

**REPLY**

**TO**

**REV. DR. WOODS'**

**"LECTURES ON SWEDENBORGIANISM;"**

**DELIVERED IN THE**

**THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ANDOVER, MASS.**

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**BY GEORGE BUSH.**

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## REPLY, &c.

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### LETTER I.

DR. WOODS,

REV AND DEAR SIR :

THE inspired motto of your recently published volume, entitled "Lectures on Swedenborgianism"—"*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*"—offers to me the same warrant for examining with care your own work that it does to you for sitting in judgment on the doctrines of Swedenborg. As I do not feel at liberty to question the sincerity and uprightness of the motives which have prompted you in submitting to the ordeal of reason and revelation the merits of the system which he has propounded to the world, so I would fain hope to proceed in a manner equally accordant with the spirit to the apostolic precept in my own *probation* of the True and my *steadfast holding* to the Good of your production. If I have any embarrassment in entering upon the task proposed, it arises from the sentiments of warm personal regard which your uniform courtesy and kindness have ever compelled me to cherish towards you—sentiments abundantly witnessed by the general tenor of your pamphlet—and which render the office that I have entered upon like something undertaken by a son in opposition to a father. But the claims of Truth we both regard as paramount to those of all earthly relations, and you would justly entertain but a poor opinion of that professed earnestness of conviction which would forbear, from motives of complaisance, to assume the defence of principles held to be of the utmost importance, and which were yet called in question and arraigned of error. Upon this work of vindication I feel constrained to enter, however hampered by the difficulty of uniting fidelity to truth with the deepest respect for the person of my opponent. If I should fail in either particular, it will doubtless be owing to the preponderance of the opposite class of sentiments at the time.

The kind allusions you are pleased to make to myself in the Preface and here and there throughout the volume, together with the frank concession that you have received profit from the perusal of portions of Swedenborg's writings, goes far to disarm the severity of criticism, and this effect is still farther enhanced by the general vein and spirit of your work. I can freely say that it is pervaded by a prevailing tone of candor. It betrays no attempt, by an invidious array of offensive points, to turn the system into ridicule, and make it the butt of a mere *odium theologicum*. The object, as it strikes the reader, is obviously in the main simple and sincere—to try the system by appropriate tests, and to ascertain how far it agrees with, and how far it differs from, *the truth*. I think, indeed, that I

shall be able to show that in several particulars you have misapprehended, and therefore misrepresented, the real character of his teachings, but I cheerfully accord to your pamphlet a ruling honesty and fairness of purpose, and a christian-like course of discussion, which demands, and I doubt not will receive, the thanks of all intelligent New Churchmen.

The work stands, in this respect, in marked and very honorable contrast with a large portion of the tracts, reviews, and volumes which have emanated from Swedenborg's opponents. Their general aim has uniformly been to excite obloquy and contempt, by holding up to view such detached items and features of the scheme as should seem to outrage all rational belief, while they studiously avoid the consideration of the fundamental principles and laws of being on which the whole is affirmed to rest. It seems never to have occurred to these writers, that all the formidable objections, arising from the *details* of the system, had to be encountered, in the outset of their inquiries, by every present espouser of it, and that they were no less sensible than others to their utmost force. But these objections were countervailed, in their minds, by the strength of the evidence which arrayed itself in support of Swedenborg's claims, and it seems to them no more than equitable, that their acceptance of these doctrines shall be judged of by the *reasons* which have prompted it. These *reasons* have been with them all in all, and why is not the demand fair, that their adequacy or inadequacy to sustain the credence yielded shall be pronounced upon? Yet this is precisely the demand which our opponents have hitherto refused to comply with. They have been willing to deal with the conclusions, but not with the premises. Until your work appeared, I recollect not a single instance, with the exception perhaps of Priestley, where there was even an approximation to the show of controversial justice in the mode of conducting the argument in regard to Swedenborg's title to be received as a messenger from heaven. Your own work I do regard as an approximation to this point, though falling short of it in a variety of particulars, which I propose to designate in the sequel. The same remark, though in a still more qualified sense, I feel bound to make in respect to Dr. Pond's "Swedenborgianism Reviewed." Neither in your work nor in his do I recognize a disposition to do injustice to Swedenborg by a gross caricaturing of his doctrines, or by a substitution of coarse abuse for grave reasoning. They both bear evidence of having been penned by men, who were seriously persuaded that the system in question involved errors of a momentous character, and such as called for argumentative refutation. I do not of course admit that either of these works has succeeded in establishing the positions upon which it has labored. I do not regard them as having solidly convicted the system of a single error on the score of philosophy or theology, or as having made good a single objection urged against it; but I nevertheless concede to both a laudable freedom from the traits, which have almost invariably characterised every former attempt to bring discredit and reproach upon the doctrines embraced by the New Jerusalem Church. These volumes may therefore be regarded as indicative of the dawn of a better day in the conduct of the controversy bearing upon the doctrines and developments announced to the world by the Swedish *savan*. The bare fact that individuals like yourself and Dr. Pond—occupying high posts in the theological world,—seated, as it were, in the very *Mizpehs*, or *places of espial*, in the territory of dogmatic research—should have seen fit, almost

simultaneously, to enter into the debate, will be of itself sufficient henceforward to redeem the system opposed from the charge of absurdity and extravagance which has hitherto rested upon it. For who can suppose that two such "grave and reverend seniors" should have girded themselves to the conflict unless they deemed the enemy worthy their prowess? Would *they* have appeared on the arena if they had regarded the doctrines advanced as a mere mass of idle visions and dreams, sustained by no show of solid reasons, and calculated to work no conviction except in minds which had lost their balance and become the easy dupes of wild delusions? The question will very naturally occur, whether it could have been anticipated of either of these gentlemen, that they should, for instance, have assumed the attitude of public opponents of the vagaries of Mormonism? Would they not have deemed them beneath the notice of their pens? Would they have been willing to confer upon them even the eclat of their dissent? Whatever then may be the estimate of the christian community at large of the character of these doctrines, it is clear that neither yourself nor your theological compeer regard them as at all upon a par with the ordinary class of religious hallucinations.

But this is not all. Your calm and logical course of procedure—your candid consideration of the arguments adduced—your careful abstinence from any designed *invidious* exhibition of the tenets of Swedenborg—your studious suppression of all incendiary or disparaging epithets—your evident aim to do no injustice to the views remarked upon—in all this your example (and I speak of both) goes to administer an emphatic rebuke to all *other* modes of carrying on the warfare against the creed of the New Church. You have established a precedent which I trust will be followed. You have virtually said, "These are men to be argued with, and not to be put down by vilification and ridicule. They justly claim to be *convinced*, and not merely *denounced* as having yielded their faith to crazy conceits and blasphemous outrages upon the Holy Oracles. They profess to assign adequate and rational grounds for their belief, and they are to be dealt with accordingly." For the altered complexion which your influence is thus likely to give to all future controversy on this score, I am for one profoundly grateful. Its effect, I am quite sure, will not be lost upon us in the maintenance of our positions.

In approaching the consideration of your work, I find myself drawn in the outset to several remarks occurring in the Preface, containing what you would have to be regarded as a solution of the fact, that matter of real excellence occasionally stands out in Swedenborg's writings in marked contrast with the staple of the *dreams*. After alluding in courteous terms to my private communications, you say :—

"I can assure my brother, that I have attended to the works of his favorite author with a sincere desire to profit. And I think that I have profited. Some important truths, which I have long believed, particularly in regard to the inward motives of human action, the disclosure which will be made of the secrets of the heart in another world, and the correspondence of future retributions with the predominant characters of men, have, by these writings, been impressed on my thoughts with new vividness and force. In some cases his visionary representations of important practical truths are very striking and happy. In his work on Providence he advances many just and scriptural views. This and some other of his works seem to contain *his own speculations*, and I think must have been composed mostly during the intervals, (as there evidently were intervals), between his visionary states, when he thought and wrote from his own

mind, and not from the dictation or influx of angels, whether good or bad. In the works referred to, we do not find him saying continually, that the angels told him so and so. And I cannot but deem it a special advantage to him, that he was thus occasionally left to think in his own way, and to draw his theories and arguments from his own resources."

That the disclosures to which you refer cannot well be read without yielding to every candid mind the "profit" which you acknowledge yourself to have derived from them, I can easily understand. But how it can be conceived possible that such a searching analysis of human motives—such a keen anatomising of the heart—such a terrible cautery of conscience—such an impressive display of retribution—could have proceeded from any one who was not an actual eye and ear witness of the realities of the world of inner unveiling, I cannot understand. With me they receive all their force from the evidence afforded that he is, in these statements, dispensing the results of *experience*, and not of mere *speculation*, whether sane or insane. If these alleged disclosures really possess the moral efficacy which you attribute to them, it must be from their accordance with what you are otherwise assured to be the *substantial truth*, and it would certainly seem reasonable, that the acknowledged intrinsic *truth* involved in his statements should abate somewhat of the presumption of their being the mere product of dreaming phantasy. Something, at any rate, seems due to the consideration, that a *mere* dreamer would be quite as apt to dream falsity as truth.

But from this dilemma you would obviously extricate your concession by the assumption that follows—and assumption it undoubtedly is, for there is nothing in the recorded biography of Swedenborg to warrant it. We look in vain for the least hint or intimation of such "lucid intervals" as you suppose "between his visionary states;" during which he gave out *his own speculations* as distinguished from his extatic disclosures. He claims for all the writings published by himself subsequent to his illumination precisely the same degree of authority, and it is utterly at variance with everything known of the integrity of his character to suppose, that he would have given us no criterion by which to discriminate between what "he thought and wrote from his own mind" and what he received "from the dictation or influx of angels." In a letter to a friend published by Mr. Hartley, and giving the leading particulars of his life, he says, "Whatever of worldly power and advantage may appear to be in the things above-mentioned, I hold them as comparatively matters of little moment, because, what is far better, I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested Himself to me His servant, in the year 1743, and then opened my sight into the spiritual world and endowed me with the gift of conversing with spirits and angels, *which has been continued to me to this day*. From that time I began to print and publish various *arcana*, that have either been seen by me, or revealed to me; as concerning heaven and hell; the state of men after death; the true worship of God; the spiritual sense of the Word; and many other most important matters tending to salvation and true wisdom; and the only motive which has induced me, at different times, to leave my home and visit foreign countries, was the desire of being useful, and of communicating the *arcana* entrusted to me."

This letter was written in 1769, twenty-six years after the date of his illumination, and three years before his death. During this whole period he declares himself to have enjoyed his distinguished gift of spiritual sight, and during this

period it was that those very works were written, of which you speak with commendation and by portions of which you declare yourself to have been "profited." In this then you were reaping the fruits of that very illumination from which you would fain withhold the due credit. He elsewhere very frequently alludes to the *continued* enjoyment of his supernatural state through a long course of years, and never once hints at the interruption or suspension of it for any interval, whether long or short. You remark indeed,—and this seems to be the source of your impression—that "in the works referred to, we do not find him saying continually, that the angels told him so and so." Very true; but what does he himself declare on this head? "With the angels I have conversed these twenty-two years past, *and daily continue so to do*; with them the Lord has given me association; *though there was no occasion to mention all this in my writings*. Who would have believed, and who would not have said, show some token, that I may believe?—and this every one would have said who did not see the like."

Permit me then to ask upon what grounds you feel authorized to assert the fact of such a distinction as you have pointed at between the different portions of Swedenborg's writings, as if one were the production of his own mind, in its normal condition, and another the result of alleged angelic dictation? It certainly rests upon no admission of his own, nor does it receive countenance from any other authentic source, and the opinion would seem to have been adopted solely with a view to meet an exigency. A problem was to be solved respecting what Swedenborg says of controversial debates among the spirits of the other world. "It is remarkable, that all his works, whether prompted by his own mind (?), or by the spirits of dead men, contain a great abundance of controversial matter. It is, however, obvious that, in this respect, his account of the heavenly world, though it indirectly resulted from his own habit of thinking (?), is not according to the word of God. For who would ever learn from the Scriptures, that there is any occasion for controversy, or any want of union, in heaven?" To say nothing of the mistake of making *heaven*, instead of the *world of spirits*, the scene of these debates among spirits, here is a *foregone conclusion*, with which the admission of Swedenborg's truth on this head is wholly inconsistent. His state therefore at the time was not one of truthfulness, but a state of phantasy. "When a man who has been accustomed to controversy, has a dream or vision of the world of spirits, it is no wonder if he finds things there, much as they are here." You are of course at liberty, if you find no better solution, to explain Swedenborg's statements of the facts of the other life on the hypothesis, that the *whole* of them are the offspring of dreams and delusions, both the true and the false, but I must certainly protest against a gratuitous assumption in the outset, with a view to separate these different elements, and then reasoning on this assumption so as to save the credit of one part of his statements at the expense of another. The evidence is decisive that *all* the utterances emanated from precisely the *same* psychological state, and for the same reasons that we ascribe truth to one part of them, we ascribe it to the others also. The whole matter reverts therefore to the question, first, of the *fact* of such a state as Swedenborg claims for himself, and, secondly of the necessary *truthfulness* of that state arising from its supernatural character. In other words, the question has to be determined, whether such a state as he

affirms his to have been could have occurred, unless he were brought into it by the direct divine agency, and whether, conceding this, he would at the same time have been allowed in that state to give forth to the world a mixed medley of truth and falsehood. This you will perceive to be a question of very grave import, and one upon which I trust some light will be thrown as we proceed. For the present I remain,

Dear Sir,

Very respectfully Yours,  
GEO. BUSH.

