

The work and the counterwork, or, The religious revival in Belfast : with an explanation of the physical phenomena / by Edward A. Stopford.

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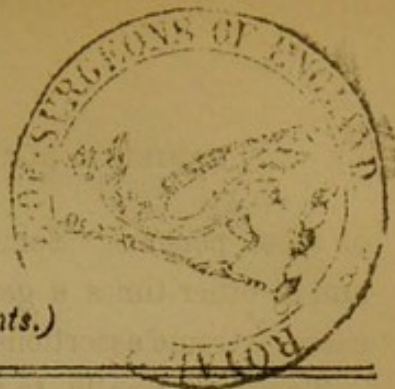
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(To the Clergy and Parents.)



THE
WORK AND THE COUNTERWORK;
OR,
THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN BELFAST.
WITH AN EXPLANATION OF
THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA.

BY
EDWARD A. STOPFORD,
ARCHDEACON OF MEATH.



SIXTH EDITION.

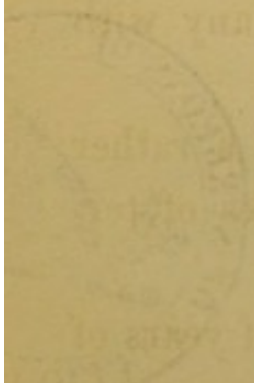
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1859.



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



EDWARD A. STODOLSKY

1892

WILLIAM SMITH & CO., 101, CHANCERY STREET

Printed by the University of Toronto


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HAVING spent ten days in the latter part of July in  
reful examination into the present religious move-  
ent in Belfast, I have been requested by many of  
y brethren to publish the result of my observations.

My chief object was to inquire into the nature  
the bodily affections. I have strictly adhered to  
e plan I previously formed, to examine the pheno-  
ena myself, and to compare them with the results  
past experience of a somewhat unusual kind.

I have been in communication in Belfast with  
rsons holding various opinions on the subject ; but  
will be seen that my own views are the result of  
rmer experience, and not adopted from any with  
om I communicated.

If I must at first deal with questions of a rather  
stract nature, I will give facts and stories of ter-  
ble interest before I have done.

The views here expressed are the result of years of  
servation, thought, and study ; but the expression  
those views, suddenly called for by some of my  
ethren, and written at their request under great  
essure in respect of time, entitles me to ask from  
em a favourable construction.

E. A. S.

Archdeaconry, Kells, Aug. 7, 1859.



# PREFACE.

## THE PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

I have spent less days in the latter part of July in  
careful examination into the present religious move-  
ment in Boston, I have been requested by many of  
my friends to publish a new edition of this work.  
It is such a task as mine truth requires that correction  
be acknowledged. In the Second Edition, necessarily  
ordered in haste by the publishers, I had no oppor-  
tunity to improve it now. I have pointed out in  
the Appendix to this Edition the alterations which I  
have made at the suggestion of persons most com-  
petent to judge. I have not rejected any correction  
I gladly take this opportunity of stating my con-  
viction that the work advances in many places  
with more freedom than could have been hoped for  
the evils which still commonly attend it; and I see  
grounds for hope that more general and united efforts  
may be looked for to free this work from evil  
of these views, and to call for the same of my  
countrymen and women as their present indignation  
expresses in respect of those who are to ask from

them a religious construction.  
September 17. 1833.

E. A. N.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

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IN such a task as mine truth requires that correction be acknowledged. In the Second Edition, necessarily ordered in haste by the publishers, I had no opportunity. I embrace it now. I have pointed out in the Appendix to this Edition the alterations which I have made, at the suggestion of persons most competent to judge. I have not rejected any correction. I gladly take this opportunity of stating my conviction, that the good work advances in many places with more freedom than could have been hoped from the evils which still commonly attend it ; and I see grounds for hope that more general and united efforts may be looked for to free this work from evil.

E. A. S.

September 17, 1859.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

### PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

Is such a task as mine truly requires that correction be acknowledged. In the Second Edition, necessarily ordered in haste by the publisher, I had no opportunity. The Publisher having called on me for the money, I signed it now. I have pointed out in this Edition, I have so corrected the printer's errors, the Appendix to this Edition, the alterations which I have made, as the suggestion of persons, most competent to judge, and I have not rejected any correction.

I have taken this opportunity of setting my corrections. It is the occasion for it, had passed away the time, that the good work advances in many places, and I have not arrived at the point where I had hoped from the first which will, however, stand it, and I see no objection to it, but more general and I signed it, that it may be taken for the work done. I do not pretend to meet the not distant. I do not pretend to all night discussion with members of the profession, and I trust I am open to correction by them, and we who know nothing of medicine, except the facts reported at the time, its progress, are not obliged to know that there are special subjects in that medicine, and that on these subjects we must rely to some extent, in the case of the work.



## PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

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THE Publishers having called on me for a Sixth Edition, I have to consider the propriety of further publication of this pamphlet. I owe it to some correspondents to state the ground of my conclusion.

If what I have written had been judged erroneous by those most competent to judge, I should suppress it. If the occasion for it had passed away, the publication should now cease. I have not arrived at the conclusion that either is the case.

I have read some letters to newspapers by members of the medical profession, intended to prove that the physical affections attendant on this religious movement are not hysterical. I do not presume to attempt discussion with members of that profession, and I trust I am open to correction by them. But we who know nothing of medicine, except the benefits to be derived from its professors, are yet obliged to know that there are special subjects in that profession, and that on those subjects we must apply to men distinguished in those specialities. From men of the



highest distinction, both in England and Ireland, on the special subjects here involved—insanity, hysteria, and other nervous diseases—(some of whom have had full opportunity of personally observing the effects of this movement)—I have received communications approving of the view which I have taken. In justice to the views I have proposed, I quote the judgment of “the Journal of Psychological Medicine,” conducted by men of the very highest eminence in this department of the profession :—

“Archdeacon Stopford had the discernment to perceive the nature of the physical effects produced by the popular excitement, and the courage to call these effects by their right name. His pamphlet is not less remarkable for the cordial recognition of the devotional movement than for its indignant denunciation of the attendant hysteria ; and is therefore calculated to eliminate the evil from the good. . . . He traces some of the attacks clearly enough to the abuse of certain pulpit arts—to the reiteration of hell, hell, hell ; the accumulation of a depressing emotion, for which no outlet was provided in active thought or practical duty ; and others, to the kindred but more gradual operation of the mental atmosphere of the locality ; and he describes the nature and tendencies of the disease with sufficient clearness to disabuse any candid mind of the supposition that it can ever, under any circumstances, be used as an instrument of good. What is still more important, he points out



the manner in which the clergy may so control their congregations as to prevent such outbreaks for the future."\*

The judgment of those best qualified to decide in this matter (so far as I have had opportunity of learning it) does not require or permit me to retract what I have written ; nor have I learned anything which appears to make it my duty to do so.

The question whether these affections be of the nature of hysteria may be to some extent a question of words. Such questions of words easily arise between *generalization*, which extends and deepens our knowledge, and *sub-division*, which directs in its practical application. In either pursuit we must look through names to the object. If Feuchtersleben be right in regarding hysteria as the sister condition of hypochondriasis, and if the moral treatment of both rest on the same ideas, then the generalization of an exalted *cœnasthesia* confirms and directs the moral treatment. I have published, in the Appendix to the Third Edition, the opinion of a physician most competent to judge, that *some* of the affections are not hysterical ; but I have since had letters from a number of clergymen in various places, stating that they had tried on *such* cases the treatment I suggested, and found it successful. This seems to indicate that even

\* The Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology. Edited by Forbes Winslow, M.D., D.C.L. New Series. No. XVI. Oct., 1859. P. 613.



here generalization affords the best direction to the duties of the clergy. And whether that generalization should be expressed by one term or by another, is a question of minor importance.

Some of my brethren, anxiously engaged in promoting the good work in this movement, have considered my efforts as an assistance. Anxious family duties have disabled me from replying to my correspondents as I wished. I request them to accept this apology.

Others of my brethren have remonstrated with me for dwelling more on the counterwork than the work. They say this pamphlet does not treat of each in due proportion. I admit that this is so. I have stated in the pamphlet that I have to dwell more on the counterwork than is agreeable to myself. My excuse is this—If *they* had dwelt on the *counterwork* “in due proportion,” I should either have done the same or not have written at all. But when I saw, and still see, numbers of my brethren, distinguished by their character and influence, doing full justice to the work, and yet giving no note of warning against the counterwork, it did seem to me admissible that some individual might make the necessary warning his special duty. These my friends have founded their remonstrance on the fact that *some* newspapers have made an unfair use of what I said of the counterwork, by suppressing what I said in the beginning and the ending about the work. They have not considered



that no "proportion" observed by me could have guarded against this. I could have guarded against such suppression only by myself suppressing the warning which I thought it my duty to give. I am happy to have it in my power to assure them that the great majority of newspapers and periodicals which have noticed this pamphlet have given due weight to what I have said of "the work."

Had the necessity of such a warning passed away, I should now withhold any further publication of this pamphlet. I do not believe that we have yet arrived at such a state of things. I recognise with joy a great improvement. The clergy and the Presbyterian ministers, at first taken very much by surprise, are in many places labouring vigorously and successfully to promote the good and to control the evil. Yet much remains to be done. Lectures and addresses, unexceptionable in other respects, are yet calculated, unconsciously I am sure, to produce an impression not yet warranted by the facts, that everything is being done by ministers that could be desired to discountenance the physical affections. Persons who make a hasty tour from place to place in the north, do not easily learn the real facts in this respect. Disapproval of the physical affection is now commonly expressed ; but many of those who express it are still drawn away in the torrent, and are used by others in promoting it ; many are still engaged in various places in promoting and extend-



ing the physical disease. Insanity is still seizing its numerous victims. There is still a necessity to stir up public opinion to the rescue of true religion and humanity.

These opinions are perfectly consistent with a thorough conviction that God is doing a great work in stirring men's hearts about their eternal interests. I have no doubt now that a great work for good is in progress, and I feel more convinced than ever that where the clergy perform their duties in this important movement with zeal and prudence the most blessed results may be hoped for.

E. A. S.

Archdeaconry, Kells, Nov. 4, 1859.



## THE WORK AND THE COUNTERWORK ;

OR,  
THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN BELFAST.

“THE kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field ; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.” Such was our Lord’s prophetic description of the condition of His Church until the time of the harvest. Let it be no cause of offence if Belfast be now subject to this common condition, and if the mingling of evil with good in the work in progress there should perplex us not a little, and “crave our wary walking.”

That there is much good in this movement has been denied by none that I have met. All whom I have conversed with in Belfast—clergy, laity, persons of all classes in society, and holding all varieties of views in respect of the physical phenomena, do all agree that there is widely awakened a serious attention to religion in the minds of thousands who never thought seriously of it before ; that there is an access to men’s



minds on the subject of religion, a readiness and desire for instruction, and for joining in the worship of God, such as never was known there before ; that churches and other houses of public worship are now filled as they were never filled before ; that instances are numerous of persons whose outward life is changed ; that in some places the outward face of society is changed (as far as we can yet see) by a visible reformation : all this is admitted without question by those who see most to blame in the conduct of the movement.

Even a stranger cannot fail to be struck with the earnest concern about religion which appears to pervade the people : as I listened to a street preacher during the dinner hour of the working men (the best sermon which I heard in Belfast) it was impossible not to be impressed with the earnest and reverent expression of countenance in all the working men and lads who gathered round, perhaps 150 in number ; faces so earnest I never saw before in any congregation. From house to house I saw much of the same feeling.

That there exists, at the same time, "a counterwork" dishonouring to the Holy Spirit, and antagonistic to the Scriptures as our sole revelation from God, founded on delusions by which it is very difficult to avoid being deluded, and sedulously propagated by means injurious alike to the welfare of souls and bodies, I shall have too painfully to prove as I proceed.

If I shall have to dwell chiefly on the counterwork,



it is only for the sake of the work ; that we may the better know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

The task is painful to me, and much against my inclination. The good in this movement pleads powerfully in my own heart for a toleration of the evil. I know it does so, too, in the hearts of others. I shrink from conflict with hopes and even with prejudices that arise from such pleadings. Yet, I may not shrink from it ; because it is Satan, and not Christ, who has mingled the evil with the good. It is *his* art to mix the tares with the wheat, and the mixture is made for *his* purpose ; the more powerfully the good appeals to us to be accepted *with the tares*, the more insidiously is Satan's art successful—the more his kingdom is advanced. I must, therefore, speak the whole truth, entreating those whose feelings may be hurt thereby to bear with me, believing that my own natural wishes and feelings are as much grieved as theirs. What I have to say will, perhaps, be found worthy of their attention.

The counterwork, such as I shall hereafter have to illustrate it, appears to me to take advantage of a bodily illness which has come to beco-existent with this revival movement, though not co-extensive with it.

How far the two co-extend is very difficult to ascertain. A clergyman in Belfast, who takes a more favourable view than I do of the physical phenomena, gave me his opinion that these cases are more numerous than the cases of conversion without such phenomena ; at the same time, he expressed his decided conviction that cases of true conversion without any bodily affec-



tion are far more numerous than real cases of conversion accompanied by the bodily affections. I am inclined to think that this opinion approximates to the truth. On the other hand, I heard a clergyman, who thinks still more favourably of the physical phenomena, affirm in a sermon that cases attended with bodily affections are not one in fifty ; a calculation which did not appear to me to be probably based upon any data. With respect to some country parishes, I have heard from sources which appear worthy of credit that the cases which seem satisfactory, yet without the bodily affections, are nine out of ten. In other country parishes I fear nothing is yet manifested but the mere propagandism, by selected emissaries, of the bodily affections.

But whatever may be the proportion between persons seriously impressed and the cases of bodily affection, the apparent connection between the religious revival and this attendant illness cannot fail to excite and arrest attention.

The phenomena of the bodily affections are often wonderful in themselves ; such as are not only easily mistaken for manifestations of the operation of the Holy Spirit, but often such as to persons previously unacquainted with them may well appear absolutely unaccountable on any other grounds.

Hence, this illness is generally assumed, according to different varieties of views, to be either necessarily or naturally, or at least beneficially and instrumentally, connected with conversion.

Those who take this view are generally inclined, and perhaps anxious, to believe that the illness is



something new in its own nature, and heretofore unknown.

Now, the question which here arises is not generally about bodily manifestations of the feelings of the soul, but about these particular manifestations as they now appear.

I have heard these bodily affections defended thus : —“Considering the mysterious connection between soul and body, if the soul be filled with sorrow, will not that be manifested in the body ? and if the soul be filled with joy, will not that be manifested in the body too ? And further, will not the intensity of the bodily manifestation be in some proportion to the intensity of the feeling of the soul ? so that if the soul be actually overwhelmed and prostrated with sorrow for sin, the body may, as a natural consequence, be prostrated too ; and if the soul be exalted with joy, the body may partake of and manifest that exaltation.” I trust I have stated it fairly. I have no desire to weaken this argument, for in this I fully concur ; and would to God that we possessed and witnessed more of it ; and I pray for as much of this as it may be God’s gracious will to grant or to permit.

But, now, looking at the peculiar character of the bodily affections at present prevailing in Belfast, we have to inquire whether they be really of the nature above described ; how far they are the natural and real expression of the feelings of the soul ; or how far they are to be attributed to the morbid action of disease : for unquestionably there is in many of these cases much that appears to be mere physical disease, not re-



cognised by mankind as any expression of the feelings of the mind or soul. We should also inquire whether this bodily illness be indeed a new thing, or whether it be not one whose nature and influence on religion is already well known. We should not grope for opinions or conjectures in the dark, if we have light and knowledge within reach.

I shall have to show—(1), That the usual bodily and mental affections in this movement are only the ordinary phenomena of a well-known form of disease, which, though it seldom prevails to its present extent, is yet quite capable in its nature of such extension. (2), That in its very nature it is antagonistic, and not favourable, to true religion. (3), That the present results of this disease and its natural consequences are injurious to woman's nature, and subversive of the Word of God as the sole foundation of our faith. (4), That this affection is only accidentally, and not properly, connected with true conversion; and that religious revivals can be, and ought to be, wholly disconnected from it.

On reading the earliest accounts of the bodily affections, I found nothing but what I had been previously familiar with in cases of illness of which, in the course of professional duty or at the call of personal friendship, I had had the management under medical direction. The same observation applies to the accounts which I have since read.

