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BLASPHEMY:

Who are the Blasphemers? The "Orthodox" Christians, or "Spiritualists"?

BY THOMAS R. HAZARD.

PART I.

Webster defines blasphemy: "1. An indignity offered to God by words or writing; 2. That which derogates from the prerogatives of God." John the Divine says that "God is love." Admitting both Webster's and John's definition to be correct, it is difficult to conceive how a greater indignity can be offered to God than in charging him with being addicted to "eternal hate," "wrath," "vindictiveness," "revenge," or any degrading vices or propensities that fallible men are liable to.

Now, *Spiritualists* are often accused of blasphemy, and especially by the Orthodox clericals, such as are now plotting in conventions to deprive them and other liberal men of their political, civil and religious rights, by compelling the acknowledgment of their peculiar God through amendment of the National Constitution. Let us examine the subject a little, and learn, if we can, who are the blasphemers—*Spiritualists*, or their accusers.

In general, *Spiritualists* hold that John's definition of God is true, and that the great incomprehensible Power that sustains and controls the universes is altogether lovely in his attributes, and has done all things well, and after the exact pattern intended; and that, in spite of man's inability to discern the wisdom and goodness of his plans, everything will eventually work together for the good of his creatures, and insure to all a never-ending progress and development toward a better and a higher state of being. Holding the fall of Adam as accepted by the churches to be a mere allegory or myth, they have no belief either in the necessity or the fact of a vicarious atonement, but regard Jesus of Nazareth in the light of a most eminent reformer and enlightener, such as seems intended in the Divine economy shall be raised up, from time to time, to meet the progressive knowledge and wants of humanity. That Jesus received power and inspiration, through divinely appointed messengers from higher spheres, to say and do many wonderful things, *Spiritualists* believe; but they hold that these spiritual gifts afford no proof that the physical instrument through which they were exercised was necessarily of especial divine origin; much less that he should be endowed with the infinite attributes of the Godhead, as is claimed by the Orthodox churches. This, if admitted to be conclusive testimony, would seem to prove too much for their argument; for it would then follow that all the instruments who have done or now do the seemingly miraculous works that Jesus did, must likewise be endowed with personal attributes of Deity. Moreover, *Spiritualists* hold that Jesus of Nazareth, so far from claiming any special divine origin; repeatedly took occasion to disavow the supernatural and hero-worship-inclined followers, to whom he mostly addressed his beautiful discourses, of any such idea. We find him not only reproving his followers, but rebuking even the devil for tempting him to usurp prerogatives "belonging only to God." He also tells his disciples, both when clothed in flesh and when he appeared to them in his spiritual body, that those who truly believe in the gospel he enunciated should not only be endowed with power to do the miraculous works that he himself did, but even greater works. And it is a remarkable fact, that church contemners of what is called "modern Spiritualism" might do well to note, that when the risen Jesus, whom they have defiled, sent forth his *despised* disciples of that day "into all the world," he instructed them with his latest words how they might distinguish those who believed right in the gospel he commissioned them to preach, enumerating certain signs that should "follow them that believe," which, singularly enough, are substantially the same that very generally attend upon the ministry of the *despised* "spirit mediums" of this day, but very seldom on that of the ordained ministers of the popular churches. The Orthodox ministers of that day charged Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples with being blasphemers, and workers of miracles through the power of the devil, precisely as those of the Orthodox churches in our day charge against the "spirit mediums" who do the works that Jesus declared all should do who believed in (or rightly received) him and his gospel. Who, then, are the blasphemers—the "Spiritualists," or the "Orthodox"?

If infinite love is the all-pervading attribute of the God of Jesus Christ, and his apostle, John, then I again say that nothing more blasphemous can be uttered than to charge him with being a God of hate and malignancy, after the manner of Calvinistic Orthodoxy, as may be abundantly proved from the written testimony of its very highest authorities. John Calvin, the chief corner-stone and founder of the Presbyterian sect, says, "Children bring their condemnation with them from their mother's womb, being liable to punishment, not for the sin of another, but for their own; for, although they have not produced the fruits of their iniquity, they have the seed inclosed in themselves. Nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin; therefore it cannot but be odious to and abominable to God."

