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VERSUS

SPIRITUALISM.



ANSWER

TO THE SERMON OF THE

Rev. T. DE WITT TALMAGE

AGAINST SPIRITUALISM,

Delivered by

Hon. A. H. DAILEY,

BEFORE THE CHURCH OF THE NEW SPIRITUAL DISPENSATION,
AT THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE, MAY 12, 1884.

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1884.

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BROOKLYN, April 28th, 1884.

HON. A. H. DAILEY :

Dear Sir—We, the undersigned, members and friends of the Church of the New Spiritual Dispensation, believe that it is due to us, as believers in modern Spiritualism, that a deliberate answer should be made to the sermon (so called) of the Rev. Dr. Talmage, delivered on Sunday, April 27th. We would not wish (and we are sure you would not) to meet it in the same spirit that it was delivered by this reverend defamer ; but as the reverend gentleman has expressed the earnest wish “to gather up all the *raps* Spiritualists had ever heard from spirits, blessed or damned, and place them on the heads of Spiritualists in one thundering rap of annihilation,” we would have you give him some of the thundering raps of facts that we know you possess. if not to his annihilation, at least to teach the gentleman that he had better inform himself about the facts of Spiritualism before he attempts to teach an intelligent audience in the city of Brooklyn. Any Sunday in May will be acceptable to us.

Yours Fraternally,

J. D. GRAHAM,
DANIEL COONS,
F. D. HARNED,
A. G. KIPP,
CHAS. C. CLAGGETT,
WM. R. TICE,
GEO. W. MIDDLETON,
W. J. BEARD and others.

BROOKLYN, May 3d, 1884.

COL. JOHN D. GRAHAM and others :

Dear Sirs—I am just in receipt of yours of the 28th inst., inviting me to publicly answer in the Church of the New Spiritual Dispensation the recent discourse of Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage upon modern Spiritualism. I thank you for the confidence you repose in my ability to meet the assaults of Mr. Talmage. I will undertake that task with much pleasure, and will name Sunday evening, May 11th, at the Brooklyn Institute as the time and place.

I have the honor and pleasure of being,

Fraternally Yours,

A. H. DAILEY.

ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen :

For many years the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage has occupied a phenomenal position in the religious world, drawing large congregations and a corresponding salary. From a small beginning his congregations have grown, and now they are among the largest in the land. Wealth, aristocracy—imaginary and real—refinement and culture, as well as good music, have for some time been found at the Tabernacle ; but the central figure, the moving spirit, the magnet around which all these cluster is Mr. Talmage. I have not yet spoken of the curious people who go there, as they go to the shows and dime museums ; as they also go to the theatres and great gatherings where our statesmen speak, and where Mr. Ingersoll lectures. Nor have I spoken of the intelligent and ignorant people who go there. There are very subtle distinctions which society makes in its own ranks. The ignorant go to be enlightened, and when I speak of the ignorant I do not mean it in an offensive sense. They go in large numbers and they permeate the class representing intelligence, wealth, aristocracy, culture and refinement. I have not seen a man who is not ignorant on some subjects, and it is sometimes upon subjects about which he talks the most. Genius is always admired, and Mr. Talmage, in a certain respect, is a genius. People say he is odd, which may mean almost anything peculiar. Original modes of expressing old thoughts, old doctrines, old ideas, are very interesting, because the mind loves variety, in fact, it is essential to its good health. “ Old Hundred ” is an old tune with which we are all familiar, as we are with “ Home, Sweet Home,” or “ The Star Spangled Banner.” We tire finally of hearing these played or sung over and over again. They may become monotonous, and like other things, finally a decided bore. That man is the greatest musical genius who can play them the most and keep up an interest the longest, and to do it he goes into the variations and delights his hearers by his sagacity and skill in wandering in the realm of sound with quaver and semi-quaver here and there, and vaulting from one note to another, he occasionally drops down to the original, just to let you know that he has the thread still in view, and with those few notes of the air you hear “ Old Hundred ” with the variations. Mr. Talmage is like some other clergymen, skillful in giving to his hearers orthodox discourses with gyrations and variations, and when you remember that orthodoxy consists in accepting what is known as the so called Holy Bible as the *sum total* of all that is known and ever can be known by mortals of the creation and origin of man, of his relations to God and nature, as being all that man can know of the future, and of the relations of the spiritual world to this world, you will at once comprehend that to keep awake an interest in such limited fields for discourse, anything and everything that can be invented must be resorted to. The bass viol, the organ, the flute, the violin and cornet, join in choral anthems. All of these things go into the costly edifices where the light of heaven comes in, in varied hues through colored glass. With this the Lord is supposed to be pleased, and with the strains of sweet music His anger is soothed against sinful man, who reclines in ease upon downy cushions, and listens to what the preacher says. He invokes the God of all to have pity

and mercy on man. Jesus is invoked to keep his promise and to return to earth and reign a thousand years. The story of the cross is told over and over again, and God is thanked for having begotten His Son Jesus and for having sent Him into this world to suffer and be put to death as a sacrifice for our sins, and to appease his own anger and satisfy the ends of justice. A great deal of time is spent in telling God how good he was to do this, and in uttering praise to Him for all we have and enjoy, as if God did not know our hearts, and as if He could be moved by the flattery of men. A great deal of time is spent in telling God how mean man is; how much we are like sheep which have got over the fence where the grass is greener, and the water is purer; and God is invoked to save us from the devil, as if, like a hungry wolf, he is waiting for a fresh lamb; and we are then taught that all human suffering, even death, came into the world simply because the first man and first woman ate apples which grew in the orchard where God put them, which God said were unhealthful food and man must not eat, but which the devil said were splendid fruit, the very best for man in the whole garden. I am not here this evening for the purpose of demonstrating the idiocy of such teachings to this audience, except in a general way to say, that to keep men, women and children, who are growing to be men and women as useful subjects for the purpose of tribute, as tools for cunning and designing religious teachers you will find Mr. Talmage and others of his stamp always consistent. He plays, sings and preaches the old, old story in tune, verse and sermon, with just those variations and silly hits as please a class of ignorant persons, and at its close this man's life will have been full of fat things; and I am not so prejudiced as to say that he will not say, do and lead his hearers to say and do much that is good. But this I do say, such men never advance the standard of truth. They leave it just where they found it. They found it just where it was placed by Calvin and Luther, hundreds of years ago. They enlarged the theological area from the work of Pagan Rome and the immediate successors of St. Peter to the limitations and boundaries of their own conceptions, narrow indeed, but larger than the Popes'. Orthodoxy, Romanism and Judaism, all had their foundations in so-called Paganism; and the sacrifices of the Jews to God were but the same things made to the sun.