## LETTER II.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :

After intimating in your preface that you shall peremptorily decline any reply to whatever animadversions may be made upon your work, you hand over the task of continuing the controversy, if it shall be kept up, in the following words :

“I must therefore commit the subject to the care of brethren who are younger than I, and to the disposal of an all-wise Providence; and will only whisper to the zealous advocates of Swedenborgianism, that their expectations of success will be very likely to be disappointed. The system has indeed some powerful attractions to a certain class of men. But its errors and corruptions are so palpable and gross, as to divest it entirely of the authority which it claims, and to prevent its prevalence among the great body of sober-minded Christians.”—*p. 4.*

The “whisper” here so kindly administered to the “zealous advocates of Swedenborgianism” might as well have been a voice uttered in the tones of a trumpet, for any special or oracular significance which they will be disposed to attach to it. The probability of their success in the propagation of their peculiar views will depend, they believe, entirely upon their accordance with the abstract truth, as embodied in the Divine Word, and echoed in the universal reason of man. Their hopes on this score are measured entirely by their confidence in the accomplishment of the Divine purposes, in regard to the final prevalence of the genuine doctrines of Christianity over the earth. Cheering anticipations on this head do undoubtedly hold the ascendancy in their minds, yet they are moderated by so deep a consciousness of the many adverse influences with which the truth has to contend, that they are probably as far as any class of men can well be from cherishing expectations, that will be likely to receive a shock from disappointment. The very genius of the system forbids the prospect, in the main, of any other than a very gradual triumph over the obstacles which oppose its progress, and its espousers have only to revert to their own individual experience—to the long struggle—the alternations of doubt and assurance—the antagonist pleadings of self-interest, even when conviction had won the day—to be aware of the infinite lets and hindrances with which a code of life and truth so sublimated, so intellectual, so spiritual, so heavenly, will inevitably meet. Nevertheless, as I remarked, the confidence of hope predominates, because they consider the *bestowment* of the revelations a virtual pledge for their ultimate wide *reception*, and they consequently regard all such *whispered* vaticinations as the above as little else than a mere gratuitous begging the question as to the intrinsic verity of the principles and doctrines involved. If the system be of man, it cannot eventually succeed; if it be of God, it cannot

*but* succeed. The true issue therefore is the true character of the system, and by the verdict of the Divine Providence on this head I presume you and I are both willing to abide, and we can mutually agree to hold our prophecies in abeyance till that is pronounced.

As I have already made my grateful acknowledgment for various personal courtesies interspersed through your volume, it will be unnecessary to repeat them in every instance in which I feel constrained to advert to such references. Nor do I advert to them with a view to make the personality prominent. It is solely with the design of remarking upon something of more importance, as for instance in the passage which follows;—

“It would have been gratifying to me and to many others, if Professor Bush had come forward with the express design to carry into effect the above mentioned precept of the Apostle in reference to Swedenborg’s writings, and to distinguish between the true and the false, the good and the bad, the Scriptural and the anti-scriptural. As I considered him to be sound in the faith, and settled in the intelligent belief of the great doctrines of the gospel as commonly understood by evangelical ministers and churches; I should have thought him well qualified for such an undertaking. But the work he has entered upon is of a different kind. His object is not to discriminate between the true and the false in his favorite author, but to recommend his writings without distinction, and to defend the system contained in them, with all its peculiarities, against all exceptions. He has given no intimation that he regards Swedenborg as chargeable with any mistake, or liable to any. On the contrary, it is implied in what he has published, that he has full confidence in the claims of that writer to a divine commission, and in the divine authority of all his teachings. In this matter, I find myself in a very different state of mind from my brother.”—p. 10.

The precept of the Apostle to which you refer, as one that you and others would have been gratified to see me come forward with the design of carrying into effect, is that which stands at the head of your Lectures—“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,” and the implication is, that I could not consistently act upon the spirit of this precept in reference to Swedenborg’s writings without “distinguishing between the true and the false, the good and the bad, the scriptural and the anti-scriptural,” that might be found in them. In reply to this allow me to say, that as the whole body of these writings came before me with precisely the same claim on the score of truth and authority, I felt myself bound in justice to examine the foundations of that claim as to the entire ground covered by it, and not as to its separate departments. The system announced, I perceived to rest upon certain great principles, mainly psychological, and that by the truth or falsity of these principles, the whole superstructure built upon them must stand or fall. Swedenborg does not present himself to the world as a man giving out his own peculiar views—the product of his own unaided speculations—like an ordinary theologian, some of which might be expected to be sound and some unsound, but he comes professedly clothed with an entirely different character—that of a chosen and commissioned messenger from God, empowered, by special divine illumination, to lay open the mysteries of the spiritual world, and to unfold the genuine doctrines of the inspired Word. Whether true or false, this is his claim, and this claim, in its entire purport, I felt constrained to weigh. It did not at all occur to me that I was to begin, from the very outset, with the tacit assumption, that a part of his averments were probably true, and a part of them certainly false, and then to proceed, by a winnowing process, to separate the wheat from the chaff. I was rather prompted to act upon

the principle distinctly recognized by yourself, (p. 20), "If his claims are founded in truth, *all* his revelations are, in the highest sense, *from God*."

It was very obvious, that considering his claim of truth throughout, any palpable errors would of course practically nullify all the positive truths with which they might be mixed up. Who would regard the truth when corrupted by such base alloys of falsity? You have yourself distinctly adverted to this perverse tendency in the human mind to undervalue truth when found in close connection with error. "Truth," you say, "is indeed truth, wherever it is found. But mixing error with it is likely to prevent its good influence on the mind, and in many ways to lead on to pernicious consequences." You are right therefore in saying that my object is not any such discrimination as you spoke of, but to recommend Swedenborg's writings without distinction, for I know not where to draw the line that shall separate between the true and the false. If you can enlighten me on this head by clearly defining the *principles* on which such a discrimination is to be made, I will readily confess to the defectiveness of my procedure.

But permit me to say that it will not be sufficient for this purpose merely to point out certain features of his disclosures which are intuitively seen to be true and which involve truths that have uniformly been admitted as such by good men of all ages of the Church. This doubtless may be very easily done. But the credit given to Swedenborg on this score is a vastly inadequate response to the extent of his claim. These self-evident truths, as you might term them, are found in him in such connections—built upon such principles—bearing such relations to the nature of God and the nature of man—and drawing after them such inevitable results—that they assume an entirely new phasis and can scarcely be recognized as the same truths with which we were before familiar. You remark upon this head, that;—

"There are many doctrines contained in Swedenborg's writings, which we believe, because they are agreeable to reason and Scripture. We are not indebted to him for the knowledge of these doctrines, though we may be under obligations to him for presenting some of them before us in a clear and striking manner. For example, we have believed, without any reference to his writings, that the mind or spirit is essentially *the man*. We have believed that man continues to exist after the death of the body, a real and true man, in the full possession of the power of perceiving and knowing, loving and hating, enjoying and suffering. And we have believed that he has all his mental powers and faculties, as a rational and moral being, in a higher degree of activity and perfection after death, than before. We have believed that the spirits of men in another world, even before the resurrection of the body, are not only capable of intercourse with the infinite Spirit, but of communicating their thoughts and feelings to one another, and that far more perfectly than was ever done by means of bodily organs in the present life. We have believed that the state of man in the other world will be according to the predominant affection which he exercised and the habits he formed on earth; and that an unsanctified man is incapable of holy pleasures, and could not be happy in heaven, even if he were permitted to dwell there. We have believed in the existence and agency of good and evil angels; and we have believed that they have a real influence in and upon the minds of men, the good angels, a salutary influence, and wicked angels, a hurtful influence, though we have not always called it an "influx." We have believed that the Lord Jesus, being truly God, is the proper object of supreme worship, and that according to the example of the Apostles and primitive Christians, our prayers are to be addressed to him, as really as to the Father. We have believed that friends and acquaintances will fully recognize each other and be associated together in the world of spirits; that all the holy, whether they die older or younger, will in some way suited to their condition, have the means of



improvement, and will make rapid advances in intellectual and moral excellence, and in heavenly enjoyment. We have believed that intelligent, moral beings are spread, in vast numbers, over the whole material creation, and have employments and pleasures suited to their nature and condition; though we have never had the means of knowing whether the distinction of sexes and the institution of marriage everywhere prevails.

These and other doctrines we have believed on the ground of evidence arising from reason, conscience, and revelation. And this belief has preceded our acquaintance with the writings of Swedenborg, and has been wholly independent of them; and yet these doctrines are taught by him, in this way, with more or less clearness, and with a mixture of his own fancies, and, in some instances, illustrated very happily. But my present object is not to dwell upon the *truths* which Swedenborg taught, but to point out his *errors*. And however great the number of truths found in his writings, all the doctrines of his which are not manifestly agreeable to reason and Scripture, must be regarded as errors.”—*p.* 116.

These concessions, I confess, are larger and freer than I should have anticipated from one who takes so many exceptions to what Swedenborg has advanced upon the same topics; and even now I ask myself, with some incredulity, whether such a belief as you indicate on these points as your own, is really cherished, to any considerable extent, among the mass of christians in our land. I doubt exceedingly whether any accredited formula of doctrine acknowledged by any of the Evangelical denominations among us will be found to sanction the explicit declaration made above, that “man continues to exist after the death of the body, *a real and true man*,” by which must be fairly understood, in the possession of all the powers and faculties which go to constitute his true and essential humanity. Now I had previously supposed that the current belief among Christians was, that man is very far from being “a true and real man” immediately after death—that, on the contrary, the resurrection of the body is deemed essential to the integrity of his nature in the other life—that, though he may be said to *live* in the interval between death and the resurrection, yet he lives a very imperfect kind of life, the soul ever longing and pining for reunion with the destined body. Indeed there are those in the theological ranks who do not scruple to maintain, that man, as man, is not complete, but in the union of soul and body (the spiritual body), and though I do not charge this view upon any who do not hold it, yet I think I cannot be mistaken in saying, that the prevalent opinions in regard to the disembodied spirit are, to the last degree, indeterminate and vague—that while they ascribe to it conscious enjoyment or suffering, they still do not conceive it under any definite conditions of form, or as anything more than a mere thinking and feeling principle. I have yet to learn that Swedenborg has misrepresented the popular impression on this head when he says:—“It was further remarked, that the learned are entirely in this belief, that the soul, which is to live after death, or the spirit, is an abstracted thinking principle; which belief appears plainly from this circumstance, that they are unwilling to admit any expression which has reference to what is extended, as applicable to the soul, by reason that a thinking principle abstracted from its subject is not extended, but the subject of the thinking principle, and the objects of it, are extended; and such objects as are not extended, men limit by terms, and make them extended, in order that they may apprehend them; hence it plainly appears, that the learned have no idea of the soul, or spirit, but as of a thinking principle; and thus they must needs believe, that when they die, it will vanish.”

If the spirit disembodied is “a real and true man,” one would think it must

have all the grand constituents of humanity, and if so what need of the restoration of the buried body, especially as that body must be raised spiritual in order to be fitted to the conditions of a spiritual existence? But what does such a body add to the endowments already possessed by the spirit? It cannot be necessary to the functions of sensitive or perceptive life, for you say "it is in the full possession of the power of perceiving." If then it is to receive no reinforcement of its powers on this score, what purpose is it to answer in the more integral economy of the future being? Why should Omnipotence be lavish in its gifts? You may say, indeed, that the divine declaration of the *fact* is a sufficient answer to all such queries, and that interrogation may be carried to the point of impiety. This, I admit, is a very effectual *silencing* of all argument, but still it does not *satisfy*; because God has himself so constituted the human mind that it *cannot* blink the *cui bono* of a purpose which strikes it as inconsistent with something else equally plain. I trust I am not void of a becoming reverence for every divine dictum clearly made out, but I certainly have no fear of bringing every such alleged enunciation into the closest contact with what I am compelled, by the constitution of my nature, to recognize as the truth of things, which is just as imperative on my belief as the sense of words. Now as I am not only taught by Swedenborg, but instructed by my own inductions, that I am to take with me a spiritual body into the other world, in every way adequate to the exigencies of that state of being, I am utterly at a loss to conceive the use of still another spiritual body superadded to the former, and therefore I have no scruple in adopting the conclusion, that such cannot be the true-meant design of the language that *seems* to imply it. In other words, it is impossible that I can be any more certain, from lexical or exegetical grounds, that such *is* the meaning, than I am, from rational grounds, that it is *not* the meaning. Such is the posture, and, as I conceive, the necessary and inevitable posture, of my mind in view of the premises. And how am I to be answered? You tell me that such and such is the plain sense of the Word—and the Word is dictated by God himself—and that it is not for us to take liberties with its obvious import. But I reply—the intuitions of my calm reason are as much from God as the written Word. Has He established a conflicting testimony? By which am I to be governed? Do you say, my reason is a very erring guide; that I cannot safely follow it when it leads counter to the plain letter of scripture and that other men's reason comes to no such results? This is very possible. Nevertheless, my reason is *mine*, and God gave it to me, and I am sure that I do violence to his own promptings within me when I forego its dictates. I feel too that I am bound to exercise my reason on the revelation he has imparted, as well as upon any and everything else in which I am concerned, and I am to do this under a solemn sense of responsibility to Him as one "that must give account." I ask then what I am to do when the clear decision of my reason is against the *literal* sense of his Word? My conviction is firm, that I should positively *sin against God* by postponing the authority of the intuitions which grow out of the very structure of my mind, to that of the purport of terms which, in the nature of the case, must be determined by my apprehensions of the intrinsic truth.

I am quite well aware that I am here touching, not only upon a nice point of metaphysics, but of casuistry also. The tenor of my remarks brings me upon precisely that ground on which, if any where, a judgment is to be pronounced

on the *moral character* of religious opinions. The verdict of heresy is frequently pronounced on the basis of a scriptural interpretation differing from that given by the condemning party. What is the real authority or validity attaching to such a sentence? How is error to be ascertained but by a reference to some common standard of truth? Who is in possession of that standard, and how is he to make good the evidence of his claim? The church of the Papacy has indeed a summary way of deciding all issues of this kind. The only appeal is to the oracular voice of the church itself. But as you and I, and Protestants generally, hold to the right of private judgment, the question again comes up as to the grounds on which one body of christians is authorized to impeach another of heresy. It is certainly no more than charity to suppose that each one is sincere in its convictions, and that it has acted upon the clearest light of reason in determining the genuine import of the Word, the acknowledged source of all doctrines. Are you or your Church authorized to sit in judgment on their decisions? If so, by what title? They have exercised their deepest and coolest reason upon the verities propounded to their faith. You have done no less—no more. But the conclusions reached are widely at variance. Which party then is warranted to assert to itself the claim of truth, and to denounce upon the other the charge of error, and upon what grounds? The charge can be of no moral efficacy except so far as it fastens itself upon the interior rational convictions of the soul. But here the field is preoccupied by a directly opposite class of convictions equally legitimately attained. In the forum of conscience, then, to what amounts the sentence of “heretical pravity?” What weight has the judgment of man unless it is felt, in the mind’s deepest recesses, to echo the judgment of God?