By personal observation I have satisfied myself of the identity of the cases now occurring in Belfast with



those which I had formerly attended. The movements of the hands, arms, head, &c., in these cases—the expressions of the countenance—the sounds of the voice, cries, screams, moans, coughs, &c., have each a peculiar character, unlike to anything else. Once duly noticed, these can never be mistaken. To ascertain whether these indescribable, yet unmistakeable, signs of the disease which I suspected, did really exist, was one purpose of my visit. I was accompanied by a friend who had never heard the sound, but who is capable of observing and dealing with these things. I told him on our journey to Belfast that, if I were right in the opinion I had formed on the accounts I had read, he would hear sounds such as he had never heard before from the human voice, and such as in after life he could never fail to recognise again. In the scenes of wild excitement which we visited together, and in quieter hours, he has told me that my anticipation was true—that such a sound he never heard before, and never hereafter can fail to recognise.

My first acquaintance with the peculiar character of that cry was singular. Nearly thirty years ago, in Mr. Irving's chapel in London, I heard Miss —— speak in an unknown tongue. That produced on me one of the most permanent impressions I have received in life. I never for a moment believed in it as inspired ; yet I *felt* it as a sound such as I had never heard before. Long years passed away, and that sound still dwelt upon my memory as something unearthly and unaccountable. Many years after, in the first serious case of this kind that I had to



attend, a physician told me at the outset to mark the peculiar character of the cry. That moment it flashed upon my memory ; it was, with some slight modification, but in its character essentially the same, the unmistakeable cry of Irving's prophetess ! a sound that while I live I never again can mistake or misinterpret.

That cry I have now recognised in its most unmistakeable form in Belfast. I have also recognised every other symptom and phenomenon as what I have formerly witnessed, and I have seen or heard of none beside.

All the "cases" I saw in Belfast were clearly and unmistakeably hysterical ; and, as far as it is possible to judge from description, so was every case which has been described to me.\*

I have heard attempts made to prove that medical men are doubtful, or disagreed, as to the nature of these bodily affections. As far as I had opportunities of examining, all these attempts rested on one story, which proved only this, that in one case (not in Belfast) it was considered doubtful, or obscure, whether the girl were hysterical or not.

I have found no reason for believing that the medical profession are in doubt on the subject. I have been told by a person likely to know the fact, that there is no difference of opinion among medical men in Belfast.

\* I have heard of some cases that were considered epileptic. I believe it is not uncommon for epilepsy to exist in complication with hysteria. But I have never seen a case of this kind, and have no knowledge of epilepsy.—(See Appendix to Third Edition.)



The fact that all the present phenomena have been witnessed before, in cases which did not arise in connection with religion, at least meets the assumption so naturally, almost unavoidably, made by those unacquainted with the subject, that these phenomena are unaccountable except on the assumption that they proceed from the work of the Spirit. I shall further on point out facts in the movement in Belfast which are utterly repugnant to such a solution, and are felt by thoughtful persons who adopt that view to be utterly perplexing; whereas the general facts in the case may be satisfactorily explained when what we know of hysteria is taken into account.

Having ascertained what the illness generally is, it becomes us to inquire whether the preaching of Christ and His Apostles did ever produce hysteria.

I have read of Him that He went about "healing *all manner* of sickness and *all manner* of disease among the people" (Mat. iv. 23); but I have never read that His preaching did ever create anything of the nature of disease. I have read that our Lord did give power and commission to His twelve disciples "to heal *all manner* of sickness and *all manner* of disease" (Mat. x. 1); but I never read that any sermon preached by them, or any word spoken by them, except in the execution of miraculous judgment, did ever produce anything of the nature of disease. On the day of Pentecost itself, to which the prevalence of hysteria under preaching is now compared, when three thousand were pricked in their



hearts on the awful charge that *they had crucified* Him whom God had made both Lord and Christ, I find no trace of hysteria ; but, on the contrary, in the very period of conviction, the best and highest exercise of their moral and intellectual faculties.

But I feel that this statement is weak and inadequate. I have had experience and success in the treatment of hysteria. I have learned to subdue the wildest cry. I understand, or, at least, feel, the nature of the influence which I was taught to exercise ; and this experience has left a strong conviction on my mind that, apart from all Divine or miraculous power, and assuming only the facts of our constitution and the influences which we know to act on it, hysteria could neither have arisen nor existed in the presence of Christ ; that it must have stood mute, and have ceased, in presence of the calm power of His perfect manhood. The woman taken in adultery could not become hysterical ; she stood quietly in the midst and spoke calmly. Neither could that sinner who poured forth all the emotional feeling of her soul in washing His feet with her tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head.

I believe also that the eloquence of the Boanerges would have had a powerful influence in arresting it. The grounds of this opinion may appear as I proceed.

The more we learn of the nature and tendencies of hysteria, the more we will understand why Christ and His Apostles did not use it, and why we should not use it now.



This is a matter in which we clergy are utterly at a loss, and wholly unable to form any opinion, without the assistance and instruction of the Christian physician and psychologist.

In fact, so far as the "Revival" assumed this hysterical form, it was no longer a case to be treated by the clergy with prayer meetings and singing ; it became a case for moral treatment by the clergy under the advice and guidance of the Christian physician, conversant with physiology and psychology.

I do not presume to suppose that any information I have gained could qualify me to teach others. I merely offer my own observations as suggestive to the clergy of the source whence they may derive instruction, and the topics on which they would do well to seek for it. The clergy are not generally aware what light some medical men can throw on some of the most distressing and perplexing parts of clerical duty. I aim only at awakening the attention of others to the value of instruction which I have myself enjoyed and prized. With this apology for any apparent presumption, I venture to submit the conclusions I have formed from any experience I have had, or any instruction I have received : of course not presuming to speak about those cases of hysteria which arise from organic or functional disease, or of any cases complicated with other diseases, but only of hysteria in the simple form in which it now exists in Belfast.

Some general idea of the nervous system is useful in trying to form an idea of what hysteria is.



“The nervous centers consist of four distinct series or sets of organs, called respectively the *Cerebrum*, the *Sensorium*, the *Cerebellum*, and the Spinal cord. The *Cerebrum* . . . . supplies the material instrument of the will, and is the seat of all the intellectual operations. It neither receives nor transmits nerves ; but is intimately united with the *Sensorium*, upon which it is dependant for all the stimuli that call it into activity, and also for its power to react upon the body. The *Sensorium*, placed between the base of the brain and the summit of the cord, has received its name from being the seat or instrument of all sensation. Of this compound body one portion ministers to the sense of vision, another to the sense of hearing, and another to the sense of smell . . . . The *Cerebellum*, or *Little Brain*, . . . . Its function may be regarded as a matter of detail rather than of principle. . . . The Spinal cord is concerned solely in the production of motion, and into it are inserted all the afferent and efferent nerves of the body, excepting only those of the former class which proceed from the organs of special sense, and which terminate in the *Sensorium*.”—Dr. Carter’s “Influence of Education on the Diseases of the Nervous System,” pp. 9, &c.

“ . . . . The second great division of the nervous system—the sympathetic, or ganglionic—which has been mentioned as controlling *the processes of nutrition and growth*. . . . The sympathetic system consists of a number of collections or masses of gray matter, distributed in various parts



of the body, and forming centers of activity to the nerves connected with them, just as the brain and spinal cord form the centers of the nerves of motion and thought . . . filaments from each system passing into the other, and thus reaching parts of the body with which their own centers have no connection of the ordinary kind ; but from which, by this arrangement, they are not entirely severed."\*—Idem, pp. 77, 78.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made. In the due subordination of the inferior and superior parts of the nervous system, God has laid the foundation of moral duty, and of the subjugation of the body to the soul.

According to Feuchtersleben, one of the greatest living authorities, hysteria and hypochondriasis, both alike, involve, so far as they exist, the subversion of

\* "All the nerves do not lead with equal freedom of communication to the brain ; on the contrary, the vegetative nerves form, as is well known, a partially distinct system, existing independently of the cerebral, and which, by peculiar separate foci, *partly counteracts* and is partly connected with the cerebral system by the sympathetic nerves, which Reil calls the apparatus of semi-conduction, and which form a continuous elliptical chain. Hence, the impressions which fall within the dominion of this system are not at once so clearly felt as those of the other, namely, the cerebro-spinal nerves. A morsel, for instance, that is swallowed is felt only to a certain point, when it enters the *oesophagus* ; sensation then ceases, and returns only at the *sphincter ani*. An animal which is opened alive does not cry out when the soft nerves of the abdomen are pricked, but immediately when the hard nerves at the extremities are touched. . . . It is sufficient for us to know that the sensations of the ganglionic system, when in a healthy state, are not so immediately conducted to the brain as those of the other nerves."—Feuchtersleben's *Medical Psychology*, Sydenham Edition, p. 66, § 11.



the moral order which God has established between the superior and inferior parts of our being.\*

This is worthy of being considered by those who hope to find in hysteria the handmaid of religion.

It is impossible for me to trace out the action of hysteria. I can only point out a well-known fact, important to my object.

Certain nerves of those proceeding from the spine govern all the expressions (except action) which the body can give to the feelings of the mind. The branches of these nerves extend to the eyes, the face, the lips, the throat, the chest, the region of the heart and stomach.

In the normal state, these nerves are moved to action by real emotion of the mind, and are subject to its direction and control—a control which increases in power by exercise. It is in this motion and direction that the value of their action as expressions consist. Hence, in the state of health, tears, sobs, expressions of countenance, movements of the lips,

\* "Hypochondriasis . . . is, in its essence, nothing but a *cœnæsthesia* ("common feeling which is referred to the ganglionic nerves," p. 91, § 13), abnormally heightened in all directions . . . the patient believes that he has all the disorders which he sees, or hears, or reads of; because *he feels* every part of the organism the moment that he innervates it, by constantly fixing his attention on it. . . . The hypochondriac presents a melancholy picture of the human mind under subjection to the body. . . . Hysteria, the sister condition, whatever nice distinctions may be made between them, is only the same disturbance of the *cœnæsthesia*, as modified in the female sex."—Medical Psychology, Sydenham Ed., p. 222-227. § 100, 103.

This common origin may account for the fact that men are



tones of the voice, sensations of the throat or chest, "weight about the heart," sickness of the stomach, all are, or at least may be, natural expressions of mental feeling, and are recognised as such by mankind.

But in the hysteric state, the system of vegetative nerves and the sense of physical feeling predominate, and govern those nerves of expression, or some of their branches, absolutely discharged from this direction or control of the mind or the will. Hence all action of the nerves of expression so affected, so far as that action is produced by hysteria, although identical in outward form with that which is natural, ceases to be any expression of the emotions of the mind, and becomes only the expression of diseased physical feeling. This is very hard to believe when it is first witnessed, but it is still harder to disbelieve it after experience and reflection. Apart even from the instruction that we receive from the researches of science, I think any careful observer of hysteria must come to the conclusion that it involves the supremacy of the bodily

capable of becoming hysterical, of which many instances are to be found in medical books. On this Feuchtersleben says—"When men are attacked by genuine hysterical fits (*globus hyst. &c.*), which certainly does occur, they are, *for the most part*, effeminate men."—*Ibid*, p. 228, § 104.

I have read in some medical work (I forget where) that when hysteria becomes epidemic the sympathetic influence often determines the form of hysteria in man, rather than of hypochondriasis.

It is difficult to ascertain the proportion of male cases in Belfast, &c.; some have stated it to me as one in ten; others as one in twenty; I have heard no higher estimate of male cases. The authority for one in twenty appeared to me to be the best I met with.



feeling over the mind ; and is it possible to believe that this can be favourable to religion ?

It is not for me to venture to have an opinion whether the ganglionic system be the original seat of hysteria, or whether that seat may not even be in the mysterious connection between body and soul. But this much is clear, that as hysteria simulates many diseases of the body, so it does also of the soul ; and may, perhaps, end in producing both. There are cases, for instance, of apparent disease of the knee or hip joint, not easily distinguishable even by physicians, which are merely hysterical. In like manner, it is very common for hysteria to assume the form of religious despondency or despair, of which no trace ever appears in the mind or soul of the patient while not under hysteric feeling.

The same appears to be equally true of that perversion of the moral feelings which generally appears in cases of hysteria when they proceed to any length. In some cases those perversions may be no more the subject of moral responsibility than insanity itself.

There is one perversion of moral feeling which always exists in hysteria, and more than anything else may make us doubt whether hysteria be chosen of God as a means of conversion, and that is—*selfishness*. Now, I protest against being thought to imply that all persons who are hysterical are naturally selfish. I have known the contrary in several instances, and I know the effect in such cases of appealing to unselfish feeling ; but it will be easily understood from the foregoing account that the predominance



of the idea of "self" as the object of the mind is of the very essence of the disease, and it is the necessary consequence of this, *if allowed to proceed*, to engender selfishness : the woman who *habitually indulges* hysterical feeling, as many in Belfast are now led to indulge it, becomes the most selfish and unsympathetic being in the world, except one—the man who indulges and cherishes hypochondriacal feeling.

I must suggest caution in coming to an opposite conclusion on apparent evidence to the contrary in mild forms of hysteria *in its incipient stages*. I struggled long against admitting that the predominance of the idea of "self" in hysteria always contains the germ of selfishness ; but I had to admit the conviction that this is true. As hysteria grows by habit or indulgence, all its evils become apparent ; but a trained observer detects the germs in its origin. I have seen this deplorable selfishness manifested, and promoted by others, in some sad cases in Belfast. I submit it for consideration whether this be a proper preparation of our moral constitution for the reception of the Gospel of Christ.

Among those who already admit the hysterical character of these affections, there appears to be a tendency to confound hysteria with the natural excitement of emotional feeling. I desire to correct this notion, because it lies upon my conscience that emotional feeling in religion requires to be more cultivated than it usually is with us, and I believe firmly that any



revival of true religion must depend chiefly on its proper cultivation. I believe that re-action from the error of mistaking hysteria for emotional feeling will throw us back into coldness and deadness. In all I have to say of hysteria, I write in vindication of emotional feeling, and its absolute necessity in true religion ; for in it is felt the love of God and of our neighbour.

“With THE HEART man *believeth* unto righteousness” is an expression powerful in its apparent incongruity with our ideas. There can be no true, living, working faith, unless emotional feeling be engaged in it. God claims for His own the whole being He has made. But just for that very reason, the subversion of emotional feeling, and its subjugation in hysteria to the lower part of our nature, involve a present incapacity of believing aright.

Emotional feeling may be exercised and excited to the highest degree without anything of the nature of hysteria ; nay, it may be a powerful means of counter-acting it. The natural expression which the body gives to emotional feeling of the mind or soul is not hysteria ; neither is the natural weakness or exhaustion of the body or the mind which follows on emotional feeling strongly excited.

It can never be too strongly insisted on, or too thoroughly understood and believed, that hysteria is an unnatural state, involving diseased action of mind and body. As such, it is as distinct from true emotional feeling as the unnatural must ever be from the natural—as distinct as disease is from the functions



of life. Hysteria is the subversion and destruction, not the action, of real emotional feeling. When clear and distinct symptoms of hysteria are present, this should never be overlooked.

Any one who may take notice of what I write without taking notice of this, will hardly do justice to me or to the subject.

We may now proceed to examine the phenomena, and attempt a solution.

The prevalence of hysteria in connection with religious revival is by no means so unaccountable as it may at first sight appear. It is of the nature of the disease — (1) To attach to any idea connected with self ; (2) To be propagated by sympathy ; (3) To imitate any form of hysteric action seen or heard of. I shall show that it is only accidentally connected with revival of religion ; but the above known facts are quite sufficient to account for its becoming accidentally connected with religious revival, to any extent. Suppose such a revival to proceed, as the last and best of the American revivals did, without any hysterical accompaniments ; and suppose one girl in a revival meeting to become hysterical, even from any cause not connected with religion ; her hysterical feeling will, from causes which I shall explain, naturally attach itself to the idea of religion in connection with "self." That one case may probably produce at the time, by sympathy, many more ; and the form of that case will probably determine the form of all the rest. If strong counteractive means be not then employed,



and still more if hysteria be *encouraged*, it is not only not surprising, but it is a natural consequence of the nature of the disease, that hysterical affections of this particular form should then spread generally among those who take part in the revival ; yet, in all this the connection is only accidental.

