

MODERN SPIRITUALISM

VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
SCRIPTURE TEACHING.

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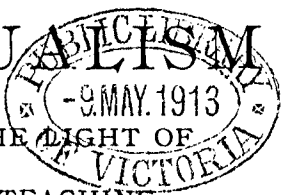
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1894.

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SCRIPTURE TEACHING.

*A Paper read before the Y.P.S.C.E., the Tabernacle,
Sackville Street, Collingwood,*

BY THE

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SPIRITUALISM.

THE question is continually being asked concerning Spiritualism, "Is it a reality, or simply a system of fraud?" The answer to this enquiry leads to another, "Is there any harm in practising it?" Replies to these two questions I propose to give to-night.

That many of the so-called manifestations of Spiritualism have been proved to be absolutely fraudulent; and that many of the most famous professional mediums have habitually resorted to trickery and the grossest deception the slightest enquiry into the history of Spiritualism places beyond a doubt. Still I believe it can be readily proved (and some of the evidence I shall put before you this evening) that after every deduction has been made for fraud, credulity, unconscious deception, remarkable coincidence, exaggeration, or looseness of observation, there remain a vast number of phenomena which can only be explained on the theory that they are occasioned by the operation of intelligent spiritual agents.

I propose to give as far as space will allow my reasons for believing (1st) *that the genuine phenomena of Spiritualism are the work of Spirits*; (2nd) *that these are in ALL cases EVIL spirits*; (3rd) *that the practice of Spiritualism is strictly forbidden in God's word.*

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In modern spiritualism, mediums are divided into 24 * classes, according to the various powers displayed by them. They are Vibratory, Motive, Gesticulating, Tipping, Pantomimic, Impersonating, Symbolic, Psychologic, Psychometric, Pictorial, Duodynamic, Developing, Pulsatory, Manipulating, Neurological, Sympathetic, Clairlative, Homomotor, Therapeutic, Missionary, Telegraphic, Speaking, Clairvoyant and Impressional Mediums. For our purpose, however, these may all be grouped under the following principal divisions, of which the others are modifications :—

- 1st, The *Motive* Medium, who furnishes the magnetic power by which spirits are enabled to move tables and other material objects.
- 2nd, the *Impersonating* Medium. In this case the communicating spirit enters and takes full possession of the medium's body, whilst his own spirit stands aside.
- 3rd, the *Neurological* Medium, in whom the spirit impresses thoughts upon the brain, and the medium puts them into words and writes them in his own handwriting and diction.
- 4th, the *Therapeutic* Medium is one who effects the cure of many diseases through the sympathetic power of seeing and describing minutely the disorganised parts of the body, and directing the necessary treatment.
- 5th, the *Clairvoyant* Medium is able to see the scenes which are actually transpiring at the time in another place, no matter how far distant.
- 6th, the *Impressional* Medium is one who has become so thoroughly impressible by a spirit that the medium appears to live a double life, the conditions and circumstances of both states of existence finding a ready expression through his organism.

* The list is taken from "A Scientific View of Modern Spiritualism," by Mr. T. Grant, of Maidstone, England.

The modern system of spiritualism is not yet half a century old, and had its rise in America. As I have not time for a detailed account, I give a brief record written a few years after the events occurred.*

"In December, 1847, a respectable farmer and his family, named Fox, settled in a house in Hydesville, a hamlet near Newark, in the State of New York. They were troubled from the first with noises, which in January, 1848, assumed the definite character of knockings, like those of a hammer. Two children, since so famous as the Misses Fox, felt something heavy, like a dog, lie on their feet when in bed, and one of them felt as if a cold hand were passed over her face. The knockings went on increasing in violence, and at length it was observed, on some occasion when farmer Fox tried the windows to see if they could be caused by the wind, that the knockings exactly answered the rattle accidentally made by the moving sash. This suggested the idea of inviting the noises, or rather the being who caused them to reply by rapping, on repetition of the letters of the alphabet, to questions put to them. This was first tried at a place called Rochester, with which the family were connected, whence the term 'Rochester knockings' came into use. The experiment succeeded perfectly, and this was the origin of 'spirit-rapping,' which has since grown into a regular system. The neighbours being called in, the affair soon thickened, and developed into a movement. The rappings revealed a murder which had taken place in the house when in other hands. Public meetings were called, committees of ladies formed to examine the

