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SPIRIT-POSSESSION.

A TREATISE UPON MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

COMPRISING

The Experiences and Theories of a "Retired" Spirit-Medium.

BY HENRY M. HUGUNIN.

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INTRODUCTORY.

"Lord what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him?"—*David.*

MAN is a mystery. Of all created things, perhaps, he is the greatest mystery to himself. Viewed in the light of the fall of Adam and the atonement of Jesus Christ, he is the most astonishing being that the mind can imagine—a wonder to the angels.

The Bible speaks of man as having a body, spirit and soul, (1 Thessalonians v., 23.) The body is the sensual part, the shell, which dies and is left to decay. It is fitted only for the life that now is, and man is responsible to God, who made him, for the right use of the body, as well as for the condition of the soul at the hour of death. But he is to be judged principally for the deeds committed by the body, through its members.

The spirit and the soul are properly the man, in or out of the body, investing it with life, intelligence and responsibility. At the resurrection of the dead, man will rise with a spiritual body, (1 Corinthians xv., 44,) something, perhaps like that of an angel's, without a trace of corruption in it. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." The spirit and the soul will occupy it as they do the earthly body, with the difference that the raised body will not be fitted for such a life as we now live on earth, any more than the body that we now have is fitted for the heavenly life—"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

The eyes, ears and other organs of a living man are so many instruments, or implements, by which his soul and spirit help him to work his way through the world. When the spirit and soul leave the body of flesh, these outward organs are of no more use than if they had never existed. The man has gone into another world, (not so far from this, perhaps, as many persons imagine, but unseen and unheard—I was going to add, *unfelt*, but I think that hardly true—by our carnal organs), and his house or body, is left unto his surviving friends desolate and worthless, except to memory. His labors are ended, his earthly account closed up, and his life henceforth is eternal, either for joy or misery.

The soul is that part of man, derived from God alone, which more closely resembles the Creator than any other. It is that part of man which is the most susceptible to sin, which is the most easily injured, which is to suffer or rejoice through eternity, according to its condition when it leaves the body with the spirit. If it is saved and purified before death, the most vivid imagination can have but a faint idea of the peace joy and glory it is capable of enjoying in heaven, or of the bitter misery that awaits it eternally in hell if it is not redeemed in this life, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

SPIRIT-POSSESSION.

I HAVE been requested to write upon the nature and developments of modern Spiritualism. At the outset, I desire that no sect, society, or individual, except myself, be held responsible for any opinion or theory advanced therein. I desire, also, to state what I believe to be true, as gathered from my personal experience as a spirit-medium, the records of human history, the Word of God, and the revelations of the spirits themselves.

First, I class modern Spiritualism with the supernatural phenomena of the ancients, known as sorcery and witchcraft, which notably flourished in Egypt and Canaan in the days of Moses, and in other ages and places. It occupied a prominent position in history in the time of Moses, while he was laboring with Pharaoh for the release of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, as recorded in the early chapters of Exodus; and in several portions of the Bible we find particular mention of similar demonstrations. Among the most remarkable ancient Spiritualists, Mr. Daniels mentions Jannes and Jambres, (the Egyptian sorcerers who withstood Moses); Balaam, the soothsayer; the woman of Endor; the pythonic damsel of Philippi; Elymas, the sorcerer, and Simon Magus. This latter individual, a very prominent Spiritualist declared, was "a prince among the workers of spiritual miracles." His history is written in Acts viii. 9–23. Some of the false prophets of the Bible, it is also claimed with considerable

arrogance, were "often as really inspired as the Lord's prophets, though by a widely different agency." The latter were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and the former by evil spirits. In the history of Ahab, (2 Chronicles xviii.), is a case of the real inspiration of 400 prophets by a lying spirit, by which Ahab was deceived and destroyed in judgment for his wickedness. On the other hand, Jehoshaphat was not so deluded. He inquired for "a prophet of the Lord" besides, that he might inquire of him.

The earlier modern Spiritualists considered Spiritualism a revival of ancient sorcery, which Webster's Dictionary defines as "magic witchcraft; or divination with the assistance of evil spirits." Ex-Governor Talmadge, of New York, declared: "Now all the magic, the mysteries, the witchcraft, and necromancy of the ancient world, from the time of the Delphic oracle, are explained by these modern investigations." Judge Edmonds, Andrew Jackson Davis, Charles Partridge and other noted Spiritualists also expressed a similar belief.

A witch is defined as a "woman who practices divination by the aid of evil spirits; one who is possessed with a divining spirit, or has one in her; one who exerts supernatural power by the assistance of a familiar spirit;" in other words, she is a developing spirit-medium. Judge Edmonds wrote: "About two hundred years ago, under the administration of the wisest of the English judges, hundreds were tried and executed for the crime of witchcraft . . . . And Barrington, in his observations on the statutes of '20, Henry VI., says that 30,000 people were burned for witchcraft within 150 years."

In our own country, the records of the Salem (Mass.)

witchcraft point out to us the horrors and evil results of the ancient systems of necromancy and sorcery reproduced and demonstrated, bringing distrust, confusion and violent deaths into a peaceful community. And yet the earlier American Spiritualists claimed that Spiritualism is but a revival of the supernatural phenomena of ancient sorcery and witchcraft.

