

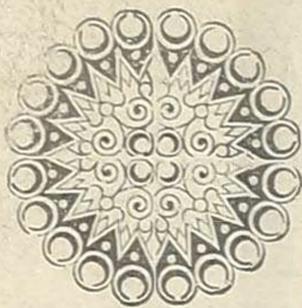
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SPIRITUAL

MANIFESTATIONS,

THEIR

NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE.

By WILLIAM RAMSEY.

EDITED WITH ADDITIONS
BY H. L. HASTINGS,
Editor of "THE CHRISTIAN," Boston, Mass.

SCRIPTURAL TRACT REPOSITORY.

H. L. HASTINGS,
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SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS:

THEIR

NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE.

BY WILLIAM RAMSEY.

The phenomena called "Spiritual Manifestations" are so numerous, so varied, and so remarkable, that they seem to require consideration and explanation. Every effect must have an adequate cause. What is the cause which produces these manifestations, among people of so many different opinions, in all parts of the world, and among the most diverse circumstances and conditions?—H.

The object of the present investigation is, to answer this question, and to ascertain and exhibit the character of modern Spiritualism, and its significance as a Sign of the Times.

There are many good men in our midst, highly gifted, and deservedly esteemed for their scientific researches and their patient investigation of the causes of things, who are bold to say that the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, are mere optical illusions, or juggling tricks, and that all of them can easily be explained upon scientific principles, and are well understood by those who perform them. Yea, more; that to believe otherwise furnishes a sad proof of a defective education, if not of imbecility of mind. But these persons, with more

correctness, might say that the solutions which they and their philosophic expounders give of these latter day wonders, ascribing them all to mere natural agents, as electricity, magnetism, odic force, and we know not what else, are still more striking illustrations of the very deficiency which they so feelingly lament in the case of others.

Granting that there are among what are called "spiritual manifestations," numerous instances of imposition, deception, tricks of legerdemain, and bare-faced swindles, as there always may be when pecuniary interests are involved, yet most candid observers will admit the existence of some phenomena in connection with spiritualism which are not yet satisfactorily explained by any power with which we are acquainted. For after allowance has been made for all deception and imposition there appears to remain a mass of veritable facts which demand careful consideration. What are the proposed explanations of these facts which are so abundant and so striking?—H.

Some observers who discard the idea of fraud, refer these manifestations to the operation of hidden forces of nature, which philosophy has not yet discovered; others view them as indicating the presence of the spirits of the dead; and still others believe them to be the workings of malignant spirits, and powers of darkness, who seek to accomplish the destruction of those who follow them.

It is easy to believe that tricksters and knaves will furnish "spiritual manifestations" to order, as long as they are liberally paid for so doing. But this does not account for other manifestations where there *are* no tricksters and knaves, and where there is no money at stake. The knave may be exposed, and his dupes may be enlightened; but persons who know in their own hearts that they are *not* knaves, are not convinced that the

things which they themselves have experienced alone are the result of trickery or knavery.—H.

Nor is the fact that professional "mediums" often fail to furnish manifestations a positive proof that under other conditions such manifestations, have not occurred. A scientific expert may detect a fraud, or prevent an imposition; but neither a scientific expert, nor a professional medium can control the will or command the conduct of an invisible personality, which may act its own pleasure about responding to their calls, or conforming to their tests and requirements. Hence in such an investigation mere science may be utterly at fault. Science can experiment with mechanical powers and chemical elements, with uniform results; and the scientific man can repeat the experiments, and tell just what the results will be; but no scientific man can tell what will be the next move of a monkey, the next act of a child, the next hallucination of a lunatic, or the next manifestation of the power of any conscious, intelligent, invisible, personal being. In every independent conscious mind there are elements of action which no mortal can comprehend or foresee; there are unknown quantities and forces there, which place it forever beyond the sphere of mathematical calculation, or scientific foresight.—H.