* See "Glimpses of the Supernatural," by F. G. Lee, D.C.L., vol ii., p. 141.

children, and prevent the possibility of deception. Similar phenomena began to show themselves in various parts of the country, and under yet more extraordinary conditions. Raps were heard on all sorts of objects—ceilings, tables, chairs, &c., and it was discovered that certain persons were better fitted than others to communicate with the spirits, to whom the noises were now attributed. Such persons were called mediums, a name with which the world is now familiar, and when they were present tables and chairs would move about and rise from the ground. Many other astonishing things became common, as drawing and music executed under this strange influence, by persons who knew nothing of these arts.”

I will now give my reasons for making the first of the three statements I desire to illustrate, viz., *that the genuine phenomena of Spiritualism are the work of spirits.*

Of course the first question to be settled is, are there *any* genuine phenomena of Spiritualism, or are *all* the so-called manifestations impositions.

That many of the most famous mediums have been convicted of barefaced deception is true, but admitting this is very different from acknowledging that all the so-called marvels of Spiritualism are produced by fraud. The truth seems to be this—the actual phenomena of Spiritualism are very uncertain, and depend on conditions not thoroughly understood; constant communion with these spirits blunts the moral sense, and thus when the medium finds himself unable to produce the effects by conjuration of spirits he resorts to trickery. However, patient investigations by those accustomed to conduct experiments, and to sift evidence seem to place it beyond a shadow of a doubt that many of the spiritualistic manifestations are genuine.

The testimony of men of science is, of course, of the utmost importance in connection with such an inquiry. If we turn to Germany, we are at once met with the names of six eminent scientists who have given their attention to the subject, namely, Zöllner, Fechner, Scheibner, Fichte, Weber, and Ulrici. These savants (who are behind none as careful investigators of facts) have all expressed their belief in the genuineness of Spiritualistic manifestations. The three first-named are (or were) Professors at Leipsic University, Zöllner occupying the Chair of Physical Astronomy, Fechner that of Physics, and Scheibner that of Mathematics. Fichte and Ulrici were Professors of Philosophy, the one at Tübingen, and the other at Halle; and Weber is world-known as a Professor of Electricity, and author of learned works on that topic.

Now these gentlemen rest their belief in the genuineness of Spiritualistic manifestations on experiments performed in their own presence on several successive occasions.

I have only space to notice one of their experiments. The medium whose power to call up spirits they investigated was the famous Mr. Slade.

"Almost regularly in all our sittings," says Professor Zöllner, "while Slade's hands were visibly laid on the table and his feet confined, we felt under the table the touch of hands, I wished, therefore, to institute an experiment by which yet more convincing proof of the existence of these hands could be obtained. I proposed to Mr. Slade that he should place under the table a shallow porcelain vessel, filled to the brim with white flour, and that he should request the spirits before they touched us to dip their hands in this flour. In this way the visible traces of the touch would show themselves on our clothing, and after

the touch, at the same time, we could look on the hands and feet of Slade for any remnants of flour adhering to them. Slade expressed himself as ready to undertake the experiment under these conditions. I brought in a large porcelain bowl, filled it to the brim with flour, and placed it under the table. As to the outcome of this research, we did not make ourselves anxious, but for more than five minutes carried on magnetic experiments, whilst Slade's hands were always visible before us on the table. I felt suddenly my right knee under the table vigorously clasped and pushed downwards for about a second by a large hand. At the same moment, as I stated this to those who were present, and was about to rise, the bowl of flour was pushed, without visible touch, some four feet from its place under the table. On my pantaloons I had the impression in flour of a large, powerful hand, and on the surface of the meal in the bowl were printed the palm and forefingers, with all the fine details of the skin. A painstaking examination of Slade's hands and feet showed not the slightest trace of flour. The comparison of his own hand with the impression in the flour proved that the latter was considerably the larger."