For one, I indorse their claim in this respect.

As regards the supernatural element in sorcery, witchcraft and Spiritualism, it is useless to deny its existence. No medical, religious, or philosophical reasoning can successfully controvert the supernatural character of spirit-manifestations. Medicine and religion will serve to strengthen our physical and mental humanity, and brace it up to resist the influences of evil spirits, but the evil influences will continue to exist, although their power over the nervous systems of men is checked. Even in this age of the world, amid all the materialism and "philosophy" that encompass us, the supernatural does still hold its sway over the minds and bodies of men.

What is the supernatural? It is that which produces a natural event, or effect, during the apparent suspension or reversion of natural laws, or which causes a surprising result by the introduction of an unknown influence The supernatural must either originate with one of the two great forces at work in the world—good and evil—and its effects must partake of the nature of one or the other of these forces. For instance, the miracles performed by Jannes and Jambres in the Egyptian palace were in opposition to those performed by Moses and Aaron. The latter were influenced by the Spirit of God; the former were opposed to God, being in the interest of paganism and oppression. The miracles of Jesus and

his disciples were all performed in the interest of benevolence, and for good purposes; those of the soothsayers and magicians (as in the case of Sceva's seven sons, in Acts xix., 13–16, and Simon, in Acts viii., 5–23,) were evidently actuated by a love of money or personal popularity.

In the scriptures, the devil, or that evil force that is arrayed against God and all his goodness, is spoken of as "the prince of this world," or "the prince of the power of the air," showing us how very intimately his influence is brought to bear upon things earthly, and particularly upon things human. This influence began to be felt in the garden of Eden, where it wrought the fall of man, and that influence has always been felt, with tremendous force, in the propagation of temptations and crime ever since.

If I am asked why God permits such a wicked spirit to influence men in this way, instead of destroying it at one blow, as he might, I shall reply that I do not know; nor is it my business to search for the reason, or encourage others to do so. It is sufficient for me to know that God can and does destroy the evil spirit in any and all persons who repent of their natural wickedness, and henceforth wholly devote themselves and all they have to his service, trusting in his Son Jesus Christ as their only salvation, and living up to all the spiritual light that they possess, as set forth in the Bible. Whoever does this, and seeks earnestly and sincerely for purity of life and heart, will find himself delivered from all further dominion of the devil, so long as he maintains his faith and obedience to God.

The history of the world shows that the fascinations of the supernatural, without regard to good or evil, have

led men into the worship of many strange gods. While most nations worship beings of superior excellence (real or fancied), whose love and favor they desire, the Chinese worship the devil, seeking to secure his good will, so that he will do them no harm.

The great God of heaven has best revealed himself to us through the Bible. Men may puzzle their brains with the dogmas of all the "philosophers," from the old and wise serpent in Adam's paradise, down to Tyndall and Huxley, and then know less of God than a poor, ignorant servant who reads her Bible and converses often with her Creator in the privacy of her closet.

But when men cast away the Bible and its teachings, as things of little worth, the devil steps in with some device to excite their curiosity, mislead them into error, and confirm them in false, delusive and ruinous doctrines. This was the way in which he commenced with Eve, and he has been doing business in this manner ever since, with similar results. When certain men began to scout the truths of the Bible and cry out for other doctrines that would better suit them (by allowing them to indulge their carnal propensities without restraint), the devil introduced modern Spiritualism, in this century, just as he inveigled King Saul into a similar sorcery with the woman of Endor. It was the death of Saul, and Spiritualism has destroyed thousands of its followers, and sent them to perdition, by its delusive and unholy opposition to the only means which God has provided to secure everlasting peace and blessedness.

Let us now examine the manner in which the devil and the evil spirits whom he controls, be they unearthly demons or the departed spirits of wicked men and women, contrive to influence living people and turn them

into pliable instruments, to deceive others by spirit mediumship.

There is a science called "biology," or "animal magnetism"—sometimes incorrectly styled "psychology,"—which, twenty-five years ago, was rather extensively practiced in private and public, in this country, creating much wonder and amusement by its remarkable manifestations or phenomena. By it one person, possessing more "magnetism," or "will power," growing out of certain physical conditions, (which I think have never been satisfactorily explained), can, by particular manipulations, attain perfect control of the body, members and mind of another person, causing the latter individual to say and do things silently or verbally suggested by the "operator," in the most complete and involuntary manner. In this condition the "subject" loses his entire will, and has no power to resist that of the "operator," whose influence is felt not only near by, but, in some cases, when a considerable distance separates them. The body is not only in subjection to the "operator," but the imagination and the mental faculties are all controlled by him, sometimes to a degree that destroys the power of the "subject" to identify himself. In his infatuation, he sees, smells, tastes, hears and moves as the "operator" directs, however wisely or ridiculously. The same glass of water may be made to taste like coffee, beer, ardent spirits, etc., to the "subject," as his "operator" shall dictate. It is a dangerous science to trifle with, as it puts the "subject" so completely under the direction of another person and so destroys tbe "subject's" own volition that he or she is in danger of being helplessly drawn into evil and hurtful practices. There is one advantage which most persons possess in pursuing this science of

"animal magnetism"—their own consent to become the "subject," or victim, is required before the "charmer" can overcome them. Resistance is safety.

