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AN ADDRESS  
TO  
THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW CHURCH,  
REGARDING  
THE MISSION AND WRITINGS  
OF THE  
REV. T. L. HARRIS.  
BY  
A NEWCHURCHMAN.



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## AN ADDRESS

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW CHURCH  
SOCIETIES IN GREAT BRITAIN.

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DEAR BRETHREN,

It is now upwards of a hundred years since the execution of the Last Judgment in the spiritual world, and the commencement of a new era in the history of the church on earth. While every individual of ordinary intelligence must admit that greater and more important changes for the better have taken place in the civilized world during the past century than during any that has preceded since the establishment of Christianity, it is your privilege to know the spiritual origin and philosophy of that rapid progress experienced by the whole of Christendom within the period referred to.

In conformity with the uniform procedure of Divine Providence in past ages, and in fulfilment of His promise that He will make known His judgments through His servants the prophets, the Lord prepared a man, from birth to maturity, and opened the eyes of his spirit, that, through personal observation, he might make known to the world the important facts of the execution of the Last Judgment and the Second Advent of the Lord to His church. As a means to the establishment of a new and better church in place of the old, which had come

to an end through evils of life and consequent falsification of divine truth, the Lord, through this servant, restored the genuine doctrines of Christianity, as the divinely hewn stones of His new spiritual temple, which is to surpass all former churches in glory and perpetuity.

As a sharer with you in the possession of the important truths contained in the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg, I would affectionately, yet earnestly, ask whether we have, as avowed receivers of these truths, relating to the Lord, the Word, and the spiritual world, realised in ourselves individually, or in our societies generally, the results which might reasonably have been expected from the privileges granted us? Does our *superior life*, as individuals or as churches, bear any adequate relation to our *superior knowledge*? We know well—none better—that faith without charity is nothing,—that “all religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good.” The Word in its spirit has been opened up to us, and the knowledges stored up in its sanctuary are preached to us every Sabbath,—knowledges which as far transcend those contained in the letter as the soul surpasses the body. But what better are we? What do we more than others as a result of our superior knowledge and culture? True, through our Missionary and Tract Societies, we display great zeal and activity in the propagation and defence of the truths committed to us; but until we can show that the influence of these truths upon the lives of the recipients is in proportion to the alleged superiority of the doctrines themselves, we may captivate the understandings, but we shall fail in gaining the affections, of men generally. We could not desire a purer system of doctrine than that given to us by the Lord through Swedenborg; but we are well assured that something more than the external reception of a system of doctrine, even when heaven-derived, is necessary to make a perfect man in Christ Jesus. As the combined harmonious action of the *will* and the

*understanding* is essential to the regeneration of the individual man, so the union of the *celestial* with the *spiritual* element is absolutely necessary to the perfection of the church of Christ. Admitting that both of these elements, to a certain extent, pervade the writings of Swedenborg, no intelligent reader of his works will deny that the spiritual element largely predominates. It is merely the *spiritual* sense of a part of the Word which he professes to reveal; yet in declaring the existence of a *celestial* and a *supreme* sense in the Word, he virtually gave a pledge that the higher knowledges contained in these senses would be given to the church at fitting seasons. The object of this brief address is to urge those of you who desiderate further openings of the heavens as a means to the manifestation of a higher life in the church on earth, to inquire and look whether such a season has not even now arrived.

The Rev. T. L. Harris, a man of unblemished life, and earnest warm-hearted piety, claims to be consciously open to the heavens, and to have received from the Lord Jesus a commission to reveal to the world some of the knowledges contained in the ultimate celestial degree of the Word. In fulfilment of this mission he has written many works, all of which, in the estimation of eminent New Churchmen, who have attentively perused them, enforce the doctrines of the New Jerusalem with a power and beauty of language unsurpassed by any writer not divinely inspired. From more than two years' careful study of these writings, I firmly believe that they inculcate the doctrines of Christianity, especially those relating to the Divine Humanity, Conjugal Love, and the Christian Life, with such persuasion, simplicity, and beauty, as not only to gain the attention of the illiterate as well as the learned, but to captivate their hearts and quicken their consciences. In support of this opinion, I may here adduce the testimony of one highly esteemed as a writer amongst the members of the New Church both in this country and America, the Rev. E. H. Sears, who,