Now what are we to make of this experiment? Either we must say that the manifestations were genuine, or we must say that they were spurious and produced by fraud. If we say the latter, then it must follow that Zöllner and his brother professors were deceived persons—the victims of a clever imposition. Zöllner and his associates maintain that it is "*demonstrably impossible* to produce these results by fraud;" and one of the foremost philosophical magazines of the world—the *Zeitschrift für Philosophie*—has long since taken sides with the professors, and accepted the results as genuine.

Few English men of science are held in more repute than Wm. Crookes, F.R.S. After a careful investigation of the manifestations of Spiritualism, he writes :—

“The phenomena I am prepared to attest are so extraordinary, and so directly oppose the most firmly-rooted articles of scientific belief—amongst others, the ubiquity and invariable action of the law of gravitation—that, even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind between *reason*, which pronounces it to be scientifically impossible, and the consciousness that my senses, both of touch and sight—and these corroborated, as they were, by the senses of all who were present—are not lying witnesses when they testify against my preconceptions.” *

I can only give a few paragraphs from the record of his investigations. He writes—

“I was sitting next to the medium, Miss Fox, the only other persons present being my wife and a lady relative, and I was holding the medium's two hands in one of mine, whilst her feet were resting on my feet. Paper was on the table before us, and my disengaged hand was holding a pencil. A luminous hand came down from the upper part of the room, and after hovering near me for a few seconds, took the pencil from my hand, rapidly wrote on a sheet of paper, threw the pencil down, and then rose up over our heads, gradually fading into darkness.” †

“On three successive evenings a small table moved slowly across the room, under conditions which I had specially pre-arranged, so as to

* Enquiry into the Phenomena called Spiritualism. 1873-73, p. 77.

† P. 89.

answer any objections which might be raised to the evidence."*

"On another occasion the table rose from the floor, not only when no person was touching it, but under conditions that I had pre-arranged, so as to assure unquestionable proof of the fact.†

"Under the strictest test conditions, I have seen a solid self-luminous body, the size and nearly the shape of a turkey's egg, float noiselessly about the room, at one time higher than anyone present could reach standing on tip-toe, and then gently descend to the floor. It was visible for more than ten minutes, and before it faded away it struck the table three times, with a sound like that of a hard solid body. During this time the medium was lying back, apparently insensible, in an easy chair.

I have had questions answered by the flashing of a bright light a desired number of times in front of my face."‡

Mr. Wallace, one of the foremost of living scientific men, writes—"My position is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences."

To these I might add the evidence of Profs. Challis; Camille Flammarion, the French astronomer; Mr. Livermore, a well-known New York banker, who began his experiments as a decided sceptic; Martin Tupper, the poet; Serjt. Cox, the popular English barrister; Wm. Howlitt and Gerald Massey, the brilliant writers; the Hon. J. W. Edmunds, Chief Justice of New York; Prof. Maples and Hare, and Capt. Burton, the explorer.

These phenomena, whilst many of them are

* P. 84.

† P. 85.

‡ P. 87.

ludicrously grotesque, are undoubtedly governed by intelligences, as answers are given to questions, and information is supplied which could not possibly have been furnished by any of the parties to the experiment. Of this I will give one example. It is part of the evidence of Lord Lindsay before the Com. of the Lond. Dialectical Soc. He said—

“A friend of mine was very anxious to find the will of his grandmother, who had been dead 40 years, but could not even find the certificate of her death. I went with him to the Marshall's, and we had a séance; we sat at a table, and soon the raps came; my friend then asked his questions *mentally*; he went over the alphabet himself, or sometimes I did so, not knowing the question. We were told that the will had been drawn by a man named Wm. Walter, who lived in Whitechapel: the name of the street and the number of the house were given. We went to Whitechapel, found the man, and subsequently, through his aid, obtained a copy of the draft; he was quite unknown to us, and had not always lived in that locality, for he had once seen better days. The medium could not possibly have known anything about the matter, and even if she had, her knowledge would have been of no avail, as all the questions were mental ones.”

I will not further enlarge on my first assertion, as it will receive confirmation as I endeavour to make good the second, viz., *that these spirits are in ALL cases EVIL spirits.*

This may seem a startling and almost unkind thing to some who have just dabbled a little in spiritualism. Some have found consolation in fancying they have intercourse with their dead friends, and I can scarcely expect then to receive at once this statement. It is just such, however, that I would urge to dispassionately and earnestly

consider the evidence I will now briefly lay before you. I shall do this under seven propositions, each of which supplements the others. The proofs I shall give as far as possible in the words of noted spiritualists themselves.

