

**Spiritualism in New
Zealand**

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**Nineteenth Century Miracles Or
Spirits and Their Work in
Every Country of the Earth**

CHAPTER XXXII.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW ZEALAND.

ERE we quit the Southern waters which lave the vast seaboard of Australia, we must take a cursory glance at the progress of Spiritualism in the fair islands which form the brightest gem of the Pacific Ocean—NEW ZEALAND. Here, as in Australia, Spiritualism has made a deep mark, and one that promises to be very permanent; but though the plan of this work does not admit of our lingering upon any nation's Spiritual experiences antecedent to the present century, we are disposed to impinge upon this set purpose, in favour of the fine and singular race whom the white pioneers of the land found in its possession, and who are now known as the "MAORIS." Spiritualism has not only been the religion of this people from time immemorial, but this belief still prevails amongst the broken remnants of the tribes which inhabit the land. There are, moreover, so many features of resemblance between the Maoris' modes of spirit communion, and those with which the Spiritualists of the New Dispensation are familiar, that we deem a few items of information on this subject may be acceptable, and in harmony with our Nineteenth Century Spiritual revelations.

In their ideas of Creation, the Maoris are essentially evolutionists, and Darwin would have found a mental field amongst them, fully prepared for the reception of his plausible philosophy of the *ascent* of man.

The following curious examples of Maori poetry, although greatly marred by translation, will give an approximate idea of the methods of classifying the order of unfoldment as it appeared to the savage mind of uncounted ages ago. The words are given by the Tohungas or Priests amongst the tribes, and after having been handed down from generation to generation, are translated by the various white missionaries who have become familiar with their language. We can only give the following brief extracts from a vast mass of similar legendary recitations:—

"OF THE BEGINNING.

From the conception, the increase;
 From the increase, the thought;
 From the thought, the remembrance;
 From the remembrance, the consciousness;
 From the consciousness, the desire."

"OF THE FIRST LONG, LONG, NIGHT.

"The word became fruitful;
 It dwelt with the feeble glimmering.
 It brought forth night;
 The great night, the long night,
 Night, blackness, evermore;
 The lowest night, the lofty night;
 The thick night to be felt;
 The night to be touched;
 The night not to be seen;
 The night of death, yet alive;
 No eyes yet in the world."

"WHEN THE LIGHT COMES FIRST

"From the nothing, the begetting.
 From the nothing, the increase;
 From the nothing, the abundance;
 The power of increasing;
 The living breath,—the world,
 The living breath; it dwelt with the empty space
 And thence came the air:
 The air above, around, the all;
 The atmosphere, which floats above
 The great firmament; the early dawn,
 The glimmering growing light;
 The atmosphere dwelt with the heat,
 And thence proceeded the mighty sun;
 And the moon sprung forth,
 And the chief eyes of Heaven, the stars came out.
 Then the Heavens became light;
 Then the grey earth became light;
 The early dawn came, the day was born;
 The mid day,—the blaze of day from the sky."

"The fourth period," gives the names of islands, and the places which were the cradle of the race of men.

The land being formed, "the fifth period" produces the gods of many things, and many creatures. "The sixth period," is assigned to the production of men. Amidst an immense store of legendary description of the heavens, seas, gods, and other evolved forms, there is another "song," descriptive of how the earth changed from its ancient condition of barrenness:—

"The earth's skin was once the *tutu*.
 Her garment was the *wehe wehe*.
 Her mantle was the bramble,
 The coarse stinging nettle.
 Don't grieve that the earth is covered with water.
 Don't lament for the length of time.
 The ocean's reign shall be broken.
 The ocean's surface shall be rough
 With the lands springing up in it;
 With mountains very high,
 Girdling round the sea.
 Yea, round the sea, and rising through the waves.
 The waves shall wash their feet;
 The high mountains full of fire.
 Broken up shall you be, oh earth;
 Pierced thro' you white waves;
 Grieve not earth for your water covered head.
 Lament not seas for your
 Mountains springing up;—
 Lament not!"

It would require a volume to describe the intricacies of Maori mythology, in which gods, men, demons, monsters, heroes, and spirits of the dead, are the actors. The mythology of these islanders is not less diffuse or complicated than that of the ancient Greeks. But the vivid ideality and poetic fantasies of the Greek mind, are no marvel, *because they emanate from the Greeks.*

The endless convolutions of uncurbed fancy by which the Greeks impersonated the powers of nature, are of course admirable, because they originate in Grecian ideality, and are labelled "classical lore."

The Maori sings, believes, and teaches, all that the Greek classics enshrine, but alas! his legends only bear the opprobrious name of "savage superstitions." Read however the Rev. Richard Taylor's *TE TKA A MAUI*, from which our extracts are taken, and the difference between "classical lore" and "savage superstitions" will seem very slight; in fact, the greatest marvel of all is, where either Greek or Maori got their ideality from? Amidst the mythological personages of New Zealand, "the Spirits of the dead" ever play a very prominent part, and our chief interest in noticing the Maoris at all, lies in the fact, that belief in, and open communion with these Spirits, still exists. The priests or "Tohungas" are unmistakably "Mediums," in the modern sense of the term. Sometimes they are born with their gift, and sometimes they are devoted to the priestly office by their parents, and acquire their powers after the fashion of Eastern ecstasies, by prayer, fasting, and contemplation.

That good prophets exist amongst the Maoris has been abundantly proved, even to the cold materialistic government that has absorbed their country. During the time when Great Britain busied herself in appropriating New Zealand, on the plea of a "discovery," her officials frequently wrote home, that *the Maori would never be conquered wholly*; information of the parties sent out to attack them; the very colour of the boats, and the hour when they would arrive; the number of the enemy, and all particulars essential to their safety, *being invariably communicated to the tribes beforehand, by their prophets or Tohungas*.