But it is said that heresy endangers salvation—that those who are *in* a state of salvation have a certain instinctive perception of truth which cannot pertain to those who are *out* of it—and this truth they are entitled to declare by virtue of their conscious possession of it. But here is a new element introduced into the debate. We now pass out of the region of the *intellectual* into that of the *moral*—from the domain of Truth to that of Good—and here the receivers of Swedenborg find themselves at home. The question then arises, how far error of judgment may consist with goodness of heart—to what extent one may be in Good while at the same time he is not in Truth. But who shall determine this? It is clearly beyond the province of human power. It is impossible to pronounce upon opinion, as saving or damning, except upon the simple ground of Character. *Life* is the only criterion of *Doctrine*, and of Life we can only judge by the external *practical* indications.\* The final arbitrament must be left to the Omni-

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\* “Truths considered in themselves do not give life, but goods; truths are only the recipients of life, that is, of good; wherefore no one can ever say that he may be saved by truths, or, as it is commonly expressed, by faith alone, unless there be good in the truths which are of faith; the good therein must be the good of charity, hence faith itself, in an internal sense, is nothing else than charity. As to saying that an acknowledgement of truth is the faith which saves, it is to be known, that with those who live in things contrary to charity, no such acknowledgement can exist, but only a kind of persuasion, to which is adjoined the life of self-love, or of the love of the world; consequently in this acknowledgement there is not the life of faith, which is of charity.”—*A. C.* 2261.

“The quality of every one’s interiors is made manifest in another life, where the exteriors are removed, and then it appears, that where there is no charity, the interiors are

cient Awarder. We are bound to recognize as Christians, and as in the way to be saved, all those whose *lives* do not belie their profession. We have no warrant to erect any other standard. The tree is to be known by its fruits. The only fatal heresy is a depraved love and a corresponding life. I do not deny but that it is practicable to characterize correctly certain opinions as false, but I do deny that it is competent for any man, or any body of men, to impeach of dangerous heresy a system of doctrinal belief the espousers of which are, in the eye of charity, in the good of life.\*

I admit that I have lapsed into somewhat of a digression in the foregoing train of remark. But I wished to bestow some consideration on a theme which usually receives very little—viz. the moral estimate which is to be formed of the errors of Swedenborg's doctrines and the practical bearing which their adoption is likely to have on the salvation or perdition of its disciples. I speak in plain language on this head, because this, after all, is the great issue. It is here that the opponents of the system find their warrant for aiming to counteract its prevalence. They are primarily prompted to this by a serious conviction that the errors it embodies *peril the salvation of the soul*, and I wish to evince that on this very point there are principles involved, which require investigation as truly as the abstract character of the doctrines. Yet they are principles that are very seldom adverted to in this controversy, or in fact in any other. Where do we find any explicit statement of the grounds on which the sentence of *fatal tendency* in doctrinal sentiments is pronounced? Yet what more imperiously demands it, in order to justify the earnest reprobation, and often fierce persecution, with which those sentiments are assailed? To myself the following remarks of Swedenborg are very impressive. "They who are gifted with goods, from a celestial origin, that is, with celestial goods, and spiritual goods, are also gifted with eternal salvation, that is, are saved. That none may remain in ignorance, how it is with the salvation of men after their decease, it is to be stated in a few words. There are many who say, that man is saved by faith, or as they express it, if he only have faith, but amongst these the greatest part do not know what faith is; some suppose it is mere thought; some that it is an acknowledgment of something to be believed; others that it is the whole doctrine of faith which is to be believed; others again otherwise; thus they err in the bare knowledge

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altogether contrary to all the truths of faith. It is not possible for those to receive the life of charity in another life, who have not received it, in some degree, in the life of the body, for the life they had formed in the world remains after death, and therefore they can then arise to and have the life of charity."—A. C. 2049.

\* "Doctrinals alone do not constitute the external, much less the internal of the church, as was shown above; nor do they distinguish churches before the Lord: but this is effected by a life according to doctrinals, all which, if they are true, regard charity as their fundamental; what is the design of doctrinals but to teach how man should live? The several churches in the Christian world are distinguished by their doctrinals, and they hence call themselves Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, or the Reformed and Evangelical Protestants; with many others. This distinction of names arises solely from doctrinals, and would never have had place, if they had made love to the Lord, and charity towards the neighbor, the principal point of faith. Doctrinals would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which true Christians would leave to every one according to his conscience, and would say from the heart, that he is a true Christian who lives as a Christian, or as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish, yea, all the animosities of one against another would be dissipated in a moment, and the kingdom of the Lord would be established on earth."—A. C. 1799.

of what faith is, consequently in the knowledge of what that is, by which man is saved. But still it is not mere thought, neither is it an acknowledgment of what is to be believed, nor a knowledge of all things pertaining to the doctrine of faith: by these things no one can be saved, inasmuch as they can take root no deeper than in the thought, and the thought does not save any one, but it is the life, which man has procured for himself in the world by the knowledges of faith; this life remains, whereas all thought, which does not accord with his life, perishes, even so that it becomes null; heavenly consociations are according to the kinds of life, and never according to the kinds of thought which are not of the life; the thoughts which are not of the life are hypocritical, and such are altogether rejected. In general, life is of two kinds, one infernal, the other celestial; infernal life is contracted from all those ends, thoughts, and works which flow from self-love, consequently from hatred against our neighbor; celestial life is contracted from all those ends, thoughts, and works, which are of love towards our neighbor; this latter is the life, to which all those things called faith have respect, and it is procured by all things appertaining to faith. Hence it may appear what faith is, viz. that it is charity, for all things which are called the doctrines of faith lead to charity; they are all contained in charity, and they are all derived from charity. The soul after the life of the body is such as its love is."—*A. C.* 2228.

But to return to the subject of your concessions. You intimate that the mass of Christians believe in the doctrine of angelic existence and agency—that Jesus Christ is truly God—that he is the proper object of supreme worship—that prayer is as really to be addressed to him as to the Father—and that friends and acquaintances will recognize and be associated with each other in the world of spirits. For these items of belief you say the world is not indebted to Swedenborg, and the argument is, that no special claim can be set up in behalf of his revelations on these heads, inasmuch as all that can be recognized in them as true, was well known and generally received before he lived or taught.

I reply to this, that on every one of these points Swedenborg's teachings are so immensely diverse from all that had ever before been held concerning them—they are mixed up with so many new elements—referred to so many new principles—and presented in so many new phases—that they become, to all intents and purposes, new truths. I must say, therefore, that there is an intrinsic unfairness, however undesigned, in withholding from him the credit of novelty in this part of his disclosures. He has taught in them what no man ever taught before. Nor can these truths properly be said to be believed, according to his presentation of them, unless the belief embraces all he has said in respect to them. Consequently it is unjust to intimate that he has made no advances upon our former knowledge in any of the above departments, when those very truths are so exhibited by him that they virtually cease to be the old truths, with which Christians have been always familiar.

Take, for instance, the admitted doctrine of Christ's divinity. "We have believed that the Lord Jesus, being truly God, is the proper object of supreme worship, and that, according to the example of the Apostles and the primitive Christians, our prayers are to be as really addressed to him, as to the Father." If Jesus Christ be "truly God," and the "object of supreme worship," he must certainly be *the supreme and only God*, for we can of course recognize but one

such Being in the universe. If prayer is to be addressed to Him, in his character of supreme Deity, then what is termed "the Lord's Prayer" is to be addressed to him in that character, as well as any other. Do you believe this? Does the mass of the christian world believe it? Would they not inwardly shudder at the idea of thus seeming to confound the *person* of the Father with that of the Son? Can they be brought for one moment, to admit that there is any sound sense in which the term Father is to be applied to the Son? Is not the popular apprehension of the distinction of *three Divine Persons* at utter variance with such a view? Do not their thoughts, in the offering up of this prayer, penetrate beyond the person of the Son and fix upon that of the Father? And do they not prefer this prayer to the first person of the Trinity in *the name* and *for the sake* of the second? You will scarcely refuse to admit that this is the case. Now it would be gratuitous to inform you, that this is directly contrary to the teaching of Swedenborg and to the belief of his adherents. Guided by his illuminated interpretation of the sacred Word, they are taught to recognize in Jesus Christ *the true and only Jehovah*, and no other sense do they affix to the term *Lord*. They know no other Trinity than is concentrated in Him. As this, in their view, is not a Trinity of *persons*, but of *principles*, they consequently know nothing of imploring one divine *person* for the sake of another, just as they know nothing of an *atonement* or *satisfaction* made by one of these persons to another. This they regard as the grand corruption and perversion of the Gospel, while at the same time they recognize, in its fullest extent, the absolute and inexorable necessity both of the *incarnation* and of the *atonement*, as they conceive those doctrines to be taught in the inspired oracles. And, be it observed, they do not on these points, build their faith exclusively on what may be termed the supernatural disclosures of Swedenborg. They are perfectly willing to abide by the results of the most fair exegetical process in determining the literal sense of the Word. They require nothing more than the admission, which you certainly will not withhold, that the Old Testament Scriptures of "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms" are of equal divine authority with the New. This conceded, they are prepared to show that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is identically the same Divine Personage with the Jesus of the New, and as they have no intimations of there being two Jehovahs, one in heaven and another on earth *hypostasized* in Jesus, they can conceive of no grounds for *such a peculiar economy of redemption* as is set forth in the great mass of Christian creeds. Yet the redemption-work of Jesus is the only foundation of their hope.

The reply to all this will undoubtedly be, that in denying the *common construction* of this and the related doctrine of the Trinity, we deny the *substantial truth* of each. Here then the matter rests. It becomes a pure question of interpretation, and to this question apply, in all their force, the remarks made above as to the *assumed infallibility* of one mode of interpretation over all others. On what solid principle is this to be made out? And then as to the verdict upon the *morale* of the matter—who is to pronounce this?\*

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\* "Man, according to the quality and quantity of remains, that is, of good and truth with him, enjoys bliss and happiness in another life, for as was said, they are treasured up in his interior man, and are then manifested, when he puts off corporeal and worldly things. The Lord alone knows the quality and quantity of the remains with man, and man can never know this; for man at this day is such, that he can put on a semblance of good, when yet inwardly there is nothing but evil; and also man may

From what I have now said, somewhat of a fair judgment may be formed as to the real community of teaching between Swedenborg and the ordinary standards of Christendom on this single point of our Lord's divinity and his title to supreme worship. It is easy to see that they are at a measureless remove from each other. The "Doctrine of the Lord" of Swedenborg may be said to be *toto cælo* different from that which has obtained currency in the church and from this flows by necessary consequence an entirely different view of the whole scheme of dogmatic Christianity. Upon this, however, I do not here enlarge. My present object is simply to show that Swedenborg's claim to have made a new revelation of the interior genius of our religion cannot be vacated by the plea, that he has, in many instances, merely reproduced, in new forms and aspects, long established and widely admitted truths. These truths here come before us in an entirely new character, and it is a great wronging of his developments to represent them as mere common-place truisms. You will observe however, that I am not exhibiting the evidence of the divinity of his revelations, but simply specifying certain things which are no evidence to the contrary.

You say in addition:

"The writings of Swedenborg unquestionably contain a large amount of truths, relating to God and Christ, to divine Providence, to saints and sinners, to the selfishness, deceit, and wickedness of the heart, to the graces of Christianity, to our dependence on God in connection with our duty to love and obey him, to the disclosures which will be made of human characters in the future world, and to a variety of other subjects. Swedenborg teaches some truths in the language commonly employed. But for the most part, he sets forth well known and acknowledged truths in a language of his own,—in a phraseology which he constantly repeats, and to which he seems to be stiffly devoted, although it is really very strange and abstruse, and to beginners in the study of his works, frequently unintelligible. But in one way or another, either in the usual forms of expression, or in a singular, philosophical style, or in the peculiar manner of rhetorical fictions, or dreams, his writings contain many moral and religious truths."

The peculiarity of diction to which you advert has been frequently remarked upon and objected to, and is doubtless very apt to impress the novitiate reader unfavorably. It produced, in the outset, its usual effect upon my own mind, although this soon passed away, as I became more conversant with the peculiar genius of his system. On all theological subjects we become habituated to a certain stereotype phraseology, any departure from which is apt to beget a latent suspicion of a departure from the essential truth conveyed by it. Now in Swedenborg's writings, as I have already remarked, the fundamental truths accredited among Christians are presented in entirely new aspects, being for the most part referred to the primary psychological principles on which all moral truths rest. It is not unnatural, therefore, that the established phraseology ,

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appear as evil, when yet inwardly he possesses good ; wherefore it is never allowable for one man to judge of another as to the quality of his spiritual life, for, as was said, the Lord alone knows this: yet it is allowable for every one to judge of another's quality as to moral and civil life, for this is of concern to society. It is a very common thing, for those who have conceived an opinion respecting any truth of faith, to judge of others, that they cannot be saved, but by believing as they do, which nevertheless the Lord has forbidden, Matt. vii. 1, 2 ; on the contrary, it has been made known to me by much experience, that persons of every religion are saved, if so be, by a life of charity, they have received remains of good and of apparent truth.—A. C. 2284.

should be very considerably modified by the new relations in which the subject-matter of his discourse is exhibited. But it may be justly claimed for our author that no one is more uniformly consistent in the use of terms, or is at more pains to put the reader, from the beginning, in full possession of the exact meaning, in all its various shades, which he would have attached to them. With this he soon becomes familiar, and from a certain sense of the intrinsic adaptedness of the word to the idea, he desiderates no other form of expression than what he finds. The great question in the minds of his receivers is, as to the intrinsic truth of the thought which is to be conveyed. When satisfied on this score, they are generally satisfied also, that the phraseology could not well be improved. I might perhaps even go farther on this head, and say that the language employed by Swedenborg grows out of the peculiar *state* in which it was uttered, and that it has about it a certain *breathing* of a supernatural sphere, which is altogether *sui generis*, and when duly weighed affording no slight evidence of that internal elevation of the faculties by which it was undoubtedly prompted. But upon this I do not insist, though it is a feature of the system which weighs much with me in my general estimate of the man in his assumed character. He came as the herald of a dispensation the motto of which is, *Vetera transierunt*—"Old things are passed away; behold, I make *all things* NEW." I do not see why this comprehensive saying may not embrace the forms of theological diction as well as a thousand other things. If we have new truths imparted, why should they not be clothed in a new dress? As to the "constant repetition" of this phraseology I see nothing more implied in the remark than *uniformity of usage*, and this certainly is no fault, provided it be originally adopted upon sufficient grounds.