The world is moving, and men are moving the forces in nature for the uses and purposes of man and in amazing strides. The first fruit of man's research proves, and I say it not irreverently, one of two things, either man has been lying about God or God has been lying to man. Now, I say, and I say it reverently, that God has never told a lie; He never will. God is the Great Truth in all nature, and nature is God's open book, and He has opened that for His children to read, and they must read it forever. He who does not read that book gets all his knowledge at the retail shops, and the Tabernacle is just where the religious mixtures, the oleomargarine of theology, is given out as God's spiritual food for hungry souls.

When, two weeks ago, Mr. Talmage gave out that "Spiritualism as a myth or a revelation," would be treated by him as the subject of his morning's discourse, the curious went to hear him. I went, because I did not wish to take second hand anything he might say. I am now to reply to some of his remarks, having given the preceding as essentials in what is to follow. He preached from the text: "There shall not be found among you any consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer; for all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord. (Deut., 18th ch., 10th, 11th and 12th verses.) He followed this by saying, "we are surrounded by mystery." That "there is a vast unexplored realm that science will map out, and the man who explores it will do more service than Columbus or Vesputius." That there are "many sounds that cannot be accounted for, many things approximating to the spectral, many effects that do not seem to have a sufficient cause, that the wall between the spiritual and material is a very thin wall; that there can be no doubt but there are communications between this world and the next world, the spirits of the departed going from this world to that, and, according to the Bible, ministering spirits coming from that

world to this." He says he "does not know but that some time there may be complete, constant and unmistakable lines of communication open between this world and the next. To unlatch the door all the fingers of superstition are kept busy." This is the first time I ever heard of the "fingers of superstition." Superstition is born of ignorance; it is a belief in the unreal, and if it shall turn out, as it surely will, that the cardinal principles of Mr. Talmage's orthodoxy are founded on superstition, then, that which he calls superstition, is a belief in the real, made manifest to every sense which we, as human beings possess, of which he is profoundly ignorant, because he has bound himself up in superstition, refuses to acknowledge the truth; why, then we shall find him in this, as in the rest of his discourse, utterly at fault. For a religious teacher that is very bad.

Now, spiritualism is before the people for investigation as to its claims, demanding that its assailants either investigate or cease to bear false witness against it. I assert that spiritualism alone stands against all superstition upon the one hand, and atheism on the other, and claims to show that there is not now, never was, and never will be anything unnatural. It is absolutely destructive of superstition, because it demonstrates and shows that for every effect brought home to human consciousness, there is a simultaneous cause in nature. Men discourse with an air of great wisdom about science and philosophy; what they will map out and show. Science and philosophy map out and show nothing. It is that which surrounds us and takes place, of which we become conscious, that enables us to draw conclusions and make deductions, as these things are impressed upon the mind. Man is all there is of science and philosophy that can be of service. Mr. Talmage talks as if science would do wonders; but the man who fingers the keys by which the forces around us are made to unlock their mysteries is a great benefactor, until he comes to that domain especially reserved for the church and Mr. Talmage, then *he* wants "to rap" the man on the head. The man is dispelling the superstition by which Mr. Talmage maintains his hold upon the people through their superstitious fear. On the other hand, spiritualism destroys infidelity in the existence of man after this sphere of life closes. That is one of the legitimate fruits of the tree of spiritualism which Mr. Talmage designates as the very worst tree in the orchard of necromancy. I challenge Mr. Talmage and every clergyman in the United States to bring home to the knowledge of one infidel, the fact of the immortality of the soul of man without the aid of what is known as Modern Spiritualism. And I assert that there are thousands of clergymen who are hungering for that knowledge, and there are thousands of others who have attained it secretly, quietly, and just as fast as they dare, leave the haunts of superstition and break the bread of truth,—I say *Truth!*—to their people, they are doing it. I have had many clergymen tell me that they had a sort of faith in what they preached, but they had no knowledge of its truth. That they hoped we spiritualists would be able to prove to the world the immortality of the soul of man. Oh, yes, my friends, they are getting ready to go with their congregations, and their congregations are getting ready to go with them; they are like bashful lovers—afraid to speak of that which most interests them both.

