

LETTER FROM DR. THOMAS

WEST HOBOKEN, HUDSON Co., NEW JERSEY,

JULY 30th, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS,

Yours of March 5th and April 24th have been duly received; also the *Ambassadors* to July inclusive, and the report of your discussion with one of Satan's ministers. Many hindrances have interposed, preventing an earlier reply. To shew you, however, that the delay was not through indifference, I may state that I took the said letters with me on my visit to Philadelphia and Baltimore, intending to answer them while there; but the weather was so intensely hot—from 95° to 100° in the shade—that it was as much as I was equal to, to do what public and private speaking turned up, without the fatigue of sitting at a desk or table to think of many things, and to condense much that might be said into a few written words as possible. Therefore, I brought the letters home again unanswered; and, as the heat has moderated, and being stationary a few days, I have determined to make an effort to do what may present itself to be done. The doing of it, however, will not be as pleasant as I could wish, owing to an hereditary disability affecting my left arm and hand, developed since 1862. You may see from the uncaligraphic evidence before you the nature of the affection. The mechanical operation of guiding the pen is positively disagreeable. It is a nervous affection of the arm that makes writing exceedingly burdensome.

I entirely agree with you in your graphic description of the barrenness of Christadelphia. Yet dry and withering as things appear within its limits, all exterior to it is scorched and destitute of any vitality at all. The Christadelphian Body in the days of the apostles abounded with professors whose hearts were but little attuned to the faith and hope they professed. Peter styles them *washed hogs*; and Paul, as little complimentary of them as he, terms them, "*liars, evil beasts, and slow bellies.*" These were creatures who had "crept in unawares," and "spoke evil of those things which they understood not;" clouds they were without water, carried about of winds of doctrine, and sporting themselves with their own deceivings, by which they beguiled unstable souls, and brought "the way of truth" into disrepute. The influence of these, who passed themselves off for Christadelphians, was more disheartening to the apostles, and the rest of the real brethren of Christ, than all the opposition that Satan could bring to bear upon them from without. Their influence was great, yea, strong enough to turn multitudes from the truth to fables, even to old wives' fables; and, as a consequence, to alienate them from the apostles, who had before turned them from pagan darkness, and the power of Satan. They were an element of the One Body, answering to sin in the flesh, which cannot be eradicated till this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall put on immortality. They were the occasion of great vexation and mortification to the apostles, whose work of faith and labour of love they neutralized, and rendered, to a great extent, ineffectual. They were zealous. They "zealously affected" the brethren, "but not well."

Their zeal was not for the honour and promotion of the truth as taught by the apostles; but for the development of a theology that should be more acceptable to flesh and blood, and profitable to themselves. "The truth as it is in Jesus" was too exclusive and uncharitable for their piety and liberality of soul. *It was too "sectarian;"* and they were terribly afraid of being made responsible for those characteristics deemed odious by the fashionable religionists of their day, which were inseparable from "the sect everywhere spoken against." The way of salvation taught by this sect was too narrow for them. They wanted a broader way, whereby some good, pious souls might be saved, who did not belong to the apostolic sect or party. The apostles were too sectarian for their benevolence and universal philanthropy. Their large hearts could not be bounded by so sectarian a dogma as, that only those could obtain eternal life who affectionately believed the gospel of the kingdom, were immersed, and continued in the teaching of the apostles. This made no provision for babes and sucklings, and pious Jews who assented to the truth, but did not approve of so sectarian an institution as baptism. Were all these to be damned because they didn't see things as Paul did; and because they had not been dipped? He that believeth the gospel and is baptised shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be condemned. This is the oracle of the Founder of the Sect. It is eminently "sectarian;" and whoever is faithful to it must, and can only be sectarian; and so sectarian were the apostles, that they turned all over to cursing, when the Lord comes, who did not believe and do according to the principles of the sect. "They lost their lives in labouring to establish, in all its alleged exclusiveness, illiberality and sectarianism."