1st—*No Spiritualist will deny that SOME of the spirits which manifest themselves are lying spirits.*

The following is from *The Spiritualist*, of June 25, 1875:—"There is no dependence to be placed on the mere verbal statements of spirits as to their real belief. One class deceives purposely; they are simply flowing into your general thought, and coinciding with your most devout convictions, for the purpose of obtaining a supreme and ruinous domination over your mind and body. Another class are simply parasites, negatives, drawn into the personal sphere of the medium, and seeking to sun themselves in its light and heat by absorbing the vital forces. . . . To the Mohammedan they confirm the Koran; to the Pantheist they deify nature; to the believer in the Divine Humanity they glorify the Word." The same article speaks of the "clans, hordes, tribes, and wandering banditti of the spiritual world."

Had these words been mine I might have been accused of extravagant denunciation, but it is a very easy matter to bring the most sweeping conviction of Spiritualism from the utterances of inspirational writers themselves.

At one sitting of the committee of which I have already spoken, evidence was given by Mr. Glover, who said he attended a séance held by Mr. Home. The witness had studied the question of the coming of the Lord, so asked the spirit when the Lord would come, and was informed, "In August." The spirits pointed to texts in the Bible. He asked in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost if the communications were of God, and thus

conjured, the spirit answered, "No." He then asked if they were of the Devil, and the answer was, "Yes." The witness believed that Satan did it all to deceive men.

2nd—*The Spiritualists admit that no one can distinguish between good and bad spirits.*

In support of this I will quote the evidence before the Dialectical Society, of a spiritualist, Signor G. Damiani.

On being asked by a Mr. Meyers, "Are there any wicked spirits?" "Yes," said Signor Damiani, "and lying spirits." And then he gave a remarkable instance in point, where a spirit, at a séance of Mrs. Marshall's, had professed to be the spirit of Dr. Livingstone, and had given a minute account of how he had been killed by the natives in Africa, and afterwards boiled and eaten; which was, of course, a tissue of lies from beginning to end.

He was then asked by the chairman, Dr. Edmunds, "How can you distinguish between a *medium*, who is an impostor, and a *spirit*, who is a liar?" To which he was obliged to confess, "*You cannot distinguish*, but in that case it was the spirit that was lying. Mrs. Marshall would have had no object in telling me an absurd story about Livingstone being killed, and boiled and eaten. And the explanation the spirits gave was this—'You came here,' they said, 'out of curiosity, and you found an impertinent spirit, who amused himself at your expense.' It was simply the trick of a ragamuffin spirit."

The next evidence in the same direction I will give from the columns of a formal organ of the Spiritualists.

"Mr. and Mrs. Chevalier attend a séance at which the spirit of 'a darling child' is manifestly present. They attend a second séance, and through the same medium they are confirmed in

the conviction of the real presence of their child. Mr. C. then finds that he is himself a medium, and forthwith he purchases a small table for the exercise of his power. His first experiment proves to him beyond a doubt that an intelligent being, though invisible, is with him; but he speedily begins to suspect that whatever the character may have been of the spirit which first manifested to him through another medium, this, which is now communicating through himself, is an evil spirit." The paper then describes the movements of the table, and continues — "This gentleman then adjured the spirit in a variety of forms, and asked if it was not a bad spirit? and it said 'Yes.' Then he said, 'Accursed devil! By the living God I adjure thee to speak the truth! Has the spirit of my child *ever* been put in communication with myself or her mother through this or any other table?' The 'accursed devil' said, 'No, never!' Then after similar assurances, Mr. C. made up his mind to believe the devil; and he closed his experiments with an auto-de-fe, by breaking up and burning the table."

The story was told by Mr. Chevalier at much greater length before the Dialectical Society, and he closed his evidence with these words:—"My opinion of the phenomena is that the intelligence which is put in communication with us is a fallen one. It is the devil, the prince of the powers of the air. I believe we commit the crime of Necromancy when we take part in these spiritual séances."