As a sample of this kind of teaching, from a clergyman who does tell the truth, I read an extract or two from the sermon of Rev. Minot J. Savage, of Trinity Church, Boston, preached last Easter Sunday. After reiterating the evidence of the immortality of the soul collected in the Bible and New Testament, of what the Buddhists and Mohammedans say, he says he "must frankly admit they do not furnish the required evidence." He says: "The church does not help us in this matter, for all her Easter ceremonials, and even the date itself are older than Christianity, and are palpably borrowed from pagan sources. On such testimony then, as the New Testament furnishes us for so stupendous a claim as the reappearance of Jesus, no modern court would convict a criminal of petit larceny. A thousand times more evidence in favor of spirit return, in the modern world, is offered us by the despised and outcast body of spiritualists. And yet thousands believe an alleged fact 1,851 years old, while rejecting a good deal better testimony for

alleged facts on the part of their next door neighbors." Again he says: "For this ancient story of the resurrection of Jesus we have no satisfactory evidence. Do you want such evidence? I most certainly do." In another part of his sermon, this clergyman, who is breaking the shackles of superstition, and demanding proof in the place of faith, says: "But I want to live, and labor, and think, and love. What will the world be in a thousand years? I want to know, and to help on, if I may, in whatever sphere the process of evolution. I want to travel this wondrous universe, explore its deeps, and stand on its light-crowned heights. * * I want to climb and see if the mystery resolves itself, and so find the key to this great enigma of life. Then let us address ourselves anew to the problem. It is 1,851 years since the alleged reappearance of Jesus. How stands the matter to-day? Though the church claims that Jesus was God, and that he came on purpose to establish a divine kingdom among men, only a small part of the human race knows anything about him, and but a fraction of even this small part accepts the claims that are made in his behalf. From the church's standpoint it looks dreadfully like a disastrous failure. The average Christian seems but half in earnest about it. Paul says: 'To die is gain, and to depart and be with Christ is far better than to live.' But church members to-day do not at all act as though they really believe it. Very little is the apparent consolation they find in the hour of death. With crape on their door, they wail over going to heaven as though it were the last great disaster that crowns with gloom a Christian's life. I think it will be the honest testimony of both doctors and ministers that the Christian dies no more peacefully than other men. I have just learned that my old father of 90, after more than 70 years of active work, as an orthodox church member, is now mourning by the day, over the fear of going to hell. 'Miserable comforters are ye all,' we may well say of this great promising group of orthodox doctrines that claim to speak for God."

Those, my friends, were the words of a clergyman to his people on last Easter Sunday.

With this frank admission of the utter failure of Christian orthodoxy to satisfy the longings of the human soul for life, up rises Mr. Talmage and says that "Spiritualism takes advantage of people when they are weak and morbid with trouble. We lose a friend, the house is dark, the world is dark, and the future seems dark. If we had, in our rebellion and in our weakness, the power to marshal a host and recapture our loved one from the next world, we would marshal the host. Oh! how we long to speak to the dead. Spiritualism comes in and says to us when we are all worn out, 'Now we will open the door; take your places around the table.' We sit down. We begin to shiver and feel queer. After waiting 40 minutes the table begins to quiver. 'Johnny is it you?' Two raps, 'Yes.' 'Are you happy?' Two raps, 'Yes.'" Then, with a leap forward, the reverend gentleman shouted, "Every time you sit around a table and invoke the spirits of the departed you strike God square in the face." Well, my friends, this is a terrible condition of affairs. If this is true, the God of Mr. Talmage is getting his face slapped pretty often. It is getting dangerous for him to come into the homes of our most respected citizens. Does Mr. Talmage suppose that anybody but an idiot can be influenced by such expressions? Does he present to the world a conception of a very dignified God, who is being constantly struck in the face because his children love each other and seek for some evidence, even at the family table, that their departed ones still live, and can even imperfectly convey their messages of love? Mr. Talmage admits he cannot give them any consolation, by the very picture of the desolation he has shown death to have made. Is it, or is it not, contemptible and beneath true Christianity for this impotent man to ridicule and despise the methods and means which God has given, if he ever gave anything to man, by which human sorrow can be assuaged; by which the mourner can be comforted; by which truth may be established; by which the fond mother may know that her noble boy, whom death snatched away before he had been "taken in" at the church of Mr. Talmage, is not roasting in an orthodox hell, according to the established creeds of the Church, but lives, and

tells his mother so, in a state of consciousness, where love and affection die not; and that over her he will stand with watchful eyes and loving heart, whispering in her ears words of cheer; counsel and love, until she, too, shall rise in brightness and glory not from the grave, but from the mortal form which her soul has tenanted? Mr. Talmage, after saying that the tree of spiritualism is the worst tree in the garden of necromancy, says he concludes this by its fruits. He says to his hearers, if they wish to consult any one to come to him. "Ah! there's the rub." It is the old, old story, history repeating itself. The priests among the Jews and certain seers made it a death penalty to consult any one but themselves. They made laws and told the ignorant people God did it. They hunted the mediums, whom they called persons having familiar spirits, out of the land, putting them to death. There were chosen ones, however, upon whom the favor of the Lord fell, so *they* said, and to *them* they could come with their gifts and consult about the affairs of this life. Pious old Samuel fairly reeked with human gore. Read the vengeance he meted out to the Amalekites at the hands of Saul, in the xvth chapter of 1st Samuel; and a little preceding, how Saul went with his servant to consult this man of God as to where his father's asses had strayed, and how he took something to pay him for this divine service; and how God had been talking in Samuel's ear about Saul coming. A little bit of clairaudience, no more remarkable than occurs in this city, yes, in my own home every day of my life, with this difference, I do not pay for the instructions I get nor for the messages of love given me.