In cases where hysterical affections and religious feeling appear together, it is very natural hastily to assume that all the expressions are proofs of the feeling of the soul. Where hysterical affection appears almost universally accompanied by religious feeling, it is equally natural to conclude that there is some real or beneficial connection between them. The phenomena of hysteria are certainly sufficiently wonderful in themselves to persuade persons previously ignorant of them that the expressions resulting from hysteria in connection with religion are absolutely unaccountable, except on the assumption of the actual operation of the Holy Spirit.

But thoughtful persons, who are led to take this view, soon find themselves thereby involved in inextricable perplexities, destructive of the assumption itself. It remains to be seen if we can account for these things.

The cries, moans, and other inarticulate sounds of hysteria are merely expressive of diseased physical feeling. I think this conviction must force itself upon the mind of every observant person who has watched it carefully.

The same observation is equally true of the seemingly expressive action, in hysteria, of the hands, head,



eyes, &c. ; except in so far as it is influenced by the sight of visions, so common in this affection. In Belfast I have heard all these actions interpreted by an ignorant young man, who appeared to be employed to take charge of "cases" in a celebrated house of worship. His interpretation of "repelling Satan," "inviting Christ," &c., seemed to give universal satisfaction to the bystanders—except myself, who had before seen precisely similar hysteric action to which no such explanation could apply.

The words and expressions uttered in these hysterical affections, upon the most important topics of religion, require more care and thought to discriminate their real value.

It has been repeatedly urged on me that in this illness the conviction of sin has been universally expressed, and the cry for mercy universally raised ; and it is argued from this that the affection which produces such effects must, therefore, be from God.

From personal observation I am obliged to deny the universality of the assertion. I give elsewhere a remarkable case, the most famous "conversion" while I was in Belfast, attended by a daily levee of ministers, ladies, and visitors, in which no sense of sin was felt in the paroxysms, no trace of godly sorrow remained in the recovery.

Yet I acknowledge that the burden of sin is be-moaned, and the cry for mercy offered, and the shout of victory and thanksgiving raised, in a great majority of cases of this bodily affection.

Here the question arises as to the real value of



these expressions—whether they do or do not express real feelings of the soul.

Now, I am far from thinking that real sorrow and mourning for sin does not sometimes exist in the paroxysm of hysteria. I fully believe that it does. But I do say that *the words used while in that state*, especially when those words express only a vague, indefinite sense of distress on account of sin, without compunction for particular sins (which, I fear, is a common case\*), afford no proof that such feeling is genuine or real, however sincerely it may be believed in by the patient at the time. The existence of such real feelings can only be believed on evidence of previous feeling or subsequent conduct.

Here I have found it invariably acknowledged to me, by those who urged the universality of this conviction of sin and cry for mercy and feeling of peace as proof of the spiritual origin of the affection, that in a great number of cases it is already proved by the subsequent evidence of the lives of the persons, and in very many instances, too, by the subsequent confession and testimony of the persons themselves, that there never was any real influence of the Spirit of God on their hearts, and that all these expressions, however sincere at the time, were entirely delusive and worthless. I find that those who rely most upon this argu-

\* “With some this conviction has reference to particular easily besetting sins; with others, *the far greater number*, to the general sinful state of the soul.”—The History and Prominent Characteristics of the present Revival in Ballymena, by the Rev. Samuel J. Moore. Page 7.



ment can neither refuse nor account for an admission destructive of the argument itself.

I have to account for it from what we know of hysteria.

I think it must be acknowledged by every one who has watched hysteria, that its paroxysm occasions a sense of undefinable and indescribable distress of physical feeling never before experienced from any other cause, and unaccountable by any feeling or cause of pain or distress ever before experienced.

The force of this will be more felt if we remember that a whole system of nerves, always before in very subordinate action as respects self-feeling, is now excited into unnatural activity, and demands the whole attention of the mind as being, for the time, the chief or, perhaps, only source of self-feeling.\* A state so unnatural may well be the source of unutterable and unaccountable physical distress. This seems indicated in the peculiar character of

\* "Self-feeling" is thus explained by Feuchtersleben:—

" . . . Common feeling, where the word 'feeling' only stands for sensation. . . . The so-called common feeling itself, through which we perceive only the vegetative sphere of our body, is wholly somatic (of the body, from *σωμα*); but if from the psychical (from *ψυχη*, used here for the spirit of man) termination, we trace the relation downwards, we certainly come to a point at which the psychical element so loses itself, as respects our investigation, in the physical element of the common feeling, that we can no longer draw the boundary line of the transition—no longer point out the share taken by body and mind. At this point, therefore, there would be common feeling rising into the psychical sphere, and we could not designate it better than by the expression 'self-feeling,' a feeling of personal existence in an empirical, not a metaphysical, sense.

" *Self-feeling*, then, combines in itself *sensation* and *idea*; its sub-



the cry—a sound which no human voice at any other time—which no other form of pain or suffering, can imitate.

The very nature of the sensation—self-feeling in its most unnatural intensity—prompts an investigation of the cause. I never knew a patient who did not seek some solution of this hitherto unexperienced distress ; and I never knew a patient make the slightest approximation to a true solution.

I submit now a simple fact to which my attention was long ago called by a physician, and which I have since verified in several instances. Observe young children at the commencement of their first illness, when just able to express their wants by speech. The cry is almost always, “I’m very hungry.” The nurse offers food which the child rejects with loathing, and instantly cries again, “I’m very hungry.” This is easily explained : the child has experience of only one physical distress, and one source of relief : feeling

jectivity pervades the organic body ; it is what we mean by the *ego*, applied to the vital functions. . . . The state of mind in which self-feeling is void of sensations announces itself to us as *ennui*. . . . The opposite state, where self-feeling is full of sensation, is called sensitiveness”—Medical Psychology, Sydenham Ed., p.p. 131,132, § 39.

I have not been able to find any word which expresses better than “self-feeling” does that real perception or feeling of ourselves, which consists partly in bodily sensation and partly in mental consciousness. Composed as we are of body and soul, it is the union of the two which gives us the feeling of ourselves. It is with the union of both we have to deal in speaking of hysteria ; not with bodily sensation apart, nor with mental consciousness apart. In hysteria the bodily part of the feeling unnaturally predominates, and governs the mental.



a physical distress, it assumes the only known cause, and cries out accordingly.

A like thing happens in hysteria, only modified by a wider experience. An hitherto unexperienced feeling of distress seeks a solution : any known but unexplored cause of a distress not yet experienced will be adopted as that solution. Guilt in the sight of God has been in some small degree felt perhaps by all, and suspected to a far greater extent, as a possible cause of unknown suffering ; it is perhaps the only cause thus partially known or suspected, yet unexplored. It will therefore be naturally, perhaps almost necessarily, adopted as the true solution of an unknown distress. I take this to be the reason why in every serious case that I have formerly seen, although in its origin unconnected with religion, the sense of the burden of sin has been present to the mind for the time. How much more when a prevailing and engrossing opinion all around has led to *the expectation* of a new form of distress, arising from this very cause ; and suggests a cry for mercy as its remedy ! This is but a re-adaptation, founded on a wider experience, of the first faculty of reasoning or feeling that we can trace in a child, to account for an unknown sensation of physical distress.

This explanation is very strongly confirmed by the very vague and indefinite accounts often given by those who have been "struck," of what they have experienced of the sense of guilt and the feeling of pardon : they often betray a degree of ignorance of the nature of these things which goes far to prove



that they have merely mistaken a feeling of distress, physical in its nature, for a sense of sin.

I saw in Belfast a striking and a very happy illustration of this, in a young woman whose evident truthfulness impressed me and others most favourably. She seemed carefully to consider her answers, for fear of being guilty of untruth. Having stated her distress, and the peace which followed, she was asked the nature or cause of that distress : after a moment of truthful hesitation, she replied with emphasis, "*I suppose* it was the burden of sin." That burden I ascertained she had truly felt before ; and she could only "suppose" it to have been in some way the cause of unaccountable distress. This was one of the most pleasing and hopeful "cases" that I met with.

The remarkable characteristic of this disease to copy and imitate other cases is also important to be considered here. An incautious inquiry by a physician whether the patient has a particular symptom, which she was before ignorant of, will very often be followed by that symptom. I believe that if any case of hysteria were now to arise in Belfast from any irritation, actual or reflex, of the brain, or from any functional derangement, wholly apart from religious excitement, it would at once assume the form of trouble on account of sin ; and I also believe that in such a case, upon recovery, no trace or consequence of godly sorrow for sin would remain.

In proportion to the intensity of physical distress will be the enjoyment of being free from it. If the physical distress of hysteria, such as I have endeavoured



to describe it, be mistaken for the sense and burden of sin, then, as a necessary corollary, the indescribable sense of relief will be mistaken for pardon and peace. This seems to me a sufficient account of the admitted fact, that in very many cases in which we have no ground to doubt the sincerity, for the time, of the expressions used—the confession of sin, the cry for mercy, and the triumphant expressions of peace received, are proved by subsequent experience to have been wholly delusive.

This affords grounds for a solemn warning to ministers of the Gospel to beware of persuading people, or giving countenance to the persuasion, that they are all safe and right because they have gone through a state of diseased physical self-feeling. I do believe that this is one of Satan's chief objects in sowing the tares ; and the Methodist system seems to be more liable to this danger, and to need this warning more, than any other. But Presbyterians need it too ; for it seems to me, on a careful consideration of some remarkable cases, that Presbyterians “struck” are often little else but Presbyterians turned Methodist. Class-meeting is their future worship. So some have told me.

Nothing seems more relied on, or more naturally perhaps, as a proof of spiritual operation in this illness, than the heavenly light and joy which is said to shine upon the countenances of those who have found peace.

I have not myself witnessed this in Belfast ; but



I fully believe the accounts that I have read of it. I should rather be surprised if such appearances did not now present themselves in some of those affected.

Few, perhaps, have seen this wondrous light shine so brightly as I have seen it in times past. But a knowledge of the realities of life is the greatest restraint on its delusions. The recollection of what I have seen makes it impossible for me to accept the "spiritual" solution now offered of this phenomenon.

I have, in former times, seen a countenance, not plain, and yet hardly pretty, transformed, after a paroxysm of distress, into a perfection of personal, moral, and intellectual beauty, such as I have never otherwise witnessed—such as I had never before conceived—such as I can now but imperfectly realize in memory. Time after time I have gazed for a moment in entranced admiration upon that resplendent vision of all that is beautiful in woman, heightened as it was by a brilliancy of intellectual light, and a flow of words of inexpressible beauty. But the stern call of duty interfered (for that case was entrusted to me by a friend), and I soon found that my control was as necessary then as in the paroxysm of distress. How movingly she would entreat me to let her brilliant thoughts and words have flow, as being the source of the most exquisite happiness she had ever experienced ! An absolute injunction of silence and quiet never failed to bring it to a close. Many a time I have thus destroyed a vision



on which I could have gazed for ever, and which I never expect to see again in like perfection.

The highest perfection of that beauty was the expression of heavenly peace and joy. Yet in that case this had nothing to do with religion. It is not for me to attempt to explain it; but it evidently proceeded from natural causes, and cannot be regarded as a proof of spiritual illumination.

It would be interesting to ascertain whether this appearance may not have been observed in Belfast, or elsewhere, along with the most rapturous expressions of divine peace and joy, in cases in which it may have been proved by subsequent experience that there never was any real work of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

In another case I have repeatedly seen a square and angular face assume the form of a perfect oval.

Such fleeting beauty as this is commonly followed, and perhaps for a long time, by a haggard countenance, a muddy skin, and purple or brown hands and wrists, of which I noticed many instances in Belfast. I cannot recommend hysteria as a cosmetic.

Of the kindred phenomena, the excitation of ideas and words, and the unconscious perception of beauty and of grace, I did witness something in Belfast. I take the following instance from my notes, written at the time :—

July —th, 1859; eight o'clock, P.M.—Methodist class meeting for young converts, at ————. About 150 present in the school-room. All were invited to declare what the Lord had done for their souls.



Many did so ; some with feeling, and some in what seemed like repeating a mere form. One case was touchingly interesting :—A young girl, evidently still in the state of excitement which follows the actual prostration, rose up and spoke at much greater length than the others. Her whole demeanour in that trying ordeal was the perfection of modesty, humility, and gracefulness ; the tones of her voice were deep and rich and beautiful ; the tremulous calmness of her voice and manner revealed the excitement of her mind, and, I trust, the fervour of her soul ; the grace and flow and beauty of her words and thoughts was touchingly genuine. She spoke of prostration of body and peace of mind ; but not of joy. She could not have spoken of joy with truth ; for her face wore the expression of sorrow. The character of the whole was profoundly mournful and sad. I never listened to anything more truly affecting. It seemed impossible to doubt this young girl's sincerity ; and may her peace be lasting and true. Yet, thoroughly impressed with a sense of the sincerity of every feeling she expressed, I could not but know that the grace and beauty and fulness of the expression, of which she herself seemed perfectly unconscious, and of which she would in all probability be utterly incapable at any other time, must be attributed to a state of excitement which is in itself of the nature of disease. Deeply grieved and sad I felt when a gross specimen of self-glorification was then set before that young creature, as a pattern of what she might hope to attain to.

I also witnessed a striking instance of the gift of



prayer (as it is thought), in a girl at whose bedside I sat while she was engaged in vision. She was very ignorant, and could not read ; at least she said so. The flow of ideas and the power of expression were great indeed ; yet not rising to anything really above what she might have heard at ordinary meetings. This was a case in which I afterwards had the clearest evidence that her heart had never experienced any work of grace. I shall have more to say of this poor girl when I come to speak of visions. This case seemed to me decisive as to the absence of spiritual, and the effect of physical, action.

The remarkable flow of ideas and words often produced by the merely physical influence of strong drink, up to a certain point, is a good illustration of the physical nature of this phenomenon.

I have myself, on some rare occasions, when speaking, given utterance to thoughts and feelings which did not at all appear to me to emanate from my own mind. The feeling on my mind at those times was almost irresistible, as if I stood aside listening to another doing what I could neither have conceived nor executed ; and watching with interest, but without any previous knowledge of them, for the next words and ideas. Those have been the only moments of my life in which I have ever been capable of anything of the nature of eloquence. I believe that a subject of exciting interest, with some physical stimulant (for the physical prevails in it), might produce in me again the same feeling of listening to another.



It is easy in Belfast to distinguish, for some days after, those who have been affected, by a peculiar appearance of the eyes. I believe that physicians can account for this, and to them I leave it. The eyes are commonly affected in hysteria.

The "dumb cases" in Belfast need excite no surprise. Affections of the voice are common in hysteria. I knew a slight case where the voice was occasionally lost for a short time. In that case the loss and recovery of speech always depended on impressions made on the nervous system by others ; this may give a clue to the solution of some cases in Belfast. The power of the will may solve others. I did not myself see a dumb case in Belfast ; but I give, farther on, an account of a dumb case as I heard it related in a sermon.

If I cannot form a favourable opinion of hysteria, as a means of religious revival, from a consideration of its known nature and tendencies, still less can I do so on considering the means which I have seen used to induce hysteria in this revival, or the fruits which I have witnessed from it.

It has been urged on me in defence of these bodily affections, that as God uses other diseases to awaken men to repentance, so he may use hysteria too. In this argument it is tacitly assumed that each case of hysteria is produced by the direct act of God.

I will not repeat here the apparent unsuitability of a subversion of our moral nature as a means of



spiritual regeneration. I do not treat it as impossible, but only as much less probable than it is thought to be. I cannot leave out of account the effect of excitement during the hours of the night. The diet of the mill girls often consists wholly of bread and tea—the worst diet for “cases.” At work for thirteen hours—they are then kept, often till long past midnight, in crowded and ill-ventilated assemblies, subjected to the greatest excitement. I have heard them singing after one o’clock in the morning. We have no right to call the natural result the act of God.

But my chief answer is a denial of the assumption that it is to be regarded as the act of God. I decline consideration here of the difficulty, so far above our present knowledge, of reconciling the sovereignty of God in the ordering of all things, with the responsibility of human action. A coroner’s jury can distinguish whether a man died by the visitation of God or by the hand of man. I want a verdict, and I ask for it on this ground.