Before going a step further in my indictment, I would say:—If the case were no darker than I have already made out, it might well make any who are playing with this matter stop to consider what they are doing. They have, it may be, lost a dear one, and have found consolation in attending

séances, in which the spirit of their loved one is professedly present. What guarantee have they (even if nothing more than I have already substantiated were proveable) that the spirit producing the manifestations may not be what Signor Damiani called a 'ragamuffin spirit?' In the case of Mr. Chevalier (according to his testimony) the spirit told him things which the child and he only knew. The child had been brought up in France, and the spirit communicated with him in French and English. He says, "Frequently I obtained manifestations in French and English, such messages as a child could send to a parent." Yet all the while that he was consoling himself with the thought that he was holding fellowship with his own child, it was a demon who was playing with him, and it was only the solemn adjuration in the great Triune name that compelled the demon to throw aside the mask, and to confess that the spirit of his child had on no occasion been in communication with him.

But now I go a step further in proof that not only *may* the spirits be evil ones, but that in all cases they *are*—so I would say,

3rd—*There is presumptive evidence that the spirits are evil ones.*

As I shall give *direct* proof of this, I need not spend much time on it.

The point I would emphasise under this heading is the ridiculous nature of many of the manifestations. Again I quote from a Spiritualistic journal. An article, by Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, in the *Spiritual Magazine*, after detailing some manifestations, concludes thus:—“The writer cannot accept as emanations from the Spirit revelations of a spiritual nature, inconsistent with his intuitive conception of the nature and attributes of God. He

cannot trace the dignity of the divine power in breaking cedar pencils and tables, or ringing bells ; nor its wisdom in the mild communications of the medium writings. He believes that if God meant to reveal to him that this Spiritualism was the work of His Holy Spirit, He would not have given His will in the very heathenish oracular manner here recorded ! He fails to see anything like divine wisdom or divine power in these unreasoning medium writings and grotesque physical phenomena."

But I will pass on to say—4th—*That the doctrines taught by the spirits prove them to be evil spirits.*

I could much more easily devote all the space to this one branch of the subject than I can compress any adequate statement of it into the few pages I can bestow upon it. I would, however, mention the following facts, which can be abundantly proved :—

(a) Notwithstanding the fact that lying spirits continually contradict themselves, a connective system of spiritualistic teaching can be gathered from the various inspirational writings.

(b) This system has for its fundamental position the absolute denial of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian religion.

(c) The most famous system of inspirational teaching is a book published by an M.A., of Oxford, under the title "Spirit Teachings." In this book, written under the influence of the spirits, the doctrine of the atonement is contradicted ; the inspiration of the Scriptures is denied ; the Resurrection of Christ is also denied ; the human reason is repeatedly stated to be the only standard of truth. Of the atonement this work says :—"The spirit creed does not recognise any need of propitiation towards this God, It rejects as false any

notion of this Divine Being vindictively punishing the transgressor, or requiring a vicarious suffering for sin."

(d) The Spiritualist teaching allows no place for sin. The great peculiarity of familiarity with these spirits is that as long as the votary follows their guidance, they keep out of sight all idea of sin. They urge in a vague, mild way, that virtue should be practised, but sin is only failure to attain to the height that might be reached. There can be no hell, for there is no sin to punish; there can be no judgment, for there is no sin to condemn.

Mr. T. W. Greenwell thus states the Spiritualistic conception of sin:—"Vice is virtue in its unprogressed or germinal condition; sin is therefore an impossible chimera. Self-love is the centre and fountain-head of all human or spiritual actions—the spirit world is the theatre for the continued evolution of human spirits, under the perpetual force of nature working through self-love."

A sentence or two taken from the book I have already quoted is all I have time to give, but they are enough to show the complete rejection of Christianity.

"We know nothing of the potency of blind faith or credulity. We know, indeed, the value of a trustful receptive spirit, free from the littleness of perpetual suspicion. Such is Godlike, and draws down angel guidance. But we adjure and denounce that most destructive doctrine that faith, belief, assent to dogmatic statements, have power to erase the traces of transgression; that the earth life-time of vice, and sloth, and sin can be wiped away, and the spirit stand purified by a blind acceptance of a belief, of an idea, of a fancy, of a creed. Such teaching has debased more souls than anything else to which we can point."

