

"sient world, I may still fix the anchor of my hope and happiness in Thee, who art the source and spring of all blessings, and without whom no evil or calamity could ever befall me!" +

A THREE-FOLD TEST OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by WILLIAM R. GORDON, D. D.—
New York, Charles Scribner; Montreal, B. Dawson—pp. 408.

"Modern Spiritualism" is the mania which began with "rapping" and "table moving," a few years ago, at Rochester, New York, and has now spread widely over the United States, as a system of alledged intercourse with disembodied spirits, by the help of certain men and women who are called "Media," and who by this craft have their wealth. We do not advise any one to study the subject, which is of a shocking and painful character, but any, who think it their duty to inquire into this base delusion, may read with advantage the work above named.

Dr. Gordon tries the modern spiritualism by the tests which its own expounders have recommended, and comes to the conclusion, that the whole system is of the Devil and his angels,—that it is of the same character with ancient heathen necromancy, and demonic possession,—and that evil spirits personate the dead, in order to confound, deceive, and destroy the souls of the living. We incline to the opinion that a larger proportion the facts than Dr. Gordon supposes, may be attributed to cunning imposture. For the rest, we agree with this author, that they bear many marks of being "wiles of the devil." The only serious objection to this view which occurs to us arises from the circumstance, that the outpourings of sentiment and philosophy through the "Media," are too stupid, silly, and incoherent, to be ascribed to any "seducing spirits." For instance, the spirits that personate Lord Bacon, John Locke, and George Washington, maunder in a most contemptible manner. But we set over against this the sad fact, that the delusion, however despicable in some aspects, has actually succeeded, and has yielded such results, in atheism, insanity, despair, and suicide, as are according to the will of that Wicked One who is the "father of lies," and 'a murderer from the beginning.'

We have no doubt that the maniacs who have embraced this Spiritualism are partly impostors, and partly victims and dupes. Among them are very few persons, of education or character. The majority are infidels, Universalists, Swedenborgians, and Unitarians. A few Methodist preachers have fallen under the delusion, and some of these have had their reason completely overthrown, and are now inmates of lunatic asylums. It is a remarkable and instructive fact, incidentally mentioned by Dr. Gordon that, so far as known, no Divine or Layman, holding Calvinistic views of Christian truth, has been drawn into this Stygian whirlpool.

Two remarks occur to us in closing the book.

1st.—The modern Spiritualism is quite as wicked as the ancient necromancy; and whether its claims be real or no, sin is committed by every one who has recourse to it, in order to obtain intercourse with the dead or with familiar spirits. It is an abomination unto the Lord. See Deuter. xviii, 10-12.

2nd.—The dangers resulting from the uncultivated condition of large masses of the people, as respects religious truths, are more serious than many have suspected. How one blushes for his species, when he learns the large success in this very 19th century, of such vile systems as "Spiritualism" and "Mormonism!" What a rebuke to the Church of Christ; that in Protestant countries, multitudes should be so ignorant of true religion, and so alienated from the house of prayer, as to fall a prey to these wicked impostures and 'doctrines of demons!' x