Hence any theory which makes no allowance for outside, invisible, independent and intelligent personal action, must be predestined to failure in any investigation of occult phenomena, *provided* those phenomena *do* in any case result from the action of invisible, intelligent personal beings. If such beings exist, as the conviction and testimony of the world for ages certifies, then those who endeavor to solve the mysteries of their action by mere mechanical tests, will detect frauds, expose impostors, deceive themselves, reach one-sided and partial

conclusions; but will utterly fail to convince honest and conscientious believers in spiritual manifestations, since they know perfectly well that they are *not* deceived, nor trying to deceive others about these phenomena; though they may be unable to convince acute investigators of the actual facts which they have witnessed, and may also be entirely indifferent as to whether they convince them or not.—H.

Doubtless there are many “mediums” who are deceivers; but behind all these there *may be* a still greater deceiver, and a deeper deception, which at times deceives even the deceivers, and working with and through them performs marvels which they alone could not accomplish; at other times leaving them to their own devices, and allowing them to suffer defeat, or failure, or to make up by tricks and impositions for the loss of their unseen assistance; thus weaving a web of mingled mystery and knavery which defies scientific investigation, and baffles the wise in their craftiness, and confirms the sincere in their delusions, thus fulfilling that apostolic prediction that in the last days “grievous times shall come, for . . . evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, *deceiving* and BEING DECEIVED.” 2 Tim. iii. 1–13.—H.

While it is claimed by some that the communications received are so pious and innocent that they cannot emanate from evil sources, it is assumed and asserted by others that spiritualistic phenomena are so trifling and contemptible that they are unworthy of any notice, and are to be regarded as of no possible importance. But both these conclusions may arise from partial views of the subject. No estimate of the real character or importance of these manifestations can be correct if it be based solely upon the physical and mental aspects of the case. Moral considerations must be regarded. There may be

nothing dangerous or important in the undulating and oscillating motions of a serpent while fascinating its prey, but the end of the performance is death. There may seem to be nothing suspicious in the playful gambling of two or three wolves, as they detach themselves from their companions and slowly work their way around a flock of sheep; but, when they have disarmed suspicion, and secured the position they sought, and are slaying and devouring, the true meaning of their antics is apparent. The devices and tricks of the hunter and fisher may, in themselves considered, seem innocent, idle, and frivolous, but they are a means of death to the curious and incautious victims. And so a system which commences with light, innocent, trifling, and frivolous performances and communications, but which ends in leading its followers to deny "the Lord that bought them," and reject "the Word of God" which "liveth and abideth forever," gives evidence that there may be a deep purpose under all its fantastic tricks; and that the craft of the old Serpent, who is a liar from the beginning, may underlie those trifling and unimportant communications which by stimulating curiosity and inspiring confidence, lull to slumber the suspicions of honest but undiscerning souls, until they are in the fatal toils of the Enemy of all righteousness.—H.

At all events, one thing is certain: those who hold that there is a spiritual agency in connection with these manifestations, have a cause which is adequate to the production of these effects—yea, and, if need be, of others far more wonderful than any that have as yet been exhibited. And they can go to the Word of God for a clear and proper solution of all these phenomena, and not to the mysterious workings of some hidden law of nature, nor to the teachings of an Infidel or Atheistic Philosophy.

THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT.

There arises here a most important question which should be settled first of all. Have we an authoritative rule of judgment? and *Has God given to man a written Revelation of his will?* If there is such a Revelation there can be no doubt what Book contains it,—that one Book which to-day exists in more languages, in more editions, and in more copies than any other book ever written; and which, in spite of criticism, opposition and persecution, has made its way onward from age to age, until it stands to-day at the head of the literature of the world;—the one Book which commands the respect and confidence of the most enlightened nations, the most progressive peoples, and the most intelligent minds on earth, while it is unknown, unheeded, rejected, or despised by the debased, the uncivilized, the uneducated, the vicious, the degraded, and the barbarous throughout the world: that Book under the light of which flourishes the science, the research, the progress, the invention, the education and the intelligence of this most progressive age, while beyond the flashing of its beams we search in vain for free government, just legislation, advanced education, manly dignity, womanly culture, education, and elevation, and all the better and more desirable elements of the civilization of the nineteenth century.—H.