I submit that this one dogma of Calvin, alone, entitles the church he founded to lay claim to one of the seven heads of the murderous beast seen by the Revelator, that was destined to pervert and trample upon the gospel of Jesus, all of which were inscribed with the "name of Blasphemy."

Perhaps some patriotic Americans may object to Calvin's testimony because he was a foreigner. Let such hold their breath, and read what the great Rev. Jonathan Edwards (the American

Calvin) has to say: "Reprobate infants are vipers of vengeance which Jehovah will hold over hell in the tongue of his wrath, until they turn and spit venom in his face." And Emmons, another reverend Calvinist, in his sixteenth published sermon: "The happiness of the elect in heaven will in part consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell; and among those, it may be, their own children, parents, husbands, wives and friends on earth. One part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is eternally executing on the vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking the part of these miserable objects, will say, Amen! Halleluia! Praise the Lord!"

Now rest a moment, and read what the Rev. Thos. Bolton says, in his "Foulfold State," page 336: "The godly wife shall applaud the justice of the Judge in the condemnation of her ungodly husband. The godly husband shall say Amen! to the damnation of her who lay in his bosom. The godly parent shall say Halleluia! at the passing of the sentence of his ungodly child; and the godly child shall from his heart approve the damnation of his wicked parent who begot him, and the mother who bore him."

And yet another, The Rev. Mr. Ambrose, in his "Doomday," eloquently discourses thus: "When the damned have drunk down whole draughts of brimstone one day, they must do the same another day. The eye shall be tormented with the sight of devils, the ear with the hideous yellings and outcries of the damned in flames; the nostrils shall be smothered, as it were, with brimstone; the tongue, the hand and foot, and every part shall fry in flames."

I have before me a book with the imprint of "John Murphy & Co., 182 Baltimore street, Baltimore, 1859," entitled "Spiritual Confessions," by Frederick William Faber, D. D., with the approbation of the Reverend Archbishop of Baltimore. The nine pages (438 to 447) contain a very lively description of the "hell" of the "only true church," but differing somewhat from the Calvinistic conception, inasmuch as the intolerable sufferings of the damned are not made to contribute to the more exquisite happiness of the saints in heaven, as Edwards and other Orthodox ministers claim. It is most probable, however, that the same Calvinistic idea prevailed in the Romish Church a few centuries ago, when *auto de fis* were periodically exhibited in Catholic countries for the gratification of the priest-ridden masses, and perhaps as a foretaste of the more exquisite delight those heirs of Peter's heaven were to participate in hereafter. In perusing Faber's description of "hell," I could not refrain from the idea that some of his most fearful pictures were obtained from the archives of the "Holy Inquisition," wherein the "most reverend and holy fathers of the Church of Christ" were seated in stuffed chairs around the rack and torturing machines, in which their victims were writhing, and from time to time suggesting to their ready "familiars" and other executive "heirs" of salvation who were engaged in the Christian ministrations of church discipline on the offending heretics now and more exquisite turns, modes and touches of torture, highly beneficial to the agonizing souls of their victims and their own pleasurable and heavenly sensations. I extract a few passages for the benefit of the reader—not because they are more vivid than others, but that they can be given in a shorter space without doing violence to the context:

(Page 439) "Think only of what the head, the teeth, the ears, the eyes can suffer! Then consider all the variety of wounds which may be inflicted on our wining flesh and our tingling bones, whether upon a field of battle or in surgical operations. Consider also the exquisite ingenuity of the tortures of medieval prisons, or of the inhuman contrivances from which the criminal law of England and Scotland has not been free till quite late in modern history. All these, always at the highest stretch, always up to the point of the intolerable, and beyond it. Such is the life of hell; nay, it is not such; for besides these, there will be an excess of unendured and tortures of our flesh, which has lost even the poor mercy of being able to lie down and die!"

