

# **SPIRIT OBSESSION.**

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**A FALSE DOCTRINE**

**AND A MENACE TO**

**MODERN SPIRITUALISM**

**STANFORD LIBRARY**

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**REV. E. W. SPRAGUE.**

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## PREFACE.

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That the reader may have a better acquaintance with the author, and may know of his wide experience in occult and spiritual matters, he will say that he was born a spirit-medium and went through a prolonged development of his psychic powers; that a wise band of spirits have been his teachers and inspirers, and for more than thirty-three years he has been in constant service in the field of Modern Spiritualism, traveling well over the United States, preaching, teaching and demonstrating through his mediumship the blessed truths of Modern Spiritualism.

His good wife, Mrs. C. A. Sprague, is also an excellent medium, developing her powers at the same time he developed his, and has been his constant companion and co-worker in the field all of these years. Besides this, he has been intimately acquainted with many mediums for the various phases of spirit phenomena and has studied it faithfully in nearly all lines.

His own personal experiences in being controlled by spirits, entranced at times, and also through his other mental phases of mediumship, gives him a knowledge of facts concerning the subjects discussed in this work that is of greater value than all the theories of theorists who have never been blessed with such personal experiences.

It is not the author's purpose to antagonize those who honestly believe in spirit obsession. He only wishes to right what to him is a grievous wrong; not only a wrong that is working evil with poor,

innocent people who become victims of this terrible delusion, but a wrong that unjustly accuses the noble spirit-friends of doing the most terrible things, or allowing them to be done, to poor, innocent and helpless mortals by "evil spirits."

The author has been greatly blessed by a noble band of spirit-teachers, some of whom, after living a long life on earth, have spent centuries in the spirit world. Their teachings regarding the subject of spirit-obsession is voiced in this work.

In the long years of the author's experience he has heard the messages given by thousands of spirits to people in the mortal form and he never heard a single one advise a mortal to commit a crime or do wrong in any way. The advice of the spirits is always uplifting, spiritual and helpful. They always teach that we must be good and do good if we would be happy.

It is the great desire of the author that this work may prove valuable to those few unfortunates who are laboring under the delusion that they are victims of obsessing spirits, and that their minds may be freed from such hallucination; also to the many others who, through fear of evil spirits and other troubles taught by obsessionists, have deserted the ranks and ceased their labors in the interest of Spiritualism—and they number many! And especially does he hope to reach a large number of those dear mediums who, through fear of "evil spirits" and "obsession," have ceased the development of their God-given spiritual faculties, that they may be encouraged to return to the work of development unhampered and unprejudiced, freely renewing their efforts for their higher spiritual unfoldment.

It is certainly true that Modern Spiritualism is suffering a blighting curse through the ignorance and misunderstanding of the truth regarding the subject of "evil spirits" and the doctrine of "obsession."

The author is not writing this book for praise or pleasure, for honor or glory, as he is not an aspirant for place or position in the literary field or elsewhere. His only object is to assist others to find the truths that have been proven to him beyond question through his own personal—and to the outside world—unusual experiences, that they may become free from the erroneous beliefs in spirit-obsession and enjoy the happiness such freedom is certain to produce.

The author believes this book will be a help to believers in obsession, in freeing themselves from the blighting influence of this great delusion. He is well aware of the fact that there are good and true Spiritualists and other people who will misunderstand his motives, who will think he is entirely mistaken in his conclusions, and he cannot hope to convince such ones at once; but he hopes to interest them and cause them to think. Therefore he asks that his readers will put all prejudice aside and look at the subject from the author's standpoint while reading the book.

Realizing that he will be misunderstood by some, and possibly condemned by others for his efforts, the author nevertheless considers it his duty to proceed with the work, and will do so, praying that his readers may be led to see the truth and profit thereby.

When the minds of all Spiritualists are freed from this terrible delusion, the cause of Spiritualism will be presented to the world in its true light and its beautiful teachings and true philosophy will then be accepted and its blessings universally enjoyed.

May this work, carrying the message of peace and enlightenment, go forth to free and to bless all who peruse its pages, and inspire many to renewed efforts in the work of freeing the minds of Spiritualists and others from this terrible misconception called "spirit-obsession," the greatest bugbear to Modern Spiritualism.

THE AUTHOR.

## CHAPTER I.

### Definitions of the Word "Obsession."

"The world hath felt a quick'ning breath,  
From heav'n's eternal shore,  
And souls triumphant over death  
Return to earth once more.  
For this we hold our jubilee,  
For this with joy we sing,  
'O grave, where is thy victory?  
O death, where is thy sting.'"

All black type used for emphasis of quotations in this work is the author's.

**"Obsess**—First, to besiege, to invest; second, to beset, as an evil spirit or influence does; hence, to influence, as by a fixed idea, to an unreasonable degree.

Second—Act of the Devil or an evil spirit in besetting a person, or impelling him to action from without; the fact of being so beset or impelled.

Third—The persistent and unescapable influence of an idea or emotion; also, the emotion or idea." —Webster.

**"Obsession**—3. In Pathol., a constant brooding upon any subject, such as the thought of death, until the mind becomes dominated by that one idea." —Century Dictionary.

**"Obsess**—To exert an influence over, haunt, harass, or beset, as by an evil spirit.

Second—To oppress or trouble, as by a fixed idea, usually with an auxiliary; as, he was obsessed with the idea that he was ill."

**"Obsession—The act of vexing or besieging, or the state of being vexed or besieged by some foreign personality, especially by an evil spirit antecedent to possession."**

**"Obsession implies the influence of an external spirit, distinguished from possession by a demon that has taken up his abode within one. With Spiritualists it means possession of one's consciousness by a foreign personality, as in a seer or trance state."**

**"Psychol. 3. An idea that persists in consciousness, in spite of effort to banish it; an idea that dominates the mind and controls it."**

—Standard Dictionary.

It will be seen that one may be "obsessed" by an "idea," according to all of the above mentioned authorities.

If to be controlled by an undeveloped spirit for a time is "obsession," then mediums for spirit control are "obsessed." If this is "obsession" the author believes in it.

But if "obsession" means the spirit taking possession of a medium and holding her for years, for the purpose of ruining her health, her morals, her mind, causing her to become a moral pervert, a lunatic, and finally landing her in the grave, there to meet with the annihilation of her soul, a la "The Great Psychological Crime" and other Theosophical works, then the author most emphatically declares that he does not believe in "obsession." Indeed, he loathes such a blasphemous doctrine.

According to Modern Spiritualism, law prevails in the spirit world. It is a natural world and gov-

erned by natural law. Good spirits have a predominating power over evil spirits, as will be shown; consequently, if such a horrible state of things did exist in the spirit world as obsessionists proclaim in their unreasonable, unphilosophical and unprovable philosophy, the innumerable hosts of good spirits would organize a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Innocent People in the Mortal Form and its officers and members would prevent such spiritual perverts from injuring an innocent mortal, even if they had to use force to do it, and then surround the mortal subject with a bodyguard, or spirit-band, to protect her, while they placed under restraint all such totally depraved minor devils of this modern witchcraft though they had to hie them away to the orthodox "realm of the damned" for safe keeping.

#### The Author's Position.

"Speak thy thought if thou believ'st it,  
Let it jostle whom it may,  
E'en although the unwise scorn it  
Or the obstinate gainsay.  
Every seed that grows tomorrow  
Lies beneath the clod today.

"If our sires—the noble-hearted  
Pioneers of things to come—  
Had, like some, been weak and timid,  
Traitors to themselves, and dumb,  
Where would be our present knowledge?  
Where the hoped millennium?"

No one realizes more fully the position the author assumes in publishing this book to the world than does he. The entire Christian world, basing its belief and teachings on the Bible, are supposed to believe its teachings on the subject of witchcraft, spirit-possession and spirit-obsession. All of these—and they constitute a mighty power—will necessarily condemn the teachings of this work.

The author fully realizes also that its teachings are totally opposed to the published works and teachings of a few of our venerable and trusted workers in the cause of Spiritualism; and he well knows that the one small voice of the author may be entirely drowned out by the thunder tones of the great institution of Christianity, and the voices of these few great and good men, who are accounted authorities in Modern Spiritualism. Nevertheless, the author feels it is his duty to speak the truth as he sees and understands it, and cannot, and will not, falter in doing that duty though he face annihilation as a teacher at the hands of the church and of these wise and good, though terribly deluded men upon the one subject of spirit-obsession.

There are earnest, sincere and true souls who believe that evil spirits are the cause of most of the troubles men must meet in this life. It is the sincere desire of the author not to injure the feelings of such persons; his earnest purpose is to help liberate them from the dire effects of such belief.

The truths of Modern Spiritualism disprove the doctrine of spirit-obsession, as are abundantly proven in the following chapters of this book.

**Belief in Obsession a Menace to Spiritualism.**

The belief in evil spirits and the doctrines of obsession is the greatest menace to the advancement of the movement of Modern Spiritualism. The crude teachings and unreasonable beliefs of many Spiritualists upon this subject has worked great harm to the cause of true Spiritualism.

Many good workers and worthy aspirants for mediumistic development have given up the finest prospects and retired in fear and sorrow, never more to assist in the advancement of the movement or attempt the development of their beautiful, spiritual faculties. They have not done this because they loved Spiritualism less, but because such teachings had placed them in mortal fear that evil spirits might swoop down upon them and ruin them forever.

Having seen the dire results of this nightmare of Theosophy, we feel to do a little to correct the colossal errors into which the belief in its teachings have led many people.

The present-day belief in spirit-obsession partakes largely of the teachings of ancient witchcraft. It is highly flavored with them. These teachings are lineal descendants from that horrible nightmare of superstitious belief, and now, as then, are given without sufficient proof to verify their impossible claims.

Many mediums are teaching their patrons this terrible doctrine. Some healers are declaring that their patients' diseases are caused by evil spirits.

The teachers of the doctrine of obsession picture the spirit-world as being literally filled with these

terribly malicious little devils called "evil spirits," and some healers assume to drive them out and cure the patient of the ills produced by them. The believers in obsession claim that these evil spirits go on for years obsessing individuals and bringing dire calamities upon them, sapping their vitality, destroying their health, and bringing upon them all kinds of disease and disaster, unfitting them for life's duties; and when we have innocently asked, if this was true, why the spirit-friends did not interfere and take the evil spirits away, we have been told that they have not the power to do it. Believers in obsession seem to think that good spirits have no such power, and yet these same believers and healers assume to drive out these evil spirits themselves and to heal the persons they claim are obsessed.

Has the healer more power than the spirit-friends? "The good spirits cannot drive out the evil spirits," "but the healer can" (?). So say these believers in obsession. At the same time the healer assumes to drive out the evil spirits by the power given him by good spirits. How inconsistent! Has man in the mortal more power to handle spirits than the spirits themselves? We certainly think not.

Among the most ardent teachers of the doctrine of "evil spirits" obsessing mankind are people who boast that "they were never mesmerized, hypnotized, psychologized, nor controlled by man or spirit."

Some of these wise, self-denominated "masters," "adepts," "mahatmas," etc., assume to know more

of matters spiritual, on account of their having had none of this personal experience; but they know all about such matters because they have met and conversed with, or perhaps taken a few lessons in ancient, oriental occultism from some poor Hindoo who is as full of ancient theories of "reincarnation," "possession" and other unproven idiosyncrasies as a young orthodox minister is of the belief in the "devil," "total depravity," a "physical resurrection," "eternal punishment," and the other beautiful embellishments adorning the old-fashioned type of orthodox Christianity. One being just about as reasonable as the other, as all such teachings contradict truth, common-sense and reason.

Some Theosophists, though they may have had no experience in being controlled or influenced by a spirit, assume to know more about the subject than any medium, though the medium may have had a life-time experience in the matter. They even assume to know more about the subject than the wisest spirits who have had the experience gained by living this life, and in some cases the experiences of centuries in the spirit-realms.

It is a fact that it was the spirits who inaugurated the movement of Modern Spiritualism, after having labored for ages in bringing mankind up to the necessary standard of mental and spiritual development to be able to comprehend and appreciate a little of the meaning of its great truths.

And now for one whose only experience has been limited to a few short years in this world of materiality to assume to know more than they of the spirit-world is, to say the least, colossal egotism.

The communicating spirits of Modern Spiritualism are not "earth-bound spirits"; neither are they "ignorant spirits," nor yet "evil spirits," as taught by the Theosophic enemies of Spiritualism.

These communicating spirits are intelligent, loving and good spirits who return to bless the world, and who are blessing it more and more as the people become developed to receive and understand their beautiful teachings and heavenly ministrations.

How silly it appears to people who are familiar with mediumship and the laws governing it, and especially to one who is a medium, to note the cry of men and women who have had little experience, proclaiming to the world "The Dangers of Psychism," "Mediumship Ruinous," etc., etc., condemning the spirits who return to mediums as being "earth-bound," "evil," "ignorant" and "seeking to ruin those to whom they come." Yes, condemning them while acknowledging their coming, and in the next breath denying their coming at all, a la W. Q. Judge, former president of the Theosophic Society of New York State, as published in his book "The Ocean of Theosophy," and by other writers of his class. Such people are the ones who assume to know more about mediumship than the mediums who are its fortunate possessors.

Mediums should have no fear of "evil spirits" or the other bugaboos invented by the enemies of Spiritualism in the hope of destroying it, but continue in their sacred mission of comforting the sorrowing, healing the sick and enlightening the world.

Mediums should continue faithfully and confidently in their aspirations for the good, never

doubting their noble spirit-helpers, their spirit-fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, wives, husbands, children and friends, whom they loved and trusted when they lived in this life, and whom they may trust now, since they have been numbered among their guardian spirits. The spirit's mission is, and ever will be, to shield them from all harm, both from the spirit side of life and this life also. It is only through mediumship that men in the mortal can learn of the life to come.

#### To the Mediums.

“When in the busy haunts of men  
    The meek immortals tread,  
A fragrance from the spirit land  
    Upon our souls they shed.  
For, not like flow’rs of earthly mold,  
    The flowers of heav’n are found,  
In angel hearts, where holy loves  
    In deathless bloom abound.”

## CHAPTER II.

### Frivolous and Mischievous Spirits.

The author knows very well that frivolous, mischievous, or undeveloped spirits may sometimes get control of a medium or influence a mediumistic person temporarily.

Everyone knows that good and wise people, and undeveloped and unwise people, live in this world and they all pass away.

The Spiritual Philosophy teaches that good and bad people enter spirit life, just as they leave this world; they are no better nor no worse on entering that life; and that the good and the not good can, under proper conditions, return and communicate with mortals.

This the author knows is true, for both have come to him and through his mediumship have communicated with people on this side of life.

### Temporary Possession, Not Prolonged Obsession.

Frivolous, selfish and even vicious spirits are sometimes brought to the circles and are assisted by the wise spirits of the medium's band to take temporary control of the medium, and such spirits are thus brought out of their darkened condition into the light. This is not obsession; it is temporary possession through the assistance of other and good spirits.

### Can Evil Spirits Obsess Mortals?

The author knows very well that undeveloped spirits, when assisted by wise and good spirits, can

return and communicate through mediums. It is also true that even wise and good spirits cannot communicate without assistance if they have not learned how to do so. They, too, must learn the laws governing spirit control and how to apply them.

Not every spirit can control any and every mediumistic person. There must be an adaptability between the spirit and the subject he would influence or control, else he cannot do it. This law holds good in cases of so-called spirit-obsession, because a spirit would have to influence or control his subject to obsess him.

Before one can be obsessed he must become passive to the influence of the obsessing spirit, and there must be a certain degree of interblending of the magnetic and spiritual forces. A person must be mediumistic to be controlled, influenced, or obsessed by any spirit, good or bad. The laws governing mediumship apply to evil spirits the same as to good spirits; consequently a person would have to be mediumistic to be obsessed.

### Fear.

Fear is a great hindrance to spirit control. Neither a good nor a bad spirit can control one who is in fear of them. A person may fear he is attacked by an evil spirit and become obsessed with that idea, and be annoyed by the imaginary spirit, having all the symptoms attributed to spirit-obsession.

The suggestion that an evil spirit cannot come near one, when firmly planted in the subject's mind,

is an absolute barrier and preventative against such so-called evil spirit as well as against the obsession by the **idea**.

No person can be influenced or obsessed by good or evil spirits against his will, providing he wills against it and holds to such determination; or if he firmly believes it impossible for an evil spirit to influence him without his consent.

If one believes that an evil or undeveloped spirit is seeking to obsess him, that very belief lends assistance to his becoming obsessed by the idea or belief that he is obsessed. One who does not believe in obsession and is fearless regarding the matter, believing it is an impossibility for a spirit to control him without his consent, is absolutely immune from such a condition.

If one understands the laws governing spirit-control, and is very mediumistic, he may use his will-power and in perfect safety defy all the so-called evil spirits of the "under world" this side or on the farther side of purgatory, to injure him, and he may remain serenely secure against any invasion from the supposed inhabitants of that mythical realm.

A person may successfully resist any influence of evil or good spirits clothed in the mortal flesh or inhabiting the spiritual body if he **wills** so to do.

Evil spirits cannot injure one in the flesh who does not in thought or deed prepare the way for them. This is shown in the fact that evil influences of mortals do not injure and ruin all good people with whom they come in contact.

### The Doctrine of Spirit-Obsession.

The teachings of the religions of the past regarding evil spirits and obsession, as well as of some of the more modern cults, has been the source of much mental and physical suffering.

The Christian Bible and orthodox Christianity has bequeathed to all of the generations of the civilized world from the time of Moses down to the present day the belief in evil spirits and in a devil with almost omnipotent powers for evil.

The belief in demons, diaka and devils, great or small, with which the world has been cursed throughout past ages, though they were but figments of the minds of primitive and ignorant people, have succeeded in accomplishing unlimited evil.

### Fraudulent Mediums a Fruitful Source.

Fraudulent mediums are perpetuating the belief in evil spirits. Their seances are breeding-holes for these mythical fiends. These rascals teach innocent people that evil spirits are obsessing them and then agree to drive them out for a stipulated price.

When these frauds are caught in their vile acts of drunkenness, etc., they always have these demons of the "under world" handy, to lay their own evil actions upon, declaring that they were "influenced," "controlled" or "obsessed" by evil spirits to do these wicked deeds.

These deceivers have no mediumship and know little or nothing of the great philosophy of Spiritualism. They pretend to be mediums and assume the white robes of mediumship in serving the devil

of their own perverted natures. They teach spirit-obsession and other doctrines of witchcraft and black art and call it Spiritualism, and their dupes, all being novices in the study of Spiritualism, accept all they teach as true; and thus is our beautiful Spiritualism misrepresented, misunderstood, and cursed.

The only remedy is the exposure of their fraudulent methods, and this is being applied by organized Spiritualism and the true workers in the field. Slowly the world is learning of the work of these worse than pirates of the high seas. The erroneous teachings of these poor wretches has proved a blighting curse upon the fair name of Spiritualism and has furnished material which has been industriously used by its opponents to injure the good cause. They have used the teachings of these poor wretches as though they were genuine facts, to bolster up their theories of spirit-obsession and to support their untrue claims that "mediumship is dangerous," and by so doing they have succeeded in driving many mediums away from the development of their God-given powers.

The truth is, that the proper development of mediumship is the true "Ark of Safety" and should be sought for because of its glorious revelations and its absolute security from all harm. Explanation of this fact will be found in another chapter of this work.

#### **Laws Governing Spirit-Control and Spirit-Influence.**

A person who is not mediumistic cannot be influenced or obsessed by a spirit.

It is a well-known fact that a hypnotist in the flesh cannot hypnotize, control or influence a subject who opposes him and wills otherwise.

It is also true that a good and wise spirit hypnotist cannot hypnotize, control or influence a person in the flesh who refuses to be influenced by such a spirit.

A magnetic and spiritual healer in the flesh cannot heal his patient against the patient's will. The healer must have the sympathy and co-operation of his patient or he is not successful.

Neither a good nor an evil spirit can control, influence or obsess anyone without his sympathy and co-operation, and certainly not if the person thinks he cannot do so and is determined he shall not.

One must be controlled or influenced by an obsessing spirit to become obsessed, and he must become receptive to the influence of any spirit before he can be influenced or controlled by him. Therefore one cannot become obsessed by a spirit unless he co-operates with him in being controlled.

