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ADDRESS

BY

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DELIVERED AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, LONDON, NOVEMBER 20, 1865.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

LONDON: PRINTED BY THOMAS SCOTT, WARWICK COURT, HOLBORN.

Price Sixpence.

QUESTION :—

“IT HAS BEEN ALLEGED THAT MODERN SPIRITUALISM IS THE WITCHCRAFT OR NECROMANCY REFERRED TO IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS: WILL YOU BE GOOD ENOUGH TO DEFINE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM?”

It has been alleged that modern Spiritualism is the witchcraft or necromancy referred to in the Old and New Testaments.” We are required to define the difference between them. Let us then in the first place consider what are the subjects requiring the line of demarcation to be drawn between them.

Necromancy is defined as an art by which embodied souls communicate with the disembodied; or a system of communication with “the dead.” Witchcraft, as stated in your question, as well as in the opinion of a great mass of mankind, is assumed to be a reality, but our chief reason for stigmatizing it as a crime or a practice obnoxious to religion, is to be found in the denunciation against it attributed to Moses, the Jewish Lawgiver, and contained in the charge so often quoted in connexion with this subject, of

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.”

Another instance of denunciation against witchcraft, in such connexion as to fasten upon it the odium of offence to God, occurs

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in the book of the Prophet Isaiah. In the 8th chapter of Isaiah, we find the writer denouncing certain practices supposed to be identical with witchcraft, but savouring more of necromancy, unless the two be synonymous terms. He says—"And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, or unto wizards, that peep and mutter,—Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" Something like a definition of the mode of communion is here suggested, namely, in the denunciation of those who "peep and mutter." We would that the volume in which these charges are made were now beneath this hand. We will endeavour however to recall the spirit of the chapter, although we cannot render perfect justice to the words.* We find that from the pen of Isaiah the Prophet, have poured those words of fundamental truth which give us the assurance that he was the mouthpiece of the most noble and Divine inspiration, which, defining as it does the laws of God and the highest truths of pure morality, gives us a right to quote him as our authority at least in his *writings*; in *deeds*, however, he was but a man. Despite his matchless and sublime gift of prophecy, we find that when he desired to impress the monarch of Judah with the sublimity of his power, and to control him by his commands, and the monarch resisted his will and refused to ask for a sign from the Lord at the dictation of Isaiah, that the Prophet first informed King Ahaz what the sign should be, and then pursued such a course of action, as to ensure the fulfilment of the promised sign. It is in angry denunciation of the King's refusal to accept of the Prophet's peculiar mode of signalling future events, that the famous charge is written "not to resort to those that peep and mutter." We have said thus much in illustration of the two principal texts from which we derive information on the subject of witchcraft in the Jewish Scriptures. By the presence of this book one of the phases of modern witchcraft, namely, psychometry, will enable us to recite other instances, which we believe will bear upon the subject under discussion.

Referring to our question, namely—What are the evidences that the witchcraft and necromancy of the Old and New Testaments differ from modern Spiritualism? Our first difficulty is to find the definition of what these crimes really are,—for though the two instances of denunciation I have referred to on the part of Moses and Isaiah, represent them as crimes, the nature of the acts involved are neither so defined nor sufficiently understood through any coincident history of the times, as to enable us

* (Here a Bible was brought and presented to the speaker, who retained it *(without opening)* in her hand during the rest of the discourse.

to determine* that those acts were obnoxious to the Jewish people only, or generally to the laws of God, as revealed in the accepted forms of religion and morals. In elucidation of this part of our question, therefore we gladly turn to another portion of the Old Testament, where we are assured upon the authority of most modern commentators that a clearly defined case of witchcraft and necromancy is detailed. I allude to the case of Saul and the woman of Endor,—rendered by these same modern authorities as “the witch of Endor.” We find that when Saul was himself subject to the power of the spirit, when he was “amongst the prophets,” and communicated with his God through the then established modes of intercourse with a spiritual source, called in the Old Testament “inquiring of the Lord;” when Saul was the chosen of Israel, the friend of his God, and received prophetic revelations,—he was himself the recipient of the very power which, in the case of the woman of Endor, is denounced as witchcraft. When Saul had offended his God, the evidence of that offence is stated to be the fact that he was denied the continuance of this power, and that no response could be obtained through any of the then known modes by which men “sought the Lord.” What those modes were, we need not now remind the scholar, except to state that they were of an external nature, such as the waiting for a voice; consulting the Urim and Thummin, or “light and perfection,” which signifies the looking into the twelve stones which surrounded the breast-plate of the priest, and from the glittering lights which were supposed to flash across those stones, interpreting a suitable response. These and various other modes of obtaining oracular responses, might suggest to the uninitiated the idea of witchcraft—the very crime under consideration—did we not know that they were practised as the religion of the time by those supposed to be favoured by the Lord; it seems it was only when persons were supposed, in the language of the times to be forsaken of the Lord, that attempts to obtain responses by “necromancy,” or by other forms not clearly defined, were denounced as “witchcraft,” or, perhaps, we are to suppose that certain individuals, perhaps those invested with the priestly office, were allowed to have a monopoly of spiritual gifts, while the unprivileged respondents were stigmatized as having a familiar spirit, and were of the class whom Saul is stated to have banished from the land, as being obnoxious to the charge of witchcraft—chiefly so it appears, because they obtained oracular instruction without the legal authority to do so. In what respect those who had familiar spirits differed from Saul himself, when he was “amongst the prophets,” we are not informed; certain it is that when this power (which was only withdrawn in evidence of God’s wrath)