(Page 440) "The life in hell will disclose to us indescribable novelties of unhappiness. Our vast immortal spirits will become alive with misery and woe. New faculties of wretchedness will spring to life. We shall be forever discovering new worlds of intensest sorrow, of most intolerable anguish. But is this to be endured? It must be endured! We must live in disconsolate helplessness forever. Our minds have lost also their last poor mercy of being able to go mad!"

(Page 442) "We shall be in the hands of devils quailing under the cruel manipulations of those hideous, incorporeal, shapeless, formless, gigantic spirits. They will do what they will with us. It is their office to distress, to rack, to torture us with a vindictive cruelty and a demoniacal skill, of which we can form no conception. Mighty creatures and yet their magnitude, their fury, their oppressive fiery nature cannot crush the wretched life out of us, their trembling, awe-struck victims."

(Page 443) "Yet this is the bright side of hell. This is hell, with hell left out. The crowning woe, the loss of God. This is hell without the fire and the brimstone and the darkness and the discordant noises and the weeping and the wailing and the gnashing of teeth. It is the minor adjunct of hell, the torment to be thought least of, the miseries that come nearest to being bearable."

This may not be "as deep" or "as wide" as the Calvinistic hell, "but it will do." For a papal hell in this latter half of the heretical, back-sliding nineteenth century.

I think there are but few right-minded persons who will not admit that nine-tenths of the horrible malignity expressed in any one of the foregoing quotations may be subtracted, and then there be left ample testimony to convict one and all of their *Right Reverend* divine authors of the crime of blasphemy against not only the God of love, but of any God that was ever imagined by heathen, Mahometan or devil, the "Orthodox" minister and priest only excepted.

It is true that with the exception of the last, I have not taken the foregoing extracts directly

from the original works, and cannot therefore positively vouch for their correctness. I believe, however, that they are truly given. But if there are any doubters of the fact, I would refer them to the "Works of PRESIDENT JONATHAN EDWARDS, in Eight Vols. (published by) Worcester, Mass., 1808; by Dr. Isaiah Thomas, Jr.; Isaac Sturtevant, printer." I now have the seventh and eighth volumes before me. Both (as well as all the six others) are rampant throughout with the "wrath of an angry God, hell fire and eternal damnation." On page 387, Vol. 7th, the reverend "father in God" gives a description of the torments of hell, which he declares falls far short of the reality in intensity:

"Imagine," says he, "yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, all of a glowing heat, or into the midst of a glowing furnace, where your pain would be so much greater than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire as the heat is greater. Imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour full of fire, as full within and without as a bright coal of fire; all the while full of quickness, what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace? And how long would that quarter of an hour seem to you! If it were to be measured by a glass, how long would the glass seem to be a running; and after you had endured it for one minute, how overbearing will it be to you to think that you had to endure it to the other fourteen!"

"But what would be the effect on your soul if you knew you must lie there enduring that torment to the full for twenty-four hours? And how much greater would be the effect if you knew you must endure it for the whole year? And how vastly greater still if you knew you must endure it for a thousand years! Oh then how would your heart sink if you thought, if you knew that you must bear it forever and ever! that there would be no end! that after millions of millions of ages, your torment would be no nearer an end than ever it was, and that you never more should be delivered! But you know in your heart, will be long more greatly than this illustration represents."

Let the reader rest a while, and then read what follows, page 418, Vol. 7:

"How dismal it will be, when you are under these racking torments, to know assuredly that you never never shall be delivered from them; to have no hope, no light, no prospect of relief; that you might be turned into a *toad* or *serpent*, but shall have no hope of it; when, after you should have worn out the age of the sun, moon and stars in your dolorous groans and lamentations, without rest day or night, nor one minute's ease, yet you shall have no hope of ever being delivered; when, after you have worn out a thousand more such ages, yet you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer to the end of your torments; but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks, the same doleful cries incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend up forever and ever; and that your soul, which shall have been heated by the wrath of God all this while, yet will still exist to bear more wrath; your bodies, which shall have been burning and roasting all this while in these glowing flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will remain to roast through an eternity yet, which will not have been at all shortened by what shall have been past."

