

# The Church.

“Get Foundations are upon the holy hills.”

“Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

TORONTO, CANADA, JULY 12, 1855.

No. 50

## Society.

Though many a joy be given  
By the pure emotion of all-pitying Heaven—

Though sweet emotions in our hearts have birth  
Which are spangled on the lap of earth—

Though, with the flag of Hope and triumph hung  
Upon our heads, we start when life is young—

And onward cheered by sense, and sight, and sound  
Like a launched bark, we enter with a bound—

And must the dark cloud lour, the tempest fall,  
And the same chance of shipwreck waits for all—

They are they who leave the harbouring land  
For a summer voyage, hand in hand—

Presure's light slaves; but with an earnest eye  
Beholding all the future of the sky;

When life's career at length is past,  
The right have they who may stand at last—

Safe from hidden rocks, or open gale,  
By the oar, and furl the slacken'd sail—

Anchor deep on that tranquil shore  
Where raging storms can never reach them more.

Should thou be singled out by partial Heaven  
To one to whom a cloudless lot is given?

Look round the world and see what fate is there,  
Which justice can pronounce exempt from care:

Though bright they bloom to empty outward show—  
Tears lurk in each some canker-worm of woe;

By some the dark cloud lour, the tempest fall,  
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be proved to be impossible or absurd, seeing they have done so before this, until our objections establish, consistently that the condition of the world and men in it at the present day raises at the least a violent presumption against any such idea.

3. Another objection is made, which seems to present greater difficulty. It is this. Almighty God, being, by the very conditions of His nature (so far as we have power to conceive of it at all) concerned to spread among men the knowledge of the gospel of His dear Son, and to secure their reception of it, cannot be supposed to permit anything to happen, the tendency of which is to impede the progress of the kingdom of the Messiah. Yet, according to the views here maintained, good men, wise and learned men, are engaged in this thing, believe it, profess it, are “mediums,” receive communications from spirits and transmit them, by voice, by writing, and in various less dignified ways. Large numbers of good men—good as far as we can know, and good, as far as we have any right to judge—Christian men, lay and clerical, are believers of it. If so, and the facts of “Modern Spiritualism” be allowed, as facts, or real events—*facta* or things done—then this thing is for good. God is in it and with it; not as permitting it only, for inscrutable, but undoubtedly wise ends of His Providence; but as approving it. Then it is God's work; and if the devil, or any inferior evil spirit, under his command, have anything to do with it, it is only in the same way and in the same degree, in which he or they are permitted to interfere in all things that concern our preparatory life in this world.

But the objection overlooks a somewhat important consideration, which is, that after all, and with all the help which the goodness of God has provided for them—men—the best and wisest—are only men. No grace, till we have cast off the burden of the flesh, is sufficient to make temptation impossible to any, or to certify beforehand that, being tempted, a man will not fall. Even the humanity of the Lord himself was tempted. But his was the only humanity that knew no sin. Now we admit, of course, that God will not permit a good man to be tempted beyond what he is able to bear, but will, with the temptation, send a way of deliverance to them that be godly. What then? Some godly men may have been, may be now the subjects of this temptation. Granted that does not prove it to be not of the devil. So far as it is temptation to any evil, however slight, it is surely not of God, who tempteth no man. It is the man's own “lust,” the lust of the spirit of pride; the lust of his intellect, the worst of lusts—that spiritual pride that wrought the devil's ruin in the beginning—and that lust of forbidden knowledge which prevailed on Eve to the ruin of her race. That any godly man has fallen a victim to it, proves nothing but the frailty of the godly man. It is no more proof that Modern Spiritualism is of God, than the boils upon Job's body were that he was in a higher condition of health than was good for him—or than the fall of our first parents was proof that God approved as well as permitted the temptation.

Nor is there any real inconsistency between our idea of the diabolical origin of Modern Spiritualism and the unquestionable fact that many good men have fallen victims to the iniquity in which it is founded, and to which we suppose it must inevitably lead. Our blessed Lord Himself has anticipated a similar objection, and furnished the answer to it. “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.” Sincere, earnest Christian men in the times of persecution, fell away and made shipwreck of their faith. That did not prove the backsliders to have been hypocrites; much less did it prove the falsity of the faith. It proved nothing but the weakness of the backsliders. No man ever lived on earth, but the holy and just One who was not perpetually falling into sin. But that does not prove that Abraham and Moses, and Peter and Paul were human beings. God certainly permitted them to be addressed by the temptation of whatever kind under which they fell. But that does not prove that God approved the temptations, much less that He approved the sin. It proves nothing but that they as well as all human beings were imperfect, liable to sin, and in perpetual need of the disciplines and strengthenings of divine grace.