With a grateful recognition of your allowance of "many moral and religious truths" contained in these writings, I remain,

Yours, &c.

GEO. BUSH.

### LETTER III.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

In entering upon the more detailed examination of the doctrines under review, you say:

"I would direct your particular attention to the test of Swedenborg's principles, which is laid down by Prof. Bush, who has, with distinguished ability, undertaken their defence. This test he clearly sets before us in the following language. He says, that all the grand features of the system 'appeal directly to the inner intuitions of the reason.'—'The truth of Swedenborg's revelations can only be made apparent by their intrinsic character.'—'The truth of his mission is to be established by the truth of his message, and by that only.'—'We must rely upon internal evidence.'—'His principles appeal directly to consciousness and reason.

"I make no objection to this test. *But how shall we apply it?* This is a serious question. *How are we to judge of the truth of the message? How are we to be satisfied as to the intrinsic character of the system, and as to the internal evidence on which we are to rely?* The appeal, it is said, is directly to the *inner intuitions of the reason*. But whose reason? The reason of one man differs widely, as to its state and mode of exercise, from the reason of another. Consequently the appeal in different cases will meet with different receptions and lead to different results. This will certainly be the case, unless the peculiar principles of Swedenborg are like the first principles or *self-evident truths* of Geometry, concerning which all men must form the same judgment. But no one can pretend that this is the case. In judging of moral and religious subjects, human reason itself does, in



very many cases, need a standard or guide. In other words, the rational being, man, is, in many cases, incompetent to determine what is truth, without being instructed by a wisdom superior to his own. If we are consistent Christians, we believe that we have been thus instructed; and we have settled it in our minds, that *the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, clothed with divine authority, and are the only sure and infallible rule of our faith and practice.* This has become a fundamental principle with us. On the ground of clear and sufficient evidence, our reason receives it and rests upon it; and we can no longer call it in question. Now this *word of God* has taught us a system of moral and religious truths, which we can no more doubt, than we can the veracity of God. When therefore we undertake, in the use of our reason, to form a judgment as to the truth of any other system, how strange would it be, if we should divest our reason of the benefit of its settled convictions! With what ingratitude and perverseness should we be chargeable, if we should extinguish or undervalue the light which shines upon us from revelation, and go back to the darkness of deism and heathenism! This is what we cannot do. If we would maintain the character of Christians, we must use our reason, *as enlightened by revelation.* The more it is thus enlightened—the more it is furnished with scripture-principles, and the more closely it adheres to those principles in all its actings; so much the more likely will it be to form right judgments. They who heartily believe the word of God, and duly regard its heavenly light, shall not walk in darkness. In the case now before us, what better can we do than to copy the example of the noble Bereans, who searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether that which they heard was true. We must go directly to the Bible; we must go with all our intellectual and moral faculties; and our great inquiry must be, *whether the disclosures of Swedenborg are in harmony with the Scriptures.* Our reason and our philosophy, instead of attempting to be a guide to the word of God, must be guided by it.—p. 15.

I have given this passage at full length, because it embodies, with much distinctness, the *jist* of the grand objection usually urged against the soundness of the test which I have here proposed. "The appeal, it is said, is directly to the *inner intuitions of the reason.* But whose reason? The reason of one man differs widely, as to its state and mode of exercise, from the reason of another. Consequently the appeal in different cases will meet with different receptions and lead to different results." And you intimate that such a claim as I have asserted for the peculiar principles of Swedenborg cannot be maintained, unless they are like the first principles or self-evident truths of Geometry. Now from the above position respecting reason I do not scruple to affirm my total and unequivocal dissent, and in the case before us I appeal directly to *your* reason, as well as to that of every man who is disposed to exercise his faculties upon the evidence of truth in regard to moral subjects. I cannot doubt for a moment that there is a *common reason* pertaining to man as man, which will always draw substantially the same conclusions from the same premises, when those premises are distinctly before the mind. I cannot question that there are *moral* axioms which command assent as truly as *mathematical* axioms, and that nothing more is needed than their simple enunciation, in a clear light, to receive the instantaneous admission of their truth. This arises from the very constitution of the human mind. It cannot see the meaning of certain propositions without at the same time seeing their truth. The *reasoning* (*ratiocinatio*) of different men is undoubtedly different; but the *reason* (*ratio*) of all men is the same, because it is in fact the *Universal Reason*—the reason of God himself. The utterances of this inward oracle may be perverted by the influence of affection and passion. The light of the rational eye may be darkened by the mists of ignorance, of prejudice, of error, and other causes, but when the clouds are cleared away it always, in all men, sees the same things in

the same manner. A Hottentot or an Esquimaux must see the propositions of Euclid in the same light with Newton or La Place, when his mind is opened by the process of intellectual culture to perceive the truth of the axioms on which they rest, and to grasp the chain of consecutive demonstration. He must yield the same assent, upon the same evidence, that is yielded by Edwards or Dwight to the eternal distinction between right and wrong—to the duty of loving and serving God—to the propriety of pursuing happiness rather than misery—to the justice of the Golden Rule—and to various other moral axioms upon which the well-being of the rational creation obviously depends. All this arises from the fact of the *community of reason* in the universal mind of man.

If it be not so, I should be gratified to learn on what grounds you would feel authorized to pass censure on those who reject the evidence of the truth of the Christian Religion. You urge the claims of this Religion upon a philosophical skeptic. He replies that he has given the subject his serious and careful consideration, and that the verdict of his dispassionate reason is against it. Do you, in your judgment, acquit his decision of all wrong? Are you not inwardly conscious that there is some radical vice in the mental process by which he has brought himself to this conclusion? Do you scruple to assure him that his *reasoning* really does violence to his *reason*? Do you not confidently affirm, that God has so constituted the human mind—that he has established such a harmony between the dictates of the reason and the grand truths of Revelation—that it is absolutely impossible that the latter should be rejected when the former has fair play? Neither you nor he may be able to detect the precise point where the defect in the process inheres, but you are positively certain that the defect exists *somewhere*, and that he is not faithful to the voice of reason in rejecting Revelation. You have not a doubt that the verdict of enlightened reason, when the evidence is fairly weighed, will evermore be in accordance with the claims of the Christian faith. It is so in your own case, and you cannot conceive that it should be otherwise in his.

Yet allow me to ask, with what propriety you can challenge the soundness of his decision on the principle affirmed in your Lectures, that the reason of different men will, on the same subjects, lead them to different results? How can you any more justly impeach his reason for rejecting Christianity, than he yours for embracing it? If I rightly apprehend the purport of your argument, you have furnished him with a complete apology for his conclusion. In your controversy with the skeptic, in behalf of Christianity, you appeal to “the inner intuitions of the reason.” He says to you, as you to me, “I make no objection to the test. But how shall we apply it? To whose reason shall we appeal? You submit the matter to my reason and my reason discards the verdict of yours.” What have you to reply so long as he is merely acting on the very principle with which your logic has furnished him?

I am here reminded of a very peculiar train of remark bearing somewhat upon this subject in the Rev. Mr. Landis’ reply to my work on the Resurrection. Whatever may be the success of my attempt to rebut the force of your reasoning on this head, I certainly feel no difficulty in regard to his. In his chapter on “The true office of Reason in respect to Revealed Religion,” in which he very truculently takes to task my position, that “reason and religion must be consistent with each other,” he remarks;—“The statement made by Prof. Bush and

others who have written as vaguely on the subject, neither makes nor allows any distinction between the principles of reason (so called), which any man in particular may adopt, and the principles of right reason, such as God both recognizes and appeals to in his word: and hence every man is left to infer that the deductions of his own philosophy (however distorted by his education or his prejudices), are legitimate, and that the announcements of revelation ought to be so explained as to harmonize with them." Again, "It is not to be forgotten that there is the same distinction to be observed between Prof. Bush's view of right reason, and *right reason itself*, as between a man's view of truth, and truth itself." Once more; "The Professor perpetually confounds *his own philosophy* with *true philosophy*; and, of course, leaves the privilege of doing the same to every man who is satisfied with the legitimacy of his own deductions." The decorum and the dialectics are here just about upon a par. With a most exquisite assurance of infallibility he *assumes* that my reason must of course be opposed to right reason, and my philosophy to true philosophy, and why? Does he intimate any other ground of the *ex cathedra* sentence than that it is opposed to his? And is not his equally opposed to mine? I do not like rudely to disturb any man's self-complacency, but if it may consist with the deference due to one who speaks so oracularly, I would fain inquire whence he obtained the authority to speak thus as the inspired organ of the only "right reason" and the only "true philosophy?" By what tokens am I to know that he is indeed invested with this high prerogative? So lofty a claim needs to be made out by some adequate credentials. I should imagine, indeed, that he was not at all aware that there was any room for preferring the question, yet it does really seem a little questionable how one can affirm, in one breath, that "man's reason has been bruised, and weakened, and defaced, and greatly obliterated by the fall," and yet in the next, under the auspices of this very reason, thus bruised, battered and broken, take it upon him to sit peremptorily in judgment on the opinions of another and condemn them as undoubtedly irrational and absurd. Is there not at least a bare possibility, that the deteriorating effects of the fall may have left some traces of fallibility upon his reason, as well as upon that of those who differ from him? May we not, at any rate, deferentially solicit some evidence that he is commissioned to speak *ex officio* in the name of whatever "right reason" and "true philosophy" may be found in the universe? Is it at all *mal apropos* to apply to a critic of this stamp the language of Jeremy Taylor—"When a man speaks reason, it is but reason that he should be heard; but though he may have the good fortune, or great abilities to do it, yet he hath not a certainty, no regular infallible assistance, no inspiration of arguments or deductions; and if he had, yet because it must be reason that must judge of reason, unless other men's understanding were of the same area, the same constitution and ability, they cannot be prescribed unto by another man's reason." (*Lib. of Proph. p. 146.*)

I can scarcely doubt that you, my dear sir, will agree with me that nothing is more supremely ridiculous than such an "'Ercles' vein" of dogmatism in any one who has not received letters-patent of infallibility from the Divine fountain-head of truth. What *right* has an erring mortal to assume a tone implying that he is in possession of the true key of wisdom, while I am merely groping and fumbling at the door with no means of opening it? With the same interests at stake—with the same honesty of purpose—with the same advantages for in-

quity—what authority has he for intimating that the results of my investigation are less in accordance with “right reason” than his own? If he shall *prove*, by satisfactory arguments, that my conclusions are unsound, then let him “glory over” my fallacies; but let him not *assume* in the outset, by virtue of some extraordinary illumination, that my reason and philosophy are of course at fault, when he can give no better grounds for the sentence than that they happen to differ from his. It will be observed, moreover, that he speaks with a kind of holy horror of the inevitable consequence of my position, viz. that it leaves to every man the privilege of regarding *his* philosophy as *true* philosophy, provided only he is satisfied in his own mind that he has legitimate grounds for doing so. This is indeed a fearful issue, for it sweeps away at a single stroke the whole fabric of an authoritative tribunal appointed to hold in abeyance the right of free opinion—or, in other words, the entire system of Protestant popery, and reduces everything to the standard of *private judgment*. I shall leave the gentleman to mourn over the wreck of such a darling institute, and return to the consideration of your reasoning.

You remark, in the present connection, that “in judging of moral and religious subjects, human reason itself does, in very many cases, need a standard or guide. In other words, the rational being, man, is, in many cases, incompetent to determine what is truth, without being instructed by a wisdom superior to his own. If we are consistent Christians, we believe that we have been thus instructed; and we have settled it in our minds, that *the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, clothed with divine authority, and are the only sure and infallible rule of our faith and practice*. This has become a fundamental principle with us. On the ground of clear and sufficient evidence we receive it and rest upon it, and we can no longer call it in question.”