The state of preparation in which the English found "the savages," fully verified this claim, and proved the fact of prevision, affirmed to exist amongst them.

The best natural prophets and seers amongst the Maoris are, as amongst the Spiritualists, of the female sex; and although the missionaries try to account for the marvellous powers they exhibit, above all, for the sound of the *Spirit voice*, which is a common phase in their communion with the dead—on the hypothesis that the women who practise "the arts of sorcery," are *ventriloquists*—this attempted explanation rarely covers the ground of the intelligence which is received.

The author has herself had several proofs of the Mediumistic power possessed by these "savages," but as her experiences may be deemed of too personal a character, we shall select our examples from other sources. One of these is furnished by a Mr. Marsden, a person who was well known in the early days of New Zealand's colonial history, as a miner, who grew rich "through Spiritual communications." Mr. Marsden was a gentleman who had spent much time amongst the Maoris, and who still keeps a residence in "the King country," that is—the district of which they hold control.

Mr. Marsden informed the author, that his success as a gold miner, was entirely due to a communication he had received through a native woman, who claimed to have the power of bringing *down* Spirits—the Maoris, be it remembered, always insisting that the Spirits *descend* through the air to earth, to visit mortals.

Mr. Marsden had long been prospecting unsuccessfully in the gold regions. He had a friend in partnership with him, to whom he was much attached, but who had been accidentally killed by a fall from a cliff.

The Spirit of this man came unsolicited, on an occasion when Mr. Marsden was consulting a native seeress, for the purpose of endeavouring to trace out what had become of a valuable watch which he had lost.

The voice of the Spirit was first heard in the air, apparently above the roof of the hut in which they sat, calling Mr. Marsden by his familiar name of "Mars." Greatly startled by these sounds, several times repeated, at the Medium's command, he remained perfectly still until the voice of his friend speaking in his well-remembered Scotch accent sounded close to his ear, whilst a column of grey misty substance reared itself up by his side. This apparition was plainly visible in the subdued light of the hut, to which there was only one open entrance, but no window. Though he was much startled by what he saw and heard, Mr. Marsden had presence of mind enough to gently *put his hand through the misty column* which remained intact, as if its substance offered no resistance to the touch. Being admonished by an earnest whisper from the Maori woman, who had fallen on her knees before the apparition, to keep still, he obeyed, when a voice—seemingly from an immense distance off—yet speaking unmistakably in his friend's Scotch accents, advised him to let the watch alone—for it was irreparably gone—but to go to the stream on the banks of which they had last had a meal together; trace it up for six miles and a half, and then, by following its course amidst the forest, he would come to a *pile*, which would make him rich, if he chose to remain so.

Whilst he was waiting and listening breathlessly to hear more, Mr. Marsden was startled by a slight detonation at his side. Turning his head he observed that the column of mist was gone, and in its place, a quick flash, like the reflection of a candle, was all that he beheld. Here the *séance* ended, and the astonished miner left the hut, convinced that he had heard the Spirit of his friend talking with him. He added, that he followed the directions given implicitly, and came to a mass of surface gold lying on the stones at the bottom of the brook in the depth of the forest. This he gathered up, and though he prospected for several days in and about that spot, he never found another particle of the precious metal. That which he had secured, he added, with a deep sigh, was indeed enough to have made him independent for life, had it not soon been squandered in fruitless speculations.

Several accounts are extant of Spiritualism amongst the Maoris, one of the most curious and graphic, being a personal narrative, written by General Cummings, in a small volume called "Old New Zealand."

The party who lent this work for perusal to the author, was well acquainted with General Cummings, and vouched for his truth and reliability in every particular. Although the narrative we are about to quote has often been retailed in magazines and other periodicals, it was so thoroughly authenticated by the author's friend that we give it place once more in this volume, as an example of the kind of Spiritualism practised amongst the Maoris.

A popular young chief who had acquired a fair knowledge of the English language, and with whom General Cummings was very intimate, had been appointed registrar of births and deaths.

General Cummings occupied a portion of his office, but they were about to remove to a more convenient place, when the young Maori encountered a violent death. In changing the office, the book of registries was missing, and much inconvenience was occasioned by its loss. A short time after the decease of his friend, General Cummings was informed that his relatives intended to invoke his spirit, and that as the "Pakeha" (white man) had been much beloved by him, he might if he chose, be present.

Notwithstanding his inveterate scepticism, the General accepted this

invitation, mentally resolving "to keep his ears and eyes wide open." The narrator then continues as follows:—

"The appointed time came. Fires were lit. The *Tohunga* repaired to the darkest corner of the room. All was silence, save the sobbing of the sisters of the deceased warrior-chief. There were thirty of us, sitting on the rush-strewn floor, the door shut, and the fire now burning down to embers. Suddenly there came a voice out from the partial darkness, '*Salutation, salutation to my family, to my tribe, to you, pakeha, my friend!*' Our feelings were taken by storm. The oldest sister screamed, and rushed with extended arms in the direction from whence the voice came. Her brother, seizing, restrained her by main force. Others exclaimed, '*Is it you? is it you? truly it is you! aue! aue!*' and fell quite insensible upon the floor. The older women, and some of the aged men, were not moved in the slightest degree, though believing it to be the spirit of the chief.

