

means to communicate with spirits in the flesh. They are not working in a corner. The world is agitated on these subjects. Religious ministers are said to preach, editors to write and print, judges to judge, etc., by this kind of inspiration. It is brought into requisition to develop the sciences, to detect crime, and in short to mingle in all the interests of life.

In the first place, what are we talking about, when we touch the question of the living hearing from the dead? It is a saying, that "*dead men tell no tales.*" If this is not in the Bible, it is somewhere else; and if it be true, it is just as good as if it were in the Bible.

The Sadducees in the time of Jesus, believed there were no such things as angels or spirits, or existence in another sphere; that when an individual was dead, it was the final end of the workings of his intellectual being, that the elements were dissolved, and mingled with the great fountain from which they emanated, which was the end of individuality, or conscious existence.

Jesus, in reply to them, took up the argument from the Scriptures, or history of the ancient fathers, venerated by reason of antiquity, in hopes, by this means, to influence the Sadducees, or at least the Pharisees and others, by means so powerful and so well adapted to the end in view.

Said he, God has declared Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; as much as to say that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not dead, but living; that they had never been dead at all, but had always been living; that they never did die, in the sense of the word that these Sadducees supposed, but were absolutely alive.

Now if intelligent beings, who once inhabited flesh, such as our fathers, mothers, wives, children, etc., have

really died, and are now dead in the sense of the word, as understood by the ancient Sadducees, or modern Atheist, then it is in vain to talk of conversing with the dead. All controversy, in that case, is at an end on the subject of correspondence with the dead, because an intelligence must exist before it can communicate. If these individuals are dead, in the sense that the human body dies, then there is no communication from them. This we know, because of our own observation and experience. We have seen many dead bodies, but have never known of a single instance of any intelligence communicated therefrom.

Jesus, in his argument with the Sadducees, handled the subject according to the strictest principles of ancient and modern theology, and true philosophy. He conveyed the idea in the clearest terms, that an individual intelligence or identity could never die.

The outward tabernacle, inhabited by a spirit, returns to the element from which it emanated. But the thinking being, the individual, active agent or identity that inhabited that tabernacle, never ceased to exist, to think, act, live, move, or have a being; never ceased to exercise those sympathies, affections, hopes, and aspirations, which are founded in the very nature of intelligences, being the inherent and invaluable principles of their eternal existence.

No, they never cease. They live, move, think, act, converse, feel, love, hate, believe, doubt, hope, and desire.

But what are they, if they are not flesh and bones? What are they, if they are not tangible to our gross organs of sense? Of what are they composed, that we can neither see, hear, nor handle them, except we are quickened, or our organs touched by the principles of vision, clairvoyance, or spiritual sight? What are they?