



DEVOTED TO THE NEW DISPENSATION.

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The facts and the laws of spiritual infestation and possession do not seem to have been well understood, even by believers in Spiritual Manifestations. It is attended, indeed, with many difficulties. No other one subject, perhaps, could be considered so complicated, involving so very many conditions, affinities, opportunities, and so much time, space, and all those qualities which distinguish the spiritual from the external world. And hence the necessity for understanding the doctrine of Degrees, the doctrine of Correspondences, and the Laws of Analogy.

As the lowest spiritual, must, in some sense, be considered as above the highest external, it is easy to see, in what sense we must be advancing in order to understand the difference between the two, and how it is possible for them to approximate and mingle together.

Man is a compound, complicated, external, spiritual being, possessed of a variety of faculties, and susceptibilities, adapting him for intercourse both with the external, and the spiritual worlds. His nervous system or external body, adapts him or renders him accessible to spirits who are low and near the earth. His interior, inmost, and spiritual nature, allies him to the Spiritual world, and to influxes from corresponding influences from above. And, at the same time, there may be nothing in common with his external and inmost natures. That is, for times, a mortal may be perfectly reliable as to his goodness, justice, and integrity, (which characterize his inner nature) while his nervous system is impressed, and possessed by an apocryphal spirit, who is far below him in these moral qualities. And, when once thus fascinated and possessed by an unknown spirit (who may call himself Dr. Rush, Thomas Jefferson, or Dr. Franklin, or a beloved relative) how difficult it must be in the nature of things, to detect the cheat. "How can it be possible," says one, "that I could have been so much deceived?" Why, it is not more wonderful than the fact of Spiritual infestation! Not more marvellous than spiritual possession, and the "wonders" that result from that possession? Was any mortal ever more familiar with the "world of spirits," and the whole spiritual world, than Swedenborg is admitted to have been? And yet, he tells us, that he was, for a time, himself really deceived by the phantasies of the spirits, who inhabit the spirit-world, "nearly the whole of which" he assures us, "is fanatical and seeks for nothing else but to teach, and to lead. Striving even to possess the bodies of men." And how very difficult it is, to dispossess these spirits when they once get into mortals and gain possession of them, can only be learned from experience or from a knowledge of Analogy and the laws to which reference has already been made. Jesus, alluded to this difficulty, it would seem, when he declared that "this kind could be cast out only by prayer and fasting."

It was but just now, that this excellent lady "H.," to whom I have already referred, set down near the table where I am writing. I asked her "guardian spirit," (which I have described, as having tormented her so, in keeping her awake all night) why he wished to control her

at all? And, the spirit answered, "Because she belongs to me!" And this is said after the lady had detected that spirit in falsehood, calling himself "Dr. Channing," "Swedenborg," &c., and had desired it to depart, and never approach her again.

This lady is very candid, and willing to know the truth. And being in company with some congenial friends who knew nothing of what had occurred, the spirit rapped out the following: "Help H. to regain her power as a medium." As if the invisible spirit, finding his hold upon that medium was about to be dissolved, he calls on those believers in the reliability of spirits, (who did not know what had occurred) to help in its gaining more control over her!

It may, I think, be referred to as significant of the condition in which the medium is involved by possession, when the question is asked, as to how "one so good, so intelligent could be so much deceived?" We have seen, that the subject itself, involving all that this does, is the very one of all others, upon which the medium would be the most likely to be deceived. It is a mixed question,—one not purely spiritual, nor yet wholly relating to this external world. You cannot examine it with all your external senses. The spirit, so to speak, is behind you, or under the table. There is but a step, we are told, between the truly sublime and the ridiculous. So it may be said here, it is a short cut, often, from the most important Truth to the merest falsehood. Hence how perfectly absurd to be talking of "testing" spirits, as some do. One boasts of his having asked more than "five hundred" "test questions," which were all answered correctly, through one medium! Now, suppose these "test questions" were all asked of a beloved sister, or wife? What! test your own sister, your own wife? How could that be? The presence of a real sister, a real wife, would never tolerate the first thought of a test. And yet, from this very fact, how many have indeed, forbidden to test apocryphal spirits, under the consciousness that a real wife, brother, father or mother, could not be mistaken, and nothing like a "test" could be thought of when they were really present! My opinion is, that I shall always know my own friends, when they are present with me, without a dozen "test questions," more or less, and questions which would only prove the clairvoyance of the associate spirit even if they were correctly answered. And a strange hallucination must have possessed mortals, when they believe an invisible intelligence, to be a real father, mother, child or wife, merely because they are influenced so to believe, and because they have asked a few "test questions," which the spirit was clairvoyant enough to answer correctly! But, in this way, we live and learn. We are all children before we are men. All alike attracted with the external, before we learn what is meant by spiritual; for "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards, that which is spiritual."

LA ROY SUNDERLAND.

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Is Reason Man's Highest Faculty?