"Whilst reflecting upon the novelty of the scene, the 'darkness visible,' and the deep interest manifest, the spirit spoke again, '*Speak to me, my family; speak to me, my tribe; speak to me, the pakeha!*' At last the silence gave way, and the brother spoke: '*How is it with you! Is it well with you in that country?*' The answer came, though not in the voice of the *Tohunga*-medium, but in strange, sepulchral sounds: '*It is well with me: my place is a good place. I have seen our friends: they are all with me!*' A woman from another part of the room now anxiously cried out, '*Have you seen my sister?*'—'*Yes, I have seen her: she is happy in our beautiful country.*'—'*Tell her my love so great for her will never cease.*'—'*Yes, I will bear the message.*' Here the native woman burst into tears, and my own bosom swelled in sympathy.

"The spirit speaking again, giving directions about property and keepsakes, I thought I would more thoroughly test the genuineness of all this; and I said, '*We cannot find your book with the registered names; where have you concealed it?*' The answer came instantly, '*I concealed it between the takuhu of my house, and the thatch; straight over you, as you go in at the door.*' The brother rushed out to see. All was silence. In five minutes he came hurriedly back, with the book in his hand! It astonished me.

"It was now late; and the spirit suddenly said, '*Farewell, my family, farewell, my tribe: I go.*' Those present breathed an impressive farewell; when the spirit cried out again, from high in the air, '*Farewell!*'

"This, though seemingly tragical, is in every respect literally true. But what was it? ventriloquism, the devil, or what! . . ."

The Rev. Richard Taylor, a good and learned missionary, one who, after many years' residence amongst the natives, wrote a valuable treatise on their lives, traditions, and customs, entitled *TE THA A MAUI*, dilates most ingenuously on the striking similarity of the Maoris' spells, enchantments, &c., &c., with those practised by the ancient Hebrews. He likens the scene of destruction by which a once celebrated *Wharekura*, or Temple, was demolished, and the worshippers scattered, to the destruction of the Tower of Babel. His descriptions of the *TAPU*, or curse, which attached to certain things and places forbidden to be touched or entered, reads like Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and precisely resembles the *taboo* of the Hebrews, by which certain objects, food, and persons, rendered those that came in contact with them "unclean."

Their prophets officiate and speak oracularly, like the prophets of Israel. They have multitudes of *Karakias*, or *spells*—designed to act as curses or blessings, the translations of which read strangely like the dying words of Israel to his sons, or the curse and blessing on "Ebal and Gerizim." Maoris go up to enquire of the gods, precisely as the Israelites "enquired of the Lord," and the *Tohungas*, or priests, answer them, in the name of the gods, *by staves, by stones, by lots, by arrows, and a voice*, exactly as the priests of Israel did, as described in Godwyn's "*Antiquities of the Jews.*" This is neither the time nor place to enquire whence this wonderful parity of customs, traditions, and modes of religious observance arose, between nations as widely separated by oceans and continents, as by epochs of time;

but one of the curious circumstances in this connection which *does* belong to our own time, is the mode in which reverend Christian missionaries comment on these marvellous resemblances, invariably referring the customs, invocations, sacrifices, and other formulæ practised by the Hebrews to Divine command, whilst the almost identical rites and ceremonies practised by a far distant race of Savages, are regarded as evidence of their utter degradation and barbaric superstition.

We regret being unable to pursue the subject of New Zealand *Spirituality* or *Superstition*—let the reader adopt whichever term his predilections incline him to—any farther. Mysterious in their origin, and strongly indicative in their present application of a belief in the potencies of “magnetism” and “psychology,” this interesting people illustrate fully, to the very few who are enabled to gain an inside view of their real lives and customs, the astounding fact that the modern Spiritualism, which seems to have fallen upon this century as a new revelation, not only finds a parallel in the Biblical account of the Jewish nation, but in its more subtle phases of science through magnetism and psychology, has been, and still is unconsciously practised by those children of nature whom we contemptuously call “heathens” and “savages.” If it be a subject quite worthy of philosophic research to endeavour to find a common origin for language, how much more so would it be to endeavour to find the true root of all religious or Spiritual ideas and customs!

If animal magnetism or the transference of invisible force and influence from body to body be a proven fact, and psychology, or the impress of mind upon mind be a truth, which the poorest experimenter in “electro biology” can demonstrate, then would it not be a subject well worthy the attention of the scholar, especially the psychologist, to trace out the source from whence savage nations have learned the use of these sovereign potencies, and that without books, written language, or philosophic understanding of what they do?

Whilst every phase of Spiritual power now recognised by Spiritualists and attributed to the influence of deceased human beings is known and practised more or less intelligently by the New Zealand Maoris, their Spiritual beliefs, although *not eradicated*, are measurably modified by the new doctrines introduced amongst them by Christian missionaries. A remarkable example of the grafting process by which new forms are being welded into ancient ideas, is found in the person of the celebrated Maori Prophet, “Te Whiti.”

This remarkable personage still exercises unbounded influence over the tribes amongst whom he resides, in fact he is considered by them very much in the same light as Christians esteem the Founder of their faith. His word is law, his command is regarded as nothing short of divine, and his prophecies are to the Maori, as the word of fate. We shall conclude this chapter, the only one we can devote to the Spiritualism of a so-called “savage people,” with a brief account of Te Whiti, published in a San Francisco paper, the closing paragraphs of which, in especial, we commend to the candid thinker’s consideration. The sketch is dated *August, 1879*, and reads thus:—

“A MAORI PROPHET LEADER.

“Erueti, now known as Te Whiti, is the grandson of Paora (Paul) Kukutai, who was chief of the Pautukai tribe when this district was first occupied by European settlers. The chief of the tribe now is Ruakeri, also a grandson of the old chief, though his influence is but nominal, being overshadowed by that of the great prophet leader Te Whiti.