Do you expect poor, decrepid, human nature to evolve holier influences now, than it was socially capable of under an apostolic ministration of spirit? I believe you do not. It would be very pleasant if there were none in Christadelphia but the called, the faithful, and the chosen; all of one mind, and "with one mind and one mouth glorifying God." If all understood the truth, and were governed by it, who profess to believe it, there would be a very different state of things to what has obtained in any age or generation, past or present. But ecclesiastical perfection is not to be expected in the absence of Christ. Till he comes, the wheat will be mingled with the tares in such proportion as to keep the faithful in tribulation and the exercise of patience. The kingdom of the heavens preached is still, parabolically, a net cast into the sea, and gathering all sorts of fish, good, bad, and indifferent. When the net is full, it is landed on to shore, and its contents are sorted by the master. All the good fish are gathered into vessels for his use, but the bad are cast away. This arrangement cannot be altered. The good and bad fish will continue to swim in the same waters until the end comes, and that end, it is to be hoped, is very near; for it is by no means pleasant or comfortable to swim in waters full of sharks and serpents of the sea.

I am glad you like *Eureka II*. It is a satisfaction to know that one's labour is not altogether ill-bestowed. There are many who profess to be interested in the Apocalypse, who have no desire to know, or, at least, do not manifest a desire to know, whether it sets forth a scriptural exposition or not. I am glad to find that there are so many more exceptions to this class in Britain than I expected. But neither *Eureka* nor its author can ever become popular so long as the present order of things lasts. When the truth becomes popular, then their fortune will change; till then, the names of the book and its author

must be sought for in the *index expurgatorices* of the names and denominations which fill the scarlet-coloured beast of Christendom, so called in the index of the proscribed.

I write from a sense of duty, not from inclination I have no inclination to write for the instruction of the general public; for it is manifestly not worthy of the truth. So strong is this disinclination, that I do not think I shall ever resume the *Herald*. I should be very sorry to see you “quit the field,” so long as you are loyal and valiant for the truth. Sink or swim by this. Do not be discouraged by the lukewarmness or abuse of your contemporaries. If you belong to the gold and jewels of the temple, the wood, hay, and stubble will be sure to honour you with their envy, hatred, and malice. You must have a face of flint and nerves of iron, if you would do real service in the house of God. It was only by such a constitution of face and nerve the prophets were able to acquit themselves worthily in the presence of a stiffnecked and perverse generation. They maintained the truth without compromise; they cried aloud, and spared not, and lifted up their voice like a trumpet, shewing Jehovah’s people their transgression, and Jacob their sins. This is as necessary now as in the days of Isaiah. The mingled people of Christadelphia need this cry to be sounded in their ears. Some of them, perhaps many of them, have a name that they live, when they may be really dead, or ready to die. Things are not as they ought to be. Sharks and serpents of the sea, creatures that have crept in unawares, are deadening the power of the truth by their evil influence. They “discuss everything and settle nothing.” The impression their twaddle makes upon the mind is, the impossibility of attaining to certainty in regard to things divine. They are like vultures and crows who feast on garbage. They can tear and rend; but to build up, and improve, to enlighten and adorn, is utterly beyond their reach.

I am revising *Elpis Israel* for republication entire. The whole or nothing is the advice of brethren here. Three hundred copies subscribed for will pay expenses for an edition of 500 at 3 dollars a copy in our own currency. It is thought here that these can be easily raised. Perhaps so. We shall see.

I have only eight copies of *Eureka* I on hand, out of 1,000. They sell here for 3.50 dollars. Expenses added on to this would make them too costly for purchasers in Britain. I have concluded, therefore, to keep them on this side the Atlantic.

I hope that all things are rectified in a certain direction. It is a monstrous conceit that “the only discipline the Ecclesia can enforce in these times is against false doctrine, and not against immorality of conduct.” Such a rule as this, approved by any society of professors, would make it a fellowship of iniquity. For myself, I would not belong to such a body of evil doers. The conceit is itself false doctrine, and, therefore, a matter of discipline. Such a dogma is symptomatic of immorality in the holder. An ecclesia should, at least, aim to keep itself free from the corruptions that are in the world through lust, though it may not succeed to the extent desired. To fellowship iniquity knowingly, and without rebuke, makes us partakers in the guilt.