Let us here consider this man's opening admission, "we are surrounded by mystery. There are so many sounds and appearances which defy investigation, which approximate the spectral." He thinks science will map out this great unexplored realm. He then admits that there are communications between this world and the next; spirits from here going over and those from the other coming back, and the walls between the two worlds are very thin. He follows this by saying that "modern spiritualism has never offered a reasonable credential showing a spirit's return, and that the post office which it has established between the next world and this is another Star Route post office, kept up at a vast expense, without having delivered one letter from the other world to this." Such language uttered in such a place, a place called the sanctuary of God, of supposed freedom from uncharitable motives, in the presence of thousands and carried to the knowledge of millions elsewhere who know it to be utterly false, justly arouses indignation, and men stop and ask, "is the man ignorant or is he wilfully untruthful?" He says he is not ignorant, that he is well posted in all that is going on, and that the tree of spiritualism is the worst tree in the orchard. When a man gives his opinion upon the subject of spiritualism based upon *some* knowledge, he exercises a divine right, which is a human right; but when a man asserts positively that to be true or untrue of which he has no knowledge, he is not a truthful man, and the more prominently he asserts it the greater is his sin, for he is a falsifier before a great number of people. Mr. Talmage does not and cannot know all that is going on in spiritualism. It is not given him to know all, and when he assumes to know that there is not one well authenticated case of communion between this world and the next, that not one letter has ever been delivered, he knows he is placing himself face to face in flat contradiction to millions of intelligent and truthful men, women and children who know that what he says is utterly untrue. When Mr. Talmage said, as he did, that there was not one thing ever done through the instrumentality of mediums but it could be and had been duplicated by jugglers and necromancers, and that they were all frauds—in every instance had been proven to be a fraud—he uttered a vile slander against thousands and thousands of the purest and best men, women and children in our land, and a vile insult to that innumerable host which he admits are so near to us. He insults every spirit which attempts to bear a message of truth and love to mortals. He stamps as fraudulent every manifestation they make to prove to the world the immortality of the soul. Mr. Talmage asserts as false what I know to be true, for he admitted at

the outset that there is spirit communion between the two worlds. Here, then, I challenge him and the clergy of the city of Brooklyn, to meet us face to face in the Tabernacle or any other public place, and answer the sworn testimony of hundreds of respectable citizens whom we will summon to bear witness that they have both seen and spoken to the spirits of their departed friends, and have been answered in return. We will go before the congregation of the Tabernacle, in the presence of Mr. Talmage, and place among his people a seer whose vision is as clear and hearing is as acute as that of any of the old prophets, who were, the Bible says, aforetime called seers, and that seer will describe the spirits present so that the most skeptical of his congregation, if they will admit the truth—and they will if they are not too much demoralized by the teachings of Mr. Talmage—from description recognize their own friends, and incidents of their lives will be given them, and matters and things of which they are ignorant will be told them by those spirits, that their truthfulness and identity may be established. If those things can be done by any other person than a seer and if they can be explained as being untrue, Mr. Talmage will be doing humanity the greatest service of his life to accept this challenge at once.

We challenge him and a committee of clergymen whom the clergy of this city may appoint, to witness and explain upon any other theory than as the work of an invisible intelligence, the phenomena of independent slate writing, to be produced in their presence in the open light of day. I challenge him and any and every sleight-of-hand man to duplicate it except through the spirit of a departed human being. I stand here to-night and say that in my presence, and in the presence of several other persons, I have taken my own slates, and putting them together and a small pencil between them, I have placed them on a table under my arm, with no other mortal in contact with that slate, and in the presence of Henry Slade, with the sun gleaming in through open windows, I heard that pencil write, and, opening those slates, we found two communications written which I have here to-night, one from my father, signed with his full name, and one from my wife's sister, signed with hers. And we can both solemnly aver that Henry Slade to our knowledge knew nothing of our family affairs or relations. And at the same time a chair standing remote from us all, leaped up from the floor without visible hands touching it, and at our request a hand, fully materialized, with no visible arm to support it, was darted up from the table and was placed upon my person. I defy Mr. Talmage or any other man of himself to produce these astounding things. Science had better "map it out" and explain it.

About five years ago Hiram Sibley, one of the wealthiest men now living in the city of Rochester, was investigating modern Spiritualism in the presence of medium Watkins, when the phenomena of independent slate writing, under such conditions as I have stated, was produced. He thought it was some mysterious trick, and offered Watkins \$1,000 to explain it to him, with the solemn promise not to divulge the secret. Poor Watkins wanted money, but answered, "I can only say it is not me, it is a spirit writing." Not content with that, Sibley advertised in a Rochester daily paper for a long time, a standing offer of \$5,000, to be paid to any person who could produce, under similar conditions, such writing, and rationally explain how it was done, the secret not to be divulged.

The attempt was never made, and Mr. Talmage's necromancers never tried for the \$5,000, and what is more, you cannot get one of those sleight-of-hand men to attempt it.

In common with many others, I have seen materializations in the light from no cabinet, but at my side, where I could place my hands upon the misty substance as it gathered over the spirit form. I clearly saw it become the form of a human being. It then disappeared, and again reappeared with the rapidity of lightning.

I have held the hands of a medium, and at the same time from the medium appeared to come other hands, which were large and small; some were the hands of little children, some of grown persons, which were placed upon my head, patting my face, as I called by name the spirits of my loved ones, whom I knew to

be there, for the clairvoyant eyes of others described them to me. Some hands were warm as if in life, some were as cold as clay. I will here challenge Mr. Talmage again, to appoint an impartial committee, of which he shall be one, to sit in a circle, where the hands of the medium may be held, with no cabinet whatever, and explain the intelligent forces there manifested, and if he wants a rap over the head from a materialized hand, he will very likely get one, and one which may be very convincing to him, and improve his bump of veracity. The best intellects in this and other lands have investigated these things and found them true.