Erueti was in his youth a pupil of the Rev. Mr. Riemenschneider, head of the now defunct Wesleyan mission-station at Warea, and it was here that he obtained his intimate knowledge of the Bible, which it is no exaggeration to say he knows by heart, and his thorough acquaintance with which he displays with so much effect in his public manifestos and orations. He was looked upon by Mr. Riemenschneider as an earnest Christian, and when his pupilage ended, the rev. gentleman presented him with a large Bible, which he still possesses.

"He first came prominently into notice as a leading man among his people in 1862, on the occasion of the wreck of the steamship "Lord Worsley," in Te Namu Bay, Opunake. It was chiefly through the exertions of Erueti that the passengers were allowed to proceed to New Plymouth, and also 1,500 ounces of gold on board the ship were given up. Soon after this Erueti changed his name to Te Whiti; after an old Pah of the tribe, situate in the vicinity of New Plymouth, near the Sugarloaf Peak.

"In 1868, Mr. Parris, then civil commissioner, had an interview with him. Mr. Parris stated that the Parihaka natives were, without exception, Kingites, and Te Whiti was looked up to by them as being little, if at all, inferior to the king; that all he uttered was spoken in a very calm manner, though the man was evidently deeply convinced that he was under supernatural influence, no doubt the result of the secluded life he had then been leading for some years.

"Such is the man who, at the time the Grey Government was trying to purchase the adherence of Tawhaio and Rewhi, again lifted his voice and called on all Maoris to rally round him, and said that their lands should be returned to them, still protesting against fighting, but announcing that the settlers would be removed by some supernatural means. When the survey of the Waimate plains was commenced, it was thought that Te Whiti would make some demonstration, but he still confined himself to prophecy; though, when Maclean, the cook to one of the survey parties in the Waitoturu district, was murdered by Hiroki, and the murderer took refuge at Parihaka, Te Whiti sheltered him and refused to allow him to be given up; and on the chief of the tribe to which Hiroki belonged, proceeding with some of his men to Parihaka to demand that he should be surrendered to them and given over to take his trial, Te Whiti ordered that all the party, with the exception of a European who accompanied them, should be killed if they did not at once retire. In March last the Hon. Mr. Sheenan, native minister, went to the Parihaka meeting and demanded the surrender of the murderer. Te Whiti's reply was that Hiroki was not so guilty as the Government; he had only killed a man, while they had killed the land. He therefore refused to allow Hiroki to be given up, and Mr. Sheenan left Parihaka. The very next day Te Whiti issued orders to his natives to remove all the surveyors and their gangs from the Waimate Plains, but without any shedding of blood, which was accordingly done, men and instruments being carted across the Waingogoro river. Parihaka is now in Alsatia, where any murderer or other criminal of the Maori race is secure from the arm of the law, Te Whiti having proclaimed it a city of refuge. The place is only five miles from the main south road, and barely six miles from the European settlers at Okato. In a speech which Te Whiti delivered at Parihaka in June last, he said that the Government would send large forces to Parihaka, and take him (Te Whiti) and crucify him. He says he will not offer any resistance to the soldiers when they come, but that he will gladly be crucified. He also states that the Government are determined to put surveyors on the plains; but he will not fight them. Te Whiti further stated that he received a telegram from Sir George Grey on the 17th of June, proposing to send a commission to investigate the claims of the natives to the confiscated lands, inviting him (Te Whiti) to employ a lawyer to look after his interests, the Government paying all the expenses. Te Whiti said his answer was that the matter had been delayed too long; that the end of all things was at hand, courts and commissions included. He added: 'When I speak of the land, the survey, the ploughing, and such matters of little consequence their (the reporters') pencils fly with the speed of the wind; but when I speak of the words of the Spirit, they say, "This is the dream of a madman." They are so intent on accumulating wealth, that nothing appears to interest them except what is in some way connected with the acquisition of wealth. The storekeeper who has succeeded in acquiring wealth by short weight and inferior articles, and the numerous ways of picking and stealing known only to the initiated—the men who steal the land of the Maori and acquire flocks of sheep and herds of cattle—the men who would take the bread out of the mouths of the widow and fatherless, and acquire great riches by so doing, are all looked upon as gentlemen of property, while the humble seeker after truth is passed by unknown and unheeded. The time is at hand when their goods will rot in their stores, their ships will rot in their harbours for want of sailors to work them, the merchants will wring their hands in despair when they see all their accumulation of riches melt away like the morning mist before the rising sun.'"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW ZEALAND (CONCLUDED.)

WE must now call attention to the earliest attempts of a few earnest investigators in New Zealand, to promote the knowledge of the modern movement known as "Spiritualism."

The first efforts in this direction were made by those who had brought with them from older countries, the tidings of the great Spiritual outpouring.

By these pioneers, circles were formed in private families with the usual results of Mediumistic unfoldment. Amongst the earliest investigators in Dunedin, one of the largest and most flourishing cities in the islands—was a gentleman who now holds a prominent and influential position in the community, Mr. John Logan. Before this esteemed citizen had become publicly identified with the cause of Spiritualism, an association had been formed, the members of which steadily pursued their investigations in private circles and semi-public gatherings. One of the most marked events in connection with the early development of Spiritualism in Dunedin however, was the arraignment and church trial of Mr. Logan, the circumstances of which may be briefly summed up as follows. This gentleman, although holding a high and dignified position in the first Presbyterian church of the city, had not only dared to attend circles and witness Spiritualistic phenomena, but it was currently reported that one of his own near relatives was a very remarkable Medium.

