

Light and Life

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"Mysticism, properly understood, represents the Spiritual side of Life."—F. F.

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"Symbolism in the Bible."

By Rev. Abiel Silver.



HE science of correspondences is a language. It may be denominated THE language, for it is the sure language of Jehovah. It is therefore a living language. It is the only language that has spirit and life. It is a *universal language*: the language in which not only the Holy Word speaks, but the mountains and streams, the winds and the ocean; yea, earth and skies and universal nature with her ten thousand tongues are speaking to us. Does any one doubt the existence of such a language? Let him learn to read it. No one who has ever

learned it has any such doubts. Does he say no one ever has learned it? How does he know that? Thousands of persons, entitled to respect, say they have studied it, and find it to be a most sure and certain language. Where, then, rests the weight of evidence? Who is the best judge of a book, he that has read it, or he that has not?

By this science, the Sacred Scripture is convincingly proved to be the Word of the Infinite Jehovah. All its parts thereby blend into harmony. The darkest and most obscure passages are opened and explained; and the simplest portions are filled with profound wisdom. Every passage is, indeed, seen to be "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy iii. 16), according to the apostle's declaration. But without this science, has any one found it to be so? If the Bible was given by God to man to teach him something, was it not intended to be understood? Has God endowed man with reason, addressed him as a

reasonable being, said to him, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah i. 18), given him His Word as a rule of life, to show him what he must do and what he must not, and, at the same time, interspersed throughout the Word thousands of things which he can never understand, and which are of no use to him? Not so. Infinite Wisdom has not so indefinitely expressed Himself that He cannot be understood.

The difficulty is with man. He, by a false and evil life, has lost the pure language of analogy in which God speaks. But, by the divine mercy of the Lord, that language is again restored. That sublime key to the inexhaustible treasury of intellectual wealth contained in the Word and Works of God is now mercifully made known. The great seminary of scientific wisdom has become accessible to man. For this divine key not only unlocks God's book of Revelation, but also, at the same time, His book of Nature. And as we are thereby conducted within the veil of the letter of the Word, and permitted to feast upon the pure bread and water of life, and to admire the glory and beauty of that divine sanctuary; so we have, also, a passport within the veil of universal nature where we find, enthroned, pure spiritual philosophy, expounding the invisible ligaments which unite heaven and earth: elucidating those otherwise incomprehensible affinities which exist between life and matter, God and nature, the mind and the brain, the soul and the body. In passing this veil, we enter the School of all schools, look up to the Teacher of all teachers, and study the Science of all sciences. The books we read are the Books of all books—the book of Nature and the book of Revelation. They are books published by the same Author, they illustrate the same principles, and lead to the same conclusions. Both books are necessary to the proper study of either. All the objects in nature are so many indices pointing to the history of their creation and the cause of their existence, and refer us for information to the written Word, to which they are the grand concordance. At such a seminary, with such books, and such a Teacher, we may obtain heavenly wisdom and feast on angels' food.

But to a mind unimbued with the science of correspondences, what we have said are mere assertions rather than reasons. Let us, then, assign some reasons why the Holy Word has a spiritual sense within the letter. And, first, it is because it contains divine thoughts and feelings which are infinite in wisdom and love. Now, the literal sense is in man's language. The meaning of the words of that language is limited. Men understand their full import. There must, therefore, be a sense within and above the literal definitions of the terms, or it is the language of men only, and not of God. And the Lord Himself declares that there is such a sense, when He says to us, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." For He made this declaration to teach men, that He does not mean by the words "flesh and blood," what they are defined to mean in man's language: but that He means infinitely more. For spirit and life are infinite and eternal things: such things as He desires to feed our souls with, that they may live for ever. Now, if we know that "flesh" is a symbol of goodness, and "blood" a symbol of truth, we have, at once, a definite though limited understanding of what the Lord there means, and it is highly interesting and instructive. But, otherwise, we cannot distinctly understand what He does mean by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. And the correspondences here are exceedingly beautiful. Our physical man is composed, principally, of flesh and blood: our spiritual man, if in order, is composed of goodness and truth. Thus there is a perfect correspondence between the mind and the body. Now, it is because the natural substances, of which the body is composed, correspond to the spiritual substances of which the mind is composed, that the mind and body can be united and exist together.

Again, all spiritual life is by means of the union of goodness and truth ; and all physical life, by means of the union of flesh and blood. Therefore, if we well understand the science of correspondences, we may know, from the fact that, as the drawing of the blood from the flesh produces physical death ; so, also, the separation of goodness and truth in the mind produces spiritual death. We must love the truth, or die spiritually. And so the natural things which we eat and drink to supply flesh and blood to the physical man and keep it alive, have their perfect correspondences in the goods and truths which the Lord says the mind must eat and drink, or have no life in it. Thus, with this scientific light, the mind is illuminated, the soul cheered, and the heart refreshed ; but without it, that beautiful Scripture is involved in clouds of uncertainty, and its richest blessings are unenjoyed. And when we further know that evils and falsities are goods and truths perverted, and that such substances, when taken into the mind, poison the affections and thoughts, and make the soul diseased, we may also know that the poisonous substances of the earth, to which those evils and falsities correspond, will, when taken into the body, make it also sick and diseased. "Flesh and blood," therefore, when mentioned in the Word, may mean either things good and true, or things evil and false, according to the sense in which they are used. With this scientific light in the mind, the true use of the words "flesh and blood," wherever expressed throughout the entire Word, may be readily seen ; and thus, Scripture, otherwise dark and obscure, will emit a clear and certain light.