Inasmuch as a good spirit cannot benefit a person physically, mentally or morally unless that person becomes receptive to and harmonious with the influence and desires of the spirit, it naturally follows that an "evil spirit" cannot injure a person who is not receptive to evil influences and who is not in harmony with the purposes and desires of the spirit.

The logical conclusion of these facts is that an "evil spirit" cannot influence, control or obsess a good person to his injury.

An evil or undeveloped spirit may be permitted to control a medium temporarily, providing the medium's spirit-guides are willing and prepare the conditions for him to do it, and the medium gives his consent, in which case the medium is not injured and the spirit receives a benefit. Many undeveloped spirits are brought to mediums that they may receive help to understand their sad condition; learn how to outgrow it and develop aspiration; and receive inspiration for a higher spiritual unfoldment.

Most of the mediums of Modern Spiritualism can testify to the truth of this statement, because they have had personal experiences that prove its truth. Instead of undeveloped spirits injuring the medium, the medium benefits and blesses the spirit in such cases.

The law governing spirit-control is that the ignorant and viciously inclined spirits are mentally and morally improved and spiritually advanced by being brought in contact with good people, especially with mediums and members of a spirit circle.

Through the kindly assistance of the medium, the members of the circle and the help of the medium's spirit-band, an undeveloped spirit may be allowed to control the medium from time to time, becoming enlightened, educated and spiritually unfolded, and finally prove to be a wise and loyal member and helper in the medium's spirit-band. This has occurred in various cases.

#### **The Law of Love.**

Disembodied spirits communicate with the people of earth through the laws of love, attraction and

adaptability. Spirits cannot control persons whom they hate, because there can be no attraction between such ones; but they are repelled by the influence of hatred. This is the unerring law, and is demonstrated and explained by Spiritual Science.

Some people in the flesh are on a much higher spiritual plane than some spirits are in the spirit-world, and are very capable of teaching them and otherwise assisting in their development and upliftment spiritually.

### Undeveloped Spirits.

"Evil spirits," "spirits of the under world," "unclean spirits" and devils, whether real or imaginary, have caused much contention and great suffering in this world.

The Christian Bible teaches that they are the spirits of men "cast into outer darkness" (Matt. viii: 12). They are termed "spirits in prison." "Jesus preached to the spirits in prison" (I Peter iii:19).

According to the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism, some spirits are so submerged in materialism that they do not understand that they have passed through the processes of death. They have not yet awakened to a realization of the fact that they have reached the spirit-world. It should be plain to everyone that such a spirit would not be able to understand and utilize the spiritual laws of control and entrance a medium without assistance from the medium's spirit-guides. This proves that such a spirit "from the under world" could not obsess a person in the mortal form. It certainly requires

intelligence on the part of the spirit hypnotist to hypnotize and influence a person on this side of life, even when that person co-operates with the spirit intelligence; therefore, if evil spirits are in darkness or a state of ignorance regarding spiritual things, as they certainly are, they cannot understand the spiritual laws governing mediumship and cannot take control of a person in this life and control him or obsess him, especially so when that person does not co-operate with such undeveloped spirit.

An ignorant and vicious spirit knows little or nothing of spiritual things, and consequently is unable to utilize the spiritual laws governing spirit-control in order to obsess a medium. This is easily realized when one considers the fact that good, intelligent and learned spirits sometimes are obliged to spend years in study and practice before they are able to control a medium.

One of the author's most competent and spiritual spirit teachers and helpers says he has been with him since his birth, studying his peculiar make-up and learning the laws governing mediumship as applicable to his particular case, and the author was thirty-four years old before this spirit had mastered the conditions and was able to control him.

This spirit was wise and good and had been in spirit life nearly two centuries, studying the very laws of spirit control that some of these so-called evil spirits from the under world are supposed to understand next day after death and to utilize in ruining innocent people of earth. Does this fact count for anything with the honest seeker for truth? We trust it may.

**Like Attracts Like.**

There is a law of attraction and repulsion. This is a natural law and is applicable to spirit return and spirit communion.

Low and degraded people on this plane of life do not seek association with persons who offer no opportunities for the gratification of their evil propensities; and if brought into the presence of their moral and spiritual superiors they may become subjects of education and reform. This law holds good between spirits and mortals.

When one gets the notion into his mind that there is an "evil spirit" trying to annoy him, he should remember that if he offers no attraction or opportunities for the gratification of evil propensities there would be no attraction for such a spirit and consequently he could not harm him.

"Birds of a feather flock together." "Evil spirits" and good people do not live in the same psychic atmosphere, and either placed in the company of the other would be out of his element and like a fish out of water could not enjoy the influence. Both would be attracted back to their own natural elements.

**Malignant Spirits May Be Assisted to Return Temporarily.**

Some churches teach that the saints communicate with them, but only devils commune with Spiritualists. Their creeds say: "We believe in the communion of saints."

The author knows full well that the law of spirit control is not confined to the saints of spirit life

alone; that sinners make use of the law just the same as others if they have learned how to utilize the spiritual and material elements and forces to produce the phenomena of the seance room. He also realizes that all spirits, whether good or evil, must have conditions to obtain results, and that good spirits and evil spirits cannot manifest to, nor through, mortals without they (the mortals) furnish the conditions necessary for such manifestation. Therefore, we of the mortal world hold the key that unlocks the door to spirit communion, and we can say, if we will, when the door may be opened and when it may not, and consequently we may say who may enter and who shall not.

The author has had experience—personal experience—in these matters and he speaks from knowledge. He has at different times been controlled by undeveloped spirits who were brought to him by his spirit band for enlightenment and help to out-grow their unfortunate condition, that they might become free from their unpleasant environment and go on in their progression.

He knows from these experiences that those who are filled with feelings of revenge at the time of their death may be permitted to return temporarily to manifest such feelings, but that this very rarely occurs, because death itself is an almost universal antidote for this unpleasant condition of the human spirit.

Temporarily, the author felt just as the spirit influencing him felt, and thus he acquired an understanding of the spirit's unfortunate condition.

It was not in the least injurious to the medium to be controlled by such spirits, but it has in every case proved to have been of great benefit to the unfortunate spirit in arousing him to a true understanding of his own condition and awakening in him a desire and a determination to work out of it.

It proved valuable to the medium also, because it gave him knowledge of the conditions of such unfortunate people of the other life.

Many years ago, while Mrs. Sprague and the author were developing their mediumship, their spirit guides sometimes brought undeveloped or so-called evil spirits to them, and after receiving their consent, they were permitted to control them.

Though these spirits manifested their lack of spiritual development, and were sometimes even viciously inclined, their coming was always to their benefit and never to the detriment of the mediums.

#### Not Spirit-Obsession.

In the more than a third of a century of constant service in the field of Modern Spiritualism, the author has found a few—comparatively very few—persons who were supposed to have been obsessed by “evil spirits.”

The stories related to him of their treatment by these “obsessing spirits” in some cases partook so much of ancient witchcraft that they were pitiable in the extreme; and the author can truly say that every case of so-called “obsession” with which he came in contact could be far better explained upon other grounds than that of spirit-obsession, and the

causes thereof were easily and much more satisfactorily traced to other sources.

These do not include the hundreds of people who have been told by "healers," "pseudo-mediums" and downright "frauds" that they were obsessed, that evil spirits were causing their sickness, their financial failures, helping their enemies to put curses upon them, etc., etc. The ones mentioned are those who believed themselves obsessed, and some of whose friends believed they were obsessed.

### **Belief in Obsession Unreasonable.**

When it is considered that there is little incentive to wrong-doing in spirit life—the desire for money or position could not be satisfied in a spirit by obsessing a human being—there could be but little other satisfaction than that of revenge in controlling an innocent mortal for years, just to injure him.

One who is revengeful is usually selfish, and would hardly tie himself up to a mortal, devoting all his time for years to devising ways and means of injury to his victim. This would make a slave of the obsessing spirit.

There is not the incentive to wrong-doing in spirit life that there is in this, since the mighty warfare for bread is outlawed in that realm. There could be no incentive other than that of gratifying the passions and appetites; and Spiritualism teaches that all men are inherently good; that through the laws of progress and evolution which prevail in the spirit world, each sinner must outgrow his sins and become his own savior by doing right and helping others.

All of this presupposes and logically shows that the good spirits will protect the innocent people of earth from any chance spirit with evil intentions or habits, taking him away to the reform schools of spirit life. If an evil spirit can control a person to his injury, a good spirit can certainly control him to his benefit and for his good.

It is a great injustice to our dear parents, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands, children and personal friends who have reached that better land, as well as to all the noble and trustworthy lovers of right, the regal-souled martyrs, philanthropists, and other good people who have lived and died, to teach that they either have no power to defend the right or they have no inclination to intercede in behalf of the innocent and unfortunate people "obsessed" by "evil spirits," and especially those whom they have selected as instruments through whom they are able to reach their own loved ones of earth and bring to them the proof of their survival of death and the assurance of their continued love.

The claims of obsessionists that the wise spirits of that better world have not the power to protect the innocent mediums whom they have selected for their own use in revealing and demonstrating the mighty truths of the future life, but that ignorant, vicious, low, vile and vulgar "evil spirits" may take possession and ruin their mediums, while they stand by helpless to prevent them from doing so, is to the writer the most unreasonable thing ever taught by a Spiritualist, or even by a Theosophist

with all of his other ineffable follies. It is not true! The writer's whole being revolts at the thought.

It is the greatest injustice to the noble souls who have opened the door of the spirit world and are teaching and demonstrating the truths of a glorious continued life for all mankind.

Belief in obsession properly belongs to the primitive days of mankind, and not to this day or age. They are the product of medievalism and the legitimate children of witchcraft.

### CHAPTER III.

#### Do Good Spirits Obsess Bad People?

“Come, let us reason together.” (Isaiah.)

If it were true that “evil spirits” obsess good people and lead them to commit evil deeds, destroy their health, ruin their minds, taking them to the insane asylums and finally to the grave, as is taught by Theosophy, why would it not be true that good spirits, by the same law, could take possession of bad people and make them be good and do good?

The law must work both ways if it works either way. If this were true what a lot of real good people there would be. Strange that we never hear of a case of a good spirit obsessing a bad man and making him good.

The truth is clear. Like attracts like, and evilly disposed people may sometimes attract spirits of

their class to aid them in their wickedness; and good people will attract good spirits to assist them in doing good. And more than this, an evil spirit would be out of his element and could not operate through the aura and vital forces that are generated by a good and pure person any more than a good person would be at home or in harmony with an evil person.

Why are not the inmates of the slums found in the homes of the pure and good? Simply because they are not attracted there.

Why are not the pure and good found in the slums? For the same reason.

Why are the ignorant not attracted to the halls of learning? Because learning has no attraction for them.

Why are the educated and cultured not found in the resorts of ignorance and the haunts of the uncultured and uncouth? Because such associations would be torture to them.

The same law applies to everything in this world as well as in the spirit world. There is no affinity between evil spirits and good people; consequently evil spirits cannot control or obsess good people without their making the conditions that help them to do so.

How may good people help "evil spirits" to take possession of them? The belief in "evil spirits" and their power to obsess people in the mortal opens the mind of the subject to the thought of obsession and the fear of being obsessed by evil spirits completes the job. The subject becomes obsessed, not by a genuine "evil spirit," but he

becomes obsessed with the **idea** that he is obsessed, which is equivalent to it and probably just as disastrous.

One may be obsessed by an “erroneous idea”; many are obsessed by an “idea”; one may make a “hobby” of an idea, be it good or bad, true or untrue, until he becomes obsessed by it to such a degree that to him it is infallible truth. This is the case with most people who are supposed to be obsessed by “evil spirits”—they are obsessed by an “idea.”

### Good and Bad People.

There are many times more good people in this world than there are bad people. All spirits of the after-life were once people of this life, consequently there are many times more good spirits than evil spirits in the spirit world. This being true, there should be many more people obsessed by good spirits than by bad ones. If spirit-obsession were true, this world would be full of people obsessed to live good and pure lives, to devote their lives to doing good to others, and this obsession by good spirits would make of this earth a real heaven, with only once in a while a person obsessed by an evil spirit. No one would be responsible for his or her good or evil acts; all would be creatures of their obsessing spirits. Human beings would be but automatons, with no responsibilities and no credits for what they might do or how they might live.

Though credulity may laugh and ignorance may scoff, the author feels free to say that he does not believe in obsession, if the term signifies a long term

of possession, though he knows the truth of spirit control.

He knows that a spirit may control a person in the form who is of like temperament, disposition, desires etc., temporarily; and that this faculty of spirit and mortal is the most health-giving, soul-satisfying, spiritually uplifting practice; and that spirit mediumship is the most important faculty inherited by the children of men.

#### **Obsession Contrary to the Spiritual Philosophy.**

In accepting the belief in spirit-obsession we are pronouncing the good people of the spirit world incompetent, impotent or powerless to overcome the evil of that sphere, which is a direct contradiction to the spiritual philosophy these good spirits have brought to the world.

The great power of the spirit world to overcome evil with good is a fundamental principle of the spiritual philosophy, and under its teachings the ancient doctrine of spirit-obsession can find no foundation upon which to rest.

If evolution is the law, and progress in spiritual things is a fact in the spirit world, then all spirits who have entered the spirit world since man first lived upon the earth have been unfolding spiritually, and there can be but a comparatively few among the unnumbered souls in that life still in the sphere of "earth-bound" spirits, from whence, obsessionists tell us, all "evil spirits" come to do their "awful" (?) "work."

### No Incentive or Remuneration for Obsessing Spirits.

There are few people in this world that would obsess an enemy for years, devoting their time to this unpleasant task, with no remuneration therefor, and there must be less of that evil class in the spirit world because they are constantly outgrowing their evil tendencies; therefore the proportion of good people must almost infinitely outnumber the evil spirits of that world.

The spirit world, all spirits declare, is a natural world and governed by law; that they have government, and everything is carried on in orderly fashion; that they have educational institutions in which to educate and assist spirits in their spiritual development, etc., etc. In the face of these great facts, who can believe that if some poor undeveloped spirit should become calcitrant, disobeying the laws of the spirit world, the powers of that realm could not restrain him from the nefarious work of obsessing an innocent person and ruining him? All the great souls and spirits of all time, with all of their understanding of the laws with which they have been dealing for centuries, must stand idly by, perfectly helpless to cope with this one poor ignorant, undeveloped, earth-bound spirit while he completes the ruin of this unfortunate soul, his mortal victim.

God forbid that men and women of intelligence and of spiritual attainment should be led by such an unnatural belief, such an impossible thing, such a colossal illusion.

### Hypnotism Employed by Spirits.

A person must be a hypnotic subject or medium, else he cannot become obsessed.

No spirit can obsess a subject by any other process than by the use of hypnotism, mesmerism or psychology. He may influence, control or possess a subject by the use of this power, providing the subject or medium consents and assists in the operation.

The belief that a medium is a helpless nonentity in the hands of a spirit hypnotist is a colossal error. It is wrong to teach it to mediums, as it produces a bad suggestion, leading to misunderstanding of facts and sometimes causing the medium to doubt and even fear his guides, and thus opening the way to the delusion that the medium is obsessed.

No hypnotist can control an intelligent subject against his will or wishes. The subject must co-operate with the operator, submitting himself to the will of the hypnotist, or the effort fails.

This is fully demonstrated and cannot be successfully contradicted or disproved.

The following statements of Dr. La Motte Sage contain valuable facts for the consideration of those who believe in spirit-obsession. He says:

1. "No one can be hypnotized against his will."
2. "No one can be hypnotized unless he complies with certain conditions and does his part to bring about the state."

3. "Anyone who is hypnotized may have done more himself to induce the state than the operator has done."

4. "The hypnotist possesses no special power, nor can he gain permanent control over anyone or absolute control even temporarily without the subject's consent."

5. "To be hypnotized in no respect shows a weakness, nor is the condition in any sense a pathological one."

6. "Hypnotism of itself is absolutely free from harm."

Let the reader carefully peruse the above six statements of these unanswerable facts, which show that more depends upon the subject than the operator; and as no spirit can hypnotize a person in the mortal form without his consent and assistance, neither can he influence or control him without his hearty co-operation. It follows, that as a spirit must influence a person or control him in order to obsess him, that no one is obsessed by evil spirits without his consent and assistance.

### **Can One Not a Hypnotist Control a Medium?**

It is true that a hypnotist in this life may hypnotize a subject and cause him to do his bidding, making him sing, preach, pray, etc., and to believe even absurd things, at the will of the operator, providing the subject submits and co-operates with the hypnotist.

When controlling his subject the operator may turn the subject over to another person who does

not understand hypnotism and he may control the subject, causing him to obey his will, providing the operator remains present and wills him to do so. Such person must work through the operator's influence.

The same law applies in spirit influence or control. The spirit hypnotist holds the forces while the spirit who is not a hypnotist controls the medium. In this manner so-called evil spirits who are ignorant of the laws of spirit control are assisted to communicate through a medium.

This experience is a great help to undeveloped spirits, as it brings enlightenment to their darkened minds and awakens desires for their own spiritual unfoldment.

#### Ancient and Modern Methods of Exorcism.

To one not obsessed by the belief in obsession, the question naturally arises in his mind, Why do certain "healers" have the power to drive out evil spirits and cure obsession since they usually show no extraordinary ability in other directions?

If the unnumbered hosts of good people of the spirit world who have been progressing in knowledge and wisdom for ages do not and cannot prevent a spirit from obsessing an innocent person, as is claimed by obsessionists, how is it that so many so-called spirit-healers of not more than ordinary intelligence, who teach obsession and claim to cure it, possess so much greater power than the hosts of wise spirits who inhabit the spirit world where these evil spirits are? If a poor human being in the flesh

could drive out an "evil spirit" with or without the assistance of spirits, why could not a wise and powerful good spirit of the spirit world at least prevent his obsessing a person? And further, why could not the innumerable hosts of good spirits living in the same spirit world where the obsessing spirit lives, restrain the one evil spirit from obsessing a poor helpless creature in this mortal world? The whole doctrine of obsession is weak at every point, and the best thing about it is, it cannot be true if the philosophy of Spiritualism is true.

The methods of exorcism, adjuration, or conjuration of evil spirits has not changed much in the past centuries. Modern witchcraft employs about the same methods in driving out evil spirits that were employed in ancient witchcraft.

The burning of incense; placing the Bible upon the table; and the minister and the family forming around the table on bended knees, praying God, saints and good angels to take them away; scattering salt about the room and using it in other ways; wearing charms, crucifixes, "praying the rosary," etc.—all these and many other still more simple and silly methods are used and are thought to be safeguards against the influence of these "demons of the air," providing they have not yet gained possession; or if they are supposed to be obsessing some poor unfortunate these methods are by some believed to drive them away.

There is, even in this day and age, an occasional villain who poses as a Theosophic "adept," a "mahatma," and sometimes as a "spirit medium," going from city to city, claiming to possess all the powers

belonging to spirit mediumship and assumed to belong to Theosophic "adepts" and "mahatmas," and advertising to "unite estranged lovers," "tell if husband or wife is true to their marriage vows," "find lost or stolen property," "locate oil wells, gold mines," etc., etc.,—"terms, fifty cents and up." It is always "up" if their visitors become their patrons.

They sometimes advertise to develop any phase of mediumship desired by anyone, for a price. These unmitigated deceivers furnish their dupes with obsessing spirits and then apply some of the many foolish methods of exorcism to relieve the patient of the supposed evil spirits which they have suggested him into believing are obsessing him. They sometimes sell their dupes charms, amulets, etc., to be worn upon the person as a supposed prevention of injury by such spirits.

They tell their victims that some evil-disposed persons in the flesh have "put a 'curse' or 'spell' upon them" and are "bewitching them," which is causing their financial losses, sickness and all other "bad luck," and they succeed too often in making them believe it, and also in believing that the use of these charms will make them immune from all such influences. In this way they succeed in getting much money from some of their ignorant victims, then disappear between two days, leaving them "to mourn their loss." Some of these unfortunate dupes innocently, though unjustly, attribute their losses to Spiritualism. This is very unjust, because Spiritualism had nothing to do with the matter. The perpetrator of the crime is not a Spiritualist and his acts are not upheld or sanctioned by Spirit-

ualists. They are no more to blame for them than are Christians to blame for the wrongdoing of one of their ministers, or a business man is to blame for a defaulting secretary, or any genuine institution is to blame for impostors who are not in their employ.