At Lake Pleasant, last Summer, I attended one of Mrs. Maud E. Lord's dark circles, and during the sitting a voice spoke as if from the ceiling, saying: "A mighty earthquake is forming under the islands of the seas, great disturbance and loss of life. There will be terrible cyclones and convulsions of nature for the next three or four years, and beware of pestilence!" Over twenty persons present heard that strange, unnatural voice. Two days after came the fearful verification of that prediction of the earthquake, when the Island of Java was shaken to the center, and the bottom of the ocean did rise to the surface, and land sunk in the sea and thousands upon thousands of human beings perished. As to the devastations by cyclones you all know the fearful wreck they have made. A few months ago Newton S. Otis was taken sick, complaining of pains in his head, and at times he was insane. A lady, whose name I will not mention, not a professional medium, said to others and to me, "Mr. Otis will die; I can see his brain, and on the side of his brain is a dark substance; when the blood rushes up, he is insensible, when it recedes he is rational. He will die." The doctor attending did not believe it. Soon after, a little child, whose name I can give, saw the same thing, and said he would die, and die he did; and an autopsy proved the correctness of the diagnosis. These mediums can diagnose disease when the doctors fail, and some of our very best physicians are using them for this noble purpose. I state what I do know, for I have it from the lips of the physicians themselves. Perhaps this is bad fruit! Mr. Talmage would deprive suffering mortals in their sickness of the benefit of our clairvoyant physicians, because *his* Bible is *his* God, and it is not authorized.

I now turn to Mr. Talmage's further objection, that the spirits use bad grammar, bad orthography, and thus show they are not the persons they represent, that hence the mediums are frauds. This is an old argument, and again illustrates Mr. Talmage's ignorance of the laws governing what is known as spirit control. Let me here briefly explain this law for the benefit of those who are not familiar with it. You have perhaps stood beside the bed of a dying person, and unless you were clairvoyant you did not see the spirit leave the body and yet you knew it had gone, for you saw the lifeless clay of your friend, and you were no longer conscious of his presence. If you look into the heavens you see nothing but the apparently empty air, and yet you do not know that the heavens are not full of spiritual substances. As you are now constituted, with the spirit encased within a tenement of clay, which is the mortal body, your spirit is growing, ripening for another birth, a new resurrection, which causes the immediate death of the body. The spirit wakes to a new consciousness. Then the man for the first time fully realizes that he has been of a dual nature, and has emerged from a shell, and that that old shell, his body, blinded his sight, deafened his ears, and stunted every sense of his nature. He finds he has a spiritual body, either dark or bright, according to the moral and spiritual development that has taken place in his own soul, preceding his advent into the spiritual realm. A bad man is a dark spirit, and there is nothing more hideous to a bad man than the consciousness that his moral deformities are unmasked, uncovered, and cannot be concealed. The spirit finds that in this new condition of his life, that which was substance before to him has ceased to be such, and the ethereal skies above and around him are no longer as empty space, but full of life, and more real to him now than the misty earth from which he has risen. He finds that laws which he knew not of are now sensibly felt, and he approaches earth

under the guidance of an experienced spirit guide, and enters the house where he died. He sees not its walls, nor can he see the forms of his friends as they move quietly around the lifeless form that once was his. The spirit is led, perhaps to a little child, and is told to enter the aura of that child. He at once finds that he has become *en rapport* with a mortal, and through the eyes of that mortal he is again conscious of earthly surroundings. He sees through borrowed eyes the scenes of his former habitation. He sees his friends weeping because he is dead ; he rushes to his heart-broken wife and throws his arms around her, but she feels them not. He shouts in her ears that he is living, but his voice she hears not through the thick wall of flesh which deadens her senses. He hears with borrowed ears, and feels material substances of earth only through the faculties of mortals. He moves by the sense of will. Thoughts become language understood of spirits. How can he give his thoughts to mortals? Is there no way? He is then taught that while he cannot be heard, that he can find some sensitive person, whom we call mediumistic, upon whose mind or brain he may impress his own thought, and the effort is made. It may be some poor, unlettered person, whose education was neglected, who has small powers of language, no power to recall names ; and by repeated efforts the spirit out of the body succeeds in mesmerising the spirit of this person in the body, just as you have seen one person mesmerise another until the person who was mesmerised becomes the mere instrument, the mouth-piece of the other. The spirit now tries to give its perhaps great thoughts through this poor instrument to his friends. The brain of the medium imperfectly responds to the effort, and cannot be thrown out of its accustomed manner of expressing its own thoughts, and it uses its own language, ungrammatical and mispronounced words, to the great dismay of the more intelligent spirit, and skeptical persons condemn the poor medium as a fraud and liar. The same results are liable to follow every form of manifestation the spirits adopt to communicate with mortals. Therefore you will see in these words of explanation how very important it is to have as perfect an instrument as possible for the use of the spiritual world. Therefore it is that mediums of varied gifts are developed who excel as Paul declares, in the various phases of mediumship. Through some is the gift of what Paul seems to regard as the working of miracles, which is the production of results without any apparent cause, like the passing of matter through matter, the raps, the ringing of bells without any visible hands, as Mr. Talmage with astonishing wit says ; " is before dinner is ready." These revelations open up to us a world of knowledge of which Mr. Talmage is profoundly ignorant, or assumes to be. Mr. Beecher is not altogether ignorant of these laws. Here we have a knowledge of how sudden thoughts are flashed in upon the mind. We are taught by this, how good spirits cluster around good men and good women and children, to influence them for good ; how they become ministering spirits, according to the New Testament, without Mr. Talmage knowing anything of their methods or who they are. We are taught, and here have from the positive assurance of reliable spirits, that the only devils they have ever seen are the dark and malign spirits of bad men and bad women ; we here learn how these depraved creatures lay hold upon men and women of passion, of sensual habits and desires, and impel them from step to step in vice, crime and immorality ; we here learn how it was possible for one woman to be possessed of seven evil spirits ; and time and time again have these wretched beings been delivered from horrid obsession through the good offices of some pure medium and her spirit friends, thus performing the same offices that Jesus did to those obsessed in His day. We here learn that like calls for like. A man draws in his wake a great host as good or bad as himself. A man who fabricates on Sunday and maligns his neighbors has bad spiritual influence around him, and if he wishes " to rap the whole body of Spiritualists with one thundering rap into annihilation," he is evidently *en rapport* with malign influences and dark spirits. He will by-and-by wake up, and to his dismay find he cannot shirk the burthen of his sins and throw them as a good many wicked people expect to do, on the back of poor Jesus. Let him

remember that "whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." The gods I refer to are the familiar spirits of bad men. If Mr. Talmage supposes he is not beset by familiar spirits who influence his actions, he is very much deluded, and he shows how utterly futile it is for a man occupying his position, to attempt an assault upon people who can teach him his alphabet in spiritual truths.