If this is not blasphemy, I know not what it is! To charge that the "God of love" could, under any circumstances, inflict such ghastly sufferings on any of his creatures for any cause whatever—much less for merely being the unwitting descendants of parents who in the long past were tempted (as the clumsy fable says) to bite an apple! Now from my inmost soul I thank my God that he has endowed me with a nature that could not if I would do otherwise than loathe and detest such a monstrous God as Calvin, Edwards & Co. have created in their own image, though in absence of my love he had both power and will to doom me eternally to such a hell as they describe.

One of the best read and most prominent Congregational clergymen in New England, remarked to me some time since that he considered "Jonathan Edwards the greatest theologian that ever lived."

Doubtless uninitiated readers might think that so great a man as Edwards would, in common with all others who have a single spark of humanity remaining in their bosoms, feel profound pity for the poor damned souls that from a stern sense of divine justice they hold, God has found it necessary to cast into such a hell. On this point let us hear the reverend teacher of Jehovah's highest truths speak for himself. "See Edwards's works, Vol. 7th, page 417:

"The view of the misery of the damned will double the ardor of the love and gratitude of the saints in heaven. The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and preciousness of the grace of God in their happiness, but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness; it will give them a more lively relish of it; it will make them prize it the more. When they see others who were of the same nature and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they distinguished, oh! it will make them sensible how happy they are! A sense of the opposite misery in all cases greatly increases the relish of any joy or pleasure." (The italics are mine.) "Every time they look upon the damned it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so to differ."

I was recently favored with an invitation to attend a meeting of the Radical Club, in Boston, to hear a most suggestive and stirring poem read by its author (Mr. Crahan, of New York). After the reading a conversation ensued, and among other topics, the question was raised as to the practicability of setting Calvinism to music. Although the very "jink and poetry" of the divine art in the *Hell* was present and took part in the discussion, the meeting dissolved without apparently coming to any definite conclusion on the point. Though not in the least acquainted with the principles and technicalities of music, it struck me, at the time, that there was not a passage in the Old Testament, not even in the psalm wherein David calls upon God with such vehemence to avenge him of his enemies, that could produce so grand an oratorio or "Inferno" effect on an assemblage of "Orthodox" worshippers as might some of the incidents narrated by Edwards and other divines, set to music and ex-

ecuted in a style worthy of the subject. Let us for a moment suppose but one incident of the myriads that must be constantly occurring in heaven—that of a hisping infant in God, as it catches a glimpse of its mother in heaven, throwing up its little arms and crying to her for help, only to be answered with scorn and derision, as she turns from its agonized, beseeching look to her God and glorified Saviour, shouting at the top of her voice (as Emmons says), "Amen! halleluia! praise the Lord!" Or imagine such a mother dancing away (as Calvinistic angels only can dance) from her imploring infant, humming one of *pius* Watts's sacred melodies:

"There is a never dying hell,
And never dying pains,
Where children meet with demons dwell,
In darkness, fire and chains.
Have faith the same with endless shame,
But let us comfort with infants' damns,
Without a day of grace."

Or imagine an instance of a mother who passed to heaven in the pains of childbirth, first beholding her infant "turning in its agony and spitting venom" in the face of the raving, tearing, wrathful and malignant God, as he holds it in "the tongs of his wrath" preparatory to dropping it into the fiery billows of the Calvinistic hell, and "instead of taking the part of the miserable object, looking upon its writhings with a livelier and more admiring sense of the grace of God in making her fate so to differ" from that of her poor child.

Now I seriously declare that if Mr. Dwight is not competent, with the help of the grand organ at Music Hall and the scores of eminent composers, vocalists and musicians at his command, to set these sweet little Calvinistic episodes to music, he can be hardly deserving of the high reputation he has obtained as a professor of the divinely-art in the world.