Why should the acts of these impostors be laid to Spiritualism? This is a great injustice. These vampires who prey upon the innocent and unsophisticated public are neither Spiritualists nor Theosophists, neither are they mediums. They are simply criminals of a very low type, preying upon an innocent and sincere class of people in the name of the beautiful religion of Spiritualism, which fact brands them as being of the lowest criminal instincts.

Spiritualists of the organized movement in the United States have succeeded in ridding the country of a great many of these deceivers and have made the road they travel a very unpleasant one.

If the officials of every city would co-operate with the Spiritualists, these rascals would cease their nefarious work and one of the sources of the perpetuation of the terrible doctrines of obsession would be closed forever.

The Christian Bible teaches the doctrine of "evil spirits from God" troubling people and tells how good music was successfully used in freeing King Saul from such a spirit. David did it by playing a harp. (See I. Samuel xvi:14-23.)

Acts xix:11-12: St. Paul drove out evil spirits by using magnetized cloth in the shape of aprons and handkerchiefs.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Some Cases of So-Called Obsession.**

A Mr. and Mrs. —— of a certain city (name and address omitted in deference to these highly respected people) are said to be subjects of obsession.

Mrs. —— has been prostrated with a disease that physicians pronounce "multiple neuritis, a disease of the nervous system affecting the mind at times." She usually is helpless to rise from her bed, though at times she seems to be given strength and gets up and walks around. This she has done when no one is in attendance upon her.

A healing medium was taken to her by a friend of the lady and the patient's husband did not give her a very cordial welcome, but finally consented to let the medium try her powers to heal his wife.

This Spiritualist healer, as well as several others who had seen the lady, declared that the patient was obsessed. Her husband at times shows symptoms of the disease and obsessionists claim that evil spirits are obsessing him also. Both of these unfortunates are opposed to Spiritualism, being ignorant of the subject, and they know nothing of obsession.

The medium referred to is treating the lady, at the time of this writing, for obsession. The reader will please note that the lady's disease was "multiple neuritis, a disease of the nervous system affecting the mind at times." Is it not folly to call it spirit-obsession?

### Another Case of So-Called Obsession.

The author was personally acquainted with a young man who was an excellent medium (though not for public work). His wife opposed his practicing his mediumship among his friends, making it very unpleasant for him. He gave it up and became greatly interested in his farming. He became so engrossed in this that he worked early and late in good and bad weather, Sundays and weekdays. This overwork caused him to become so nervous that he could not sleep at night and finally his mind gave way and he became insane.

At times he was ugly, would curse and use terrible language, and while in the very midst of one of these mental spasms there would come a change over his countenance, the ugly expression would disappear, a placid smile would take its place, and he would be controlled by his spirit guides as in former times. They would preach, pray, and improvize poetry beautiful to listen to.

Sometimes this influence would last fifteen or twenty minutes, then the spirit would lose control and the poor man would lapse into the horrible condition mentioned before, cursing, writhing, twisting and looking terribly ugly.

Some people who believed in obsession declared that he was obsessed by evil spirits, but the spirit of E. V. Wilson, speaking through the mediumship of the author, said that the man was not obsessed, nor was he troubled with an evil spirit. He said the young man's overwork and loss of sleep had affected his nervous system; that his insanity was caused by this weakened condition of the nerves; that his own

spirit could not properly manifest itself because of this organic defect, and in attempting to manifest the results were like a musician's efforts to produce harmonious and melodious music on a piano that was seriously out of tune. The result must of necessity be only discord.

He also said that when the patient's spirit guides could get control and stimulate the injured nerves to a normal state, they could manifest intelligently; but when they could hold him no longer, he fell right back into the spasms of mind caused by his own inability to stimulate and harmonize the nervous system.

The spirit also said that this medium's spirit band would, through this process of spirit control, heal the medium and restore his health of body and mind to the normal again; that it would probably take a year to do it, but they would certainly heal him. This patient was taken to the state hospital, where he remained nearly a year, when he was discharged and sent home as cured.

Instead of this being a case of obsession by evil spirits, it was a case of insanity caused by injury to the physical organism, and instead of evil spirits trying to ruin this good man it was good spirits who cured him.

Many persons who are thought to be obsessed are simply insane, and many such may be cured by spirit power properly applied.

What a pity that the spirit world should be pictured to men as a bedlam where evil spirits rule and pandemonium reigns. It cannot be true. It is not true. It is as false as the doctrine of eternal

punishment. The spirit world is a beautiful world, where good predominates, where love rules and justice reigns.

Good spirits taking control of insane persons for the purpose of healing them, as related in the case mentioned above, are often misunderstood and accused of causing the insanity of or obsessing the patient.

#### **Obsessed by an Idea.**

This is a case of so-called obsession with which the author came in contact in his travels.

A medium became obsessed by an idea in the following manner:

She said she had a spirit guide who controlled her hand to write; that he was a wise spirit and wrote beautiful things at times; that he told of things she knew nothing about and they proved to be true. Occasionally he wrote for others, giving tests and proofs of his knowledge and ability. At times he had written excellent poetry, and sometimes when in the midst of a fine writing or a poem he would break right off from it and commence to write nonsense, untruths, and even vulgarity, using vile language.

The lady said: "Oh, Mr. Sprague, I am so distressed in the matter! I am a medium and good spirits can use me; why should I be obsessed with this evil spirit? Can you help me?"

It was the author's privilege and pleasure to tell the little lady that she was not obsessed by an evil spirit, but that she was obsessed by an erroneous

idea. She looked astonished and asked for an explanation. The explanation follows:

### The Explanation.

The lady had told the truth in the matter. Her spirit guide had written many beautiful messages through her hand, and then all at once the communication changed to writing nonsense, ribaldry and falsehood.

Every hypnotist knows that he may be able to control his subject successfully for a time and suddenly he may lose control of him and can go no further. There may not appear to be any reason for the change. The hypnotist cannot account for it, but such is sometimes the case.

This lady was a hypnotic subject, placed under the control of a spirit-hypnotist who was successful in his writing through her hand until suddenly he lost control over her, and when this occurred he could write no more. The lady, in the first place, had to place herself in a passive condition to be hypnotized by the spirit, letting go of her own will and yielding temporarily to the will of her spirit control.

The spirit influence was excellent until the spirit suddenly lost control, and then the medium's passive mind "went a-wandering" without the guidance of the hypnotist or of the lady herself, just as your mind, dear reader, goes wandering when you lie down to sleep at night, and her hand kept on writing the thoughts of her wandering mind, while the medium herself had not learned that her hypnotist had lost control and that her imagination

was the only controlling influence that was inspiring the writing that so terribly shocked and grieved the lady when she awakened from the influence.

Imagination figures largely as an orthodox devil in some religions, and as a controlling "evil spirit" in others. Many false communications, so-called, and vulgar writings that are now laid to "Jesuitical spirits," "evil spirits," "diakka," etc., are caused by "erroneous ideas" with which good people become obsessed.

This dear woman was obsessed by an **erroneous idea**. She thought a vile and evil spirit was obsessing her and she suffered the same as though it were real and true, notwithstanding that when she was controlled it was by a wise and good spirit, but when she was not controlled by anyone, not even by herself, imagination held full sway and ribaldry was the result.

It mattered not how much this good spirit protested his innocence in the matter when he did control her. It made no difference with her when he told her that it was her imagination that ran away with her when he lost control. She would not believe him; she could not realize that a change had been made in the control when the spirit lost it, so of course she could not be blamed for still thinking that the spirit wrote the things that so shocked her and consequently was an evil spirit.

My explanation seemed to do her some good, for she said the spirit had told her the same thing and she wondered if it could be true after all. She was so rejoiced over the explanation that she said she

would follow my advice and try to put the thought out of her mind and go on with the development of her mediumship.

The author does not know the result of her sittings after this, for he has never seen her since.

### Have Evil Spirits More Power Than Good Spirits?

The forces governing mediumship are subtle and refined. They consist of magnetic, electric, mental and spiritual forces which are generated by both spirits and mortals, and they must be manipulated with intelligence and care. Ignorant spirits cannot control mediums without the assistance of intelligent spirits unless there is a perfectly natural adaptability between the medium and the spirit.

Mediums sit for years to gain a development so that a spirit is able to control them, and even after they have gained the development their own spirit guides are often unable to control them, though they sit for them, becoming passive and praying for them to come and control them.

This being an established fact, is it possible for an evil, undeveloped or ignorant spirit to have more power than a good spirit and able to take the medium against her will, forcing control and obsessing her, driving her to commit evil deeds, immoral acts, etc., while the spirit absorbs her vitality, destroying her health, injuring her mind, and in every way bringing ruin and destruction upon her, as claimed by obsessionists?

Is it reasonable to believe that evil spirits have so much more power over a good and true medium, or other good person, than good spirits have? We

answer, no, positively no! and we speak from absolute knowledge which we have acquired through long years of experience as a spirit medium.

Reader, do you know that two times two are four? How do you know it? You have proved it many times. The author knows the truth of the above statements from the same class of proofs.

### The Christian Devil and "Evil Spirits."

According to Christianity the devil and "evil spirits" have been the cause of all evil. The facts are that nearly every reform movement of the past has been laid to the devil, while wise men, inspired by spirits of the departed, have been the authors and promulgators of many great reforms.

It is ignorance that attributes all the new ideas and modern discoveries to the devil or to evil spirits, as has been the custom. It is said that when a Scotchman invented the fanning mill, to be used in separating the wheat from the chaff, the Presbyterian ministers of Scotland cried out against the invention, declaring that it was the "devil's wind," that it was contrary to God's word, that the Bible gave the proper directions as to how the wheat should be separated from the chaff, that the wheat and chaff should be scattered with a shovel or a bowl, and the wind—God's wind—would blow the chaff away in a natural way and the wheat would fall on the threshing floor.

The fanning mill was condemned as a device of the devil and the wheat cleaned by it was condemned also and must not be used. But it was not long until the flour made from this condemned

wheat was used to make the bread the Presbyterians used in the sacrament. The world moves, and nothing more has been heard of the "devil's" wind for a century.

When Guttenberg invented printing, Christians condemned it; it was called "a device of the devil." A little later it was used to print the Holy Bible. Thus it is that the devil of the church has been accused of doing nearly all the evil things, so-called, that have later proven to be great blessings.

Many such facts could be mentioned, all of which shows the superstition of men of the earlier years, just as the belief in spirit-obsession of today shows that men have inherited somewhat of the superstitious beliefs of their honest but deluded ancestors.

#### **Human Frailties Attributed to Undeveloped Spirits.**

It is sad to contemplate the weaknesses and frailties of humanity, and still more sad to see a human being in ruins.

To one who knows the blessing of spirit communion and understands the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism it is grievous to hear a person so low in character that he, though possessing no development of mediumship and using fraud to deceive the innocent people who attend his seances, when caught in some act of wrong-doing such as drunkenness, immorality, or using fraud in his seances, attributes his dishonest and immoral acts to innocent so-called "evil spirits."

There are many such people traveling about the country who never felt the presence of a spirit in

their lives and are purely frauds and deceivers. These villains in their dastardly work cast a reflection upon mediumship and the good cause of Spiritualism and cause them to be dragged down to the level of these low and vile parasites, in the minds of those who are not familiar with the true philosophy of Spiritualism.

To say the least, it is insulting to attribute men's foibles, follies and weaknesses to the noble spirit friends. Shame on the one who will commit a wrong or misdeed and then attribute his vile act to an "obsessing spirit."

The spirit friends of every age and of every nation have healed the sick, overcome disease, insanity, bad habits, etc., and the history of Modern Spiritualism proves that tens of thousands have been healed of their diseases, mental and physical, in our day; that other thousands have been cured of the tobacco habit, liquor habit, morphine habit, etc., etc.

Modern Spiritualism furnishes the healing balm for all diseases to which human beings are subject. It unfolds men and women physically, mentally, morally, intellectually and spiritually. Spiritualism is truly elevating and ennobling; it fills men with inspiration and aspiration; it unfolds their spiritual powers and faculties and works altogether for good.

If some Spiritualist or medium does wrong it is the custom of its opponents to say, "There is the effects of Spiritualism. Not so! It was the lack of Spiritualism that caused the wrong-doing. If the

wrong-doer had been living Spiritualism he would not have done wrong.

When a Christian commits some misdeed the skeptic will point it out and say, "There is your Christianity." When a Spiritualist does wrong their opponents will say, "There is your Spiritualism."

Both are wrong. It was the lack of Christianity that caused the Christian to do wrong and it was the lack of Spiritualism that caused the Spiritualist to forget himself and commit the wrong act. True Spiritualism and true Christianity will save men from wrong-doing.

The true Spiritualist abhors the evil deeds of men, and a belief in the truths of Spiritualism when understood and applied in the lives of men will overcome evil, do away with wrong and injustice and develop mankind to that higher unfoldment that leads to angelhood and Godward.

Pity the poorly developed creature that will attribute the fraud produced in his seances to "evil spirits," and when he is caught and accused will whiningly declare that "an evil spirit" made him do it." One who attributes any of his other low and vile acts to "evil spirits" should be pitied. He is a great unfortunate and needs spiritual development.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, in "Sears of the Ages," page 308, says: "It is enough to make good men sad and angels weep to see the efforts in given directions to fasten all the shortcomings of media upon the spirits, thus virtually making the spirit-world a scapegoat for all the ills of this."

## CHAPTER V.

### Witchcraft and Spirit-Obsession.

Witchcraft has no legitimate place in Modern Spiritualism. The modern teachings of spirit-obsession is truly a relict of ancient witchcraft.

Before the application of scientific knowledge to natural phenomena, every hurricane or other destructive storm, every epidemic of disease, all accidents and disasters, were attributed to evil spirits, devils and witches.

People suffering from almost any ill were thought to have been obsessed by some evil spirit, or that the "spell," as it was often called, was placed upon them by some witch or wizard.

In those early days of ignorance and superstition, persons who doubted the witch-theory were called "infidels" and were persecuted as such by the church. They were sometimes put to death, as were the so-called witches and wizards, their persecutors acting under what they called the "Divine Law of God as given in His Holy Word, the Christian Bible." (Exod. xxii:18 says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.")

The doctrine of spirit-obsession belongs to that class of superstitions that teaches that certain charms, amulets, talismans, crucifixes, etc., possess the power to protect the wearers from the influence or injury by "evil spirits" and "bring good luck" to the possessors, and to attract good spirits, saints, etc., to protect and help them. These are relicts of ancient and medieval witchcraft, and have no place in Modern Spiritualism.

The Encyclopedia Britannica says:

"Witchcraft is merely the form that the belief in the arts of magic assumed under the action of certain notions introduced by Christianity."

"In France, in the year 1579, in the neighborhood of Melm, a decree was passed that all witches and consulters with witches should be punished with death; and not only those, but also fortune-tellers and conjurers." — "Psychology of Suggestion" (Sidis), page 334.

#### Witchcraft Receives Legal Recognition.

"In England and Scotland the witch-mania was somewhat later in setting in than on the continent; but when it did so, it was little if at all less virulent —the Reformation notwithstanding. The statute of Elizabeth, in 1562, first made witchcraft in itself a crime of the first magnitude, whether directed to the injury of others or not; and the act of King James VI. in the first year of his reign in England defines the crime still more minutely: 'Anyone that shall use, practice, or exercise any invocation of any evil or wicked spirit, **to or for any purpose**; or to take up any dead man, etc.; such offenders, duly and lawfully convicted and attainted, shall suffer death.' Many years had not elapsed after the passing of this statute, ere the delusion, which had heretofore committed but occasional local mischief, became an epidemic frenzy, devastating every corner of England."

"The poor creatures who usually fell victims are thus described by an able observer: 'An old woman with a wrinkled face, a furrowed brow, a hairy lip,

a gobber tooth, a squint eye, a squeaking voice, or a scolding tongue, having a ragged coat on her back, a spindle in her hand, and a dog by her side—a wretched, infirm and impotent creature, pelted and persecuted by all the neighborhood because the farmer's cart had stuck in the gateway, or some idle boy had pretended to spit needles and pins for the sake of a holiday from school or work—such were the poor unfortunates selected to undergo the last tests and tortures sanctioned by the laws, and which tests were of a nature so severe that no one would have dreamed of inflicting them on the vilest of murderers. They were administered by a class of wretches who, with one Matthew Hopkins at their head, sprang up in England in the middle of the seventeenth century and took the name of **witch finders.**"

#### **Great Theologians, Statesmen and Others Became Believers in the Delusion.**

Heads of governments, leading church men, and the wisest and best people in all walks of life believed in witchcraft. We may be thankful that only a few of the intelligent people of today are believers and advocates of these abominable doctrines.

That great religious reformer of his day, the Rev. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, was a believer in spirit communion, as is shown in his works, Vol. IV., pages 279 to 286. He was also a believer in witchcraft, and says that "the giving up witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible." (This

and much more of Wesley's belief is not published in late editions of his works, but appears in those editions published prior to the year 1808.)\*

### So-Called Witches Legally Tortured and Executed.

The Encyclopedia Britannica further says:

"The era of the Long Parliament was that, perhaps, which witnessed the greatest number of executions for witchcraft. Three thousand persons are said to have perished during the continuance of the sitting of that body, by legal executions, independently of summary deaths at the hands of the mob."

Witch-executions, however, were continued with nearly equal frequency long afterwards. One noted case occurred in 1664, when the enlightened and just Sir Matthew Hale tried and condemned two women, Amy Dunny and Rose Callender, at Bury St. Edmunds, for bewitching children. It is stated that the learned Sir Thomas Browne, who was accidentally present, had great weight against the prisoners. He declared his belief that the children were truly bewitched, and supported the possibility of such possessions by long and learned arguments, theological and metaphysical. Yet Sir Matthew Hale was one of the wisest and best men of his time, and Sir Thomas Browne had written an able work in exposition of the "Popular Fallacies."

About the year 1590 King James VI. of England published a famous work on "Demonology." It

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\*See the author's pamphlet "Modern Spiritualism; Testimony of Leading Scientists and Prominent Theologians Who Are Believers in Its Truth."

might be interesting to compare this work of the king with works on the same subject published today.

Thousands of the greatest and wisest men of those days were as certain of the truth of spirit-possession, spirit-obsession and witchcraft as are a few of the obsessionists of this day. The world has outgrown much of this superstition, through the wonderful evolution and progress made in science, religion and all other departments of civilization.

The Encyclopedia further says:

"The cessation of judicial proceedings, however, did not all at once put an end to popular outrages on supposed witches. In 1751 an aged female pauper and her husband were killed by a mob near Tring, in Staffordshire; and for the murder, one of the perpetrators was tried and executed."

"Not longer ago than 1863 a reputed wizard was drowned in a pond at the village of Hedingham in Essex." \* \* \*

"Besides such violent outbreaks, striking revelations are frequently made in the course of judicial proceedings, how deep-seated and general the dread of witches continues to be throughout the more ignorant strata of European society, especially in rural places; and concurrent with this, the faith in the skill of certain 'wise men' and 'wise women' (white witches) to counteract their malicious practices. As recently as March, 1867, a man calling himself Dr. Harris (S. Wales) was committed for trial at the next Radnorshire Assizes for duping various persons by persuading them that their ailments were caused by their being 'witched,' and

pretending to cure them by giving them written charms to wear. From one man he had extorted £4, from another £6, and so on."

"The belief in magic or sorcery, in fact, continues to be the most energetic belief of the ignorant and degraded all over the world, no matter what their nominal religion is."

"Dr. Sprenger, in his *Life of Mahomed*, computes the entire number of persons who have been burned as witches during the Christian epoch at nine millions."

There is much more on this subject that is of great interest, recorded in the encyclopedias, and one should read the history of witchcraft as published by many authors to get a full understanding of the true relation of the modern doctrine of spirit-obsession to that of witchcraft. They are virtually one and the same; both teach that many are "obsessed" or "possessed of evil spirits"; that they cause insanity, sickness, paralysis, epilepsy, jealousy, hatred, revenge, murder and suicide; that "demoniac spirits torture, cause vile habits, and incite many vicious crimes"; "that millions of undeveloped, uneducated, ignorant, bigoted, immoral, debased and criminal men and women hover around the earth like a dense cloud, full of remorse, anguish, repentance, others with revenge, hate, murder; that evil spirits can, unconsciously to the subject, cause sickness, disaster, trouble, losses, premature death, etc." Therefore, spirit-obsession is a part of, and belongs to, the doctrines of witchcraft.