I say that hysteria, in connection with revivalism, is now commonly produced and propagated by man. Sometimes it is done in ignorance of the means applied ; sometimes with deliberate premeditation of the means. But in each case the result is very commonly intended.

It is notorious that hundreds of mill girls in Belfast have prayed, and are praying, to be “struck.” This was acknowledged to me by an elder or office bearer in a place of worship famous for such conversions. It was also told to me by many of the mill girls them-



selves. I need hardly say that such a prayer answers itself.

I say that they learn in places of worship to offer such prayers. I was myself present, in a Presbyterian Meeting House, at a prayer, offered with the most frenzied excitement and gesticulations, that God would then and there descend and strike all the unconverted to the earth. That prayer was accompanied throughout by a storm of cries, and groans, and exclamations, and Amens, all having the true hysteric sound. This was the most frightful scene I have witnessed in life : at the moment of the awful COMMAND to the Almighty to come down and strike, it was perfectly terrific. No such scene would be permitted in any Bedlam upon earth. Presence at such a prayer could be redeemed from guilt only by the purpose of warning. I have many terrible recollections of life, but this prayer is the most frightful of them all. I have been used to be calm in presence of hysteria ; I was calm then ; but the physical effect upon myself was as if I had been drinking plain brandy. This surely is not the worship of the Church of Scotland.

And just before me, and among the singers, throughout this fearful scene, sat a very type of all that is impressionable in woman. I could have wept, and could hardly restrain myself from doing so, as I marked her slight figure, the hollow cheeks, the muddy colour under a clear skin, the intelligent face, the unnatural calm of the brilliant eyes under the dark lashes of singular length, and the fearful energy with which she sung. It is a



frightful thing to see such young creatures in such a hotbed, knowing to what it leads. I watched her down the aisle, in most enthusiastic intercourse with another just like herself. It is shocking to hear this well-known morbid sympathy mistaken for the mutual love of God's children.

I cannot recognise as the act of God hysteria thus produced and forced.

Neither can I so recognise hysteria which is produced by preaching.

A system is extending to every town and village of propagating hysteria by emissaries—young men, who, in many cases, have been subject to its influence themselves, and who cannot but desire to produce "cases." Their means may be unconsciously used, and may not be the less effectual.

There can be no doubt that in places of worship which have become famous through their hysterical cases, or in which *hysteria is prayed for*, the production of it is an object desired and aimed at in the preaching.

One sermon which I heard impressed me forcibly with the conviction that the preacher had carefully studied how hysteria might be produced. An account may be as instructive to others as that sermon was to me.

The preacher's natural qualifications appeared to be but small. His manner was cold, dry, unimpassioned. His voice was naturally good, and, like his action, appeared to have been carefully studied; his tones were unnatural, as if the peculiar cry of hys-



teria had been taken as a model. He did not appear possessed either of intellectual or sympathetic power. He reminded me of Feuchtersleben's description of hysterical men—"for the most part effeminate."\*

I stop here to observe that many published accounts of sermons prolific of hysteria do carefully notice that there was "nothing exciting" either in the preacher's manner or his discourse. This is put forward as if it made the operation of the Spirit more apparent. Several persons have urged on me that hysteria could not be produced by sermons so "unexciting." But those who speak so do not consider the difference between hysteria and natural emotion, nor do they know that it is not all kinds of excitement that tend to produce hysteria. It must be *emotional* excitement. Excitement of the intellectual faculties is a strong counteractive, and in some cases may be made the most effective instrument of cure. Emotional excitement, to become hysterical, must have for its object, "self;" or rather "self-feeling." True emotional feeling *for another, and not for self*, is a powerful counteractive to hysteria. I could tell strange stories of these things.

It is true, a devoted mother may become for a moment hysterical at the illness of her child, but it is only while the physical self-feeling of grief overcomes her. Perfect self-devotion to others absolutely excludes hysterical feeling. This is the secret of the noble strength of many women.

\* See note, pp. 26, 27.



These maxims explain many effective sermons which are supposed to be devoid of all exciting power, and enable me to return to my instructive discourse.

It was on the parable of Dives and Lazarus. There was nothing of the love of Christ, nor of the guilt of sin ; there was *nothing to awaken conscience* :—hell, h-e-ll, h—e—ll—was the one cry ; and the sole object aimed at was to produce a sensation of intensified torture of physical self-feeling. Remarkable as this sermon was for the paucity and smallness of ideas, it could not be wholly without ideas ; *but passages were*. After the part above described came a passage in which “the existence of Dives” and “endless duration” were put together, repeated again, transposed, reversed, inverted, with infinite variety and art, until nothing in the nature of an idea to occupy the mind remained—nothing but the prolongation of the physical self-feeling of agony. This part of the sermon struck me as the most laboured and studied piece of composition I ever listened to. The skill shown in the wording was great ; and the whole object of the study appeared to be the elimination of every idea or thought. It was evidently here the chief labour of preparation had been bestowed ; and it was precisely here, where every idea had disappeared, that the preacher bestowed the whole force of voice, and tone, and gesture—a fact which I had observed in other sermons before.

Accustomed to reflect on every intellectual excitement, and every true emotional feeling, by which hysteric action can be counteracted, I had sat down to watch and track the process by which hysteria can



be produced. Precisely as I expected, when all sense and meaning was gone, the preacher had his base and unmanly triumph in evoking a wild and long-continued scream of hysteric agony, which, as it rose more loud and thrilled more wild, did effectually silence the preacher, and left him standing in his pulpit with a most self-satisfied air, until her tardy removal enabled him to proceed.

That thrilling cry of agony—that cold-blooded outrage upon the moral nature of woman—did awaken in me the strongest feeling of indignation that has ever filled my breast.

My horror was not lessened as I watched the effect on a well-dressed and nice-looking girl near me. Her countenance did change at that fearful cry, but it changed into an expression of steeled indifference, hateful to be seen in woman. Perhaps this is the effect on those who do not yield to the influence.

I shall give an instance as I proceed of the way in which the female sex is degraded in the subsequent treatment of young women thus reduced to a state incapable alike of reason and of religion ; and also of the awful consequences that may result from woman's nature being thus abused.

Ladies of Belfast—wives and mothers—is it nothing to you that your sex is dishonoured by its utmost weakness being produced and exposed as a spectacle in public assemblies and in presence of the male sex ? Ladies, wives and mothers, I know what hysteria is, and I tell you that I was ashamed as a man to witness, as I have done, the exposure of your sex.



Have you no right or power to demand that this shall cease? Is not your silence its encouragement?

Men and brethren, have you no voices to be raised in arresting it? Should not the man who deliberately produces hysteria in woman (as many do now seek to produce it) be denounced as an outrage upon one sex and a disgrace on the other? Has righteous indignation lost its power? Must we all be content to write upon our graves, "*Ubi sæva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit?*"\*

In the production of these effects, the use of the hand in pointing to individuals evidently plays a large part, and is carefully studied and applied.

This has suggested the idea of mesmerism, which has been urged on me by some careful observers as the agent employed.

Knowing as I do the great power exercised by some "mesmerisers" in some cases, though wholly unconvinced of the theory by which they account for it, I see no occasion whatever to recur to mesmerism as the agent in producing hysteria. The action of the hand which I have observed is studied on other grounds; persons are wrought up, as above described, to a state of self-feeling of personal torment, as far as possible disconnected from any exercise of the understanding, or any appeal to the conscience; and then the motion of the hand comes in; not in direct influence on any selected individual, as a mesmeriser

\* "*Where savage indignation no more can lacerate the heart.*"



would do, but skilfully made to bear, like a squinting eye, on as many as possible, as if it rested on each alone ; thus to embrace the largest number of chances. That pointing of the hand is the last appeal to intensified and agonized self-feeling, wrought up to "cruel expectation" by an artfully judicious pause. This is not mesmerism ; it is a mere trick, too often successful.

"Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men ;" but in Scriptures that terror is used only as a motive to lay hold on the hope set before us. Used as it is now applied, alone, for itself and in itself, apart from any appeal to reason and to conscience, and divested in its application of any connection with the love of God through Christ, the mere agonized feeling of physical torture, as the sole object of the mind, can only be productive of injury. It is no moral instrument ; it does but overthrow the constitution of the religious being. Such preaching can no more convert the heart than the burning of the cities of the plain or the destruction of the old world in the Flood could change the fallen nature of man. It can only produce hysteria.

"God so loved the world ;" "While we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly ;" "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden :" what a frightful contrast to this Gospel of love are the sermons which I have heard !

Yet I would not be supposed to mean that it is only under such sermons as I condemn that hysteria occurs. There is a sympathetic power of producing it, too. I give this sermon as an instance of how a



man who has no sympathetic power may produce it ; and also of the real nature of the production, so far as it is really produced by the matter of sermons.

That in such a state of things as now exists in Belfast "cases" may and do occur under sermons not really calculated to produce them is inevitable. A girl's mind may dwell in Church on impressions before received ; or she may come there having prayed to be "struck," and hoping for it there : in either case, the result may follow during a sermon, and yet not be caused by the sermon ; and one case, if not promptly checked (of which I shall speak again), may produce twenty more in persons similarly predisposed ; and in all this the sermon may be blameless.

That "cases" now occur in many places in Belfast, in mills, factories, private houses, not under the immediate influence of preaching, does not weaken the censure due to those who produce it. Many of those cases are produced by the mind dwelling on what was heard in sermons. All, perhaps, are caused more or less by the excitement created by public preaching, praying, &c., extending to those who have not heard those sermons, by the known powers of propagation by sympathy which is characteristic of this affection. The man who deliberately sets fire to one house cannot excuse himself from the burning of others to which the fire extends. The general expectation, desire, or fear of being struck, which is mainly owing to the course taken in public preaching, is also a powerful agent, for which those who promote it are



responsible. All this is not to be attributed to the act of God.

The fruits of hysteria thus stimulated in connection with religious revival, next require our attention.

It has been urged on me that the general awakening to religion has arisen from the solemn feelings about religion induced by the physical manifestations ; and I partly agree to it. It has been asked of me, even if all I say should be sad and stern truth, why should I seek to destroy an illusion, if such it be, productive of so much good.

I reply, *firstly*, that, as a Christian, having in the Scriptures a true and certain revelation from God as the only means of bringing man to the knowledge of His truth, I cannot look on delusion or imposture as a lawful or useful means of working out that same end.

*Secondly*, notwithstanding that some good may at first have arisen from the impression made by the bodily affections, through ignorance of their nature, yet the delusion, as it is now developed, is (1) subversive of religious reverence ; (2) antagonistic to the Scriptures as our sole revelation from God, and the only foundation of our faith ; (3) dishonouring to the Holy Spirit ; and (4) ruinous to man in its effects.

On all these grounds it appears to me that a thorough examination of the delusion is now a necessary duty.



As to religious reverence :—It is true that in some private houses, as where I saw a poor girl in vision, whose case I will relate, I did see a great feeling of reverence in others, as if God were present by His Spirit (where, indeed, He was not ; see pp. 60, 61, &c.) ; but all I saw in public places of worship convinces me that all feeling of reverence for hysteria is fast wearing out, nothing remaining but morbid excitement.

I take the following from my notes of a visit to a meeting-house famous for “cases,” but which is supposed to be conducted, and is really conducted, with more decency than some others :—

The preacher, before giving out his text, requested that if any cases occurred the congregation would be quiet, and leave it to the office-bearers of the church, who had made full preparation for their reception. While the preacher was urging, with the peculiar pointing of the hand before described, “Your case is as bad as hell can make it,” a poor girl cried and fell. In reproving the excitement which followed, the preacher said, “God is doing His work in that individual.”

When the sermon closed I obtained admission to the room to which this girl had been carried, pursuant to the arrangements announced by the preacher. The room was small, and very narrow, and stifling—no air, no water was there.

A more pitiable sight I never saw. This girl was about 15 years of age, or perhaps a year or two older ; her frame was weak and thin, her small hands stained and ground with hard work, her skin delicate and



transparent, her hair and eyelashes long and dark, her neck marked with scrofula, with a highly-intellectual face seldom seen in her class of life except in weakly girls, and now made painfully interesting by the unearthly expression of cataleptic hysteria ; every movement of the head and hands, every expression of the countenance, every moan, was markedly hysterical. She had previously been struggling and screaming ; she was now quiet, her lips sometimes moving, but inaudibly ; she had spoken of the devil catching souls to throw them into hell, crying, " Away ! you shan't have mine : " just the last impression made upon her failing mind.

I learned that this was the third attack that this poor girl had had in a short time, each being more severe than the former ; so readily does the habit grow. I could have wept to see this sad disease superadded, in the name of religion and of the Holy Ghost, to a poor weak frame, a scrofulous habit, and a life of toil.

She was seated on a form, reclining in the arms of a coarse young man, about twenty years of age. He was no relation of hers, being ignorant of her name or residence. He seemed employed for the purpose, and related with apparent glee that before we came in it had taken all his strength to hold her in her struggles. In this small room, and gathered closely round her, were eight or ten young women, some of whom (perhaps all) had lately been hysterical, and two or three young men (not related to her), of whom one at least had been lately hysterical too. No



elderly woman was there ; nor any elderly man, except one who came in once or twice for a few minutes during the hour we remained there.

Just opposite, and touching her, sat a girl who had gone through the same kind of conversion two days before, and was now crying hysterically, but quietly. She was well dressed for a mill girl, having showy bracelets, and several rings on her fingers, notwithstanding her so recent conversion.

The young man who held the patient, and who seemed quite used to that employment, grinned with professional pleasure as he exhibited to us the points of the case and explained his treatment. Formerly, he said, they used to talk to the patients all through, but this was found too exciting, and now he was forbidden to address the patient until recovery. I wished the prohibition had extended to speaking about the patient in her presence ; of which these girls are very conscious when apparently not noticing other things, and which is most injurious to them.

When this subject was exhausted, the girl who sat crying before the patient was requested to entertain the company with the narration of her visions. How she did brighten up at becoming Number One ! She told a rambling story of how she saw two girls running away from two men dressed, and herself running away from a man half dressed, and how he caught her four times, &c. ; and how she was resolved not to believe it, but still saw it all. Here some one suggested, "as in a dream ;" but she indignantly rejected the solution. I could find no religious point in her vision.



I shall have more to say of these visions again ; I speak here only of the effect : the company seemed highly amused ; but, from first to last, of anything like reverential religious feeling at these supposed manifestations of the work of the Holy Spirit, or at "God doing His work in that individual," I could not see one trace throughout that painful scene.

This case is nothing to the relations I have heard from eye-witnesses of scenes which take place elsewhere in the treatment of those who are "struck." I keep to what I have witnessed myself, in what is considered, and with reason, one of the most decently conducted houses of this kind of excitement ; and I give it as a proof that these proceedings are fast wearing out all feelings of religious veneration, and of respect and decency towards the female sex.

The manner in which these hysterical affections are now cried up and preached up is already thrusting the Word of God from its place, as our sole revelation of the knowledge of His will, and the sole ground of our faith.

Visions and delusions of the sight or mind are one of the most ordinary phenomena of hysteria. Almost every girl now "struck" in Belfast has "visions," and would be greatly disappointed if she had not : she would think it only half done, and would probably pray to be "struck" again.

When the hysterical affection is mistaken for the operation of the Holy Spirit, these visions are naturally mistaken for revelations from God ; and this is



the more natural as these visions are often attended with the remarkable flow of ideas and words which I have before noticed as being so easily mistaken for the gift of prayer.

It is easy to imagine of how little consequence the Scriptures become to ignorant persons who believe that they have a direct revelation from God, as the ground on which they believe in their own personal salvation ; careful conversation proves the existence of this evil.

I grieve to express my apprehension that this delusion is not uncommon in Belfast in the congregations of those clergymen who give no countenance to the bodily affections. Yet I saw happy instances of mill girls, educated under the Church, as deeply affected as any with religious impression, yet preserved from these delusions, and praying not to be "struck."

