



A Talk by Mrs Emma Hardinge at Cleveland Hall, London – Sunday 30th April 1871
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THE CREED OF THE SPIRITS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE RELIGION OF
SPIRITUALISM

Invocation

Infinite and Eternal Spirit, thou from whose wisdom we sprang into the solemn mystery of life; thou in whose providential hands we pass into the no less tremendous mystery of death; thou who art the anchor upon which the pilgrims of eternity lean, from whom they come, to whom they tend; inspire, instruct, and guide us in this night's attempt to counsel – in this hour of communion, when we seek with reverent purpose to fathom thy will, to discover the aim of our own being, to approach thee nearer in knowledge, nearer in strength and understanding. Thou hast taught us evermore in proportion to our capacity to receive. Thou hast spoken to the unlettered savage in the solemn anthems of nature. Thou hast revealed thyself to the civilian groping for light in all the beautiful unfoldments of knowledge and intellectual wisdom. Thou dost speak to the little child in the love of father and mother. Thou dost speak to the aged sire in the whispers of the land of immortality—in the bright and shining light which streams through the golden portals of eternity, guiding his tottering footsteps through the valley of the shadow. And now when page after page has been opened of thy kind purposes and thy wise designs in the solemn, grand, and stupendous motion of life, behold thou dost draw back the veil from the mystery of death, and reveal to us a grander, nobler fulfilment in life and its aims than we had ever dreamed of. Up the steps of progress the angels are guiding the toiling pilgrims of life; by the shores of that beautiful river we see their white hands extended to guide our barques across the stormy waves. And we know that in the ministration of the beings who are nearest and most like to thee, all is well with us; and we can trust thee, O our Father, for we know that thou art God the Spirit, the spirit of which man is a part—the Father Spirit, bound by the nearest and dearest ties of sympathy to the weak, frail creature who calls thee Father which art in heaven!

“The Creed of the Spirits, and the Influence of Spiritualism”

This page of our gospel should not be turned until many another has been read; for as we look back over the faint and imperfect footsteps that we have made, treading on the sands of time towards the grand culmination of wisdom and knowledge, a perfect understanding of the gospel of the divine humanity, we see how few and faltering have been those footsteps. But time closes around us; the darkness of the temporary hour of separation is upon us; and in haste, like the Passover of the ancients, we must gird up the loins of our spirits and take the last look at that bright and glorious gospel whose pages are to be read alike in the shining stars and the many-coloured flowers. There is not a leaf that now glitters in the parting rays of the setting sun, or bends beneath the weight of the falling dew, but what is a chapter in that divine gospel. Each of these tiny flowers, each tendril that supports the leaves that are tossing in the agitating breath of the strong tempest, is a minister of God's benevolence—an evidence of God's wisdom and power. But we know that when the flood-gates of Divine wisdom are opened, no hand can close them; onward must pour the mighty flood, no matter what channels it makes—no matter through what imperfect avenues of mortality that flood is poured. We obey thy voice O Master of life—O Spirit of inspiration to all who, consciously and unconsciously, breathe thy breath! Let us now contemplate this beautiful gospel, and take a brief review of its source. A word so familiar to us now, so strange in the ears of humanity only a score of years ago. Twenty-three years ago the views of nearly all of us that are here present received a shock more tremendous, more powerful and radical than any that for many past centuries agitated the mind of man. Let us recall, if we can, how vague, how imperfect, how desolating were the best and most faithful views of spiritual existence which any amongst us cherished. Who could determine that the form laid away in the grave was but the casket of the brighter and more glorious man within who could not perish? Who could determine, even if he believed that “if a man die he shall live again,” to what unknown and distant realms that spirit was bound? Who could resolve that the great agony of bereavement would ever again be gladdened by the great joy of reunion? Who could resolve for himself that the efforts that he had poured out upon mankind, sometimes so fruitlessly, so hopelessly, with so little of worldly success, should ever meet or greet him on a further shore? What spirit was—how spirit lived, if at all—under what conditions life was continued, if at all—(I pronounce to you with the experience of one who earnestly and faithfully tried to discover the road)—was nothing more than a credence in the credence of our fathers, and nothing more than a faint traditional belief—nothing more than a hope, or, at least an intellectual form of belief inherited by the son from the father. The revelations which were brought to us from the time when, twenty years ago, spirits openly and by a series of material phenomena, demonstrated their presence amongst men proved the identity of the workers with spirits of men that had once lived on earth—in a great variety of circumstance flooded the world with testimony against its will—unsought, uncourted, uninvoked. Without any of the ordinary precedents under which humanity moves towards a great reform, Spiritualism poured itself in a mass of irresistible power, in tides of unquenchable light, upon the unyielding yet unresisting world. We were unyielding because we had no evidence whatsoever that there was a power to whom we ought to yield; we were unresisting, too, for that power took us captive, left no means of resistance. And so it becomes us from time to time, in numbering up the footprints we have made, to recall the source, to consider the authority that the spirits present to us, that we may better move forward either to resistance or to obedience to this mighty and masterful control. We first, then, recall the facts that the spirits have revealed to us. They have taught us that the spirit of man is untouched by the action of death. They show thus that the forms we look upon and commonly call those of humanity are nothing more than a mould in which the inner man is forming and growing. They have taught us that there is no break whatsoever effected in the action we call death—that the spiritual existence is an unbroken continuity of the present.