failed him, he sought to supply the deficiency, by a resort to those whom it is fair to infer he must have deemed to have possessed the same gift which he had lost, and these are the circumstances under which he is represented as seeking "a woman who had a familiar spirit."

Now let us consider the details of this act of "*necromancy*," or consultation of the dead. Samuel was a man of God, or a mighty prophet "inspired by the Lord." The whole history of this remarkable man gives us the assurance that either he was endowed by nature with that peculiar power which enabled him to communicate with the super-mundane world, or that he was specially favoured by God in the reception of remarkable spiritual gifts; and he was able to inform those who enquired of him where lost property could be found. It was evident from certain portions of the history of Samuel that persons were in the habit of resorting to him for information on this last point. Of course we need not remind you that this gift was *not* one of the attributes of witchcraft, for Samuel was a man of God. The woman of Endor, on the contrary, was not a woman of God, consequently whatever occult powers she possessed must be witchcraft; at least so we are informed by popular opinion, although the simple narrative of the Scriptures affords us no such definitions. Now when Saul sought Samuel through the woman of Endor's power, *be it what it might*, Samuel responded. The description given by that of the woman of a figure visible to her eyes alone, and identical with that of the deceased prophet, represents this scene first as an act of "*necromancy*," or communion with the dead, next as strictly in accordance with the evidence of that peculiar gift of modern mediumship which we call "*clairvoyance*." Thus far the parallel between ancient *necromancy* and modern mediumship is complete, but to determine whether or not the character of the act was obnoxious to God's laws in ancient or modern times, we must enquire yet farther. Under the spell of this necromantic act it is evident that the woman recognized the King, whose disguise on his first entrance she could not penetrate. There was a change, therefore, occurring in her organism and illuminating her eye with a spiritual light, enabling her to perceive the embodied as well as the disembodied spirit. Now by what right do we call this state opposed to God's laws, or stigmatize its actions with the odious name of witchcraft? Samuel was good and true and obedient only to the divine spirit in his earthly life. How comes it that a soul so pure as his should become the subject of control from one you call a witch, simply because that soul had cast off its earthly tenement? Could that woman of sin, if such she were, have controlled the soul of Samuel whilst embodied in the form of earth? Could she have willed him to come at her bidding, and commanded from him.

the revelations he made to King Saul? Your own experiences of life testify that the strong control the weak, the wise the ignorant, and the good the bad; and whose experience testifies to the reverse of this picture? The power, then, which could control the spirit of Samuel and produce his apparition, and render his words intelligibly to earth, must have been in harmony with Samuel's state and acceptable to his intelligence, for remember that throughout this scene the spirit must have been *the* power, and not the woman. The spirit, too, according to the Scripture test so often declared to be truth, was a good spirit, and "spoke from the Lord," not the "familiar" of an act of necromancy as some modern commentators would assume. It is written that, "if the thing which the prophet speaks comes to pass, the prophet hath spoken from the Lord." Now we find that, what the spirit of Samuel spoke *did come to pass*; we have, therefore, the Scripture test to show that the prophet did "speak from the Lord."

In considering the part which the necromancer, or Woman of Endor herself acted in this scene, what right have we to assume a criminal character for her, except in respect of her violation of the laws of the King, to whom she responded?—her manifestation was characterized by truth, and it involved the action of the good Samuel, whom we must either suppose to have been incapable of taking part in an act offensive to his God, or to have greatly retrogressed in piety since his departure from the mortal form; hence, if this scene of necromancy, detailed with such graphic simplicity in the Scriptures of the Jews, be a specimen of an act of witchcraft, we are far more qualified to decide upon its being a strongly parallel case to an act of modern mediumship than one of "Satanic agency," unless indeed Satan employs such agents as the good Samuel, and produces such results as truth.