During my visit to Belfast, I sat by the bedside of a young woman ("struck" for the third time), recently cataleptic, and when I saw her, in a state of ecstasy. She was at first in prayer, with a power of utterance I have before described ; then in thanksgiving for spiritual operations in herself ; then in ardent desire of visions and revelations ; then describing aloud the vision, as she saw it. I carefully weighed her words, as the best evidence of the source of the vision. She said as follows :—"Thou knowest, O Lord, that this morning, ere I went out (she was struck shortly after going out), I said that I would *this night* sing the song of praise for the vision of glory that should be revealed to me." Here was distinct evidence that she had



been working herself up to seeing a vision, and that she had herself previously determined the time. The evidence was equally strong throughout that she had been working herself up to the particular ideas which she hoped to see realized in the vision. And then she went on, in a singularly impressive tone of voice—"Oh, now it opens, and I see Him now, and He is beautiful ; and, look ! the angels open out, and He comes forward, and He comes to me ; and what has He in His hand ? Oh, it is a gown !\* and how beautiful it is ! What a beautiful gown ! And it is a gown of glory. And it is for me. And, look ! He comes straight to me ! What is He going to do now ? He is going to put it on me Himself. And now He puts it on. . . . Where am I now ? What a beautiful seat ! No, no, it's not a seat. I am sitting on the throne of God, and Jesus sitting beside me !" But let us drop the curtain on the sick-bed of a diseased imagination and a deluded soul ; and let us consider her state upon recovery. I visited her three days after ; she was recovering, but still very weak. She had a succession of visitors ; for she was considered one of the most wonderful cases. I expressed a hope that it was not too much for her. She replied, "I am glad to see so many coming to me ; for I am not so wrapt up in my own glory but that I think it good for others to pray for me, too." The conversation that followed was dark, indeed. She related her

\* A comparison of this with a vision I shall presently relate (p. 64), from a sermon I heard, will show the tendency of these visions to copy from one another.



careless life ; for nine years she had been but twice in a place of worship, the want of good clothing being her north-country reason. Up to the moment of her being first “struck” (she said) she had no thought or care about her soul ; but while she was insensible (on her first being “struck”) she was led through a dark valley, and had a vision of hell, into which she was about to fall ; then the Saviour touched her hand, and she turned and followed him. *From that moment she had peace and happiness.*

I had heard that in every case the burden of sin is felt and bemoaned ; she said nothing of this ; so I put every question that could draw it out, and at last asked her plainly of it ; it was quite evident, and was acknowledged by herself, that she had felt nothing of this. I inquired about her future attendance at public worship ; she replied that when she got proper clothes she would go, but not till then. I told her of the warning in Scripture against the sin of forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ; and I asked would she have kept from Christ when on earth on account of her clothes ; she replied that it would be easy before Him, but it was hard to do it before man. I pointed out to her the trial that she now was brought to, between conformity to the will of Christ and being governed by the fear of man ; she said tartly that *she knew all that*, but she never would go to a house of worship till she had proper clothing to go in. Her countenance was now dark and angry, and she showed very plainly that she wished to have no further conversation with me. I left her with a



sad feeling that her heart was unchanged and untouched ; yet, I have met no case made so much of by ministers and ladies. I fear that great harm is done to persons so deluded. What can be more deplorable than that a soul in this state of darkness should be deluded with the belief in false revelations assuring her own salvation, without one sign or evidence of true repentance ? Had not her own delusive visions set aside from her the teaching of the word of God ?

This case has been spoken of to me by a clergyman, who, I believe, at first thought favourably of it, as a case of imposture. I think this quite unfounded ; yet it is a mistake very likely to be fallen into now. Hysterical delusion is first mistaken for religion ; when found not to be religion, it is then mistaken for imposture : it is neither the one nor the other ; it is the delusion of hysteria. There was in this case, besides other unmistakeable evidence, the predominance of the idea of self, and that strange tendency to deceive, so characteristic of hysteria as it advances ; but I could find nothing to justify the imputation of imposture, in the ordinary sense of the word.

I have heard these visions preached up in a pulpit in Belfast, as direct revelations from God ; and, as a consequence of them, the practice of exorcism : of which practice I know of a fearful instance, which circumstances restrain me from relating.

The preacher had some gifts above the average, with one defect (to be noticed again), which made



him all the fitter for his work. He undertook to tell us incidents which would show us the glorious nature of the work in progress. His whole sermon was confined to this : not one word about Christ or the Scriptures, not one word of religious instruction or religious exhortation did it contain.

He told us first of "a case exceeding in the beauty and abundance of grace all that he had yet witnessed in the six hundred cases he had seen—gifts and graces so abundant that the oldest and most advanced saints of God might well be filled with envy at that young creature." He spoke of her throughout in such language as Roman Catholics apply to the Blessed Virgin, and thus proceeded—"I was called to see Jane ; it had taken four men to hold her, and her shrieks were awful ; she had then been insensible for hours ; on her recovery she foretold that she would go to sleep that night at eight o'clock, and sleep till eight o'clock the following night ; I called several times and found her sleeping ; I was present to watch the result ; at half a minute before eight she lifted a finger, and at eight precisely she awoke.\* She then gave vent to one of those beauteous heavenly prayers, *which none but such as she are worthy to address to God*. When she ceased I asked her had she seen the Lord—for *I knew she had*. 'Oh, yes,' she said, 'and He is beautiful ; and I saw the angels open right

\* I may observe that many persons have the power of awakening at a fixed time. I have it myself to some extent. I see no reason why this power may not be excited in hysteria, as well as the power of utterance and expression.



and left, to let Him pass out to me with His glorious train.”

“But, Jane dear, how did you know it was the Lord?”

“Oh, I knew Him well (with a heavenly smile of glory); for He came to me, and held up His hand, and showed me written across it my own name.”

“But how did you know Him besides?”

“Because I could look on all His glorious train, but He was too bright to look on; and, besides, the angels opened out and let Him pass to me, and He came, bringing in His hand *a suit* (which the speaker explained to be “a robe”—the robe of righteousness), which He pointed at, to show it was for me; and He turned, and passed on, and left me.”

The speaker then observed—“It might not be profitable or edifying for you to tell you what she then said to me further; but I will tell you one thing more. I told her there were some graces in which I myself was still deficient, and I asked her the best means to obtain them; and she replied—‘Ask what you will—believe only that He gives it, and you shall have it; for His promise is sure.’ And now (he said) I will go on to tell you in my next story how gloriously this is since fulfilled in me.

“I was called, two days after, to see a little girl who had been dumb for three weeks. She had been using her tongue in idle and rash talking, and thus God punished her. I remembered Jane’s words, and I told her I would pray for her deliverance if she wished. She expressed assent by signs. I made a young girl,



a recent convert, take one hand, and I took the other. We both knelt down. I struggled and wrestled with the Lord in prayer that the dumb devil which possessed her might go out of her. And Jane's words came true, and the Lord granted my request. For *it was* a dumb devil that possessed her; had you but seen how she struggled, and how she screeched, and how the devil tare her, you would have known that it was a dumb devil that went out of her at the prayer of faith, when, at length, she lay calm and tranquil and joyful on the bed, and spoke and sang the praises of God with the tongue that He had loosed." The third story I was not able to recall, but it was of a similar nature. I cannot express the remarkable power of exciting sympathy with which those stories were told.

Let the Presbyterian Church look to this in time. This is Irving and his prophetesses over again.

When such sermons as these are repeated night after night, is it any wonder that hysterical girls seek to have visions, and mistake them for revelations?

The nature and source of the visions of light so common in hysteria, and now so prevalent in Belfast, may be best illustrated by the disgusting practice adopted by the monks of Mount Athos, to produce in their minds what they supposed to be the light which shone upon Mount Tabor.

The directions of the abbot Simon for producing those visions (supposed to have been written in the 11th century) are still in existence.

"Alone in thy cell, shut thy door, and seat thyself



in a corner ; raise thy mind above all things vain and transitory ; recline thy beard and chin on thy breast ; turn thy eyes and *thy thoughts* toward the middle of thy belly, the region of the navel ; and search the place of the heart, the seat of the soul. At first, all will be dark and comfortless ; but if you persevere day and night, you will feel an ineffable joy ; and no sooner has the soul discovered the place of the heart than it is involved in a mystic and ethereal light.”\*

In the bitter controversy which followed in the 14th century about the nature of “the light of Mount Tabor,” the monks of Mount Athos were never accused of imposture ; and this was right, for they were guilty of none. Anticipating the researches of modern physiology, they had discovered, if not the theory, yet certainly the effect of innervating the great centre of the ganglionic system. They did thus produce in their own minds visions of darkness and of light ; those visions were hysterical ; the fruits of

\* The above translation is Gibbon's : the following is the original :—

Attende ut facias, quod tibi dico, clausis foribus, sedeas in uno aliquo angulo seorsim, mentemque tuam abstrahas ab omni vanitate re fragili, et caduca. Deinde mentum tuum pectori innexum inhæreat, moveasque sensibilem oculum cum tota mente tua in medio ventris, in umbilicum scilicet ; quin etiam constringe attractionem spiritus navium, ut non facile spires ; et inquire intus in visceribus, ut reperiās locum cordis, ubi animi facultates morari solent : et primum quidem invenies tenebras, et crassitudinem minime cedentem ; ubi vero perstiteris, ac dies noctesque in hoc opere consumpseris, o rem admirandam ! percipies lætitiā, quæ nullo puncto temporis intermittit ; quam primum enim mens locum cordis repperit, statim aspicit quæ nunquam sciebat ; siquidem viso aere, qui inter spatium cordis extat, seipsa totam lucidam et discernendam præbet.—Baronius Annal, A.D. 1341, LXXI.



the supremacy of the nervous system of the belly over the mind. Perhaps most of the religious delusions which have since appeared in the world (so far as they were not actually impostures) have the same base origin. The present state of things is not new. The history of religion is full of such things. Dr. Cheyne speaks of those "who have mistaken unequivocal symptoms of hysteria for manifestations of the Holy Spirit."—Essay v., p. 132.

The last-mentioned preacher's manner was instructive: calm, and quiet throughout, he had great power of exciting sympathy, with a total absence of moral power—the two great gifts of an hysterical preacher. I saw both illustrated at the beginning of his discourse. As his deep tremulous tones grew louder, low hysterical moans arose and got more audible. Another approached and tapped him on the shoulder. He stopped, and that other spoke—"I hear sounds which disturb the speaker and prevent his words being heard by others. *Those sounds must cease.*"

And the sounds ceased, as I expected.

The preacher proceeded again, and as he did so the moans arose again. The preacher stopped and said, "I really cannot go on unless you stop; I *entreat* you to *try* and cease."

That instant I foresaw the result. The girl's self-control was overthrown, and yet he had no resource but *to ask her to "try" and use it*. This nature, so strong in its sympathy, was utterly devoid of moral power. I allowed two minutes for the true hysteric cry. The speaker went on, and so did the hysteric moans.



Within the time I limited that unmistakable cry broke forth. The offender was carried off. And now, mark the result. As the speaker proceeded he arrested all attention on his stories ; all listened, like myself, with breathless interest. As this proceeded, all hysterical indications died away in that atmosphere of hysteria. He proceeded to the close, as I expected he would, without producing another "case ;" thus proving that intellectual excitement is a great counteractive.

Ere I leave this subject I may give an amusing illustration. In the same assembly I heard a discourse from an old sailor ; wild excitement, and a running chorus of hysterical sounds, made him almost unintelligible, save at the very end of his discourse, in one touch of professional nature which Dickens might have envied, as he expressed his fervent hope "that this revival would not pass away like the visitor of last summer in the heavens, which I myself traced through nine points of the compass before it disappeared from among us." That night I marked down in my notes, "The old sailor was quite steady on his sea legs when he got on the compass ; had he stuck to that he would verily have extinguished hysteria." A few nights after I heard him again. He hoped those present would be kind enough to listen to an old seafaring man as he told them something of what he had experienced on the sea ; and very kindly they did listen, and very odd stories he told—how he was shipwrecked in Russia, and what a dress he came home in, &c., &c. Would that I could have reported



it all ! The total absence of all idea in his mind of giving any religious application to his stories, made it very characteristic when the old sailor declared the fundamental point of his professional faith (the true mark of a noble old seaman of the mercantile marine), that whatever captain the owners put in command he would ever believe to be competent to navigate the vessel to her port ! As I had logged down, he did extinguish hysteria. "Helms-a-lee" was never better sung ; and "fore-topsail-haul" from a good mate would then have put the ship about. There are useful hints in such things.

Among the fruits of hysteria as a means of religious revival, I must notice the insanity which it has already produced. In a very brief space of time, and in a very limited circle of inquiry, I saw or heard of more than twenty cases. I fear a little more inquiry would have extended it largely. Some of these cases were of a shocking character.

In one lodging in Belfast lived a man, his wife, and daughter ; all three were "struck ;" the father is now raving in the lunatic asylum ; the wife is a hopeless idiot ; and the daughter, from grief and horror, nearly as bad as either.

I was taken to see a heart-rending case of a very interesting girl verging on insanity from a practice I have noticed above ; but some faint hope of her recovery restrains me from telling that fearful story.

Some seven or eight cases were in the lunatic asylum, several of whom I saw ; some of these had been



insane before, and were now brought back to that condition ; one woman after seventeen years sanity. Some had never been insane, nor showed any tendency to it, before. One of these is a fearful case. I heard her history in her own village, and learned the nature of her madness in the asylum. She had a young family, and was nursing an infant ; she was a good wife and mother until she was made hysterical ; she heard it roared that all things must be made new ; women in that state are apt to mistake what is said, so she burned all her little children's clothes, expecting new ones ; she then attempted the life of her husband. Her insanity has taken the fearful form of the lowest degradation of woman's madness. " This form (says Feuchtersleben\*) is combined in a singular manner with the preceding (religious delusion). .

. . . *The transition into this mixed form is mostly occasioned by hysteria.*" I have to veil a horrible subject ; would that it might be so understood by preachers as to make their blood curdle at the thought of trifling with woman's moral nature by inducing hysteria.

Are these the fruits of the right preaching of the Gospel of Him who said, " Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest?"

Anything which I can say must depend for its weight upon the opportunities of observation which I have had. I cannot now withhold anything which can give it weight.

\* Medical Psychology. Sydenham Edition, p. 281.



During some years I was employed, for two or three months at a time during some hours each night, in bringing to the women on the streets of London the appeal of Christ to such as they. Such employment leads to a terrible kind of knowledge. I learned of a system of temptation of inconceivable villainy as to its objects, rendered happily imaginary in its especial sinfulness by the villainy of its agents. Much of my practical acquaintance with hysteria was gathered in this employment. No class of women is so subject to hysterical influences ; I have found none more accessible to an appeal to religious feeling ; but in a great number of cases, I have found that awakened religious feeling in them will irresistibly become hysterical. I always found such cases the most hopeless ; and the reason is evident : the destruction of the last remnants of moral self-control and moral resolution cannot be a source or a means of reformation ; but rather destroys the last hope of it.

As the result of experience of this kind, I feel bound to give the most solemn warning, and to enter the most solemn protest, against proceedings which fill the streets of Belfast at late hours of the night with hysterical young women, in company with hysterical young men. I dare not enforce my warning, lest I reveal the means of incredible outrage. In the name of all that is sacred in woman, I call for a reform of what every policeman in Belfast sees to be indecent and wrong ; but of which few know the danger as I do. This consideration alone affords grounds sufficient for banishing hysteria for ever from religious revivals.



Some sixty years ago, "religion" was the popular account of persons becoming insane, and that notion was then countenanced by many physicians. Since that day the study of insanity and the treatment of the insane has progressed like the railroad or the telegraph ; and mark the result. Hear Dr. Cheyne, one of the first who spoke out :—"We firmly believe that the Gospel, received simply, *never, since it was first preached, produced a single case of insanity.* . . . We have granted that fanaticism and superstition have caused insanity, *as well they may*—nay, derangement of the mind may often have been caused by the terror of the law ; but by the Gospel—by a knowledge of and trust in Jesus—NEVER."\*

I have lately conversed with three physicians, eminent in that branch of their profession, and they all agree that the religion which God has framed for man cannot do injury to man's nature. I have also read the works of some of the most distinguished men in this profession, and I find the same great truth acknowledged by all.

Do we not all glory in this, as the noblest homage which the march of true science, most beneficent to man, has borne to his Maker ?

And can the Gospel of Christ, truly preached, produce hysteria in woman now, any more than when it was preached by Christ and His Apostles ? I firmly believe that experience and science will yet answer this question as it has already been answered

\* Essays on partial derangement of the mind, in supposed connection with religion.—Essay v., p. 144.



respecting insanity, and that it will come to be received as a settled truth that the Gospel of Christ, taught and embraced as He wills, is the most effectual preservative against hysteria.