They have taught us that, in place of mere atmosphere, ether, electricity, or other imponderable elements, this mortal world is full of a spiritual second world, invisible to us, and only manifest through phenomenal ministrations, or the inspiration which from time to time we receive as presentiments, monitions, influences that we cannot repel, nor hitherto could we account for. They have taught us that not a single act or deed, not a thought or word of our mortal existence is lost. They have taught us that the true meaning of this mighty battle of life that we are all fighting, the great warfare in which some of us are pressed down beneath the waters of adversity until they overwhelm us—they have shown us that it is the strife of the birth of the spirit. They have brought us face to face with the ordinary acts that we perform, and left us no excuse for evading the responsibility that is set upon every one of us. They have brought to our view the dawns of a new science, the foregleams of a grander and nobler field of knowledge than we have ever ploughed before—a field in which stars, and world, and suns, and systems are the soldiers, and the generals, and the mighty army of light that are moving on charged with life and spiritual existence for ever. They have indeed enlarged the borders of our vision, independently of all the personal blessings of reunion with our beloved, of hope and consolation for ourselves. These are but a few of the revealments of Spiritualism; and yet there are some shadows in the picture of the great movement which it becomes us this night candidly to reveal. Even in this land, no less than in the far-distant homes of the mighty West, many of us who first entered upon this glorious field, so full of promise, beheld around us the strong and the learned, those endowed with the world's gifts and the world's means of strength. Shoulder to shoulder they stood, and formed a powerful phalanx; to them, as to us, this Spiritualism seemed to come like the Comforter, so full of joy for the present and of promise for the future—such a leveller of those unkind distinctions which drew hard lines of demarcation between man and man, covering the broad plain of humanity with such a beautiful mantle of brotherhood and charity, uniting us all in a common destiny, opening up the nature of psychology, and offering a wonderful solution of the mystery of sin and crime, displaying the grand fields of progress before us with such unerring certainty that it seemed impossible that a gospel so bright, so holy, so comforting, and so reasonable, could be resisted by any. You and I to-day stand deserted by many a one in whose hands the white standard of Spiritualism was placed along with our own. You and I have seen the great ranks of this army thinning. You and I could number up even in this city scores of those to whom the mission has been entrusted who have fallen away from our side; and whilst but one rostrum remains where the glad tidings of Spiritualism, and the keen, strict, yet daring analysis of all that its light reveals, are permitted, we find that this rostrum is deserted by most of those whose hands were the strongest, and to whom was entrusted the mightiest responsibility in the conduct of this noble work. This excites in us some questions, and the very answers that we are prepared to give most clearly elucidate the progress of the movement. When we come keenly to analyse why we are thus deserted, we find a clue to the character of Spiritualism throughout. Let us observe two points which account for the defalcation of those to whom we have alluded. Spiritualism endorses no sect; Spiritualism closes down upon all the avenues it is possible to open of mere sectarian belief, and rebukes them all. And why? Because the very fact of the spirit's continued existence, its state and condition, is a denial of every sectarian dogma. There is not one but provides a vicarious atonement for its believers. There is not a spirit from the far East, to the mighty West, from the burning South, to the frozen North, that has ever yet communicated to man and been able to prove that it was happy or miserable on account of its belief—not one who dared to deny that its happiness or misery is determined by its acts and deeds alone. How do we prove this? You enter any court of justice to take human evidence, to assemble a certain number of witnesses, three of whom shall be acknowledged as wholly unreliable—wholly untruthful; you examine these separately, and, despite their unreliableness, they shall each separately confirm the statements of the others; and this is evidence that no court of civilisation can reject—evidence which for hundreds of years has been accepted in all courts