**Salem Witchcraft.**

One author says:

**"WHAT SALEM WITCHES DID."**

"The 'Salem witchcraft' delusion fell upon Salem about 1688.

"Almost every ill-fortune, especially sickness and theft, was ascribed to witches.

"The 'victims' of the supposed witch carried on curious antics to prove that they were bewitched. They would alternately become blind, and deaf and dumb. They would bark like dogs, or purr like cats to show that they were under evil power.

"The statement was often made in court by the person charging witchcraft that he saw the devil standing by the supposed witch whispering in his ear. Persons suffering from convulsions or hysteria invariably ascribed their illness to witchcraft.

"Nineteen persons were hanged, one pressed to death, and 200 arrested on charges of witchcraft before the craze abated."

Quotation from a book entitled "Witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692," by Winifred S. Nevins, page 39:

"The strange performances were renewed. The old man's cap was pulled off his head and the cat throwed at him. They put the cat out and shut the doors and windows, and presently she walked in. After they went to bed the cat was throwed at them five times, once wrapped in a red waistcoat. Such is the story told under oath by an old man, whom Rev. Mr. Hale said was esteemed a sincere and understanding Christian by those who knew him."

"People found their cattle untailed in the morning and laid it to witches. If one died it was some witch that had put a spell upon it and killed it. Sickness was thought to be brought upon innocent persons by these supposed evil persons who it was said had sold themselves to the devil and were witches. Innocent people were accused of every crime, of causing all sorts of trouble; sickness in cattle, epidemics of disease, storms, frosts, destroying crops, causing drouths, and anything and everything unpleasant and distressing."

"The deposition of Mercy Lewis, aged about nineteen years, who testifieth and saith that on the 2nd of April, 1692, the apparition of Dorothy Good, Sarah Good's daughter, came to me and did afflict me, urging me to write in her book, and several times Dorothy Good hath afflicted me, biting, pinching and choking me, urging me to write in her book."

"Mary Walcott deposed that March 21st she saw the apparition of Dorcas Good come to her, bit her, pinched her, and afflicted her most grievously, etc."

"On such evidence as this these people were sent to prison and the gallows."

"Witches had great power. A Mrs. Wilmot Reid caused children to sicken and die. She would cause milk to curdle as soon as it left the cow. Newly churned butter turned to wool when it came in contact with Mamy Reid."

Page 262: "Diana Becking deposed that her daughter had fits, and she was taken with pains in her stomach, like pricking of pins; and afterwards fell into swooning fits, taking little or no food, and

daily vomiting crooked pins, and upon Sunday last raised seven pins. These pins and also a lath nail were produced in court."

This history is replete with such statements as the foregoing, many of which were testified to under oath.

The Encyclopedia Britannica records many of the terrible deeds caused by the belief in this horrible superstition, of which the following is a sample:

"In 1716 a Mrs. Hicks and her daughter, aged nine years, were hanged at Huntington, England, for selling their souls to the devil, and raising a storm by pulling off their stockings and making a lather of soap! With this crowning atrocity, the catalogue of murder in England closes."\*

"The belief in magic, or sorcery, in fact, continues to be the most energetic belief of the ignorant and degraded all over the world, no matter what their nominal religion is. To the mass of the adherents of Buddhism in Central Asia, the Lama or priest is merely a wizard who knows how to protect them from the malignity of evil spirits; and, according to Livingstone and other travelers, trials and executions for witchcraft are at this day common throughout Africa, as they were in Europe in the seventeenth century and under forms ludicrously similar."

The few foregoing quotations, among the many that could be quoted, are sufficient to show something of what constituted ancient witchcraft and just a word regarding its terrible results.\*

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\*For more, much more, upon the subject, go to the Encyclopedias, also read the many works on witchcraft mentioned in them.

**Dr. J. M. Peebles, a Full Believer in Obsession.**

In the December (1913) number of "Reason," a magazine published in Los Angeles, California, by B. F. Austin, under the following heading, "The Truth About Obsessions," Dr. J. M. Peebles says: "It is a fact that thousands of persons are obsessed and don't know it. That seven-tenths of the so-called insane are merely obsessed! That low and ignorant spirits incite jealousy, hatred and revenge. That depraved spirits cause sickness, paralysis, epilepsy, insanity, suicide and death! That demoniac spirits torture, cause vile habits, and incite many vicious crimes! That millions of undeveloped, uneducated, ignorant, bigoted, immoral, debased and criminal men and women hover around the earth like a dense cloud, full of remorse, anguish, repentance; others with revenge, hate, murder!" Is this far removed from witchcraft?

Thanks be to the angels of heaven, the author of this book does not believe in such terrible teachings as these. If he believed in them he would never enter a Spiritualist seance or a Spiritualist meeting again. He would never, never advise another person to investigate Spiritualism. He would give up the work which has blessed his life abundantly and never, never, never proclaim himself a Spiritualist again.

We love our dear old friend and co-worker, Dr. Peebles, who has done so much for the cause of Spiritualism. What has come over him? The terrors he depicts, the horrors he pictures, the fiends and demons he peoples the universe with and then lets loose, unrestrained, upon the poor,

helpless people of this planet, would discount the old theological hell and horned devil of orthodox Christianity. Let all rejoice that neither theory is true, that good rules and all is well.

### Guardian Spirits.

"How kindly our Father has sent them to keep  
Watch over His children below;  
They're with us in slumber, their eyes never sleep,  
They're with us wherever we go."

## CHAPTER VI.

### Ancient Priests and Prophets Prophecy Out of Own Hearts.

Jeremiah v:30: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land."

Verse 31: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof."

Jer. xiv:14: "Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them; they prophesy unto you false vision and divination and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their heart."

Jer. xxiii:16 says of the prophets: "They speak a vision of their own heart and not out of the mouth of the Lord."

Verse 25 says they "prophecy lies"; chapter xxvii, verses 10, 14, 15, 16, "They prophesy lies."

Like some modern mediums, they conjured up things in their own minds.

### **Some Partially Developed Mediums Prophesy Evil Freely.**

Some mediums foolishly predict things conjured up in their own minds, and when they fail to come true they lay the fault to deceiving or "evil spirits" controlling them. Wise mediums and wise spirits seldom foretell coming disasters, the time of a person's death, etc., while some undeveloped mediums, either out of their own minds or when self-hypnotized, freely prophesy death and other evils.

The author has known several cases where ignorant mediums have assumed to foretell the date of their client's death, and it has worked sad havoc to the unfortunate client. One man gave up his business, sold out his store, divided his property and went to bed the day he was to die.

When we left the town where this happened the man was still in bed and death was ten days overdue. The man's health was good; he was cheerful and confident that his time had come, and when we bid the poor man good-bye he said he could not last more than a day or two longer. Certain ones have been frightened nearly to death by such modern "false prophets."

It is true that the dates of the death of certain persons have been correctly foretold by wise spirits, but usually this has been given by the spirit to the one who would not suffer fear in consequence, as in the case of the young man in Fort Wayne, Indiana, mentioned in the author's book "A Future Life Demonstrated," page 233.

There are cases where no harm would occur by foretelling one's death; but where one would be terribly frightened over the matter, as most people would be, it is much better not to reveal it to them when it is made known to the medium.

Mediums are being held more and more responsible for their acts as the world becomes more familiar with the facts and philosophy of mediumship and Spiritualism.

No medium should reveal anything that will cause suffering or trouble. The mission of mediumship is to relieve distress and to teach mankind to avoid trouble and suffering. Many mediums need instructions in these matters and wise spirits are trying to educate them.

When a medium gets the notion that this world is surrounded by "millions of undeveloped, ignorant, bigoted, immoral, debased and criminal men and women who hover around the earth like a dense cloud, full of remorse, anguish, repentance, others with revenge, hate, murder," a la Dr. Peebles, it were better for that medium to close the door to all spirits and give up her mediumship entirely and never allow a spirit to come near her until she has outgrown this monstrous error; and for the simple reason that any medium who believes it is sure to

be obsessed by the idea, and that is almost equal to being obsessed by an evil spirit or by the Christian's devil. Oh, the horror of this terrible delusion!

What a contrast there is between the true teachings of Modern Spiritualism and this medieval witchcraft. One should note the following quotation from the "Spiritualist Manual," issued by the National Spiritualist Association of the United States of America, and contrast its beautiful truths with the foregoing awful teachings of spirit-obsession:

#### **"N. S. A. ON POWER OF SPIRITS."**

"How vast the power of spirits! A host of invisible intelligences, exalted and wise, surround us everywhere. They cause men to purify their hearts and rectify their lives. They are everywhere, beside us, around us, above us. 'Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.'

"All these with ceaseless praise, by day and by night, behold the works of Infinite Intelligence and adore them. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who walk in the light and to save those who walk in darkness? Yea, the angels attend the pure in heart and surround them with a halo of light and melody.

"They come to lead the weary pilgrims from the rude scenes of this life to the mansions of the blessed. They come to guide the erring one and win his heart from evil. They breathe a holy calm into the wounded heart. The glory of their presence dissipates the darkness of this world.

"Their smile dissolves the frost of years. They restore the springtime of the affections. They make life's barren waste bloom like gardens of exquisite beauty. Their presence brings an iridescent glory and they leave a luminous wake behind them.

"Who are these angel ministers? They are the wise and good of every age, of every land, who come laden with love, to bless, cheer and comfort sorrowing mankind. Under their loving tuition our spiritual senses may be unfolded so that they both appear and speak to us.

"O! Angels of Light and Wisdom, we solicit your presence with us this day, that you may illumine our minds, quicken our understanding, and strengthen our adherence to truth. May your light chase away the mists of doubt and superstition so that the light of God's Divine Truth may be ours forever."

Not devils but angels surround us like a cloud.

#### Theosophic Teachings of Spirit-Obsession.

Since the organization of the Theosophic movement, in the year 1875, beginning with Madam Blavatsky as its ruling queen, Theosophy has evidently sought to destroy Spiritualism, and with the knowledge of the fact that spirit-mediumship is the foundation of Spiritualism, it has persistently attacked it with the cry that mediumship is dangerous.

Its published works and the lectures delivered by its leaders upon the subjects of the "Dangers of Psychism," "Dangers of Mediumship," "Spirit-Obsession," etc., make lurid pictures of the awful results to befall those who dabble with Spiritualism

and seek to develop or practice mediumship, stating that such development leads to ruin, and, as some writers declare, to death and annihilation.

This is like multiplying the horrors of a belief in an orthodox devil and eternal hell-fire. It peoples the spirit world with unnumbered little devils in the form of evil spirits, "earth-bound spirits," etc., then lets them loose upon an innocent and unsuspecting world, as is portrayed by these obsessionists in their published works, the reading of which would almost cause a sane man to believe they were right, that spirit-obsession was true, that their teachings give evidence of the fact that they themselves were obsessed.

In connection with their attacks upon Spiritualism, the leaders of the Theosophic movement have laid claims to the possession of much greater powers than those of spirit-mediumship, which are, they say, perfectly safe, and by which they claim to be able to penetrate the spirit world to its greatest heights and to enter the distant "higher" spheres, where they communicate with those exalted spirits who have lived multitudes of earthly lives in their many reincarnations and have become as gods, so great is their spiritual development.

We have heard of no public demonstration of this great claim; nor have we learned of any remarkable spiritual unfoldment being given to their students, as promised by some of their teachers, a la T. K. of "The Great Psychological Crime." Meanwhile Spiritualism, through its earnest, self-sacrificing and loyal mediums, has continued its good work of healing the sick, comforting the sorrowing, edu-

cating and enlightening the world upon important subjects relating to life in the spirit world and to this life, and at the same time demonstrating a future life for mankind and otherwise blessing the race.

The teachings of Theosophy are not entirely valueless, because it has purloined some of the beautiful truths of Modern Spiritualism and embodied them in its teachings, and they stand out in wonderful contrast to their other teachings of Mahatma's in the Himalaya Mountains and their accredited God-like powers, which, by the way, were never demonstrated; their contentions that no spirit of a dead man ever came back and communicated to people in the flesh, and that none but suicides and murderers ever return from spirit-land, etc., etc.

"Spirit-obsession," according to Theosophy, is on a par with the poem "**The Goblins Will Get You if You Don't Watch Out.**" It is used by them vigorously to frighten people away from Spiritualism, and the author is sorry to be obliged to admit that they have succeeded in some measure, small though it be; but he is glad to say that many who at first were greatly taken with this new superstition are getting their eyes open and returning to their first love, even though some Theosophists are now teaching plain Spiritualism and calling it Theosophy.

### Where Are the Hosts of Obsessed People?

Dear reader, are you acquainted with one really and truly obsessed person? The author would like

to ask a fair question of those who believe in obsession and especially those who assume to heal obsessed people by exorcism.

What proportion of the people with whom you are acquainted are obsessed, and what proportion of your patients, Mr. Healer, are obsessed by evil spirits?

The author has been very much alive to this question for many years, and he knows of but very few people among all his acquaintances who are said to be obsessed, and not one of them but the cause of such affliction may be traced to other sources than obsession by evil spirits. He also wishes to ask the believers in obsession, and especially the writers and other public advocates of it, after all the great cry about it and its terrible results, where, oh where, are these terribly afflicted people? Please don't point to the insane of the asylums, because it is known that their troubles are caused by physical degeneracy, intemperance, over-indulgence, overtaxing of the nervous system, taking too much and too strong medicine, extreme excitement, fright, etc., etc. Insanity is easily accounted for from other causes. Where, then, are the hosts of obsessed people?

The author loves Spiritualism with all his heart, and believes mediumship is the sweetest gift of God to man; and when he learns of its beautiful truths and principles being perverted, its spiritual teachings being besmirched with modern witchcraft, black art, and other such abominations, and its mediums being crucified, it grieves his heart and his whole being protests against such wholesale

injustice, such colossal and unparalleled assumption, such unreasonable and unprovable folly and wickedness.

This is why he is writing this book, and he here and now enters his protest against this awful heresy. It was born of ignorance, promulgated by man in the childhood of the race, handed down from generation to generation in company with the orthodox devil, and in this day and at this time there is nothing left of it excepting a hazy remembrance in the form of written history of the terrible things enacted by believers in it; and of the church's supreme effort to rid itself of these early teachings of the Christian religion. In heaven's name, why should Spiritualists, who are in possession of the very fountain-source of new truth, genuine spiritual science and evolutionary laws of spiritual, mental, moral and physical progress, turn back to these medieval teachings and discarded Christian dogmas! Let's be free and trust our dear spirit friends, since they have given us the only knowledge we possess regarding that life toward which we are all hastening.

#### Fear of Evil Spirits and Obsession.

The fear of evil spirits has become fastened upon so many believers in Modern Spiritualism and to such an extent that it is doing great injury to the movement.

Some of the mediums are telling their clients that they are obsessed. If they have la grippe, rheumatism, a pain in any part of the body, they are told that evil spirits are producing it.

If they have troublesome dreams, become forgetful, get angry, despondent, have forebodings, etc., they are assured that they are obsessed and the horrors of obsession and the awful stories of the vile acts of obsessing spirits is poured into the receptive mind of the poor victims, not the victims of obsessing spirits, but the victims of this most terrible hallucination.

Fear always proves a curse. It has cursed the world in the past and curses it still. The fear of evil or obsessing spirits has become almost as pernicious and as much of a peace-destroying influence among certain Spiritualists and those who patronize mediums as was the Salem witchcraft of the seventeenth century. Indeed, it is a species of witchcraft; it is a relict of this should-be-forgotten delusion that cursed the Christian countries of the globe for centuries.

### The Demon Fear.

The demon "fear" is the evil spirit that possesses men and women, and it is a million times more dangerous and deadly in its effects upon the innocent and confiding than all of the evil spirits of the dead with all of their accredited devilishness.

Fear in any form is destructive. It is an enemy to everything that goes to make up the sum of man's happiness. Fear tears down tissue, stagnates the blood, breeds paralysis and other diseases, and sometimes causes instant death.

The fear of "evil spirits" injuring or obsessing one is most terrible. Many people who believe in spirit obsession attribute to the spirits almost un-

limited powers; they credit them with doing the most impossible things.

The cries of the opponents of Spiritualism and of a few Spiritualists who believe in obsession are, "Beware of evil spirits," "Evil spirits are the cause of your sickness," "They have placed a 'spell' upon you and everything must go wrong," "It is an evil influence that makes you unhappy," etc., etc.

The very suggestion that evil spirits are around a person, seeking to ruin him, has so frightened many mediums that they have given up, or refrained from attempting the development of their beautiful spiritual gifts. Such teachings have caused many Spiritualists to lose interest in the cause. They have come to imagine that invisible demons are about them who are working day and night to ruin their health, to ruin their business, their morals, to break up their families, and even to take their lives.

Deplorable as is this condition of one who thinks himself obsessed, there is a ludicrous side to the case.

The poor victim of this delusion creates a phantom, endows it with life, and furnishes it with almost infinite powers and then stands aghast, filled with fear and trembling, lest this figment of his own imagination shall harm him. It seems so utterly silly that one must smile at such great credulity if it were not so serious a matter.

On the other hand, there is indeed a pathetic side to the question. It is a terrible condition in which one is placed who believes himself to be obsessed, or that an evil spirit or invisible enemy is following

him with determined purpose of ruining him in every way possible. Such a belief may be denominated an **insane idea** and in itself is enough to cause one to actually become insane. It is terrible to feel that one is constantly followed by an invisible enemy. This haunting belief will keep one on the lookout for every unfavorable, unpleasant feeling or experience, each one of which such biased mind will magnify until it becomes to its possessor a reality, when it will actually result in physical sickness, mental abberation and other dire results that may be suggested to that mind.

There is no end to the trouble that such a belief, even though it be based upon error, may produce.

Modern Spiritualism came to the world, not to dispense more fear and consequent trouble to poor human beings who were already overburdened with them; it came to relieve the children of men from trouble, sorrow and distress, by teaching them to outgrow fear. It comes teaching men to be loving, trusting, and to enjoy this beautiful world.

Spiritualism has not entered the consciousness of men to implant in them a belief in, and fear of, unnumbered devils of the invisible world whose only enjoyment consists in torturing and ruining people who are dwelling in the mortal form.

A spirit that would seek to destroy the body, mind and soul of an innocent person, following him day and night, year in and year out, laying traps for him, leading him into all kinds of trouble, would certainly be a fiend most fiendish.

### Is There a Motive?

What would be the motive that would inspire a decarnate spirit to do such devilishness? He has nothing to gain by causing pain and witnessing another's suffering. There must be a motive for such persistent and continuous diabolical acts.

Are such acts prompted by feelings of revenge on the part of the spirit? If so would one person hold such feelings of revenge against a poor innocent, honest, truth-loving little woman, such as are among the victims of this horrible delusion? And if so would he spend years and years of his own time and effort in bringing this ruin upon his helpless victim? Would he possess her and obsess her, remaining with her day and night for ten, twenty or fifty years in an insane asylum, as he would have to do if he was the cause of her insanity? Of course if a person is obsessed, which causes her insanity, if the obsessing spirit left his subject for a moment, that moment would be a lucid one and the poor unfortunate would enjoy the moment's return of her reason.

So it will be seen that an obsessing spirit may be in possession of a long and very unpleasant job. He must, in such a case as this, make the insane asylum his home, and spend his entire time in doing his diabolical work. Oh, the unreasonableness of this horrible doctrine of obsession!

How can anyone believe that a spirit who has sufficient intelligence, as well as knowledge of spiritual things necessary to control a mediumistic person, would be so depraved as to commit such a damnable act as described in the foregoing. How

many spirits of men and women are there that are so terribly depraved that they would be willing to spend years of their time in the dismal and unhappy surroundings of an insane asylum, with no other motive than to cause suffering to poor, innocent and helpless people?

If this calamity-breeding doctrine of obsession is true, then the Christian religion teaches a truth in its horrible doctrine of "total depravity" and there are millions of spirits who are totally depraved—one for every insane person in and out of the insane asylums of the world—who are now working out their diabolical instincts on each one of these innocent and unfortunate creatures, causing untold misery, suffering and sorrow, much of which extends to other millions of the innocent friends of these inmates of the insane asylums.