Now, there is much said in the Word of "blood," and of "innocent blood ;" of "shedding *innocent blood* ;" of "taking away *innocent blood* ;" of "condemning *innocent blood* ;" of "putting away the guilt of *innocent blood* ;" of "betraying *innocent blood* ;" of "sinning against *innocent blood*." And yet, there can be no such thing as innocence, or guilt, in material blood. This, everybody must know. All understand that it is the mind that is innocent, and not the blood. Blood is therefore used because it denotes a living principle of the mind. And it is only because truth filled with love is the very life of an innocent mind, and blood, as the life of the body corresponds to that life, that the blood of such a person is said to be innocent. It is declared in Isaiah that, "The sword of the Lord is filled with blood"—an expression which strikes terror to many minds ; and yet, its real meaning is beautiful and consoling. The *sword of the Lord* always signifies the divine truth of the Word in its powers to conquer and destroy evils and falsities. Therefore a sword is said to go out of the mouth of the Lord, because He speaks the truth. "The sword of the adversary," mentioned in the Word, signifies falsehood. For the Devil is "A liar, and the father of it." Then the phrase, "The sword of the Lord is filled with blood," would read, by correspondence, "The truth of the Word is filled with life." *Sword* denoting truth, and *blood* life.

"SPIRITUAL institutions can be remodelled only at high temperature. When the metal is cold they can be broken, but they cannot be altered."—*J. Froude.*

"BITTER indeed has been the disappointment which the clear perception of some men's minds—men in whose love of truth I trusted—has brought to my soul. All have made their peace, at least a long truce, with error. They are miserably afraid of following it up to its sources. What chance is there left for positive truth? None on the part of man's own exertions. The course of time will probably shake these monstrous structures of superstition by indirect means ; but till that crisis arrives even the most clear-sighted men are agreed to let them be undisturbed."—*Blanco White* (written in 1838).

Dr. John Pordage.

OF the life of this profound and noted mystic, only a few particulars are accessible. He was born about 1620, and died in London, 1698. In an interesting paper on the "Philadelphian Society," which appeared in *The Dawn* for December, 1862, some account of this remarkable man is given, which is full worthy of extract:—Dr. John Pordage, a leading member of the Philadelphian Society, was in 1654, or more than forty years previous to its formation, ejected from his living in Bradfield, Berkshire, by a commission formed in the time of Cromwell for ejecting scandalous and insufficient ministers. The charges against him were for alleged heresy in his preaching and conversation, and professing to see and to have communication with spirits and angels. He had been previously tried and honourably acquitted of all these charges by another ecclesiastical court, and was therefore, according to law, not liable to be tried on the same charges, but the commissioners were not to be hindered from their purpose by legal difficulties. One of them stated, before sentence of deprivation was passed on the doctor, that "The commissioners might receive such evidence as had been given against him as good and sufficient proof, though not esteemed so in courts of law, for that they were not tied by statutes and forms of law, but proceeded according to justice." Another, after expressing the concern of the court in passing sentence against him, said: "Though he did not think him guilty of maintaining those horrid tenets, yet they must proceed *secundum allegata et probata*."

This trial of Dr. Pordage is printed in a collection of *Celebrated Trials*, in six volumes, published in 1825. It is a curiosity in its way, and, as a specimen of extra-judicial proceedings, is enough to reconcile us even to the glorious uncertainty of the law in preference to the "justice" of incompetent and prejudiced men. The first article produced against him is "That some of Blavery, who spake against marriage, said they came from his house." To this he replied—"Their having been at my house does not so much as consequentially prove me guilty." "Article 2.—That his chamber hath been filled with spirits." "Answer.—I suppose that no one will swear to this article, since spirits being immaterial cannot fill a room." "Article 9.—That he hath frequent and familiar converse with angels." "Answer.—I do not see how this article, as mentioned (without expressing whether the communion be visible or invisible), can touch me." "Articles 10, 11, 12, 13.—Concerning a vision of a dragon and the apparition of spirits." "Answer.—I believe none will swear it as expressed in the articles, neither will I confess any particular apparitions until they are proved, but acknowledge many wonderful apparitions were, about four years since, seen in my house; and what can this hurt me? Was not Job terrified through visions? Did not Zechariah see Satan stand at the right hand of Joshua? Did not John behold a red dragon in a vision? Was not Christ Himself tempted of the devil by voice and vision? Now the servant is not greater than his Lord, therefore not exempted from attempts of the devil; neither is Bradfield or any other place exempted when God permits; and how can this render me scandalous, ignorant, or insufficient? It rather shows God hath blessed me with faith, and enabled me to overcome these trials by fasting and prayer. Could it be proved I used magic art, I ought to be punished, but it is hard to be prosecuted for the devil's malice." "Article 14.—That Mrs. Flavel was in a trance, and in it saw the philosopher's stone, which she knew to be the divinity in the humanity." "Answer.—I admire this should be charged to prove me insufficient, etc., when it is affirmed of another, and does not touch me."

According to the testimony of the witnesses brought against him, the apparitions and visions which gave rise to his prosecution were not either sought after or desired by the doctor, but were an annoyance to himself and the family. He acknowledged before the commissioners that he and some of his family had seen many dreadful apparitions in his house, and his servants deposed to their having seen lights and heard music several times, and one of them added that she had never lived in such a pious family. The doctor said that these apparitions had excited him to more frequent fasting and prayer, but his enemies had scandalised him with the name of conjuror and sorcerer, and that Mr. Ford (one of the commissioners), in his sermon at Reading Assizes, had uttered these words, viz., "That there is one of the most eminent church livings in the county possessed by a blasphemer, and in whose house the devil is as familiar as any of the family ; and shall the horns of these beasts never be pared off by the civil magistrate ?"