The true position of this Book, which is rejected by some as a fraud, and accepted by others as a history and a revelation from God, is one of the first and most important questions that should be settled in this connection. But we cannot here interrupt our argument to present the claims of the Bible to human credence and confidence, nor to recite the abundant proofs from profane history, fulfilled prophecy, ancient monuments, and modern discoveries, which demonstrate the authenticity,

inspiration, and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures. All this has been done again and again, in convincing volumes, too numerous and too bulky to be generally read; and also more recently in the successive numbers of the *Anti-Infidel Library** to which, as well as to other similar works, we must refer the candid though skeptical reader for positive and convincing evidence that the Bible is in fact a credible and authoritative revelation of the will of God to man. And we most earnestly request those who have doubts concerning these matters to first carefully examine the publications referred to, and then proceed with this investigation, which will be conducted upon the ground that God has spoken to man, and that the Holy Scriptures contain the revelation of his will. By this Light we shall seek to walk while investigating this intricate and important subject.—H.

The educational training of some, and the manifest ignorance of others of the truths of the Bible, that only true revelation of the will of God to man, hinder multitudes from admitting, in all their literality and distinctness, the statements of the Word of God on the subject of Spirit-agency. In consequence of this, reasonings on this subject, the most false, puerile, and stupid, often pass for sound logic and good Scriptural argument, provided they be clothed in the garb of scientific words and technical phraseology, the true meaning of which the people cannot comprehend, and one grand design of which is, in reality, to conceal the ignorance of the men themselves, who attempt to explain what they do not

* While the entire series of these popular and inexpensive pamphlets should be examined by the careful student, we would direct particular attention to *The Inspiration of the Bible*, *The Wonderful Law*, *Remarks on the "Mistakes of Moses,"* *Atheism and Arithmetic*, and *Infidel Testimony to the Truth of the Bible*. To be obtained of the publishers of this work.

understand, and who are, though unconsciously to themselves, another illustration of the wonderful power of that influence the very existence of which they so stoutly deny.

This subject is one that presents to the mind of the thoughtful reader of the Word of God and the careful observer of the workings of Satan in these last days, such a wide field for remark, that we scarcely know where to begin, what facts to select, or where to end. It is certain that we are now living in strange and eventful times. There are agencies at work in our world other than can be seen by the eye of man. But this has always been the case. The facts in reference to the fall of man, and his redemption by Christ, show us most clearly, that there are opposing agencies at work in reference to man's present and future state, that are outside of himself; and that man is that most important being who concentrates the thoughts of the whole invisible world upon his person, condition, and destiny.

FUNDAMENTAL FACTS.

The writers of the Sacred Scriptures nowhere attempt to prove the existence of God. Moses takes it for granted, and proceeds to state, in the first chapters of Genesis, what God has created. Nor do they attempt to prove the existence of a Spiritual Being, whom they call in the Hebrew, Satan; which means an opposer, a foe, an enemy. They speak of it as a fact that needs no proof; for the world is full of the evidences of his real, personal existence, and of his mighty power, and unremitting hatred of God and of man. We are fully aware of the fact that the personal existence of Satan is admitted by nearly all those who bear the Christian name. It is at least among the articles of their faith. But by

the great majority of professing Christians of the present day, it is so feebly realized and so superficially regarded, that their faith is in a great degree inoperative, and the fact of Satan's existence and influence upon the minds of the people, is virtually disbelieved. One striking difference between the experience of Christians, as recorded in the New Testament, with the frequent exhortations of our Lord and his apostles to "resist the devil" and guard against his "wiles," and to be "not ignorant of his devices;" and the experience of Christians of our day, and the exhortations we hear on the subject now; must be manifest to every one who will give the subject a moment's reflection. Of old *they* felt and acted as if there *was* a great and mighty Adversary for them to oppose, and they speak of their spiritual conflicts with him as of a real warfare; but the wisdom and philosophy of our day have long looked upon Satan as a mere myth, or at best, but another name for the wayward disposition of man. This, however, is not

THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE MATTER.

The Bible speaks of the devil or Satan, as a mighty spirit, once holy, but now fallen through pride; as the deceiver of man; as the usurper of the dominion of this world, and as the Prince of this world, and also of the Power of the Air, and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.* Through his influence and "wiles," our first parents lost the image and the likeness of God in which they were created, and also the dominion over the earth which God had bestowed on man. Satan deposed man, and took his place. Since then he has not ceased to exert his influence over man; to enslave his mind by gross superstitions; to debase and defile his body by vile affections;

*1 Tim. iii. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Rev. xx. 3, 8; John xiv. 30; Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12.

to shut him out of the kingdom by leaguering him in with himself in opposition to God. Accordingly we find that although the agent, Satan, is the same at all times, yet the mode of his operations differs in different ages and among different people, according to the degree of their intellectual culture, or the amount of Scriptural truth and knowledge they might possess.