In a similar manner, it has been conceived, evil spirits, unseen, but pressing about the unregenerate, are permitted to magnetize the bodies and spirits of living persons who seek to communicate with them, and whose physical organizations are fitted to become spirit-mediums. Happily, all persons are not. Certain conditions of the nervous system, temperament and mental organization are requisite for mediumship, as well as necessary in a "good subject" for the success of "animal magnetism." In the days of Jesus upon earth, it was said, that the evil spirits entered into the man, and it may be that the modern spirit-medium is similarly demonized. I am not prepared to state by which of the two processes named the spirits control the mediums, but incline to a belief that both methods are possibly used, for the devil leaves no stone unturned to ruin the souls of men. But, as in "animal-magnetism," resistance to spirit influence is a strong safeguard, especially if the divine help is prayerfully sought. This latter fact is a significant indication that modern Spiritualism, in its nature and tendencies, is not in harmony with the interests of God's kingdom.

Recurring again to the Spiritualism mentioned in the Bible, I am inclined to believe that the demoniacal possession, in many instances recorded by the Evangelists as healed by our Lord Jesus Christ during his life on earth, partook largely of the nature of spirit-mediumship. Notably we have a case, a marked case, indeed, in the naked man among the tombs of Gadara, (Mark v.), who was tormented by a legion of devils, or unclean spirits

—"daimon," or *demons ;* not Satan, or Diabolus, " the father of lies," but evil spirits less potent, yet, perhaps, quite as malevolent.

" When I read of the number of demons in particular persons," says a distinguished commentator, "and see their actions expressly distinguished from those of the man possessed; conversations held by the demons about their disposal after their expulsion, and accounts given how they were actually disposed of; when I find desires and passions ascribed peculiarly to them, and similitudes taken from their manners and customs, it is impossible for me to deny their existence without admitting that the sacred historians were themselves deceived in regard to them, or intended to deceive their readers."

Another scriptural writer says: "The universal opinion in the East is, that devils have the power to enter into and take possession of men in the same sense as we understand it to have been the case, as described by the sacred writers. I have often seen the poor objects who were believed to be under demoniacal influence, and certainly, in some instances, I found it no easy matter to account for their conduct on natural principles ; I have seen them writhe and tear themselves in the most frantic manner."

Now, whether the evil spirit enters into, or only magnetizes the medium, or victim, the result appears to be the same—the "subject" loses his own will and is overcome by the power and will of his tormentor, physically and mentally.

The will being overcome, the medium becomes a fanatic. Judge Edmonds, the great Spiritualist, in a public lecture, said : " We have to contend against our own fanaticism : for I assure you, from my own experi-

ence and observation, that the fascination of this intercourse is so great that its tendency is to lead men away from their proper judgment, and instil a spirit of fanaticism most revolting to the calm and natural mind."

With regard to the phenomena of Spiritualism as manifested by strongly developed mediums, it must be admitted that as they are supernaturally affected and governed by other powers than those of living human beings, the wonderful performances of which Spiritualists boast in their *seances* are not all to be classed as "humbugs." The opinion is sometimes expressed that "Spiritualists do not perform the wonders which they profess to do." Certainly not, always, for there are pretenders in all professions, as well as true performers. One of the most wonderful manifestations of modern spirit-mediums is to produce the appearance of "materialized spirits." In the tenth century, of the Greek Spiritualists, it was written: "Goetia, or witchcraft, is a certain art respecting material and *terrestrial demons*, whose images it causes to become visible to the spectators of this art. And some of these demons it leads up, as it were, from Hades, but others it draws down from on high, and these too, such as are of an evil species. This art, therefore, causes certain phantastic images to appear before the spectators."

Again says Dr. Cumming, of London: "Whatever God does in the world, Satan always gets up something very like it, because his hope of progress is by deception. We may quote the miracles of the magicians of Egypt. Satan got up his miracles too—perhaps real, at least supernatural ones."

When Aaron's rod was changed into a serpent before Pharaoh, by the power of God, the Egyptian magicians

"cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents;" as this was a contest between God and evil, and God was helping Aaron, it is a fair inference that wicked influences were helping these magicians; "but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods," and evil was defeated, as it always will be when it fights against God. Then Moses and Aaron turned all the waters of the river into blood; "and the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments." And, afterwards, the magicians "brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt," as Aaron had also. But when Aaron brought upon the Egyptians the plague of lice, by the divine power, the magicians failed to repeat this miracle, and said to Pharaoh, "*This is the finger of God.*" The evil spirits were unable to cope with such a wonder as *that.* (Exodus vii., viii.)

It is written that "false Christs and false prophets shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect," (Mathew xxiv., 24.) And the beast, (in Revelation xiii., 13), it is said, "doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." Paul wrote also, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, (ii., 1, 10), that "the man of sin, the son of perdition" was to be revealed "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." The inspired Revelator, also, (xvi., 14,) speaks of "the spirits of devils" (demons) working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Finally, Paul wrote to Timtohy (first Epistle, iv., 1,) "that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy." How many of the spirit-mediums are hypocrites, pretending to do those things which they do not, is uncertain; but even Satan himself is a hypocrite, often passing himself off as "an angel of light," (2 Corinthians xi., 14.)

