

Spirit recorded by the inspired writers of the new dispensation. "The Jews who believed, even all who came with Peter [from Joppa to Cesarea] were astonished when they saw that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit," Acts x. 45. Speaking of this outpouring the apostle afterwards says, "The Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning," xi. 15. Did the Spirit descend and rest on the apostles at the beginning to convert them? Did the Spirit as it fell on these Gentiles convert them to God? No: hear the apostle again:—"God made choice among us that the Gentiles BY MY MOUTH SHOULD HEAR THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL, and BELIEVE," Acts xv. 7. So then the Holy Spirit, if Peter's testimony is to be credited, did not fall upon these Gentiles at Cesarea to enable them to believe. Can the apostle's language be mistaken by intelligent, honest, candid men? The Spirit came upon Cornelius and his assembled friends, not to produce faith, not to convert them, as we learn from the inspired Peter, but for a purpose widely and grandly different. They spake with tongues or in new languages—tongues that they knew not before—immediately after the Spirit fell upon them, in a degree as the apostles spake at the beginning when the Spirit descended from heaven and rested on them like tongues of flame.

Now, how deep must be the hold that uninspired systems have on men's minds in this our day when these manifest truths are so perverted and wrested out of their place. And when we thus expose these perversions, our cotemporaries distrust us and say, 'You deny the Spirit.' We do certainly and solemnly deny *their* Spirit, and by the Spirit of God we are enabled to think light of all the harsh names and misrepresentations awarded to us for disowning the current speculations about the Spirit. God's Spirit we deny not. We confide in it. We love it. We rejoice in it. We trust to bring forth much fruit by it. We pray to be filled with it!

Did the reformer Luther deny Peter when he denied that the Pope sat on his apostolic chair? All the Romanists so argued, and they gloried in their logic. Yet Luther though he denied not Peter, sternly denied that he had a successor in the person of the Pope.

To proceed.—There is one instance in which certain men were converted suddenly by spirit—not however converted to the Lord, and most assuredly not by the *Holy* Spirit. The case is detailed in a few words. Seven vagabond Jews, strong opposers of Paul and the gospel, impiously tried to imitate him in curing persons possessed with an unclean spirit, using the name of the Lord Jesus in mockery. Jesus suffered not his name thus to be profaned. He permitted the evil spirit in the unclean man to answer back, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know [for I cannot resist them;] but who are you?" And forthwith "the man in whom the evil spirit was, leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them," Acts xix. 13-16. The nearest akin to this instance is recorded in Acts xiii. To the wicked Elymas, a profane disbeliever and scerner, Paul said, "And now, behold *the hand of the Lord is upon thee*, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." This was a direct "operation" by the power of the Lord upon an unbeliever; but as in the above case, the influence