

spiritual wickedness in high places—sometimes translated—wicked spirits in the heavenlies.”

Dr. C. Williams, author of “Insanity and Mental Specialist,” says: “I venture to predict that just as scientific men no longer consider it unscientific to admit that people in the body can hypnotize, influence, and control other people in the body, so very shortly it will no longer be considered unscientific to admit that disembodied beings can, and do, act upon and control in a somewhat similar way beings in the flesh. I have devoted the very best years of my life to the subject, and have arrived at the conclusion that disembodied beings can, and often do, obsess the fleshly inhabitants who people the earth’s surface.”

I never thought very much about this subject till lately, and my feeling since studying it, has been one of absolute amazement. Truly there are more things in heaven and earth than this world dreams of.

All through the Old Testament we see examples of the terrible results of tampering with occultism. In the 1st Chron. 10-13, King Saul, you remember, died because he enquired of one that had a familiar spirit; and secular history supplies abundant evidence of its existence in all parts of the world, down to the present time, while Paganism has ever been closely associated with spiritism and necromancy

Readers of the “Life of Mary Slessor” will know that in parts of Africa, if twins are born, both mother and babes are left to die, if not actually killed, because it is supposed one twin must belong to an evil spirit. Probably you also know that in such lands as China and India little girls are daily being sold to the temples to be married to the Gods, and their parents think it an honour.

I have read that frequently before a crisis in the world’s history, there is unusual activity in the spirit world—certain it is at the time of the first advent—they furnished abundant evidence of their presence and power, but when Christ came into the world, he brought a new light with Him, and wherever that shone it dispelled the darkness of Paganism and the powers of evil were driven back. As Milton so beautifully expresses it:—

“The oracles are dumb, no voice or hideous hum

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.

Apollo from his shrine, can no more divine

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.

No nightly trance or breached spell,  
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.”

You cannot read English history or literature, Shakespeare for instance, without meeting frequent references to witchcraft, nor need I remind you of the nation’s opinion of it. Lord Halifax shows that it is identical with the spiritualism of to-day.

Let me quote extracts from his arresting comparisons: “What is the essential difference between such tales and the accounts, say, of the Delphic Oracle, and the Pythonesses, with their tripods, and the trance into which they were thrown? What, I say, is the difference between all these accounts of ancient necromancy, witchcraft, and dealings with the unseen and the professed and acknowledged claims of the spiritualism of to-day.”

The modern phase, as we have already seen, commenced about the middle of last century, when the discovery was made in America, that communication could be established with the spirit world by means of the alphabet. The first message thus transmitted was a typical lie: “We are all your dear friends and relatives.” The movement thus commenced spread across America like prairie fire till its adherents were numbered by millions. It has been well said, we have travelled a long way since then, and the occult has become so fashionable as to supersede all other religions, for the last thirty years, under various names, it has been extending its influence. Prior to the war the United States and Australia were its strongholds, now England seems to be coming its chief centre.

Another writer, twenty years ago, speaks of “Psychical epidemics, yielding to no arguments of reason, whose career the law seemed impotent to really check.” He tells how in the latter part of the eighties there was one society of occultists in Berlin, while in 1900 there were some nine rival societies; what must they number