Notwithstanding all the objections which are made by spiritualists themselves, and by those who, in spite of the evidence, refuse to admit its supernatural character to our view, that it is the work of the devil; we are compelled to adhere to our opinion both of the reality and the character of the facts.

And here, before we proceed further, by proofs drawn from the authorized publications of the Spiritualists, to establish our charge against the thing itself; and to prove, that whatever it professes theoretically, and whatever its adherents think of its purpose, its origin, and its effects, it is essentially diabolic, and its chief operators under diabolic possession; we must once more enter a caveat against misconstruction. Personally, we know none of these chief operators. By reputation, we know several of them; having carefully inquired concerning them. We admit the general excellence of their lives and characters. Some of them are as pure in their moral lives as it is possible for men to be. And for ought we know, or can ascertain, some of them are religious men. Yet are they defiled by their wickedness. We deny

not their sagacity, their learning, their wisdom, their moral purity, nay, if you please, their religious excellence. And as to their wickedness, itself, we do not presume to judge them. That is God's business—none of ours. We pretend to judge nothing but “Modern Spiritualism.” And our judgment of that must stand the same, even if any of them held the Apostolic office; age, though we know them to be angels from heaven! For their doctrine is in contradiction of the Word of God. It is a “new Gospel,” other than that which Christ gave, and the Apostles preached. And we have been expressly warned that though the Apostles, “or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!”

Our stand-point, as we have said, is the truth and the finality of the Gospel. Spiritualism necessarily denies both; no matter what its pretensions, or its advocates think they intend and desire. Nor is the importance of that consideration lessened by the fact, which is patent enough all over your publications and operations, that often a very low intelligence is exhibited by the spirits; and that many of their pretended disclosures are—*but for the solemnity of the topic—*simply ridiculous. The inanity and ignorance of many of them—if they be indeed made by spirits—would, of course, prove them to be not of God. Nor can any pretence of morality or religion alter the essential character of the facts. If the devil himself were to appear visibly, and dwell in bodily shape among men, as one of themselves, he would be careful to hide the cloven foot. You would never find him in any scene of avowed and shameless vice. He would be a thorough-going punctilious in conduct, with the full measure of puritanic intolerance of all indulgences. He would, doubtless, be a regular attendant upon “stated preaching”—but withal a great disseminator of heresy and of the guile of dissent, and with the very Word of God in his mouth: as once before he was, when his conqueror bid him, Got thee behind thee, Satan! His intelligence, however great, was completely at fault in the case of the temptation. He overreached himself. And any intelligence of his subordinates, acting under his direction, is sure to be at fault, when it presumes to meddle with matters which it has not pleased the Holy Spirit to disclose to man, for whom, only, the written Word has been given. The devil knows no more about the future than we do. It is no wonder, then, that when they pretend to make disclosures concerning it, they should lie, and like all liars, contradict themselves.

But for our proofs of the opposition to the Scriptures of truth, which modern Spiritualism discloses. They are not to be found so much in plain and formal statements of doctrine against Scripture, as in the general tone and uniform character of all their utterances. Everywhere in them, the devil (as we have been warned he would) puts on the character of an angel of light. Now and then bad spirits (styled “unprogressed”) avow their presence—but the superior ones are always there; apparently to control them, in reality to make the devil's doctrine more palatable. These lack not however occasional utterances, in which the devil overreaches himself; so that if he had not possession of the “mediums” and the “circles,” he would thereby disclose to them the cloven foot. And occasionally the Apostles of the new Gospel avow their belief that Christianity is either an imposition, or that its miracles are of the same class, and had the same purpose, as the marvels of Modern Spiritualism. Thus in Fowler's Essay, read before the divinity classes of Cambridge, we have a classification of the Scripture Miracles, which, he pretends, find their repetitions in the modern manifestations. And among these he does not fear to cite the miracles of our Lord Himself—the luminous appearance at the conversion of Paul—which, however, he says, took place on the day of Pentecost!—the descent of the Holy Ghost at our Lord's baptism, &c. &c. Nor does he hesitate blasphemously to quote the Mystery of the Incarnation itself, as being, if not utterly a lie, at least paralleled by many similar stories told and believed in ancient times.