I now proceed to consider some few additional cases of spiritual manifestations narrated in these Scriptures, and call your attention to some passages in the life of the father of the Jewish nation—Abraham. We read, that whilst sitting at the door of his tent in the heat of the day on the plains of Mamre, he beheld spiritual beings and conversed with them; that he supposed them to be spiritual beings we have evidence from his own lips to prove, for he addresses them in pleading for the doomed cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, as—"Lord," and even as "God of the whole earth." Moreover, Abraham is represented as beholding spirits sometimes "in an horror of great darkness." What meaning should we attribute to this remarkable passage?—our mediums to-day are denounced as witches and wizards when they require the condition of darkness for the performance of certain phenomena which the light would, they tell us,

neutralize. Must we thence assume that spiritual manifestations produced under the conditions of a darkened atmosphere are witchcraft to-day, but religion three thousand years ago? We find that Abraham on one occasion built himself an altar, laid thereon a sacrifice, and waited, "lying upon his face on the ground till fire came from heaven and consumed those pieces." How long think you, would the performer of such an act to-day have to wait for the fire of persecution *to come up* from the earth to consume him?

We pass on and find that every page of the Old and New Testaments teems with innumerable evidences of spiritual manifestations, and though these are there called "the acts of God" or of "angels," they are always identified with beings who present such a likeness to humanity, as to be frequently mistaken for men, and in this respect too, they bear a striking resemblance to the manifestations of modern Spiritualism. Let us notice another phase of spiritual revelation, which in these Scriptures is recorded as an evidence of Divine Inspiration. I speak of dreams, and I remind you in this connexion of the famous historical account of the "Vision of God," manifested to the Patriarch Jacob in that dream which represents the ladder whereon angels are seen ascending and descending. This narrative, so sublime and so suggestive of the eternal relations between the infinite and the finite, was given through the simple and familiar instrumentality of a dream. Dreams then were one of the Divine modes of revelation in ancient times. By what transmutation have they become through the lapse of ages in our own day mere "old wives' fables?" Is the angelic ladder drawn up, and do angels ascend and descend no more between heaven and earth? We have no record of this decadence of angelic ministry as an historical fact, but we must assume it if the privilege of Divine revelations in dreams be pronounced impossible, and if all spiritual intercourse on spiritual ladders be altogether ended.

Another illustration of this form of revelation in ancient Spiritualism is recorded in the history of Joseph—the good Joseph—whose life has, in piety and example, proved the strength, comfort, and counsel of so many countless generations; whose own captivity in earth's dungeons, and sorrows in life's prison-houses, have been cheered by the history of God's providence manifested to Joseph in dreams. Yet we find this man so highly favoured of God and revered of man, performing an act of *divination by a cup*. He certainly did perform such acts, or he would have had no use for a "divining cup," and such a cup he certainly did possess, or the history of his touching intercourse with his brother Benjamin, becomes mere fable. That cup was found in Benjamin's sack, placed there by the command of

Joseph, and those who discovered it taxed home upon the supposed thief a greater degree of crime, because it was "the cup wherewith my Lord divineth." Who amongst you this day would venture to follow the example of Joseph, and to divine with a cup without first preparing themselves to endure all the martyrdom which scoffing, scepticism, or pious indignation could inflict? Remember I am not now discussing the possibility of obtaining truthful responses through a "divining cup;" simply pointing to the parallel between the ancient, which the world offers us as a model, and the present time, when obedience to this model is so often denounced as impiety or insanity, blasphemy or imposture.

Turn to the history of Balaam. Without questioning its details, I will but remind you that truths the most solemn and important were through him given to the children of Israel, the "chosen people"—the people claimed by Christians of the present day, as well as by themselves, to be the peculiarly favoured of God. Remember that for the guidance and counsel of God to this wonderful people, and to out-work the accomplishment of their mission, God selected a fire-worshipper, even "Balaam the son of Peor, who made Israel to sin;" Balaam who fell down and worshipped the host of heaven, adoring sun, moon, and stars. Yet he was the mouth-piece for the utterances of God's divine truths! Moreover, we find that Balaam strove to obtain an answer favourable to his employer, through divination and enchantments, and that when these failed, Balaam "had a vision of the Almighty, having his eyes open." Balaam appeared therefore to speak the words which God gave him to say, in a condition approximating to what in modern phrase is called an "inspirational state," or one which while preserving consciousness and individuality, is yet gifted with the power of prophetic vision. Balaam the fire-worshipper, the diviner, and the enchanter, then, was selected as the instrument of giving forth Divine inspiration. Are we so very presumptuous in supposing that our humble mediums of to-day may become the recipients of the subordinate inspiration of kindred spirit friends?

Remember the history of Moses. We do not propose to occupy your attention with its details, but there is a certain portion of it, not historically represented in its fulness in this book, but mentioned by Josephus, whom we suppose we may quote as an authority, to which I desire to call your notice. This writer tells us, that there was a certain place which had an ill repute. It was said that a powerful spirit—"The spirit of the mountain"—dwelt there; and by the inhabitants of that region the place was called "A dreadful place" and a "place of fear."