That the evil spirits desire to communicate with every living human being whom they can influence and seduce, is pretty well understood, and the methods which they use are as novel as they are numerous, and often so absurd as to appear ridiculous to well-balanced minds. That some of these efforts so convince men of the reality of spirit-revelations do not disgust those whose curiosity concerning Spiritualism leads them within the influence of the charmed "circle," is simply because they are infatuated with the novelty and fascination of seeking to converse with departed friends. It is wonderfully fascinating, especially the hope of becoming fully developed as a spirit-medium, and without realizing the danger, hundreds plunge into the bewildering, forbidden and unholy pleasures of spirit-communication.

The danger is in being so easily deceived. The wonderful uncertainty attending spirit-communication renders it perplexing, even when the medium is honest. Let me illustrate by a simple example. Suppose that a seeker after communications from the dead sits down with the spirit-medium in a room by themselves, separated by a thin partition from another room. What is done in that other room is unseen by the medium and his customer. The questions are asked by the medium verbally, and the spirit-answers made by a system of

raps, as in the early days of modern Spiritualism. The answers may, or may not, be satisfactory to the customer, but they are regularly rapped out upon the partition between the rooms; still I defy the medium or his customer to determine with any degree of certainty whether the raps are made by disembodied spirits, (and by how many of them,) or by half a dozen mischievous and shrewd young men and women behind the partition. In either case there is nothing trustworthy in the mode or matter of the communications; and this fact alone ought to prevent even weak-headed and sentimental persons from indulging in the delights of spirit-communication.

Even with writing or speaking spirit-mediums, be they ever so "good" and genuine, the uncertainty is the same. The spirits are vacillating, and perhaps two or three may be influencing the medium—the man in the tombs at Gadara had a "legion" at one time working upon him—and in such a case the communications might be unsatisfactory, or "badly mixed"—bewildering, not to say false. One spirit can write or rap so like another, that who writes the communication—friend or demon—an innocent seeker after spirit-truths will not be able to determine.

Of the "dark seances"—the flying guitars, music in the air, bell-ringing, rope-tying, and other mysterious demonstrations, I know nothing by experience, but I believe that such things may be. The devil prefers darkness to light, and I have witnessed so many singular things—delusive and real—in spirit-manifestations that I believe many others are possible with the children and associates of Satan, either in the body or out of it.

As to the *prophesies* made by and to spirit-mediums, no dependence can be placed upon them. As well might

one patronize the common fortune-tellers in the slums of our great cities, in the hope of obtaining a truthful revelation of the future. A horrifying instance of the deceitful character of spirit-prophesies came under my personal observation. One of the rankest Spiritualists in America, with whom I was intimately acquainted, in the spring of 1865, said in my presence that the spirits had promised him twenty-two years more of life in the flesh, adding that he was sorry for it, he was in such haste to join his friends in the spirit world. In December, 1866, he perished in a burning building in Waukegan, Illinois, being almost entirely consumed by the flames into which he fell.

I have spoken of the wonderful fascination that fastens upon the receiver of spirit-communictions. It soon absorbs all the time, faculties, hopes, fears, and desires of its devotee, and herein lies one of the greatest dangers of Spiritualism. Infatuated by communion with the unseen inhabitants of the hidden world, the medium loses his or her interest in the things pertaining to everyday life on earth. A soft and pleasing atmosphere appears to surround them. The realities of flesh and blood are lost in ideal dreaming, and there is no incentive to break away from a state of existence so agreeable, no matter how monstrous are the delusions practiced by the spirits. This is one reason why so few persons who have once yielded to the charms of sipritual intercourse can ever be reached and drawn away from it by the invitations or warnings of the Bible.

Their consciences are as callous as if seared with a hot iron; sin has to them lost its wickedness, and they are willing dupes to unseen beings who delight to control their every faculty, Very seldom has a full-fledged

Spiritualist ever been able to comprehend the necessity and blessedness of the religion of Jesus Christ, and withdraw from the morbid condition into which he has fallen. Some there are, however, whose prayers to be delivered from the fearful state into which they have wandered have been graciously heard by the great God of the universe, and they have been restored to liberty of will and body. My own is a case in point.

As intimated on a previous page, it was my pleasure and privilege, several years ago, to investigate the phenomena of modern Spiritualism under all the advantages of a remarkably high condition of mediumship. I propose, before entering upon a history of that investigation, to make a brief statement of my spiritual condition previous to my experiences in the supernatural.