On page 17, he misrepresents the Scripture account of our Lord's appearance after the Resurrection, and insinuates the impossibility of his entrance into the room where the Apostles were assembled, if He were not then merely a spirit. On page 24, he cites the miracle of the curving of the fig tree, with the comment, “One can scarcely tell which is the more ridiculous, the act itself, or the telling of the story as a fact in the history of that meek and lowly person, Jesus.” On page 97, he proclaims the superiority of the new Gospel over Christianity. “From the first creation of the world, there have been periods of the influx of a new and higher life into this earth. It is distinctly traceable through all the geological ages, and in the traditions and monumental histories of mankind. And now we see the most unmistakable indications of a new and higher influx of life, of *divine life*, into the world, which is already opening upon mankind the dawn of a new era, as much more glorious than the “Christian” era, as that is more glorious than the Mosaic.”

To the same point Capron says, “The foundation on which belief (of Modern Spiritualism) rests is stubborn facts, and no religion ever spread with such unprecedented rapidity, and none ever rested on such positive foundation.” p. 438. Speaking of the organization of the Spiritualists in Philadelphia, the same writer, an accu-

sed and a man who, if you please, feel that there is a sacredness hovering around the Bible not attaching itself to other books. Also those who still cherish some of their former opinions in reference to the efficacy of prayer, the divinity of Jesus, &c. The second class is composed of those who feel cut loose from all authority of both Bible and church, and who seek to attain to a more perfect knowledge of both God and man by the study of the great book of nature, as transmitted by the Creator to his children.” p. 269.

A main argument of Judge Edmonds' introduction to his second volume, is that Scripture has left unrevealed to man what was to be his ultimate destiny through the countless ages of eternity. “I asked myself why may not that now be revealed? Surely nothing could be more important, and man was never before so well prepared for its reception.” pp. 19, 20.

If we had space at our command, nothing would be easier than to quote paragraph after paragraph and page after page in Judge Edmonds' book, in which are contained teachings both beyond Scripture and in contradiction either of its truth or its finality. Revelations are made “passing” of the occupations of the departed in the next world; and the leading doctrine of all is that the future life is, nearly in all particulars, but a continuation of the present. There are there rich people and poor people. The luxuries and enjoyments of this present life are continued there.

Among other pictures which are given are such as follows: A party of brazenclad; the ladies in purple velvet riding dresses; the gentlemen in a short jacket and cap of crimson velvet, trimmed with gold cord. They were accompanied by dogs. Residents of the far interior, they had heard of his (Judge E's) visit, and had come to see him, p. 126. The departed live in houses furnished just like our houses here—have vegetable gardens, wherein grow Indian corn, potatoes, beets and lettuce; p. 136; orchards of fruit trees, p. 137, a saw mill at work with four saws going, p. 138, poultry, turkeys, geese, ducks and chickens, p. 139. The women tend the dairy and make bread, p. 140. The young men and maidens fall in love with one another, and the young folks “tell stories, laugh and are full of fun,” p. 142. A venerable matron invites the Judge to make them another visit, and she would, she said, give me a drink of butter-milk” p. 144. And “just as I was leaving, my wife,” (the spirit of Judge E's deceased wife,) “pressed her lips to mine” p. 146. On one occasion the Judge is taken to his deceased wife's house and there is astonished (for do we refuse to sympathize with him) to find “her old rocking chair in which she had nursed all our children, and whose creaking they yet remembered so well, and her worktable which was one of the first articles of furniture I ever got her” p. 163. He takes a ride with the “presiding spirit” and his own wife, in a carriage and four.” The Judge drives, but turning offers to converse with his companions; the presiding spirit grows fearful of an upset, until Mrs. E. quiets his mind by telling him that “(Judge E.) was at home where I was, and knew what I was about,” p. 164. On one occasion the spirit of his wife told him that she was a compiler of planetary history and a teacher thereof; that she had chosen this pursuit for herself in the world of spirits, because it was a favorite study of his, p. 530.

So much for teaching beyond the Scriptures. For a few specimens of contradiction of the Holy Word and avowals of contempt for it, we refer to the same volume. “There I saw the devil, if there is one. Yet he, like the others, had lived as a mortal once on earth,” p. 243. “From Heaven's high throne the word has gone forth. From the inconceivable brightness around the great I AM, flashing in its dazzling radiance, the mandate has issued, “The work of man's redemption has begun, and it shall be finished.” “One will again be found to plant the cross on the summit of Mount Calvary, as a beacon light to future ages, though he bear it alone, and there water it in his own life's blood!” p. 441.