Having become interested in the movement through various influences, Mr. Logan completed the list of his enormities in the eyes of his Christian brethren, by attending the lectures of the Rev. J. M. Peebles, and actually appearing with that arch-heretic on the stage of the Princess Theatre, on "the Lord's day," as the complaint against him set forth. To make matters worse, the offender would neither express penitence nor promise to desist from his desperate acts of heresy for the future, to the committee of church dignitaries who waited on him, with a view of remonstrating on the atrocity of his conduct. On the contrary, the sturdy Scotch gentleman, affirmed his right to visit Spiritual or any other meetings, when and where he pleased, whether on the *Lord's Day*, or any other day, in public or in private.

What was to be done? Mr. Logan was rich and powerful. He had been a pillar in the church, and his example and influence could not fail to lead other sheep astray, besides involving the entire church in the awful scandal of his own dereliction!

On the 19th of March, 1873, Mr. Logan was summoned to appear before a Church Convocation, to be held for the purpose of trying his case, and if necessary, dealing with his grave delinquency.

Up to this time, the noble wife of the accused gentleman had not followed him in his Spiritual researches; in fact, she had manifested no sympathy in the subject to which they related. In the trying hour of her good husband's arraignment however, she was by his side, and listened attentively to the entire conduct of the high-handed procedure of which he was the victim.

The farce of a modern "star chamber" trial ended, as might have been expected, by Mr. Logan's conviction, and *excommunication* from the heavenly benefits and heavenly hopes of which the Presbyterian Synod claimed to be the appointed dispensers. Before the final breaking up of this most reverend and fraternal assembly of Christians, Mrs. Logan, moved by those tender feminine impulses which rendered the severance of once cherished ties of friendship and religious communion very painful to her, rose up in her place, and with all the dignity and earnestness which mark this estimable lady, she asked in thrilling tones, *if there was no one there to speak for John Logan?* No voice responded. Of all the former friends and associates who had been bound to John Logan by ties of gratitude, as well as companionship in a foreign land, not one held out a hand to sustain him, not one breathed a word to mitigate the insensate tyranny of the sentence pronounced upon him! It seemed as if the ice bolts of a hard and savage theology had shut humanity out of the hearts of those present, even as they would have shut a good man out of heaven, for daring to follow the dictates of his conscience.

Again and yet again the sweet voice of the brave lady rang through the stillness of that guilty crowd, in the pathetic question, "Is there no one here to speak a word for John Logan?" When it was fully shown that not one recreant man present dared to break that solemn silence, the devoted wife taking her husband's arm, passed out from amongst them, saying as she went, in her own calm and touching tones, "This is no place for us; let us go hence." And thus they went forth, that good John Logan and his noble wife; out from the stifling atmosphere of man-made and cruel sectarianism, into the free air of Spiritual life, light, truth, and reason; out from the night of bigotry into the sunlight of God's truth, never more to return, but still better, never more to tread separate paths in life again. From that hour, Mrs. Logan resolved to enquire into the faith that had enabled her husband to withstand the multitude, and prove how one man in a good cause, is mightier than a host. Struck with the base ingratitude of those who had deserted him, and ashamed of the faith which thus disgraced its members in attempting to disgrace their friend, Mrs. Logan sought, and found, the source of her brave companion's strength, and not only found it to be true and good and rational, but she herself came to be a minister of its divine afflatus, and when the author visited Dunedin in 1879 she found Mrs. Logan, not only firm in the faith of Spiritualism, but one of its most marked evidences in her own beautiful and convincing phases of Mediumship.

With the increase of population and development of civilized life in the beautiful islands, even so has Spiritualism grown. It has had its opponents from without, who, by slander, ridicule, and open persecution, have endeavoured to crush its rising influence. It has also had to contend—as usual—with "many foes of its own household." Some of its propagandists, stirred with temporary enthusiasm, have acted, like many other injudicious new converts, with an amount of fanaticism which has laid them open to the charge of folly. Unbalanced minds have ridden it as a hobby to the verge of lunacy. The avaricious have sought to make capital out of it, and failing to do so, turned to revile it; and still others have sought to make it the stalking horse to shield their vicious proclivities, or furnish excuses for the indulgence of their evil propensities; in a word, *human nature* has been represented amongst New Zealand Spiritualists, as fully as elsewhere. Being so remote and self-centered, shut in as it were by its own vast sea-

board, New Zealanders are more liable to regard each others failings, than a more cosmopolitan population; hence, whatever shortcomings poor human nature has put upon this noble cause in New Zealand, have had more than the ordinary share of comment. Still "the cause" has grown mightily, and wherever good lecturers have appealed to the candid portion of the community, they have succeeded in awaking a deep and permanent interest.

In many of the principal towns besides Dunedin, circles held at first in mere idle curiosity, have produced their usual fruit of Medium power, and this again has extended into associative action, and organization into local societies.

For over a year, the Spiritualists and Liberalists of Dunedin were fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr. Charles Bright as their lecturer.

This gentleman had once been attached to the editorial staff of the *Melbourne Argus*, and had obtained a good reputation as a capable writer, and liberal thinker. Mr. Bright's lectures in Dunedin were highly appreciated, and by their scholarly style, and attractive manner, served to band together the liberal element in the city, stimulate free thought, and do good in every direction.

In Auckland, the principal town of the North Island, the same good service was rendered to the cause of the religious thought, by the excellent addresses of the Rev. Mr. Edgar, a clergyman whose unconservative and Spiritualistic doctrines, had tended to sever him from sectarian organizations, and draw around him, the Spiritualists and liberal thinkers of the town.

Besides the good work effected by these gentlemen, the occasional visits of Messrs. Peebles, Walker, J. Tyerman, and the effect of the many private circles held in every portion of the islands, all have tended to promote a general, though quiet diffusion of Spiritual thought and doctrine, throughout New Zealand.