'Twas said that none might approach within the sphere of this terrible mountain until Moses, as Josephus relates, whilst keeping the flocks of his father-in-law, penetrated that "place of fear," and led on, as it is assumed, by the Spirit of God, he drew near to behold the "Burning bush, that was not consumed," and in the midst of that scene of awe and mystery he received the first intimation of his wonderful mission "Through a voice speaking out of the midst of the fire." Record such a scene in this, the nineteenth century, and how would you pronounce upon it? Pass over the trials of skill which are avowed to have taken place between Divine power and Egyptian magic, proving as the record does, that a strong similarity existed between them. Pass by the mightier "miracles," so called, of the great Jewish Lawgiver, and pause only on one of his acts, significant to those who seek for the origin of powers now "sacred," now "profane." At one time deemed "religion," but at another "witchcraft,"—and consider the fact that the uplifting of the hands of Moses was a necessary act for ensuring a victory for the Israelites over Amalek; nay, when his hands were heavy "Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands until the going down of the sun." So that this act appeared not only instrumental, but essential in deciding the results of the battle, and securing the victory to Israel. A curious page this would be in the history of modern Spiritualism,—and one which, if submitted to the criticism of a modern press and pulpit, would call forth a tempest of literary sarcasm, and of religious anathema, fierce enough to overwhelm the Spiritualism of every age from the present day to that of Moses and Aaron. "Not so," a courteous and consistent modern age replies,—"the uplifting of a pair of human hands as a means of ensuring victory in the nineteenth century, if not an act of simple absurdity, would be, to say the least of it, one of presumptuous blasphemy." Why it was successful in the case of Moses, or why the Lord who could work that power through Moses, yet not without him, it is not for us to enquire,—one thing is certain that what the Lord could do in the days of Moses, He *cannot do now*, and therefore that what in Moses is the law of God and true religion, in the modern Spiritualist, is the law of Satan and pure necromancy." Pause a while on the history of Gideon,—pass over the many pages of this volume so rich in spiritual records, that I am embarrassed with my riches, and only able to make certain selections—and remember that a simple fleece of wool and a few drops of dew, were the tests required by unbelieving Gideon, to prove that his God spake with him. We prate of God as beings familiar with the Infinite and the Eternal, and yet we find, when that which we call God is presented to man, that apparition did not impress him with the belief that God was present with him! It needed

a *test* to convince him of that awful presence; and what test did the man demand, and the mighty presence deign to grant? Simply a power exerted in an unusual mode upon a fleece of wool and the drops of dew!

We are told, that falling drops of dew at a spirit-circle, have been known to baptize the brows of those who seek for evidence of spiritual presence there,—and thus far again we find God's laws in spiritual manifestations are paralleled in modern and ancient times, aye, and in the very self-same mode. But a fleece of wool and drops of dew, are not objects too insignificant to become the tests of the presence of the "Mighty," "the Wonderful," "the Counsellor," the Infinite Soul that filleth space, and whom "the universe cannot contain," and yet these petty objects of mere material sense are unworthy of the dignity of our spirit-fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, to convey us telegraphic signals that they are present with us, or if used in such a mode, they must be denounced as acts of "necromancy," or powers of "witchcraft." We are asked to draw a line of demarcation between these manifestations, simply because they occur at different periods of time. We can only respond by supposing that wool and water were sacred in Jerusalem, but that they are not so in Great Britain, or that the power of God is not too great to use such petty means, but that the power of spirits is! That which is dignified for God, is undignified for spirits. Some power, we are told, of a spiritual nature—an angel, so it is stated, caused fire to consume the unleavened cakes and broth that Gideon placed upon a rock, and this was done also as a sign of angelic presence; but let such signs be presented to us to-day, let but a spiritual power act in changing the simple elements of matter, wreath a ribbon in the form of flowers, oh, how contemptible, how undignified becomes the act! How, all "unworthy of a disembodied spirit," or else how very clear such acts become as evidence of "witchcraft!" Gideon might save Jerusalem through the commands and ministry of angels; and a simple peasant maid might not save France by the self-same means and aid, without being subject to the avenging flame for the crime of witchcraft. Perhaps in drawing these parallels I shall be reminded that the power which enabled the Jews of old to effect their signs and wonders was the very power and visible presence of God in person in their midst. To this I answer in the words of Jesus. "No man hath seen God at any time," nor do these ancient records leave us room to question, that beings human in form and often mistaken for men, were the agents of this ministry.