although at the time he wrote seems doubtful of Mr. Harris's claims to special illustration, bears witness to the purity, beauty and power of his discourses and writings. In writing of a visit to the University Chapel, in New York, he says:—"We heard Jesus Christ and Him glorified preached with a most subduing power and unction, till the Lord's presence was almost visible, and 'fragrance filled the room!' Since then we have read everything from his pen that has come in our way. \* \* Three things are patent enough. First, his warm grasp upon three grand and essential truths—the essential Divinity of Christ; the plenary sanctity and inspiration of the Divine Word; and the doctrine of an unselfish and devoted life, into which all truth must pass and be ultimated in order to save. \* \* Secondly, Mr. Harris has a charity so warm and comprehending, that we can feel his sentences throb with it as we read them. And, thirdly, his morality has almost an angelic sweetness and purity."

I have also added the independent testimony of two experienced New Churchmen, who have seen and heard Mr. Harris and attentively perused his writings; and also of Mr. William Howitt, who has been a reader of Mr. Harris's writings from the commencement, and an attendant upon his ministry in London. The first of these letters was written to an inquiring friend in Accrington, and was not intended for publication; the second we copy from the "Herald of Light," for February, 1860; and the third was published in the "Critic," in answer to remarks made on Mr. Harris's sermon on "Modern Spiritualism."

Other similar testimonies might be given; but as the object of this friendly address is merely to call your attention to the fact that such writings exist, and that, whatever be their origin, they are of such a quality as to merit the attentive perusal of every member of the New Church who seeks the welfare of his brethren by endeavouring to guard them against error and to lead

them to the knowledge and practice of the truth, according to the ability bestowed upon him, those adduced will suffice.

In asking you, as wise men, to judge for yourselves, I am persuaded that many of you who as yet are scarcely aware of the existence of the author, will find in these works such inducements to an active unselfish life in the Divine service as will increase your charity, encourage your hearts, and give a force to your endeavours which can only result from the combined power of truth and love operative in the heart. The design and tendency of Mr. Harris's works may be summed up by an extract from the introduction to the "Arcana of Christianity:"—

"To develop an orthodoxy which is rational and cosmical,—to maintain, at the same time, a liberality both humane and Catholic,—to afford a resting-place and centre of reconciliation, where Christian men of all persuasions may unite in the convergent harmony of doctrine,—to free from misconception the Biblical theory of salvation by Christ alone,—to vindicate the works and way of God with man in the establishment of inmost heart relations between Himself and a lost world, so leading back a wandering planet to its throne among the stars of heaven, will serve as the objects of this book. To make men better is its motive; and it purposes to do this by setting forth, from an interior stand-point, such reasons for loving the Lord as shall touch the soul with a magnet of attraction to Him. To aid the growth of the mediatorial empire of the Redeemer in the bodies and souls of a new race of simple-hearted, childlike, unsectarian men, wise in the knowledge of divine truth from an inward delight in its inspiring love and its out-flowing use,—to serve, in some degree, as the rallying cry of a new crusade against the evils that infest the world,—to preach hope to the desolate, and comfort to the afflicted,—to initiate men, by an orderly process, into the priesthood and kingship of a new church, in

which the world shall renew the lustre of its morning,—this volume is designed to contribute.”

In the hope that you will examine these writings with that candour and attention which we desire the Christian world to give to the writings of Swedenborg,

I am, dear brethren,

Yours affectionately,

A NEW CHURCHMAN.

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LETTER I.