I need to think when a boy that an old uncle of mine was a very wicked man, and I heard him remark that, comparatively speaking, there were no really depraved and wicked men outside of the ecclesiastical orders. Since then, I have read and learned so much of the falsehoods and deceptions practiced, and the abominations and cruelties that have been heaped upon mankind by the priests and clergy of the various denominations of so-called Christians, that I have come to believe that my uncle was right. The sentiments avowed by Edwards and others of his sect, similar to those just quoted, confirm my conclusions. They seem to me to be too horrible for even demons to entertain, and such as I cannot believe ever originated or found abiding place in the breast of any human soul on earth, or devil in hell outside of that blasphemous order of men that even the gentle and all-forgiving Nazarene (who never condemned ordinary criminals) could not allude to but in terms of severest denunciation. Under their formal and soul-killing teachings every drop of the milk of human kindness and goodness becomes turned into gall and wormwood; truth is utterly perverted, and the whole order of the Divine economy is reversed. To suppose that any human being can become so depraved as to enjoy seeing his nearest kin writhing in pain and agony on a sick bed, is too horrible to contemplate. What, then, are we to think of this reverend divine—this preacher of the "Word of God"—who thus from the pulpit avows that his own heart has become so hardened (yea, beyond that of the mother millstone), that he looks forward to an eternity of happiness, wherein the "relish of his joys and pleasures" will be "greatly increased" by witnessing the eternal torments of his former kin and friends, in comparison with which the worst of earthly sufferings is an unspendable bliss.

When Jesus of Nazareth was writhing in agony on the cross, we read that his expiring breath was poured out in prayer in behalf of the chief priests and Pharisees who had brought him to that cruel death, and were at the very moment defiling his agonies. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But if we are to believe Edwards and other Orthodox priests, no sooner is this personification of "Love and good-will to man," including even his murderers, freed from his body, than his compassionate human nature vanishes, and he is changed into the likeness of the ever-hungry, hateful Jehovah. The heaven to which he ascends becomes a terrible pandemonium, where sits the vindictive, wrathful Father, eternally scowling and heaping never ending torments upon the countless myriads of the "damned" that his "ripen son," now the "judge of all the earth," is eternally engaged in pelting into hell, whilst the heavenly host join in dancing, jeering, shouting and yelling with delight as they contemplate the ineffable agonies of such of their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives and children, as were foreordained of God "as vessels of wrath," on whom it is his good pleasure to execute vengeance for the gratification of his elect and that all his creatures may be impressed with a livelier sense of his glorious majesty, justice and power. This is no fancy sketch on the contrary, it affords but a faint idea of the horrors of the Calvinistic heaven, the torments of the Calvinistic hell, or the abominations of Calvinistic theology, as laid down by Edwards and others of the most venerated fathers of "the church." Nor is it wholly without warrant of scripture, if we admit all that is claimed for the Old Testament by Orthodox divines. To justify Jehovah in his terrible chastisement of *rebels*, Edwards sometimes refers to the punishments that are inflicted on rebellious subjects by earthly potentates. To show the nature of such justification, I will endeavor to illustrate from like premises, thus: Our Southern brethren rebelled against the government of the United States, of which Abraham Lincoln was President and commander-in-chief of its armies. Now let us suppose that when General Sherman went forth on his grand march he had received positive orders from Lincoln to put to death everything that "breathed" in the rebellious cities of Augusta, Savannah and Charleston, and to kill

every man, woman and child elsewhere, except the virgins, which should be saved and divided among the soldiers for the gratification of their sexual lust. What think ye would be the voice of Christendom, yea, of the whole world, after the execution of Lincoln's decree? It is needless to say. Yet these are precisely the commands that were given by Jehovah to his chosen people (if Holy Writ be true), on more than one occasion, through the mouth of the commander-in-chief of his brutal heathen armies.