The Rev. T. L. Harris, who was for years one of

the leading mediumistic writers, on renouncing Spiritualism, thus summed up its doctrines:—*

First—That according to Spiritualistic tenets, nature is God. Secondly—That God is an undeveloped principle in process of evolution. Thirdly—That the Jehovah of the Bible was a ferocious human spirit, who deceived ancient mediums. Fourthly—That the Lord Jesus Christ was but a natural man possessed of the ordinary mediumistic faculty of spiritual clairvoyance. Fifthly—That our Lord's theological and psychical teachings were but the reproductions of false mythologies. Sixthly—That He held His power, great or little, because under the influence of departed men.

He concludes by saying, "I pledge myself, and stand committed to the assertion that, through mediumistic channels, all these things are taught as emanating from the spirits, and worse is taught, if possible, to those who penetrate the inner circles of the gloomy mysteries, where the old magic is born again."

The fifth proof I would bring forward that these spirits are *evil* spirits, is not only that their doctrines are false, *but are such as the Scripture clearly states devils should teach.*

In 1 Tim. iv. 1-3, we read, "But the Spirit saith expressly that in later times some should fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (or marg. demons) through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer."

* Quoted in "Demonology and Witchcraft," by Robert Brown, p. 185.

I cannot possibly go into the spiritualistic forbidding to marry, but I would say the spiritualistic teaching strikes at the very root of the divine institution of marriage. Spiritualistic works also are full of prohibitions of the eating of animal food—thus are the spirits to-day forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.

At the Spiritualistic Convention, held at Providence, Rhode Island, September, 1866, resolutions were adopted (1) abandoning all Christian ordinances and worship; (2) discountenancing all Sabbath Schools; (3) declaring that animal food should not be used, and to crown all what was called “sexual tyranny” was denounced.*

But in the sixth place, *the attitude of the spirits towards Jesus Christ brands them as demons.*

I have already given you evidence that according to Spiritualistic teaching the divinity of our Lord is denied, his powers said to be mediumistic, his teaching merely clairvoyant.

It remains for me to say that Spiritualists have carried the blasphemy so far as to profess to produce the materialised form of Jesus Himself.

The *Cincinnati Enquirer* published the following: “We have just received a remarkable document, duly attested by seven witnesses, giving an account of a series of séances, which we print verbatim, simply stating that these witnesses are all persons of respectability, moving in the best circles, and looked upon as truthful and reliable. In this document it says:—“Friday morning we had a private séance, at which only eight persons were present, including Dr. Pence. The medium entered the cabinet, and in about twenty minutes was

* On this subject see “Earth’s Earliest Ages,” by G. H. Pember, M.A., chap. xiii.

entranced. After a little while, during which the spirit control talked as usual, the cabinet door opened, and a majestic form appeared that filled us with awe: for there in the door stood, in majestic grandeur, Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord of Glory! the King of Kings, the pure and holy Christ of God! He had come according to promise, and stood manifest before our eyes. He stood looking at us silently for several moments, and then said, 'You are faithful soldiers, and greater wonders than these shall you yet see.' These words He spoke in a low voice. He then beckoned each one of us to Him, took us by the hand, and blessed us before retiring to the cabinet. He had stood in the door and on the platform nearly half an hour. He had on a white robe, and a crown upon His head, in the centre of which glittered a beautiful gem. A faint halo was visible surrounding His sacred head. He left us awe-stricken with His sacred presence. This was the masterpiece of materialisation."

I am sure you will not desire that I should read more of this precious document, but I cannot forbear quoting our Lord's own words, * "Then if any man say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert! go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

The last proof I shall bring that the spirits which communicate through mediumship are evil

* See "The Midnight Cry," by E. McHardie, p. 474.

spirits is *their conduct towards those who desire to break loose from their influence.*

At first, consultation with spirits is only conducted with considerable difficulty, but after a time the hold of demonistic powers becomes greater, until at last the cobweb has become a cable.