Reasoning farther, we must look for these mental perverts on the earth side of life. Who are the obsessing spirits, to be, in the future? How many of them are you acquainted with, kind reader? Do you know one who is low and mean enough to become an obsessing spirit when he crosses the river of death? If so, and that one is sufficiently depraved to do it when he reaches spirit-life, has he sufficient strength of character and personal perseverance to keep up persistently such deviltry as would be required for all the years of some poor victim's life?

If one such person is known, what proportion of the human race is afflicted with such depravity and

has all the self-sacrificing qualities necessary to carry out the plan until the terrible end is reached in each case?

### Good Spirits.

There are untold numbers of good spirits for every so-called evil spirit; and if the horrible delusion denominated obsession were true, the beautiful spiritual philosophy provides a preventative of its being carried out.

The philosophy of Modern Spiritualism teaches and proves that the spirit world is a natural world governed by natural law; that Nature's laws prevail and must be obeyed; that good is eternal and evil is ephemeral or only temporary. It teaches that people enter the spirit world just as they leave this one, and they are the same on their arrival there as they were when they left here; therefore they are good and not good, wise and unwise, spiritual and unspiritual, and their passing to spirit life does not make saints nor sinners of them. They are just people the same as we are people.

The spirit world being a natural world, governed by natural law, and people being the same as here, they do have organizations, schools, colleges, governments, etc., etc., as we have here.

This being the case, they must have organizations to protect women and children and others who are too weak to protect themselves. They also place restraining power upon those who are inclined to evil, and such ones are forced to obey the laws of that happy land. Since this is true, if some degenerate spirit should set out to obsess and ruin

some sensitive and truth-loving mortal, what would the good men and women of that higher sphere be doing with such a degenerate spirit?

We answer, he would be restrained from injuring such mortal sensitive. Wise and good spirits of that life would apply the laws of the spiritual sphere and would throw around the sensitive mortal such conditions as would become impervious to the influence of an evilly disposed spirit, and they would take away and care for the undeveloped spirit.

Who could rest in heaven if the supposed hosts of depraved spirits of that other life were the authors of insanity, sickness, suffering and death on this side of life, as the believers in the doctrines of obsession are teaching the people of this world? I think there would be another "war in heaven" that would outdo the one recorded in Scripture to as great an extent as the war of the great Rebellion outdid the tribal bow-and-arrow scrimmages of the North American Indians before the foot of the white man ever trod the shores of the American continent.

Our spirit friends tell us that progression spiritually is the law in the spirit world; that the longer one dwells in the spirit spheres the more spiritual he becomes; that there are in the spirit world the spirits of all the men, women and children that have ever lived and died; that some of them have had ages of experience in that life. Now let us reason together. The foregoing statements being true, it is clear that there must be a much larger proportion of the people in the spirit world who are spiritually

developed and are wise and good than there are here in this life, and if so they would be better qualified to take care of any undeveloped or so-called evil spirit than we of this life would be able to care for such an one dwelling here.

We would not stand idly by and allow an evil person to ruin an innocent one here, especially to allow him to hound and torture her for half a lifetime.

Then, as shown above, the good people of spirit-land, being more spiritual than we, and having natural law with which to do the work, would very soon apply the law and remove the so-called evil spirit from the obsessed person and prevent him from further attacks upon his victim, just as we do in this life.

Law and order prevails in the great "summer-land," and obsession as taught by Theosophy and other similar cults, and also by some Spiritualists and mediums, is as false as the doctrine of eternal punishment as taught by the orthodox Christian Church, and in some ways it is more terrible, for the church is contented to have one big devil to tempt and mislead the unnumbered millions of churched and the unchurched, while believers in the doctrines of obsession have peopled the invisible realm with legions of little individual devils, or evil spirits, who each pay personal attention to the work of ruining entirely the victims of their selection.

Let Spiritualists who believe in obsession discard this child of undeveloped men of the childhood

of the race and enter more fully into the spiritual and progressive movement so beautifully explained by the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism.

“They come when we wander, they come when we  
pray,  
In mercy to guard us wherever we stray;  
A glorious cloud, their bright witness is given;  
Encircling us here are these angels of heaven.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### Causes of Supposed Obsession.

The reason why so much is being said in this work about spirit mediumship is because a person must be mediumistic to be influenced in the least by a spirit. If one has no mediumistic qualities a spirit could not obsess or influence him at all. Persons who possess no mediumship are absolutely immune from obsession.

A healthy body insures a sound mind. A sound mind must have a healthy body in which to manifest properly. A healthy mind may not be able to manifest properly through a defective physical organism.

When the body is diseased, circulation interrupted, nerves inflamed, congested, etc., the spirit inhabiting it cannot use it to manifest itself well. The human spirit is always hampered by physical defects. Many so-called cases of obsession are

nothing more and nothing less than the inability of the owner of the body to properly use his defective organism.

There are no "devils" nor "evil spirits" such as ancient revelation and orthodox Christianity have bequeathed to innocent, believing, and long-suffering humanity. There are no obsessing spirits such as Modern Theosophy is freely furnishing to the world in the vain effort to stamp out the truths of Modern Spiritualism, that it may possess its coveted field; and it is indeed lamentable that so many Spiritualists have been psychologized with the erroneous ideas of this ancient and most unreasonable superstition, not only to their own personal detriment, but to the injury of the heaven-born philosophy of Spiritualism.

Knowledge of the truth is the only weapon needed to slay this monster superstition called "spirit-obsession," and it is through and by this angel of deliverance that its terrible doctrines will be overthrown and the civilized world become freed from this nightmare of ancient and medieval ignorance and its blighting curses.

Many cases of so-called "spirit-obsession" may be caused by nervous disorders, physical degeneracy, feeble-mindedness, delusion, illusion, hallucination, etc. Disordered mental action is manifested in all supposedly "obsessed" people. The author has never met a case of so-called "obsession" that the subject did not manifest some form or degree of mental derangement.

Overwork physically sometimes causes mental aberration, and overwork mentally often causes a

weakening of the power to reason. Many persons are insane upon one subject and are sane upon all others.

The intricacies of mind are great, and thus far men are not well versed in the causes of all mental phenomena. Even the alienists, when testifying as expert witnesses in court, flatly contradict each other in their sworn testimony upon the sanity or insanity of a criminal, as is shown regularly in murder trials.

Someone has said: "All men are insane." The author believes that statement is extravagant; but men differ so widely upon important subjects that it is certain that all cannot be right.

The minds of criminals are deranged; some minds are perverted to such a degree that they have the utmost disregard for the rights of others. Are such in their right mind? Some people are partially insane and commit strange or insane acts, and yet they are not sufficiently insane to need to be incarcerated for safety of themselves or of society.

It must be conceded that a man who commits crime is not in his right mind. Some supposedly obsessed persons are not in their right minds and are "possessed" with peculiar ideas, therefore are by some people supposed to be obsessed by evil or malignant spirits.

#### Hypnotism, Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion.

Auto-suggestion, or self-hypnotism, and imagination accounts for a great deal of what is called spirit-obsession.

Suggestion plays a large part in the processes of hypnotism and consequently in the development of spirit mediumship; therefore, it is well to study the subject thoroughly before arriving at conclusions, and certainly before frightening a sensitive person with the suggestion that evil spirits are seeking to obsess her.

The first thing for a medium or an investigator to learn is that the manifestations or communications occurring with, or being presented through, the instrumentality of a medium, be that medium a novice in the work or one who is well developed, are not infallible. Many times the members of the seance inadvertently mislead the medium. The best of mediums make mistakes, sometimes misunderstanding the spirit and misinterpreting the communication.

They may get but part of a message, and if the other part is received it changes the meaning of the communication entirely.

As before stated, the author has been approached by a medium who with a sorrowful countenance told him that she had an evil spirit; that such spirit writes fine spiritual philosophy, beautiful poetry and tests, through her hand, and that sometimes he will change almost in the middle of a sentence and write awful untruths, etc.

In this case the medium did not understand that it is not the spirit who writes the untruths; that at the time the spirit ceased writing philosophy, poetry or tests he lost control of the medium's mind and she unconsciously continues the writing without her mind being directed by the spirit, and con-

sequently she writes whatever comes into her mind, whether imaginary or real, believing the while that the spirit is directing her thought, when neither he nor herself are doing it; her mind wanders without subjection to anyone's will, and of course the results are unreliable and should not be charged to evil spirits.

### False Communications.

Sometimes a medium may be so completely carried away with the belief in her spirit guide that she accepts everything given by the spirit and places no reliance upon her own judgment. In such a case some good spirit guide may think it necessary to give an untrue or false communication for the purpose of shocking the medium in order to awaken her to the fact that she is losing her individuality by submitting everything to the spirits and then taking their word as infallibly true. This would destroy the individuality of the medium and would obstruct her own spiritual development, and is not in accord with the intent and teachings of the spiritual philosophy.

This may seem to some people as very drastic treatment, but such severe cases may require it. It would be better to use even such means to strengthen the medium's individuality and bring forth her mental, moral and spiritual unfoldment than to allow her to remain a helpless automaton; for such a person as heretofore mentioned certainly has but little individuality to begin with, and would hardly develop it without spirit assistance.

There are other reasons why spirit communications are sometimes incorrect. The fact that they sometimes prove untrue is no proof that evil spirits are the ones communicating.

A suggestion will never help or injure a person unless he receives and accepts it.

A suggestion, once lodged in the mind of one who believes in "obsession" and that an evil spirit is seeking to injure him, whether such a spirit is present or not, is gnawing at the very vitals of mediumship and becomes ruinous to body and mind; while a settled conviction that no evil spirit can injure one makes that one impervious to the influence of any so-called evil spirit.

Believing that an evil spirit is trying to obsess one is a dangerous belief, and when one comes to believe he is obsessed by an evil spirit, though there is not an evil spirit within a thousand miles of him, he will have all the symptoms; he will be obsessed by the idea or belief that he is obsessed and the results will appear to be the same.

### Suggestion Plays an Important Part.

If a person can be made to believe that he is obsessed by an "evil spirit" and that thought is truly accepted by him, he then becomes obsessed by that "idea." There is no "evil spirit" obsessing him; but the results are just the same. He has all the symptoms and his actions tend to convince others of the correctness of the claim that he is obsessed. It becomes an illusion of the mind of the poor victim.

The patient being informed of the success some "healer" has had in driving out "evil spirits" and curing "obsessed" persons, is led to try the "healer," and if the "healer" is successful in planting the suggestion permanently in the mind of the patient and making him believe that he is cured and that no evil spirit can come near him any more, the patient is cured and will remain cured so long as this suggestion finds lodgement in the patient's mind. No person can be "obsessed" by an "evil spirit" or by an "idea" or "thought" that he is obsessed so long as he holds the thought and believes he is impervious to such evil influences. Many persons have been cured in this manner, even though there was not an evil spirit in the case.

This fact goes to show that the only obsessing spirit is the one born of the mind or imagination. If we admit that evil spirits may temporarily possess a person, this shows they cannot remain to injure them; if they will they shall not do so.

Every one born into this world is endowed with untold powers and infinite possibilities. Each one's powers are under the domination of his own will. He should learn that there is nothing in this world to fear but fear. Then he should become fearless and be forever safe.

#### Cause and Cure of So-Called Spirit-Obsession.

Many evil spirits, so-called, are creations of the mind. They are but the results of suggestion. They are created by suggestion and the obsessed person is cured of the obsession by the same process. In other words, if a suggestion that one is obsessed

takes root in his mind and he becomes hypnotized with the thought, he becomes obsessed by the idea, and by suggestion the idea is eliminated and the obsessed person is cured, when in fact no evil spirit has been near him. Such is the extent of about all there is that is true in the theory of spirit-obsession.

Through auto-suggestion one may make himself sick, and through the same method one may heal himself of certain diseases.

The suggestion, made by another person, that one is obsessed, may cause him to believe that he is obsessed. If such suggestion finds lodgment in the mind of the subject he becomes obsessed by the idea and belief that he is obsessed and will manifest all the symptoms attributed to obsessed persons. If a healer of obsession appears on the scene and declares that he can heal the patient and drive out the evil spirit, and the patient is made to believe that he can do it, then the suggestion finds lodgment in the patient's mind and he becomes cured. The evil spirit is not driven out, as there was no evil spirit obsessing him; but the idea that he was obsessed, or the belief that he was obsessed, was driven out of the subject's mind, and the suggestion that he was cured takes its place, and of course the patient is relieved and is troubled no more by what he believed to be "vicious spirits."

Frivolous, mischievous or undeveloped spirits may sometimes influence or control a medium for a brief time, but never to the medium's detriment, providing the medium understands the laws governing mediumship and applies them, in which case the spirit will be greatly benefited spiritually.

A suggestion lodged in the mind that an evil spirit is seeking to injure one is gnawing at the very vitals of mediumship, and whether the person is a medium or not it becomes ruinous to the health of both the body and mind of the one accepting such suggestion, while a settled suggestion that no so-called evil spirit can injure one makes that one impervious to the influence of such a spirit.

A suggestion can never help or injure a person unless he receives it.

A spirit cannot heal you if you are in opposition to him.

A spirit cannot injure you if you oppose him and have no fear of him.

A hypnotist cannot hypnotize you if you oppose him.

A spirit hypnotist cannot control you if you oppose him.

A spirit cannot obsess you if you think he cannot do so.

A person believing that a spirit is obsessing him, obsesses himself with that idea, though no spirit is doing it.

Believing that one is a subject for spirit control helps the spirit to control one.

Believing that one is not a subject for spirit control retards the spirit in his endeavor to control one.

"For as he thinketh in his heart so is he."—The Bible.

#### More Excellent Proof Just Arrived.

While writing the above the door-bell rang and a young man entered. He made his errand known

by saying he was looking for a healer and called to learn if we could tell him where he could find one. He said he was troubled with insomnia to such an extent that it unfitted him for his work, and he desired treatments in the hope that he might get relief. He said there was an influence around him and he thought a healer might relieve him.

We told the young man that there were no evil spirits with him, that his health was good, that he was living a good life, and that if there were evil spirits who obsess people he would not attract them.

We further told him that his trouble was caused by over-work mentally, which caused too much blood to enter the brain; that he was not obsessed by evil spirits and did not need a healer. We also told him that he had been reading Theosophy and it would have been better for him if he had never heard of it; that he had become afraid of Spiritualism, etc.

All of this the young man gracefully acknowledged. We gave him instructions on one's "being obsessed by an idea," which seemed to be accepted and appreciated by him. We then gave him advice regarding the removal of the blood from his brain to his feet so as to overcome the insomnia.

The young man said he had been afflicted with insomnia before and had gotten over it, but now he was getting so little sleep that he felt something must be done. He had gone to a Spiritualist healer in Los Angeles, who told him there were four evil spirits who were causing his sleeplessness and

promised to remove them and cure him. He paid the man his price and took the treatments but received no benefit.

This young man has fine mediumistic qualities; they are undeveloped and he is afraid to undertake their development. He said he was afraid of Spiritualism.

He said he was a draftsman, that his work required great mental activity, and that for three months he had been working overtime, which, he admitted, was evidently the cause of too much blood in the brain and the sleeplessness he was suffering. The young man remained with us about an hour, asking many questions. He is a fine-appearing, intelligent specimen of young manhood.

This is but one more of the many cases that have come to our notice of the direful results of the teachings of obsession. This young man might have become a finely developed medium, and possibly have devoted a long and fruitful life to the cause of Modern Spiritualism if he had never read those Theosophic works which caused him to become afraid of Spiritualism and to be seeking a so-called spirit exorcist. We saw him two weeks later and he was sleeping well. Our remedy set him right and cost him nothing.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Spirit Possession.

It sometimes happens that an undeveloped or selfish spirit gets control of a medium and teaches her that she must not permit any other spirit to control her; such cases, however, are very rare. He may make the medium believe that her spiritual development depends upon his controlling her exclusively and no other spirit must be allowed to influence her in the least. When she consents to this she is "possessed" by a spirit. This limits the medium to the ability, capacity and power of a single spirit, when she should have the combined aid of a large band of wise spirits with varied gifts and powers, to be used by each to act upon the different faculties of the medium for her development.

Such spirit-possession becomes impossible when the medium realizes the situation and resolves to invite other spirits to become members of her spirit band.

Every medium should know the truth of these statements regarding spirit-possession.

### Spirit-Personation.

Misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or wilful misrepresentation of spirit-personation has been a bonanza in the hands of some obsessionists in their efforts to make converts to their beliefs and to frighten people away from the investigation of Modern Spiritualism.

### Personating Spirits Not Evil Spirits.

Spirit-personation is one of the most useful and convincing gifts or faculties of spirit mediumship. There seems to be a great misunderstanding among some of the mediums and Spiritualists regarding the meaning of these manifestations.

We have met mediums who tell us that they have intelligent spirit guides who do many wonderful things through their mediumship, but they have proved to be evil spirits. Usually such mediums relate some of the good things their so-called evil spirits do and then declare that they throw them down upon the floor and take away their breath; that they actually stop their hearts from beating and in this way try to kill them, and that because of such treatment they have become afraid to sit for development any more. This is no indication that an evil spirit is controlling a medium, as will be explained a little farther on.

It is no indication that evil spirits are at work if the medium's hands are used to strike the table, or if her head is shaken until the hairpins fly out and the hair falls down; or if she laughs hysterically, weeps like one in distress, whoops like an Indian, dances like a trooper, or falls down on the floor and appears to cease to breathe.

All of these peculiar conditions and many others of a like nature Mrs. Sprague and the author experienced in their development. They all have a purpose.\*

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\*See the author's book "Spirit Mediumship," page 39.

Mrs. Sprague is a personating medium and many times has she personated the death of the controlling spirit.

Sometimes her whole body would become cold and rigid as though she were dead. Her breath would cease, apparently. No beating of the heart could be discovered. This would last but a few moments, when she would gradually arouse to activity again, when the personating spirit would speak to us through her lips. The author, too, has had many such experiences and has learned that they are of great value in one's development of mediumship.

This is a direct contradiction to the statements of obsessionists, who claim that such phenomena is produced by evil spirits and are proof of obsession. Spirit-personation is one of the most beautiful and convincing phases of mediumship.

### Personation.

The author has personated the dying consumptive, coughing and raising, and imitating the actions, etc., of persons dying with that dreadful disease.

He has on two occasions personated the death of persons who were hanged with a rope, and once he was controlled and personated a man who died of delirium tremens, and he does not consider these spirits evil. No, indeed! some of such spirits were good people whom he knew when they were in earth life, and after outgrowing the effects of their earthly condition—which eventually all spirits

must—they explained that at first on returning they must take up the physical elements of life just where they left them, or laid them down, when passing away. The author will record a case where his spirit teacher and helper brought a spirit who had left the body and passed to spirit life from the effects of that terrible disease delirium tremens.

A spirit was brought to our seance by the spirit guides one evening when the writer and Mrs. Sprague were sitting alone, and the guide said a spirit was present who was in a terrible condition and he wished to bring him to the medium to gain help. Mrs. Sprague told the guide that she was willing if it would do the medium no harm. The spirit guide assured her he would not be harmed if she did not get frightened and would keep her place at the table and sing while the spirit was manifesting.

She consented to this; then the guide withdrew from the medium and a strange spirit controlled him. He threw up his arms and fell over backwards, taking the chair with him, and lying there on the floor he personated one who died in spasms caused by delirium tremens.

After a time the spirit passed through an awakening to consciousness and began to realize where he was. Mrs. Sprague talked kindly and encouragingly to him, which seemed to touch the poor soul's feelings, and he gained control sufficiently to stand the medium on his feet and to say a few words, giving his name, when the spirit guides took him away.

The spirit guide then controlled the medium again, saying that much had been done for this poor unfortunate spirit; that he might have remained in "outer darkness," not being able to rise out of this terrible condition for years, if he had not been brought back into the material conditions that caused his transition and there receiving the light which was brought to him through coming in contact with the medium in this particular manner.