This is the heathen deity, or dark familiar spirit, that through the mediumship of Moses usurped (after a fashion well known to *Spiritualists*) the place of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, (to whom *Jehovah* was, not known) that Orthodox priests and divines confound with the God of Love, preached by Jesus and his disciples, whom the priests of Moses and their *Orthodox* church successors have ever persecuted, tortured and killed, to the extent of their ability. Imagine, if we can, "Our Father which art in heaven," who is of purer eye than to behold evil, looking down from "on high," not only with approval but with Jewish delight, upon the savage-chords of Hebrew soldiers, as they invade the country of arm-rattling people, and seize by his order upon all the shrieking young virgins with the one hand, whilst with the other they butcher their fathers, mothers and brothers to the last one in the land, even to the infant not a day old. Again let us suppose that after the "rebels" were subdued, Lincoln had by virtue of his influence and authority instituted by way of punishment certain modes of torture, such as tying men, women and children hand and foot, and passing heavy iron harrows over them until they were dead; or sawing them asunder, as was the wont of David, the Man after (the priest-made) God's own heart; and that this system of torture was to be perpetuated forever and ever on them and their posterity, or so long as the government should last, for a perpetual memorial of the rebellion and of the majesty and avenging power of the United States, and especially for the everlasting gratification of all loyal citizens. What think ye would be the judgment of mankind upon Lincoln? Would not his name be justly execrated throughout the world? And yet, such atrocities do not exceed if they equal those that were inflicted in the days of Moses and David, and have always been indicated on all *rebels* to their will, by the priests and ministers of the Orthodox Churches, (I repeat always in all ages, in all places, and at all times, wherever, whenever and wherever they have had the power to execute their diabolical will.

Following in the footsteps of the Goths and Vandals, who crushed out the civilization of Greece and Rome, the "church" has ever to the extent of its ability intensified the intellectual and spiritual darkness that ensued. Fire, poison, torture and death have, as long as practicable, and up to a comparatively recent period, been meted out by its popes, bishops, priests and parsons, to every individual who has ventured to suggest an invention or act of amelioration calculated to enlarge the views or benefit mankind. Every advance of mankind has been made in spite of them. Up to the present time the priest, and the parson, as they ever have been, are the most deadly foes of human progress, and while with brazen fronts they claim that the advance of civilization among the superior Caucasian race, over that of all others, has resulted from their labors, they stand as they have ever stood, a barrier against all attempts to ameliorate our laws or bend the condition of the poor. It is they who erect and sustain the gallows—it is they who shut the people from libraries on Sunday! Go, say they, as you see fit, to the "church" or the grog shop for your recreation on "the Lord's Day," but to the free library you shall not resort, for that of all institutions is the deadliest foe of ignorance, priestcraft and the church. A thousand criminals may die in prisons, in cellars, or in garrets, unheeded by priests and parsons; but let one of these who has brought to his end on the gallows, and like crows that flock about a dying sheep, the black coated gentry gather around the despairing slum-rat, that they may *spectaculo* themselves before the world and make the real or coined confession of the culprit minister to their own or the church's glory.

When in frenzied rage the priest and king-ridden masses of Paris arose and razed to its foundations the most fearful and hated prison that was ever erected and sustained by mere temporal power, but one poor sufferer was found incarcerated in its dungeons. To-day ecclesiastical convents and prisons, wherein no civil officer or *habens corpus* was (nor is even now) ever permitted to enter on account of their religious sacredness, are being demolished in both Europe and America, and their interior walls foundry-saturated with blood and literally filled with "dead men's bones," the victims of priestly bigotry, hate or revenge. But tunc indeed, oh! how is infinitely tamer, are all the millions of horrors that the priest has inflicted in secret and in public on mankind, when compared with the ghastly system of everlasting punishment that Edwards and his ecclesiastical found-father, logically, so in some measure) upon that dark and bloody *crucifix* of Jellövä and the Jews that Constantine and his council of priests bound in the same volume with its opposite, the Gospel of Jesus, some fifteen centuries ago, and in the plenitude of imperial and priestly power *added* and forced upon the acceptance of mankind as being in every line and letter the "Word of God." As in that day the system of theology, then founded upon the Bible, originated through and in the interests of imperial and priestly despotism, so it has continued ever since. And I again repeat that there never has been a code of morals or a system of worship invented or practiced on earth, that inculcates precepts, doctrines and dogmas more debasing and inhuman to humanity (when carried out in full) or blasphemously derogatory to the Divine Being, and his attributes of love, mercy, justice and truth, than is embodied in the creeds of

Foreign Correspondence.