In the "Rules to be observed for the Spirit Circle," published by Emma Hardinge, this instruction occurs:—"Spirit control is often deficient and, at first, almost always imperfect. By often yielding to it your organism becomes more flexible and the spirit more experienced: and practice in control is absolutely necessary for spirits as well as mortals. If dark and evil disposed spirits manifest to you never drive them away, but always strive to elevate them and treat them as you would mortals under similar circumstances."

As long as the poor victim allows himself to be led hither and thither by the controlling demons the spirits give him comparatively little trouble (though even then he is sometimes the sport of what Signor Damian called "ragamuffin" spirits) but the moment he determines to break loose from the power of the spirits they throw off all disguise and he is rent as the demoniacs spoken of in the New Testament.

The *London Weekly Review*, August 1887, contained the following paragraph:—

"A young man was lately found in an apparently dying condition on the floor of a Paris church. When he was restored to consciousness it was discovered that his mind was wandering and he was accordingly conveyed to an asylum. It has been since ascertained that the poor fellow was the victim of the Spiritualists or Theosophists, who had been using him as a medium in order to find out what Gen. Boulanger was doing at a certain time."

A notice of Miss Showers, of Teignmouth, written

by her mother, appeared in the Spiritualistic journal *Light* for Jan. 28th, 1882. Miss Showers was the daughter of an officer of the Bengal Staff Corps and became a powerful medium, but suddenly discontinued practising spiritualism. Of this time her mother says:—"The spirit manifestations which commenced when Miss Showers was only 16 years old, nearly cost her life, and she will probably never entirely recover from their effects. For more than six months she lost the use of her limbs, and lay in a partially cataleptic state of utter helplessness, but with the awful and unspeakable reality of Spiritualism ever before her."

I have not time to add more than one sentence on this subject. It is from the pen of Robert Brown, a patient investigator into the whole subject. He says* "It is a very significant fact that one of the leading medical organs of the United States asserted that of the 24,000 cases of insanity in that country in the year 1873 no less than 7,500 of them were believed to be directly attributable to Spiritualism."

But I must, in conclusion, give a few words in proof of my third main proposition that *all such traffic with spirits is absolutely forbidden in Scripture.*

Spiritualists whilst they end with denying the Scriptures, usually obtain their first hold on unwary ones by trying from the Bible to show there is no harm in it.

They point to the transfiguration of Christ, and speak of the appearance of Moses and Elias as the materialisation of the illustrious dead. But is there no difference between the right possessed by Jesus Christ to reveal His power and glory, and the action of a poor mortal in imitating the work of the Lord of life and of death?

One passage quoted by them in defence of me

* Demonology and Witchcraft p 294

diuimistic writing is 1 Chron. 28-19.—“All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.” But in this case it is no intercourse with spirits but the direct inspiration of the Most High that is claimed by David.

When we turn to the word of God, divesting ourselves of all such blasphemous thoughts as that Jesus was a mere medium and that the promise concerning His followers, “the works that I do shall they do also;” relates merely to similar mediumistic manifestations, we are not left long in doubt.

I have only space to give the passages, without comment. In each case I quote the Revised Version.

Ex. xx. 18—“Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live.”

Lev. xix. 31—“Turn ye not unto them that have familiar spirits nor unto the wizards; seek them not to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.”

xx. 6—“And the soul that turneth unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards, to go a whoring after them. I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.”

27—“A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death,” &c.

Deut. xviii. 10-11—“There shall not be found with thee any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination, one that practises augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord.”

The case of the witch of Endor is sometimes quoted by the Spiritualists, but it contains the most terrible indictment against them, for the death of Saul is distinctly stated to be through the anger of the Lord at his having asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit. 1 Chron. x. 13.

Isa. viii. 19—“And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards, that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living, should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no more morning for them.”

In Micah. v. 12 is the promise, “and I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers.”

Of Manasseh, it is said 2 Kings xxi. 6—"And he made his son to pass through the fire, and practised augury, and used enchantments, and dealt with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards; he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord."

Did space allow, I would quote also the following passages:—Isa. ii. 6. xix. 3. xxix. 4. xlvi. 12, 14; Jer. xxvii. 9-10.