of judicature. Now, reverse the position: let your three witnesses be truthful; the fact that they shall confirm each other is no additional weight—none at all. It is deemed by the keenest analyst of human nature impossible that three persons separate from each other shall represent the same circumstances exactly, unless those circumstances have a common origin in truth, no matter whether the witnesses be reliable or not. But double the number of witnesses—treble it—multiply it by hundreds, by thousands, by millions—remove your witnesses to every part of the world, separate them by oceans and continents and spaces of time that it is impossible to bridge over; and when, instead of three millions, you have three times told three millions of persons, each testifying to the same general points of faith. That is authority which we think we are justified in presenting to you and it is upon such authority that we make this general statement concerning the condition of the soul hereafter.

Now to apply this statement. The spirits, then, no matter what they preach, all confirm each other on the practical conditions of the life hereafter. The spirits of every country, closely questioned, will always state that they are in judgement, and that judgement is the result of their own life, acts, and deeds. When men demand of the spirits to endorse their peculiar views of faith—when they cannot trust their religion, cannot air it in the sunlight, and measure it with the revelations of science which are every day confounding and destroying it or else enlarging its borders—we find that the spirits insist upon proclaiming this stupendous but unwelcome truth, that every spirit is in the judgement of its own acts. We can quite understand that Spiritualism is not popular or acceptable to the bigot. True it is that there is another solution to be given to this question, and one that requires most careful investigation. You and I are spirits as much now as we ever shall be. Though encased in a casket of clay, our spirits possess in germ all the attributes that we shall ever enlarge in the grander vistas of eternity; and so, whatever influences or powers the disembodied spirit exerts we exert also. If psychological influence is one of the attributes of the invisible spirit, it is one of the attributes of the visible; and the strong and determined psychology which we exercise upon the communications of the circle constantly bends, deforms and refracts the truth that we receive. You may say that this at once nullifies the evidence. No. When Spiritualism came to us we had no preconceived opinions to sustain upon it; we were in the attitude of response; we were waiting for the truth; and the voice of the spirit was then unanimous, and the tone of spirit-communications was far more universally felt and recognised to be unanimous than it is now. When first the spirits came among us they did proclaim this solemn truth of which I am now speaking, and they proclaim it still, at the very time when the sectarian, with determined psychological influence, bends, deforms and refracts the communications to suit his own views. He does not know it; but one of the revelations of this great spiritual unfoldment is to show us the power of psychology, and the mass of self-delusion by which we are perpetually endorsing our own views at the spirit-circle, instead of placing ourselves humbly and reverently in the attitude of learners, recipients of the truth, not dictators of what that truth shall be. I speak knowingly of that what I utter, for my own ears have heard men make the assertion, at multitudes of circles of this land, that if the highest spirit of the highest spheres were to return and deny the peculiar points of their faith, they would reject and repudiate them, and would have no more fellowship with them.

And there is yet another cause. Spiritualism is wholly unselfish. It proclaimed from the first the fatherhood of God—that you all admit; and with it the brotherhood of man—that you don't all admit. And this brotherhood was no mere myth; for the spirits of the circle presented themselves, some from the lowest depths of poverty, and some of the highest rounds of earthly splendour, and those had changed places. The law of caste was annihilated and the lines of demarcation were broken down. The communications of the spirits represented a new aristocracy. For ever throughout the ranks of humanity the beautiful harmony of the epic of creation is to be found in inequality. Equality is a mere myth; there is no such thing. Every human creature represents a different step on the ladder of social, moral, intellectual, and spiritual progression; but the ladder is the ladder for all—the ladder of which the feet of