To prove the doctor's ignorance and insufficiency, George Haslet, of Bradfield, weaver, deposed that the doctor used the following words, viz., "That it was a vain thing to trust in the Blood of Him that died at Jerusalem, 1600 years since, or more, unless it were acted in me or in thee, for that was but in the type, the substance must be fulfilled in us ; and that Christ must be crucified in us, we must have the Jews and Pilate to put him to death in us, otherwise it was a vain thing to believe in Him that died at Jerusalem 1600 years since without us. He further deposed that about a month since, in a sermon at Bradfield Church, the doctor said, that doubtless the Apostle, by that text, 'Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?' did not mean these earthly bodies. That, in another sermon, the doctor delivered these words, that by that text, Genesis xviii. 19, *I know Him that He will command His children and His household after Him*, was not meant the outward household of Abraham, but his inward household, his will and affections, which he was lord paramount over ; and quoted the text in Joshua, 'As for me and my house we will serve the Lord,' which he said was the inward house and not the outward, and that the deponent judged the same contrary to the mind of the Holy Ghost."

To this the doctor replied "that, in the whole scope of his ministry, he usually gave the literal and allegorical sense of the Scriptures ; and that the deponent mistook, for that he had before opened the historical part, and was come to treat of the mystical interpretation, in making a spiritual use of the Scriptures, and applying them to the inward man ; and desired time to bring in his witnesses to prove it ; and urged that it was not justice to take this evidence against him just before they designed to give sentence, and not allow him time to make his defence by the testimony of other witnesses ; and the doctor objected to this witness that he was a drunkard, and that (as he had not wrote this down) it was improbable he should deliver it verbatim, and that a small mistake in the words might make a great alteration in the sense."

The doctor, after being ejected from his living, published a book in his defence, entitled *Innocency Appearing*, in which he gives an account of his temptations from evil spirits, and the succour which he derived from good spirits and angels, especially during the autumn of 1649, when the worlds of both good and evil spirits were opened to him. One account which he gives in this book of the doings of some of his ghostly visitors equals, if it does not surpass, the narratives of modern spiritualism, and renders the idea of imposture or hallucination untenable. "Besides these appearances within, the spirits made some wonderful impressions upon visible bodies without, as figures of men and beasts upon glass windows and the ceilings of the house, some of which yet remain. But what was most remarkable was the whole invisible world, represented by the spirits upon the bricks of a chimney in the form of

two half globes, as in the Maps. After which, upon other bricks of the same chimney, were figured a coach and four horses, with persons in it, and a footman attending, all seeming to be in motion, with many other such images, which were wonderfully exactly done. Now fearing lest there might be some danger in these images, through unknown conjurations and false magic, we endeavoured to wash them out with wet cloths, but could not, finding them engraven in the substance of the bricks; which indeed might have continued until this day had not our fear and suspicion of witchcraft, and some design of the devil against us, caused us to deface and obliterate them with hammers."

(To be Continued in next Number.)

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Editors The Father's Love.

GENTLEMEN—It was a fortunate day when I saw your announcement in *Light and Life*, and called for a sample copy of your paper. You kindly sent me Nos. 1 to 8 and 10. I now desire to get it regularly, and will pay for it, too. Your paper is too desirable a thing not to have. It is a relief to the mind after a weary day with "the wisdom of the learned," and a consolation to the heart in this age of sophistry and worldliness. It is, indeed, work from the heart, rather than from the mind, we need; and I judge that the proper study for those who have begun to live the new life of Christ's spiritual coming is a divine wisdom or a *theosophy of the heart*. Our spiritual life, our true personal existence, centres in the heart. It is not only the centre of life, but also the holder of personal consciousness, free-will, and reason; hence all that life, which is most characteristic of man as man, flows from out the heart. Let me quote but a few Scripture passages in this direction.

I. *An independent spiritual sense is attributed to the heart in the following passages:—*

John xii. 40—"Understand with their hearts;"—Luke i. 50—"In the imagination of their heart;"—Heb. iv. 12—"Thoughts and intents of the heart."

II. *The heart is understood to be possessed of a power to discern, morally and logically..*

Matt. ix. 4—"Wherefore think ye evil in your heart?"—Mark ii. 8—"Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" &c.

Any one familiar with the Bible will know that these passages can be multiplied with ease, and will understand that he who has made the heart his study can write a kardiology with as much precision as another would write a psychology.

But how many turn their hearts to "these things?" And yet we must maintain that the main life flows from the heart rather than from the mind, isolated from the fountain.

I trust we shall see you devote much space to this subject. It is certainly not contrary to Mind-cure. For what is mind but heart? *Abstract* mind does not cure! The Orientals have a deep understanding of this subject. In Sanscrit the word *manas*, which only too often is translated *mind*, without any qualifying word, means *heart, the focus of the personal life*, in the same sense as the Hebrew *leb* and the Greek *kardia*, as used in Scripture. In the heart the soul is at home with itself.—I am, yours truly,

C. H. BJERREGAARD, Librarian.

Alchemy and the Alchemists.

(Continued from page 53.)