The debasing and sensual rites of Paganism are well adapted to rivet the chains of a spiritual bondage upon a people who have given up the knowledge of a true God, and who worship demons in his stead. But in an age like ours, where intellectualism and mammon are the gods to which the masses of the people bow in humble adoration, Satan must suit his "wiles" to the spirit of the times, and to the character of the people, if he would succeed in leading them to bow down to their gods in the temple of reason, and to ignore their Creator and the revelation he has given them. Hence it is that no special form of Satanic delusion continues long at one time, or in one place. The Arch-Deceiver continually varies his "wiles." Old forms of spiritual delusion pass away, but from their seeds other forms spring up, which are just as far from the truth as the former. Each successive age or generation boasts of its freedom from the follies of the past, and laughs at the ignorance and superstition of their fathers, while it is itself the victim of those Satanic delusions which are more in accordance with the circumstances, advanced knowledge, or philosophic spirit of the times. And just as we change our garments and adapt them to the season of the year upon which we may enter, while our nature remains the same—so will it be with these varied exhibitions of Satanic power; their forms differ, but their essential features are the same; and these varied manifestations will continue

to come and to go, until the kingdom of Satan on earth be overthrown, the reign of sin be superseded by that of holiness, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

As the sacred writers nowhere attempt to prove the personal existence of Satan, but always take it for granted,—and base their exhortations to resist his power and influence upon the known fact of his existence and evil character,—we need not attempt it. Still, we might ask those who deny the personal existence of Satan, and maintain that we are to understand by the term only the evil principle, or the tendency to evil that exists in human nature, how they would explain, on their theory, the history of the fall of man, and the subsequent temptation of our Lord? In the case of Adam, or rather of the woman,—for she was first in the transgression, she being deceived,* while “Adam was not deceived” but sinned understandingly,—there was evidently an influence outside of herself that was brought to bear upon her mind, so that she yielded to it and fell—she was conscious of that fact—and said so: nor is the correctness of her statement called in question by the Lord when she, in the honesty of her heart, confessed the truth, saying, “the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.”† The statement was admitted, in all its fullness, and upon that statement

* 1 Tim. ii. 14.

† Skeptics make merry over the story of a serpent that could stand on its tail and talk, and was afterwards compelled to crawl in the dust. As to a serpent standing on its tail the Bible says nothing about it. It is an invention of the skeptics, or perhaps they may have seen it in some picture book. As for a serpent’s talking, I have heard parrots talk; I have heard a cockatoo talk; and many skeptics believe that tables can talk or communicate. Now why could not a serpent talk as well as a table, if he had the same devil to help him? Why could not Satan just as easily “materialize” in the guise of a serpent, as in the guise of one’s grandmother? And why could not an evil spirit take possession of a serpent, as well as of any other medium, being, or thing?—H.

the Lord proceeds, at once, to pronounce upon the serpent his sentence, which remains upon it, to the present day, and will till time shall end.* The Judge of all the earth certainly does right. And if there were no tempter outside of woman, why should the Lord pronounce his curse upon her, and an additional one on a being, distinct from her, if no such being did exist, and if he had not deceived her as she declared he did?

So also, in the case of our Lord. He had no sin. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.† And yet he was tempted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness of Judea. Demands were made of him and proposals offered of such a character, as wholly to exclude the idea—if we admit the record in the case to be true—of these demands and proposals being the mere suggestions of our Lord's own mind. The thing is an impossibility. To suppose that the whole scene of the temptation as described by the inspired penman was a mere stretch of the imagination of our Lord; that he thought he was tempted by some one; that he thought the Tempter brought forth arguments based upon a false application of the Scriptures to induce him to yield to his suggestions; and, that he thought he answered the Tempter by correct quotations from the Word of God, requires an amount of faith, or credulity,