In the history of the prophets, many and various are the modes in which we find "the coal of fire taken from the altar,"

and put upon the lips of the inspired. Our limits, however, will not permit me to pause upon them, but I may cite a few, in evidence of the modes received with unquestioning reverence as "Laws of God." In the writings of Ezekiel we have the express declaration that he was required for a sign unto Israel to lie on his side for forty days, and afterwards for a certain period to lie on the other; we find that he was required to eat strange and repulsive food; to cut the hairs from his head, to burn some and sew others in his skirts as signs to Israel, and besides these to perform many such acts as to-day would excite man's wonder, if not contempt. I find a remarkable illustration of the difficulties attending the analysis of this subject, unless it be conducted in candour and fairness, and God's ways manifest in universal law be admitted, in many passages occurring in the life of the prophet Elisha. Amongst these, I notice one which represents King Joash seeking the prophet as he lay on his death-bed. The King of Israel wept over the dying prophet, and mourned for him as the "chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof;" and Elisha bade the King take a bow and arrows and shoot from the window, whilst Elisha put his hands on the King, and he bid him strike the arrows on the ground; but the prophet was wrath with the King, because he had not smote those arrows times enough, for he declared that as many times as he smote the ground, so many times should he smite his enemies; and because he failed to do this as often as the prophet desired, the King should be unequal to the task of smiting his enemies. Ask your accepted interpreters of these Scriptures what connection there exists between these simple instruments of mere allegorical representation, and the power by which an enemy could be conquered? Were such a scene presented for analysis in the phenomenal experiences of modern Spiritualism, we should explain the power to be the potency of soul, which through the psychology induced by external circumstances—the psychology that is assured by signs, and which realizes in a mere allegorical figure a consoling promise of future success, and becomes a stimulus to the will which strengthens it for the accomplishment of the prophecy; we should interpret it as evidence of the force by which mind acts upon mind, and realize that it was the psychological act of the prophet, which impressed the King with the belief that he could conquer, in the strength of which belief he most assuredly did conquer. Again we are told that in an earlier part of Elisha's history, as he was passing on his way in the midst of his companions, who being numerous, the text states that, "the place of their residence was too strait for them," one of them dropped an axe into the water. You are familiar with the history, and will remember, doubtless, that the prophet, kindly pitying the man who had lost his tool, for the

man lamented himself because the axe was borrowed, Elisha exerted a power which caused the axe to swim. We have witnessed, day after day, the rocking of heavy bodies suspended in air, or watched the movements of the family altar, the social board around which were gathered in the spirit-circle of modern times many darkened minds, to whom the hopes of immortality or belief in eternal life were merely priestly fables, who lived without hope in God, or fear in death. We have known the results of this fearful lack of faith, in the days when the red revolutionists of France, fearing no God, and hoping for no life immortal, unrestrained by human law, still more so by lack of Divine law, stooped by the wayside and drank the blood of God's images whom they had slain—and this, I repeat, because they believed in no God nor in life immortal. For let the barriers to human action be once taken away, and without the restraint of human law deprive man of the grand goal of existence—a retributive and compensative eternity, what does he become? The atheist, living in the wholesome atmosphere of social law and political restraint, cannot determine what he may be when deprived of these. The floodgates of spiritual life broken down, man is but an animal, a type of the red revolutionists of France whom I have cited; and how many such as these have crowded round the modern spirit-circle; atheists, unconscious of the Great Spirit, not recognizing a heavenly Father, and living for this shadowy existence without the smallest consciousness that life was but a preparation for eternity; and how often has the swinging table or the rocking chair proclaimed this all-stupendous fact to them? Perhaps the vibrating floor spelled out the little message of a lisping child; the sentence may be all imperfect in the character of that sublimity which we are told is due from disembodied spirits. But oh! how perfect in its revelation to the atheist's darkened mind, when by its tests of sure identity it proves that the soul still lives; how perfect in the demonstration of life immortal!—perfect in the revelation that, as a single fragment of spirit stands in mortal presence and material atmosphere, so the whole universe is filled with God's great spirit; for the existence of one single soul, or one individual spirit, bears witness to the whole. We are conscious of our own soul's existence in the act which says "I am," and from thence we recognize the great "I Am," and worship. And so, good friends, the heaving of the table, the rocking of the chair, or the vibrating of the floor as telegraphic messages from immortal spirits, rescuing thousands of blind despairing minds from the horrors of atheism, and lighting this modern age with a torch whose beams might have saved the land of France, not a century since more than ten thousand lives, this spiritual telegraphy of to-day is "witchcraft or necromancy," while the

recovery of a piece of iron by an unusual mode, is evidence enough to prove in that ancient time, God suspended his laws in favour of a man by causing an axe to swim!