The English translator of a work, said to have been written in Arabic by Alipili, entitled, *Centrum Naturæ Concentratum, or the Salt of Nature Regenerated*, in his address to "the Reader," says:—

"The highest wisdom consists in this, for Man to know Himself, because in him God has placed His eternal Word, by which all things were made and upheld, to be his Light and Life, by which he is capable of knowing all things both in time and eternity. . . . Therefore, let the high inquirers and searchers into the deep mysteries of nature learn first to know what they have in themselves before they seek in foreign matters without them: and by the divine power within them, let them first heal themselves and TRANSMUTE their own souls; then they may go on prosperously, and seek with good success the mysteries and wonders of God in all natural things."

This is but a reflection from what is found in the text of the volume in these words:—

"He that hath the knowledge of the *Microcosm*, cannot long be ignorant of the knowledge of the *Macrocosm*. This is that which the Egyptian industrious searchers of Nature so often said, and loudly proclaimed,—that every one should KNOW HIMSELF. This speech their dull disciples [meaning the Greeks] took in a moral sense, and in ignorance affixed it to their Temples. But I admonish thee, whosoever thou art, that desirest to dive into the inmost parts of Nature; if that which thou seekest thou findest not within thee, *thou wilt never find it without thee*. If thou knowest not the excellency of thine own house, why dost thou seek and search after the excellency of other things? The universal Orb of the world contains not so great mysteries and excellences as a little *Man*, formed by God to His own Image. And he who desires the primacy amongst the Students of Nature, will nowhere find a greater or better field of study than himself. Therefore will I here follow the example of the *Egyptians*, and from my whole heart, and certain true experience proved by me, speak to my neighbour in the words of the Egyptians, and with a loud voice do now proclaim: O MAN, KNOW THYSELF; in thee is hid the Treasure of Treasures."

The author then falls into the conventional mystic language about the central salt, the firmament, the astrum, the spiritual water, the watery spirit, the water of life, etc., etc., which would not be pertinent here, the point now in question requiring me only to show that *Man* is the Subject of Alchemy. Other points will arise in their due place.

Sandivogius, one of the most universally acknowledged *adepts*, speaks in the following manner of the *mysteries* involved in the nature of *Man*:—

"The most high Creator was willing to manifest all natural things unto Man, wherefore He showed to us that celestial things themselves were naturally made, by which His absolute and incomprehensible Power and Wisdom might be so much the more freely acknowledged; all which things the Philosophers [meaning the Alchemists], in the Light of Nature, as in a Looking-glass, have a clear sight of. For which cause they esteemed highly of this Art [of Alchemy], viz., not so much out of covetousness for gold or silver, but for knowledge sake, not only of all natural things, but also of the power of the Creator; but they were willing to speak of these things only sparingly and figuratively, lest the Divine Mysteries by which Nature is illustrated should be discovered to the unworthy; which thou [reader], if thou knowest how to KNOW THYSELF, and art not of a stiff neck, mayest easily comprehend,

created as thou art in the likeness of the great world, *yea, after the Image of God.* . . . Thou, therefore, that desirest to attain to this Art, in the first place, put thy whole trust in God thy Creator, and urge Him by thy prayers, and then assuredly believe that He will not forsake thee; for if God shall know that thy Heart is *sincere*, and that thy whole trust is put in Him, He will, by one means or another, show thee a way, and assist thee in it, and thou shalt obtain thy desire. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Pray, but yet work: God indeed gives understanding, but thou must know how and when to use it."

Cornelius Agrippa, an Alchemist, and, like many other great men, misunderstood in his day, writes:—

"There is one thing by God created [he does not name it, but he means man], the subject of all wonderfulness in earth and in heaven; it is actually animal, vegetable, and mineral; found everywhere, known [properly] by few, by none expressed by his proper name, but hid in numbers, figures, and riddles, without which neither alchemy nor natural magic can attain their perfect end."

The Duration of Evil.

No. I.

"When we cannot establish a theory, we must satisfy ourselves with the amusing haziness of an hypothesis."—*Dr. Ashburner.*

As to the duration of evil and the Divine sufferance of all its terrific consequences in this present state, I am a little helped to understand it by remembering that to "the Holy One who inhabiteth Eternity" there can be no divisional series of events: all must be seen and known in a timeless *now*, and the good to be educed from evil as present as the misery from which it is brought forth. While, on the other hand, transactions between the giver of life and the creature, that we think of as done, because a part of their process lies far behind our personal experience, are no more completed than the flow of life from that creative source. For example, we speak of the Creation as a past event, and yet manifestly it is incessantly proceeding, both as to matter and spirit (sharply dividing them as we do), and theology treats of the Atonement as a finished work, which, of course, in one aspect it is, but if completed the strife of nature in humanity would be at an end, the creature delivered from the vanity to which it was subjected by, in Boehme's language, "imagining after earthliness," and God would be all in all. For as "in Adam's soul the properties (of eternal nature) divided or distinguished themselves," all exercising own self-will, so Jesus Christ, the Atonement for sin, "assumed our sins in the Adamical Nature, understand the fountain out of which sin flows, viz., the divided forms or qualities of life in the human nature." (*Election, chap. 9, pars. 149 and 252.*) *Thus pacifying the wrath of God in man.* And while this is manifested in the human soul, the discordant working of the seven spirits of God *in it* remains unharmonized: a work only Omnipotent Love can effect and is effecting, but how gradually! For "the curse of God*" is come into the seven forms, so that they are in strife and enmity, and one form doth annoy the other, and can never agree unless they all seven enter into death, and die unto the self-will. Now, this cannot be except a death comes into them, which breaks all their will and