“ Manchester, November 15th, 1859.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—I am happy to say that the great and good movement goes on well, shaking to the very centre all the frozen New Church minds that come within its sphere. Depend upon it, this is no fantastic matter. Mr. Harris is as verily a chosen servant of the Lord, to ultimate amongst mankind his Second Advent as ever Swedenborg was. And blessed be the Lord that He hath permitted my weak eyes to behold the glorious wonders of His Kingdom, as made known in the writings of these two heaven-appointed messengers! And especially that He hath awakened my affections to a warm appreciation of the outpourings of His Holy Spirit into the vessels thus given to receive it. *Oh! that the Son of Man may find faith in the earth!* O! that the flight of men may not be ‘in winter, nor on the Sabbath day!’ But as sure as ever the flood took place when men were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not till it came and took them all away; so surely will ‘the Son of Man come as a snare on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth,’ and we have indeed need to ‘take heed that our *hearts* be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, *and so that day come upon us unawares.*’

The return of internal respiration will assuredly come to unite the Church below livingly with the Church in the heavens, and with the Lord. And oh! awful will be the state of that portion of the human race who, from neglect of internal purification are not capable of standing in the awful presence of the Son of Man, and escaping all those things which will come to pass. Oh! that the Lord would quicken the minds of the leading members of the New Church, as it stands before the world in this country to a lively interest in the coming world crisis! If my vocal powers could be heard through the length and breadth of Christendom, methinks I would lift them up to sound the mighty alarm to the nations. But enough. Mr. H., in London, I have no doubt, will stir up a most heart-quickenng influence for the good and safety of the Lord's beloved Zion.

“Yours most fervently,

“T. ROBINSON.”

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THE REV. T. L. HARRIS'S MISSION IN MANCHESTER,  
ENGLAND.

(From “*The Herald of Light.*”)

“A Manchester friend greets those brethren across the Atlantic, who long for the fuller manifestation and descent of the New Church. It will doubtless be gratifying to the readers of the ‘*Herald of Light,*’ to hear something respecting the ministrations of our dear friend, Rev. T. L. Harris, in this city. It is twelve weeks to-day since he arrived here to commence his labours, and this day he has left us. The change which has taken place within that short time is such that we must attribute it to a higher working than that of man.

“On arriving in Manchester, he and his excellent wife were met by two friends, who had a slight, because recent,

acquaintance with his writings. It had for some weeks been known that he was coming here,—yet curiosity seemed but little awakened, until, in consequence of the handing about of a few numbers of the ‘Herald of Light,’ a new perception dawned upon some of the more open-minded. They began to find that there was living truth in its pages. Many were already prepared by a deep feeling of the inefficiency of formalism, and mere head-religion, and by heart-longings for something better,—for these living truths. And when it was announced by advertisement and by the distribution of a small circular that Mr. Harris would preach the Word in the Lecture Hall of the Mechanics’ Institution, a small audience came together,—drawn by various motives,—some by curiosity, some to find heresy, and some from a sincere hope of receiving spiritual benefit. Those of the latter class were truly fed with the bread of life, and some of the others were touched in their better natures. With one or two exceptions, the audiences have increased each Sabbath, and at the closing service, there was assembled a breathlessly attentive, and apparently devout congregation of probably four to five hundred persons. No extraordinary means have been used to attract. A short advertisement in one paper on the Saturday in each week, was the only mode adopted to engage public attention. But many who came without any serious intention in coming, had their minds and hearts awakened to a sense of the reality and awful nearness of the internal world; and still more, to a perception that though they had hitherto thought they were living correct and satisfactory lives, they had been all the while far from God, heart-hardened, and self-righteous. I have before me a note from one friend,—long a receiver of the doctrines of the New Church, in which he says, ‘until I heard Mr. Harris, I never felt the utter worthlessness of my own past life.’ Another, a lady, speaking of another minister, said, ‘his preaching never made me feel my own sinfulness as that of Mr. Harris’ does.’ Others, whom I know, begin to show in

a more tender, humble, and gentle bearing,—in a more reverent and prayerful spirit,—in a love for the Word of God,—and in the subjugation of selfish tendencies,—the operation of the Divine Spirit upon their hearts. There is no demonstrative manifestation, but quietness, peacefulness, and love grow out into the life. Surely these are the ‘fruits of the Spirit.’