I shall not now weary you with further illustrations from the Scriptures of the Old Testament; I need but remind those who, with reverent minds, are accustomed to dwell upon the familiar pages of the New, that from the advent of the angels who proclaimed the coming of the Child of the manger, to the last dark hour of Gethsemane,—and on, on, after the Master's light was quenched, and the brave Apostles manfully toiled through the darkness and materialty of earth, alone upheld by the power of the spirit in the self-same signs and wonders which we have been discussing, that the whole of these pages become records of a similar and coincident class of phenomena. Such was the power that opened the dungeon doors for the captive followers of Jesus, loosened their fetters, stayed them in the heaving deep, healed the sick, guided their way, filled their unlearned lips with resistless power and wisdom, and laid the foundations of the purest religion which the world has ever known. The pages of the New Testament, no less than of the Old, are full of these revelations. Call you then this power witchcraft? Aye, but you say, "Christ healed the sick," and proved the divinity of His power by its beneficence. Nay, but he caused the elements of matter to change also, for he commenced his Divine mission. He even "shewed forth His glory" by converting the contents of a few waterpots from water into wine. How much of glory would be accorded to modern mediums for such an act as this I leave yourselves to determine. It is in the recognition that the power which enabled the poor unlettered fishermen to speak with a wisdom not their own, was the very power of God, whilst the mediums of to-day are denounced as charlatans, who would claim the self-same power; it is in the impossibility of discerning any other difference in the facts of spiritual ministry in ancient and modern times, than that which human prejudice and bigotry asserts, that the difficulty of our task this night consists, and we are fain to acknowledge that we are unable to draw the line of demarcation suggested by your question. One point still demands a few words more of elucidation. I mean with reference to necromancy and the question of how far the "miracles" (so called) of the Bible involve the acts of human disembodied spirits? One distinct statement of this kind is made in the history already referred to in the life of Samuel, but besides this, many other circumstantial reasons for this belief could be shewn, had we time to trace them. At present we can only remind you that the beings who are spoken of as "Gods, Lords, Spirits," and sometimes "angels," throughout these Scriptures, almost invariably ap-

peared in such human form as to identify them constantly with men.

We find, too, direct evidence from the lips of Jesus, that in heaven "men shall be as angels." Not only is it shown then that angels appear on earth as men, but that men in heaven are to appear as angels. Surely this circumstantial evidence proves much for the community of nature between man and spirits. "I have chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil." So spake Jesus to a *man*, a spirit still incarnate in a mortal form—the traitor Judas Iscariot. You have no definition of the word "devil," more marked than this, though a "devil" is commonly supposed to be a spiritual, though an evil, being—yet Jesus spoke to a mortal man, when he used those emphatic words, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." Does not this passage cast some light on the mysterious beings so frequently referred to as "devils," no less than on angels also?

When Peter was liberated from prison, and presented himself at the door where his companions were gathered together, the damsel who opened unto him, and reported his presence, was not believed, and they said, "it must be Peter's angel." Does not this signify Peter's spirit, or what else was here spoken of? And must we not hence conclude, that deeming that the mortal form of Peter could not be present, his companions spoke of his "angel" as his spirit, as the custom of the time would phrase it. In these same Scriptures too, we read, "who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Angels signify messengers, and this writing then declares that God's messengers are "spirits." Seek an interpretation of your scholars, Hebrew and Greek, of the word "spirit," you will find it is the *ruach*, the breath, which signifies the life or the spirit, and is always held to be synonymous with the soul of man.

And yet another witness, and we close our case. Remember the Isle of Patmos; remember John the Apostle, the councillor, the friend, the most beloved of the most beloved of God. Recollect that this so highly favoured man and chosen seer, when the vast arcana of the future was opened up to him, as detailed in the Book of Revelations, when the mighty mystery of this volume was displayed before his ecstatic spiritual eyes, so vast and wonderful appeared the power of him who brought the message that John would have fallen down and worshipped him. "See thou do it not," the mighty Revelator said, "I am one of thy fellow-servants, one of the prophets, like thyself." Does not this signify in the angelic assurance of a similarity with John the man, that the angel had been such as himself, and could be then no other than the spirit of a man?—

a fellow-servant of the prophets, such had he been, even as John was now. If any other meaning than this most obvious one, is concealed in this language, what is the use of that book whose direct interpretation is given to man as "the living word of God?" and this must complete our case in evidence, that human spirits inferentially, circumstantially, and by direct testimony are shown to have communicated the will of the Most High to all classes of men who were able to receive them throughout that vast dispensation which formed your religion. And now we reiterate the question. What is the difference between this dispensation and that of modern Spiritualism? Are not your powers the same in every age? With spiritual eyes you see the spiritual form, with open spiritual ear you distinguish voices, lost to the dull ear of matter. You lay your hands on the sick, and they recover by the power which in ancient days was called divination, translated into modern speech is known as clairvoyance, man can reveal the distant past and untried future.