In 1850 or 1851—a few years after the "Rochester knockings" had startled the world and laid the foundation of modern Spiritualism—a noted Spiritualist in Illinois one day told me that "if I only dared," I might become a spirit-medium. It seems that there are outward marks by which good material for the spirits to work upon can be readily recognized by the initiated. For months, at intervals, he presented the phenomena of Spiritualism to me as the evidence of something that he considered a great advantage—the communications of the dead to the living. At that period I did not "dare" to become a spirit-medium, as he suggested. I was afraid of it as something strange and unnatural, and it seemed, too, to run contrary to the Bible, for the Spiritualists did not appear to be pure men, and they had little real regard for the doctrines of the Scriptures. At that time my ideas of religion were very crude and unsettled. The early religious training of years in Sunday

schools and churches, and a kind mother's admonitions, had well-nigh been smothered by a foolish and irreligious life, but there did remain in my heart a respect for the Bible and the lessons of infancy, and I think now that the Holy Ghost strove to restrain me, even in my unsaved condition, from casting myself into the untried and mysterious whirlpool of Spiritualism. At least I did not become very enthusiastic for or against it, although frequently hearing much of its real or pretended wonders, and I came to regard it almost with indifference. Several of my family were led to believe in it more or less, but I still held myself aloof. The personal experiences of Mr. Parsons, a pious minister of the gospel, who had secretly become a voluntary medium in order to investigate the virtues of Spiritualism, publicly related in a lecture, also served to prejudice me in a degree against it. He openly pronounced it the work of the devil, and that fact served to strengthen me in opposition to its fascinations.

Sixteen years of irreligious life passed away, yet I was still restrained in a few things by my early lessons. In all those years I was nearly as indifferent to the blandishments of Spiritualism as I was to vital religion. I had several reasons for believing it a snare and delusion, and, if I remember rightly, what I read and heard about it only served to convince me of its unsatisfactory and uncertain character. Through surrounding circumstances, I had drifted, too, towards Universalism; but I came to consider Spiritualism of very little account, if not ridiculous, whatever reality its phenomena possessed.

Four years I was an invalid, with my nervous system unstrung and my body poisoned with strong medicines,

which had not proved to be remedies. I was on the verge of paralysis, when, through the providence of God, I found a doctor who soon started me on the high road to health. I mention these facts because it was during my recovery, and when my nerves had nearly recovered their normal strength, that Spiritualism was presented to me in a way that led me to regard it with a new interest.

I approach this portion of my subject with a feeling of humility, because of the weakness that led me to tamper with things that I had reason to believe were unclean, and partly because I hardly expect to be able to explain to the satisfaction of the reader some of the phenomena which I personally witnessed and in which I participated. But the confession of this weakness and the trouble into which it led me may restrain others who are tempted to meddle with Spiritualism from yielding to its fascinating and soul-destroying delusions.

In the spring of 1869, an elderly lady whom I had long known and respected, whose integrity I could not doubt, (intelligent, refined, and a member of an orthodox church), confided to me the secret that she had a table in her house which would answer questions and follow her about the room. Of such things I had heard before, but never witnessed, having had neither sufficient curiosity nor confidence to visit more than one spiritual "circle"—and that had proved a failure. The lady further said that however skeptical she might be concerning Spiritualism, she could not doubt the evidence of her own senses. She also invited me to witness the same phenomena at her home. I did so. The table, when our hands were laid upon it, would answer "yes" to a question from either of us, by tipping over into our laps.

and when the answer was "no," the table simply *wriggled* on its legs. It was rather amusing to witness this intelligence, and if the answers were not always satisfactory, the table—a small but not a very light one—was a great deal more prompt to answer and more willing to communicate with us than many Sunday-school scholars are when catechised about their lessons. When the lady rose from the sofa on which we sat, the table followed her a short distance, but not to the extent to which she said it had on other occasions.

This event so excited my curiosity, and secured my interest in Spiritualism, that I lost the dread of becoming a medium, and began to look upon spirit-communication with much favor. Still I did not mingle with Spiritualists, or visit their "circles," but in a private manner sought to obtain intelligence from the spirit-world. I did think I would explain to the reader the method by which I became a writing medium, but I will not, lest the curiosity of some heedless person might lead him or her to use the same means, and intentionally, or inadvertently, develop into a spirit-medium, and reap sorrow and destruction.

The development in my case was rapid and remarkable, and soon became perfect. The communications (of which I shall have more to say hereafter) became continuous, as if some one was writing long and frequent letters to me. I felt proud of this new accomplishment, and rashly informed my friends. At once their curiosity and opposition were aroused—the latter sufficiently to awaken in me a spirit of independence and encourage me to continue to receive spirit-communications. I may say here that I had clear evidence that the communications which I received were not dictated by my own

mind, and seemed to be independent of my own thoughts, as if some other person was passing his ideas through my mind and nerves to the hand with which I wrote.

I had by this time become intensely *magnetized* by the spirits. I use this term because my condition then was very similar to that which I had previously experienced when under the influence of animal magnetism. (See page 12.) This was *spiritual* magnetism. I had reached a point where I seemed to live in two worlds at once—the terrestrial and the spiritual. I had enough of the earthly, with my natural senses, to transact regular business every day, but my mind and nervous system were greatly etherealized (if I may so express it), and the tendency was to communicate with the spirits whenever relaxation from business permitted. When under the influence of animal magnetism, I had been enabled to see visions of real objects, and this power was again given to me. The spirits were very *sociable* with me, and conversed freely and naturally about ordinary earthly topics, frequently introducing new names and theories of which I had seldom or never heard. The fascination of this intercourse was very great, and the spirits appeared anxious to extend it to my heart's desire. *They were weaving the net for my soul.*