Years later this spirit came to the circle, controlling a strange medium, who had never heard of this case, and with tears in the eyes of the medium he was controlling, expressed his thankfulness and gratitude to the author and his good wife for the great blessing he had received at their hands by coming and controlling the medium on that memorable night. He told of its awakening him to a realization of the state in which his debauched condition and death had placed him, and that he had been steadily progressing in spirit life ever since; that he had outgrown the desire for liquor, and that he was free to go forward in the unfoldment of his spiritual nature and qualities. It was beautiful to see the wonderful advancement in the spirit's manifestation as contrasted with his first coming.

How thankful we should be that the truth of progression after death is proven by Modern Spiritualism, and we can also be thankful for the gift of the spirit or mediumship that makes it possible to help these poor souls who are in such great distress as was this one.

The heaven-born philosophy of Modern Spiritualism clears the air of "evil spirits" and makes of the seance room the greatest reformatory institution.

Obsessionists would have pronounced this spirit an evil spirit and would have warned the medium against letting him control him, picturing all the horrors which their abominable doctrines assume are meted out to those who may be controlled by such spirits; but the author knows, because he has had the experience, that this spirit was not an evil spirit, but that he was an unfortunate one; and he also knows that his controlling him and personating his awful transition did not harm the medium in the least. Nay, more: he knows that this experience with this unfortunate spirit helped him in the development of his own mediumship, so that if a spirit who passed to spirit life as a result of delirium tremens and has not outgrown his condition should come to him now on the rostrum or elsewhere while giving spirit messages and tests, the spirit would only need to touch the medium and he would know instantly by the sensations that he brings that he passed to spirit life as the result of this terrible disease. He has learned to discern other diseases in a similar manner by personating the spirit manifesting, and does not need to take on all the symptoms of the dying one to tell what was the cause of his death.

The world needs the great lesson this chapter teaches, and when it has been well learned spirit-obsession will be relegated to the past and left to

moulder in ruins with its legitimate mother, witchcraft.

The author realizes that ignorance may deride and scoff at the above statements, but fear of scoffs and derision shall not drive him away from declaring the truth regarding anything that he believes will throw light upon the subject and help the world to find the truth.

Everything in the true philosophy of Modern Spiritualism refutes the horrible doctrines of obsession.

It is true that an undeveloped or evil intentioned spirit may, under certain conditions, be allowed temporary control of a good intentioned person, but there is no law whereby such undeveloped spirit may take permanent control of a good person who objects and resists his control, and wilfully, maliciously, ruin such person, landing him in the insane asylum and finally in the grave, as claimed by many of the leaders of the Theosophic movement. Such teachers are the enemies of Modern Spiritualism and of human progress as well.

If an undeveloped or so-called evil spirit comes into associations with a mediumistic person whose aspirations are for good alone, instead of the medium being ruined by such spirit the spirit is greatly benefited. This fact has been thoroughly proven thousands of times.

The author has met mediums whose gifts and powers were utilized entirely in the work of aiding undeveloped spirits.

In the city of Lockport, N. Y., in the year 1893, there was an old lady, seventy-two years of age, who had spent many years sitting twice each week for the benefit of unfortunates who had entered the spiritual spheres without sufficient spiritual development to prepare them for that life. Her spirit band brought to her at each sitting those undeveloped souls, such as suicides, murderers, drunkards, morphine victims, etc., and in coming in contact with this highly magnetic, pure-minded and spiritual woman their consciences became aroused, they became more fully aware of their condition, and learned of their own power to become free from the habits that bound them. They were made to know that they must become their own saviors, and many a one through this unselfish and sympathizing lady and her spirit controls were assisted in their progression.

Does the reader ask why an undeveloped spirit needs to come back to a medium for help to progress in spirit life? The answer is easy.

The spiritual philosophy teaches that if one's spirituality is lacking and he is densely materialistic when entering the spiritual spheres, he is in darkness; that is, his spiritual faculties are not developed to discern spiritual things, and not being able to discern them he gropes in darkness. His only knowledge is of things material and he has no power to comprehend anything outside of the physical realm, consequently he must manifest from the plane of material things if he manifests at all. Therefore when he is brought into the atmosphere of a pure-minded and sympathetic soul of earth,

one who earnestly desires to help him, he feels and senses this, and being given the privilege of and assistance in controlling the medium, for the time, he imbibes from her the aspiration to be good and a desire to outgrow his errors, etc. In this way he gets a start in his own personal progression.

The author and his good wife had many proofs of these facts while receiving their mediumistic development; therefore he feels qualified to speak upon the subject.

#### **Jesus of Nazareth Teaches Progression After Death.**

According to 1st Peter, chapter iii, 18th and 19th verses, Jesus believed in a spirit world of progression, for after his crucifixion and death he, as a spirit, "went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Chapter iv, 6th verse, also says: "For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

This proves that Jesus believed and labored in the interest of progression in the spirit world. "He preached unto the" undeveloped, wicked, or evil spirits who were in the prison of "outer darkness," and he did it "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh," or in other words, judged the same as men in the flesh were judged, "but" that they might "live according to God in the spirit."

Jesus, a spirit himself, preached to "these spirits in prison" for the purpose of reforming them; and

if spirits are thus reformed in that world, then it is a world of progression, just as Spiritualism teaches. While this scripture upholds the teachings of Spiritualism, it contradicts the Christian's doctrine that progression ends with death. It also shows that wise spirits have interest in and influence over evil or undeveloped spirits and they labor to reform them.

### Spirits in Darkness.

Prov. iv:19: "The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble."

Matt. vi:23: "But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness."

Matt. viii:12: "But the children of the kingdom" (the wicked, the ignorant, the evil or undeveloped spirits) "shall be cast out into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

These passages of Scripture are quoted to prove that "evil," "unclean," ignorant or undeveloped spirits are in "prison" or in darkness, according to the Bible; and if so, they are certainly not in a state to control, obsess, and utterly ruin pure-minded, honest, sincere and innocent people. They must become enlightened before they can become able to hypnotize, influence or control a mediumistic person on the mortal plane, because the power to hypnotize a person is a spiritual faculty, a power of the spirit requiring a spiritual development.

### Bible and Spiritualism Agree in This.

According to the teachings of Modern Spiritualism, evil spirits are in an undeveloped state,

lacking spirituality and enlightenment, and they are often brought to mediums at seances and are helped to control the medium, in which experience they gain the light. They are often found by wise and good spirits in such dense darkness that they can see no light. This of course prevents them from doing either good or harm.

### Communicating Spirits.

The average communicating spirit is better than the average person in this life, for the simple reason that the spirit is beyond the fight for bread, the fight for existence.

The average man in this life is inherently good, and would be infinitely better here if the temptation to do wrong were removed from him and he was relieved of the necessary struggle to supply his physical needs.

There certainly cannot be any great incentive for disembodied spirits to commit evil against good people of this mortal realm; they are all delighted to return to the friends they have left on earth and to communicate the fact of their continued existence and tell of the wonders of the world in which they find themselves. This fact to them is all-engrossing; therefore they are not seeking to destroy the only channel through which they may be able to accomplish this desire, namely, the very mediums whom they control or influence. If they were to ruin their mediums, as is claimed by obsessionists, they would destroy their only means of

communication and then would not be able to continue their evil practices. Any spirit with intelligence enough to control a medium would know this.

#### Evil Spirits Ignorant of Spiritual Laws.

We are not at the mercy of an infinite horde of devils, spirit vampires, or evil spirits. Diabolism does not govern or rule in the spirit spheres.

The spirit world is a world governed by spiritual laws, and these are natural laws. If all so-called evil spirits are in spiritual darkness they certainly do not understand the use of the spiritual laws. This being true, what can these unspiritual people of the spheres of darkness, in their ignorance of the spiritual laws, do to injure the person who is living a good life in the mortal? Spirits can do nothing outside of the law, and knowing nothing of the spiritual laws because of this condition of spiritual darkness or ignorance, they are not able to apply them to the injury of such a person; therefore an evil or undeveloped spirit is harmless from sheer necessity, even if not from desire or purpose.

Good and bad spirits, in or out of the mortal body, cannot live in harmony together. The same law applies between disembodied spirits and those in the mortal form. Therefore, there being no attraction between them, there is no danger of an evil spirit obsessing a good person; there would be no pleasure or profit in it for either spirit or mortal.

### Are No Communicating Spirits Evil?

Communicating spirits are just like people in this life; they have their weaknesses and their strength, their spiritual faculties and powers, developed and undeveloped, etc., but a spirit must have some knowledge of spiritual laws in order to be able to control or influence a mediumistic person.

Evil-intentioned, selfish and undeveloped spirits cannot be so well prepared to control mediums as those who are spiritually developed.

True mediumship operates through the law of love. There can be no control of a medium by a spirit through the use of hate.

If a medium sits for control, and a spirit comes who hates the medium, he might try to control her until doomsday and he could not do it, providing the medium does not allow hate to dominate her thought also, and even then he could control only spasmodically or for a moment.

If a medium sits for control when her mind is dominated by fear, spirits good or bad cannot control her while she is in that mood.

The subtle forces governing mediumship are so fine that often an evil thought of someone in the circle destroys the condition and the medium's guides are not able to control in consequence.

This being true, as every medium knows, how can a spirit who is evil himself take control and obsess a person when an intelligent guide is prohibited by the evil thoughts of a member of the circle?

### Spiritualism Versus Spiritism.

Advanced spirits are denominated "angels"; undeveloped spirits, "evil spirits" or "devils."

There is a vast difference between Spiritualism and Spiritism. Spiritualism teaches that wise and good spirits rule and govern in the spirit world. Spiritism peoples the spirit world with "evil spirits," "demons," "diakka" and "imps of darkness," whose principal occupation is obsessing and ruining innocent people.

"We may dare to repose in the beautiful faith  
That an Infinite Life is the source of all being,  
And though we must strive with delusion and  
death,  
We can trust to a love and a wisdom all-seeing;  
We may dare in the strength of the soul to arise,  
And walk where our feet shall not stumble or  
falter;  
And, freed from the bondage of time-honored lies,  
To lay all we have on the Truth's sacred altar."

—Lizzie Doten.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Bible on Evil Spirits, Obsession and Witchcraft.

The doctrine of obsession was handed down from ancient times through the instrumentality of the Christian religion. According to the Bible, Jesus of Nazareth believed in and taught it, going to tremendous extremes in the matter.

Many of the modern inconsistencies and erroneous teachings regarding "evil spirits," "obsession" and "witchcraft" we have inherited from the superstitious writers of the Bible. The following quotations are a few of the many passages of scripture that support this statement:

Exodus xxii:18 says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

This passage implies that there are witches.

Was the writer of this passage of scripture, who is claimed by Christians to have been the great Moses, ignorant and superstitious? He believed in witches and thought they should be destroyed.

This passage of scripture was the principal cause, and the authority for, the murder and torture of millions of innocent men and women—mostly women—by the inquisition of the early Christians, and other superstitious beliefs of theirs have been handed down to this generation, as will be seen by reading the rest of this chapter, and even some Spiritualists of this day accept them as facts.

In this passage of scripture, according to the teachings of Christianity, God says kill the witches.

Who of this enlightened age believes there ever was a witch? No one believes it but the densely ignorant.

**According to Scripture God Sends Evil Spirits  
to Entice Men.**

I. Sam. xvi:14-15: "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."

I. Sam. xviii:10: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house."

The writer of Psalm lxxviii:49 says: "He" (God) "cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending **evil angels among them.**"

**God Uses Evil Spirits to Kill Ahab.**

I. Kings xxii:20: "And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And one" (spirit) "said on this manner, and another said on that manner."

Verse 21: "And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him."

Verse 22: "And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets, and he" (the Lord) "said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth and do so."

II. Chron. xviii:22: "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."

Who can believe that Almighty God, the Great Cause of all, would stoop to such a mean and underhanded way of deceiving a man that He might accomplish his death? Such a story cannot be "infallible truth," nor "divine revelation"; but it was undoubtedly a creation of the mind of some primitive and undeveloped man who believed in "evil spirits" and had no higher conception of the Great Cause of all than to picture Almighty God as conniving with undeveloped spirits to kill off a man that he did not like.

If there are evil-intentioned or undeveloped spirits in the spirit world, a Great God would not need to call upon them to do His work of killing a man by enticing him with false spirit-communications from a "lying or evil spirit" if He has the power attributed to Him by the Christian Church; and besides, if He was a good God, a just God, would He resort to such a low manner of dealing with a refractory, unfortunate man of His own creation?

Judges ix:23: "Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech."

### Saul Prophecies by an Evil Spirit.

I. Sam. xix:9: "And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his

javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand."

Verse 10: Influenced by this evil spirit, Saul tries to kill King David.

### **Jesus and Others Cast Out Evil Spirits.**

If Jesus was God, as claimed by Christianity, why did he cast out evil spirits such as he himself sent to control Saul, and to give lying communications through all the prophets of Ahab?

Luke vii:21: Jesus cures many of evil spirits.

Acts xix:11: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

Verse 12: Paul drives diseases and evil spirits

Verses 13, 14, 15: Seven Jews undertook to cast out of the sick,

out evil spirits in the name of Jesus, and these spirits talked to them, asking, "Who are you?"

Verse 16: "And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

This evil spirit would not be driven out by any "vagabond Jews," even if it were in the name of Jesus Christ, so he fought and defied the Jews.

Matt. viii:16: Jesus casts out "devils" and "spirits."

### **Jesus Casts Two Thousand Devils Out of One Man and Sends Them Into a Drove of Swine.**

Mark v:1-20: Jesus crossed the sea and came into the country of the Gadarenes, where he found

a man obsessed by two thousand devils, who talked to Jesus.

Verse 10: They "besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country."

### **These Devils All Talk to Jesus.**

Verse 12: "And all the devils besought him saying: Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them."

Verse 13 says: "There were about two thousand" of these hogs that "ran violently down a steep place and were choked in the sea."

Matt. viii:28: In telling this same story Matthew says there were two people that were possessed of this "legion" of devils. (A legion varied as to number; in early ages it was a number from three thousand to six thousand soldiers.) This must have been considered a good day for casting out devils.

Who can believe such a story as this? Could two regiments of one thousand devils each find room in one little Gadarene man and all "possess" him at one and the same time? If there were not "about" two thousand of them, then the scripture misrepresents the facts; and there would have to be two thousand devils if there were two thousand hogs, or they would not be one spirit apiece for these obsessed swine. If there were less than two thousand unclean spirits, some hogs could not have any, as one spirit could not possess two or more pigs at a time. The further we go the more perplexing the problem becomes. New complications arise. One is led to ask, what became of the devils? Were they drowned with the swine, or did they

come out of the pigs and hunt up some other Gadarene and continue in the business of obsession.

If so, what consolation could these evil spirits or devils get out of this terrible destruction of man's body, mind and spirit? What pleasure or profit could they possibly derive from it? Oh! what a nonsensical belief. It is without foundation in reason or truth, and the sooner mankind outgrows it entirely the better for the race. We of today have inherited from the Bible our belief in obsession.

### Did Jesus Heal by the Power of Suggestion?

When Jesus came he found the belief in devils and evil spirits obsessing or possessing people the universal belief of the Jewish nation. He did not bring it to them, but allowed them to continue in it, possibly because he was able to heal them magnetically, while applying the power of suggestion. It would be much easier to suggest the removal of a wicked or evil spirit from one who believed himself obsessed by one than to prove to him that there was no such spirit obsessing him. Nothing could convince those ignorant Israelites of that fact.

The symptoms supposed to be produced by the so-called "evil spirits" and "devils" of the scriptures were always the same as the symptoms accompanying insanity in its various forms: epilepsy, leprosy, and many other physical diseases. Is there a single instance recorded in the New Testament or the Old in which this is not true?

The people all believed in obsession or possession by evil spirits and devils, and probably Jesus could not have succeeded in driving out their diseases by his methods of suggestion if he had tried to make them believe they were not obsessed; therefore he may have spoken to them as though the evil spirits in which they believed were real, telling them to come out of them.

#### Substitute the Word Diseases.

It looks very much to the author as though the so-called "evil spirits" of which we read in scripture were simply natural diseases of the minds and bodies of the patients.

Suppose we substitute for the words "devils" and "evil spirits" the term "diseases," taking the words of scripture, "Mary Magdalene, out of whom he cast seven devils," which would then read, "Mary Magdalene, out of whom he cast seven diseases"; or the statement that a man was "possessed of a legion of devils," to that of a man "possessed of a legion of diseases," or his "diseases" were legion. Is this not a better interpretation and explanation of the matter?

But even this would hardly account for the "swine" episode, unless he cast two thousand diseases out of the poor Gadarene and then separated them, sending one disease into each hog. Thus devils would be turned to diseases.

Matt. viii:16: "They brought unto him" (Jesus) "many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick."

The people of that day believed that devils and evil spirits were the cause of all kinds of diseases, and when Jesus healed the sick their conclusion naturally was that he had cast out devils and unclean spirits, as the writers of the Bible repeatedly state.

Matt. ix:32-33: An obsessing spirit or devil causes a man to be dumb. When Jesus casts out this devil, then the man is able to speak.

Matt. xii:22: Another possessed of a devil was made blind and dumb. Jesus healed him and he "both spake and saw."

Matt. xvii:14-22: Jesus cured a lunatic, who had falling fits, all caused by the devil possessing the patient.

Luke ix:38-43: "A spirit taketh him"—an "only son"—"and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him, that he foameth again; and bruising him, hardly departeth from him." Jesus saw this devil throw him down and tear him and he rebuked the spirit and healed the child.

This was a plain case of epileptic fits, and the author frankly admits that he thinks there was no devil in it.

Luke xi:14-15: Jesus cast out another "dumb devil."

Acts viii:6, 7, 8: Phillip drives out many "unclean spirits."

At the time when Jesus lived upon the earth it was the universal belief of the people that evil spirits ruled over and produced the things of evil. Diseases of every form were supposed to be produced by them and Jesus accepted that general

belief, as is shown in the above mentioned passages of scripture, and is also shown in many more not quoted here.

This generation of ours has not entirely outgrown this ancient superstition, and when mediums and teachers in the great movement of Modern Spiritualism take up the cry of those ancient, ignorant people and carry this superstition into the lives and homes of the people of this twentieth century, our boasted claims of religious progression cease.

### **Jesus Erred in Prophecies.**

Jesus erred in some of his prophecies; may he not have erred in his belief in spirit-obsession, if he really did believe in it?

Jesus erred in the following prophecies:

Matt. xvi:28. Speaking to his disciples, Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom." They have been dead eighteen centuries and Jesus has not returned to rule over the Jews as he predicted.

Matt. xix:27: "Then answered Peter and said unto him, behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefor?"

Verse 28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Israel is scattered to the four corners of the earth, and not one of his disciples ever sat upon one of the "twelve thrones of Israel." If the inspired writers

of the scriptures erred in this report of Jesus' sayings, may they not have erred in their record of his belief in spirit-obsession?

Other passages could be quoted to show that Jesus' prophecies were not all fulfilled, but these are sufficient for the present.

### Seven Devils Cast Out of One Woman.

Luke viii:2: "And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils."

Evil spirits were very plentiful in those days, according to scripture, when one man carries around two thousand of them, and survives at that; and one woman has seven full-grown devils cast out of her. And then to think that this class of devils and evil spirits cause diseases of all kinds, even to dumbness, blindness, lunacy, leprosy, falling fits, etc., what a terrible thing is obsession (?).

As has been said, the doctrine of spirit-obsession or diabolical possession was handed down from ancient times through the instrumentality of certain religions. Is it true that Jesus of Nazareth believed in and taught it, going to such tremendous extremes in the matter, or did he heal through their belief in evil spirits and by the power of suggestion?

One explanation of the work of Jesus in the practice of exorcism is that he was a hypnotist and required his patients to have faith. If they had no faith, his suggestions found no lodgment in the minds of his patients and he could not heal them. "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." (Matt. xiii:58.)

When the patients received the suggestion from Jesus that they were obsessed or possessed of an evil spirit, they became obsessed by that idea, and when they received the suggestion from him that he would drive out the evil spirit they became dispossessed of the idea that they were obsessed and of course the healing followed.

Suggestion is one of the most powerful healers known. It heals for the M. D., for the Christian Scientist, for the Spiritualist healer, and for those who employ it properly in self-healing.