* "By God's curse or withdrawing, the heavenly body was shut up and the anger source set open."—*Sig. Re., chap. 7, par. 22.*

be a death unto them, as the Deity in Christ was to the human selfhood.—(*Signatura Rerum, chap. 12, par. 30.*)

Surely until there is universal death to the human selfhood the Atoning work is unfinished; and looking to what is to be seen of its life at the present time, one would say its vitality was unquenchable. What then can support the assurance of hope that "as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall *all* be made alive?" Since the alienation of self from God is death, how shall even the Omnipotent restore it to life? There must be many an individual who has asked the same question in utter despair, groaning under the oppressive yoke of self-seeking, and who has yet come to a sense of comparative emancipation, who is conscious that his or her centre of action has been changed from self-love to that of a higher will. Many must have been aware that the same liberating process has taken place in another soul, and if asked how it was done, it is certain they would tell of no slight affliction, no gentle breaking down of the will, and that they would thankfully attribute that deliverance to the corrective force of an infinite mercy which is supremely powerful. If that sovereign love can conquer one rebel fast bound in deathly selfishness, may we not believe that it has modes of crushing down resistance, terribly commensurate to the obduracy of other wills and equally successful?—whether in this world or another, in this *Æon* or another, is quite a distinct question; *possibility* and ultimate purpose is all I contend for. And on this ground, apart from all we gather from the Bible as to the success of the Saviour's agency [“He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.”—*Isaiah liii. 11*], if, as Boehme says, “nothing subsisteth in Eternity unless it hath been from Eternity” (*Three-fold Life, chap. 6, par. 74.*) it is unimaginable that the torments of sin should be endless. Seeing that the alteration of the “temperature” of the seven forms of Eternal Nature began in Time, is it not presumable that whatsoever evil has gone forth out of every *divided* form—not having arisen in the “Eternal fixity,” to use Boehme's phrase, as the souls of men and angels have—it *must* come to an end when all forms of derivative Nature are atoned by the restored harmony of Eternal Nature in Man; which evidently they will be when God is “all in all.” Speaking of the insect tribe, St. Martin says: “Ce sont clairement des êtres apocryphes, par rapport à la Nature.”* And so are evil spirits from the well springs of the divided properties; these, I fear, find in the human soul just that suitable atmosphere which enables them to exist, to gain a body and power for concentrated action in the temperament to which they belong. But enormously as this “apocryphal” birth must extend the dominion of evil, yet as time-born it would necessarily end in Time. Boehme never admits such a hope as this for the host of fallen spirits which we conveniently comprise in the singular number—the devil; and he speaks of their interminable torments with all the cheerful confidence of a seventeenth century Christian; but it is not as a prophet of the future that his revelations are most precious: he very distinctly says, when answering a friend's inquiry as to the end of the world, “This knowledge is not given to me,” and “it is not revealed to me, the Lord hath not commanded me to teach it. . . . I leave it for those to whom God would vouchsafe the knowledge of it.”—(*Epistle 4, pars. 72 and 34.*)

But, now, if we refuse to accept the creed of our forefathers on this point, how are we to understand the expression “losing his own soul?”—(*Matthew, chap. xvi. 26*)—and what possibility is left for hope, if we believe that when death finds any soul dominated by the four tormentive properties,

* “They are evidently apocryphal beings as regards Nature”—*St. Martin's L'Esprit des Choses, Vol. II., page 164.*

all ability to form a new will, and generate light and true substance by dying to the old, is irrecoverably lost?

Will any one dare say that we *ought not* to face this darkest of all enigmas? It cannot be altogether evaded if one feels for fellow creatures; and if the despairing answer of theology is invalid, what hypothesis can be offered?—that of ultimate annihilation, or of irresistible forces of spiritual progression as soon as the weight of matter is removed? This last is the favourite doctrine of spirit teachers in the present day: they assume that progress from bad to better and from better to best is as natural *after* death as the reverse appears before it. They speak as if there was a law of post-mortem spiritual levitation as invariable as that of gravitation in fleshly life. Yet Andrew Jackson Davis, one of the most notable Seers, has said: “Let it be perpetually remembered that the most interior part of man, his spirit *per se*, is an unparticled, indivisible, self-attractive, inter-magnetic, perfect, absolute, unprogressive essence.”—(*Pantheon of Progress*, page 75.) If it be perfect, of course there is no need of progress, but that seems a dejecting outlook for an immortal; and if all evil was only what could be sloughed off from the spirit as naturally as a snake casts its old skin, stationary goodness might be possible in other worlds—in this it is not; but that one expression, “self-attractive,” points to tendencies very unlike casting off spiritual habits. A pupil of Boehme must anticipate just the reverse—a far stronger astringency of the “hard, magnetic self-compression;” and as the conflict of this, with desire for mobility, increases anguish, *that* is my immediate hope for ruined souls: such anguish as may, even after death, create a sinking down of the soul’s fire to the abyss of Divine mercy, and a consequent rekindling of its light; feeble it may be, but initiating a new birth.

Let me for the time drop all conventional habits of speech, all decorous reference to received ideas, as well as all guard against ridicule for daring to enter upon this tremendous theme. It is rash and may be foolish, but whenever a life goes out near us which no stretch of charity can connect with hopes of bliss, thought *will* return to it again and again; and words that are but ignorantly conjectural may touch the darkness with faint gleams of partial elucidation, and suggestions almost too crude for coherent utterance, may rouse more powerful intellects to seize the longed-for clue.

“I HAVE NO home until I am in the realised presence of God; this *feeling* is my inward home; until it arrives I am not at home; or I am a wanderer without a home in the outward universe.”—*The New Nature in the Soul*.