BY J. H. POWELL (Correspondent).

[Subscriptions received for the "Banner of Light," twelve months, fifteen shillings; six months, seven shillings and sixpence. *Post free to any address.*]

The Great Light of Spiritualism—The Progressive Liberator.—Sitting at the "Wallace—Gerald May's" "Concerning Spiritualism."

There is life in the spiritual movement which manifests in new and remote places, channels are opening for instruction in all directions. Even where no efforts are made at organization there is a deepening interest in manifestations. It is not possible for the thinking minds to pass by the great light of Spiritualism without observing it; they may seem to disengage and delight to ridicule, but there notwithstanding, a power in its radiance which they acknowledge to themselves, to none other.

Action is the watchword of the English Spiritualists

Action is the name. I have been told that Mrs. Duglad is not so ill, and that she does not sit idle, and expect the world to move with them. They are "up and doing," if not their best, give praise at least of such. Never was there more earnest and so much effort put forth than now, although there is little more to be done.

To get a glimpse of what is being done, one need only enter the Progressive Library; there he may see signs of progress. I entered the other day, and was gratified to find activity in the faces of Mr. Burns and his good wife, and in all connected therewith. Immediately over the door the first attraction was the beautifully printed card announcing the "Banner of Light" for sale, which I need not describe, as copies are plentiful in America. Next to the crowded prospectus announcing the issue by Willis White & Co., of "The Temple," the latest work of A. J. J. J. J., whose name is an oracle here. My eye no sooner was off the voluminous description of the "Temple" than it was riveted on a large oil painting exquisitely executed with spirit power through the hand of Mrs. Duglad, the GI GLO trance-painter.

I shall not offer a description of the picture, as my ability to do it justice fails. I can, however, say without fear of censure that the production is a marvel, and the medium itself, like most of our best mediums, before submitting to a control, was entirely ignorant of the art of painting.

To those who perpetually inquire, "Have the spirits ever produced anything worthy acceptance?" I recommend Mr. Dugliati's paintings, feeling assured that they will neither depreciate Spiritualism nor art.

Next, and not the least attractive to me, was the lithograph proof of Mr. Riebold's admirable vignette design containing Emma Hardinge's Ten Spiritual Commandments, or rather the Ten Spiritual Commandments given by spirits through Emma Hardinge. No words of mine can give the merits of the vignette or the printed words; it goes together in happy union. Mr. Riebold, who paints in a Raphael, and does it all for amusement and the good of his productions may confer on others who touched the

nit pronouncements may come off entirely unimpaired, thereby of his subject and make it live in his design. I have no doubt the sales for the Higfield and Hardinge Ten Commandments will be immense. The picture will frame a good handsome in any drawing-room. No Spiritualist will care afford it should fail to receive a copy.

Mr. Burns is one of the activities in the movement in England, and a very useful and progressive activity. Others are in the work—mediums, lecturers and humble workers of needful kind. God send them on!

I had the privilege and pleasure of attending a couple of séances (private) at the house of Mr. Higfield, Mr. Wallace acting as medium. I have before alluded to this medium as being intelligent spirit-communications. On the occasions I refer to, his discourses and answers to questions were, in my humble judgment, equal to anything I have before heard through trance mediumship. Mr. Wallace is a most unassuming and, in a mundane sense, as a consequence, un-

careful man, i. e., he does not grind out much corn for himself from the spiritualistic mill, yet for ten years he has been the willing servant of spirits, and always ready to do for the enlightenment of others.

I am surprised that the leading lights of the movement have not availed themselves of his services and utilized them in the work of progress. He would admirably do work of propaganda.

