

I. For convenience let us first enquire what arguments may be used, with some degree of force, to prove that the pretensions of spiritualists are not delusive but have a basis in fact. Whilst admitting that a great deal of fraud is associated with the history of their science, they may claim :

(1.) The respectability of many of its advocates. We find amongst the acknowledged believers such men as Whately, Robert Dale Owen, Robert Hare, W. M. Thackeray, T. A. Trollope, Lord Lyndhurst, Wm. Crookes, editor of the *London Quarterly Journal of Science*, and many others in Europe and America, distinguished in the walks of science, philosophy, literature, and statesmanship, who believed in a new force not recognized by science, and who, after what seemed to them careful investigation, concluded that the phenomena witnessed by them were incapable of explanation on the ground of imposture.

(2.) The fact that in the Old Testament, and the New, so much notice was taken of the various forms of spiritualism as to condemn them, proves that such evils existed. Moses said, "When thou comest into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Against all such the death penalty was pronounced in the Mosaic Law. Would that have been the case if the whole system had been simply a delusion, without any element of reality or basis of fact? Is it not likely that the inspired writer would have somewhere exposed the imposition—if he had regarded it as entirely such—as the best antidote to the offence? But, instead of that, it is constantly referred to and forbidden, as a *something* dangerous, and to be avoided. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." If witchcraft is only a delusion, then rebellion against God is not so bad as it seems. Manasseh is said to have used witchcraft; so did Jezebel. The city of Nineveh was the mistress of witchcrafts. The prophet Micah spoke of the cutting off of witchcraft