The creatures you refer to, M. A., of Woburn, and L., of Glasgow, are not worthy of notice. Leave them to their native insignificance, and let them rail till they are exhausted.

The *Prophetic Watchman* refused to publish anything from the former, because of his evil course toward me in this country; and one of the church in Rochester, N.Y., told me they refused to fellowship him because of his bad spirit. He is repudiated in Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. He is only countenanced by creatures like himself; or by those on your side who do not, or will not, discern what he is, and want to make it appear in Britain that they have at least one or two appreciative correspondents in America! The messenger of Satan will find little patronage here, with a *prestige* derived from M.A., and its proposed agent in Fulton Street, N.Y. It is amazing to see how its credulity is imposed upon. If its "Intelligence and Notes" of things in Britain have no more substance than the stuff it "*culls*" from a stray letter or two from the "United States," they must be trashy indeed. The *Ambassador* has nothing to fear from such a *Messenger*, which no intelligent believer would care to receive as a gift, postage free.

A few weeks ago, I and my daughter Eusebia, paid a visit to the only ecclesia known to me in Massachusetts, or indeed in New England. I did not go like the correspondent from whose letter the Auld Reeky Messenger "*culls* extracts," (see p. 111, July, 1866,) uninvited and unsought for. I wish you to understand that I never do. I am never, therefore, subjected to the rebuffs he deservedly meets with. For two years they had been urging me to meet them in Worcester, Mass.; so having got *Eureka* II off my hands, I concluded to go. We staid with the Christadelphians there several days, speaking several times in a public hall, and conversing much in private with the brethren. I think they number about sixteen. A few others were there from a distance; two from New Hampshire, one from Maine, one from Lawrence, and one or two from Lowell. *Millerism* used to be strong in Worcester, and still exists there in the form of *Adventism*, which is *modified Millerism*; a medley of contrarious and conflicting opinions, blended with some truth concerning the kingdom. Some Adventists are immersed, some are not; and, generally speaking, they are creatures of very "easy virtue," in matters of faith. The so-called "churches" in Syracuse and Seneca Falls are of this stripe. Intelligent and faithful Christadelphians do not fellowship Adventists until they believe and obey the gospel. In this respect the brethren in Worcester are what some of your British Laodiceans would term very "sectarian." But this sectarian peculiarity is common to all true Christadelphians in America, and constitutes a broad line of demarcation between them and "kingdom-believers" of the Millerite, Adventists, Storrite, and such like genera of the unmeasured court of the Gentiles. When I went to Worcester some years ago, I spoke in Warren Hall. My hearers were mostly Millerites, upon whose ears my words fell as a tale upon the ears of the deaf. On one occasion, after I had finished, a half-witted sort of creature came up to me and said, "Is it not written, in the last days false prophets shall arise and deceive many?" "Yes, something like it." "Well," said he, "I think you are one!" This is the estimation I am held in by Millerites and world-burners generally to this day. If you declare the truth concerning the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, they denounce you for "an old carnal Judaizer" and "a false prophet." Very few Millerites, Adventists, or Campbellites, would come to hear the false prophet on his recent visit. Notwithstanding, however, the profound indifference to the truth in Worcester, it has a few earnest friends who will not allow its light to be extinguished by the Satan without, or timid popularity-hunters, and self-seeking zealots—such as the *Messenger's* "United States" *spermologist*—within. They try to defend the truth from imposition; therefore

