

ordinary methods; and holds, consequently, that if there was an appearance at all, it was probably the devil in the likeness of Samuel.* Bishop Horne held a somewhat similar view, and thought that the apparition was the result of the interposition of Providence unexpectedly to the woman, and hence her surprise and alarm when she saw it. Stackhouse, dealing with the conflicting opinions of commentators, thinks the most probable explanation is that a delusion was practised on Saul by some person whom the woman had employed to aid her in the deception.† Upon any such principle as this, however, it is exceedingly difficult to account for the accuracy of the prediction. Farmer, in his *Dissertation on Miracles*, discusses the question at great length. According to his view, it resolves itself into—“(1) Whether the whole was not the work of human imposture, the artful sorceress making the credulous monarch believe that she saw an apparition when she really saw none; at the same time so managing her voice as to deceive Saul into a belief that he received his answer from Samuel, and, (2) whether God did not rather raise Samuel, or present a likeness or image of him to Saul to denounce the Divine judgment against him, for the crime he was then committing in thus communicating with a reputed sorceress?”‡ Farmer himself clings to the latter theory. A very similar view was held by Dr. Samuel Clarke, who thought that God permitted a likeness of Samuel to appear in reproof of Saul's wickedness.§ Josephus, no mean authority upon questions connected with Jewish thought, maintains that it was really the spirit of Samuel who came at the command of the woman, an opinion acquiesced in by some of the ablest expositors of Scripture. It is quite unimportant, however, for my present purpose, which of the numerous views that have been held at different times by various commentators be adopted. The whole thing may have been a juggle on the part of the woman, the appearance the result of contrivance or collusion, and the voice accomplished by means of ventriloquism; or the apparition that came may have been some other spirit which personated the dead prophet;

* *Brown's Dictionary of the Bible*, II., p. 423. † *A Dissertation on Miracles*, p. 349.

‡ *Vide Note on the Passage in Mants' Bible.* § *Clarke's Sermons*, X., p. 287.