The well-developed medium is impervious to the influence of evil or "unclean spirits," as Jesus is made to call them. The mind controls the body, and when the suggestion that an evil spirit is harassing a person finds lodgment in that person's mind, he really becomes obsessed—not obsessed by an evil spirit, but obsessed by an erroneous idea, which becomes an active and lively entity in the patient's life and produces all sorts of hallucinations, and the symptoms of disease are sometimes as real as though they were under the control of demons and devils who were causing all manner of pain and disease. Oh, the horror of this terrible delusion!

After all of these teachings of evil spirits obsessing and possessing people as recorded in scripture, can anyone doubt the fact that the Bible and the Christian religion handed down to us this doctrine of witchcraft, this relict of ancient barbarism?

### Jesus a Magnetic and Spiritual Healer.

Jesus was a fine magnetic and spiritual healer. He healed people of their weakened and impaired physical conditions and did it in the natural manner, just as true modern mediums and Spiritualist healers do.

When they had been healed physically and the organs of the body were restored to their natural functions, their minds became normal, because of their health being restored, and the people supposed the evil spirits, whom they thought caused their condition, had been removed, and those who wrote of Jesus said he had driven out the devils or evil spirits whom they supposed had been possessing them.

We of today should not resort to the medieval theories of evil spirits causing disease, any more than we should take up the ancient methods of witch cures. They all belong in the same class of hallucinations and delusions. Violation of natural law causes disease; obeying natural law restores and retains health.

### Truth Is Our Savior.

John viii:32, Jesus says: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." We accept that statement as true.

II. Peter i:5 says: "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge."

We have been told by the foregoing passages of scripture that evil spirits and devils in ancient times inhabited men, women and pigs, causing divers kinds of sickness, insanity, etc., and at one time

caused two thousand hogs to commit suicide. And since that time evil spirits and devils seem to have taken more often and unkindly to obsessing old, crippled and poor women if we credit the tales of witchcraft of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

"Wise men change their minds." Church dignitaries once thought they knew that the earth was flat. They were sure of it. It was Christian treason to doubt it. The Bible must not be denied nor its statements disputed. Wise church members have changed their minds, however, and have concluded that the earth is not flat.

Though the God of Moses declared, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," wise men have discarded their beliefs in witchcraft. Many other teachings of the Bible have been proven erroneous and discarded by wise Christians and non-Christians. And so it is with the doctrines of "obsession"; wise men have changed their minds regarding this relict of witchcraft and relegated it to the scrap-heap of outgrown creeds, discarded dogmas, belief in a flat earth, a personal devil, a burning hell, and eternal punishment. And why should they not discard all of these unreasonable, unprovable and obnoxious superstitions, including obsession?

Is it hard for some to set them aside because Jesus of Nazareth taught them? One should consider that we have all put away the doctrine that evil spirits cause fevers and other diseases, else we would employ spirit exorcists instead of employing the M. D.'s, magnetic healers, Osteopaths, Chiropractors, and others.

Let it be remembered that Jesus never wrote one word of the scriptures himself. Did the writers of the New Testament quote his words verbatim? We think not; because not a word of the four gospels was written until more than fifty years after his death, and must have been written from memory and traditional stories; and, too, the writers were all believers in witchcraft. Undoubtedly the dominating prejudices of the writers' minds are woven into their recorded stories of the doings of the noble Nazarene.

**Jesus Himself Teaches That Evil Spirits Cannot  
Return and That Good Ones Can Manifest.**

Luke xvi:19-31: Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Verse 22: Lazarus "the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man died and was buried."

Verse 23: The rich man in hell. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

Verse 24: "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

Verse 25: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

Verse 26: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which

would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

Verse 27: "Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house."

Verse 28: "For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come unto this place of torment."

Verse 29: "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."

Verse 30: "And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."

Verse 31: "And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Here are the teachings which show that the good spirit found a good place in Abraham's bosom and the bad man went to hell; that the bad man could not return to earth to warn his five brethren of his fate in hell so they would live better and avoid it. And when the wicked or "evil spirit" of the rich man learned, from good old Father Abraham, that he, the rich man or evil spirit in hell, could not return and manifest to his brethren because he was doomed not to do so, then this poor spirit begged Father Abraham to send Lazarus, the good spirit, with his spirit message to his brethren.

Though Abraham refused to let him go, saying: "If they" (the rich man's brothers) "hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

He did not say that the spirit Lazarus could not carry the message to earth, but he did say that there was a great gulf between Abraham, Lazarus and the evil spirit of the rich man in hell, "so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot"; and that "neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." That is, no evil spirit can get out of hell and return to the seances to communicate.

Let no Christian deny Christ by accusing evil spirits of communicating with people of earth, because Jesus makes Father Abraham say that they cannot do so.

"When in the busy haunts of men  
The meek immortals tread,  
A fragrance from the spirit land  
Upon our souls they shed;  
And when mid earthly toil they meet  
The dear ones of their care,  
They pluck a thorn from ev'ry breast  
And plant a blossom there."

## CHAPTER X.

### Views of Leading Spiritualists Regarding Obsession.

**Mr. G. W. Brown**, author and editor, who for more than a quarter of a century was a member of the editorial staff of the "Progressive Thinker," of Chicago, Ill., in an editorial published in that paper dated July 19, 1913, wrote as follows:

#### "EVIL SPIRITS.

"The standard Dictionary defines obsession as 'a vexing or besieging by evil spirits.'

"The Plutonic theory of an underworld, over which Pluto and his angels presided, borrowed from Paganism with many other fabulous ideas incorporated into the Bible, is not a legitimate feature of Spiritualism.

"Deuteronomy xxxii:13, 18, teaches there was a faction of Jews who sacrificed to devils, but they were not Spiritualists. Since May of 1848 this writer has been identified with Spiritualism. He has personally witnessed hundreds of forms of manifestations of what he sincerely believes were of spirit origin; but he has never in all those sixty-five years witnessed one act that could be credited to evil spirits. He is conscious that honest Spiritualists have written and published books in which obsession is taught, but their facts and logic find no support in his judgment.

"The devil-teaching was stolen by Catholics from Roman Paganism, and Protestants inherit the devil

and his angels from their Catholic ancestors. Let Christians enjoy, undisturbed, their companionship."

**Rev. Thomas Grimshaw**, one of the finest mediums and trance lecturers, says in No. VIII. of his Psychic lessons, issued by the Morris Pratt Institute: "A medium cannot live an immoral life and at the same time attract unto himself spirits of a high grade of moral development. It may be that a highly developed spirit, having a specific mission, might use an immoral, ignorant medium for a time; but we may rest assured such association is distasteful and cannot be permanent."

If a medium cannot live an immoral life and attract highly developed spirits, then, by the same law, a pure-minded person will not attract wicked spirits to obsess him. The thought of evil spirits and obsession is, to say the least, mightily over-worked, and that, too, to the injury of the movement of Modern Spiritualism.

It is a great pity and a burning shame to pollute pure and unadulterated Spiritualism with the vile and vulgar teachings of this relict of ancient witchcraft called obsession.

### **Personal Responsibility Destroyed.**

If true, spirit-obsession would take away personal responsibility, thus contradicting one of the important principles and teachings of Spiritualism.

If bad people are obsessed by evil spirits, is it true that good people are obsessed by good spirits? If so, the personal responsibility of both are lost,

as an obsessed person could not be held responsible for what the spirit made him do, whether it was good or evil.

Spiritualism teaches that spirits influence or control mediums through the laws of love and attraction and never through hatred, viciousness and repulsion; therefore, a spirit enemy cannot psychologize and influence a good person with vicious intent to injure him.

Like attracts like, and to be obsessed by an evil spirit there must be something in the subject to attract such an influence, and that something must necessarily be evil to attract evil spirits. Law rules in everything and under all circumstances, and the law is that good does not attract evil but repels it.

#### Dr. J. M. Peebles.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, the grand old man and pioneer Spiritualist, author, teacher and minister of Spiritualism, is a believer in spirit-obsession, and in his book entitled "Seers of the Ages," page 306, he says:

"Like attracts like. Every door must have a hinge to swing upon. No evil spirit can approach us unless, morally weak, we possess a magnet within, attracting corresponding influences. This, so painful to endure, is the lesson of our frailty, teaching the moral necessity of fostering better conditions for more heavenly relations."

If "like attracts like," as stated by good Dr. Peebles,—and the author believes it does—then only evil people can be obsessed by evil spirits and

good people only can attract good spirits. This destroys the doctrine that good people are obsessed and ruined by evil spirits.

Continuing, Dr. Peebles says: "If spirits, uncultured and evil, impress, and, at times, completely obsess mortals, is not the practice of phenomenal Spiritualism dangerous? Yes, dangerous as the sunshine, that, falling alike on flowers and thorns, the just and the unjust, produces an occasional sun-stroke; dangerous as the spring rains that, sweeping away old, rickety bridges, carries rich alluvial to the valley below; dangerous as steamers, that now and then send bodies to find graves under seaweeds, while on their beneficent missions of international commerce; dangerous as mining, railroad-ing, telegraphing, which develop the hidden wealth of a nation. Shall we therefore dispense with them? Shall none pursue geological pursuits because Hugh Miller committed suicide? Briars abound where berries grow. It is one of the offices of guardian angels to protect their mediums from inharmonious magnetisms of unwise, perverse spirits and the psychological attractions of depraved mortals."

This is splendid, because it is true. Should we dispense with business because some men are dishonest, or refrain from using electricity because men get electrocuted by it? Generally, the most valuable things are most dangerous if improperly used. Overdoing mental powers causes insanity. No one would think of ceasing to use them; indeed, use makes them strong.

In his pamphlet entitled "The General Principles and Standard Teachings of Spiritualism," page 9,

Dr. Peebles says: "The purely good, all-unselfish, royal-minded Spiritualists are absolutely immune from obsessions or possessions."

With this we heartily agree and will say, so are all other "purely good, all-unselfish" people "absolutely immune from obsessions and possessions." This is our claim.

Only devilish people can be obsessed by devils. Only wicked, evil people can be obsessed by wicked and evil spirits, and even they cannot be obsessed by their kind against their will, their desire or wishes, as has been explained in other chapters. Consequently, continuous or prolonged control or obsession by evil spirits is a mistake. Under the pure light of reason such doctrine fails to prove up and consequently is cast aside to increase the rubbish-heap of cast-off teachings of old theology.

Vice cannot comprehend virtue. Vice and virtue are at opposite poles. Depravity and spirituality never room together. When one goes out the other enters. Good predominates, and all is well.

From the book entitled "A Guide to Mediumship," by E. W. and M. H. Wallis, editors, authors and mediums, of England, page 26, we quote the following:

"The thoughts we cultivate place us en rapport with corresponding spheres or planes of thought, and the man or woman who habitually lives on a good moral plane is impervious to the intrusion of mischievous and immoral influences from either the borderland or the mortal plane."

Page 29, Mr. Wallis says: "Personally, my own firm conviction is, that there is nothing inherently dangerous in mediumship."

Page 34, he continues by saying: "Hudson Tuttle, one of the greatest authorities on Spiritualism and a medium himself, says: 'As the channel, so the stream which flows through it; the vessel gives form to the water which it contains. Each medium attracts a class or grade of spirits peculiar to himself. There must be affinity. These are attracted, first, because certain phenomena can be given through his organization which cannot through any other; second, because certain thoughts can be transmitted through his brain which cannot through any other; third, because there is similarity or congeniality.' "

If, as he says, each medium attracts a class or grade of spirits peculiar to himself, because there is similarity or congeniality, then a good person cannot attract an evil spirit and an evil spirit cannot obsess a good person.

Page 41, Mr. Wallis says: "The people" (spirits) "of the lower spheres are powerless to harm us when we extend our sympathy and love towards them, but exercise our will and discreetly hold the fort of our own psychic nature."

Page 46 says: "As a general rule, to use a homely but expressive phrase, 'Birds of a feather flock together,' and unless there is some contact (it may be temporary only) low spirits cannot attach themselves to a medium. Degraded persons in this life do not seek associations which offer no opportunities for the gratification of their propensi-

ties, or, if casually brought into the sphere of their superiors in morality and intelligence, they soon desist from their evil efforts if met in a spirit of kindness, and this holds good as regards the law of association between spirits and mediums. A firm and decided, but kindly attitude, and a high-souled motive, will be a safeguard, especially when the sitters are sincere and high-minded also."

Page 47, he quotes "Mr. A. Morton, an intelligent and thoughtful writer," as saying: "It is within the power of mediums to attract a class of controls who will protect them from low spirits, except such as are brought to them to learn the way 'from darkness into light.' Away, then, with the fear of evil spirits; cultivate faith in the angels and make your aspirations for the good and the true a wall of protection from all evil."

Again, on page 111, he says: "Too many people instead of waiting until the spirits were ready to communicate with them, pressed for 'tests' before the connections were properly made; they complicated matters by their eager questionings, and worried the operators till everything went wrong, and then, because the answers were incorrect, inconsequent, misleading, or persistently negative, they declared that the spirit was a deceiver, evil or foolish, and, while having only themselves to blame, gave up the sittings in disgust; whereas, had they been less impetuous, less opinionated, less prejudiced, they would in all probability have eventually obtained satisfactory proofs of the presence of their spirit loved ones."

It is so easy to misunderstand the occult forces and their subtle operation, because we are so ignorant of influences that we unwittingly bring to bear upon them. Many evil spirits, so-called, have been created in the minds of the mediums and the circle in this very way. They were but figments of the distorted minds of the members of the circle, made so by their belief in obsession.

Page 152: "It has been frequently asserted, and we believe with truth, that no one who is averse to it can be hypnotized unless he yields to persuasion without realizing the need of resistance. No one who is watchful over himself can be drawn into vice or crime who has not the inclination in that direction, unless he is ignorant and too confiding. The man who has gained control over his desires and is morally self-centered cannot be hypnotized or suggestionized into wrongdoing, because the very suggestion is repugnant to him, and therefore there is little or no danger so long as the sensitive is alive to the need (which always exists for everyone) to maintain a level head and a pure purpose, a strong 'will' to do the right and a strong 'won't' toward the wrong."

### Hypnotism.

Page 234, quoting from the editor of "Suggestive Therapeutics," they say: "The exercise of hypnotic power requires a dual action to be effective. The power is not in the operator alone, nor in the subject alone. There is the positive or projecting power of the first and the negative or receptive power of the other. There must be a responsive

enthusiasm, energy, vibration or magnetism on the part of the subject to meet halfway the positive energy of the operator before hypnotic suggestion can do its work."

If so, then can an evil spirit obsess one without his consent? No, indeed!

Page 236: "A writer affirms, 'that no one can be psychologized unless he surrenders his will to another. Therefore the essential thing on the part of the individual is to strengthen the will-power, to cultivate self-confidence and self-reliance, and parents should teach this to their children. No magic-working suggester can injure another who realizes the fact that no power can touch him, and simply ignores the suggestion; for magic power can have no effect if it be simply ignored. On the other hand, if the person keeps thinking about it and believes the magic-workers can control him and accomplish their designs, he will bring about the evil results by his own volition and thought.'"

#### Mr. Hudson Tuttle on Obsession.

Mr. Hudson Tuttle, himself a spirit medium from boyhood, who was one of the ablest writers, teachers and speakers on the subject of Modern Spiritualism, in his book entitled "Mediumship and Its Laws," page 51, says:

"To be obsessed, a helpless tool obedient to the will of another, requires in the obsessed an organization similar to that of the obsessing intelligence. Whatever is thought or done in that state is as the individual would do in his normal state if he followed his inclinations. The obsessing force is

obliged to move in the direction of the organization of the obsessed. If the husband has a desire to leave his wife, a spirit so wishing, may intensify that desire. If he affirms that he is led by the spirit, he in other words expresses his own feelings."

Page 134: "As no subject can be mesmerically controlled against his will, and, guarded against it, no sensative can be obsessed against his will, and when conscious of such control can throw it off unless the suggestions of that influence find response in his own inclinations. A strong mesmeric operator may give temporary relief, or permanent, by gaining control of the subject and thus excluding any other."

Page 144: "If we want pure and wise spirits to communicate with us, we must be pure and wise as we would have them."

Page 97: "It is full time that Spiritualism outgrew the pernicious doctrines that have been promulgated about obsession, hypnotism, and the exemption from responsibility in these states."

"No one was ever hypnotized by man or spirit to think or do that which was not already in his own organization." In this we heartily agree.

The teachings of obsession have let loose ten thousand million devils upon poor, unprotected, helpless beings of earth, and made for rascals a scapegoat for their weaknesses and crimes.

Better far that the one very wicked old orthodox devil become reinstated, if one-half of what has been said and written about "evil spirits," "obsession," the dangers of psychism, etc., were true;

but since the teachings of obsession are as false and as debasing as the devil and hell of old theology, it behooves all who are better informed to labor for the overthrow of such monstrous teachings and the better establishment of the beautiful truths of unadulterated Spiritualism.

Mr. Hudson Tuttle, in his "Arcana of Spiritualism," pages 224, 225, 226 and 227, under the heading "Evil Spirits," says: "The Hottentots, says Thunborg, have much clearer notions about an evil spirit whom they fear (than a good), believing him to be the occasion of sickness, death, thunder, and every calamity that befalls them.

"The New Zealanders believe that each form of disease is caused by a peculiar God."

Page 125: "The Kols of Nagpore assign all diseases to two causes: the wrath of some evil spirit who has to be appeased, or the spell of some witch or sorcerer.

"Cower says the Indian lives in continual apprehension of the unkind attacks of evil spirits, and to avert them has recourse to charms and incantations.

"The West Coast negroes represent evil spirits as 'black, mischievous, and delighting to torment them in various ways.'

"Thus, all over the world, the savage is ruled by fear, and stands in dread of the influence which he believes beings beyond the realm of physical existence can exert."

"The increase of knowledge has consigned this superstition to the category of nursery fables. The more science the less superstition.

"As the spirit enters the spirit world, just as it leaves this, there must be an innumerable host of low, uneducated, or, in other words, evil spirits.

"If we believe this and the dependent proposition that they are wholly irresponsible, our situation is horrible to contemplate, surrounded by an innumerable host of intelligences bent on doing evil and we without power to resist!"

To show that Mr. Tuttle did not believe the above proposition, he continues by saying:

"The belief in this form is only a short step removed above the superstition of the savage.

"Life becomes a wretched attempt to appease these selfish beings. Fear takes the place of integrity, supine waiting of action, and existence becomes a burden in efforts to propitiate these evil influences, or not to offend them.

"We believe that at times the selfishness which has not been subjugated, and undeveloped character, will, when the door is open, manifest themselves. That they do is as well established as any principle of Spiritualism. But that we are surrounded by an ocean of irresponsible evil spirits, who are anxious to commit through us some immoral or brutal action, against whose influence we have no defense, we unhesitatingly disavow. There can be no belief carrying with it more immoral tendencies, as it casts aside individual responsibility and makes scapegoats of spirits, as the ignorance of the past made Satan the sower of evil. The admission is a denial of the fundamental principle of Spiritualism that we are responsible only to ourselves for ourselves."

Page 226: "Admitting that evil spirits do come near and influence us, they must enter into our atmosphere through the gateway we ourselves open to them. There must be a similarity and correspondence between our spiritual sphere which measure our spiritual condition and theirs, else we could not recognize their presence or they could have no influence over us."

"There are Spiritualists who, forgetting this absolutely essential correspondence, are subdued by their belief in the power of evil spirits over their lives, and instead of attempting to arise out of the sphere in which such influence can be exerted, cast about them in childish endeavors to avert the malign purposes of these invisible enemies."

"Dismal spectacle of an enlightened man of the twentieth century returning to the abject superstitions of the savage, and abasing himself in childish fear!"

"Some return to the belief of the primitive medicine man and refer the pangs of disease to evil spirits. As like attracts like, their own spiritual state is shown by the communications made through them. It is advisable to urge such people to cast the uncleanliness out of themselves and thus cease to attract the influences they fear."

"Such belief is not harmless, but positively debasing. Man should not be a puppet in the hands of irresponsible beings. 'Evil spirits' may influence to evil thoughts and deeds, but the conditions must first exist in the recipient's mind. If the medium is not in the receptive state; if he is above the sphere of evil, he may safely bid defiance to the

whole universe of 'elementaries,' hobgoblins, and 'spirits of the damned.' ”

There is no better authority upon the subject of Modern Spiritualism than Mr. Hudson Tuttle, as his voluminous writings amply prove. His claim to mediumship and of having a wise and faithful band of spirit helpers is also true, and the author has quoted the above inspired statements of this great modern seer because they should have weight and influence with men and women who are sincerely seeking to solve the question of spirit-obsession. If all Spiritualists would accept and put in practice the facts and suggestions of these quoted lines of Mr. Tuttle the fear of evil spirits and the cry of obsession would disappear from the ranks of Spiritualism as they certainly should.