“I SHUDDER at the self-deception to which well-meaning and talented men are exposed, when they endeavour to elevate individual interests into laws of Nature and order of Providence. The will of God is laid down with as much assurance and decision as if it had been supernaturally communicated to the author over an afternoon cup of coffee, and all this for the purpose of bringing eternal motion to rest, and preserving intact the Divine right of noble proprietors.”—*Letter to Perthes from a friend (early in present century)*.

“HOWEVER plainly and clearly deep truth may be described, the theosophical student can only obtain the apprehension of the sense, by the eternal innate idea of the truth rising as a vegetation in the mind, when only he first *understands* it. By the theosophical student is implied one who has made some considerable progress in the divine life; for as truth is the most inward thing of all, nothing less than the immediate powers of the Spirit of God could touch the centre of the idea, and awaken it into life.”—*Christopher Walton*.

Thoughts on Genesis.

By F. M. Van Helmont.

Verse 3. "And God said, let the light be made, and the light was made."

Verse 3. "And *Elohim* said, let there be light, and there was light."

Explication.

BUT to the end it may be more distinctly understood what the Spirit of the Lord did, and how this world, being conceived by *Elohim*, was brought forth out of the mystery of the eternal virtues and seeds of a former state or world; it is to be noted, that though there was an abyss, or deep of darkness, that is, hidden seeds, and water also, which was better than the darkness, as being capable or susceptive of light, as well as darkness; yet for all this, it was also of absolute necessity that, by the power of the Spirit of God moving the waters, the light should break forth upon our world from on high, not only to illuminate the waters, but the darkness also, successively. And to this end *Elohim* said, *Let there be light*, and immediately *there was light*. He said, to wit, with a word of His mind, that is, by thought conceived within Himself. Now as he that speaks gives forth a vital force or power, which is received by the hearers, so likewise *Elohim*, by His inward speech or efficacious thought, sent forth virtue from Himself into the object which, although whilst it was yet with Him, it were *Elohim*; yet as soon as it was made His object, it began to have a particular or proper being of its own. And this power or virtue being received by the creature, makes *light*, that is, such a virtue whereby things do strive to raise themselves from confusion to order, from evil to good, from their seeds to perfection and consummation, and from the *creature-state* to *Elohim*.

Annotations.

God said.—Moses could not better have expressed both the power and wisdom of God. For because *He said, and it was done*, He was transcendently powerful. And forasmuch as He said, *Let there be light*, He was also sovereignly wise; for what could He have made better than the *light*? Moreover, by saying or speaking, we are here to understand nothing else, but thinking, because there were no auditors. The philosophers call it *the word of the mind*. And to say within Himself, *Let there be*, is the same as to will that a thing should be; and therefore to say or speak, with the Hebrews, often signifies to *command*. And forasmuch as the words of God are of great efficacy, so that our proverbial expression may, in the rigour of truth, be affirmed of him, *said and done*; it must necessarily follow that in speaking He sends forth a certain power, since the very words of men are not without their force and energy upon the hearers. For sure it is, that in every word uttered by us, there is something of our own substance, or a going forth of our life, whereby we become really united to others, and dwell in them, without any division of ourselves; and for this reason it is that we are bound to give an account for every idle word. Now, if this be true of our words, as certainly it is, how exceedingly more efficacious, then, must we suppose the words of *Elohim* to be, whose *words are Spirit and Life*? Moreover, it was necessary that the efficacy proceeding from *Elohim* should tend to and effect some object; we must, therefore, conclude that there was something, as it were, besides Himself, though as yet within Himself, *viz.*, the object conceived in His mind.

Let there be Light.—The vulgar version hath it, *Fiat Lux, et facta est Lux*: *Let the light be made, and it was made.* But according to the Hebrew truth, *Be the light, and the light was*, which imports that this operation was emanative or immediate, without any gradual alteration; for the things which are made or done are not made immediately, as soon as they begin to be made, but need some interval of time before they be made and finished; whereas here, no sooner did *Ælohim* speak, but the light immediately existed.

Light.—What the nature of the light is may be known from what we have already said of the darkness, for the knowledge of opposites is the same, that is, when one is known, the other is so likewise. Light, therefore, is the same thing with order; or, rather, light is a force or power tending to order, and the brightness or lustre proceeding from the light is the order itself. And, in like manner, in darkness we may distinguish between the spirit or power of darkness, and the darkness itself; that is, between the force that strives to bring in or increase confusion, and the confusion itself. For there is in the darkness, as well as in the light, a power to increase and diffuse themselves, yet this power is greater in the light. Forasmuch as the darkness, by diffusing of itself, loseth its property, and becomes lessened or weakened; whereas the light is of a quite contrary nature, for its perfection consists in communicating and imparting of itself to others. A perpetual war therefore is maintained between the light and darkness, and no man shall be crowned but he who hath fought it out lawfully. In the superior and glorified state, the light hath overcome the darkness, and got above it: but in this, our orb, the fight continues, but yet so that the light always triumphs; and though the darkness may chance to prevail in this or the other part, yet in the whole it is always baffled; for even then, where it hath got the mastery, its victory serves only for a sword to stab itself withal, and is ruined by its conquest, as before hath been hinted, and shall be further spoken to in the sequel, where we shall have occasion to discourse of the seed of the woman and the serpent. We enter into life by the way of death, as appears in a grain of corn, which is not quickened, except it die; so that the prevailing of darkness for a season doth at length tend to the greater increase and advantage of light, though indeed the light can never overcome all darkness, as being infinite also, and having its own abyss. Moreover, God is said to be light, because in Him is the true light, without darkness; or order, without confusion; wherefore we also, so far as we are of God, are called *children of the light*. For, as Boethius hath it, *with respect to our original and author, God, we are all noble and free-born.*