I perceive in all this an elemental truth which I am very happy to acknowledge. The receivers of Swedenborg insist as strongly as any class of men upon the need of divine illumination in order to the due exercise of the rational faculty, especially upon all moral and spiritual subjects. They hold that the light of the Word is indispensable to the understanding when dealing with the Word itself in its interior import, and they trust that the use of the term “influx” in this relation may not be deemed to derogate from the essential truth of the admission. Still they would perhaps be disposed to hint at some difficulties pertaining to the above intimation. To myself, at any rate, it is far from being clear in what light you would have the above position viewed. I obtain no clew to determine how much is included in this settled conviction of the divinity and authority of the Sacred Scriptures, which you make to depend on a special illumination or “instruction” imparted to “consistent Christians” by a “wisdom superior to their own;” for you say, “our reason and our philosophy, instead of attempting to be a guide to the word of God, must be guided by it.” Would you imply that no man whatever can attain to the conclusion that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God without the special enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit?—or, in other words, that every one who reaches this conviction is *ipso facto* a Christian? Is then the distinction of a mere *speculative* and a *vital* and *saving* faith wholly groundless? Is it not incessantly taught in all the pulpits of Christendom, and professedly from the Scriptures themselves, that such a speculative belief may exist in unregenerate men and that too in conjunction with a

worldly and sensual life? This surely cannot be your meaning, for in this sense you will hardly deny that even a "Swedenborgian" may arrive at a tolerably clear assurance that the Bible contains a real revelation from God to man. You must have reference to some higher degree of the divine operation on the minds of men, and yet I am at a loss to conceive what it is or what is the precise effect you would ascribe to it. Indeed I see not why I may not avail myself of the very objection which you yourself urge on a subsequent page against what you intimate as the ground assumed in behalf of Swedenborg's claims. "As the appeal is to be made to reason, and reference to be had solely to the intrinsic reasonableness and excellence of Swedenborg's writings; then, of course, we are not to be influenced by the authority which he claims as a divinely commissioned interpreter of the Scriptures. If, however, the reason to which the appeal is to be made means the *illuminated reason of the man of the New Church*; then the reason of others can have nothing to do with the matter, and the question would be, why *any others* are called upon to judge." Now I am wholly unable to see why your own position is not equally assailable upon precisely the same grounds. You claim to have been led, by an "illuminated reason," to the understanding of the *true* system of revealed doctrine, and from this eminence of attainment do not scruple to pass sentence upon the system of Swedenborg as directly at variance with the genuine teachings of the Scriptures. But how can you arraign the decisions of my reason when left destitute of the supernatural aids accorded to yours? Indeed, what can my reason "have to do with the matter?" Why am I "called upon to judge" at all? It would seem that you had fired a petrel without thinking of the dangerous recoil. But perhaps you design to say that the spirit of God directly informs a "consistent Christian" as to the canonical authority of the different sacred books. Is this your meaning? You are well aware that the settlement of the question respecting the canon has ever been the great problem of biblical theology, and that even to this day learned and good men demur as to the claims of several books of the Bible to the character of inspiration. Am I to understand from your language, that the determination of this question forms a part of Christian experience? The pious Baxter assures us that this was not the case with him. "For my part, I could never boast of any such testimony, or light of the spirit, nor reason neither, which, without human testimony, would have made me believe, that the book of Canticles is canonical, and written by Solomon, and the book of Wisdom apocryphal, and written by Philo. Nor would I have known all or *any* historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c. to be written by Divine inspiration, but by tradition." If this is among the things taught by special illumination to all Christians, why are they still at variance on the subject? Is it not a point of vital moment to the interests of revelation?

But you will perhaps say—and I do not see what *else* you can say—that the effect of this supernatural teaching, which is the privilege of "consistent Christians," is to impart to them a correct knowledge of the genuine scheme of doctrines contained in the Scriptures, in contradistinction from all the erroneous, fallacious, and heretical systems which are professedly deduced from the same source. But here again we encounter the most serious difficulty in reconciling this hypothesis with the actual facts of the case. If all "consistent Christians"

are led by special illumination or "instruction" to adopt a peculiar view of the doctrinal code of the Scriptures, and this illumination really proceeds from the divine Original of Truth, it is no easy matter to conceive how it should instruct one class of Christians to draw from this source a form of doctrines directly at variance with that drawn by another. Yet nothing is more palpable than the fact, that the most dissonant schemes of religious faith are alleged by the different sects of Christendom as each the veritable system of the Scriptures, and each the product of a divine illumination shed upon the minds of its advocates.

You can scarcely fail, I think, to appreciate the difficulty and embarrassment in which I find myself involved in the attempt to put a consistent interpretation upon your language. I do not apprehend what you would claim as to the nature or extent of that divine "instruction" which you represent as something over and above the mere light of natural reason in fixing an assurance in the minds of Christians as to the origin and authority of the inspired writings. If this "instruction" or illumination is genuine, its truth must be self-evidencing, and if so, it must be, as far as I can see, infallible. How then can the inference be resisted, that you assume a certain construction of the divine oracles to be *infallibly* correct, to the exclusion of every other that differs from it? But how is this infallibility to be proved to my satisfaction? Suppose that I should assert a claim to an equal assurance of truth, and one derived too from precisely the same source, on what grounds will you contest the claim and reject my belief as heretical and false? Have you any other standard of appeal than the Scriptures themselves? "But we are instructed by a wisdom superior to our own" as to the genuine *sense* of the inspired Word and therefore all doubt is precluded. It would seem inevitable, therefore, that the reliance here is upon something more than reason, and yet immediately after you remark, that this fundamental principle of the Scriptures being the word of God is "received *by the reason* on the ground of clear and sufficient evidence." If by this you mean reason acting simply by its native, unassisted light on the evidences of Christianity considered as a point of mere intellectual inquiry, I discover nothing in the position which gives you any peculiar advantage in wielding the argument against us, for we are as well assured on this head, from the dictates of reason, as you can possibly be. If on the other hand you claim the prerogative of a *divinely enlightened reason* in coming to your conclusions respecting the true system of Christian doctrine, then, in order to make your position controversially available, it will be necessary to authenticate this claim by some adequate evidence, since we plead the same prerogative in support of a very different system.

You go on to say;—"Now this *word of God* has taught us a system of moral and religious truths, which we can no more doubt than we can the veracity of God." Has taught whom? In whose name do you here speak? Do you refer to Christians in general—all those who receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the word of God? But these constitute a variety of sects of very differing views, and it is certain that they do not all of them deduce the *same* "system of moral and religious truths" from the same Scriptures, and yet it is probable that they are all equally confident, and no more doubt the truth of their respective systems than they doubt of the veracity of God, which in fact they usually identify with the verity of their own system. In this general body

of Christians, the receivers of Swedenborg claim a place, and they too have equal confidence in the soundness of the system which they derive from the sacred oracles. But you proceed;—"When therefore we undertake to form a judgment as to the truth of another system, how strange would it be, if we should divest our reason of the benefit of its settled convictions? With what ingratitude and perverseness should we be chargeable, if we should extinguish or undervalue the light which shines upon us from revelation, and go back to the darkness of deism and heathenism?" What is implied in this? What would you have the reader understand by "forming a judgment as to the truth of another system?" Is not the system of Swedenborg avowedly a *Christian system*? How then is it "another?" And how is it necessary to "go back to the darkness of deism and heathenism" in order to adjudicate its claims? Do you regard the system of Swedenborg as coming before the world in the character of an antagonist system to Christianity, and to be placed upon a par with Deism, Mahometanism, or Buddhism? The whole train of your remark confounds me beyond measure. The controversy between you and Swedenborg is not one that involves the question of a divine revelation having been granted to man, or of this revelation being comprised within the contents of the Christian Scriptures. It is in fact the question of the *sense* of the revelation. Now you may be fully assured that the sense you ascribe to it is the true sense. I am equally assured that the sense I put upon it is the correct one. Who shall decide between us? What can authorize the condemnation of my view of the meaning of the word of God, but a conscious *infallibility* of judgment? This you certainly will not claim. To what then amounts the assumption of having been taught "a system of moral and religious truths about which there can be no more doubt than there is as to the veracity of God." I lay the same claim to this that you do. And so as to the scope of the following sentence;—"If we would maintain the character of Christians, we must use our reason, *as enlightened by revelation*." Assuredly; and do the teachings of Swedenborg breathe the slightest aura of a contrary sentiment? Have you ever met, in the writings of his adherents, a single expression implying an underestimate of the value of revelation as a guide to human reason? Is it not their unanimous aim to call all men to the deep and hearty acknowledgment of the Divine Word as the grand source of intellectual and rational light? Why then is an adverse argument so constructed as to convey the impression that our views are not only *unscriptural*, but *anti-scriptural*? Why is the reader led to infer that our doctrines can only be met on the ground on which the Christian apologist meets the deist and the heathen? "*Our great inquiry*," you say, "*must be, whether the disclosures of Swedenborg are in harmony with the Scriptures*." This as understood from the letter, I readily admit to be the true point of inquiry, but the meaning when unlocked by the key of the previous remark is, whether the disclosures of Swedenborg are in harmony with a *certain scheme* of scripture interpretation. But suppose it to be, whether they are consistent with *any* interpretation—whether they are not directly *at variance* with the Scriptures, as really as the Koran or the Shasters—still the insinuation, in either case, can come properly only from one who is *infallibly* in the possession of the true scheme of revealed doctrine, and we shall listen with due respect to the oracle when assured of its source. In the mean time we venture to claim a title to the character of full believers in a divine revelation, and to "have been taught

from it a system of moral and religious truths, which we can no more doubt than we can the veracity of God." If the *Christian* plants himself upon his prerogatives, as the Jew did in his controversy with Paul, we say as he did, "What advantage then hath the *Christian*?" And if he allowed the Jews much, on the score of the "oracles of God being committed to them," we claim our share in the general boon. Are not we *Christians* as well as they?

But we are soon brought to "the conclusion of the whole matter." The foregoing train of reasoning is merely the throwing out of a kind of logical *lasso* by which we are to be entangled and brought up to the confession of a flat denial of the canonical authority of a portion of "the word of God."

"But here, at the outset, we are met with an appalling fact, namely, that Swedenborg excludes from *the word of God* a considerable part of what we regard as the *holy Scriptures*. It is, in my view, too plain to be doubted, that Christ and the Apostles acknowledged the very books, and all the books, which now compose the Old Testament, to be *the word of God*, and regarded the whole and every part of them, as of divine authority. Any one who wishes to see this proved clearly and conclusively, would do well to examine the various treatises which relate to the subject, particularly the recent publication of Professor Stuart on the canon of the Old Testament. Our Author, then, by rejecting a part of the books, which were received by Christ and the Apostles, and which have always been received, by Jews and Christians, as *the word of God*, sets himself not only above the inspired Apostles, but in opposition to *Christ himself*, to whom God gave the Spirit without measure, and who came to bear witness to the truth. What shall we say to these things? Were the holy Apostles mistaken in regard to the books which belong to the word of God? Was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, full of grace and truth,—*WAS HE* mistaken? Must it not be a disordered state of mind that can lead any man to entertain such an opinion? The books of the Old Testament which Swedenborg refused to acknowledge as making a part of *the word of God*, are the following, namely; the two books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song; *about one sixth part of the Old Testament*;—and of the New Testament; The Acts of the Apostles, all the Epistles of Paul, including the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistles of Peter, James, John and Jude; that is, *about half of the New Testament*. Swedenborg says, 'the books of the Word are all those which have the internal sense.' Of course, those which he disowns, are those which have not the internal sense. I know not by what means he determined which of the sacred books have the internal sense, and which have it not. But in some way he found out, or was led to think, that the books above named did not readily admit of such a sense, as his scheme of interpretation required. It seems quite unaccountable, that he should have excepted some of these books, rather than some which he received. I do not, indeed, think it strange, that he found most of these books, particularly the Proverbs, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, somewhat intractable, and hard to be interpreted according to his principles. But it would have been natural to expect, that, when writing on the subject of conjugal love, whether in the natural or spiritual sense, he would make the Song of Solomon his Text-book.

"Can it now be expected of us, that we should fall in with a writer, who rejects so great a portion of what we verily believe to be *the word of God*? If we have confidence in Christ as an infallible Teacher, can we submit to the authority of one, who, in our opinion, takes a position in opposition to him? If we are consistent Christians, can we reject or undervalue the writings of those whom Christ commissioned to teach in his name, to whom he promised the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth, and who claimed to have their instructions received as the word of God? The leading doctrines of the gospel, as commonly understood by Christians, are set forth most clearly and fully in the *Epistles*. Swedenborg disbelieved these doctrines; and this may have been a reason with him for rejecting the Epistles. But can it be expected of us, that we should renounce the fundamental articles of our faith, and those sacred books, which most definitely teach them, and yield ourselves to another instructor and follow another guide?"—p. 16-19.



The objection here urged has often been replied to, and I have considered it at length in my "Statement of Reasons for embracing the Doctrines and Disclosures of Swedenborg." I there put it upon the ground which you have designated in the following paragraph, as to which you will permit me to say, that it has not exactly the air of justice to bring an unequivocal and unqualified charge, and then to exhibit it in that modified form in which only we admit its truth. If Swedenborg does not *absolutely* reject, disown, and exclude certain books from the Canon, such a charge ought not to be *absolutely* made at the outset. You may, indeed, hold that what he does teach on the subject *leads by legitimate consequence* to such a sentence of rejection, but as this is not admitted on the part of your opponents, I think your conclusion should have been stated at the close, and not in an *absolute* form at the commencement of the process by which you would establish it. But I give *our* answer in *your* words.

"It may possibly be said, that Swedenborg did not absolutely reject the parts of Scripture above named, but only gave them a lower place, and invested them with a lower authority, than belongs to the *word of God*.—p. 19.

This may not only "possibly" be said, but it is *positively*, and *unequivocally*, and *invariably* said, and the true and only point of debate is, whether it is said on good grounds. This point is fairly first to be settled before he can be *absolutely* charged with rejecting certain portions of the Scriptures, for it is at least possible, that the *distinction* which he affirms may still consist with the retaining of the present constitution of the canon undisturbed. This, at any rate, is the position assumed by those who adopt his system. But you ask on what grounds he made the distinction.

"Why did he receive the book of the Judges, or of the Kings, as the *word of God* more than the Chronicles, or Ezra, or Nehemiah? Why the gospel of Luke, more than the Acts of the Apostles, which is only a continuation of the Christian History by the same writer? Why the *Revelation* of John, more than the *Epistles* of John? And why any of the writings of *John*, more than those of the *other Apostles*? And then as to Swedenborg's test; who can find out why the rejected books do not admit of the inner or spiritual sense, as naturally and easily as the other books of Scripture? It will perhaps be said, that he did not propose to exclude the disowned books from the printed volume of the Scriptures, or to make a new Bible. It may be that he did not distinctly propose this. It may be that he was willing the Apostolic Epistles and the other degraded books, should continue for a time to be bound up with the *word of God*, as our Protestant forefathers were willing that the Apocryphal books should be bound up with the Holy Scriptures. But our forefathers were honest men, and took care to give a distinctive name to those books, showing that they were not regarded as belonging to the canon of Scripture. They designated them as the *Apocrypha*. Now Swedenborgians ought to be equally honest, and at the beginning of their Bible, they ought to give an exact list of the books constituting the *word of God*, as *Genesis, Exodus, &c.*, and after that a list of books of a lower character, not constituting any part of the *word of God*, and not possessed of plenary divine authority, such as *Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c.*, in the Old Testament, and *Acts, Romans*, and all the *Epistles* in the New Testament. Let this table be honest, and show just what Swedenborg meant. And by and by, when the New Jerusalem church becomes large enough to have a Bible society of their own, let them omit altogether those books which do not belong to the *word of God*, and so make their Bible smaller and cheaper; unless they choose to supply the place of the excluded books by some of the revelations of their Prophet.—But why should I say, *some* of his revelations? If his claims are founded in truth, *all* his revelations are, in the highest sense, *from God*, and ought to be published and circulated, as constituting a part, yea, the greater part of the Holy Scriptures."—p. 19.