Turning to the New Testament we find the power of evil spirits over men, recognised in the cases of possession by demons, of which many are recorded.

Spiritualists claim that the only prohibitions to witchcraft are in the Old Testament, and one of their prominent writers says.—"We might be disposed to ask—What has the Mosaic dispensation to do with the nineteenth century? . . . the same people who were forbidden to consult spirits, were forbidden to accept interest, to eat pork, and were moreover required to keep the Jewish Sabbath."*

This writer overlooks the fact that consulting the spirits, of witchcraft was not only reckoned an abomination when practised by God's own people, but also when pursued by the heathen. In Deut. 18. 12, this is given as the very wickedness for which God overthrew the Canaanites.

But it is quite a mistake to imagine that there is no condemnation of witchcraft in the New Testament.

In Gal. v. 20, it occurs in the list of the works of the flesh, and when we read the dreary catalogue we find it classed with the worst of vices.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these—fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, *scorcery*, (or in A.V., witchcraft), enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envying, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they which practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

In the book of Revelation, *scorcery* or witchcraft is spoken of as one of the abominations of the latter

* *Where are the Dead*, or Spiritualism explained.—p. 176.

days, in Rev. 9.21., (where it is classed with murders, fornication and thefts); 18,23., (where it is said to have deceived the nations); and amongst those cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone are sorcerers—Rev. 21.8; and amongst those shut out from the city—the heavenly Jerusalem—are sorcerers—Rev. 22.15. In Acts 8.9-11: 13.6-8: 16.16, sorcerers are mentioned, but universally in condemnation.

In token of the reality of the conversion of the Ephesians we are told of their bringing their books of magic and burning them—Acts 19.19.

Modern Spiritualism is absolutely subversive of the gospel taught by Paul; but the apostle says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

When Paul came across a girl with a spirit of divination he cast it out in the name of Jesus Christ. As far as we can ascertain, the particular description of possession in this case was that of clairvoyancy or trance mediumship.

Again, this Spiritualism seems to be set forth as one of the most ominous signs of the near approach of our Lord, for in 1 Tim., 4.1, we read:—"But the Spirit saith expressly that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth.

Indeed this heresy seems to be likely to ultimately reach its climax in the antichrist who is thus spoken of in 2 Thes. ii, 9. "He, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of

unrighteousness for them that are perishing; because they received not the love of truth that they might be saved."

In conclusion, let me give the following cautions:

1st—Do not *believe* all you hear as to Spiritualism. The whole question is beset with difficulty owing to the wholesale deceptions that are practised.

2nd—Do not *disbelieve* anything simply because it is contrary to ordinary human experience. Nothing pleases the Devil more than to bring unwary ones into this trap with the idea that it is simply a new form of fun, a weird kind of burlesque.

3rd. Do not listen to the argument that Spiritualism must be good because it has effected the reform of some who have been vicious. Paul says,* "Even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness." It is worth Satan's while to induce a man to give up gambling, or drink, or uncleanness, if by so doing he gets him under his immediate control.

4th. Do not listen to the contention that you can attend séances and yet still remain a Christian. Loyalty to Christ forbids the Christian having anything to do with a system that deliberately denies the Lord. It cannot be too distinctly understood that the choice lies between Christ and the spirits, and that in choosing the spirits you turn your back on the Redeemer. All intercourse with the spirits is clearly and unequivocally forbidden in Scripture, and the penalty of death attached to it under the old dispensation, whilst under the new it is the sign of that revolt against God which is to find expression and embodiment in the antichrist.

5th. Do not imagine that you can play with Spiritu-

* 2 Cor. ii. 14-15.

alism and leave it any moment and be none the worse. Not only is every such act a deed of direct disobedience of God, but like all the devil's snares, such as drink, opium, smoking, every new indulgence puts a fresh chain around the votary until the power becomes far beyond human might to overcome.

But if there are any who have already become ensnared, and in ignorance or folly have allowed themselves to be deluded, to such I would say—There is One stronger than the devil. He who cast out demons from all who were possessed is present to-day. His touch has still its ancient power. He still is with us to destroy the works of the devil, and though all the demons of hell should assail you, yet greater is He that is for you than all they that can be against you.



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