And there was Light.—To wit, no sooner had God said, *Let there be light*, but the light was; that is, *Ælohim*, conceiving the light in thought by a powerful word of the mind, and constituting to Himself an object of thinking, into which he might send forth His inward power, in so doing, I say, He oued or produced the same, and gave existence to something separate from Himself, and brought forth without Himself. This process illustrates the nature of the spiritual conception and birth; for, in like manner, though in a far inferior degree, *Adam* also should have begotten and propagated his posterity, in case he had not fallen, and coated himself with this gross earthly shell.

"No man ever grew to his spiritual height without sympathy, nor can he ever. We are intended to live in love with one another, and any contradiction of this fundamental law entails just so much halfness, and futility, and narrowness of insight."—*Journal of Caroline Fox*, vol. I., page 269.

Fundamentals.

From Dr. W. H. Holcombe's "End of the World."

THERE is no life in the universe but the uncreated life of God, who is the infinite, self-existing, and perpetual fountain of life.

All the so-called forces of nature pre-exist in the spiritual world as spiritual forces : and become natural forces when they flow into the molecules of physical structures. Thus the Divine Love becomes the heat, and the Divine Wisdom the light of the material universe.

The spiritual and natural worlds are therefore consociated like the soul and body of man : and the natural exists and persists from moment to moment only by the influx of the spiritual into it.

Our life is not a creation of God in us, but a gift to us : an inbreathing of life from Himself. All things exist, consist, and live from moment to moment by this inflowing breath of God.

"*The breath of the Almighty hath given me life*" (Job xxxiii. 4).

"*He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*" (Acts xvii. 25).

"*In whom we live, move, and have our being*" (Acts xvii. 28).

The pantheistic theory is not true, for so soon as life, the divine gift, passes into the organic structures of the human spirit, it ceases to be God's life, and becomes man's life, subject to man's will, which is capable of reacting, if it chooses, against God. Otherwise it would either be God or an unconscious automaton. Hence the free agency and moral responsibility of man.

God's life is the Divine Love, and our life is our love, manifested by means of our affections.

To our finite perceptions the universe consists of ourselves and others, the ego and the non-ego.

Our love therefore is twofold, egoistic and altruistic, the love of self and the love of others.

God has no self-love because He is infinite : and we approach to God in proportion as we are dead to self and alive to others.

The least predominance of the egoistic loves over the altruistic loves disturbs the moral order of the universe.

"*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*"

The voluntary surrender of our own will to God's will, which is done by obeying his commandments, effects a co-operative union between God's life and our life, so that God's will works in us both towards ourselves and others.

God identifies Himself with His children, and acknowledges as love to Himself that love which is shown to His creatures.

"*Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.*"

"*Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.*"

When self-love yields its place to God's love, we love God as we had loved ourselves, and we love our neighbour as God loves us.

"*This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.*"

The commandments of God are the expressions of His will, and therefore of His life and His love : for we will what we love.

They are the laws of being which He would obey Himself were He finite like us. Christ fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law.

To obey the commandments of God is to co-operate with Him, to be at one with Him, to become like Him. It is the covenant between God and man.

Religion is such a union of the Soul with God that the divine life and will are carried out into the life and conduct of the individual.

True religion is therefore a vital thing, a life, and not a creed or system.

There is religion and religiosity : religiosity is external without internal religion, a creed without a corresponding life, ritualism without holiness.

Religiosity is always the product of false doctrines.

We are united to God, and therefore saved, not by creeds or ceremonies, but by the filial, conjugal, parental, fraternal, neighbourly, and social affections, which are the forms of God's life in us, and by the performance of the duties they involve and demand of us.

We are Christians only as we live, love, think, feel, and act in a Christ-like manner. All else is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

"They which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him."

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

"Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God."

We may profess what faith we please, but we have no religion but that which always shows itself in every one of the minutest actions of our lives. We are what we do.

"By their fruits shall ye know them."

"NEVER say you have no faith or hope. Always think of God's strength when you feel your weakness, and remember that you can come nearer to Him than to any being in the universe."—Mary Lyon (Originator of the Woman's Christian College in America.)

"A MOTIVE—even without being put into action—is an accumulation of energy which cannot be annihilated, but which can be changed into another form, and be used in a different manner from that originally intended."
—*Theosophist*, Feb. 1885.

GOD'S WAY AND MAN'S.—Man's work in beautifying the earth is very different from God's work. God's work is seen in majestic peaks which pierce the sky, in foaming waterfalls, in pathless forests, in tangled brushwoods, in rich valleys, in ever-changing outlines of earth and heaven. Man's work appears in prim footpaths, in monotonously trimmed hedges, and in beds of flowers set out with a mathematical exactness which suggests a neat diagram in Euclid. We never tire of God's work in beautifying the world ; there is a newness of surprise in it which never fails. We do grow weary of the dead levels, the hard, straight lines, the mechanical balance of circles, triangles, and parallelograms, in which man "improves" God's work. And when we turn to the Bible, and see that here also appears the tangled order of God's creation,—heights, depths, and wandering mazes, which defy the utmost reach of the human mind,—we recognise that the beauty of God's work in the Book is like the beauty of God's work in the world ; and are thankful that, at least within the covers of Holy Scripture, man cannot introduce the prim order of a dead system. Humanly speaking, the Bible would not have been so new or so living a book to-day, if it had been written in the order of a logical treatise, beginning with an exact definition of God, and ending with a minutely precise exposition of eschatology. God gave the Bible, as He gave the world, in that apparently disorderly order, wherein appear the truest beauty and the deepest unity. God left to man the work of making trim flower-beds and equally trim systems of theology.—*Dr. Adamson, in Evangelical Repository.*

Notes from New Books, &c.