During the author's visit to Dunedin, her lectures were given every Sunday evening in the Princess Theatre, and on week evenings, in the Athenæum, and those were attended for several months, with appreciative audiences, filling the buildings to their utmost capacity. Amongst other incidents of this visit, was an extended series of newspaper discussions, not only with numbers of correspondents whose antagonism to the Spiritual doctrines was manifested in the ordinary journalistic fashion, but there were many writers, whose fierce diatribes manifested so obviously their fidelity to the founders of their faith, John Knox, and John Calvin, that the author frequently had cause to felicitate herself upon the fact, that she did not live in the days of those respected ecclesiastics, or in the immediate vicinage of the once *famous* Spanish Inquisition.

Amongst the most keen and persistent of her journalistic denouncers, was the irrepressible M. W. Green, "minister of the Church of Christ," who had somehow managed to close his career in Melbourne and turn up at Dunedin, just in time to hurl his javelins once more at Spiritualism, in the height of its success and popularity.

Mr. Green adopted many modes of attracting to himself the attention of a community, which had hitherto been all too unconscious, that they had so remarkable a personage in their midst. He persisted in writing to the papers, under his full name and style, challenging every statement made at the author's lectures, in which he thought he could pick a flaw, and

when the public began to be tired of him, and the columns of the daily journals became "too full," to admit of any more of his prosy anathemas against Spiritualism, he hired an immense new hall, and advertised a series of lectures to "expose Spiritualism," in which a whole nation of lawyers might have found employment in libel suits, had not his flaming advertisements been too rude and scandalous to render them worthy of honourable mention, or notice. Still the "Free-thought committee," under whose auspices Mrs. Britten's lectures were given, deemed the gentleman had gone far enough, if not a great deal too far, and though his atrocious sensational advertisements were obviously put forth to *compel notice*, the committee deemed their honour involved in putting a stop to them. The result was, that the same hall was hired in which Mr. Green's denunciations had been poured out to the listening few. On this occasion, the building was crowded to suffocation. The Hon. Robert Stout, Attorney-General and M.P. for Dunedin, was Mrs. Britten's chairman, and a large company of sympathizers surrounded the minister of the "Church of Christ," a company who distinguished themselves by hissing, hooting, and stamping, at the close of every sentence, no matter whether their uproar was in or out of place.

Once more we deem it in order to give an extract from the author's American correspondence in which this *coup d'état* of the "Christian minister" is disposed of in all the paragraphs it merits. It reads thus :—

"Mr. M. W. Green, one of the most persistent and unscrupulous of clerical opponents, gave and published, a series of scandalous and disgraceful lectures on the fruits of Spiritualism, and in proof of his theory of 'Satanic Agency,' drew the entire of his charges from the lives, writings, opinions and practices of certain so-called Spiritualists themselves. His collection of garbage, under the title of 'The Devil's Sword Blunted,' is now before the world. The course I finally adopted under the advice and guidance of good and wise friends from the shores beyond, I mean to stand by. . . . That course was as follows :—We procured the largest and finest hall in Dunedin. The Hon. Robert Stout, our honoured and talented Attorney-General, was my chairman, and to a mob of howling Christian followers of my reverend opponent, in his own white, or rather livid face, and surrounded by a jammed and almost frantic crowd of excited multitudes, I gave the following definitions of my religion and faith in Spiritualism :—

"1st. Spiritualism proves by a set of obviously supermundane phenomena, that a world of invisible intelligence is communicating with us.

"2nd. It demonstrates by an immense array of test facts given all over the world, under circumstances that forbid the possibility of collusion or human contrivance, that the communicating intelligences are identical with the souls of mortals who once lived on earth.

"3rd. It shows by universal coincidence in the communications, that every living soul is in judgment for the deeds done in the body, and reaps the fruits of its good or evil life on earth, in happiness or suffering hereafter.

"4th. All the communicating spirits coincide in declaring that the life succeeding mortal dissolution, is not a final state, but one which manifests innumerable conditions of progress. . . . and these four propositions I emphatically protest are the *all* of spiritual facts we know, the all that are absolutely proved. . . . or upon which, all the immense varieties of persons that make up the ranks of Spiritualism, can absolutely agree.

"The whole of my lecture, printed under the title of 'Spiritualism Vindicated and Clerical Slanders Refuted,' is now in the hands of thousands of Colonists, and bitter as the occasion was that demanded it, I thank the Great Spirit, whose instrumentality called forth so trenchant a plea, for a cause so eminently worthy."

As it will appear, even from this short extract, that the sole aim of Mr. Green now, as in the debate with Mr. Walker, was to shoulder upon Spiritualism the shortcomings, follies, and errors of its world-wide followers, and the basis of Mrs. Britten's lectures was to present the principles of Spiritualism, and redeem them from the misrepresentation which ever obscures any new movement when it is confounded with the irrespon-

sible doings of its heterogeneous followers, it will readily be perceived that the Christian minister was trumpeting forth to the world the shortcomings of Spiritualists; whilst the author insisted upon recalling him to the only legitimate ground of discussion, namely, the doctrines and principles of SPIRITUALISM. No further explanation of these movements and counter movements are necessary, and Mr. Green's action was generally recognized as the old strategic method of theological warfare, ever employed by unscrupulous and desperate attacking parties.