brothers are treading to reach the antechamber of the common Father. And so the very first charge of the spirits was self-sacrifice. They demanded some self-sacrifice in those who should bear this unpopular standard for the sake of truth. Above all they demanded the sacrifice of those darling vices for which so many of us have hitherto had a theological sponge, but which now stamp us with an awful and stupendous responsibility that we cannot escape from. Hence a great many brethren realising at first the glory, and the brightness, and the beauty, the reunion with spiritual hosts, the marvel of spiritual communion, the great outpouring of that which they called the world of supernaturalism, the revealments of clairvoyance, the astonishment of the inner sight, the discovery of new and occult forces in man and in nature, beholding only the glittering gems, but gradually finding that the stern ethics of the spirits were beginning to descend from glittering generalities to specialities, to personal tests and personal analysis—they have fallen away. Spiritualism is neither a convenient religion nor an easy burden to bear before the world. No wonder, then, that it has proved a mighty test of character; no wonder that there are but few who now stand shoulder to shoulder where the spirits first found them; no wonder that those who have fallen away have retreated from the “infidel spirits” because they would not endorse their special creeds, or from the “low and vulgar spirits” because they were levellers and did not endorse their aristocratic pretensions. And so it is that we now begin more clearly and definitely to measure the value of Spiritualism and its influence upon ourselves. And this hour is ours, Spiritualists. It neither appeals to the scoffer, nor the scorner, nor the critic. We are now about to investigate our positions, to number up our jewels, to analyse the influence that has been exercised upon those who have dared thus far the fight, thus far borne the heat and burden of the day, and who, despite the stern laws of compensation and retribution that stare us in the face, are still Spiritualists, still dare to call ourselves friends and allies of this mighty host that is proclaiming (I dare to assert it) a new religion. For if Spiritualism were only the enjoyment of the hour, beautiful as it is, gladdening to the heart and cheering to the mourner as it has proved, it were nothing but some personal attribute which we have no right to herald forth to the world. But Spiritualism teaches of that God who is a spirit, of that immortality which constitutes the very gist of human existence, of that life-practice for which religious systems have been established as a guide. What more do we require to constitute the elements of a religion? If it be not a religion, it is nothing. What influence has it brought to you and me? Perhaps it may seem to be but little because it has not taken the stand which any reform that has preceded it upon earth has taken before. The scientific man looks upon it most commonly with scorn, for reasons that we shall presently show you. He stands in his laboratory with the instruments of his craft around him; he invites the spirits to come and move his furniture, to practice with his instruments, to work with his particular forms of science, and then he says he will believe. But the spirits are not there. The Press man stands at the street corner, and echoing the voice of public opinion, repeats, with the ribald jest, and mocking tone, the enunciations of the Spiritualists as the entire exposition of Spiritualism. He interprets the words (every sentence being subject to interpretation from the ludicrous or the sublime side of its meaning, whichever you please) after the fashion that will most surely please the patrons who pay him to do their thinking, and thus presenting Spiritualism to the world from the ribald and ludicrous aspect with which his own nature invests it, he asks why the spirits do not come to him—why they do not perform marvels with his pen and ink—why they do not reveal buried treasures to him. But the spirits are not there. And the cold empty world re-echoes the demand of its old teachers, and asks why the spirits do not come and do its work—why if they can move one object, they cannot do everything—why, if they can discover one mystery, they do not discover all—why, in a word, the spirits do not live their lives. But the spirits are not there. Go to the heart which has become cold from the quenched fire of some most precious love gone out; go to the lonely chamber, and look upon the empty cradle or the empty chair; go to the home of suffering or sorrow—to the heart whose pride has been disciplined, whose spirit is broken, whose worldly

consolations have failed—to those who have tried and proved the hollowness of all human institutions, and who, with streaming eyes and breaking hearts, have uplifted their hands to the viewless *I am*—to the Unknown—to the Great Spirit; and lo! At the door of the heart opened by aspirations the angel enters, and by inspiration in a thousand methods the response comes—sometimes in the low tap of immortals knocking tangibly at the door of the empty home—sometimes by the low footfall, or the shadow on the wall—sometimes by the grasp of the dear hand, and sometimes by the glittering light of the angelic form as it flashes before the eyes of the seer—sometimes by the mystery of influx and inspiration—in ten thousand forms it comes to the receptive, but always in the home—always to the individual—always some special adaptation to single and individual needs. It does not preach *en masse*; it does not stand at the street corners, nor enter places of public resort, nor appeal to leaders of public opinion; it does not subject itself to the petty ignorance of those who in their material wisdom are wholly ignorant of psychological laws. That is why Spiritualism comes, and that is why Spiritualism with silent tread is taking men captive, is marching from home to home, from hearth to hearth, from land to land—and none can arrest it, none can track its way, and none can tell how the spirits have come. When you question again and yet again, the answer is, “The spirits are here, but with no invocatory power of our own, by no means that we are aware of; the spirits are here, and yet we scarcely know from whence or how they come”; and that is why Spiritualism is an influence to individual natures, dwelling with fragments and atoms of humanity, and not with masses.