On the authority of Mrs. E. the future judgment is “distinctly and decidedly” denied, p. 527. The spirit of Lord Bacon being present is asked “about the existence of matter, and whether it was coeval with God? It was answered, Matter being eternal does not prove that it was from the beginning with God. It exists eternally. What idea have you (Bacon) of God? Is he a personage or a principle? It was answered, God is a principle, and an identity.” p. 237. Again: “God does not manifest himself but through his works and matter.” p. 115. “Let the mind go back to that period when the spirit of the First Cause sprang forth self-created!” “It may not be amiss to inform you that among spirits of high estate there are many who believe that God himself is the product of developed intelligence!” p. 238.

For further particulars concerning the character and attributes of God and denials of His proper personality, vide p. 120 and 130. At p. 272, we have present the Bishop of — and others. “After they had gone Lord Bacon wrote,—“I was somewhat inclined to answer the Bishop cavalierly, when he asked me to write the Apostles' Creed in Latin. I have forgotten both the Apostles and the Creed, and hope I shall not again be subjected to the indignity of learning it.” The revelations through Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter are made by a great number and variety of spirits, male and female; though chiefly

by two who announce themselves to be Bacon and Swedenborg. Among others are Voltaire, (whom the priests have never understood, p. 150), Charlemagne, Queen Elizabeth, General Washington, &c., and a convict whom Judge E. had sentenced to death, and who died impatient. Him (as well as others) the Judge preaches to—leads to repentance, and to begin to “progress.” There is a long struggle, occupying in the relation from page 511 to 522, at the end of which the murderer who died impatient—and in his spiritual state begins the interview with an attempt at personal violence upon the Judge; and garnishes his discourse with a number of very “earthly” oaths—becomes penitent, much subdued, thoughtful, and goes away saying, “Good night. The way before me looks so bright! I have left the darkness all behind. I now can see. I once was blind!”

This is Modern Spiritualism—in its facts and its doctrines. We could cite more, had we space; but this is enough to establish our charge against it, that it is of the devil; and that it cannot stand, unless the Bible fall. What then? I want then, for us Christians—for our comfort here—for our hope hereafter? Only this: to let Spiritualism alone. “Touch not, taste not, handle not!” Like every other machinery of the devil, it will die out the sooner for our avoiding any contact with it. If we refuse to touch it, or to go within the charmed circle of its influence, it will do us no harm. But once within that bound—once voluntarily delving ourselves with this blasphemous iniquity—we shall be no longer safe. We shall have no longer a right to count upon that protection which knows how to deliver the godly out of a temptation. We shall have chosen to rely upon our own strength; or worse than that, to reject the help of God as He has vouchsafed it through the Gospel, in favor of lying spirits of darkness, against whom that Gospel so fully warns us. As then we value our faith in Christ, as the alone Saviour; as we revere the Bible, as the alone Word of God; as we are persuaded that we need for our comfort in this life, and the assurance of our reasonable, religious, and holy hope for the life to come, a solid, enduring, unchangeable, high, noble and holy ground of faith in Him, who has said, “The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of this word shall pass away till all things be fulfilled”—let us beware how we peril it all, by bringing ourselves within the sphere of an influence, which pretends to be wise above what is written in the Word of God, and which, in fact, contradicts Himself.

## Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

ENGLAND.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, 57, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

Tuesday, May 8th, 1855.

The Lord Bishop of St. Asaph in the Chair.

The Lord Bishop of Melbourne was present.

The undersigned members of the Society having been proposed by the Standing Committee as the Trustees for the year ensuing, were elected:—

Rev. W. Brown, Rev. W. G. Humphrey, Rev. D. Jefferies, Rev. W. J. W. Jones, Rev. J. H. Gurney, Rev. John Thomas, Rev. Richard Harvey.

A letter was read from the Lord Bishop of Graham's Town, dated Feb. 10, 1855, upon the subject of a grant made by the Society in 1850 towards the erection of a church at Bloemfontein in the Province of the Orange River.

The grant of £150 intended for Bloemfontein was assigned to the erection of a church at such place as the Bishop should approve.

The Lord Bishop of St. Asaph in a letter dated St. John's, Red River, Feb. 3, 1855, recommended the application of the Rev. John Chapman, minister of St. Paul's, Red River, who is desirous of receiving a grant of books for his school, containing upwards of sixty children.

The people are composed of Indians from the north, and are in the habit of working on the land, but they sent 25 as a mark of their willingness to do what they can, and they hope at some future time to express their gratitude in a more substantial manner.

The Bishop requested were granted.

The Bishop of Melbourne addressed the meeting, the subject of Church matters in his diocese:

“I. As to Church buildings.”