With all New Churchmen I may say, that the first and paramount question, in regard to Swedenborg, is the question of his supernatural enlightenment, or of his intromission into the world of spirits. They require to be positively satisfied on this head at the outset, but *when* satisfied here, they have very little difficulty with anything that follows, resting upon his assertion as to the *results* of the peculiar state into which he was brought. For a very full and undoubting reliance on the truth of his statements, they find an ample warrant in the nature of the case. They see that a supernatural, i. e., a Divine, influence, operating upon his spirit is the very essence of his claim. They are convinced that such an illumination as he asserts in regard to himself transcends everything short of a direct and immediate putting forth of the Divine power to effect it. They see clearly that they must admit this, if they admit anything. If then such a privilege was conferred upon him by the Most High himself, it is equally obvious to their minds that it must have been for an *end* worthy the source from which it flowed. But they cannot conceive it as by any means consistent with such an end, to have allowed the mixing of error with truth in the revelations granted, as this would be to defeat the effect of the truth. They are persuaded, therefore, that they are authorized to repose implicit confidence in whatever averments he may make in regard to the laws and phenomena of the other life, and especially as to the nature and constituents of the Sacred Word, which depend directly on those laws. If upon these points he was *instructed* from a supernatural source, they feel no hesitation to receive his information as authentic and true in the highest degree. This is their mode of reasoning on the subject, and they are unable to see wherein it is defective. The whole matter resolves itself into the question of the truth or falsehood of the main assumption, i. e. whether he was actually, as he affirms, translated in spirit into the spiritual sphere. But this question is settled to their minds by the force of the evidence adduced, which the nature of my present object does not require me to recite. I can only refer those who would weigh it, to the body of his works, and the various Appeals and Apologies which have been put forth by his advocates. My purpose is simply to rebut the force of certain objections urged against the system in whole or in part. It would require a volume to go over the whole ground in a *positive* form of discussion.

Let it not be thought however that we deem ourselves shut up to an absolutely blind deference to his authority, without the slightest perception of the intrinsic truth of what he has said, or any confirmation, from other quarters, of the decision he has made relative to the character and claims of the different books composing the present canon. We find, for instance, on recurring to the Hebrew codex, that the very books to which he assigns a secondary rank are, for some reason, thrown together at the close of the volume and reputed by the Jews as having been the product of a lower degree of the divine afflatus than is recognized by them in the origination of the books to which Swedenborg assigns the first place. How is this to be accounted for? Does it not look as if Swedenborg had some authority, from the ancient estimate of these writings, for the discrimination he has made? Does not the censure cast upon him, for the liberty he has taken, redound upon the Jewish Church? Have they not uniformly made in effect the same distinction that he has in regard to the *degree* of the supernat-

ural influence exerted upon the minds of the writers of the different books\*—denoting this distinction by ascribing the one class to the indwelling of the *Shekinah* with the writers, and the other by that of the *Ruach Hakkodesh* or *Holy Spirit*?

The truth is, there is no subject in the whole circle of biblical Archæology so utterly at loose ends as this of *the canonicity of the Scriptures*. It is still the *vexed question* of theologians, and no man who has not made it a special point of inquiry can imagine the difficulties by which it is surrounded or the *vagueness* of the principles on which the determination both of Papists and Protestants rests. Scarcely a single author can be named who has treated the subject of inspiration in connection with the psychological state of the writers while inditing the books, and yet it is precisely here that the pith of the question lies. Most heartily therefore do I subscribe to the following remarks of Mr. Parsons in his review of Dr. Pond;—"On what does the canon of Scripture rest, excepting the opinion of a number of learned men, opposed by the great majority of the Christian church, reached after much discussion, not to say some angry controversy, and resisted by many who are recognized by the whole Protestant Church, as eminently wise and good? And is this canon so fenced about with sanctity, as to justify the outcry of impiety which assails us? *Is this canon itself given by inspiration?* Are we the first, who have doubted or denied its accuracy? Does not Dr. Pond know, that precisely these questions have always existed in the Christian Church, and have often divided its branches? The impossibility of settling these questions, as much, perhaps, as any other one point, broke off the negotiations between Leibnitz, Molinus, and Bossuet; from which all parties, at one time, hoped to reunite the scattered members of the church. The simple and unquestionable facts are, that any one may take his Bible to be that book which is so called, and ask no more; but it is composed of many books, and if he goes a single step in the inquiry, *why are just these books received, and all others rejected?* he will find himself at once surrounded by darkness. No man, no book, no fact, no theory, can give any answer which shall go beyond a probable conjecture. Where, then, is the justice, where the *decency*, of the outcry that assails us? When it is made by the wholly uneducated, we pass it by in silence; but when it comes from the Seminary at Bangor (Andover), we cannot but wish that they would not pursue their controversy in utter contempt of justice. Is it not one among the inestimable blessings which the Lord is now giving to mankind, through His New Church, that this great question is now settled and determined by a fixed and definite standard? It is not the arbitrary dictum of Swedenborg which decides this for future ages, but the unerring test of the science of correspondence."

You will easily have gathered from the above, the answers which we return to your queries. We believe, as you intimate, that Swedenborg did not "abso-

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\* "The Rabbinic writers maintain that the authors of the *Cetubim* (*Hagiographa*) enjoyed only *the lowest degree of inspiration*, as they received no immediate communication from the Deity, like that made to Moses, to whom God spake face to face; and that they did not receive their knowledge through the medium of visions and dreams, as was the case with the prophets or the writers of the second class, but still that they felt the Divine Spirit resting on them, and inspiring them with suggestions. This is the view maintained by Abarbanel, Kimchi, Maimonides, and Elias Levita." *Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia*, (Art. HAGIOGRAPHIA). It is true that the book of Daniel is included by the Jews in the *Hagiographa*, to which Swedenborg assigns a *plenary* inspiration, but reasons may be assigned for this which do not affect the general argument.

lutely reject certain parts of the Scriptures, but only gave them a lower place, and invested them with a lower authority than belongs to the Word of God." We believe that he did this, because he was qualified and authorized to do it, and this belief is founded on the sufficiency, to our minds, of the evidence he has afforded to this effect and this, we contend, is the true question at issue. We believe that the test he has designated is the true test, *because he has said it is*, and as the fact of an internal or spiritual sense in the Word, and the principles on which it is developed, constitute the most important feature of his disclosures, we cannot conceive that he should have been liable to error on this head. We rely, therefore, with the utmost assurance on his declarations relative to everything pertaining to the character of the Word. This assurance can only be shaken by an exposure of the insufficiency of the evidence of his general claim. I shall endeavor to show, moreover, that the principles themselves have an internal evidence of truth.

As to the intimation of unfairness in failing to designate the distinction in question, we hold that there is no ground for it, as he has most unequivocally stated what books possess the character of divinity, and what do not, and we think that an invaluable service has been rendered to the cause of truth by putting to rest a question which has agitated the church in all ages, and which in its present form, gives an advantage to the Romanist of which the Protestant has never been able to deprive him.

The reply thus given to your objections on this score covers a wide field in reference to the contents of your work, and will preclude the necessity of a specific consideration of various items of similar tenor occurring throughout the volume. I meet them by the general assertion, that the evidence which satisfies us of Swedenborg's illumination at all, satisfies us of it also in respect to all that he has said on this subject. If this evidence is inconclusive, we beg it may be shown in what respects.

I shall go still more largely into the scriptural subject on a subsequent page, but in the present connection I will not expose myself to the charge of declining to meet the brunt of a formidable objection arrayed in the following paragraph.

"No concession or declaration of the disciples of Swedenborg, that the excluded books of Scripture have or may have some inferior kind of inspiration, can give any satisfaction to those, who believe, with Paul, that '*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*,' and, consequently, that all Scripture without exception, is *the word of God*. What is that inspiration worth, which is not *from God*, and which does not invest what is inspired with full divine authority? Whatever is not the word of *God*, is the word of *man*."—p. 20.

If I were disposed to be severely critical and stand upon the minutiae of controversial fairness, I should scarcely refrain from a passing stricture upon the phrase, "*excluded books of Scripture*," for which I recognize no authority in anything that Swedenborg has said on the subject. He neither excludes from their place, nor detrudes from their rank, any of the biblical writings. He grants to *all* the books of Scripture *all* the inspiration which is ordinarily ascribed to them, while for some he challenges an incomparably higher character, in this respect, than has ever before been thought to be predicable of them. And this he does because such he learned in the spiritual world to be the truth. But in doing it he is unjustly thought to take away from one portion what he gives to another.

Again, the reader would be apt, without farther instruction, to infer that you considered the sentence of Paul to include the whole body of biblical writings, instead of those only which constitute the Old Testament. But the defect of discrimination here may fortunately be supplied from your own work on "Inspiration" published some years ago. "I here take for granted, what has often been satisfactorily proved, that when Paul speaks of all Scripture, he must be understood to mean all the writings which were held sacred by the Jews at that time; and that those writings were the same which constitute the Old Testament now in common use."—p. 63.

But this does not advance us to the true point of determination. The question still remains as to the genuine purport of the language, which, as you have hinted in the work referred to, is subject to some doubt. The verb "is," which constitutes the whole affirmation, is deficient in the original Greek, and is supplied by the English translators as an index to their interpretation of the passage. The sentence undoubtedly requires a verb *somewhere*, but the place of its insertion depends upon the judgment of the translator. In the received version it stands in the first clause.—"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, &c." Baxter, Grotius, Schleusner, and others render the passage thus;—"All scripture given by inspiration of God, *is also* profitable, &c." The original, I think, will admit, without violence, of either rendering, though inclined myself to regard the common version as more consonant to the Greek idiom than the other. But even thus translated the *theopneusty* ascribed to the "all," or every, "Scripture," does not in itself define the *precise nature or degree* of the inspiration affirmed. It predicates of certain writings a certain character expressed by the term *God-breathed*, implying undoubtedly a special kind of influence, from a supernatural source, put forth upon the spirits of the writers and controlling the form and genius of their compositions. We may grant that these books have *all* of them been written by men who were moved by devout promptings, which are to be referred for their source to the afflatus of the Spirit of God, although I do not know that the phrase "holy men" applied to them by Peter necessarily implies the *personal holiness* or *sanctity* of the individuals employed for the purpose. The epithet "holy" may have respect rather to their *office*, which would naturally confer a peculiar *consecration* upon them, as the chosen media of divine communications; and you are well aware that the primary import of *holy* is *set apart*. The true idea of inspiration, I think, is that which places it in the *writings* and not in the *writers*. The distinctive character induced upon the sacred books and constituting them a divinely inspired word, does not, I imagine, flow forth from the internal states, as to goodness and truth, of the several persons by whom they were indited. They might be recipients of the divine influx, for a particular purpose, without being at the same time truly regenerate men, and the function they performed may have been a sufficient ground for denominating them *holy*. If Saul had written psalms at the time when the "spirit of the Lord" came upon him, and they had been incorporated into the *Hagiographa* of the Jews, I do not know that this fact would have required any modification at all of the saying of Peter, that in inditing the Scriptures "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But conceding, for the present, that the writers of the Old Testament were, in their measure, good men, and that there was a general inflowing into their affec-

tions and thoughts of a divine principle, as there is more or less into those of all good men, still I am unable to perceive that this kind of inspiration, which may have been common to them *all*, must necessarily preclude the idea of a still higher influence having been imparted to *some*, so that the product of their promptings shall have been far more purely *divine* than that of the others. This we are taught by Swedenborg is the fact. That portion of the Scriptures which is justly denominated *the Word of God* is *essential divinity* itself—a verbal embodiment of the *eternal Truth* which forms a constituent part of the Divine nature. While, therefore, we recognize a general *theopneusty* or *divine breathing* ascribed by Paul to *all* the books constituting the Old Testament Scriptures, we still regard this as something incomparably lower than that *plenary* divine afflatus under which *the Word*, strictly so called, was written. The distinction has been well expressed by Mr. Noble in his treatise on the subject. “It is customary with biblical critics, to consider inspiration as something inseparably attached to the persons inspired, so that whatever they might write, from the time of their receiving the endowment to their life’s end, would be an inspired composition: and some even appear to consider the exercise of the gift as left entirely to the discretion of the party possessing it. That there is such a species of inspiration as this, we readily admit; and also, that it was possessed by the writers of some of the books contained in the collection called the Bible,—perhaps by them all: but without an inspiration very different from this, imparted either in addition to it or quite independently of it, no composition that can be called, in a strict and proper sense, “the Word of God,” could ever have been written. This, we have seen, must be given by a *plenary* divine inspiration; and such an inspiration, it is evident, instead of being a constant attendant on any one, could last no longer than while he was delivering the message, or was writing the book, for which it was afforded. It might return to the same person again, as it commonly did to the old prophets, or it might not: and whatever they might say or write during the intervals, could only partake of that inferior inspiration capable of being attached to a person; and not necessarily of this. We have seen that this inferior inspiration is the only one now generally acknowledged to belong to any of the books contained in the Bible: we admit that some of these books may be composed from this kind of inspiration, and thence have no sense beside that of the letter: but we contend that the far greater quantity, both in bulk and number are certainly written by the higher inspiration, and have a spiritual sense throughout.”—*Plen. Insp.* p. 240.