Again its influence has been to cast us upon our special responsibility. It never does come, never appeals to us, through the thought or influence of another. Question yourselves, Spiritualists. Have you believed through the report of your neighbour? Is there not a something in this mysterious power of the invisible world which compels you to accept no less authority than the facts of spiritual existence? You have not credited your neighbour at all. The very report that has been spread of this mighty spiritual movement has only excited in you the ribald joke or the scornful repudiation, until the facts have come home to yourselves. What is the meaning of this? Hitherto we have lived beneath the influence of other men’s minds; we have paid our priests and teachers; and statesmen, and leaders to do our thinking for us; we have stultified our own individuality; we have willingly subjected our natures to the lead of others, and we have determined that others should pay the penalty of our offences. It is to recall us to the stupendous sense of our own individuality that this spiritual movement comes appealing to our individual natures. The world cannot understand this. The world, accustomed to see movements transpiring only with the masses on that large scale of reform which moves humanity as a mighty army beneath the leadership of one masterful mind, cannot understand either the extent, or the influence, or the genius of Spiritualism. But the less we are indebted to human influence, the more surely are we compelled to look to the true source of influence, and the more inevitably do we find ourselves compelled to acknowledge that the source is powerful, intelligent, benevolent, wise, irresistible. Why should we not attribute it, then, to the beings who themselves claim to be its authors—the friends who were in our midst but yesterday, the nearest and dearest to us by ties of kindred and sympathy?

Thus far, then, we trace up its influence and its progress upon ourselves; but we cannot pause here. I have said that if we were to stand alone upon the evidence of these phenomenal proofs, beautiful as they are, holy and lovely in all respects as many of them are, they would only appeal to our individual natures—they would be nothing more than a temporary joy or a temporary amusement. I have endeavoured, in the address I have been privileged to offer you, to show you that whilst the spirits never exert authority on the mind or demand of you belief, they bring you such conclusive evidences of that which they tell, that you are compelled to acknowledge the truth whose acknowledgement they do not demand from you. They do more—they hold up the torch to the dark places of nature, and, without insisting upon their opinions concerning the laws, principles, and origin of being, they invite to

investigate for yourselves. They are the torch-bearers without whose light those places would remain dark. The astrologer, the geologist, the chemist, the physician, all who have undertaken to teach us of the ways of God as manifest in his works, have never carried us beyond the surface, never deduced us from all their sublime revelations any teachings concerning our spiritual origin or our spiritual destiny. It is for the spirits to complement the defects of science. The consequence is, that Spiritualism and science are at odds. Scientific men have occupied the most humiliating position of any class towards Spiritualism, and for this reason: with all the wealth or learning they have brought us—with all the incalculable stores of knowledge that they have poured upon the world—with all their industry, their learning, their devotion to the art in which they are engaged, they have never yet attempted to transcend the mere physical existence of matter; upon the surface of things they have groped—to the forces that move that surface alone have they appealed, and there they have left us.

In their investigations of Spiritualism they have brought the formula of their science with them—insisted upon subjecting the phenomena of Spiritualism to their own physical tests; and there is no alliance between them. Spiritualism is not a physical science. Acting through physical means, it involves a wholly new set of laws. Psychological, spiritual, mental laws have never yet been subject to the formula of material laws. This is a new and untrodden field and until scientific men are prepared to sit humbly and reverently on the first step of this science they will utterly fail to procure even the very tests that they seek. Within the last few months only, one of the most celebrated and revered leaders of science proceeded to a spiritual circle to investigate Spiritualism with a purpose incompatible with the conditions—he went there and made the manifestations and simulated the phenomena which the trusting people around him believed in. He rejoiced in making them dupes, and felicitated himself upon his deception for the sake of exposing them. I cite this to do him no dishonour, but to show you that the very determination, the psychological strength of will by which he approached that circle, destroyed the manifestations; and the determination to simulate, impose upon and hold up to ridicule the simple people whose faith had already been confirmed in Spiritualism because they had proved it, whose faith in him was misplaced because they believed him to be a gentleman—I say, that the very strength of purpose that made him mislead for the sake of proving others deluders destroyed and neutralised the power that might have made him a gentleman and taught him that he had an immortal soul.