If Reason is the highest faculty with which man is endowed, then necessarily he possesses in himself no other faculty which is a superior, or more sure guide to truth. But if men possess a higher faculty than reason, it is very highly

important that we have a right understanding of the matter. And to determine this question rightly, it is necessary to understand, first, what is Reason?—what is its office, and what are its functions? Some men will say, that Reason includes all that is signified, or represented by the term Intelligence. If it does, then of course, man can possess no higher faculty than Reason. But it happens there are some who do not admit this definition to be a correct one. I understand intelligence to be composed of, and to comprise all the intellectual faculties; each of which is a distinct mental power. And according to the most general acceptance, use, and application of the word, Reason is a distinct intellectual faculty—one of the intellectual powers. I suppose all must admit that the proper, and legitimate office of Reason is, to infer conclusions from premises; to deduce inferences from propositions, that are either known, or supposed to be correct.

Such, then, is Reason. But Intelligence is properly an attribute. In man it is finite—in God, intelligence is infinite. In Him it is infinite wisdom. And if man possesses such a faculty as INTUITION, (which probably but few if any will deny) it is as distant from Reason as any one faculty of the mind is from another. And I think it can be logically proved that intuition is not only a higher faculty than Reason, but also a far more reliable one. And it requires no great amount of argumentation to show that whatever is superior to Reason is not "necessarily unreasonable." For infinite wisdom certainly is superior to finite Reason. And I know no reason why it should be deemed irrational, to suppose that there may exist powers of intelligence, (intellectual powers,) of intermedial grades between mere finite Reason and infinite Intelligence. Or in other words, between human Reason, and infinite Wisdom. But the question is asked, (in an article published in the fifteenth number of the *New Era*, by a brother whom I highly esteem, but from whose opinion upon the main question treated upon in this article, I happen to dissent somewhat,) "How can men speak of a higher faculty than Reason, and then employ Reason to sustain their assertion?" This question follows in the article above alluded to, in connexion with this assertion: "The REASONER is necessarily great—great because of his reason.—Reason, or the power of thought, is in fact the loftiest endowment of man. Let him who thinks of a loftier, never attempt to commend it to Reason; for if it is superior to Reason it must be unreasonable." And the question may be somewhat extended; for I wish to give it all the force that my Reason is capable of applying to it; it might furthermore be asked, If Reason is not "the loftiest endowment of man," why should any man, who thinks or speaks "of a loftier," resort to Reason, in attempting to prove that man possesses a higher faculty; why does he not call into action that supposed higher faculty, both in himself and in the one he designs to convince; why should he not appeal to the highest authority?

There are two good and sufficient reasons why he would in such cases generally appeal to Reason, in endeavoring to convince another that Intuition is a higher faculty than Reason. First, because the faculty of intuition in himself

might not be very fully developed. And second, if it has become pretty well developed in himself, he is conscious that there are but few amongst mankind in whom it is developed to the degree of being in vigorous activity. Therefore, instead of addressing directly, the faculty of intuition, by simply stating the truth, he would generally address the Reason by logical argumentation. But when a simple statement of the naked truth is made to a person, in whom the faculty of Intuition is fully developed, it probably would be even more readily apprehended by him, than if presented by regular argumentation; because more readily communicated. But doubtless there are many who will be ready to say that this needs proof. And by such it may be contended that Reason is the great characteristic faculty which distinguishes man from the brute. And I am ready to admit that Reason is a characteristic faculty of man, which distinguishes him from the brutes. But does not man possess also other faculties by which he is distinguished from the brutes? It must be conceded that he does.

But, again, it will be said, perhaps, that Intuition is only a more perfect development of Reason.

If this is the fact, then there is no such faculty as Intuition; for if such a faculty exists, it necessarily must be as distinct from Reason as is any faculty that man possesses. Intuition and Reason are two distinct mental faculties, and the terms by which they are designated should not be confounded. It is a self-evident fact that Intuition and Reason cannot otherwise both exist than as two distinct faculties. For Intuition is nothing else, than a mental faculty—an intellectual power "by which the mind perceives the truths of things immediately, without the intervention of argument, testimony or reasoning." If then such a faculty as Intuition exists, it must be distinct from any faculty (however denominated) the exercise of which is merely logical reasoning. For even the very term Intuition itself, implies the discovering of truths independently of Reason.

Such then is Intuition; and such its legitimate office.

This point being established, it seems somewhat apparent that Intuition must be "A HIGHER FACULTY THAN REASON."

But may be, it will now be insisted, that the faculty of Intuition, though distinct from Reason, possesses no active power of its own; that it originates nothing; that it is merely a passive receptacle, through which truths of a very lofty character even, may be received by influx from without; being either immediate inspiration from God, or communiations from spirits, of the higher spheres; and that it possesses no capability of distinguishing between truth and error. And that, therefore, whatever is thus received into the mind, is in all cases to be referred to Reason, as the supreme arbiter and judge. But I think it must be admitted, that by Intuition man arrives at truths which cannot be reached by the utmost stretch of his Reason. And I also think it will have to be admitted, that truths are discovered by Intuition which are above the comprehension of Reason. In which cases, Reason, if it has been properly disciplined, will not presume to set itself up as judge in the matter, but rever-

*See Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.

ently bow to the supremacy of Intuition. And it must be conceded that Intuition discovers facts which unaided Reason can not discover. In this respect at least, it is superior to Reason. And I furthermore think its greatest superiority consists in its almost infallible power of distinguishing between truth and error. In this, however, I do not know but I may be mistaken. Intuition is the great discoverer of truths. But Reason perhaps is more properly man's originating faculty. By it he is capable of originating many very sublime and lofty ideas. But Reason can originate nothing that is above its inherent powers of comprehension.