“Last evening, December 19th, a tea meeting was held, to which were invited ‘those who had tended and been benefited by these ministrations.’ About one hundred and seventy tickets were sold. After tea, the chair was taken by a gentleman of Warrington, an influential member of the Cairo Street Church, who sets forth in a devoted life his real reception of New Church Truths. Our dear friend, Mr. Harris, gave a most affectionate and impressive farewell address, followed by remarks from several other friends. The harmony and deep feeling of the meeting, the silent and yielding regret in parting, of so many friends, knit together so rapidly around this one man, simply because through him flowed the inspiring tones, words, and works of the loving spirit of christianity, could not but deeply impress all present. In this age of hard externalism,—of traffic and competition,—when the natural current of thought, in every one, is towards believing nothing but self-interest,—to see so many hearts silently expanding under the genial influence of the Divine Spirit, like flowers opening to the sun,—is refreshing as the palm-grove in the desert to the parched traveller. It is, indeed, a truly miraculous influence.

“During these twelve weeks Mr. Harris has preached twice on each Sunday, in the Lecture Hall of the Mechanics’ Institution, and has delivered, on week evenings a number of lectures in the Manchester Athenæum, in Warrington, and at Middleton, to audiences of several hundred, whose breathless attention showed their deep interest. Everywhere the preaching appears to have reached the heart, as it came from the heart. Sometimes it was terribly searching and rousing to the conscience,—

sometimes it exhibited fearfully vivid pictures of the spiritual results of sin,—and sometimes it melted the soul into tenderness and love. The true and almost obliterated idea of the Church, in the individual and in society, was clearly brought out. And above all, Christ,—the one God,—the Divine Man,—was preached and brought to every one's perception as the only Saviour,—the All in all,—the beginning and the end of the Church,—the inmost presence of all His followers,—and the source of all love and all truth in every human soul. A number of the sermons and lectures will be published. Several are already printed or in the press. They are verbatim reports taken by two or three of our friends here, and I believe a number of copies will be sent to America.

“As yet, few of our friends here have read any of Mr. Harris's writings, except some of the articles in the ‘Herald of Light.’ To most of them the ‘Arcana of Christianity,’ and the ‘Wisdom of Angels,’ are *terra incognita*. A number of copies of these books have, however, just been received, and most of them sold. Generally speaking, there is much less interest felt in these than in simple preaching of heart-truths. In America, spiritual manifestations have caused these books to be looked upon with an entirely different feeling from that which exists here. In Manchester we are much in the same state as regards these spiritual manifestations as existed in America twenty years ago. They have scarcely as yet been recognised as such.

“It is not to be supposed that the things we have narrated should have occurred without awakening antagonism. A strong feeling of opposition has been displayed by some of our friends for whom we cannot but entertain the highest regard. Unconsciously to themselves, some have been prejudiced by statements received from America. It is surely not uncharitable to impute prejudice to those who strongly oppose and yet refuse even once to hear or see for themselves. But the opposition

was strongest at first, and will probably at length be entirely overcome by the power of truth and love. Many others than those connected with nominally New Church Societies, however, have been attentive hearers, have become warmly attached, and drink in eagerly the truths of the New Church. Some of these, I fear, will now be like sheep without a shepherd. At the tea-meeting last evening, one of our friends entered into conversation with a working man, who sat next him, who had attended the whole of the sermons at the Mechanics' Institution. He said he had never before seen the need of religion as he now did. He anxiously asked if there was any place in Manchester, where the teachings of this New Church could be heard. We can but hope and pray that the Good Shepherd may watch over these wanderers, and fold them with His flock. May the good seed sown be nurtured by the Divine Husbandman, and all His Divine purpose in this mission be accomplished.

"Our dear brother and sister have this day departed for London. Though the morning was bitterly cold, a little company of warm hearts bade them an affectionate farewell at the railway station, and the prayers and blessings of many accompany them.

"*Manchester, Dec 20th, 1859.*

"E. B."