I have said thus much, simply to illustrate the position in which Spiritualists stand. They are deserted by the leaders of religion and science, with a few noble exceptions—a few of those who dare to cast the priceless treasure of their soul and conscience in one scale, and their worldly popularity in the other, and the conscience weighs so heavy that with popularity goes up out of sight altogether. With the exception of these, the Spiritualists are deserted by those who should be their leaders and teachers both in science and religion—and what remains? To trust to your own fidelity, to your own sense of right, to the God who protects you under all circumstances and never leads you into temptation without offering you an open way for escape, to the [Great Spirit who is your Father](#). To the power that proves itself by its fruits; but I tell you now as we are closing we cannot pause there. The spirit lives—our own destiny is unfolded to us; our own hereafter is made clear and plain; the way is marshalled by those we love best and those we can trust. And now we would ask how far these beings, not as authoritative teachers, but as guides in the direction where we are to search out a higher responsibility even than we have hitherto assumed, the responsibility of forming our religious belief—how far can we trust them? I shall here speak briefly of the creed which is evolved from Spiritualism. I may not now pause on the methods of evolution. You have heard some of them in past discourses; you may apply those to the results which I now offer.

I believe in God, for I know that spirit, matter, and motion are external existences, co-equal, co-eternal, co-existent ever. As I believe in matter, then so do I believe in spirit; and the

totality of that spirit, that master-mind that was even before form—that moved upon the chaos and void, and evolved therefrom order, harmony, and form—is God. Finite as I am, I can never comprehend his infinity; temporal pilgrim as I am now, passing on and ever passing on in temporality, I cannot master his eternity. It is enough for me to know that He is all wise, for the majesty, order, and beauty of creation prove it; He is all-good, for the beneficence disclosed in that creation proves it; He is all-powerful, for its stupendous strength, its glorious and majestic permanence proves it.

I believe in the immortality of the human soul, for I have been taught to analyse and search until I discover that that which is must have existed for ever; and though on this earth I am only possessed of such memory as carries me back to the beginning of my own temporal existence, and such prophesy as proves to me that I shall live beyond the grave, I still recognise that lives infinite one way cannot be finite another, and that if there is infinity around me I am a part of it—I am infinite also. And since I question and since I doubt, even the chemist that scoffs at me proves my position, and shows me that nothing can be annihilated. My soul is something, the functions of my soul are something, my self-consciousness is something, my sense of individuality is something that can not be annihilated. The strong psychology of another mind mightier than mine would impose upon me the dark fatal belief of annihilation of my soul, and eternal existence of everything else. My spirit-friend comes to my side, grasps my hand, and whispers in my ear, in the voice of the loved and those I have deemed as the lost—"I live for ever, and thou shalt live for ever."

I believe in right and wrong, for I do find the penalties of the wrong and the compensation of the right impressed on all things, on all forms of life. When I doubt this, the sophist would come and preach to me of circumstances, of surroundings, of impulses and forces; and when he would try in the tones of sophistry to mask me from the light which the penalty is perpetually bringing me, my spirit-friend appeals to me, and with the glory of the immortal spheres on his glittering brow, or the darkness of the dweller on the threshold hanging around him, gives me to understand that the second stage of existence is absolute judgement for the deeds done in the body.

I believe in the communion of spirits as ministering angels. I not only realise this from the truths that are demonstrated around me, but from the reason that assures me that the love which animated the form that I loved so well as it still subsists must find an exercise; that to live, to love, and yet to be unable to manifest that love to the objects that need it, must be a condition of existence far worse than that in which we daily live, and love, and minister to each other.

