

MR. GERALD MASSEY'S REPLY TO DR.
A. R. WALLACE.

The following constituted the introduction to Mr. Massey's lecture on "The Natural origin of Spirits—Elemental, Celestial and Human," at St. George's Hall, on Sunday last:—

I am not about to make any personal attack on our friend Alfred Russel Wallace, who is a good and true Spiritualist; but, in a lecture recently delivered, he has been assuring the world that "Spiritualism *alone* can reconcile the Bible with an intelligent belief:" That "the three men unhurt in the fiery furnace are to Spiritualists actual facts which they need not explain away:" That "when Christ cast out evil spirits, turned the water into wine or renewed the bread and fishes so that 5,000 were fed, we *can* believe that these things did really occur as extreme manifestations of the same power as that which is daily at work among us." The "Miracles imputed to the Saints come into the same category"; so says Alfred Russel Wallace.

Now, I cannot imagine any position more unscientific, any argument more false, any advocacy more fatal to the object we have at heart. That one of our foremost Men of Science should set up Miracles once more in the name of Modern Spiritualism; that he should vouch for Spiritualism converting the Biblical Miracles into scientific facts, is nothing short of a catastrophe for our Cause!

It would be a serious error for any man of science even to use the language of ignorance concerning miracles, which in the vulgar sense imply a supernatural interference with natural law. But Mr. Wallace does more than that, in vouching for the biblical miracles being actual facts. By taking this course the co-contributor with Darwin in establishing the magnificent generalization of Evolution, is unwittingly undoing with one hand all that he has done with the other. He is helping to rehabilitate the exploded or discredited beliefs of the past by means of that which must consequently be held to be a kindred superstition of the present. This is to set wide the floodgates of ancient and modern superstition without even taking the precaution of putting up a net to catch anything by it! It is just as fatal to include the Bible miracles among the evidences of Spiritualistic phenomena as it would be to vouch for the genuineness of all the impostures in materialization or the tricks in conjuring.

Mr. Wallace once admitted to me that he could take no interest in Mythology. That is a common position on the part of those who little dream how great is the need of taking an interest in that which has been so fruitful a source of utterly confounding falsification. Why, literalization of Mythology has been the cause of half the intellectual errors extant. It will be still more fatal to class and claim as Spiritual that which was never anything more than a symbolical mode of representation. For example, there is a picture in the Roman Catacombs that shows the non-historic, non-Spiritual nature of the three men in the fiery furnace.

The four living creatures with the faces of a man, an ox,

a lion, and an eagle, which were seen by Ezekiel when the "heavens opened" and he had "visions of God," belong to the mythological astronomy, as imaged in various lands, and are the well-known types of the four corners in all the representations. It was no more necessary to enter the trance condition to see *them* than it would be to see the Great Bear in heaven to-night.

The ascent of Elijah in a chariot of fire is no more a spiritual transaction than it was historical. Another representation in the Roman Catacombs shows the Greek Mercury in the same picture, where Elijah is just as mythical as Mercury.

The miracle of the loaves and fishes is an identifiable Egyptian myth, in common with a dozen others reproduced as Gospel history.

Spiritualism is not going to warrant the belief that the Fall of man was a fact, and evolution is a lie; or that a serpent talked before it knew how to crawl in the dust; or that Samson was a spiritual medium, powerfully possessed; or that a flood was universal which stood fifteen cubits higher than the mountain-tops.

The sun and moon never did stand still in heaven (or the earth in its rotation) in any time past, though all the tables in the world should take to turning in the present. As Mythology, the story can be understood. It had its origin in natural phenomena. The great battle between the forces of Light and Darkness was fought at the Autumn Equinox. What we call the "harvest-moon" rises at the same time, and nearly of the same size, for three or four nights together, and so may be said to "stand still" until the fight was finished.

Adam and Moses only talked with the gods, Elohim and Jah, because they were *not* men, but characters, as entirely mythical as were the gods who talked with them.

