

SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE.

Dear Brother Oliphant— In your first No. you give certain extracts from "a Christian Herald," "for the purpose of exciting interest and awakening reflection on the momentous subject of the influence of the Holy Spirit." You also intimate, that "an examination of the positions and premises of the popular advocates of spiritual influence is in contemplation." Believing with you that the "christian world has been convulsed with high school philosophy on this subject," I write to caution you as to the manner in which you treat this very important matter. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit—after the rudiments of the world—and not after Christ." There is a disposition in man to reduce every subject to the level of his own comprehension, which greatly hinders him from being "strong in faith." Hence some christians will embrace such views only as are consistent with *philosophy*, not considering that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Much as I approve of the general tenor of the "reply" in the *Herald* referred to, I think the author has hardly kept himself *pure* in this matter. In summing up, for instance, what he believes to be satisfactorily shown in the "reply," after mentioning the second item, he says, "and we know of no conceivable mode of spiritual communication to man, other than positive inspiration or the belief of the revealed will of God." And what if we do not—does it follow that there are no other? What then does the apostle Paul mean by stating that God is "able to do exceedingly abundantly, more than we can ask or think?" Did he not, like a confiding child of God, simply *believe* that his Heavenly Father could bless him in a way of which he did not conceive? Does our author understand the *manner* in which his prayers will be answered? If he does, I must conclude he has got beyond the apostle. I am inclined to think however, that he has got beyond *himself* in this matter; for, in showing the *reasonableness of prayer* he very appropriately refers to the vast and inconceivable resources of the infinite mind. "Our Redeemer" says he, "sits at the helm of dominion and power—all intelligences, good and evil—besides men, are under his government." "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him."! Is not this perfectly sufficient? Why then perplex ourselves as to the *mode* in which those angels, and authorities, and powers are employed for our benefit? But I am occupying too much space. I only designed a hint, and behold a letter. May the Lord give you understanding in all things. That all preachers and writers of the gospel would "declare the testimony of God" and cease from theories and speculations, is the desire of

A DISCIPLE.