These are some of the points of my creed, and all of them I have proved. But I do not pause here. I am living in a work-a-day world, and I am told that if my rule of life, as it is called, is taken from me, that if my scriptures and my gospel, my creeds and my faith are removed from me, I shall be a ship at sea without an anchor. I recall a portion of these teachings, and I find them enunciated in the form of Ten Commandments. I recite them, and see how far they become to me the rule of life. The first tells me that I shall have none other God but "Me". That word "Me" is echoed in ten thousand clamouring voices, each one pretending to explain that "Me," and all differing the one from the other. I am told that I should honour my father and mother, that my days may be long in the land which the Lord my God giveth me; when I see the disobedient prolong their days, and the fair, the obedient, and kindly withdrawn. I am told that I shall not kill, and that I shall commit no murder; and I see beneath the standard of Christ, in the name of Christ, the merciful Prince of Peace and Love, of Him who prayed for pity on his murderers, I see thousands and thousands arraying themselves against one another in the name of Christianity, and destroying each other wholesale. I am told I shall not steal; though I may be a wandering beggar, fluttering in rags and dying for want of bread; but put a crown upon my head and a sceptre in my hand, and I may steal my neighbour's wages, and pass Acts to make my thefts legal. When my lands are not broad enough—when my restless ambition is not content with the baubles I wear, I

may steal my neighbour's crown and kill men to my heart's content until I obtain what I require. I may not covet my neighbour's goods. Alas! Alas! Who shall tell the hungry labourer by the wayside not to covet? Who shall bid the poor, the oppressed, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, not to covet? Not those, we trust, who covet their neighbour's lands; not those we trust who covet power—that lust for it with such mighty and resistless ambition that they become tyrants, and autocrats, and oppressors; not those who cause workmen by the hundred to sell their blood, their life, their time, their labour, because that labour converts their power to work into the wealth of the capitalist. Oh friends, we do not speak in the tone of that foolish spirit of demagoguism that would level all distinctions, that would annihilate the laws which have made all men different, place them on different steps of the ladder of creation to perform different functions. But when we are looking to see a rule of life that will work in an order of society made up of immense differences, let us apply that rule. If it fail, can it be God's law?—can it be the law of Him who in the glorious harmony of the planetary system has not made two stars alike; and yet all move on by countless millions in their different order, glory, size, and degree, neither jostling nor harming each other, but all completing the grand, magnificent circuit of the skies. Can it be the law of Him who is all-wise, and all-good, and all-powerful? We think not. And with all honour and respect for the ancient seers and prophets, with all the deepest reverence for the inspiration which came to them in the hour of their need, and in the time when they required rules of life appropriate to the condition in which they lived—we ask, Are we never to move forward to more practical issues? Are we never to have such revelations as, without disturbing old landmarks, will explain them, add to them, and bring us to a more practical and every-day form of religious teaching? This is what we ask. The spirits do sometimes answer us. Within the last few hours they have given to us, not as authority, not as displacing those old landmarks or touching them in any respect, but in all loving kindness, to practical, working, every-day minds, such commandments as we may all read and analyse, and apply if we choose; and the results of that application you may judge for yourselves when you question of the spirits that have gone before. It is our purpose to close by reading in brief the Ten Commandments of work-a-day spirits—of those who have counted up the sands of life, and found that every grain is to be recognised as a part of the spiritual body that constitutes the man of eternity.

In another section of the same edition of *The Medium and Daybreak*, the editor states that :

As a supplement to the oration, Mrs Emma Hardinge electrified the audience by reading Ten "Spiritual Commandments," which she had written in a very rapid manner on the previous morning under the influence of Robert Owen, whose centenary takes place next week. They are wonderfully characteristic of that revered philanthropist, and present perhaps the most comprehensive view of religious ethics which the world has ever seen. On Monday morning Mrs Hardinge presented the manuscript and copyright to Mr Burns (**the editor**), with the request that he would print them for his own benefit and that of the cause, and have them circulated as opportunity offered. This kind proposal was gladly accepted, and that precious manuscript will no doubt be long cherished as a present of the greatest value in the estimation of its possessor. We understand these commandments will be issued in the form of a cheap tract in a few days, and circulated far and wide.

The following is the content of the tract:-

It was entitled "Seed Corn No.5" and began with "THE CREED OF THE SPIRITS" as the indented text above in Mrs Hardinge's address.

There followed:

SPIRITUAL COMMANDMENTS GIVEN BY THE SPIRITS THROUGH EMMA HARDINGE

I.—Thou shalt search for truth in every department of being—test, prove, and try if what thou deemest *is* truth, and then accept it as the Word of God.