* The curse "On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life," does not necessarily imply that "an early specimen once went erect," but rather that, whatever there might be in the line of evolution for other creatures, the *serpent* was doomed to ever crawl in the dust. Of the nine orders of reptiles, five of which are now extinct, *all but one*, the serpent, have either wings, fins, or feet. Evolutionists believe that feet develop from a desire to walk, fins from a desire to swim, and wings from a desire to fly; but while serpents travel, swim, climb, and leap, or fly, no *serpent* has ever yet been seen which had either wings, fins or feet. The curse seems to be literally fulfilled, "*On thy belly shalt thou go all the days of thy life.*"—H. † Heb. vii. 26.

far surpassing that which is necessary to embrace the simple, scriptural, truthful narration of the facts. But it happens to be with such persons as it was with a Brahmin in India, who said to me once, "Sahib, a little truth is hard, but a big lie is easy to be believed." It is just so; and we doubt not; that the father of lies assists men in their monstrous credulity as well as in their unreasonable unbelief.

We admit the fact, then, in all its fullness, that there is such a being as Satan, and we fully believe all the statements that the Sacred Scriptures make concerning him, and his workings in our world. Our Lord calls him "the prince of this world," and the "god of this world;" and he is. That he will, ere long, be deposed, and his usurped power be taken from him, and that he will be cast out of this world, are facts clearly made known to us in the Word of God. He knows well that the kingdoms of this world will be taken from him, and that it will be done by Him who is "the seed of the woman." Hence it was that Satan offered to deliver up to our Lord the kingdoms of the world, which he then held, and still holds by usurpation, if he, the Messiah, would but fall down and do him honor, or thank him for them, or even accept them from his hand. We give Satan full credit for honesty in this case. Let him have his due. We believe he would have done just as he said he would do. He had the kingdoms of the world. He has them yet. And he, doubtless, would have delivered them to our Lord, and would have laid down the usurped sceptre of power over earth, if he could, by that act, have acquired a greater glory, and a more exalted sway. And who, in the matters of trade, and of seeking after the wealth and the honors of this world, would not part with the less for the sake of the greater?

So with Satan. The honor received from man, or from a world of men, would be as naught when compared with honor and obeisance from "the Son of man." Most cheerfully would he have parted with all this world for one act of obeisance from our Lord.* But, that he must not have. Satan was foiled in his deep-laid scheme for the final and eternal ruin of all the human race. No compromise in the case can be made with the Son of man, the rightful heir to earth, and all upon it. Satan will not of his own free will resign his usurped authority and power on earth, nor can the Son of man lay aside the glory and the dignity of his exalted nature and office, to enter upon any efforts of negotiation with Satan for the redemption of the world from his power. On the contrary, he will in due time lay hold on the usurper, bind him in chains, and cast him out of the government of this world for ever.†

Satan is fully aware of this fact. He knew when our Lord was upon the earth, the time for his dethronement had not arrived.‡ But the time is now at hand. This he knows; and hence it is that he is making special efforts, in various ways, throughout the whole world, to retain his possession of the earth to the last moment, and to ruin for time and eternity all he can, before he himself shall be cast out, and be shut up in the abyss for the thousand years.||

* For Satan to offer that which it was *known* that he could not bestow, and over which he had no power, would be no temptation even to *man*, much less to *Christ*, who of course knew the *facts* in the case. But *Christ* was really *tempted*—therefore Satan had something of value to offer to him, namely, the kingdoms of the world and their glory, if he would bow down and worship him. Many a politician of the present day pays about the same for office. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, and do we not see in the allurements of worldly ambition that seduce the heart from *right* and *godliness*, this same temptation of the adversary? We are not ignorant of his devices.—H. † Rev. xx. ‡ Matt. viii. 29. || Rev. xx. 2, 3.

Paganism and the gross forms of heathen idolatry are not adapted to our present enlightened and social state. The scenes of iniquity that have been witnessed in the public assemblies, or in the secret chambers of heathen temples, in days past, would be too gross for the eye of the refined of our day. But similar scenes may be witnessed, doubtless, even now, by those who are privileged to enter within the gates that shut them out from the vulgar gaze. It only needs another name: the name of "love," or "love" made "free," and the sanction of laws which Satan himself has helped to frame, to give currency and popularity to any of the numerous forms of iniquity that have heretofore found favor in the eyes of a world at enmity with God. Some can be led as the willing slaves of their lusts. For these there is a lure in the shape of Socialism, Free-love-ism, and Mormonism, that last form of political iniquity that has been enthroned in the earth, and which if it has not received the sanction of human law, has too long been permitted to grow unmolested, and to flourish in our midst, under the fostering care of Satan himself.