My condition (for I made no great secret of it) attracted the attention of several friends in the flesh, and I was faithfully warned to desist from spirit communication. Even the lady who owned the tipping-table solemnly counseled me to relinquish Spiritualism as something dangerous; but I was infatuated, and grew angry under these repeated cautions. The idea uppermost in my mind was this: Connecting the possibility of spirit-communication with that of *religion*. I deter-

mined (having now the power) to discover whatever of GOOD Spiritualism possessed. In this respect I became its champion; and no sooner did I reach this determination than the spirit of evil and his emissaries took a deeper and fuller control of my human faculties, bodily and mental. *I had given myself away to the spirits.* To overcome me to a greater degree was in their power, and they did so. I became more etheralized, or spiritualized, and unfit longer to do worldly business. I no longer needed the pencil to receive their communications. From that time they spoke with me face to face, unseen and unheard by all around except myself. My natural senses remained, and on ordinary topics I conversed with friends in the flesh quite rationally, but there was such a preponderance of spirit-control that ordinary topics were secondary. I was doing business in the spirit-world more than in this, and my thoughts—yea, my very life, was absorbed in the mysteries and delusions that thronged about me.

For about three months I was in the power of the spirits, having a dual existence, and greatly tormented by their contradictory and unsatisfactory operations; but as I had sought their companionship for no evil purpose, and had grace enough given me from on high to call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to pity me in my miserable and helpless condition, I *felt* that the spirits were often restrained from doing me extreme injury by a power that was mightier than themselves. Still they tormented me to a very severe extent. I desired to be freed from them. I lost much of my confidence in them, and their blasphemy and uncleanness shocked me. But they were my constant companions. *I could not get rid of them.* They tempted me to suicide and murder, and to other sins. I was fearfully beset and bewildered and

deluded. *There was no human help for me.* But almost from the very first I had been inspired (as it were by God himself) to make friends with the Lord Jesus Christ—the result, I think, of my early religious teachings in the Sunday-school—who had delivered so many from the evil spirits that overcame them during his earthly life. Amid the phenomena, delusions and filth of Spiritualism, I prayed almost constantly for help to "the One mighty to save." The reader will remember the object with which I plunged into spirit-mediumship —to ascertain what *good* it possessed. *I found out.* It is the same goodness that exists in the "outer darkness" of the Bible, I am not going to enlarge upon the wickedness that was poured upon me like vials of wrath by the spirits because I would not yield and be as wicked as themselves. I praise God to-day, and I expect to through time and eternity, for the divine care and watchfulness that he accorded to me. Giving me faith to trust in his mighty power to deliver, bidding me hope, yet withholding deliverance until he was pleased to send it in all its fullness, in his own good time, he still restrained the spirits from doing me any important injury. It is true they led me into some extravagances of action, and to believe, in a measure, a few of their delusions, often combining religion and deviltry in a most surprising manner; but, after all, *beyond a certain extent*, they could not influence me. A higher power controlled them. One day, after they had been peculiarly annoying, they threatened to kill me, and, tired of their torments, I told them to do it. At once there was a temporary peace, as if they had been suddenly driven back. Often they reviled me, once telling me that my prayers had not been heard in heaven for six weeks. On one

occasion, I intimated a resolution to send for a godly minister to come and pray with me, and they threatened if I did, to tear the house down before morning. I sent for him; he came, and during the night they seemed to be more restrained than usual in their demonstrations.

I was now really at war with the spirits—not trusting in anything or anybody to deliver me from them except the Lord, yet opposing them and their efforts to overcome me. If I yielded to them in the least, even for a moment, they would take advantage of it in some way to deceive me; if I opposed them, they tormented me, their power sometimes extending to my body as well as to the mind. But still I prayed in faith, believing that deliverance would come.

Almost every sin that I had ever committed of any importance the spirits paraded before me, so that I could read it as out of a book. They instituted courts to try me (or pretended to), in which God the Father was supposed to be the Judge; but the trials were nonsense and awfully blasphemous. One good effect arose from this. I began to hate wickedness in myself and everywhere—I was disgusted with it, and sick of it; and then I continued praying earnestly to be delivered from the spirits and all sin. Oh, how I hated it in all its forms!

I believe that at one time Satan himself, hearing my prayers, and finding me so bitterly opposed to his servants and wickedness, and being in danger of losing so faithful a servant of his as I had been in the past, came to the aid of the spirits to overcome me if possible. There was more of malignity, horrifying blasphemy and awful delusion manifested against me than before; but I praise God for the grace that led me to have a deeper faith and hope in Christ in that trying hour; and I have reason to believe that then God and the devil fought for

the possession of my soul, and that He who never lost a battle drove away my mortal enemy. I felt that I was in awful peril, yet no new harm came to me. The very language of the Bible was apparently changed by the evil one, as if to destroy my confidence in it and in God himself. But with the dreadful temptation I received new grace, even under the bewilderment that beset me, and clung to Jesus through it all.