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(From "*The Critic.*")

"SIR,—I have no wish to go into the general question of Spiritualism, having so lately, through your courtesy, expressed my conviction, founded on experience, of its nature and value. But I would beg permission to say a word or two in vindication of myself and it. In your very fair remarks on the article of a cotemporary on Mr. Harris's sermon of Sunday morning week, you doubt my being quite so enthusiastic in my estimation of Mr. Harris's ministry, after that discourse. I assure you that I entertain precisely the same admiration of it as a

noble Christian oratory, and as pure Christian Spiritualism—nay more, that after further hearing, I am the more confirmed in my opinion. I can recollect no man to be compared with him in the essentials of a finished preacher: for power and originality of mind, for poetry of diction, for breadth and copiousness of argument, for affluence of historic and philosophic illustration, for vivid and acute analysis of the elements of modern society, for a courageous trampling on all conventionalities—in a word, for the effectual stripping from the Gospel of the cobwebs of a dusty, worn-out divinity, of the hampering bandages of creeds, and for planting Christianity before us in her divine and undisguised lineaments, in her free and noble beauty. I speak advisedly, for neither to Mr. Harris nor to any man would I surrender the independence of my judgment.

“I am glad that Mr. Harris gave that energetic warning against the *abuses* of Spiritualism; and I expressed to him my satisfaction before I left the place. I should be glad to know whether all who heard that discourse believed it—whether the writer referred to believed it; for, if so, they believe in Spiritualism being a great and unquestionable power. There were things in that discourse which made every face turn pale. If these things are facts, then Spiritualism is the greatest and most startling fact which has pressed itself on the attention of the present age. Did Mr. Harris establish a belief in that colossal and superhuman agency, the reality of which he asserted by all past and present consciousness? Then Mr. Harris rendered a transcendent service to Spiritualism.

“I care not whether a reality is presented in its terrors or in its amenities, so that it is planted as a truth in the heart's and soul's convictions. Let its entity be admitted, and we shall have time enough to learn all about it. It will no longer depend on the dicta of individuals; it will be placed in the arena of the world, and must be touched, handled, probed, and tested, till all its qualities

and tendencies are ascertained as those of any other principle or substance.

“Mr. Harris’s discourse, let me then say, was not directed against Spiritualism, but against the *abuses* of it; not against Christian Spiritualism, but against the inversion of it—un-Christian Spiritualism. Christianity needs its continual warnings; shall Spiritualism be exempt from them? Christ came warning Christianity against false Christs, false disciples, false doctrines—against wolves in sheep’s clothing—against devils and delusions. The need of these warnings was soon evident in a plentiful crop of spurious gospels, of spurious doctrines, of Nicolaitanes, Gnostics, Sabellians, and the like. Christianity has to be warned every week from a thousand pulpits, against the dangers which daily beset it and its disciples. It is warned in solid books, whole libraries of them—in thousands of tracts and pamphlets; but does any one on that account denounce Christianity, or make it responsible for its inversions?

“According to all my experience, and all my reading, ancient and modern, there is nothing more clearly established than that Spiritualism is a fixed law of God’s economy in the education of His rational creatures. The records of all countries, of all times, of all the greatest men of all times, bear testimony to this law. We are not creatures of matter, but spirits merely enveloped in it—existing, not in some remote and isolated corner of the universe, but in the very midst of it, surrounded by eternity with all its worlds, and spirits, and influences. In being swathed in these bodies for a time, I do not conceive that we are cut off by our physical integument from the spiritual existences outside of this inclosure, but merely veiled from them. There is a door opened, a door which God in the hour of creation opened, and which no man can shut, by which spirits of all kinds can, in obedience to certain eternal laws, communicate through this physical partition. All Christian life, said Mr. Harris in the same discourse, is a warfare. Where good

influences enter, bad influences can and will enter too. There were sorcerers to contend with Moses before Pharaoh, who could do *almost* all that he did by Divine power. But has any one ever thought of condemning the exercise of the Divine power because the devil brought up his sorceries against it? Nor does Mr. Harris mean to condemn Christian Spiritualism because of un-Christian Spiritualism.