#### False Communications or Delusions Not Evil Spirits.

Mr. Epes Sargent, author and former editor of the Boston Transcript, in his work "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," page 249, says: "There are mental phenomena in abundance which will analogically justify us in the assumption that the medium himself may be innocently the subject of a self-imposed delusion as to identity."

Because of misunderstanding communications, or what has been termed false communications, mediums sometimes attribute them to evil spirits, when they are but the results of delusion. Mr. Sargent here quotes "Mrs. Maria M. King, a medium and author of splendid talents," as saying:

"What is claimed in the philosophy I have been instrumental in giving is, that civilization in the spiritual state does what civilization in the material state aims to do. Being spiritual and higher in the strictest sense, it can do more than has yet been done on earth in dealing with the elements of evil and ignorance. Superior methods of dealing with the lowly have been developed in that life, where nothing can be concealed from those whose duty it is to oversee society there. Men disrobed of materiality come more readily under the control of spirits of strong psychological power, and this power is used for good to all in earth and spirit life, as a safe and wise policy dictates."

If what this medium and author says, is true—and it certainly is a part of the Spiritual Philosophy itself, for it is the teachings of ten thousand wise and good spirits, through the multitude of noble and true mediums the world over—prolonged spirit possession by undeveloped spirits, and spirit-obsession, in the sense claimed by obsessionists, cannot be true.

She says: "Civilization in the spiritual state does what civilization in the material state aims to do." That is, it restrains and prevents evil spirits from committing evil deeds, immoral acts, etc., just as mortals aim to do. Spirits accomplish what our civilization aims to do, viz., prohibits evil deeds and reforms the evil doer, and should an evil spirit attempt to injure a person in the mortal form, these wise spirits know it, for "nothing can be concealed from those whose duty it is to oversee society

there," and so they are restrained from doing evil and are reformed.

She also states another great truth when she says: "Men disrobed of materiality come more readily under the control of spirits of strong psychological power, and this power is used for good to all in earth and spirit life, as a safe and wise policy dictates." This being the truth, spirit-obsession is a colossal error, disappearing entirely under the holy light of the true Spiritual Philosophy.

"Joy to the world—for truth abounds,  
And 'error withering dies.'  
In fragments hurled upon the ground,  
Her broken altar lies."

## CHAPTER XI.

### Spirit Communications.

“There’s no spot in this wide world to me that’s so sweet  
As the place where the angels with earth’s children meet,  
Where hearts are most tender, where love fills the soul,  
And all our rude passions are held in control.”

### Law Rules in the Spirit World.

#### A Spirit Communication From Wm. T. Stead, the English Author, Journalist and Spirit Medium, Who Went Down at Sea With the Titanic.

According to the teachings of all intelligent spirits, the same laws of cause and effect rule in the spirit world as in this world. They have governments, educational institutions, and everything else needful for the great work of spiritual progression.

We will quote from a communication given by spirit Wm. T. Stead, as published in “The Harbinger of Light,” of Melbourne, Australia, of June 1, 1912, entitled “**What Life Really Is in the Spirit World.**” After explaining that he is communicating by automatic writing, and giving his experiences on entering spirit life, under the heading “**A Great Republic**” he tells briefly what he found in the spirit world. His communication follows:

#### “A GREAT REPUBLIC.

“What impressed me most was the colossal system of government that pervaded everywhere.

Angelic beings had evidently been instructed to meet me, and every question I asked was answered by an angel guide into whose care I was placed. I wanted to see my dear ones on earth, and swiftly was carried to my home, only to find that for the moment no direct word could be given them, no assurance that all was well. Oh, the anguish, the terror on their countenances, and I powerless to do more than spread around an unseen spiritual balm and comfort that might be apprehended. I felt that I must work, work more than I had ever done when in the flesh, to spread the truth abroad of immortal life, that some way must be opened to me to tell of my delight and assure my beloved ones that all was well. I asked to be taken back to my heavenly home, to be shown some way to get at these dark places. There it was explained to me that conditions have to be made for perfect communication, that machinery, so to speak, for sending messages through the ether had to be studied. Here, also, are schools of learning for those who needed instruction even in the rudiments of spiritual knowledge; here were vast enterprises that included work in glorious regions of which those in earth life and in the fog of material selfish thought can form no idea. There were vast armies, it seemed to me, of advanced spirits setting forth on missions to other planets than ours, as well as worlds beyond our little solar system. The whole universe alive with spiritual beings all under discipline, doing the best of some supreme director whom I have not seen, but who seems in some way I have yet to learn an Invisible Force. All this I was shown by my

director, and told that soon my work would be shown me, something that would put me in touch with those all over the world who were now engaged in spreading this great gospel. That much had to be learned by me, but that I could make a beginning at once. It is the reality of the spiritual world and its nearness that I want first to impress on the world. Spite of death-dealing disasters, spite of the fact that every minute of your days some soul is passing on, **the mass of people go on as if the life you are now living was the only one.** They cannot conceive of a world that is more real and beautiful than earth, and yet entirely spiritual. **There are here the realities of what is reflected only in earth life—flowers, trees, landscapes, and above all, a sense of youth and elasticity that no one can fully experience in the flesh, though humanity will grow gradually to a more spiritualized condition of the body.** Then here we realize what it is to be among our spiritual peers. The meetings in the homes of the great and enlightened ones who have passed over are beyond mortal understanding. It is something for me to be able to say this much so soon after entering the promised land. Later I shall tell you of the people I meet, of the matured plans for work on which I am to enter. Meanwhile let every one know there is no death, that my life is fuller and brighter and with limitless possibilities, that I had never really dreamed of. **We live and move by virtue of the Love force of the universe. No need for food; we are filled with the life-giving force of the Universe, that subtle fluid that feeds every material thing. To be filled with it is life everlasting—**

the more you have of it in earth life the more you can appreciate heavenly things. It is the Love supernal of which you have a glimmering in the true loves of earth life. Here it radiates from advanced spirits, and there is communication of soul with soul that in your earth limitations can scarcely be comprehended. I am alive! alive! alive! for evermore! That is the burden of my message today."

In this message Mr. Stead says: "The spirit world is a great republic, a colossal system of government that pervaded everywhere." This being true, then this government reaches the lower spheres, where obsessionists locate their "evil spirits," and brings them under the care and restraint of that "colossal system of government." And of course such obsessing spirits would be held in restraint by that great government, else the government was not a government at all.

He also says: "Here, also, are schools of learning for those who need instruction even in the rudiments of spiritual knowledge." In these schools these "evil spirits," so-called, are educated.

He says further: "There were vast armies, it seemed to me, of advanced spirits setting forth on missions to other planets than ours, as well as worlds beyond our solar system."

If there were armies of advanced spirits for such great missions, would not this great government delegate a few companies to prevent these "evil spirits" from destroying virtue, ruining health and generally demoralizing the victims of these so-called "obsessing spirits," since they are healing the

sick, physically and mentally, working in every reform movement, educating the people of this world and preparing them for life here and hereafter? If they would not restrain evil spirits, why would they not?

Spirit Stead says: "The whole universe is alive with spiritual beings all under discipline." **All under discipline!** That includes the "evil spirits," of course, and if they are under discipline of the government of this "colossal republic" they are within its law and would not be allowed to obsess and ruin innocent people in the mortal form.

He continues: "All this I was shown by my director, and told that soon my work would be shown me, something that would put me in touch with those all over the world who were engaged in spreading this great gospel," the gospel of Spiritualism.

The facts recorded in this paragraph shows plainly that the movement of Modern Spiritualism is in the hands of those elevated spirits who have in charge, or constitute the officials of those "schools of learning" and those "vast armies of advanced spirits." Which is another direct contradiction to the teachings of Theosophy.

He also says: "The mass of people" (in earth life) "go on as if the life they are now living was the only one. They cannot conceive of a world that is more real and beautiful than earth and yet entirely spiritual."

If that world is "entirely spiritual," surely the inhabitants thereof, having schools, colleges and other great educational institutions, as well as

armies of advanced spirits to enforce the laws of this "colossal system of government," would very soon take an obsessing spirit away from his poor victim and put him under "discipline," together with "the whole universe alive with spiritual beings all under discipline," of which he speaks.

Spirit Wm. T. Stead continues by saying: "We live and move by virtue of the Love force of the universe. No need for food; we are filled with the life-giving force of the universe, that subtle fluid that feeds every material thing. To be filled with it is life everlasting—the more you have of it in earth life the more you can appreciate heavenly things," etc. This paragraph completes in beautiful expression of thought this heavenly message from a noble and true-hearted soul whose name is almost a household word throughout the civilized world.

He says, "No need for food," and explains why. If there is no need for food, the greatest incentive for wrongdoing is removed from man at death. Self-protection is the first law, we are told, and men are led to commit wrongs in the fear of want of food, of clothing, etc., and that motive is removed at death, which leaves little incentive for a spirit to obsess and ruin an innocent person on earth. There would be no compensation in doing it, anyway.

In another message received through the mediumship of Mrs. Anna Bright, editor of "The Harbinger of Light," Melbourne, Australia, Wm. T. Stead, a spirit, says: "The best systems of governments on earth are but a faint reflex of the marvelous governments of the spirit world."

If this is true, would an obsessing spirit be allowed to ruin an innocent person by obsessing him?

It will be seen that mediums are proportionately scarce when the fact is considered that millions of wise and good spirits have no mediums through whom they can communicate. Therefore, it is clear that where a person is sufficiently mediumistic to be obsessed by an ignorant, undeveloped and evil spirit, these unnumbered wise and good spirits would remove such obsessing spirit, take charge of the medium, develop her powers properly, and prepare her for the good and useful work of teaching poor, ignorant and innocent mortals the great truths of the heaven-born spiritual philosophy which they are now engaged in bringing to bless the world.

#### A Spirit Message Regarding Spirit-Obsession.

"Ignorance is a block under the wheels of progress. Divine truth permeates the atmosphere of every sphere of life. Whales and minnows swim in the same sea. Eternal progression, continuous evolution and universal salvation form a trinity unimpeachable. Spiritual forces, like spiritual truths, lead mankind forward out of darkness into the light, away from error up to truth, freeing them from mental bondage, striking the bonds that hamper spiritual progress from the minds of undeveloped souls in the mortal and in the spiritual world. Spirit-obsession is a colossal mistake. It was born of ignorance, superstition, bigotry and fear. It dies where reason reigns, where love and truth abounds. It is in its last stages and is now passing away. Its grave is dug, its coffin is prepared, and its funeral

dirge is being sung. The last rites and ceremonies will soon close its long, eventful and murderous career. Science, reason, justice, love and truth have planted their batteries on the field of spiritual progress and are now pouring their hot shot into the camps of the enemies of progression, which is causing them to vacate their strongholds. Our batteries of science and reason have silenced the guns of ignorance and superstition and the enemy is retreating as rapidly as it is possible for him to do so. One by one their strongholds have been and still are being vacated, and as our army occupies the vacated battlefields the dead issues are quietly buried and those great fields, so possible of fertilization, are made to blossom with the golden grain of truth and the beautiful blossoms of love, justice and spiritual attainment, and all is well.

Your own spirit teacher and co-respondent,

(Signed) IMPERICUS."

#### **Another Spirit Communication Touching Obsession.**

"No one on your side of life has yet learned the significance and power of mental suggestion. It is true that nearly every evil thing laid to spirit-obsession has its foundation in that one subject of mental suggestion. Who in reason can doubt the power of the spirit world to remove any spirit who seeks to injure one of our instruments through whom we are permitted to communicate to our friends on earth?

**They—the spirit mediums—are our only source of communication with earth and there are so very**

few of them that only one spirit in many thousands who would like to communicate with people in the mortal can do so.

There is no strife in the spirit world in regard to spirit-obsession. When a spirit associates himself with a medium and treats him properly he is not molested. He is furnished every assistance he may need in his efforts in the development of his medium. If a spirit should undertake to injure his medium he would be destroying his only avenue of communication—something valuable to possess—which every spirit appreciates and prizes most highly. And more: such an attempt if made by a spirit would be the cause of his immediate removal. Wise and good spirits have charge of all such matters. However, it must be remembered that if the medium is low-minded, and prone to do evil himself, he can only be relieved temporarily by the good spirits, as bad people attract undeveloped spirits and such spirits may return from time to time even though they have been removed, although no spirit is ever allowed to permanently possess or obsess even the weakest subject.

When one has been influenced by an undeveloped spirit and believes some fiendish soul is seeking to injure or destroy him, this suggestion dominates him, and though the spirit has been removed the suggestion born of belief is all imaginary, and yet it may produce results almost identical with the real.

Self-hypnotism, self-suggestion and imagination creates ninety-nine one-hundredths of all the so-called obsessions, and suggestion by others the

other one per cent. Spirit-obsession, as taught by obsessionists, is a colossal mistake, and belief in it causes much trouble and suffering. Temporary control is not obsession.

Let those who attribute every evil suggestion, every calamity, every disease, etc., to evil spirits, remember that the laws of the spirit world are nature's laws; that the civil laws and governments of the spirits themselves are made and controlled in conformity with nature's laws, by the wise and good spirits, and are the results of ages of experience by those who apply them.

Furthermore, let it be remembered that ignorant, undeveloped spirits have not the power of wise and highly developed spirits, but they are governed and controlled by the power and will of these wise and spiritually developed souls.

Nothing is farther from the truth than the statement that a low, ignorant and undeveloped spirit can take possession of an innocent, pure-minded soul in the mortal and obsess him.

Wise spirits can discern the things of both worlds. Highly developed spirits of the spirit world can see farther and discern more, yea, almost infinitely more than low, undeveloped, "evil spirits" can see and discern, and they often produce conditions unknown to ignorant spirits, counteracting their expectations and defeating their purposes. Others are removed when it becomes necessary, and never allowed to control or influence a medium or hypnotic subject when there is no assurance that the spirit will outgrow his condition and become an accomplished,

able and competent spiritual helper and spiritual adviser to the medium.

Unnumbered wise souls of great spiritual attainment have these matters in hand. Their long experience in spirit life enables them to make the conditions and perfectly protect their mediums and those who are mediumistic, and they will do it always. When the mediums learn better how to co-operate with them there will be no more trouble about evil spirits or "obsession."

The greatest obstacle we have to overcome is the ignorance of the mortal subject. When the suggestion is firmly implanted in the mind of such a person that spirit-obsession is a truth, it must be removed ere we can place the medium on the high road to his spiritual and mediumistic development; and when one becomes imbued with the idea that he is obsessed it can only be overcome by the counter-suggestion that he is cured, and even when cured he is not safe unless he can be made to know, or at least conscientiously and thoroughly believe, that no one can injure him.

Everything from this side of life is working harmoniously. There is no war in heaven, neither upon mediums nor anyone else. Our conflicts are principally with the ignorance of poor mortals who are held in bondage by the ancient theories and hide-bound creeds of primitive religions. To the question, "Is 'spirit-obsession' as taught by the Christian Bible and by some modern cults true?" we answer most emphatically, **No!** a thousand times **No!** The spirit world is a world of harmony. It is not a lawless world, but a world governed by

natural spiritual laws. It is a peaceful world, every vibration of which produces a desire for spiritual unfoldment; and each vibration carries with it the lesson of love, goodness and power. The All Good rules, and all is well.

(Signed) ATTAINER."

"Here again in sweet communion,  
Bless'd with guardian angels' love,  
Celebrate the great reunion,  
With our spirit friends above.  
Days of doubt and nights of sadness  
Pale before the morning light,  
And the cry goes forth with gladness,  
'Welcome, Liberty and Right.' "

#### Mediumship Prolongs Life.

The author has before him a list of mediums numbering one hundred who have labored in the cause of Modern Spiritualism from twenty to sixty-five years each. The number of years of labor done for the cause of Spiritualism by these one hundred mediums totals approximately three thousand seven hundred and twenty-eight years, the average number being more than thirty-seven years' service for each medium. Is mediumship "dangerous," "ruinous," etc., as per Theosophic teachings? Do not the above facts refute these claims of our opponents? They certainly do refute the constant cry of the Theosophic enemies of Spiritualism and mediumship.

Spirit-healing is the most powerful therapeutic known to the human race. It was through this power that Jesus and his disciples healed the sick, and Jesus and his apostles constantly urged the people to "seek after spiritual gifts," naming the different gifts. In I. Corinthians, chapter xii, St. Paul urges this and names several phases of mediumship. Spiritualism has healed hundreds of thousands, physically, mentally and morally, through the powers of mediumship. What are called miracles in the Bible have been accomplished by modern mediums in thousands of cases. The author speaks from knowledge upon the subject, as he has been healed by this power himself. He has witnessed many cases of healing those who were sick, physically as well as mentally, through the mediumship of his good wife in her thirty-three years of work for Spiritualism. He has known of many cases of spirit-healing through different mediums. Mrs. Sprague's life was saved through her own mediumship, and many mediums have been and are now being healed through their own mediumship and at the same time they are healing others by the power of the spirit.

These facts prove the benefit modern mediumship is to those who are sick in body and mind, and that mediumship, instead of being "dangerous" and "ruinous" to health and happiness, as is maliciously claimed by a certain class of people who oppose Spiritualism, is very beneficial to health. The proper practice of this God-given faculty of clairvoyance and healing mediumship correctly diagnoses the disease, removes the cause, and heals the patient.

Anyone who understands the fact that spirits heal the sick through mediumship, often performing wonders in this direction, should certainly have confidence enough in the good spirits to have no fear of obsession or of obsessing spirits. There is nothing to fear, and everything to gain, through the proper development of spirit mediumship.

#### A Personal Request From the Author.

If, when old age creeps on the author, he should become weak in mind from sickness or other physical causes and become mentally deranged, he begs his friends, as well as all others, not to insult his noble spirit helpers and members of his spirit band by attributing such mental defects to "evil spirits" or "obsession."

His spirit attendants have (at this writing, May 15, 1915) been his faithful inspirers and teachers, his daily attendants, and have assisted him in keeping his physical health and mental equilibrium for more than thirty-three long and fruitful years, and if because of the body becoming weakened by age to that extent that there is not sufficient nourishment given the body or generated in it, to cause returning health, and consequently the spirit friends become unable to revive and rejuvenate it, please do not doubt, censure or blame them, for it will not be their fault if old age overtakes and destroys the conditions necessary for their use in giving him health of body and of mind.

Bless his angel band, his love for them is great indeed. They have ever proven noble, good and

true, and will continue to bless him, and others through him, so long as he lives if it lies in their power.

Is this world to be forever haunted by goblins, ghosts, evil spirits, imps of darkness and devils? No! No! Not so!

Scientific investigation, and the true teachings of Spiritual Science, is rapidly relegating them to the overcrowded tombs of the many like superstitions of ancient religions, where they are moulderling into deserved decay and forgetfulness. May the good angels hasten the day of their annihilation and the consequent mental liberty and spiritual freedom which is to take their place in the minds and hearts of the coming freemen who are to grace the institutions of this dear old world in the glorious, swiftly approaching future.

Progression is not laggard. Evolution does not loiter by the wayside. Knowledge is the world's savior. Everything works together for good.

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;  
The eternal years of God are hers.  
While error, wounded, writhes in pain  
And dies amid her worshipers.

“We rest,” believing we have won the case.

Although but a small proportion of the volumes of testimony available which are favorable to our claims has been introduced, nevertheless we are willing to submit the case to the jury of the world's thinkers, feeling certain that after careful deliberation and the application of scientific tests of the

truths to which we refer, the unanimous verdict will be favorable to our claim that the spirit-world is a world of harmony and love and is governed by natural spiritual laws wisely administered by the regal-souled, spiritually-unfolded, long-time inhabitants of the higher spheres of the glorious summer-land toward which the human race are all hastening. May all fears of the present and all doubts of a happy future awaiting every human soul depart from the minds of men forever. God is in His universe and all is well.

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to the summit round by round."

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