they do not recognize as Christadelphians, or brethren of Christ, all in those parts who prate about a kingdom, *mere spermologizers*, although they may have been under the water. They require entire separation from the unclean sects and parties of pietists around them; a faith that works by love of the truth believed; the obedience of faith in immersion; and a walk worthy of God, who invites to His kingdom and glory. This so-called “sectarianism” keeps them from becoming popular; and enables them to grow, scripturally. Spermologists may creep in unawares; but so long as they contend earnestly for the faith, they are not likely to be swamped by them. We had a very pleasant visit with these brethren, who are the salt of Yankee land. You have some subscribers among them, who are well-pleased with the *Ambassador*, and do not consider it a whit too “sectarian.” They have no sympathy with *sects in the sect* everywhere spoken against, and which is necessarily a sect in its antipathies to Judaism and Gentilism. One who is loyal to this divinely-constituted sect cannot be other than sectarian. The hue and cry against the sectarianism of such is carnal, infidel, and shallow. Sectarianism is that which is peculiar to a sect, and a sectarian is one of a sect who holds the principles and doctrines of the sect. To be unsectarian is to *profess* to hold the tenets of a sect, and to be in sympathy with the holders of the tenets of other sects, which neutralize or destroy the principles of the sect he professes to belong to. Thus, he may say, that to become a brother of Christ, or a Christadelphian, it is necessary to believe the gospel of the kingdom, and be immersed; and while he says this, he sympathises with episcopalians, presbyterians, rhantized dissenters, and so forth, who have not been immersed; and with others who have been dipped without previous understanding of the gospel of the kingdom and name—he sympathises with these as Christians? What is such a professor as he? He is one who professes to know the truth, but practically denies it. He is eminently unsectarian; one who does not heartily believe what he professes. His non-sectarian proclivities are symptomatic of treachery to the truth, which he would be very apt to betray for a few pieces of silver. The fewer there are of these unsectarian, “liberal christians,” in any country, the healthier will that sect be which was founded by the apostles. They only weaken the hands, enfeeble the knees, and discourage the hearts of those among whom they have crept in unawares. They are embryo traitors to the truth; and if their infidel liberalism were to prevail, the truth would be as dead in Britain and America as in Vienna and Rome.

On my return I received the following from the interior of Pennsylvania and not far from the confines of Ohio. The inquirer was recently from Minnesota; but when he wrote to me, living for a time near one of your subscribers, brother T. H. Dunn, who is a pillar of the faith in those parts, and engaged in active warfare with the enemy.

“Some,” says the writer, “have disregarded the substitutional testator in order to make out that the Deity died. Now, was Jesus Christ the substitutional testator and the mediatorial testator; and do they both mean the same thing? Was Christ the substitute provided, and officiating bodily in the place of Deity?”

“Was Christ from His birth to His immersion any more Deity than any other man; save that he was begotten by the Holy Spirit and the will of the Deity, and called the Son of Deity and the Son of Man? Was there any Deity-Spirit about Him before immersion;

or was He only a man of a perfect organization, intellectually and morally, and, therefore, wiser than other men—a substitutional testator in the Deity's place, with a sinful *nature*, and sinless *character*? When at His immersion the Deity manifested Himself in His son by His Holy Spirit, was it then that He became equal with the Deity, not being so before?"

Supposing that questions of this sort may be in agitation at your end of the cable, and demanding solution, I send you a copy of my *general* reply, for a very particular one would require too much for its elaboration. (The reader will find the article here referred to on page 190.)

About July 7, I again left home to pay visits southward. The first place I halted at was Philadelphia. I found the brethren there with undiminished interest in the truth; and desirous to add to their faith those excellent qualities which evince that they have escaped from the corruptions which are in the world through lust. The nucleus of the congregation here originated from the brethren in Baltimore; and upon this was grafted others from the Baptists in Philadelphia. These are chiefly one family, which was caused to take interest in the truth by a brother in the flesh who had migrated from the society in New York City several years ago. He was one of our presiding brethren, then highly esteemed by us. He talked intelligently of the faith, had been re-immersed, and appeared to be of the gold of the temple. But men require to be placed in circumstances of trial to show what they really are. They may be able to stand in a crowd, but not alone. Mr. Charles Hallib--t--n was of this class. For a few months after leaving New York city, he remained firm, and laboured diligently, and not altogether fruitlessly, to interest his sister and family in the truth. But times were hard with him, and he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. He obtained a situation as book-keeper in the employ of one who may be said to own the Baptist congregation pecuniarily. He attended his patron's temple under pretence of doing good. He was not "sectarian." He would lend a hand in the Sunday School; and pray with these unenlightened sinners, who had been dipped in water, thereby recognizing their acceptance with God, without believing the gospel of the kingdom. This was "liberal Christianity" through which he was "doing good;" that is, stripped of all hypocrisy, making his calling and election to the book-keepership sure and permanent. Things were now unsectarianly comfortable and pleasant. He was promoted to the deaconate. He who had been a president of an enlightened community of believers was now a deacon of a church ignorant of the first principles of the oracles of God, and, therefore, "alienated from the life of God!" This was a single step from the sublime to the impious. He now revealed himself in his true colours. It is the first step from the path of rectitude that pains. His conscience soon became thoroughly seared and irresponsive to all scriptural impressions. It is now thoroughly encrusted with a hard, unsightly scab; so that he positively denies having ever professed what we hold to be the truth! Unfortunately, however, for the credibility of this, there is a letter written by him on record in the *Herald* which testifies against him. But since he has become a deacon, and living under the droppings of the Baptist sanctuary, so deadening is the influence of error, that he has become oblivious of his former self!