The next charge of Mr. Talmage which I desire to answer, is "that spiritualism is destructive to the nervous system; that he never saw a healthy confirmed spiritualist; that spiritualism is the first stage of epilepsy or catalepsy; that it turns the brain and ends in insanity; that from Bangor to San Francisco the asylums for insane are filled with men and women who have become demented by spiritualism." This serious and dangerous charge would be more damaging if some one besides Mr. Talmage had made it. It is unfortunate for even him, that he has repeated this groundless slander, so often made in the interest of our enemies. This charge has been so frequently made that Dr. Eugene Crowell, a very influential citizen here, in the year 1877, addressed a letter to the various institutions for the insane in the United States, asking three questions: First, the number of patients admitted and treated during the preceding year? Second, in how many cases was the insanity ascribed to religious excitement? Third, in how many cases caused by spiritualism? In answer to these questions Dr. Crowell received reports from 58 institutions, from all parts of the country. The analysis shows as follows: The whole number of patients in all these institutions for the year preceding was 23,328. The whole number from religious excitement was 412. The whole number from spiritualism was 59. There were at that time in the United States 87 asylums. Answers were not obtained from all. Assuming as a fair calculation from the reports from others that there were 30,000 insane persons in these various institutions, and on the basis of the figures given, there should be 530 insane persons from religious excitement, and 76 from spiritualism; so that we find there are 7 inmates insane from religious excitement for every 1 insane from spiritualism—not one for each institution. This record was obtained by Dr. Crowell, because Dr. L. S. Forbes Winslow, of London, had said "this form of delusion is very prevalent in America, and the asylums contain many of its victims, nearly ten thousand persons having gone insane on the subject are confined in the public asylums in the United States;" and because Rev. Dr. Talmage of Brooklyn, had said, "There is not an asylum from Maine to Texas which does not contain victims of spiritualism," and actual statistics show that out of the 58 which reported to Dr. Crowell there were 28 which did not contain within their walls one inmate insane from spiritualism. You here have these reverend defamers proved to be vile slanderers, wilful falsifiers of the facts; for this report of Dr. Crowell's has been widely published, and undoubtedly brought to the notice of Mr. Talmage, and if it was not it was no excuse for him, for a man who asserts to be true against his neighbor that of which he knows nothing is a wilful defamer. There is no excuse for him; the truth is not in him. These things have been said of spiritualists so many times, originating in the pulpit and repeated in the press, it is our duty to drag these clerical culprits into the light and lay bare the enormity of their crimes to their own people. They stand where the Scribes and Pharisees stood—persecutors and traducers—and it may well be said of such, as Jesus said of them of old, "Woe, unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Woe, unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are like whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

But I am not yet done with this insanity subject. It is estimated that there are from 5,000,000 to 10,000,000 spiritualists in the United States. Let us assume that there are but 2,000,000; at that rate we are entitled to have 1,333 insane from spiritualism in the asylums, and we have only 76. Thus we are taxed to support these institutions without a fair representation. Mr. Talmage goes on with his scarecrow at the Tabernacle, burning a sweet incense of sulphur and rosemary, and shouting out what God thinks of spiritualism. He fills the minds

of his hearers with horrid fears and pictures of a burning hell, where those who do not rush into the church and be saved will roast and roast, and groan and burn forever. Mr. Talmage anticipates a front seat and will enjoy the scene, and shout and praise God and the Lamb for His great goodness and mercy, and for this impressive exhibition of God's justice. Why, my friends, it is this execrable doctrine that drives men crazy; a great religious revival is always followed by a fresh crop of lunatics for the asylums. Mr. Chairman, if we are to tax our liquor dealers for selling liquor, in the interest of the pauperism they cause, why not tax the dealers in orthodoxy in the interest of the lunatics they make? The saddest of earthly wrecks are those in our asylums wailing with unceasing lamentation over the horrid belief that their souls are lost, and a yawning hell is before them.

From various exciting causes people become insane; from over-joy or too deep thought upon any absorbing subject. The general tendency of spiritualism is to lessen the occurrence of insanity by a knowledge of spiritual truths. It proves to the minds of men a great natural theology, and destroys the horrid uncertainty hanging upon their minds like a hideous nightmare as to the great future that awaits them in the spiritual world. I had an aunt who grieved to the day of her death, running through a period of eighteen years, because her noble boy had died without being converted. He had been a true and dutiful son, and in the very maturity of his manhood died. His life had been full of good deeds which stood to his credit, but he had no deposit in the bank of orthodoxy where she kept her accounts. So, of course, his drafts were not honored by God, and he sunk to hell. Oh! my friends, that young man has been back to me many times since I became a spiritualist, and laughed at the folly of such a delusive doctrine. Not long ago he came, leading the spirit of his old mother, whom he was trying to recover from the effects of the fearful delusion she lived under until it was worn into her very soul. People who live and die under the delusion that Jesus will be standing with open arms waiting to clasp them to his bosom and who will present them to a personal God, will find themselves woefully disappointed. They will look back at the hours wasted in useless supplications for mercy at the foot of an imaginary throne, with an imaginary God sitting upon it. What will be the condition of those men who know better and still keep up the delusion, and draw their sustenance from the deluded victims of so vile a theology? That there have been a few persons who were firm believers in orthodoxy who have been made insane by spiritualism I can readily believe. It comes from the stunning blow, the tremendous shock the man receives when the great truth bursts in upon him. The teachings of his whole life have become a part of his nature, and the breaking of the fearful tension so long felt sometimes may unseat his reason by the great mental reaction. Like the slave released from his bondage, he exults in his consciousness of new-born freedom, and if, in such a case, insanity comes, at whose door is the sin? Is it the fault of the truths of spiritualism, or of the hellish creeds of the church instilled into the soul of the poor victim by orthodoxy and these great expounders of creeds? The religious wars and wars for the redemption of the Holy Land, led on by fanatical men, have filled many a land with blood. God grant that the coming generations may be freer from those causes which produce such direful effects upon the human mind.