“Mr. Harris now announces his intention to state his real views of Spiritualism through the press; and I think we shall find that he will acknowledge the fact that this great power, like all things in nature, has *two* sides; and that, as you may derive the highest advantages from the exercise of the pure, or, according to his own phrase, ‘orderly Spiritualism,’ so you may receive injury from ‘disorderly spiritualism,’ as from disorderly Christianity, if not aware of it, and guarded against it by faith and prayer. That is something to know.

“If Mr. Harris should really attempt to disparage spiritual circles and manifestations under pure and holy conditions, I would be the first to tell him that without these manifestations he would not have had a dozen people to listen to him. I say confidently that these manifestations are doing, and have long been doing, what neither ‘saint, sage, nor sophist’ could do in this day—knocking on the head Materialism. Any one who has tried to convince sceptics must know that Mr. Harris, or any other man, however learned or able, may preach through his whole life, and preach to them in vain.

“The manifestations of the present age are peculiar, for a most obvious reason—the conditions of the age are peculiar. A triumphant Materialism has established itself far and wide, originating in this country with Hobbes, Tindal, and Hume, but perfected in Germany and France—a Materialism invulnerable to argument, defiant of eloquence, but compelled to bow in astonishment to the *proofs* which it has long demanded. For sceptics and materialists always turn round with this

pertinent remark: 'It is all very well to tell us of miracles, and a history occurring nearly 2000 years ago; but if God then condescended to convince souls of the reality of a spirit-world, by unquestionable physico-spiritual manifestations, why should he not now? Is God grown old? Or is he less regardful of humanity? Don't *preach* to us, but give us *proofs*.'

"And the greatest theologians, men without a flaw in their logic or a hiatus in their inductions, *could give no proof*, and therefore, could not satisfy the doubter of their premises. Well, here are the proofs to be seen any day by those who will approach them in a candid and philosophic spirit; and thousands of sceptics and atheists who have seen them, have been confounded and convinced. And you may take my word for it, that nothing else will convince materialists. Therefore these physico-spiritual manifestations are invaluable. They are the alphabet to the teachings of belief. They are the means to the end; and had not Mr. Harris passed through the whole mysterious world of these manifestations—see his works, he could never have reached the place he now occupies on the heights of Christian Spiritualism. It is through his combats with inverted and antagonistic influences that he has become armed at all points, and thoroughly furnished to every good word and work. To kick down the ladder by which he has ascended, he must kick down with it a great piece of nature and a great piece of the gospel. He must demolish the ministry of angels as well as of devils—angels ministering to 'all who shall be heirs of salvation,' and who ministered to Christ himself in the wilderness of the temptation, and in the black hour of the garden of Gethsemane. Mr. Harris is no such one-sided monitor.

"As to the real condition of Spiritualism in America, I leave the leading American Spiritualists to decide. I have only to observe that, as to Spiritualism in London, the writer whom you quote, entered Mr. Harris's chapel for the first time, heard one discourse, and rushed away—

seized, as it were, a single brick, and thought he had plan of the whole house. Sir, a man might as well all the days and nights in the year, rush forth into darkness and tempest, and then tell us that the world is nothing but darkness and tempest. *There will be light and calm* too, for those who will duly wait for them.

“It may save such skip-and-go observers some trouble to let them know that they are only beginning a battle which has been fought *à l'outrance* in America for the past ten years, only to leave Spiritualism more rooted and multiplied than ever. And I say, let the press in this country, if not instructed by that fact, try to kill Spiritualism if it can. If it can be killed, it is no truth, and we shall be well rid of it. Let then all heresy-hunters go forth—all wolves in sheep's clothing prowling through the camp of Spiritualism—let the pulpits beat all their drums ecclesiastic, and the press throw up all its batteries, frowning with rifled cannon and Armstrong guns; and if among them, or altogether, they find that they have killed one or both of the twin sisters, Christianity and Spiritualism, they will, no doubt, report upon it. Till then—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

“WILLIAM HOWITT.”

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