But, while he and his other half have turned traitors, or betrayers of the truth, his sister and family have withdrawn from his deaconal jurisdiction, and obeyed the faith he finds it to his interest to deny. The exchange has been a gain to the truth; all the loss has been his I think there are now some thirty members, who seem to work together in harmony and general confidence. Spermologists, especially the *Messenger's*, are at a discount so great that they are uncurrent among them. The *Messenger's* spermologist invited himself to their meeting. They permitted him to come; but they were so disgusted with him, that if ever he is seen there again, it will be in opposition to their wish. The creature obtruded himself some weeks ago at 24, Cooper Institute, trying to obtain evidence against me, and threatening to sue me at law, on the supposition that I wrote the article enclosed! But he was barking up the wrong tree. The squirrel was not there. I had nothing to do with the article; no more than I would condescend to have to do with him, or any that give him countenance. The brethren whom he had accused of worshipping me indignantly denied it; and refused, on my suggestion, to listen any longer to his twaddle. The only persons in these parts that tolerate him is a little squad in Williamsburg, N.Y., starving upon the husks of his carnal mind; but even they, I am informed, regard him as an incarnation of conceit. When a certain lady-correspondent of yours heard of his being at the meeting, with one of these Williamsburgers, she very aptly termed the situation, "Satan among the sons of God accusing Job."

I spoke thrice in Philadelphia to small audiences. The weather was intensely hot, and the place of meeting ineligible. This prevented some from being there; in addition to which, the sinners, who cheat and lie all the week, are too sabbatarianly obedient to the law of Constantine, the Man-child of Sin, to run the cars for public accommodation. Hence, there were some across the Delaware that could not attend. The brethren here sing admirably. They use, as we do in New York and Baltimore, the Scottish Version of the Psalms and Paraphrases; and where an unscriptural turn is given to the testimony by the versifier, we alter it.

From Philadelphia I went to Baltimore, Md., where I was very kindly received. The brethren here are more numerous than in Philadelphia. The ecclesia is older by several years. It commenced, I think, in 1853, as the result of my introduction of the gospel of the kingdom to the attention of a Campbellite church in 1847. The truth was accepted in theory by two influential members, one of whom obeyed it at length, and came out from among them. This was the late brother William P. Lemmon, originally a member of the Baptist Church, and president of their Bible Society. I immersed him in the Petapsco, I think about six years after my first address on the subject at North Street. I remember this incident well. I had just obeyed the gospel myself, and visited Baltimore to offer it to my friends there. I was doubtful whether they would receive me civilly, seeing that I had renounced their theory. I called on Mr. Richard Lemmon, and asked if they would hear me? He said he would see. After breakfast he called upon the deacon. He agreed to divide the responsibility with him of advertising an appointment for me at their meeting-house on Sunday evening. It was given out after the morning meeting; but one of the members rose and objected to my speaking in their sanctuary, on the ground that wherever I went my doctrine caused agitation and division. It was then put to the vote whether or not I should be permitted to speak there. The only hand lifted up against it was the objector's.