That Intuition is a receptive faculty, there is no reason to doubt, and where it is developed, I believe it is an ever ready receptacle of truths whenever and however presented. And that it is also a perceptive faculty, that is, that it has the capacity of discovering facts and truths by its own inherent powers, I think is a fact which every man is conscious of, in whom the faculty is in any considerable degree developed.

And moreover, it must be conceded that it is not Reason, but INTUITION which "is in fact the loftiest endowment of man." And yet it must be acknowledged that, "The REASONER is necessarily great—great because of his Reason." Intuition and Reason are each dependent on and necessary to the other. As one progresses and becomes more developed so also will the other. For the unfolding of the one, tends also to the unfolding of the other. But it is vastly important that we should assign to each its true and proper position. For Intuition cannot develop itself as long as Reason is set above it.

But the ideas of some men are so extremely vague in regard to what Intuition is, and what is its proper office, that they seem to think it can but seldom if ever be brought into exercise except when we are in a state of abnormalism. But such an idea is altogether erroneous. As well might it be said, that a man cannot exercise the faculty of Reason except when he is in a state of abnormalism.

And there may remain in the minds of some, a degree of doubt arising from a sort of vague apprehension that if Intuition is a mental faculty distinct from, and superior to Reason, when it becomes fully developed in man's future progression in the other world, the faculty of Reason will either cease to exist, or become entirely useless, for the want of occasion to call it into exercise. But there is no occasion for apprehending any difficulty on this ground. For as long as man is finite, he will have sufficient occasion for exercising his Reason. And as I have said above, Intuition and Reason are each dependent on and necessary to the other, in their progressive development. And in this relation they must forever stand to each other. For man can never progress to infinity, or if he should, as some suppose he may, he would cease to exist as man; he would lose his identity; and in fact he would be as though he never had been; if it be true that God is absolutely infinite. We may very reasonably suppose that when the faculty of Intuition becomes fully developed in mankind human progress will be rapidly onward. And I think there cannot be much Spiritual, nor moral progression in the world until the faculty of Intuition is more fully and more generally de-

veloped in mankind. But I think the time is fast advancing when it will not only be far more fully and generally developed, but its superiority over Reason, be also far more generally acknowledged. But I have an impression that that time will be preceded by "a reign of terror" during which Reason will be Deified, and Nature worshiped above all that is called God.

Intuition is the great central or internal power of mental perception; to which the internal, or spiritual senses, ("the real senses of the real man") bear the same relation, as do the external senses to the external perception. And these internal senses (which now act through the senses of the animal or outer body, which dies and "returns to the earth as it was,") constitute the essential and real basis of all the perceptive powers. They compose the sensitive nature of the soul. With these senses, the essential and real form, of the real man, is inseparably connected. They constitute the real, essential elements of the spirit; and hence, the basis of its identity and consequent organization, without which man would not be a man. As also, without these interior senses, man would not be man. And they must, therefore, be immortal. For as the spiritual affections and faculties are essential to his being, so are also the interior or spiritual senses. Such is man here, and such therefore must he be hereafter. For, as are his relations, and constituent essential elements in this world, such must they be in the future world. "Is his inner being composed of spiritual affections, other than those which relate purely to self, then other beings, like himself, in nature, must live with him, and be related to him, as the objects of these affections; and central to these must be God, as the object of supreme love. Has man a constitutional life—a life of the senses, which are a part of himself, and from their very nature, related to the universe outward of themselves, then such a universe must ever exist, as the spirit's objective world." And each of these senses must sustain and retain its true and proper relation to its own appropriate objects and classes of objects.

So then we have no cause for any fear, or apprehensions that the faculty of Reason, or of Intuition, or of any other essential constituent or real faculty which man possesses here in the present world will cease to exist, or become inactive, or useless in the future world.

"I hail with joy divine," says the brother of whom I have spoken "the coming of the glorious Age of Reason." Would that his joy might be made full, in the realization of all the glorious results, of which he appears so expectant, from the coming of the glorious—Age of Reason! And would that I could believe those expectations to be well founded. But on the contrary, my soul is stricken with somewhat dismal forebodings of the fast approaching, wide extending "reign of terror" wherein, (as in the instance of the French Revolution,) Reason shall be deified, and its "divinity" acknowledged as "the loftiest and most unquenchable light of the world," and as its most infallible guide, and as "the only leader to the immortal summits of manhood."

Reason is truly a very lofty, a very estimable, a very ennobling faculty. But to exalt it above its own true and proper position, is not only vain, and unwise, but very ruinous to human happiness.

A. Woods.