After a season of these varied and wonderful experiences, I began to receive intimations from God and from the spirits (as I think now after the lapse of years) that my deliverance was near at hand. I had been among the spirits for about three months, and tried in body and mind to a certain degree by their constant warfare upon me, but not permanently injured in either, and enjoying very good physical health. I had exercised by taking long and frequent walks, and been nourished by healthful food; I had thoroughly repented of every sin and become a believer and follower of Jesus, who had been my Friend through all, and I felt that I was really soon to be delivered from the labyrinth of wickedness and mystery in which I had existed for so many weeks. One morning I was asked by an unseen and mysterious associate (I know not whom) to give my promise never more to have anything to do with Spiritualism. It may have been a messenger from the Lord, or from my spiritual enemy—I know not; but a positive answer seemed to be required. That promise I solemnly gave, and have solemnly kept for seven years, and by the grace of God I shall keep it until I am called into the world of spirits. I think it was either on that day or the next that my communication with the spirits ceased, and I was at liberty, filled with praise and joy at God's deliverance of

my soul from the peril through which I had so marvelously passed. From that hour I have been a Christian.

I promised to relate in this connection what I found in Spiritualism. In doing so I shall rather confine myself to general results than to particular phenomena. I have already referred to the delusory character of these phenomena, and the little confidence that can be placed in what the spirits declare and perform. For instance, not *seeing* the beings who guided my hand when communications were written, it was impossible to identify the controlling spirit, although I confess that I sometimes had an intuitive impression that it was a certain individual whom I had known in this life; yet here there was great room for delusion, and I may always have been mistaken. When I conversed with them face to face, in a higher condition of mediumship—my spiritual hearing being opened—it was the same, for I found they could imitate the voice of one man who is still in the flesh, and with whom I was formerly very intimate. I knew that this person was not dead, and that he was not speaking to me, but the imitation was very perfect. I came in contact, also, with several who professed to be persons whom I had known before they died, and whom I knew were dead. (These were, as I have reason to believe, people who had died in their sins.) But to this day, I am not prepared to declare positively that they were the persons whom they represented. They may have been, but where so much of delusion existed, it was somewhat difficult to decide between the false and the real. And this seems to me to be *the great objection* to accepting Spiritualism as a temporal or spiritual adviser, as thousands are doing, only to find themselves deceived.

One day I received a communication purporting to be

written by a very dear departed friend from the Bible place of torment, flattering me, and warning others in the flesh to change their course lest they should go there too when they died. As I had good reasons for believing that this dear friend was in glory, saved through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and as I was still in my sins, I have set down the communication in question as a fraud—a forgery. I also received several communications of a religious character. At first they seemed sincere and consistent. But one day, after writing very piously, the controlling spirit finished up the communication with the vilest and silliest language imaginable. There *are* hypocrites in the spirit world, whether they be dead men or devils.

The reader may remember that I was looking for the *good* of Spiritualism, sustained and restrained, as I have reason to believe, by the power of God himself, and so prevented from yielding too much to the baleful influences that surrounded me. Sinner as I was, I was yet a believer in the truth of the Bible as coming from God, (through my youthful instruction), and this fact brought me into controversy with the spirits at once. One day, it seemed to me, they sent a committee to examine me on Christian doctrine, and now, sometimes, I am impressed with the resemblance of these spirits to the opposers of Jesus and his apostles while on earth, or the famous French infidels. In my ignorance of scripture lore and vital religion, I could not argue successfully against their dogmas, and yet I was not convinced that I was wrong in believing the Bible, (it was such a comfort to me even then), or that they were right in opposing it.

I do not propose to detail all that I found in Spiritualism. Nothing could induce me to repeat much of

the language they used, or the delusions which they prepared to deceive me. Of the untruthfulness of those that I encountered there could be no doubt. I found them not only wicked, but possessing a supernatural shrewdness that might easily mislead a human mind that was unguarded as to consquences, if once brought within their influence. Who is so subtle and deluding as Satan, "the father of lies?" Has he not many faithful servants in the flesh, and if they die in his service, will they be any better in the spirit-world? And if the spirits are like those demons who destroyed the swine at Gadara, fearing they should be tormented before the time, (Mathew viii., 29) are we to look for truth and goodness in them? I followed the Bible rule, *tried the spirits*, and found that those with whom I mingled were not of God.

The question has arisen, are all the spirits who communicate with men, of this evil class? Let the spirits answer this question. That good (saved) persons out of the flesh *might* communicate with those still in tbe body, I believe is not impossible, if the Lord should permit it; but I think he seldom does. Mr. Daniels relates the following in "Spiritualism not of God:"

In 1853, Mr. William B. Lanning, of Trenton, N. J., ... not being fully satisfied of the real character of these spirits, held the following colloquy with one, through a writing medium. The spirit, on being asked if it was right and beneficial for the human race to consult these spirits, replied, "Yes, it will make them happier and better." He then testified in substance to the main doctrines of these spirits, and said, though an unconverted man, he was happy; that departed Christians were among these spirits—all were happy; there was to be no resurrection of the dead, no future punishment, nor Day of Judgment. But on being cross-examined a little, the spirit became very angry and unwilling to answer, and begged to depart; said he would go and get more spirits and return. Said my friend, "No. When you go, I want

you to stay away; but at present do you answer my questions. *In the name of the Lord do I demand it.*,' The "happy" spirit quailed, and Mr. L. proceeded: Is the Bible true? Yes.

The Bible forbids necromancy and the consulting of familiar spirits. Which shall I believe, you or the Bible? The Bible.

Why then did you tell me that it was right and useful to consult the spirits? Because I wanted to deceive you.

What is the business of these spirits with men? What do you think it is?

I think it is to deceive. Very well, you are correct.