Thus the appointment was confirmed; I spoke; the word took root, and has grown into a society of over thirty members. This development is attributable to the joint labours of brethren Lemmon and Packie, assisted by *Elpis Israel*, the *Herald*, and so forth. Brother Packie is well-known and respected in Baltimore, and not to be moved by the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive. All the brethren have full confidence in his integrity and scriptural intelligence. They know his disinterestedness, and are well aware that what he labours for is their spiritual well-being in the kingdom of God. Though he has some sixteen men in his employ, whose work he lays out with his own hand, he can find time to study the word, and to handle it scripturally to the edification and comfort of those who hear him. His vigilance is praiseworthy; so that he will not lend himself to the purposes of printers and wandering spermologists, who, under pretence of doing good, scatter nonsense broadcast; and distract the minds of well-disposed, though not very acute, inquirers after the truth.

I spoke in Baltimore four times. If I were to report to you what I said, you would certainly have to enlarge the *Ambassador*, if you thought to give currency to it there. A great deal may be said in eight hours. But, I cannot begin to write about it here. The general effect of it was a stirring of them up to watch and keep their garments, that when "the Lord the Spirit" comes as a thief they may be found ready. They are trying to discern the signs of the times, which are very remarkable. Certainly our redemption draweth nigh, and the judge standeth at the door. May we all be prepared for what is about to be revealed.

At the earnest request of brother Packie, who offered to pay the expense, I visited the brethren in Norfolk, Virginia. I arrived there by steamer on Saturday morning, after a pleasant voyage along the Chesapeake Bay of twelve hours. Jehovah's spirit is quieted in these parts for a short time. War has ceased; but peace has not brought prosperity. The brethren have fared better than they feared they would. Their firm stand against the military authorities of both governments, while all around them were playing the hypocrite with both parties, has given them a commanding position in Norfolk. They number about twenty-five. One of them is an ex-preacher of Methodism. He sacrificed all his vested interests therein, and obeyed the gospel. He now cultivates a small farm up the Elizabeth river, and, with a clear conscience, lives the life of an honest and respectable man.

The brethren there hire a small meeting-house of the Presbyterians, at six dollars a month. I think there may have been 150 people out. I spoke to them twice. In all about four hours; but though very hot, and the benches very hard, they sat it out manfully. They seemed very glad to see me, and expressed themselves as very thankful for my visit; for they had almost concluded that I had forsaken them, as I had not been there for years. Although invited to Richmond, I did not go farther into Virginia, the heat being so oppressive. I never felt it so intensely before. You send some *Ambassadors* to Norfolk and Richmond, and will receive orders from Baltimore and Philadelphia. In Richmond there are more professors than possessors of the truth in the love of it. The only support of it there are those in connection with brother Davison. This brother was formerly a deacon in the Baptist church, and highly respected by his quondam brethren. He lost

everything he had by the conflagration of the city. His hospitality was notable among all the brethren while he was able to do. He practises dentistry, and is, I think, standing again upon his feet.

They have a custom in Norfolk and Richmond in the memorializing of the bringing into force the Abrahamic covenant by the death of its Mediatorial Testator, which is peculiar to themselves. The table, say they, is the Lord's, not their's. *He* brake the bread and GAVE it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat. Christ not being here in person to break it. "His body, the Ecclesia," breaks it instead—takes and eats. Each one rises, walks to the table, and helps himself. By this custom, they relieve themselves of the responsibility of handing the elements to those who might be improper persons. Whoever rises and takes it does so on his or her own responsibility. If unworthy, they eat and drink to their own condemnation, not to the condemnation of those who protest against the fitness of persons eating who are not in the faith; or who, being in, do not walk worthy of God and the high vocation to which he has called them. With them, therefore, the breaking and eating is not a test of fellowship. They hand it to no one, and withhold it from none. If traitors to the faith like Judas, or immersed sinners, eat it, so much the worse for them; their test of fellowship is not the eating of bread, but "walking in the light as the Deity is in the light, and so having fellowship one with another" (1 John, 1:7,) which is the only true ground of fellowship exhibited in the word.