Now although neither Mr. Green nor his followers could justify an attack on a great cause by assailing the characters of those who believe in it, especially in a new movement, the wide-spread notoriety of which has necessarily attracted to its ranks all the scum of society, Mr. Green having been industrious enough to hunt up all the scandals which had been cast upon the cause by its camp followers, had of course many facts on his side; facts as cogent to prove the disorder which licentious people can attach to any cause that attracts them, as the records of the Inquisition, the torture chamber, or the night of St. Bartholomew, could prove murder, and barbarity, against Christians. Just in as far as monsters of cruelty have disgraced Christianity, so have examples of vulgarity and profanity, disgraced Spiritualism. When the day comes, in which the community recognizes that principles are eternal truths, and personalities, the transient representatives of certain states of society, such orators as Mr. Green will find their occupation gone, and stick to the endeavour to prove their own forms of belief, instead of throwing mud against the beliefs of others.

During Mrs. Britten's course of Dunedin lectures, the Hon. Robert Stout, as Attorney-General of New Zealand, and member for Dunedin, deemed himself called upon to oppose with all his wide-spread influence, and liberality of sentiment, the introduction of the Bible in the public schools as a necessary element of education. The partisans of this movement had been strenuous in their efforts to effect such an introduction. The opponents, headed by their popular leader Mr. Stout, had been equally persistent in their opposition, and it was in this state of divided opinion, that the Committee of the "Free-thought Association" of whom Mr. Stout was the president, solicited Mrs. Britten to give a lecture on the subject. The attendance on this occasion was overwhelming. The question under consideration was, of course, treated from the Liberalists' standpoint, but the main feature of the occasion was the citation of the Bible itself, *as its own witness*. This was done, by the simple presentation of about seventy or eighty quotations, in which the character and consistency of the Jewish Jehovah, the morality and humanity of the commands issued, and the agreement of the passages cited with science and chronology were fully displayed, and that on Biblical testimony alone, without comment or criticism. At the close of the lecture it was determined to print and circulate gratuitously, ten thousand copies of the Biblical quotations, and this was done without any other notice of the texts presented, than the simple headings which the extracts illustrated. The sensation produced by this procedure, increased the effect of the newspaper and rostrum discussions, and when the author was finally compelled to quit Dunedin to fill other engagements, the ladies who had been her most staunch friends and supporters, organized a farewell meeting, at which they presented her with a splendid set of ornaments formed from the jade or "green stone" so highly prized by the natives, as to be deemed "sacred," set in pure New Zealand gold.

Even now, though time and distance have mellowed the enthusiastic influences prevailing on this occasion to regretful and tender memory, the heart swells, the eyes fill, and the hand of the writer becomes nerveless with emotion, as the astral light in which all things are engraved, reveals once more, the images of the beloved faces gazing so earnestly upon the one, and recalls the pressure of the kind outstretched hands, so prompt to sustain, and so loath to unclasp the farewell pressure!

In Wellington, Nelson, and Auckland, important places successively visited by the author, warm friends of the cause were found, many private circles held, and a vast amount of public interest manifested. Fierce newspaper controversies still raged, but these only served to increase the depth of public sentiment, and stimulate investigation.

The great deficiency of railroad accommodation, the remoteness of this lovely land, and its isolation in the midst of the lonely Pacific waters—floating as it were on the tossing billows which lave its rugged volcanic mountain seaboard; sometimes lashing the rocks with heaving fields of white breakers, and sometimes spouting high in air under the influence of submarine disturbances; all these physical features of its environment tend to isolate New Zealand from casual intercourse with the outer world, limit its population, and render it far less known than the more distant continent of Australia. Still its internal growth is marvellous, and when the natural charm of its delightful soil, climate, and scenery, shall have produced their legitimate effects upon the characteristics of its inhabitants, New Zealand ought to be, the Paradise—physically, mentally, and morally, of the Southern Seas. Since the author's visit in 1879, two marked events have transpired in the history of New Zealand progressive thought.

One of these, is the publication of a bright spirited "Free-thought" paper, called *The Echo*, in the columns of which, Mr. Robert Stout's incisive logic, forcible argument, and scholarly research, finds frequent expression. Besides this, *The Echo* is graced with numerous scientific and able writers on Free-thought and Spiritualism. The second subject for gratulation by all liberal minds, is the foundation of a noble hall built by free-thinkers, and dedicated to the exposition of scientific and progressive subjects. Meetings are now held every Sunday in this hall.

Its plan and execution are reported to be alike creditable to its founders, and the noble purposes to which it is devoted. A progressive Lyceum or Sunday school, conducted on the principles taught by Andrew Jackson Davis, the "harmonial philosopher" of America, meets in this hall every Sunday, when both children and adults participate in the exercises. Fine music forms part of the religious worship of these Dunedin Liberalists, and already the roof has re-echoed to more sweet strains, elevated thoughts, fine literature, and broad progressive teaching, than has ever been heard within the walls of New Zealand ecclesiastical edifices.

With an account of the memorable scene during which the foundation stone of this fine edifice was laid, our summary of the New Zealand Spiritual movement must terminate. The day has not yet come—and heaven grant that it never may!—when sharp lines of demarcation will be drawn, for the purpose of dividing the ranks of "Free-thinkers" and "Spiritualists." Whatever the former class may profess to accept or reject, the latter are FREE-THINKERS, with RELIGION elevating their free-thought to heaven, and carrying their progress on to a life beyond the grave. In all else, none can transcend the breadth of their thought, or the freedom of its flight. Pending the dark day when this scope of thought shall be deemed

too narrow, although the hall of which we have been writing was avowedly dedicated to "Free-thought," we dare as Spiritualists to claim the deepest possible interest in its erection and the uses to which it is applied, in token of which, we gladly record the fact, that the corner-stone was laid by a ministering angel on earth, and one who confidently hopes and expects to continue that ministry in a higher life, the Mrs. John Logan, of whom mention has been made in earlier pages of this chapter.