II.—Thou shalt continue the search for truth all thy life, and never cease to test, prove, and try all that thou deemest to be truth.

III.—Thou shalt search by every attainable means for the laws that underlie all life and being; thou shalt strive to comprehend these laws, live in harmony with them, and make them the laws of thine own life, thy rule and guide in all thine actions.

IV.—Thou shalt not follow the example of any man or set of men, nor obey any teaching or accept of any theory as thy rule of life that is not in strict accordance with thy highest sense of right.

V.—Thou shalt remember that a wrong done to the least of thy fellow-creatures is a wrong done to all; and thou shalt never commit a wrong wilfully and consciously to any of thy fellow-men, nor connive at wrong done by others without striving to prevent or protesting against it.

VI.—Thou shalt acknowledge all men's rights to do, think, or speak, to be exactly equal to thine own; and all rights whatsoever that thou dost demand, thou shalt ever accord to others.

VII.—Thou shalt not hold thyself bound to love, or associate with those that are distasteful or repulsive to thee; but thou shalt be held bound to treat such objects of dislike with gentleness, courtesy, and justice, and never suffer thy antipathies to make thee ungentle or unjust to any living creature.

VIII.—Thou shalt ever regard the rights, interests, and welfare of the many as superior to those of the one or the few; and in cases where thy welfare or that of thy friend is to be balanced against that of society, thou shalt sacrifice thyself or friend to the welfare of the many.

IX.—Thou shalt be obedient to the laws of the land in which thou dost reside, in all things which do not conflict with the highest sense of right.

X.—Thy first and last duty upon earth, and all through thy life, shall be to seek for the principles of right, and to live them out to the utmost of thy power; and whatever creed, precept, or example conflicts with those principles, thou shalt shun and reject, ever remembering that the laws or right are—in morals, **JUSTICE**; in science, **HARMONY**; in religion, **THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD, THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN**, the immortality of the human soul, and compensation and retribution for the good and evil done on earth.

The following "Ten Laws of Right" were also included in the tract and might be presumed to have been given to Mrs Hardinge at the same time.

THE TEN LAWS OF RIGHT

I.—**TEMPERANCE** in all things, whether physical, mental, moral, affectional, or religious.

II.—**JUSTICE** to all creatures that be—justice being the exercise of precisely the same rules of life, conduct, thought, or speech that we would desire to receive from others.

III.—**GENTLENESS** in speech and act—never needlessly wounding the feelings of others by harsh words or deeds; never hurting or destroying aught that breathes, save for the purpose of sustenance or self-defence.

IV.—**TRUTH** in every word or thought spoken or acted; but reservation of harsh or unpleasing truths where they would needlessly wound the feelings of others.

V.—**CHARITY**—charity in thought, striving to excuse the failings of others; charity in speech, veiling the failings of others.

VI.—**ALMSGIVING**—visiting the sick and comforting the afflicted in every shape that our means admit of and the necessities of our fellow-creatures demand.

VII.—SELF-SACRIFICE, wherever the interests of others are to be benefited by our endurance.

VIII.—TEMPERATE yet firm defence of our views or right, and protest against wrong, whether for ourselves or others.

IX.—INDUSTRY in following any calling we may be engaged in, or in devoting some portion of our time, when otherwise not obliged to do so, to the service and benefit of others.

X.—LOVE—above and beyond all, seeking to cultivate in our own families, kindred, friends, and amongst all mankind generally the spirit of that true and tender love which can think, speak, and act no wrong to any creature living; remembering always, that where love is, all the other principles of right are fulfilled beneath its influence and embodied in its monitions.

We should ever hold the above-stated principles of right to be obligatory upon all men, as they are the deductions evolved from the laws of being, and therefore in strict harmony with the divine order of creation. All views of science are dependent on human intelligence and the unfoldments of intellectual knowledge. All views of theology are dependent upon intuitive perceptions, faith, or testimony derived from varying sources—hence man's opinions concerning science and theology are subject to change, and dependent on circumstances of nationality, intellectual training, or incidents peculiar to personal experiences; but the religion of right, morality, and love, and the commandments of life-duty, originating from the fundamental principles inherent in life and being, can never change until man ceases to be, or the harmonies of the universe are themselves changed or annihilated.