But there are others, whose instinctive horror of bodily defilement would separate them forever from those who "corrupt themselves in those things which, as brute beasts, they know naturally."* These Satan must secure by other means. Reason is their god. To them, the revelations of the Most High are, at least, but enigmatical hints of things they cannot comprehend. For the god of this world hath blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into their hearts, and give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.† They must have certain knowledge,

*Jude 10. † 2 Cor. iv. 4-6.

and such a knowledge of secret and future things, as God, in his infinite wisdom, withholds from man; for he would have man "walk by faith, not by sight."* But, what God withholds, Satan offers to impart. They would lift the veil that hides the unseen world from them, and seek to know from those who inhabit it, the things which God has hidden from them, and purposes they shall not know. The knowledge of Satan is not like ours. We can know nothing of the invisible world from our own observation. Satan can and does. The invisible world is all untrodden ground to us. To him it is all known and familiar. He, doubtless, does and can know facts, and reveal them too, which it would gratify the curiosity of our nature to know. Facts which transpired, long since, even before the birth of any now on earth, are not blotted out of the memory of Satan, who, we may suppose, retains all the knowledge he has ever had of our world for the past six thousand years. These facts he may communicate to man,—and none can prove that he cannot;—and these facts being found to be true, the door is now opened wide for the full belief of any number, or any kind of facts or fictions that Satan may see fit to communicate. The reality of one truth will pave the way for many falsehoods, all of which may be believed with equal faith. In this way, Satan will satisfy the minds of multitudes of the philosophically wise. And as they judge they can find that knowledge in and through his communications which they cannot obtain from the Word of God, the result is easily foreseen. They will reject the revelation which God has given them, as a work behind the age, and not meeting the demands of the times. If this be not so with those who now believe in the revelations that God has made to

*2 Cor. v. 7.

them in his Word, they will superadd to it these supposed revelations of facts by Satan, and thus virtually set aside entirely the Word of God as a rule of life.*

As it is certainly revealed to us that Satan will be cast out from this world, and as his efforts will be made untiringly to retain his hold upon the minds of the people, we may reasonably look for some special manifestations of his power and delusive workings before that event. These manifestations and miraculous workings will be so apparent to all those who are savingly enlightened by the Spirit of God, that they will not fail to perceive, in due time, that they are of Satanic origin. "They that trust in the Lord shall be," in these times of coming trial, "as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth forever," † while those who may trust to their own fallible reasoning, and the desires of their own hearts, will be as the chaff before the wind, or as the stubble before the flame.

By multitudes of Christians in our day, and of Christian ministers also, the study of the prophecies of God's Word is either neglected or condemned. What God declares to be "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the Day-Star arise," ‡ they, in their presumption have declared to be impenetrable obscurity. Hence the utter misapprehension which so extensively prevails in the Church at the present time, as to the character and design and end of this dispensation. Peace, prosperity, and stability are confidently predicted and fondly anticipated by the men of our progressive times, whereas conflict and destruction are distinctly

* These words, written in 1855, predicted what has long since come to pass. Infidelity follows Spiritualism as night follows day; and the enmity of evil spirits against Christ is as great to-day as it was when they cried out, "What have we to do with *thee*, thou Son of the Most High God?"—H.

† Psa. cxxv. 1. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 19.

foretold by the prophets of the Lord. And so intense is this deception, that, by many, the very workings of Satan are confounded with or taken for the operations of God's Spirit. They look for a coming glory and a brighter age for this world; but it is not such as God predicts. They raise their superstructure, Babel-like, out of material which God purposes to destroy. There is a future glory in reserve for this world. But, it is not to be effected by the wisdom of man, the progressive development of the age, nor by a careful observance and study of the mere laws of nature. It will be the work of the Spirit and power of the Lord.