The following extracts from the report of the ceremony in question are taken from the New Zealand *Echo* of October, 1881:—

"THE LYCEUM HALL.

"LAYING THE FOUNDATION 'STONE.

"The fifteenth of October, 1881, will ever be a memorable day in the annals of Free-thought in these Southern Colonies. On that day was laid the foundation-stone of the first hall in the colonies wholly devoted to Freethought, and it was laid with more *éclat* than any foundation-stone ever laid in Dunedin. The morning was bright, but rain seemed threatening, and about eleven o'clock it began to rain. At twelve there was a steady downpour, and many of the committee were afraid that the ceremony would have to be postponed. Between twelve and one o'clock, however, it cleared up, and after that there was no shower till late in the evening. The warm weather and the breeze soon dried up the streets, and from 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. the weather was all that could have been wished. Two platforms were erected on the site—one for the band, and one for the children and ladies and the F. T. Choir. Near the north-eastern corner a small space was fenced off, carpeted, and a drawing-room *suite* placed in it. Around the stone and the front of the platform there were numerous flowers and trees in pots, and flags were hung from poles, and evergreen decorations were around the front of the main platform. Mr. Thompson had taken great trouble in decorations, and arranging these nothing could have been better done. Shortly before three, a large crowd gathered in Dowling Street, and the main platform was soon filled with Lyceum children, the choir, and ladies and gentlemen. About three hundred were on the platform. At three Mrs. John Logan arrived, and on her stepping on the platform Mr. Thompson presented her with a splendid white camelia, and she and some other ladies were placed near the stone. The band arrived, numbering about forty performers, many musicians having kindly lent their assistance to the Freethought band, and then the ceremony began. The crowd at this time was not less, we believe, than 3,000 people. The band played the "Star of England Polka," with cornet solos, Mr. Chapman leading, and Mr. Parker conducting. The music was excellently rendered, Mr. Chapman ably executing the cornet solos. The choir and Lyceum children then sang the following version of the "New Zealand National Anthem," composed by Mr. Bracken, one of the members of the Association, namely:—

"God of Nations ! at thy feet,
In the bonds of love we meet,
Hear our voices, we entreat,
God defend our Freeland !
Guard Pacific's triple star,
From the shafts of strife and war,
Make her praises heard afar,
God defend New Zealand !

"Men of every creed and race,
Gather here before thy face,
Asking thee to bless this place,
God defend our Freeland !
From dissension, envy, hate,
And corruption, guard our State ;
Make our country good and great,
God defend New Zealand !

" Let our Love for thee increase,
 May thy blessings never cease,
 Give us plenty, give us peace,
 God defend our Freeland !
 From dishonour and from shame,
 Guard our country's spotless name,
 Crown her with immortal fame,
 God defend New Zealand !

" May our mountains ever be,
 Freedom's ramparts on the sea.
 Make us faithful unto thee,
 God defend our Freeland !
 Guide her in the Nations' van,
 Preaching love and truth to man,
 Working out thy glorious plan,
 God defend New Zealand !

" Mr. Braithwaite, as Chairman of the Building Committee, then stepped forward, and, handing Mrs. Logan a handsome silver trowel, said : I have the honour to ask you to lay in the customary fashion the foundation-stone of a building to be called the Lyceum, which, when erected, is to welcome within its walls people of all shades of opinion, and to be dedicated to freedom of conscience, to intellectual and social liberty, and to that higher morality which we believe results from obeying the laws of Nature. As Freethinkers, we naturally feel proud of the event that brings us together, which in some respects is an auspicious one. To-day we are to lay the foundation-stone of the first Freethought Hall in the Australasian colonies. Old and young are here to take part in the ceremony, each feeling hopeful of the ultimate results of such an unusual occurrence. We have with us—making glad the scene with their clear, ringing, merry voices—the children of the first Lyceum started in New Zealand, an institution fraught with the deepest interests to our movement. We have also with us most of the members who in years gone by initiated and sustained in season and out of season the Dunedin Freethought Association, the first of its kind in this colony. Yourself and your worthy husband are two of the number. What more fitting, then, than that you should lay the foundation stone of a hall to be used for the dissemination of principles for which you have ardently laboured ? I take great pleasure, then, on behalf of the Freethought Association, in presenting you with this silver trowel to perform the work for which we have met. It bears the following inscription :—' Presented by the members of the Freethought Association to Mrs. John Logan on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the Lyceum. October 15, 1881.' "

Following upon the ceremonial thus auspiciously commenced, were a number of excellent speeches, the most stirring and brilliant of which was one from the President of the Free-thought Society, the Hon. Robert Stout. In this address Mr. Stout defined the noble and unsectarian purposes to which the hall was to be devoted, and in a most eloquent and masterly style, drew pictures of the narrow creeds which chain the soul and erect cruel lines of demarcation between man and man, and the unbounded aspirations for light, love, truth, and kindness, which answer the Freethinkers' demand for a real religion of life, &c., &c.

Mr. Stout's address deserved to be written in letters of gold. It is something however to know that its characters of ink have met thousands of eyes, and made a deep and healthful impression upon thousands of earnest readers, and now it only remains to add, that the " Free-thought Hall," soon developed its handsome proportions above the foundation-stone laid by the honoured hands of Mrs. Logan. By this time it has echoed and re-echoed to the eloquent strains of many an inspired speaker. It has witnessed weekly gatherings of joyous children, gifted teachers, keen debaters, and unanswerable logicians. Noble strains of music have resounded through its walls, and the place fully realizes the spirit of its dedication, and forms one of the grandest mementos of the value of practical religion stimulated by the exercise of " Free-thought," at present erected in any part of the world.