I returned to Baltimore on July 25th, and spoke next evening at Entaw Hall. On the Friday following, I left for New York. The next Sunday I spoke at 24, Cooper Institute, and afterwards assisted at the baptism of three men and three women. I am now at home for a few days; and if I were to follow my inclination, I would leave it no more until death or the Lord come. I like to be with faithful brethren; but to talk to a stupid, besotted, and gainsaying world on divine things is like fruitlessly squandering one's vitality and time and beating the air. Next week I am off for Toronto; thence to Detroit, Milwaukie, Ogle Co., Illinois, Henderson, Ky., Hayfield Pa., and then home about the first week in October, to resume the preparation of *Eureka* III.

As to your enquiry how I am "off financially," I reply that brethren in divers remote parts of the earth, under the conviction that I cannot write, speak, travel, and exist on air alone; and that if I could, there is no obligation resting upon me so to sacrifice time, strength, and information for their benefit, without their enjoying the privilege of co-operation, in what they regard a work of faith and labour of love, furnish me occasionally spontaneous and unprompted supplies, which, on the principle you note, that "a lot of littles make a mickle," have hitherto been sufficient. As yet I have had no occasion to make spermological appeals to the brethren, such as I see in the *Auld Reekie Messenger* for July, and trust I never shall. I do not sit at home compounding quack lozenges or salves, taking "*a view of the idea of trying to present the gospel to the city of Boston,*" or any other city! What an unsubstantial view! The brethren at large have more sense than to enter upon such a speculation. If I had occupied the past thirty years in "having a view of the idea of trying to present the gospel," I should not have been able to answer your question as above. Without waiting to "interest the brethren at large," in such a ghost of an idea, I communed not with flesh and blood, for I had no brethren at large, but went at

the work, which developed what you know and see, and hear on every side. A creature that waits for cash, merely viewing an idea, is not fit for any good work. If the truth be really in a man, he will be up and doing as opportunity serves. His self-denying labour will commend itself, and *he will be sought after*, and have more work than he can do. We have no hirelings among us in this country. By *us*, I do not mean Adventists, “the brethren in the West,” and such like. I mean among Christ’s brethren. I do not know of any; nor do I think they will fall into such an error. All effort is spontaneous, and without bargain, recompensed according to the sense of benefit received, and not the self-assessed, supposed ability of the receiver. The brethren in Worcester will look after Boston when the time comes. If “the brethren at large” wish the gospel introduced into that city of the Pharisees, they cannot do better than to communicate with them, rather than hiring a mere self-seeking speculator in ghostly ideas. There had better continue to be no gospel at all in a city if the gospel is to be disgraced and put to shame by unreliable and conceited pretenders.

I perceive that G. Dowie, at length in effect, confesses the true character of *The Messenger of the Churches*. He says: “There have been so many papers of late on out-of-the-way, *weird* topics, of which the present number of the *Messenger* contains a full share,” &c; that he calls for articles “of a *sunnier* character.” It is truly a *weird* concern! *Weird* signifies “skilled in witchcraft” *Weird topics* are subjects of discourse, skilled in witchcraft. This is the meaning of the phrase as nearly as it can be got at. It may indeed be expressed by the word *sorcery*, which is divination by the assistance, or supposed assistance, of “evil spirits.” *Weird topics* in their elaboration are divination by evil spirits. The evil spirits are the writers; and the divination their guessings and conjectures, in which they “discuss everything and settle nothing.” We learn from the said Dowie that his miscalled *Messenger of the Churches* is full of sorcery—therefore a Messenger of Sorcery! Surely I have not been uncharitable in styling it the Messenger of Satan! If sorcery do not belong to Satan, to whom is it to be assigned? Sorceries belong to the rest of the men who repent not (Rev. 9:20, 21,) and by which they deceive the people.—(Rev. 18:23.) “Churches” that endorse and sustain a messenger full of *weird topics* are deceived communities, and no better than “the names” of which the Gentile scarlet-coloured beast is full.—(Rev. 18:3.) Surely such a messenger if he were ever alive, should be put to death according to the law in Lev. 20:27.

From the testimony of your correspondent which corroborates mine, things do not improve in Glasgow.

And now, I think I have cleared up arrears. My family join with me in kind wishes to you and yours, and to all not bewitched with sorceries; and that peace may be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, is the fervent prayer of yours faithfully in the hope of the kingdom and the patience of the saints.

JOHN THOMAS.