The next charge of Mr. Talmage against spiritualism is that it is destructive to health. This, too, in the main is a groundless charge. Spiritualism demands proof of the truth of all things; it will be satisfied with nothing less. That it undertakes to give to all honest investigators; the world is tired of investing so much on faith. When men become bilious from too much orthodoxy, it will make them pale while the system is undergoing the necessary "purgatory" to its complete eradication. The tearing away from the old influences and the development of mediumship is now, as it always has been, a matter to be conducted with prudence and care. To be a worthy instrument in the hands of the angel world for the transmission of knowledge, for beneficent and noble acts, for lead-

ing people from delusions to the knowledge of eternal truths is the noblest, most sacred calling possible to human beings. Mediumship, properly used, is not destructive to health, but is often conducive to it. The old prophets and Jesus fasted to enable their faculties to be the more readily used for the transmission of thought from the angel world. They teach us how to live, and if spiritualists are not as gross in appearance as would please Mr. Talmage, it does not follow that our temperance impairs our health. I have often been amused at the surprised looks of some misinformed persons when they came to our church. They were astonished to find after all, that spiritualists looked like other people, and I have always noticed that those people have continued to come to our meetings. My friends, spiritualists are as robust and healthy as any class of people in this city. They study and know more of the laws of health and try to obey them.

Another and the vilest of his slanders is to the effect that spiritual doctrines encourage immorality and are subversive of the marital relations. I will here read a few sections from our manual which declare our position upon this subject :

8. FREEDOM.

"That Freedom is the birthright of every soul, and the indispensable condition of the highest progress, purity and perfection ; yet that true freedom is neither anarchy nor license, but implies restraint from all infringement on the rightful freedom and welfare of others ; hence that fidelity in the monogamic marriage, and chastity in all relations, are duties of the highest obligation.

9. AWARDS.

"That all wrong doings, as well as right actions, tend to produce sooner or later their legitimate results of suffering or joy, by the operation of divine laws inherent in our constitutions, physical and spiritual ; and hence that happiness or suffering, in this life or that which is to come, is not the arbitrary award of a capricious deity, but the necessary consequence of individual action and spiritual condition.

I have seen a vast amount of unhappiness growing out of the violation of the marital relation among all religious sects. No more among spiritualists than among other denominations. There is a wide difference of opinion among people of all denominations as to what cause shall be sufficient for a divorce. For my own part, I believe it to be the duty of every husband and wife to bear with each other, and do the best they can to live in harmony, and rear their children to respect and love their parents. But in every instance, the limit beyond which one shall not endure or suffer from another, is very hard to determine. I believe it to be a sin and a crime for a pure, sensitive woman to live and cohabit with an irredeemably besotted brute of a man at the peril of her life. I believe, and spiritualism teaches, that a large number of persons are totally unfit to enter the marital relation. They are tainted with disease, and pre-natal conditions have made them criminals from their birth ; and to entail those diseases and propensities upon the human race, is a crime against natural law ; and such persons should not be allowed to marry, and the marriage of such persons should be dissolved in the interest and well being of the human race. The spiritual world is advancing these lessons to mortals, and insisting upon the best pre-natal conditions for the development and advancement of a healthy race of human beings. Does the Christian church take up and discuss these all-important subjects ? Is there a word uttered from a Christian pulpit in the land against the prevalent yet horrible crime of child murder by mothers who are too indolent, or perhaps too poor, to rear them properly ? Can you find among spiritualists one person who does not know the enormity of the crime of murdering these little innocents before they have matured into consciousness ? And is Mr. Talmage not aware that no crime is so prevalent in fashionable society, as that of child-murder, and that no spiritualist tolerates it ? Does the Bible anywhere teach the great truth earned from the spiritual world, that at the moment of conception, a human being is created, and that that little germ of life is a human soul, which must

live on, and forever? That the murderous hand which forces it unnaturally out entails years of suffering upon that helpless innocent, which still must mature and grow up a stunted being, yet to stand face to face with its unnatural parent in condemnation of this horrid sin, when that parent enters the spiritual world with murder written on her brow. The Bible is silent: and Christian ministers are ignorant of these laws; but spiritualists are not, and I am glad that I have the opportunity and courage to declare these great truths before so many people, for there cometh a day when all that we have done will be open, and that day is the day of our advent into spirit life. Shall spiritualism be judged and condemned, because a few masculine females and feminine males, are riding bareback on some pet hobbies concerning affinities and domestic relations? Shall we judge Christianity by the Christians who use it as a cloak for their crimes?

From the same Mosaic law that Mr. Talmage gets his authority to hang us all as witches, I give you a specimen of Bible morality, in the 24th chapter of Deuteronomy: "When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes because he had found some uncleanness in her, let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house, and when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife."

That is making divorces easy, and, according to Mr. Talmage, *God gave that law directly to Moses*. What a queer God you have got Mr. Talmage! The 25th chapter of the same book contains more relics of a barbarous age, which Mr. Talmage accepts as coming directly from God. Would Mr. Talmage like Christianity to be judged by all of the short comings and sins of his clerical brethren? If so, it would have died out long ago.