All the evidence I have been able to find goes directly to prove that the bodily affection is connected with true conversion only accidentally. An elder or office-bearer in a place of worship where the bodily affection has most prevailed said to me, "You would not find a case of a person struck, who had not been mourning for sin and praying for God's mercy through the Saviour for days before." Personal observation, and the testimony of others, oblige me to believe in exceptions ; but all the evidence I have found confirms the general fact ; and in every exception which I have been able to examine or inquire of, the person "struck" without any previous sense of sin and cry for mercy *appeared to be unconverted on recovery*. Without denying that there may have been conversions during this illness, the above evidence leads us to believe generally, that where true conversion has taken place, it *preceded* the bodily affection ; for surely the first godly sorrow for sin, with the first prayer of faith for mercy through Christ, is the first fruits of a converted heart.

The possibility of separating hysterical affections from revival of religion has been demonstrated in America. I had lately the privilege of conversing with a distinguished physician, the head of a great lunatic asylum in America : he had full experience of



American revivals, having had a large number of patients from them. He stated that all former "revivals" in America were attended with bodily affections far exceeding in extravagance what we witness now, but that the last revival had been wholly free from it; and yet, or rather *therefore*, that last revival was most effectual for good. In reply to my inquiry as to the cause, he replied that all right minded persons, having had experience of the evil of the bodily affections, "had frowned it down;" and he attributed the result chiefly to a general agreement that all revival meetings should be held by daylight, and be of short duration. Thus the good was obtained free from the evil. Such evidence of the practicability of separating religious revival from hysterical excitement is of the highest value, and most encouraging.

Ladies and men of Belfast, I have appealed to you before, and now I show you the means: will you not join against the evil which disfigures the good, and "frown it down?"

On this subject I cannot speak from personal observation, but I have heard of several places in the north of Ireland in which this course has already been adopted with the happiest effects. I trust that those who have personal knowledge of such facts will make them public for the instruction of others.

I have met some cases in which persons on recovery did appear to enjoy a feeling of comfort and peace, which, by God's word, they were entitled to before, but which they did not before enjoy. This is all the benefit that I can attribute to the bodily



affection in any case I had opportunity to examine. Those were cases of persons previously under a system which did not sufficiently cultivate emotional feeling in religion.

I cannot conclude from this that it is desirable to cultivate emotional feeling in a way which endangers the subversion and degradation of emotional feeling itself ; which leads to delusive visions, and to false confidence ; and which in so many cases proves destructive of reason.

Having endeavoured to expose a great evil, because it seeks the perversion of a great good, I have to offer what suggestions I can for the remedy.

In the first place, considering the difference and opposition between true emotional feeling and hysteria, and the counteractive effect of intellectual engagement, and of feeling for *others*, we ought (1) to seek to engage people's intellect on religious truth ; (2) to cultivate religious emotional feeling in a right direction—towards Christ and towards *others* ; (3) to direct such emotional feeling into action according to the will of Christ ; for indulged emotion, terminating in itself, induces diseased "self-feeling."

Let us take as our example the appeals of Christ to the emotional feeling of His hearers. He wept Himself over the fall of Jerusalem, and at the grave of Lazarus ; for the miseries of those that will perish, and for the sorrows of His children. Such tears as He would teach us to shed will never do harm to our nature.



What can appeal to our emotional feeling like His love towards us as shown upon the cross? What comes home to the heart in every trial, great and small, like the thought that He took our nature upon Him and suffered all Himself, that we might feel that He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and feel for us?

What act ever appealed to the hearts of young and old, of children and parents, like His, when He took the little children in His arms, and laid His hands on them and blessed them?

Let us study the Scriptures to learn the true religious use of emotional feeling in man; and with that guidance let us cultivate it carefully, and appeal to it boldly. Our greatest power for good will ever be to lay open to men the secret feelings and cravings of their souls, and to show them the supply in Him in whom all fulness dwells.

If we do this we can satisfy, better than any others can, the real cravings of our nature towards God. If we do not, we abandon at the present time our people to those who do but abuse emotional feeling in religion to its subversion and destruction; and we shall reap the fruits of a terrible reaction, plunging us into greater coldness and deadness towards God. Away for ever with the notion that our emotional feelings are not meant for His service, or that we can ever be truly religious without the feelings of our hearts being engaged in our service towards God. In one sense all errors are but reactions against their opposites; and in this sense the abuse of our emo-



tional feeling in religion (which is indeed the very craving of our hearts towards God) is but the reproof and the consequence of our neglect of it. Let us not fear to consecrate to His service the noblest faculties that He has given us : only let us do it as Christ has taught us ; in this endeavour, under this guidance, lies our only way of safety and success in extricating souls from the deceits of men, and leading them direct to Christ.

The sympathetic power of true emotional feeling is perhaps equal to the power of sympathy in hysteria, and is undoubtedly a powerful agent for good. I cannot but connect with this the real good in this movement, and hence my hope respecting it.

In the means which we may adopt for promoting "revival of religion," great caution appears to be necessary. Nothing but the Spirit of God can truly revive us : the work must be His, or it will come to nought. Any attempt on our part to assume His office will at once lead to hysterical results. Fervent prayer from earnest hearts is our first means.

The opening of prayer meetings for the public generally is liable to dangers against which we have carefully to guard. Under present circumstances, the emissaries of hysteria, and hysteria itself, will seek such prayer meetings, to turn them to its purpose. The control over them should therefore be carefully and prudently preserved. The services of our Church have in this respect an advantage which no other meetings can have ; and if emotional feeling be duly cultivated in them, may be at least as



effective as any other. But it is impossible to lay down general rules. I can only suggest the general caution that is necessary.

The services of the Church have an advantage above all others in the part assigned to the people; coldness is not in those services, though it often is in the minister and the people. The litany said with earnestness, and responded to with hearty voices, has a fitness for the purpose of warming hearts which no other service possesses. Why should we not make this our special service, urging on all who come that they will find that their own hearts will warm when their own tongues are loosed in prayer and praise? Success in such an attempt would soon revive the warmth and fervour of our public devotions. In the prayer before a following address or sermon, the clergyman might, with great propriety, point out the objects of prayer, and generally those for whom special prayer should be made. The address would naturally close with prayer for the pouring out of God's Spirit on the hearts of ourselves and others.

Our co-operation with other religious bodies is also a question requiring great caution, but not admitting of any general solution. I desire myself to co-operate with all Christians so far as they walk in the way of Christ; and of that way I know no rule or limitation save the will of Christ, as gathered from the Scriptures. I can never acknowledge as lawful or right the divisions of His people, because Paul has warned us to avoid them that make divisions (Rom. xvi. 17), and Christ Himself has prayed for a visible unity of



His people, such as the world itself could not fail to recognise (John xvii. 20, 21). Admitting that nobody of Christians is free from blame in this respect, I yet think the rules of Christian duty clear, and that, according to the word of God, we should all be members of one Church; and I think the rules of Scripture and the facts of history are sufficient to demonstrate which it is in these countries. Yet I am taught in Scripture to rejoice when the name of Christ is preached (Philip. i. 18). In this I can join hand in hand with any, so far as I may without violating the will of Christ Himself. I could join hand and heart with any who profess to believe in Christ, to rescue religious emotional feeling in man from subversion and destruction. I think the especial duty of the Church at this time is to mark the line between emotional feeling and hysteria; to cultivate the one and to exclude the other. I could not kneel down in prayer with those who devote themselves to the propagation of hysteria, to ask for a common blessing as on a common object in this matter. Their path and ours are wholly divergent, if not opposite: any such union as this must paralyze the Church in her most important duty in the present crisis.

It appears to me that the treatment of the hysterical part of this movement lies apart from any question of sects—it is common to all who desire to call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ from their hearts. I have lived among the Presbyterians of Ulster, and have cultivated with them the most friendly relations. I have no desire and no intention to charge on them



as a Church or as a body what I so strongly condemn. I have no doubt that thousands of Presbyterians, and hundreds of Presbyterian ministers, do condemn these things as I do, and will condemn them still more. But that is not enough, until they join actively in putting down practices in their own body which are now disgracing them. If the Synod of Ulster regard the character of their body, they ought, for the present at least, to close some houses of religious excitement in Belfast; and publicly to discountenance hysteria.

On one point the clergy and others ought to be prepared, viz., where an hysterical cry breaks out in church or at a prayer meeting, against the wish of the clergyman. I have already stated how easily this may happen, and how many more may immediately take up that cry.

It is most important that the clergy should be aware that they have the control of this. No fact is more certain than this, that the hysterical cry must absolutely yield to the exercise of calm and quiet authority. If such a cry arise, let the clergyman stop his discourse, and say instantly in the calm voice of one who knows that he must be obeyed, "I will not let you cry." The words must be thus absolute: anything of the nature of an appeal or an entreaty will probably give increased vigour to the cry. In church a clergyman might, perhaps, add—"This is the house of God, and we must be quiet before Him;" but, generally speaking, anything added to the absolute words only introduces some possible occasion



of failure. Every expression of sympathy must be strictly avoided during the paroxysm. That cry once stopped *may* break out again and again; subdued each time in the same way, it will finally cease; and this process will, in itself, check the tendency of others to imitate it. In all this the clergyman must preserve his own calmness and self-possession, and must believe in the certainty of success. And so he may; for though when such cries have been long indulged and have become habitual they are difficult to manage, yet even then success is certain to one who has self-possession and self-reliance; and where the cry arises for the first time, which is most likely in the case I speak of, success is easy. I heard no cry in Belfast which I could not have immediately subdued. I thought on going there that I might have been useful in this way, but I was told by those of the clergy there to whom I offered my services that I would not be admitted into any house in Belfast for such a purpose—that would be quenching the Spirit. I found that this was true; and in public assemblies, where the object is to produce such cries, the attempt was more hopeless still. Absolute authority over all present is essential, in order to control counteracting influences. In the pulpit this authority is possessed, and success is merely dependant on calmness and self-possession.

I learned some facts in Belfast which illustrate this. I have stated a case in which one man said, "Those sounds must cease," and succeeded; in which another said, "Try and stop," and aggravated



the cry. I learned of a case in which a girl at a prayer meeting screamed and fell ; another girl ran to her, but only fell upon her, screaming too. The clergyman, though taking a more favourable view than I do of the bodily affections, did not want to have them in his prayer meeting. Though not aware of his own absolute power, yet, by a happy instinct, with perhaps a little feeling of annoyance, he said he really would not submit to it, and they must stop. Both cries stopped at once, and he had no more of it. These were probably first attacks. A case occurred, too, in a church, and for a moment produced great excitement ; but the clergyman, though by no means aware of his power, was calm and prompt, and succeeded in stopping it. I have heard of other cases which prove the same thing.

Generally, in the treatment of hysterical cases, medical advice is necessary, especially to ascertain if there be any cause in organic disease ; but medicine cannot stop the cry ; that can be dealt with only in the way I have stated ; by perseverance it can be cured ; and in uncomplicated cases, however violent they may appear, all other symptoms will probably decline in proportion as the cry is subdued. It is easier to succeed in a case in which there is a violent cry than in some cases in which there is no cry at all. The peculiar movements of the hands, head, &c., and the distressed rolling of the eyes (as if in search of visions), will generally yield to an injunction to be quiet, from a voice which has mastered the cry. But in all cases speak as little as possible. I have no



doubt that I could have put a stop, by a few words, to the vision at which I was present, if the admiring audience could have been removed. In this revival hysteria as yet appears in a very manageable form. Let the clergy take comfort in this, and be ready to repress it with calmness.

It is unquestionable that there now exists among the mill girls of Belfast, and their families, a great amount of suffering, through physical prostration from hysteria in connection with religion ; and this prostration is often of long continuance.

I can conceive of nothing which constitutes a greater claim upon the sympathies of those who feel for religious delusion and deception : nor of any demand for temporal relief which requires greater care in its administration ; for I have seen that mischief of the most dangerous kind is done by the indiscriminating charity of visitors attracted to Belfast by this movement.

One fact has struck me forcibly, that in the multitude of cases I have heard of—even those which have ended in insanity—I have not been able to find any instance of the more terrible forms of hysteria which I have myself witnessed. An eminent member of the medical profession has answered my inquiry for a solution of this by attributing it to the great difference of mental cultivation in the lower and upper classes of society. Feeling assured that there is great force in this, it still seems not to embrace the whole cause. The worst forms of hysteria appear to



require for their development time and habit, and, above all, opportunity and leisure for indulgence of hysterical feeling. In ordinary circumstances, the mill girl must endeavour to return to her work as soon as possible ; she cannot afford to indulge hysterical feeling as her superiors can ; and perhaps this is one cause of her comparative exemption, so far, from its most frightful consequences. This affords ground for calling on the upper classes to take steps to arrest the evil ; for if hysteria should appear among their daughters, it will produce more terrible effects.

But it is here that the indiscriminate charity of strangers is productive of the greatest evil ; *they* see only the “ most remarkable cases ; ” *i.e.*, those already “ struck ” *many times*, and now acquiring the “ habit ” and the morbid desire of indulging it. To these *only* is given, what I cannot call charity, but truly the means of developing the worst forms of hysteria. I knew of one girl who received in one day, *from her daily levee*, at least eleven shillings ; of course, she had repeated fits, each worse than the former, and was trying to attain to something higher : this is the morbid nature of hysteria.

If we add to this, that original cases are now of comparatively rare occurrence, and that most of the cases are now habitual recurrences, there does appear great danger of the development of the worst forms of hysteria, which might then too probably become epidemic, like the simpler forms now existing.

This state of things does appear to call for a remedy.



If things have not greatly altered for the better since I was in Belfast, there must be a considerable number of mill girls greatly needing relief. It appears to me that on every ground such relief should be given.

But I think that none but medical men could properly administer it ; because—

(1) Many of these cases absolutely require medical treatment ; now sedulously excluded.

(2) A medical man only can tell when relief should cease, and the girl return to her work.

(3) Though in ordinary cases, in the upper classes of society, the visits of the physician should be as seldom as possible, and the demands of the patient for his presence should never be yielded to ; yet in the present state of things in Belfast “medical treatment of cases” would be the most powerful moral instrumentality that could be brought to bear on patients themselves, and on the people generally.

I venture to suggest to the mill owners in Belfast, and to all who sympathise in the deplorable results to humanity of a religious revival, good and glorious in its object, but sadly perverted to evil, that such a fund for relief should be established in Belfast, strictly under medical administration ; and that all strangers and visitors should be earnestly entreated to give relief only through such a fund. I venture to hope that such a system would help to bring “the physical phenomena” to a safe and speedy conclusion.

The same suggestion may, perhaps, become useful elsewhere.



In the interest of science and religion alike, it is much to be wished that these "cases" were more often subjected to medical examination. There is, unfortunately, a universal desire in Belfast to exclude the physician from such cases; a desire, perhaps, too readily acquiesced in. I fear there will be few medical reports upon a subject so interesting to the medical and clerical professions. I heartily wish also that the medical instruction necessary for the clergy on this subject should be afforded to them by members of the medical profession, who alone are truly competent to give it. But I believe it to be necessary that the clergy should first be awakened to a sense of the value of such instruction, and the necessity of seeking for it. When so sought for, I believe from my own experience that it will be cordially afforded. My task is only to lead to the desire for it: and in the meantime to give to my brethren that which they have especially asked me for, some light, dim as it may be, on the state of things which they have to deal with at the present moment.

In what I have written of hysteria as an agent in religious revival, I have confined myself strictly to what I have personally witnessed in Belfast. If it should be read by others where the hysterical element has not yet been developed to the same extent, may it prove a warning to them how they encourage it, and how they ought to repress it.

I desire earnestly, before I conclude, to enter my protest against any who may attempt to argue from



what I have written that there is no real good in the present movement in the north of Ireland. I have written nothing that can support such an argument. I see a great work for good as plainly as I see a great evil. That thousands who never thought before of religion should think of it earnestly now, is a great good. That there should be an opportunity of proclaiming the way of salvation, and a readiness and desire to hear it, such as we have never known before, is a great good. I expose the evil with any power I possess, merely to purify the good. If any should argue from what I have written that this movement is wholly evil, there are facts enough to confute them ; and it may be useful that I should here declare my deliberate conviction, that those who seek to deny or to discourage the good in this movement are acting as much against the best interests of man as those whose perversions and abuses of that movement I have undertaken fearlessly to expose.