Are you happy? No, I am miserable.

Is there a hell? Yes.

Are you in hell? No, not yet.

Do you expect to go there? Yes.

When? At the Day of Judgment.

Is there to be a Day of Judgment? Yes.

Is there to be a resurrection of the dead? Yes.

Have you any prospect of happiness? *I have no hope.*

In the name of the Lord, is there a good spirit—the spirit of a departed Christian among all of these rapping and writing spirits? *No, not one.*

Where are the spirits of departed Christians? THE LORD HAS TAKEN THEM.

Why then did you tell my brother in Philadelphia the contrary of all this? Because I wished to deceive him.

Could you deceive him? Yes.

(The brother was a Spiritualist.)

Why could you deceive him? Because he is a fool.

Why is he a fool? Because he don't believe the Bible

Can't you deceive me? No.

Why? Because you believe the Bible.

Will you tell my brother what you have told me? Yes.

I want to hear from you no more; good-bye forever. *Spirit*—Good-bye forever.

Of those who profess and practice Spiritualism, thousands undoubtedly are sincere seekers after truth in forbidden places. Deceived and overcome by the spirits, they are content to be governed temporally and spiritually by them. The phenomena of Spiritualism become a source of wonder to them, being supernatural, and serve to strengthen their faith in the power

of the spirits, and, afterwards, in the truth of spirit-teachings. After that, these proselytes are willing to believe almost anything, if it professes to come from the spirits of departed persons whom they have loved and respected in this life. Here is the infatuation that satisfies the minds and consciences of the great mass of Spiritualists—the motive that leads them to look no further for religious doctrine, and to despise whatever opposes itself to their fixed devotion to the spirits. As the Bible offers this opposition, it is rejected, and this rejection of the word of God is favored, if not directly advocated, by the spirits. Hence so few Spiritualists (misled and infatuated, but satisfied, not realizing that they are deceived), have no desire to break away from the allurements that hold them spell-bound. This infatuation of Spiritualism leads bad men and women in the flesh to contrive and practice counterfeit spiritua phenomena ; and every little while the press teems with "ex posures of another spiritual humbug," and the details are widely read and denounced by those who are not Spiritualists, as well as by those Spiritualists who have not been able to distinguish between the true and false phenomena until the counterfeit was unmistakably exposed.

At the time when I was absorbed in Spiritualism, I was not dependent upon other mediums (being a "high" one myself,) nor "circles," nor "seances," or any of the machinery in use among real and counterfeit Spiritualists. I associated with none of these people, although several paid me brief visits, so that I was not influenced by them. I dealt in a private capacity with the spirits, without requiring the machinery used by the genuine or bogus Spiritualists of these days. Therefore, whatever Spiritualists may say, I feel that I am a competent witness, under God, against the errors and delusions of a mysterious and soul destroying infatuation. Since then I have opposed Modern Spiritualism for the following reasons :

First, it is expressly forbidden and denounced in the Bible, under the titles of "doctrines of devils," "sorcery," "witchcraft," "familiar spirit," etc., in the following passages:

Isaiah, viii., 19, 20; Leviticus, xix., 31; Leviticus xx., 6, 27; Deuteronomy, xviii., 10,11; 1st Samuel xv., 22; 1st Chronicles, x., 13,14,; 2d Kings, xxiii., 24; 2d Chronicles, xxxiii., 6,11; Isaiah, xlvii., 9, 12; 2d Thessalonians, ii.. 9, 12: Isaiah xix., 3, 4; Galatians, v., 26; Revelation, xxi., 8. Secondly, because it denies the truth of the Bible, and reviles its teachings. Thirdly, because it bears the stamp of demonism, while endeavoring to pass itself off for something virtuous. Fourthly, because it blasphemes the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, and denies the existence of a personal, all-ruling God. Fifthly, it rejects the divine nature and mediatorial office of Jesus Christ, while some of its followers claim to have divine natures themselves. Sixthly, it claims a probationary state after death, while the Bible expressly denies it. Seventhly, it is a delusion and a snare, misleading its devotees into silly and evil actions, under the impression that they are doing and talking sensibly. Eigthly, it drives hundreds into suicide, murder, free-love and insanity. Ninthly, its visible phenomena, although better than its teachings, are unsatisfactory and useless. Tenthly, no reliance can be placed upon what the spirits say. If they are sometimes truthful, it is to excite the confidence of those who converse with them and lead to a firmer belief in what they pretend to reveal. Lastly (for these reasons are sufficient for the purpose of this pamphlet), Jesus and his apostles drove legions of demons out of the "mediums" of his day, and restored them to their senses, (See Luke ix., 37–42.;

I do not say that all Spiritualists believe exactly alike in every one of these dogmas. There have been two distinct parties of Modern Spiritualists for sometime past—the free-lovers and those who were not; and I learn that quite recently another branch (strongly opposed by the others) has declared that they "recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the spiritual leader of men, and accept his two great affirmations of love to God and love to man as constituting the one ground of growth in the individual, and the only and sufficient basis of human society." But, as I understand them, they still reject the divinity and mediatorial office of Jesus, and of course their creed is sadly deficient. Still this movement may be the entering wedge that shall yet aid in destroying the Spiritualistic Antichrist

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