Some occult power in the human frame, quickened by that of spirit, can now as then change the elements of matter, and act upon ponderable bodies in strange and unusual modes; the gift of tongues is with us, and many are the Pentecostal chambers of this day, where the ignorant and unlearned speak with the wisdom and foreign form of speech they knew not of before.

What voice was that which called the infant Samuel;—spoke to Judea's ancient patriarchs and prophets;—sometimes by burning bush, and human tone, and sometimes in extatic slumber? 'Tis written that they were "In the spirit," but that spirit's manifestation was commonly displayed in the form of a voice speaking in human phrases? What voice was that which spoke to Socrates, Pythagoras, and to many a Greek and Roman sage, whom you call heathens? Voices spoke with Buddha and dictated the noble poem called the "Golden Verses of the Buddha." Voices conversed with Zoroaster and rehearsed the pure and holy teachings of the Zend Avesta. Were these voices false, or merely hallucination, or the work of "demons," whilst God Himself spoke with a voice to patriarchs, prophets, disciples, early Christian fathers, saints, and martyrs? Is God's voice hushed that He speaks no more with man, or are ministering angels silent? What voice was that which spoke to good George Fox, bidding him go forth and preach God's truth, and cheered him in the dungeon, and strengthened him in the hour when the arm of violence and persecution was heavy on him? What voice was that which spake to Joan of Arc, and called the humble peasant girl to go forth and become her country's saviour? And with them and with us, and with every age and clime, those voices speak on—

speaking in still small whispers to the spirit-ear that is open to receive them. They are silent never, never! In the dull cold ear of matter, their precious tones are voiceless, but the spirit medium of the nineteenth century *knows* that they are speaking ever, and as surely hears the Pilot calling to her words of good cheer and comfort amidst life's storms and tempests, as ever that voice resounded in the ear of holy Paul or John in the Isle of Patmos.

No, friends, I do not find the line of demarcation you enquire of. In the phenomena of witchcraft and the record of their dark and dreadful trials, I do find abundant illustrations of certain phases of magnetism and psychology, the two pillars which support the temple of Spiritualism; I do find that the entire of the communion or relation between the natural and spiritual worlds is demonstrated to be upheld by magnetism, which is the action of body upon body—and of psychology, which is the action of mind upon mind. I also find in analysing the curious phenomena of Spiritualism in every age, and under whatsoever title prejudice or partiality may bestow upon it, the very same testimony of similar phenomena, and therefore I infer a unique and similar cause. I find that the records of this grand old book have been received because they are in this book. I find them hitherto received in the spirit of unquestioning faith, which learns to read but not to obey the command of "Search the Scriptures." I find that the investigation suggested by modern Spiritualism, compelled by its mistakes, necessitated by its falsehoods and by the very difficulties through which you are blindly groping, are all revelations which throw back upon those ancient records the illuminating light of truthful science, so that henceforth we may not only believe, because we imagine it is pleasing to God so to do, and because this record is called His word, but because we believe and understand the record, and know it to be GOD'S TRUTH; because we recognize through the evidence presented to *our own* senses, through the testimony of God's revelation to *us*—through the voice that speaks to you and to me—through the light that shines upon *our* eyes, and the angels that walk *our* city streets, and the re-opening of the gates of spiritual truth that man, but never God has closed against us, that the grand and sublime phenomena of ancient and modern Spiritualism are one and the same revelation of eternal spiritual guidance, and of Divine and human relations; and that though man has received them in different ages, in the spirit suggested by prejudice, bigotry, or partial egotism, their basis, action and ultimate effect are ever the same, and leave me no line of demarcation to draw, or difference to define between what is called in one age witchcraft and necromancy; in a former, miracle and religion.

DR. WYLD: Granting that the body of a certain man appears to pass through the substance of a closed wooden door and that the garments of other men are removed apparently through solid ropes, what is the scientific explanation of such facts? Is the operation conducted by the spirits of departed human beings or by the spirits of living men present, suspending by some force the laws of the cohesion of solid bodies?