Though we are journeying on toward a brighter period, when amid "scenes surpassing fable, and yet true," we shall "see golden days, fruitful of golden deeds," yet the way that leads us to that time of rest and peace, winds through dark and dismal scenes, and only those who walk in the guiding light of God can have an assurance of reaching that home of joy. Multitudes who suppose themselves calmly journeying toward the golden age, will undoubtedly find that their path leads downward, and they, with their blind leaders and followers may fall together into the ditch.—H.

WHAT HAVE THE SPIRITS TAUGHT US?

The instinctive longing of the human heart to penetrate the mysteries of the unseen, and to know what shall come to pass hereafter, has caused many to seek of familiar spirits information concerning hidden things. But though a generation has passed away since modern Spiritualism commenced its work of revelation; though communications have been received by the million; and though enough of them have been published to make a hundred Bibles, yet after all what have they added to

the sum of human knowledge? There are multitudes of spirits ready to communicate, but what do their communications amount to? There are thousands of mediums ready to write, but what have they written that is worth reading? They claim to have knowledge of all the mysteries of the unseen world, but what have they done to enlighten, instruct, elevate, and save mankind? What book can we find to-day which Spiritualists themselves would point to as a *standard* which they would accept and endorse as an authoritative revelation? They claim to have demonstrated the immortality of the soul, but the heathen world had it demonstrated in *the same way* thousands of years ago, and yet their wisest men admitted that there was no certainty in the demonstration. They claim that great and important secrets have been revealed, but their ablest writers admit that multitudes of their communications are false, and give us no distinct test whereby we may distinguish the false from the true. Instead of their theories being new they are old; instead of their revelations being the harbingers of a new era, they are and have been for ages known in connection with heathenish darkness, superstition, degradation, and barbarism, and they never have risen above their surroundings, nor elevated their votaries above the beastliness and barbarity of their times.* Spiritualists are better here than in heathen lands, but it is only because they have had the advantages of Christian education and Christian example.—H.

It is evident from the statements of travelers from the various parts of the heathen world, that the belief in spirits, distinct from man in the flesh, is, generally speaking, prevalent among the people. Not only do the people believe that they do exist, but that these spirits can

* See *Heathenism and Spiritualism*, by H. L. H.

also take possession of the bodies of men. There may be, and doubtless is much superstition connected with the faith of the people on these subjects; but still, their faith has some foundation in fact. The Old and New Testament writers speak of the existence of such evil spirits and influences, and we have no reason to think that they have yet been wholly expelled from the abodes of men.

Hence not only in ancient, but also in modern times, there is abundant and indisputable proof that multitudes of the heathen have claimed to consult, communicate with, and worship the dead. What then is boasted "Modern Spiritualism," but ancient heathenism, modified and made more respectable by the influence of the gospel of Christ?—H.

SPIRITUALISM FORESEEN AND FORETOLD.

It is a remarkable fact that those very modern manifestations of which Spiritualists boast and vaunt so much, have been foreseen by the prophets, foretold in the Scriptures, and anticipated in *this particular period* of the history of the world, by Christian men who study the Word of God, and take heed to the sure word of prophecy.—H.

The Apostles declare that the close of this age was to be marked by special manifestations of demoniac powers and Satanic influences. Thus said the Apostle Paul :

"Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is *now* present; let no man beguile you in any wise: for *it will not be*, except the falling away come first, and

the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only *there is* one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed THE LAWLESS ONE, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; *even he* whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all POWER and SIGNS and LYING WONDERS, and of all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a WORKING OF ERROR, that they should BELIEVE A LIE: that they all might be judged who BELIEVED NOT THE TRUTH, but HAD PLEASURE IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. 2 Thess. iii. 1-12.—H.

Said an able and intelligent writer in 1842, after going over and presenting the entire Scripture testimony concerning the presence and power of good and evil angels:

“Whatever glimpses we may have caught of the world of spirits in the course of this inquiry, must be turned to good account; for *we shall soon need to exercise judgment in the discerning of spirits.* The sixth vial, under which, there can be no doubt, we now live, is marked by the going forth of the three unclean demons, of whose miracle-working power we are forewarned; and He who has deigned to show us things to come, has not set forth cunningly devised fables to amuse our fancy, but revealed solemn truths to guide our steps aright, when our

path becomes perplexed beyond all that we have known hitherto, or that the experience of the church has recorded. He that is born after the flesh always persecutes him that is born after the Spirit; but now we shall have the AUTHOR of all corruption of the flesh, persecuting the Lord in his members; and we shall do well to measure, so far as we can, the extent of that power which is coming against us, that we may not only be the better prepared to withstand in the evil day, but also the better able to magnify the glorious might of Him who, having himself led the way, has given his poor followers a commission to trample under foot all the power of the enemy. How needful, therefore, how precious, are the admonitions of Scripture! "Watch and pray." "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." *—H.