With this your respected colleague expressly agrees, who also recognizes the historical fact of a lower degree of inspiration being ascribed by the Jews to the Hagiographa. “In fact, the lowest gradation of inspiration ascribed by the Rabbies to the Ketubim, is as high as Christianity demands, or, as one may say, permits us to ascribe to man. No man, not even Moses or Isaiah, was uniformly and always inspired. Of all God’s messengers, only one received the gift of the Spirit without measure; and he was the only one who never erred and never sinned. Others were inspired for a particular purpose, and (it may be) remained so, until that purpose was accomplished. Then they returned to their usual state. So it was even with Moses; and so with all the other prophets or priests concerned with the writing of the Old Testament Scriptures.”—(*Stuart on O. Test.* p. 271)

You will scarcely fail to infer from this, that your solemn remonstrance on the score of a virtual annulling, by Swedenborg's assumptions, of the authority of Christ and the Apostles, has extremely little weight with us. We find that our Lord referred to "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms" as testifying of him, and we cordially abide by his authority in this reference, and whenever you will clearly demonstrate that this classification of the sacred and canonical books includes those to which Swedenborg assigns a secondary rank, we will seriously re-consider the grounds of our present judgment in regard to them. I have read the work of Professor Stuart to which you refer, and though I willingly bear testimony to the careful collation and extensive research evinced in it, yet on the single point of the Hagiographa I do not think his results conclusive, or that he has done full justice to the opposite views of Hengstenberg in support of the Talmudic bibliology. His work I regard as a very triumphant refutation of the theory of Mr. Norton and his school, but as inadequate to countervail the decisions of Swedenborg on the particular department in question. You will of course feel yourself at liberty to attribute as much of this judgment as you think proper to the influence of a pupil's deference to the authority of a master.

As to the impiety of a constructive charge of mistake brought against the Lord himself, we could not well fail to be as much horrified at the bare thought of it as you can yourself be, should we for a moment deem that the imputation rested upon any sufficient basis. His clear decision upon any question is, in our view, the ultimate law of heaven and earth. We should not dare to doubt, for an instant, the canonicity of any book to which he plainly ascribes such a character; but in the present instance we are not satisfied that he has positively passed the judgment which you suppose, and therefore your remonstrance on this score does not reach our convictions. It falls, if I may so say, upon a certain *callosity* in our minds, from which it suffers a rebound and leaves us unaffected.

The difficulty you find in conceiving "by what means he determined which of the sacred books have the internal sense and which have it not," is to my apprehension no greater than that of conceiving how he should have learned that there was any spiritual sense at all—any, that is, depending on a fixed and definable law. We have no difficulty in recognizing the truth of the fundamental law which he has laid down on this score, and we see more or less clearly that the application of this law brings us to the very results which he has announced respecting the character of the books in question.

You remark, in one of the paragraphs above cited, that "the leading doctrines of the gospel, as commonly understood by Christians, are set forth most clearly and fully in the *Epistles*. Swedenborg disbelieved these doctrines; and this may have been a reason with him for rejecting the *Epistles*." Admitting, merely for the sake of argument, the propriety of the term "reject" in this connection, our mode of reasoning on this subject is directly the reverse. We believe that his dissent from these doctrines, as *popularly understood*, was not strictly *anterior* to the estimate he was led to form of the *Epistles*, but *subsequent* and *consequential* to it. He was enabled to perceive that a certain grand principle reigned in the construction of certain books in the Bible, and that this principle did not obtain in regard to certain other books. This perception was entirely independent of any particular form of prior belief or disbelief; at least it had no necessary con-

nection with any preformed doctrinal sentiments, nor is it possible to show that such sentiments had the least influence in prompting the verdict he has pronounced upon the Epistles as compared with the Gospels. Indeed, considering the circumstances of his birth, training, and ecclesiastical relations, the presumption would undoubtedly be, that he previously *believed* the prevalent doctrines of his country and age, until instructed, from the source abovementioned, in their fallacy. But however this may be, certain it is that it can never be shown that Swedenborg "rejected," as you term it, the Epistles from the fact of his previously rejecting the doctrines they contain. The *principles* on which his discrimination is made involve no relation to any prior form of faith.

With respect,

Yours, &c.,

GEO. BUSH.

#### LETTER IV.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

In submitting to an attentive examination the scope of your remarks upon "the predicted effects of the revelations of Swedenborg," it may seem paradoxical to say that my chief difficulty in replying to it consists in finding no difficulty at all. Yet such is the fact. I am at a loss to conceive the exact state of mind that could have originated the vein of remark to which you here give utterance as having the force of an objection to the general claims of the system excepted to. I transcribe the passage.

"I shall now remark briefly upon the *predicted effects of the revelations of Swedenborg*. It was his confident belief, that 'the august dispensation,' (as it has been called,) which he introduced, would be followed by glorious results. He says, 'as for the state of the church—this it is which will be *dissimilar* hereafter. Henceforth the man of the church will be in a more free way of thinking in spiritual things, because spiritual liberty has now been restored to him.' Swedenborg thought that the man of the church would be free from the slavery and captivity under which he had been suffering, and would be able to perceive interior truths and thus to become more like himself. Professor Bush speaks very eloquently of the new dispensation which Swedenborg introduced, as an epoch of sublime character—as the *Lord's second coming*, which was to signalize itself by the most striking phenomena in the political and moral world. Such an event, he says, must touch all the secret springs of revolution, must infuse a new and omnipotent element into all the great principles of human action. 'The coming of the Lord—the descent of the New Jerusalem—shakes heaven and earth.' This he regards as 'the true clew to all the grand civil and ecclesiastical movements of the age.' Again he says, 'Swedenborg has broached what we affirm to be the true theory of the moral, religious, and political phenomena of the age in which we live. He has suggested the ample and adequate cause of the astounding effects everywhere visible around us. He has professedly put his finger upon the *primum mobile* of the complicated changes that are incessantly transpiring on every side.' —'He refers all the grand developments which are now swelling to a superb revolution in the state of the world, to the passing away of an old dispensation and the ushering in of a new one.'—p. 21.

I should certainly deem it very indecorous to intimate a want of seriousness in any part of the argument you have seen fit to institute against the positions of Swedenborg and the firm belief of his adherents. Nor can I for a moment question your competency to distinguish between *cause* and *effect* in weighing the character of the system under review. Yet one or the other of these suppositions



seems to be forced upon me in the attempt to account for such a strange inversion—such a palpable *ὑστερον προτερον* or *last foremost*—as I detect in your reasoning on this head. The very language employed conveys an idea as foreign from the mind of a New Churchman as can well be imagined. He knows nothing of any “predicted effects of Swedenborg’s revelations” considered merely *as* revelations, and apart from the things revealed. Who has predicted them? You say of Swedenborg that “it was his confident belief that the ‘august dispensation’ (as it has been called) which he introduced, would be followed by glorious results,” and the reader is evidently left to infer that these results would flow from the mere *announcement* of the dispensation, or from his *personal agency* in it, instead of referring them to the legitimate operation of the *truths* and *principles* which really constitute the dispensation. His disclosures consist simply of the declaration of a high order of *causes*, made known to him, which in the Divine Providence were then at work, and which would issue in corresponding *effects* in the state of the world and of the church. His revelations were the revelations of these *causes*, but the revelations themselves no more produce the effects than the astronomer’s calculations of an eclipse produce the eclipse. The eclipse takes place whether calculated or not; and so, although it was indeed according to the order of the divine counsels, that the annunciation of the passing away of an old economy and the ushering in of a new one, should accompany the event itself, yet the event is one thing, and the intelligence of it another, which it would not seem very natural to confound together. It may doubtless be admitted that Swedenborg *was* very confident that the dispensation which he introduced (by announcing it) would be followed by glorious results; yet he never thought of referring them to anything else than to the primary cause to which they would be owing. This cause according to him was the fact of the occurrence of the Second Advent of the Lord, to which you yourself allude as the alleged ground of the expectation. If this position be well founded, is it not sufficient to warrant all he has said in regard to the inevitable *effects*? Will not “an epoch of such sublime character signalize itself by the most striking phenomena in the political and moral world?” And is it not obvious that this is the true point of debate—whether his teaching respecting the nature and time of the Second Advent be sustained by competent evidence or not? How is it possible that you should pass by this as a question of no account, when it is in fact the hinge on which the whole controversy turns? If the coming of the Lord is an event to take place *spiritually*, and not in a *personal* and *visible* manner, will it not “shake heaven and earth?” Can you conceive it to be otherwise? And is not the question a fair theme of discussion? We distinctly assert that we are prepared to show, by the most legitimate process of interpretation, that if such an event is *ever* to occur, it must occur at the time and in the manner which Swedenborg has asserted. Why do you decline to meet our arguments? And why do you feel at liberty to shift the issue from the *cause* to the *effect*? If you believe the Bible, you believe that *at some time or other* “the holy city, the New Jerusalem, is to *descend* from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Can you suppose for a moment that the bare *annunciation* or *prediction* of such a descent will effect it? The prediction has indeed been made, and the time and manner of its fulfilment is a perfectly proper subject of inquiry, and one too about which every Christian, and especially every Christian minis-

ter *ought* to have an opinion. If he slurs it over, or puts it away from consideration, as among the mysterious things with which he has no concern, he dishonors the divine revelation—he virtually charges God with making useless disclosures, and that too in a book which bears upon its front the emphatic assurance —“Blessed is he that readeth and keepeth the sayings of this book.” How does he know that he has no concern in the oracles respecting the New Jerusalem and the Second Advent? Is it not possible that diligent inquiry might bring him to a very different conclusion? Would the Jew have been justified in pleading that the predictions respecting the Messiah and the First Advent were veiled in such impenetrable obscurity that it were a waste of labor to attempt to investigate their meaning? Was not this the very rock on which the nation, as a body, split? And is it for Christian men to enact over again the same infatuation? Be assured, my dear sir, there is a danger here of which the Christian world is but little aware. It is impossible for any one who has not examined the prophecies with attention to be positively certain of safety in neglecting to ponder the very announcements which Swedenborg has made respecting the character of the present era. We *may* be at the point at which it can properly be said of us, “O that thou hadst known the day of thy visitation!”

In view of the scope of my remarks, so amply quoted above, I was, in the perusal, anticipating of course your reply to the *fundamental assumption*, so clearly indicated throughout, that all the signal *effects* adverted to were traceable to the great *cause* assigned by Swedenborg, when, to my surprise, I encountered the following *quasi* rejoinder:

“I must leave it to the followers of Swedenborg to make it appear, that the grand social, moral and intellectual movement, which, during the last eighty years has been changing the face of the civilized world, has been owing to his system. Let it be, that the grand movement referred to, did commence about the middle of the last century. The question to be answered is, what influence the revelations of Swedenborg had to originate that movement, or to carry it forward. Many events are connected in point of time, which have no connection as *cause* and *effect*. Many learned men, now living, were born just before the American revolution. But who ever thought that any or all of those births had any influence in promoting the revolution? Let any advocate of Swedenborg show, if he can, that his principles specially contributed, in any way, to the revolutions alluded to, or that they had at the time, or have had since, any particular *tendency* to promote them. Other things can be mentioned, and often have been mentioned, which manifestly had such a tendency. But who among the profoundest writers on the affairs of nations, whether philosophers, historians, or civilians, ever perceived or imagined any connection between the revelations of Swedenborg, and the grand civil, moral, and intellectual changes which have occurred during the last 80 or 90 years?—p. 23.

The “followers of Swedenborg” will not probably be particularly “careful to answer thee in this matter.” They assume to “make” nothing “appear” on this head but their full belief and assurance that the “grand social, moral, and intellectual movement” referred to is due to the principles and agencies which Swedenborg’s system discloses, and which are as much the cause of his system itself as of anything else. Nothing more, I conceive, is necessary in reply to the drift of the argument in this paragraph, which is concentrated in the following query;—“Who among the profoundest writers on the affairs of nations, whether philosophers, historians, or civilians, ever perceived or imagined any connection between the revelations of Swedenborg, and the grand civil, moral, and intel-

lectual changes which have occurred during the last eighty or ninety years?" The connection asserted is between these changes and *the things revealed* by Swedenborg, and it is a matter of very small consequence whether this has been *perceived* by the philosophers or not. Their perception is not unfrequently very obtuse when they come to deal with the *causes* of things. The historian Gibbon undertook, in his great work, to assign the *causes* of the rapid spread and establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire. The argument was reviewed by Priestley, who showed very conclusively that what the historian took for *causes* were merely *effects*. Your argument, I humbly conceive, makes a still greater mistake by confounding the *announcement of causes* with the *causes themselves*.

The assumptions hinted at in the following paragraph are indeed substantially made by Swedenborg, and I have yet to learn that they are contravened by anything advanced in your pamphlet.

"Swedenborg did indeed teach, that *the men of the church* would be the men, who would experience the most signal effects of the New dispensation; that *they* were the ones, who would be freed from the bondage of error, and would be more spiritual, more heavenly, and more active in doing good. The whole church, Protestant as well as Catholic, before his teachings were published, was, he thought, in a state of total darkness. He takes high ground on this subject, and asks—'Who in the Christian world would have known anything of heaven or hell, unless it had pleased the Lord to open in some one the sight of his *spirit*, to show and to teach?' The whole Christian world, he thought, had gone astray from the truth, and involved itself in the grossest 'falses,' and was sunk to the lowest degradation. He held that *all the churches*, the whole body of Christians, were ignorant of the true meaning of the Scriptures; and that *he* was commissioned to teach what had not been known respecting God and Christ, heaven and hell, and all the great things of religion, and that the New Jerusalem Church which he ushered in, was the only true church, and was to be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world."—p. 23.