Literalized Mythology has its *Miracles*; Spiritualism has only its *Facts*. We have now the means of comparing and distinguishing the one from the other.

Eglinton's slate-writing is a fact, but it lends no likelihood to the statement that the various conflicts between Jesus and a personal Devil took place at the highest points of elevation that could be found in the world. And when we learn that Eglinton sat for three years without getting more than a scratch on the slate, it becomes obvious that we are in presence of a process in the laboratory of nature, as purely evolutionary and scientific as anything in chemistry. It gives us such a glimpse of difficulty in attainment, no room is left even for the word "Miracle," and we have no shadow of right to fling away the result by classing the hard-earned accomplishment with the cheap and easy miracles of Mythology. For a Spiritualist to do this is to commit suicide.

The miracles are supernatural and anti-natural, because they were *not* human; whereas our facts are and must be a part of nature now as they were in times past; or else they are not facts at all. The miracles only happened "once upon a time"; the facts are continually repeated, and therefore are scientifically true! We have more than enough to do in our fight for that which is *possible* in the present, to allow of Spiritualism being made responsible for all that was impossible in the past.

It was as a *Spiritualist* that I made it the work of my life to try for a true explanation of Mythology, so as to prevent our rushing into this false position, which has been occupied by some of the early Spiritualists; my object being to restate the ancient facts in their right relationships, and make way for the new, by explaining the fictions on purpose to explode the falsehoods.

The miracles of misinterpreted Mythology are *not* to be actualized by Modern Spiritualism; they must be explained by *Mythology* itself; and when explained, they are true to neither the one nor the other, but as miracles are repudiated by both. They are the very worst enemies of their own cause who ignorantly try to convert the mythical miracles into spiritual phenomena, or who vouch for the fact of their being identical. For instance, I find some of our writers declaring that it has been left for us to gather from the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism the precise nature of the resurrection of Jesus! What, then, do our *dead come back in the same body from the grave*? Is the tomb tenantless when the ghost walks? Do the departed ascend to heaven visibly from a mountain-top in the same body that is missing from the mausoleum? Does Spiritualism teach that the first resurrection occurred 1800 years ago; or that it was corporeal; and that all the other dead have to rest in their graves until the corporeal Christ shall come again in the clouds

of heaven, at the end of the world? This is foolishly trying to re-vitalize a dying belief with a transfusion of new life, drawn from facts which are verifiable: a belief that cannot be vitalized, not if you were to bleed Spiritualism to death in the effort to give it a little new life!

So far from the Christian cult being *identical* with Modern Spiritualism, it was and ever has been, as it continues to be, *totally* and *fundamentally* opposed to the phenomena now called *Spiritualistic*. It was the *pre-Christian*, the Gnostic, religion that based immortality or continuity of existence upon the evidence of abnormal phenomena and clairvoyant vision. Historic Christianity was built upon the tomb of the Ancient Spiritualism, which it succeeded in burying alive. The resurrection of its Christ was emphatically physical; and you cannot demonstrate a spiritual continuity by means of a bodily resurrection.

The risen Christ of the Gospels expressly shows that he is not a spirit; but that he has returned in the old physical body—blood, bones, and all. Now the physical resurrection on which the churches have rested their hope of immortality for 1800 years, never has been a verifiable fact in human experience! That is the *TRUE* testimony and teaching of Spiritualism. Nor can you rehabilitate the fading belief by calling it "Spiritual"—because that would annihilate the history! Christian revelation has no light on this subject, just because the resurrection was Mythical and not Spiritual.

No matter how the Christian Spiritualist may want to, and try to, read his interpretations into the plain facts of the case as recorded, his facts are not there. They were not intended to be there. The Historical Christians could not see them there. The Latter-day Christians do not find them there. And it is not for the Spiritualist to smuggle them in on purpose to prove them there.

Let every tub stand on its own bottom.