May God in His mercy over-rule and govern all to the praise of His name, and the salvation of many souls. May He guide us into the knowledge necessary for promoting and making known His truth. May every earthen vessel be broken in His hand, that His light alone may shine !

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## APPENDIX.

Since concluding the above sheets, I have received the following letter from the Archbishop of Derry; and as the facts related are of great interest, and are authenticated by persons on whom full reliance may be placed, I have obtained permission to publish the letter here.

My Dear Archbishop, — I understand that you are preparing for publication your views and experience on the present temperance revival. This I am very happy to hear, as I know from our mutual friends, that you have taken particular pains to make yours a thoroughly and personally-impregnated gift to the cause of the time, as far as they had to do with themselves at the period of your visit to the North. It has occurred to me, however, that it might be an interesting and useful if you were furnished by an acquaintance with the particulars of a new and startling phase of the movement which has recently exhibited itself in this district.

On my return from a three days' absence from home the week before last, I was informed that



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“Dunboe, Coleraine, August 15.

“MY DEAR ARCHDEACON,—I understand that you are preparing for publication your views and experience on the present remarkable revival. This I am very happy to hear, as I know from our mutual friend, ———, that you have taken particular pains to make yourself thoroughly and personally acquainted with the facts of the case, as far as they had developed themselves at the period of your visit to the North. It has occurred to me, however, that it might be interesting and useful if you were furnished by an eye-witness with the particulars of a new and startling phase of the movement which has recently exhibited itself in this district.

On my return from a three days' absence from home the week before last, I was informed that



several persons in a remote and mountainous part of the parish, and who had all been previously "struck"—some of them repeatedly—had been suddenly affected with loss of speech, sight, hearing, &c. I immediately rode over and found no less than eight persons in different stages of the affection. One boy of about 17 had recovered his speech, but all the rest, young females, were still dumb. They all exhibited, however, remarkable acuteness of perception with the faculties which remained unaffected—making earnest and very intelligible signs, expressive of their great happiness and of the inward manifestations from above which they supposed themselves receiving. Each and all believed themselves to have been translated to heaven, and to be under direct inspiration from God. Turning the ear or the eye upward, or holding up the Bible at arm's length, they would select a passage of Scripture, which they would hand to some bystander to read, as specially pointed out by the Divine Spirit. Several of them could not read themselves, and these were the persons who chiefly acted in this manner.

The duration of these affections appeared to be arbitrary, but both their approach and their cessation were always, I believe, accurately foretold by the patients. They would mention the hour at which they would lose their speech, &c., and while under the affection would signify on their fingers the number of hours which would elapse before their restoration. As the time approached, they commonly drew the point of the forefinger of one hand gradually along



that of the other, and on reaching the point of the latter as the period expired, they suddenly burst out with some exclamation, usually a text of Scripture. The deafness and blindness generally occurred during the absence of speech, and for short intervals only. I did not see any cases of the latter, and am not aware if any or what tests were applied to ascertain their reality. Indeed, the friends and bystanders are so persuaded of the miraculous nature of the affections that they would resent any attempt to test them. They even, in some instances, object to their being questioned.

On the following Sunday an elderly woman, who had been "struck" some time since, left my church during the service, and on reaching her house close by became speechless, and continued so at intervals for two days, occasionally losing also the power of her hands. A nearly similar case occurred the next morning to another elderly woman while at work in the fields.

On Monday evening I again saw several of the cases first referred to. Most of them had recovered their faculties ; but one who continued speechless had likewise lost the power of one side, and appeared to be suffering much pain and uneasiness. On that occasion I found another young girl who was deprived of speech and occasionally of hearing. While I sat by, the appointed time for her restoration having arrived, she suddenly exclaimed, "Come unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved ;" and then, in answer to an inquiry, stated that she would have the



use of her speech for five hours, which, I was afterwards told, proved to be the case. Immediately after her speech returned as above, she was able to walk a quarter of a mile to a schoolhouse where I held a lecture, and sat out the service apparently quite well.

On Thursday last, accompanied by two clerical friends (—— ——— and —— ———), both of whom you know to be men of piety and judgment, I again visited several of these persons, and two others—Presbyterians. We saw in one house *four* persons speechless, and one who, while we were conversing with her, suddenly lost the power of her right hand and arm. A woman who was standing by immediately placed it in a sling. We were allowed to handle the limb, and found it of the natural heat, and perfectly pliant and flexible in the joints. Most of the particulars which I have already related were repeated on this occasion. The passages selected for us, as from divine revelation, were, as nearly as I can recollect—Psalm 2, Isaiah i. 1–20, Jeremiah i. 1–10, Numbers xvi. 36, Job xvi., Revelations xxii. The lad already referred to was able to speak, but not very communicative, and rather reluctant to be questioned. He professed to have been in spirit several times in heaven, and to have seen Christ, and several deceased persons whom he had known, and whom I understand he named to others, though not to us. He also, I am told, named other persons whom he had seen in torment. Whether this was a delusion or an imposition we could not, of course, determine; but our general impression was



that (with *perhaps* this exception and one other) there was no ground for suspecting fraud or imposition. We came (I think unanimously) to the conclusion that the visions and prophesyings were the vagaries of over-heated imaginations—that the selection of chapters, though supposed by the persons themselves, and by all around, to be divinely directed, was quite random and fortuitous, occasionally appropriate, and more often completely otherwise—that the temporary suspension of the various faculties was of a convulsive and spasmodic character; and that the predictions as to seizure and recovery were referable to the mysterious action of the mind on the body and nerves, so well known in hysterical and cataleptic cases, but so little understood and so difficult to be explained. At the same time, there was, in several of the cases, much that was pleasing in the apparent piety and resignation of their demeanour.

Several other cases occurred in this neighbourhood which I did not see, but which were accompanied by supposed revelations. One of these *ενεργήματα* foretold the eternal destiny of several living persons. Another openly denounced certain individuals prominently connected with the movement as hypocrites, worldly minded, &c. Since then a girl who had had 70 seizures, sometimes 7 in one day, lost her speech and the use of her limbs. During the last few days, however, these strange symptoms have greatly abated. Most of the persons affected have recovered, and one of them, a girl of about 16, enjoyed greatly my Annual Sunday School fete on Friday last, when



she had the full use of ears and tongue, of hands and feet, and I may add, of teeth also.

“The effect of these cases on the very ignorant has been, I fear, for the present at least, to confirm them in the belief of the divine character of the whole movement with all its accompaniments ; but with the more enlightened and sober it has, I have reason to think, the opposite result, and is opening their eyes to the danger of encouraging the extravagances which have so marred the amount of real good which was being done.

“Pray excuse the length of this letter, but well attested facts seem to me to be of such importance at the present juncture that I thought it better to give them to you in detail. You are at liberty to make any use of them that your own judgment may dictate.

“Believe me,

“Very faithfully yours,

“ARTHUR W. EDWARDS.”

This very interesting statement of facts rests on the testimony of three witnesses, whose character and ability command confidence. I am fortunate in being able to give it for comparison with the explanation I have offered.

It illustrates the imitative character of hysteria. All these cases took the form which the first case took.

The dumbness is perfectly accounted for by the hysteric affection of the nerves of the throat.



The blindness may be accounted for either on the same ground, or by hysteric action extending to that part of the sensorium which receives the nerves of sight.

The visions and revelations are due to hysterical suppression of the powers of will and reason, leaving the operation of the cerebrum and sensorium as uncontrolled as in dreams.

Temporary paralysis is no uncommon effect of hysteria. It may even become permanent.

There is but one fact stated in this letter which is unusual in hysteria, viz., deafness. I have not seen nor read of, nor previously heard of, a case of deafness from hysteria. Yet such a case is far from being unaccountable. It is common in hysteria to witness states of suspension of all the faculties, or states of mental abstraction, in which the patient does not hear ; but these are not properly cases of deafness. If a person giving attention, and trying to hear, were really unable to hear, this would be deafness. But nothing is more easily pretended ; such a case should not be admitted without being carefully tested ; and it appears from the above letter that no such testing was permitted in these cases.

It does not seem impossible that hysteric affection of a portion of the sensorium should cause temporary deafness ; but when so unusual a phenomenon becomes prevalent, a knowledge of hysteria suggests another solution. In the cases above mentioned, repeated fits had occurred ; in such cases there is often developed a morbid desire to deceive, and to



pretend diseases which do not exist. Dr. Carter's statement of this may afford a useful warning: "When once a young woman has discovered her power to produce a hysteric paroxysm at will ; and has exercised it for her own gratification, without regard to the anxiety or annoyance it may entail on her friends, a very remarkable effect is speedily produced upon her whole mental and moral nature. *The pleasure of receiving unwonted sympathy, once tasted, excites a desire for it that knows no bounds ;* and when the fits have become familiar occurrences, and cease to excite attention, their effect is often heightened by the *designed imitation of some other disease*. Then, in the words of Dr. Carpenter, 'pleasure is morbidly associated with many ideas which ordinarily excite pain. The girl, though originally amiable and disinterested, derives a strange satisfaction from the sight of the anxiety, and even the distress of her friends ; and though previously truthful, enjoys the idea of deceiving them.' Those who have never witnessed this strange mental perversion could scarcely be made to credit the extent to which it is often carried, or the nature of the proceedings that it will often prompt."\* I have seen this formerly ; and I saw a good deal of this moral perversion in Belfast. After a few attacks, these young women, receiving unfortunately an amount of mischievous sympathy to which they are totally unused, will not easily

\* Carter on the Influence of Education on Diseases of the Nervous System, p. 224.



submit to being outdone by others. If they hear of deafness in others, they will be deaf. I cannot look on this as ordinary imposture. It is the diseased moral action of hysteria. The chief censure should fall on those who first seek to produce hysteria, and then stimulate its worst propensities by invoking for it a morbid and mischievous sympathy.

The foretelling of the duration of dumbness, &c., or the time of recovery, is easily explained. The patient has heard of this means of exciting admiration and sympathy; a morbid desire is excited to do the same. That desire does itself induce the hysteric action, and can equally determine its cessation. This notion of fixing a time for personal changes in oneself is neither new nor uncommon. I have read of several instances in medical books; and of some instances, too, in which the performance, though perfectly sincere, was entirely baffled by altering the clock.

It seems very desirable that the clergy should carefully observe and note down their observation of cases.

In some cases the observation of hysterical symptoms can only be made by persons previously conversant with them. The record of observed facts is always useful; but such notes as "no hysterical symptoms present," from one who has not been trained to observe them, are of no value.

The points which the clergy can most usefully observe are perhaps these:—

(1) How hysterical affections have been introduced



into a district : whether by emissaries ? or in what other way ?

(2) Whether a work for good was in existence before the introduction of such affections ?

(3) The proportion of persons on whom a real impression for good seems to have been made, with, and without, such affections.

(4) The cause or origin of the hysterical affection in the individual ; whether by sermons, and of what character ; whether by dwelling on thoughts in private, and what thoughts ; or whether caused by sympathy and expectation from hearing of other cases. In all this acute examination is necessary ; for patients do not often themselves see the real cause.

(5) Whether the work of grace preceded, arose in, or followed the bodily affection. This requires careful discrimination between the erroneous estimate which persons make of their own religious feelings, and that repentance and faith to which, even from its origin, belong the promises of Christ, but of which few realise the enjoyment until afterwards.

(6) The value, as subsequently proved by works, of the bodily affection when not preceded by repentance. In connection with this, it is especially valuable to have noted the expressions used during the bodily affection, and the phenomena which appeared in it.

(7) The effect of visions and revelations in producing greater or less attention to the Word of God, and in producing a teachable or unteachable spirit.

(8) Whether the sense of sin, and of pardon re-



ceived, can be subsequently described in such a way as to lead to the conclusion that it has really been experienced ; or whether there remains only a vague sense of *some kind* of distress and relief. It is important here to guard against being deceived by a few set phrases easily learned. The existence of true and active repentance for past besetting sins is here essentially important.

The preceding pages may suggest other topics of inquiry ; and a record of facts and phenomena will always be valuable.

I shall be most grateful to any who may kindly supply me with information.

I recommend for perusal a tract lately published, giving an account, from Presbyterian authority, of an American Revival : "Bodily Effect of Religious Excitement. (Reprinted from the "Princeton Review.") Price one penny. Armagh : J. M'Watters; Belfast : Phillips & Sons. 1859." This tract is worthy of being read. I give a few extracts which bear upon the views I have proposed.

"As far as we could observe, the bodily exercise *never preceded*, but always followed upon the mind's being deeply impressed with a sense of some divine truth."—(p. 6).

"Preaching, *especially* of the didactic (that is, *teaching*) character, was considered a *great hindrance* to the progress of the revival (*i. e.*, to the hysterical affection). This sentiment was not confined exclusively to the populace, for some of the leading and most popular preachers gave way to the opinion that



*such kind of preaching* was rather an interruption to the great *work that was then going on.*—(p. 7). This is quite true ; nothing interferes with hysteria like *teaching*, when it is listened to.

“After all these novelties left us, the church, like one enfeebled and exhausted, sank down into formality and apathy. . . . In her wisdom and experience, we believe such things will never find favour and encouragement again.”—(p. 16).

The following passages are from a statement by a physician given in the tract :—

“Their discourses are generally passionate addresses, *first*, to the *fears*, and secondly, to the *sympathies* of their hearers.”—(p. 21).

“Persons always attacked by this affection in churches *where it is encouraged*, will be perfectly calm in other churches *where it is discouraged*, however affecting may be the service, and however great the mental excitement.”—(p. 22).

This evidence, from Presbyterian and American experience, confirming the conclusions I had arrived at, has reached me since the foregoing pages were printed. I recommend the tract to those who are interested in the subject.

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## APPENDIX TO THE THIRD EDITION.

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It has been my desire to write in the cause of Truth, as the sole object ; and to submit to correction any error I may have committed. I, therefore, feel bound to give impartially the substance of some communications which I have received, tending either to confirm or to correct the views I have put forward. The publication of a Second Edition, necessarily ordered by the Publishers without communication with me, on the fourth day after the publication of the first, did not afford me such an opportunity.

In pages 24 and 25 I ventured to give a sketch of the nervous system. An authority to which I implicitly submit has pronounced some of it questionable ; I have, therefore, withdrawn the whole passage to which the censure applied, and have substituted for it a statement taken entirely from Dr. Carter, without a word of my own. If that censure had extended to the conclusions which I subsequently draw, those conclusions should have been equally withdrawn. But as the censure was not extended to those conclusions, they remain.

In page 26 I committed the mistake of attributing all hysteric expression to the eighth pair of nerves.



I cannot account for falling into such an error (save by the haste with which I had to perform so anxious a task); for I had been better taught. I have corrected myself in this Edition by not attempting to say what nerves are affected. It is enough for us to know that the nerves which give natural expression to emotional feeling are unnaturally deranged in their action in hysteria. This apology applies also to an alteration made in the first paragraph of page 44.

I have received a communication from an eminent physician and kind friend, which I feel bound to give, on the following passage in page 20 :—" All the cases I saw in Belfast were clearly and unmistakably hysterical ; and, as far as it is possible [for me] to judge from description, so was every case which has been described to me."

I think it is on this that my able friend has observed, "I wish also to say that I am not quite satisfied in my own mind that *all*\* the cases of bodily affection properly belong to the class hysteria or catalepsy. They are undoubtedly instances of disease, and probably of some nervous disease ; but the description differs so widely from the ordinary forms of hysteria, and the persons in whom the seizures have occurred have so little of the hysterical diathesis, that at present I am forced to look upon them as something different."

Here I wish to explain that it never was my intention to be guilty of the presumption of saying

\* The *Italics* are marked in the original.



that *all* the bodily affections *in the revival movement* are hysterical. I have throughout endeavoured to confine myself strictly to what I actually witnessed ; in this place only I necessarily included those cases "which have been described to me." Understanding, I think, what description of cases prevent my friend admitting all to be hysterical, I did not see one of these cases, nor did I in my inquiries hear such a case described by an eye-witness. It would appear from this that non-hysterical affections were exceptional in Belfast during my visit there ; and if the great majority of cases be hysterical, there was ground sufficient for what I have written. I have altered a few other expressions which may have seemed to assume that every case, wherever occurring, was hysterical.