Mr. Talmage ridicules the way the spirits manifests themselves to mortals, and condemns the darkness in which the manifestations occur. "Why don't they occur in the light?" I answer, most of them do. Let me ask him a few questions: What is darkness for? Does he recognize the part it plays in the workings of nature? Where is the soul of Mr. Talmage? Is it basking on the outside of his coat in the sunlight, or is it peeping through the windows of an opaque body? Why was he gestated in darkness? Why is a tree rooted in darkness? From whence does it draw its strength? Does he know the effect of light upon matter? Does he realize that if there is a spirit body, it is so shadowy that his eyes cannot see it? that if that body can re-habilitate itself in any visible form of matter, the laws governing the concentration of this matter must be observed? Why does he wear a hat? Is it not to protect his head and eyes from the strong light and heat of the sun? Can he glare with his unprotected eyes in the face of the sun? These questions are suggestive of the answers that must follow; and until Mr. Talmage can change the laws of nature, let this puny man cease to cavil at laws which through nature and nature's God control all things. I wonder he does not bring his photographer to task for holding a dark seance when he takes one of his exquisite pictures. This distinguished divine should have the materialization on the face of the sensitive plate in the sunlight, so that he and others can distinguish between the genuine and the fraud. I will admit there is plenty of fraud called spirit phenomena, but it has the misfortune of being easily detected. You may unmask the materializing fraud, but who can expose the monster that may lurk under clerical robes, or be concealed by the face of the fawning hypocrite.

Mr. Talmage closed his discourse by a frantic appeal for his wandering flock to turn from this unclean, adulterous religion to the only true religion of the (his) holy Bible, which revealed all there was to be known of the mysteries around us; that to go further, we were trespassing on the domain of God. Poor God! if you are as small, as mean, as low, as Mr. Talmage would make you, you are in great danger of being dethroned by the children you have created. Away, with the miserable falsehoods your Bible fastens upon God for the hellish purposes of a selfish, licentious and enslaving priesthood. Under the law given as coming from God, by barbarous Jewish priests, four thousand years ago, mil-

lions of innocent persons have suffered death, and on the fair escutcheon of old Massachusetts, my native State, rests the corroding stain of the fearful crimes committed at Salem by bigoted fanatics under the authority of God Almighty, as found in this Bible of Mr. Talmage. Had he and others of his stamp the power, I firmly believe were Jesus the poor despised Nazarene whom Mr. Talmage professes to idolize so reverently, to walk the streets of our city, as he did of old, going as do the spiritualists among the poor, and in the humble walks of life, setting at defiance these wicked laws of the Jews, they would place on his head a crown of thorns, spit in his face, and spike him to the cross, and expect God to approve the hellish deed !

When Mr. Talmage said, had he the power, he would "gather up all the raps ever given by spirits, blessed or damned, in one thundering rap of annihilation," we know that out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spoke.

Oh, my friends, when you go home to-night get out your old Bibles and read the whole of the 28th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, consider what these priests pretended God would do if the people did not keep the law. Among other things that God said are these abbreviated curses : "But it shall come to pass if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and statutes, which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee : cursed shalt thou be in the city, cursed in the field ; cursed in thy basket and in thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine and flocks. Cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out and when thou comest in. The Lord shall send upon thee cursings and vexations ; he shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee. He shall smite thee with fever and inflammation and extreme burning. Thy carcass shall be meat for the fowls of the air. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, with the emerods and scab, and with the itch, and thou canst not be healed. Thou shalt betroth a wife and another man shall lie with her. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people. The Lord shall smite thee in the knee and in the hips with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the soul of thy feet to the top of thy head. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son and towards her daughter, and towards her young one, if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou may fear this *Glorious and Fearful name the Lord thy God.*"

These, dear friends, are only a few of the fearful things, here threatened against the violations of the law. And this is Mr. Talmage's ideal God ! And from this book comes his authority to declare in "thundering indignation of God Almighty" against spiritualism, which sets men free from such damnable doctrines. If this is the true character of God Almighty, then I will hunt creation over to find the Devil that I may make friends with him, and secure any quarters at his disposal in the infernal regions. God bless Mr. Ingersoll for his noble work in delivering mankind from such tyranny ! These men to day are the taskmasters over the people, levying tribute and a surrender of manhood as a condition of salvation. Let us arise with renewed vigor and push forward the work of deliverance from religious thralldom. The angel world are crowding in upon us, exhorting us to be true to ourselves and the great God of this vast universe, whose voice is heard in all nature, and whose presence comprehends his vast domains, as well as the immense systems of worlds that roll around other central suns than ours. Let us study and learn all that can be known of the great Infinite who fills all space with life, and from the involution of whose over-soul is evolved all that lives and moves and has a being. Avoid a religion that teaches that a man may cheat, lie, steal and murder all day long, and one minute to twelve, midnight, he can cast the whole load of his crimes upon an innocent man and fly, an angel of light, into the arms of Jesus, while the victims of his crimes, whom he has taken unaware, are smoking and wailing in the burning lava of an

endless hell ! Such a religion is subversive of civilization and makes possible the escape of the criminal for every crime. The only redeeming feature in this Christian religion is that which has been gathered from antiquity, and is represented in the teachings and character of Jesus of Nazareth ; and with the light we now receive from the angels above us we can discern the truth contained in all scriptures and reject all that is false.

Away off, under the ancient cities of the east, are dug up the remains of the mummied men who made the laws which delight the soul of Mr. Talmage. Modern enterprise has utilized them as objects of curiosity in museums, and ground mummy in small doses is sold in our apothecary shops and prescribed by physicians as possessing medicinal qualities. Now, my friends, if you must have mummy, get it in small quantities at the druggist's, and avoid the large doses at the Tabernacle.