MISS HARDINGE: I will again ask your attention to certain quotations from this most valuable record, (holding up the Bible) "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." That is a quotation which bears immediately upon our subject. The circumstances to which you refer of a solid body passing through a solid body, not only require a vast amount of faith to recognize their possibility, and of testimony to assure us of it, but they involve a proposition which is not needed in spiritual manifestations. All spiritual manifestations are performed through the knowledge the spirit possesses of how to work upon the elements of matter. Having a certain amount of knowledge which will effect his purpose, why should a spirit endeavour to seek for other facts, even if they be facts in science, which would involve a far greater amount of difficulty in the production of the same effect. For instance, spirits know that it is not only possible to change any of the atoms of matter through the three forms in which it is presented—namely, the fluid, the solid, and the gaseous, but they can by knowledge readily do so. Now spirits have no need to effect these changes in their mode of moving ponderable bodies from place to place. The spirit is surrounded by an atmosphere as you are. In your atmosphere all things are visible to your eye. The atmosphere is the medium by which the eye is informed of the presence of objects which partake of the same ponderable character as the eye. The spirit is surrounded by an atmosphere like unto itself, formed of the emanations of spiritual bodies, composed of spiritual particles, and in that atmosphere all things are immersed, and become invisible to human eye, except by the aid of clairvoyance, or prepared conditions; hence you cannot behold the spirit land which fills your chamber, neither could spirits behold your world through your earthly atmosphere, unless they had had the experience of two worlds instead of one, and had already lived in the natural as well as in the spiritual sphere. Hence they can behold the natural form around you, as well as the spiritual around themselves. You cannot, except by clairvoyance, reciprocate this power, and so long as any substance is held by the spirit, and immersed in its atmosphere, it is invisible to you; it is dropped before your eyes into your atmosphere, and becomes visible to you. The action

of the spirits in manipulating matter, which they do with inconceivable rapidity, because they are better acquainted with the laws of chemistry than yourselves, is, therefore, invisible to you. The form of the man whom you describe, giving off emanations of magnetism to such an extent that a battery can readily be formed with spirits, becomes immersed in the spiritual atmosphere, and is invisible to your eyes. Meantime the magnetic spiritual body of the medium, which is an exact counterpart of the mortal form, is made visible to the eye of the circle passing through the ponderable mass of the door. Conducted by the disembodied spirit, this still embodied soul can pass like thought or electricity with inconceivable rapidity through space, and take note of scenes through which it passes. In part, at least, it is separate from the body, but still it is held by that same cord which Swedenborg has described as binding the soul of the seer to its mortal body; he realizes not himself, like the apostle, whether he is in the body or out of it; hence the testimony of his sensations are no evidence in this case. Still we repeat, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." It can be moved upon, carried through space, but two forms of decomposition must take place ere the door can be disintegrated, and the human body also; and this is not only, as in the present case, unlikely, but also unnecessary.

The door offers no obstacle to the transmission of electricity, and therefore the electrical body of the medium readily passes through it—not so the ponderable body which is not disintegrated, although it may remain in the chamber with the circle, invisible to the eyes immersed in a spiritual atmosphere. We render you this explanation confident of its truth, and further investigation of this peculiar phase of such phenomena will prove it. We say not that the form of humanity may not be carried by a force, which like the magnet, upheaves a mightier weight in substance than itself—the force of gravitation; thus it may be carried with the speed of electricity through the air, *but not through ponderable substances*. The fine and subtle form of humanity is never disintegrated. Subject then to the laws of the physical universe, neither the objects of clothing which you have alluded to nor the knots which fastened the bound form of the medium are disintegrated, but by the speedy force of mechanical action they are loosened, changed, and altered by the simplest modes. True, *inanimate* substances may be disintegrated and recombined again without destruction, but never the human body. We may not tamper with this glorious model of the Divine, but spirits adopt much simpler means to effect whatever changes are produced between the visible and the invisible worlds.

MR. COLEMAN : You have not explained the latter part of the

question, whether human beings or the spirits of living men present aid in the operations which are seen?

MISS HARDINGE: Human magnetism aids in such phenomena only so far as human beings give off a magnetic force. But we shall treat your question in further detail, for by the permission of those who are here assembled, as it is your speaker's privilege to be permitted to turn some more pages of that volume, radiant with light and fragrant with the airs of immortality, so we shall ourselves select for you subjects of contemplation. We ask whether your minds will follow us and rally around our thought should we present you in the address to be next offered in this place, the Philosophy of the Spirit-Circle; if this subject be acceptable to you, we will renew this question in treating of the persons most intimately connected with it, namely, Spirit Mediums.

Now ere we part, oh lift your thoughts in the divine circle with your speaker to the Great Spirit, the Infinite Soul, the Father, who calls us hither, even in our own purpose to assemble together to ask Him for light, or the intent to search of His Scriptures, written with His own divine hand on human brow and human tongue and human soul. Let us appeal to Him in humble aspiration for more light. We are standing in the vestibule of His divine presence; we are gazing on the volume whose seal is not yet broken; we are waiting for His voice to quicken our thought; we are asking of Him revelation from the world of the unknown. When next then we gather together, let us each one say in the secret chambers of his soul "I will arise and go to my Father." Such a purpose will form of this chamber a place of Pentecost; such a purpose will ensure the response we seek, for "Where two or three are gathered together in His name there will He be in the midst of them."