Of the hysterical diathesis as a medical question, I, of course, do not presume to say a word. But I may observe that it here seems to involve a question common to all inductive philosophy, viz., how far, or in what cases, any amount of induction can establish a negative limitation. I believe that no hysterical diathesis would embrace myself ; yet in trying circumstances I have felt an absolute conviction that I *must* either succeed in controlling frenzy or the agonized expectation of instant death, or else must yield to the hysterical influence of the patient, producing in myself some undefinable effect. I was forcibly reminded of this feeling during the prayer, and its accompaniments, which I have described at page 46. Without presuming to enter on any medical question, but merely on the general ground of inductive philosophy,



I doubt if any amount of deduction from ordinary cases of hysteria could determine with certainty what form of bodily affection hysteric influence, emanating from masses of persons, could not produce in myself, if self-control were to fail me.

The same kind and judicious friend whose letter I have quoted has also, at my request, favoured me with observations upon subjects not medical, and I gladly avail myself of acute and Christian criticisms which, perhaps, express the opinions of many others.

“Even if I were to adopt your view, that all the cases were hysteria and nothing more,\* I think a wide distinction ought to be drawn between the attempt to propagate this disease deliberately, on the part of those who know that it is only a disease produced by natural causes and explicable on ordinary principles ; and those who believe, as many, I believe, ignorantly do, that it is disease connected in some mysterious manner with the best interests of the individual. I do not think this distinction is drawn with sufficient clearness in your essay.”

I acknowledge and desire to supply this defect. I am bound in Christian charity to believe, and I do really believe, that the great majority of those who now produce hysterical cases do it under the conscientious but erroneous conviction that they are promoting the best interests of man. I trust and believe that the exceptions to this are comparatively few. My excuse for omitting to state this (as I

\* I have already explained that I meant to say this only of those which I had seen, or which had been described to me by eye-witnesses.



ought to have done) is simply that it had nothing to do with the particular argument I had to consider in page 45, viz., whether these hysterical cases are to be considered as produced by the act of God or of man. Any error or mispersuasion under which man acts does not affect the decision of this question. A coroner's jury could not bring in a verdict of "died by the visitation of God" on a person killed by a lunatic. But on the question of the moral responsibility of those who at present produce hysteria (which I omitted to speak of), the above observations are most important. I am grateful for the opportunity of supplying this defect. At the same time, I feel bound to point out the responsibility which hereby devolves on those who can teach them better.

This most acceptable criticism proceeds, "But entertaining the opinion that I have been led to form, that many of these cases are not hysteria at all, and are not produced by sympathy, terror, or human instrumentality of any kind, I cannot but feel that it is too much to infer that clergymen of any denomination can prevent their occurrence by any course of procedure, however judicious."

I am quite sensible that some cases now arise which cannot be treated except by quiet removal and calm superintendence. The observations which I have made in page 80 were strictly limited to cases "where *an hysterical cry* breaks out in church, or at a prayer meeting, against the wish of the clergyman." I mentioned these cases as far the most likely to occur. I believe from experience that such cases are under the absolute control of a self-possessed



person. But I am thankful for this opportunity of correcting a great omission in not having stated at the same time that cases, even hysterical cases, *may* arise which cannot be treated in this way from the pulpit, but which ought to be at once removed to a quiet place, and attended by some one quiet and self-possessed person, and not by an admiring crowd. I have nowhere said that the occurrence could be *prevented* by any course of procedure, but have rather pointed out that in many cases it cannot—pp. 52, 53, and p. 80.

This kind criticism proceeds—"I have now conversed with a good many Presbyterian ministers, and they have all, without a single exception, regretted the extravagances into which the ministers, but especially the people, have fallen. The latter, they have stated, they have endeavoured to shake out of their delusion in desiring to be struck ; and as to the former, they said their only apology was their utter ignorance as to the proper mode of acting in unusual circumstances. And while endeavouring to prevent the recurrence of these physical phenomena, they said it was impossible to do so. Several of them have read your essay, and expressed their satisfaction at its general bearing, but thought you were in error in supposing that *all*\* the cases were to be accounted for on the hypothesis of hysteria."

I have already, in pp. 79 and 80, expressed my conviction that "hundreds of Presbyterian ministers do condemn these things as I do." I desire now to

\* The *Italics* are so marked in the original.



express my regret for not having stated this still more strongly. I feel the full force of their difficulty in not being able to shake out the delusion of desiring to be struck. I cannot but feel it, from having had it stated to me by many of my own brethren, who are not subject to anything like the same difficulties, and who yet state it as *their* great difficulty too. Nothing can be farther from my intention than to speak unkindly or unjustly of those Presbyterian ministers (and they are many) who feel this difficulty, and yet desire to accomplish this result. I desire earnestly to express my regret for anything which I may have written calculated to give them pain. I also express my conviction that the great majority of Presbyterian ministers in the north of Ireland are really anxious to put down what is wrong in this movement, and that their active co-operation is essential to success.

The following letter, written by a Presbyterian minister, affords a worthy instance, and deserves admiration for its moral courage founded on a love of truth :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWRY TELEGRAPH.

Rostrevor, Sept. 2.

SIR,—The following narrative of a remarkable religious movement, which took place a few years ago in Sweden, appears to me so interesting, as a parallel to the events occurring in our own country at the present time, that I make no apology for bringing it before the notice of your readers.

It is desirable that those physical manifestations, which many people seem to look upon as an essential accompaniment of Divine influence, should not be in any way identified with religion. Let them be traced as far as possible to the purely natural, though imperfectly understood, causes from which they take their rise; for, while a sufficient number of cases have not yet been collected to form the basis of a perfect system, enough seems known to warrant



our attributing them to the influence of biological sympathy or animal magnetism.

I would only add, that while some may deprecate any attempt to strip these manifestations of their supernatural character, I have myself so firm a belief in the salutary power of truth, and in the universal, as opposed to the partial, display of Divine love, that I do not hesitate to express my concurrence in the views here set forth.

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS MORGAN.

I regret that his interesting account of the Swedish movement is too long for insertion here: it appears in the *Newry Telegraph* of September 6, 1859.

But at the same time, I cannot accept as sufficient their apology for those whose conduct I have had to condemn, viz., "their utter ignorance as to the proper mode of acting in unusual circumstances." This is not sufficient to account for the excesses which I have seen committed. And, giving them the fullest credit for the sincerity of their desires, I cannot accept as conclusive their judgment that it was *impossible* to prevent the recurrence of these physical phenomena. I can well understand their thinking so, for I should certainly have thought so myself once; but now I cannot but believe that by earnest and united efforts, the physical phenomena could soon be brought to a conclusion.

My kind critic complains of the following passage in page 46—"Is this the worship of the Church of Scotland?" I have altered it in a manner which as forcibly expresses the meaning I intended; and which, I trust, is not liable to misconception or offence.

If any other passages, yet undetected by me, are calculated to give offence to those to whom I would regret to give it, or who may regret to take it, I



sincerely desire to apologise, and will be equally ready to retract.

If I have said that some of these most friendly criticisms are founded on mistake of what I really intended, I am not the less grateful for them ; because I know those passages must be still more liable to be mistaken by others, and I the more gladly embrace this opportunity of explanation.

I have to express my thanks to several persons eminent in the medical and clerical professions, for expressions of approval which support me under the painful anxiety of such a task as I have undertaken.

From many communications made to me by persons on whose statements the greatest reliance may be placed, I give some extracts showing both the good and the evil in this movement.

I have received the following very interesting statement from Belfast. "The bishop confirms annually. The average number for —— district is 24. This year it was 121. It was sacrament Sunday, and all confirmed remained for the communion. Of the 121, *only 15 were persons who had been struck.*" Such facts as these are very encouraging.

The following is from a clergyman whose position and character obtain general confidence. He says, "The plan of a religious service which you have suggested at p. 78 is precisely that which I adopted at a school-house in my parish, close to a great factory. The meetings have been very solemn. *No 'cases' occur at them.* The mill girls who attend are a very interesting class. The last evening I was there the



factory worked to a later hour than usual, and they came straight to the meeting, without waiting to get their usual cups of tea at home. The Litany is, I think, growing upon the people, and unfolding its depths of devotion to them."

From a large town in the north of Ireland I have received the following statement from one on whom reliance can be placed: "A steady observer of the movement, who has been to nearly all the nightly meetings, says he never saw the Bible opened, or heard one word read out of it, except once in a Methodist meeting, when a Presbyterian minister tried to read the parable of the Prodigal Son, but was put down by cries of 'you are spoiling our meeting.'"

The following came to me from a distinguished clergyman, most actively and usefully engaged in connection with this movement:—

"I have proved in my own church the truth of your statement in p. 80, that the hysterical affection can be repressed by firmness. While in the churches and meeting-houses round, the cases have been numerous, there have been but *two* in my church; and I know of no other way of accounting for it than my known disapproval of the physical demonstrations. Even the two that did occur were so decidedly met by Mrs. ——— (the clergyman's wife), who left her seat and took them authoritatively and decidedly out of the church, and when she had brought them to the vestry room insisted on their controlling themselves, that they were able to go home, and gradually recovered their composure. One of them was afterwards told that he would never have peace till he



went back to the same place, was again struck, and remained till comfort came ; he announced to me his determination to do so, and I announced mine to have him removed. The consequence was, that he told me a few days after that he had given up the idea, and has since attended repeated services with devout composure."

From the same source I have received the following interesting account :—"Just as I had commenced my sermon, a girl who had been repeatedly 'struck' left the church. Mrs. —, as usual, followed her, and insisted on her accompanying her to a house close by, where she burst out into a most fearful fit of hysterical laughter, accompanied by violent jerkings of the arms and legs. So shocking was it that several persons belonging to the house were obliged to leave the room . . . dumbness then ensued . . . she signified that she would not speak for two hours. At the end of *an hour and a half*, however, on one looking at the clock, and saying in her hearing that the time would be up in five minutes, she did speak accordingly. Meantime she had lost the use of one side. On Mrs. —, however, *insisting* on her getting up, she walked up four flights of stairs to her bed . . . she slept well, forgetting that she had predicted blindness and deafness. . . . On the following day she had no recollection of yesterday's proceedings. It then turned out that she had been nearly the whole of Saturday night up with hysterical cases. She promised me to keep quiet and abstain from such places ; but whether she will be able to resist the torrent of fanaticism and ignorance



around her I know not." I trust the noble example of the gentle firmness of this excellent lady will be considered by those ministers who say they can do nothing towards repressing such affections.

It is due to the Archdeacon of Derry to give the following explanation of an expression in p. 93, addressed by him to the Editor of the *Londonderry Guardian* :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LONDONDERRY GUARDIAN.

DEAR SIR,—In your notice last week of my letter to the Archdeacon of Meath, in reference to the remarkable circumstances at present taking place in this parish, you state your opinion that "the term *energoumenai*—possessed by a devil—is too strong to apply to those suffering under the maladies described!"

This is undoubtedly true of the rendering which you have assigned to it, but the original word does not necessarily imply, and in the connection in which it was used by me, could not have been intended to imply—Satanic agency. It signifies "powerfully influenced or acted on" from any quarter. The word itself almost invariably occurs in Scripture in a *good* sense, as expressive of a *gracious* influence, and the participle is used by St. James as connected with prayer. "The effectual fervent (*energoumene*) prayer," or, as Parkhurst renders it, "the divinely inspired prayer, of a righteous man availeth much."

I adopted the word as more expressive than any English term that occurred to me, of the total absence of any *personal* or *responsible* agency in the strange visions and prophesyings which I was describing, and my belief that the parties were acting under extraneous influence—not indeed of an evil spirit, much less of the Spirit of God—but of that subtle disease which in its more advanced stages appears to rob the patient of all self-control, and almost of all personality.

While I am most ready and thankful to acknowledge the genuineness and good effects in many instances of the present religious movement, I cannot but look on the manifestations which I have lately witnessed as most prejudicial both to the physical and spiritual well-being of the people, and therefore to be discouraged by every proper means. But I would not willingly use any expression which might tend to mislead or give pain.

Your faithful servant,

ARTHUR W. EDWARDS.

Dunboe, Sept. 5.



## APPENDIX TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

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BEING called on by the Publishers for a Fourth Edition on the day on which I receive the first copy of the Third Edition, I can have little to add ; but a clergyman in the north of Ireland, on whom I can thoroughly rely, has stated to me a case which seems worthy of being mentioned. A woman at his gate-house had been "struck" at a meeting, and was recovering. The clergyman was called up at night and told that her husband, a man about 60 years of age, was struck. He found the man crying and screaming and lamenting by turns. His hands and arms were violently agitated and thrown about, apparently without the power of control. The room was filled with men and women, already imitating the man's excitement. The clergyman, who is self-possessed and energetic, immediately cleared the room. When alone, he took the man by the wrist, and insisted on his being quiet. The man, of course, protested that he could not stop. The clergyman was the more resolute, and in a few minutes the man had recovered his composure, and, though remaining very weak, had no relapse. If this be not hysteria,



may it not yet be the effect of sensations or self-feeling produced by the prevalence of hysterical excitement around him ?

This clergyman states that no one has been struck in his church, but that a highly excited expectation appears to pervade the congregation, the dropping of a book, or any such occurrence, producing a sensation which might at any moment become hysterical. It seems difficult to believe that a state of apprehension so evidently physical can be desirable in the worship of God.

The same clergyman has stated to me a fact on authority which warrants my giving it. At a recent great revival meeting, which broke up into little knots, as such meetings do, a clergyman who went to observe was attracted to a group, in the midst of which lay three young girls screaming ; over them stood a Methodist preacher, thus addressing those around—"Now, my friends, if any of you have relations unconverted, just bring them here, and we will strike them for you."



## APPENDIX TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

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THE following extracts from a letter lately addressed to me by a clergyman in the north of Ireland, afford an instructive illustration of the proper treatment of "stricken cases":—

"I was called upon to visit a parishioner and two of her daughters, who, on the previous night, had been stricken at a very crowded and exciting prayer meeting, held by the Presbyterian minister (who is endeavouring by every means in his power to keep up the excitement). I found the room in which they were crowded to excess. I shook hands with the whole party, and then, without saying a word, seized the mother patient by the hand, and led her into the adjoining room, when, by the very decided and determined manner recommended by you, I soon succeeded, with God's help, in my efforts to render her calm. I then called in the daughters, and acted towards them likewise, with a similar effect. I then threw open the door, and having prayed with them all, I left. The following day I found them in a very tranquil state of mind. . . . Some time after, at evening service, just as I had concluded my sermon, one of



those fearful screams was heard in the porch of the church. I immediately went there, and found a young woman, 23 years of age, surrounded by the people. Without saying a word to any of them, I led her screaming up the aisle into the vestry-room, and closed the door. 'For God's sake,' she cried, 'pray with me.' 'I will,' said I, 'be most happy to pray with you when you are in a fit state to be prayed with ; you *must* now be tranquil and quiet, and when you become so I trust we may be able to pray with profit.' Well, in about three minutes she was as composed as I could have wished her to be. I then talked to her, and prayed with her, and in less than half an hour was as well as ever, and returned home with her friends. . . . Last Sunday a circumstance occurred which required particular exertion, and I thank God that I was enabled to meet the difficulty. Had I not been, previous, armed by your advice, I know not what I should have done. Mr. ——— was preaching for me, when two persons left the church in a state of great excitement, and, immediately after, a scream from one of them outside was heard. It was quite evident that several others were about *to fall*, as it is called. The whole congregation were on the move, and a scene of indescribable confusion would have immediately followed. I got up, and in a determined voice said, 'I must insist upon your keeping your places. I will not suffer the public service of the Church to be interrupted by any cause whatever.' The effect was electrical. Every individual sat down, and the over-excitement



of those who had been so much moved ceased. I then went out and brought the girl who had been the cause of all this into the vestry-room, and the result was the same as on the former occasion."

Few, perhaps, will deny that this clergyman rightly and worthily exercises the moral power which his character and life confer on him. There seems no reason to doubt that his patients were hysterical; but even if the application of that term were questionable, the fact remains, that treatment suggested by observation of hysteria is effectual in controlling the bodily affection.



