In 1842 the late Edward Bickersteth, an eminent writer on prophecy, in an introduction to a volume entitled "*Principalities and Powers in Heavenly Places*," wrote:

"Looking at the signs of the times, and the long neglect and unnatural denial of all angelic ministration or spiritual influence, and at the express predictions of false Christs, and false prophets, *who shall show signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect*, and that when men receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie; I cannot but think there is a painful prospect of a SUDDEN RECOIL and religious revulsion from the present *unbelief* and *misbelief*, to an unnatural and undistinguishing CREDULITY, when Anti-Christ shall appear in his latest form, 'with signs and lying wonders.' I would, therefore, leave an earnest caution on the minds

* *Principalities and Powers*, by Charlotte Elizabeth, pp. 297, 298.

of my readers. *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.* The Scriptures have forewarned us beforehand, that we may not be *led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from our own steadfastness.*"*—H.

These words, written, printed, and read by the writer and by hundreds of others, years before the commencement of the modern spiritual manifestations near Rochester, N. Y., March 31, 1848, clearly foretold from Scripture prophecy what might soon be expected, and what has since come to pass. At that time there was a widespread "unbelief and misbelief" concerning all spiritual powers and influences. The idea of ghosts, spirits, angels, demons, the devil, or any spiritual powers whatever, was doubted, disbelieved, denied, scoffed at, mocked out of all society, not only by the infidel world, but by a large portion of Christendom. At that time probably not one skeptic in ten could have been found who believed in the existence of any kind of spirit intelligences. This was the time of "unbelief and misbelief"—it was the pendulum swung clear to one side. The devil was a myth; demons were fancies, spirits were shams, angels were phantoms of the imagination. Men would not heed the divine warning. They mocked at God's revelations concerning evil angels, unclean demons, and Satan their prince. "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved," and God sent on them at length a strong delusion. The "sudden recoil and religious revulsion" came. Throughout Christendom perhaps nineteen out of twenty of the skeptics, free-thinkers, infidels, and deists, who had been rejecting all evidence of spiritual existences, became firm believers in these new manifestations. The strong delusion came.

* *Principalities and Powers*, p. xi. See *Reasons for My Hope*. pp. 111-122.

Infidels, backsliders, and apostates swallowed the bait, and the hook! New revelations, by rapping, writing, trance-speaking, and all the current methods of spirit communications, were accepted, with their follies, fables, incongruities, falsehoods, and immoralities, and upon these communications men have based their hopes, rejected the gospel, and risked their eternal destiny.—H.

In 1840, the idea of Spirit-communication would have been scoffed at by the infidel world. Since 1848 it has come to be a leading article in the unbeliever's creed. Such a tremendous change is probably unparalleled in the history of mankind. Similar manifestations have occurred in all ancient time, throughout the heathen world, as the histories of those ages bear witness, but probably not to that vast extent which they have attained since this manifestation has swept like a whirlwind over the infidel world. Men may cry humbug, and talk of trickery, but after all their exposures the delusion rushes on like a torrent, indicating its origin and character by assaults upon the Bible, religion, virtue, marriage and law. Its priests, like Jannes and Jambres in Egypt of old, resist the truth, and are often men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. It numbers its votaries by myriads. It is just what prophetic students anticipated, and just *when* they expected to find it revealed. Should not Christians, bought with the blood of the Son of God, and cleansed and quickened by the Holy Ghost, beware of this unclean and contaminating delusion? And should not every man and woman take care lest by giving heed to seducing spirits and teachings of demons, they be lured away from the paths of virtue and religion, until they imbibe fatal errors, or come under the control of unclean and malicious spirits, and so be ensnared in a net from which they may never escape?—H.

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