EXTRACT FROM INTRODUCTION TO THE "AUREUS" OF HERMES.

AMONGST the occult sciences carefully studied by the Egyptian priesthood were Astrology and Alchemy. It is not possible, in our present knowledge, to assign an approximate date when Alchemy, the father of modern Chemistry, became a recognised science, or even to follow its development with precision. But whether we accept the Hebrew story of the Golden Calf as a literal fact, or an allegory of the time of Solomon, it at any rate proves that if Moses, or a later priest, could resolve gold to powder, the Egyptians, from whom that chemical problem was derived, were advanced in the science. This assumed qualification of Moses was greedily seized upon by the old Alchemists as a proof that the ancient law-giver was an adept of their secret fraternity; and they even gave out that an apocryphal work on the science was written by the Jewish king, Solomon. They also applied the legend of Jason and the Golden Fleece to allegorise transmutation.

We consider that there is internal evidence in the works attributed to Hermes to prove that, though garbled by the later Greeks, they yet enshrine, with perhaps some redundancy, the actual doctrine of the Egyptian Thoth. The Egyptian priests are said by various writers to have preserved the original Scriptures down to the period of Greek domination; but those that have come down to us under the name of Hermes are the oral versions received in the course of secret initiation. The original books of Thoth, being in a language known only to the priests of Mizraim, have hence become lost to our generation.

These remarks, upon the Hermetic writings generally, apply equally to the following Tractate. The nature of the doctrine, as we have enunciated it, necessitates that Alchemical Science should be taught by Theosophical Symbolism; so consistently is this form continued throughout the ages, that in some cases it is problematical whether even practical Alchemy is intended, and it is clear that in some later instances of the use of Alchemical jargon the object was entirely Theosophical instruction.

The language of this Tractate is Osirian, and much less complicated than the works of the later Alchemists. Thus, where they use the planets to typify the metals, and qualify the trinity of being, as Salt, Sulphur, Mercury, the following Tractate adopts theological qualifications used by the people, or the priests for them, of the trinity of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. Thus: "We must marry our Crowned King to our Red Daughter, who conceives an excellent and supernatural Son. But our Son, the King begotten, takes his tincture from the fire. Our dead Son lives. The Son already vivified is become a warrior in the fire. Venus begets light, liquifies, her brother being conjoined. Join the Son to the daughter of water, which is Jupiter and a hidden secret. The King: 'I am crowned with a Royal Diadem; . . . rest with gladness in the arms of my mother.' " It needs a very superficial acquaintance with the legends of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, to discover the parallel Symbolism, by which this metallic son of the Sun was compared with the son of Isis and Osiris. It is also noteworthy and curious that the magnet was termed the bones of Horus.

LIFE, NOT AUTHORITY, THE GREAT NEED.

Extract from "New Church Independent."

FOR, indeed, in no respect are the writings of Swedenborg "*spiritual things*," but they are writings *concerning* spiritual things. For it is evident, upon

inspection, that neither ideas, nor scientifics, nor doctrinals, nor doctrines, nor truths, etc., etc., can be written. An idea is a state of the mind. Can a state of the mind be transferred to paper? A scientific, a doctrinal, etc., is a state of the mind; and so is joy a state of the mind. Can joy be written on paper? Can any possible state of the soul be transferred to paper? I cannot write the state, but I can write concerning it—may write about it, so that you may receive into your mind a state resembling mine. And this is all any finite mortal can do: and so it is all Swedenborg could do.

The idea, the scientific, the doctrine, is formed in the mind, from spiritual substances which flow there from God. Yet not one of these is Truth; not one of them is a spiritual substance. They are but states of the mind or soul. But Truth is a spiritual substance.

"The Second Coming of the Lord" is the coming of Truth into the soul infilled with Life. Ideas, scientifics, doctrinals, and doctrines, are preparatory conditions of the soul for the Lord to come, in Truth and Life. Of all these Swedenborg teaches as no other man ever taught; and so he helps to "the Second Coming" as no other man ever helped.

As little are Swedenborg's writings "the internal sense of the Word." That "sense" is "the life" of the Word. It is a spiritual substance effluent from God. It is living truth; and can what is alive be written or printed? How can rational men contend for such things?

Such teaching is a mistake radical and fatal; and to teach people such things and call the result Christianity, and to call the people so taught "the Lord's New Church," can do nothing but bring desolation to humanity. To teach fatalism is not worse.

Yet the writings of Swedenborg are inestimable: not because they are infallible, or the Second Coming of the Lord, nor because they are the internal sense of the Word, nor yet are authority, for they are not one of these; but because they so treat and teach concerning these and other things of first value, that they are suited in the highest degree to lead the soul into union with the Lord, in order that it may receive these things into itself from the Lord. The soul does not want authority. That but makes it "as a crab, walking with the sight following the tail." But it wants union with God. And this begins by ideas of God; and it progresses by scientifics, doctrinals, doctrines, etc., till it receives Truth full of Life. And this is "the Second Coming of the Lord."

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