His lordship acknowledged several grants which had been made by the Society for promoting Christian knowledge to various churches, schools, &c., referring especially to the grant by the Society of an iron church and parsonage-house which had been erected at Melbourne, but which had been delayed from difficulties in putting the parts together, the church and parsonage-house had been erected at Williamstown, the port of Melbourne, and the former had been consecrated shortly before his departure.

He also described the comparative position of the Church in respect of buildings on his arrival in the colony and at the present time, with reference to Melbourne, the chief city, and Geelong, the next largest principal town. On his arrival there were only two unfinished churches (St. James' and St. Peter's) at Melbourne, and a small net church at Geelong. There was no parsonage at Melbourne, but there was at Geelong, a substantial brick building. There was also a neat brick school-building at Geelong. At Melbourne there was nothing but a miserable weather-board building. Since that time the number and the character of the churches, parsonages, and schools, though far from adequate to the wants of a rapidly increasing population, had been such as to indicate no small measure of zeal and liberality on the part of the people.

“II. As to Prayer Books and Religious Books.”

The Bishop stated that he had on his arrival established a Book Depot, and had made arrangements for the disposal of the books which the Society at such prices as would cover the cost, and, to a certain extent, prove remunerative.

“III. As to the Character of the People, and their power to provide Church buildings for themselves.”

“As to the Educated Class.—A general respect was entertained for Religion. They took a great interest in the welfare of the Church, and had a strong sense of their responsibility and of their duty to make such provision according to

“A great liberality had been shown by many individuals of that class. As an instance, the Bishop stated that a Stipend Board having been established, with the object of raising, by voluntary contributions, a general fund, out of which deficiencies in local contributions might be made up, and thus a certain stipend secured for every clergyman; by means of this Board in the year 1852 alone, the large amount of £1652 12s. had been raised (chiefly in the parishes of St. James and St. Peter in Melbourne), in addition to local subscriptions for individual parochial ministers.

“As to the Uneducated Class.—The mass of this class the Bishop stated to be ignorant, and indifferent to spiritual things.

Their means were small, and they were unaccustomed to give. They were chiefly laborers, and resembled the laboring class in England.

“A few of them were, however, godly and liberal.”

“IV. As to the Principles by which the Bishop had regulated his own conduct in the administration of his Diocese.”

1. He had endeavored to commend his actions to the judgment of all, both clergy and laity, by the most perfect openness.

2. He had sought to obtain the co-operation of the laity by consulting them, and showing a deference to their opinion on ecclesiastical matters. He had held two conferences of the clergy and laity to consider the affairs of the Church, which were presided by some of the principal officers of Government, and by many of the chief bankers, merchants, and other commercial men, whose time was extremely valuable to them; but who gave up their time for several days, and several hours each day, to the discussion of the topics submitted to their consideration.

While maintaining the closest connection with the Church in England, he had aimed from the commencement of his episcopate to cherish a feeling of independence in the colony, which might make the members of the Church turn to themselves rather than to foreign assistance for their support.

“V. As to the Necessities of the Church in the Colony, and its Claims for Relief.”

“As to the Necessities.—The Bishop referred to certain returns made by the clergy in answer to printed inquiries circulated by him. These returns showed an inadequate provision for the members of the Church of England in comparison with other religious bodies.

“As to its Claims for Help.—Those the Bishop stated to be:—

1. On the immigration, annually, of many thousands of poor persons from England; and

2. On the return of most of the rich to England. As soon as people had made their fortunes they went home again.

“This poverty was constantly flowing into the colony, and wealth flowing out of it.”

In conclusion the Bishop requested the prayers and sympathy of the Society.

The Hon. Dr. O'Meara, missionary among the Indians of Lake Huron and St. Clair, Canada West, in a letter dated London, April 9, 1855, requested the aid of the Society towards the erection of a new church in his mission. He also requested a grant of books for the schools in his mission.

The Board granted £25 towards the church, and books to the value of £3 for the pupils.

Letters were read from the Rev. J. A. Welch, dated Koolah Hospital, April 23, 1855; from the Rev. H. P. Wright, dated Headquarters, Army in the East, above Sobatopol, April 22, 1855, and from the Rev. J. Keegan, dated British Hospital, Smyrna, April 10th, 1855. They were all of a congratulatory nature, in which the books granted by the Society for the use of soldiers and for hospitals in the East had been distributed, and requesting further supplies of the books. These requests were complied with.

The Secretary stated that other very valuable acquisitions of Bibles, New Testaments, and Prayer Books, with