We all sat in earnest conversation, not dreaming of festivities at that time, when the medium was entranced and his spirit-guide joined in convincing us soon that were pigmies in argument compared with him. Our voracious theme became illumined with a novel light, and all found delight in silence. I understand that Mr. and Mrs. Wallace have given one séance a week at Mr. Blewett's many years, and I am further told that there is never a lack of novelty or profundity in the discourses.

The next thing calling for special notice is Gerald Dineen's "Concerning Spiritualism," a neat little tract issued by Burns. It is the substance of the address which the poet gave on the occasion of Mrs. Hasting's séance, which was held at St. George's Hall, on the 25th of June, to which is annexed a great deal of new matter. There is no question as to the ripe ability manifested by Maesey in the treatment of his theme. He twines logical poetry in substantial prose, and hits right hard when he strikes. He does not presume to an acquaintance with spiritualistic literature, apart from the works of Swedenborg.

I like the word so much that I do not want to say I feel prompted to... But I cannot forego and rest content in treating the question, "normal and abnormal mediocrity," which, by the way, is uniquely put and answered. Mr. Massey deals a blow at T. L. Harris, which, however, does not fall in the instances cited, is by no means considered solely in relation to the subject.

The author starts out to prove that abnormal mediocrity has given us nothing in poetry or painting or the manifestations of normal mediocrity. He examines "Hymns of Spiritual Devotion," (New York, 1857), and covers lines and couplets, plagiarisms slightly altered from Watts, Hooper, Old Hymns, Mrs. Browning and Thomas Moore.

I am willing to accept the evidence as given by Massey in the citations, as far as they go, "But the life of Florence [sic] has been shown to the critic's hand as the breath of his snail." He should mention other works by Harris, especially "The Land of the Golden Acre," and

The question is, "Can a good thing come from abnormally?" Mr. Harris—in the abnormal state—involved his published poems. It is unfair to title a few platitudes of some Harris may have been unconsciously the dupe of some spirit-pirate, and leave untouched a larger mass of his poetic improvisations.

I have read sufficient of Harris to venture my reputation (which is worth little, perhaps) in support of the point that there is a great deal of sterling gold in his improvisations, which is as much as to say that normal mediums in such instances, cannot eclipse the abnormal.

Notwithstanding Mr. Marey's strictures on the poor actor of the productions (literary) of abnormal mediums cannot help seeing, from a wide platform, that many of abnormal mediums are incapable, in the normal condition of producing anything equal to their mediumistic essays in the domain of knowledge. Who, for instance, could hear Mr. Conant, under spirit power, discourse the same kind of things of human knowledge, answering questions which could perplex a Philadelphia Lawyer? could he that by any course of training, could excel in the normal the abnormal state?

The same may justly be asked of scores of other abnormal mediums.

I think, with all deference to opposite opinions, that Davenport and his works have not been excelled by any other one. He was obviously abnormal, the same as

Harris, when he was made to deliver them." "Nature is Revelations" and the "Great Harmonies" are not only to be hidden behind any of his moral productions, but might thus illustrate all of his moral productions. But enough. The work of our poet, apart from his normal and abnormal states, is mastery. You turn there to discover rich thoughts and occasional truths derived by close to the heart of the matter. The work of our poet is to be found in the "Tidals," the "Leaves and Carpenters," who set their faces against the light, and the "Leaves and Carpenters," who set their faces against the light.

"It appears to me that you might as well ask the state that is your brother, one of Turner's paintings, you find it of the picture of the world, as for any spiritual content of these facts from our typical scientific mind of present. Science has a broad brow and luminous, it says 'the foolishness crown her head,' and her eyes vacant of spiritual light."

"You may come into the field a little late; but late than never. He has had a good deal of experience in spiritual matters, and cannot fail to offer the world the thing worthy its acceptance on the subject. I shall be published views as promise of still further work in the field."

direction.

WORCESTER, MASS.—The Spiritualists hold meetings every Sunday, afternoon and evening, in Horticultural Hall.