So far as the "men of the church" do really experience the life and power of the New Dispensation, they do undoubtedly become "more free from the bondage of error, more spiritual, and more heavenly" than others. If I do not add, "more active in doing good," it is not because *action* or *life*—a life of beneficent *use*—is not the grand constituent element of their religion, but because the primary object of their solicitude is *being* good, and because their views on this head may not perhaps ultimate themselves in precisely such *forms* of benevolent activity as you would deem the natural or necessary result. As a general principle, they regard the neighbor whom they are to love and to benefit as the *vicinus*, *the one near by*, and the salutary influence they would fain exert upon him they believe will be propagated, like widening waves, as from so many centres till it finally reaches the circumference of society and of the race. Looking upon this as the established order of heaven, they endeavor to conform to it, and while they oppose no impediment or remonstrance to the various reforming or missionary operations of the age, they ask to be not harshly judged if they endeavor to accomplish their "labors of love" in the way which strikes them as most accordant with the true genius of the moral code which they have adopted. They humbly trust they are doing something for the most important interests of humanity, but what they have been taught respecting the inseparably *orderly* connection between Truth and Good, prevents an alliance with schemes aiming

at the latter which at the same time involve principles or doctrines that, in their judgment, compromise the former. If it be said that this is no argument why they should not league their efforts, on the ground of their own faith, to secure the extension of their peculiar religious sentiments and the good which they embody, I can only reply, that their numbers, from causes which they can well assign to themselves, have been hitherto so few, and those so scattered, that concert of action, to any great degree, has been almost impracticable. But from existing omens they regard the prospect in this respect as daily brightening, and the lapse of a few years may perhaps give a new aspect, in this respect, to the New Church.\*

As to the alleged implication of a reigning darkness, error, and falsity in the great body of the then existing Christian church, we have no disposition to deny or evade its truth. On the contrary, our belief in the truth of the charge is most firm and unwavering. We are fully assured that Swedenborg was "commissioned to teach what had not been known respecting God and Christ, heaven and hell, and all the great things of religion." We believe too that the condition of the church, under this prevailing blindness and deadness to the interior spiritual truths of the Word, was among the chief reasons which rendered his mission necessary. We cannot conceive how it were possible, that the Gospel of God our Saviour should exert its appropriate moral power over the souls of men without a distinct revelation of the essential and *formal* nature of heaven and hell, and of the fixed and immutable *laws* by which human destiny, in the other life, is governed. We perceive that previous to his disclosures there were no *definite* ideas held or enunciated on these subjects—that the future life was a field of endless conjecture—that the fundamental principles on which the relation of the spiritual to the natural world subsists were likewise a theme of perpetual guessing—and that this general absence of all distinct knowledge on these heads had given rise to an almost universal relaxation of the life and power of true godliness, the essence of which is charity, and which can only flourish as it is fed and sustained by an intelligent perception of its fixed relation, according to *immutable laws*, with the realities of the spiritual world. On all these subjects

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\* "The causes why the New Church, which is called the Holy Jerusalem, is first to commence with a few, afterwards with greater numbers, and so at last to arrive to its full state, are several; the first is, that its doctrine, which is the doctrine of love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor, cannot be acknowledged and thence received, except by those who are interiorly affected with truths, and no others are interiorly affected with truths but they who see them, and they only see them who have cultivated their intellectual faculty, and have not destroyed it in themselves by the loves of self and of the world. Another cause is, that the doctrine of that church cannot be acknowledged, nor consequently received, except by those who have not confirmed themselves in doctrine, and at the same time in life, in faith alone; confirmation in doctrine only does not hinder reception, but if it be at the same time in life it does hinder, for such persons do not know what love to the Lord is, nor what neighborly love or charity is, neither are they willing to know. The third cause is, that the New Church on earth increases according to its increase in the world of spirits, for spirits from thence are with men, and they are from those who were in the faith of their church, whilst they lived on earth, and no others of them receive the doctrine, but those who were in the spiritual affection of truth, such only are conjoined to heaven, where that doctrine is, and conjoin heaven to man: the number of those in the spiritual world now increases daily, wherefore according to their increase, the church which is called the New Jerusalem increases on earth. These also were the causes, why the christian church, after the Lord left the world, increased so slow in Europe, and did not arrive to its full until an age had elapsed."—*Apoc. Expl.* 732.

we deem that Swedenborg, in his supernatural function as Seer, has poured a flood of light—that he has not only unveiled the phenomena of the life to come, but has developed its philosophy also—that he has fully shown *how* and *why* it is that the condition of spirits is *what* it is. In executing this great mission he has moreover with a somewhat stern, but benevolent fidelity, rent away the coverings which concealed from itself the hidden gangrene—the wasting corruption—that was preying upon the vitals of the church in the omni-prevalence of the Solifidian tenet and the absence of true living charity. This he has done, not in order to give the enemy occasion to say, “Aha! aha!”—not to glory over her infirmities—but to indicate and administer the only remedy—to point her to the true physician and to put her in quest of the healing balm.

What now, is the true answer to all this? Must it not be either the admission or the denial of the soundness of the grounds on which our assertions are made? Here are plain and emphatic *assumptions* which we are prepared to defend, and on the truth or falsehood of which we claim to be met. We see no argument in the mere holding up our positions so as to excite a horrified wonder at the effrontery which could dare thus to array itself against the universal sense or sentiment of the Christian world. But it seems you would turn the matter to an argumentative account by showing that the results have not been at all adequate to the large and lofty pretensions set forth.

“But I ask, what *the men of the church have done*. There has been ample time surely, for some of the expected effects of the New Dispensation to appear. The heaven has had almost a century to work. But what has been the result? The christian dispensation gave rise to great events during the life of the Apostles. In a short time it changed the face of the world. But what has this new form of christianity done? What important results have flowed from the introduction of the New Church—which Swedenborg regarded as so superior to all preceding dispensations? What remarkable conversions—what instances of uncommon piety, or uncommon usefulness has it produced? What enterprises for the good of the human race has it originated? Where among the various plans which have been pursued for the intellectual, civil, or moral improvement of the world, can you perceive any traces of the special agency of Swedenborgians? If they have had the benefit of so much new light from heaven—if, as they think, the all-powerful truths of religion, which have been concealed from the rest of the world, have been revealed to them, and they have thus been distinguished above all who have been called christians; we should have expected them to exert a distinguished influence in enlightening and saving their fellow-men. But where can you trace the footsteps of such an influence? Historians, who have been enemies to the Puritanism which sprung up and prevailed in England, have been compelled to acknowledge it as the great cause which operated in favor of civil liberty. But what respectable historian has referred to Swedenborgianism, as a cause which has operated in favor of any important public object? Christianity, accomplished wonders at its very beginning. But what has this new form of christianity accomplished in a hundred years? The men of the church were to be different men, more free, more spiritual, more completely under the influence of truth and love. But who among them, either here or in other lands, has in these respects, been distinguished above all other christians? I ask not, who among them has possessed sincere piety; but who has risen to the pretended pre-eminence? Who has attained to a higher degree of spirituality, to a more fervent devotion, or a more enlarged and active benevolence, than multitudes of ministers of the gospel and private christians in the Protestant churches of Europe and America? And yet all these, according to the strange notions of Swedenborg, are to be excluded from the list of enlightened, spiritual Christians, and to be looked upon as destitute of ‘the truths of faith and the goods of charity.’”—p. 24.

It cannot fail to be seen that a certain air of triumphant interrogation pervades this paragraph. The questions asked are evidently asked under the confident impression that they cannot be answered. What, now, will you say should we even consent to abide by the test here propounded to us? What if we should not only claim all that is thus virtually denied to our system, but all that is in effect challenged to yours, in the way of the extraordinary forth-putting of benevolent zeal and active effort during the period specified? You speak of "remarkable conversions"—of "instances of uncommon piety or usefulness"—of "enterprizes originated for the good of the human race"—of "various plans pursued for the intellectual, civil, or moral improvement of the world"—all which you would doubtless rank among the striking features of the age, and yet among which you discern no perceptible traces of the agency of this "new form of Christianity." Now granting the main assumption, that various moral movements of a high order have distinguished the last eighty or ninety years, in which the leading branches of the present Christian church have borne the most prominent part, I yet venture the assertion that the system of the New Church may justly claim the credit of *the whole*, for that system professes to embody a revelation of the *causes* to which the distinguishing character of the era in question is owing. Whatever may be said of the active personal participation of New Churchmen in these movements, I scruple not to affirm that the system which they have embraced contains within itself the prime moving springs of the entire machinery of benevolence and action to which you would doubtless point as the crowning glory of our age. If that system is true, the sublime event of the Lords' Second Coming entered on its incipency about the middle of the last century, and it is to this epoch that the grand revelation to which you allude is referred as its announcement. We recognize therefore in the relation of our system to these stupendous changes, civil, intellectual, and moral, the relation of *cause* and *effect*. They are precisely such results as we were taught to anticipate, though their occurrence is as truly independent of our personal ostensible agency as the revolution of the heavenly bodies, in accordance with Newton's great law of gravitation, is independent of his scientific announcements of their periods. The celestial spheres roll on under the impulse of their own laws regardless of his predictions however accurate. The hoop with which he may have played in childhood bears no more proportion to the immense orbits which his calculus afterwards measured, than do the puny efforts of the men of the New Church to the grandeur of the issues that flow from the truths and principles to which they have subjoined their *credo*.

"Christianity accomplished wonders at its very beginning. But what has this new form of Christianity accomplished in a hundred years?" *CIRCUMSPICE*—as the epitaph reads on the architects' tomb, when the query of the passing stranger is answered as to the monuments of his genius—*look around* on every side and peruse the record of its achievements. The testimonies to the triumphs of *your* faith are the living witnesses to those of ours.

With much respect,

Yours, &c.,

GEO. BUSH.

## LETTER V.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :

The subject to which you next approach is "the manner in which Swedenborg interprets the Scriptures." After remarking upon the prevalence, among the early Christian fathers, and among some of the moderns, of an *allegorizing* or *spiritualizing* style in expounding the sacred writings, in which the object is not so much to ascertain what sense was in the mind of the writers, as how many senses they could give to each passage—without, however, claiming a divine authority for their interpretations—you observe that Swedenborg comes forward with a claim to supernatural and infallible illumination, and that under the promptings of this inspiration, "the ordinary and most tranquil movements of his active, fervid spirit, exceed the highest flights of the allegorizing interpreters who preceded him." You then go on to ask :

"What now are we to think of the lofty affirmation of Swedenborg, that the whole Christian world was ignorant of the true spiritual sense of the word of God, and filled with the grossest mistakes and 'falses' on the subject of religion, until he was commissioned to give instruction? Is such an affirmation entitled to our belief? Is it credible, that the revelation which God made under the former and the latter economy, absolutely required another revelation from heaven, to disclose its true meaning? And was that other revelation made to Swedenborg, and through him to the world, near the middle of the last century? On all essential points, the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament appear to be very plain. They were evidently designed for the benefit of the common people. And who can doubt that common people, and even children, have had all the knowledge of them, which is essential to salvation? We know that, except in infancy, some right knowledge of divine truth, some spiritual discernment of the things of religion, belong to all who are saved. To multitudes, in different ages since the death of Christ, the word of God has been quick and powerful. And this quickening word is found in the writings of those to whom Christ promised the Holy Spirit, to guide them into *all the truth*? The Spirit was promised and given to the Apostles, not only to enlighten their own minds, but to qualify them to teach others. And what is necessary to enable the common people rightly to understand the teachings of the Apostles? Not a new revelation from heaven, but a new heart, a heart to receive and love the revelation already made. The hearts of men are naturally blinded by sin. The Spirit subdues the power of sin, and in that way removes the blindness, and opens the eyes to see the light. The Apostle speaks of God's shining in the hearts of men. This has been the common privilege of Christians in all ages. It was their privilege before the time of Swedenborg, as much as since. It has been given them of God, to discern spiritual things. True, they have not had *Swedenborg's* discernment. They have not understood spiritual things, as *he* understood them. The Apostles had the promise of being guided into *all the truth*. But did they ever understand the word of God as Swedenborg did? When and where did they give such interpretations of the Scriptures, as are found in his writings? But it would be in vain to propose such a question to any one who rejects all the Apostolic Epistles. What those Epistles contain is now to be set aside, to make room for the revelations of the last century. And even as to what Swedenborg admitted to be *the word of God*, a sense is to be apprehended and received, which is altogether different from what plain, honest, pious men have ever apprehended, or would be likely to apprehend,—a sense which never came into the mind of any one, before Swedenborg."—p. 29.

The burden of this entire strain of descant may be compressed into the single sentence in which you hint at the utter incredibility of the hypothesis, that "the revelation which God made under the former and the latter economy required

another revelation from heaven, to disclose its true meaning." This you regard as utterly beyond belief not only from the general plainness of the sacred writings and their consequent adaptation to the wants of common people and children, but from the fact, that the Holy Spirit was promised to the apostles to guide them *into all truth*, and that under this guidance they have been enabled to utter themselves quite intelligibly to the great mass of men. What need then of a new revelation from heaven? The grand requisite is not a new revelation, but a new heart, "a heart to receive and love the revelation already made."

We should probably fall very little behind you in the deep conviction of the necessity of a "new heart" to a right entertainment of the revelation already bestowed. But this does not militate with the equally strong conviction, that ends worthy of infinite wisdom and goodness may dictate the bestowment of new light in regard to the interior genius and scope of the written Word. If, for instance, we could suppose that there were in fact certain principles or powers in our nature hitherto undetected, which laid an adequate foundation for an interior or spiritual sense in the inspired writings, and yet that these principles or powers were such that they could not be fully developed without a special illumination, is it not easily conceivable, that such an illumination would be warranted by the important results to flow from it? Does not the psychological nature of man bear a distinct relation to the subject-matter of a divine revelation? Is it in aught inconsistent with our best views of the perfections of the Deity to believe, that he would interpose for the purpose of acquainting mankind with the great truths of their inner constitution? And if we suppose, moreover, that this revelation could only be made by the unveiling of the state of the soul after death, is it not conceivable—as it will readily be granted to be *possible*—that some individual of the race, suitably endowed, might be chosen for the purpose and made the subject of a species of translation into the spiritual sphere, and that too with the express design of his being qualified to impart the knowledge thus obtained to his fellow-men? Now this is, in fact, the claim which is made in behalf of Swedenborg. It is contended that he has, by special illumination, laid open the interior structure of the human spirit, and developed such laws and principles as absolutely necessitate the conclusion that there *must* be an interior or spiritual sense to the Word. He instructs us in the fact of an all-important distinction between *natural* and *spiritual thought*—that angels and spirits, who are all from the human race, come into a psychological condition, in the other life, in which they necessarily receive *spiritual* ideas from *natural* expressions—and that this spiritual sense is governed by laws as fixed and immutable as those that prevail in the material universe. It is true, indeed, that this implies the existence and the reading of the Word in the spiritual world as well as in this, but such he affirms to be the fact, though it is often read by spirits *in our minds*, while we ourselves are reading it, and the evidence he affords in regard to this fact, entitles him, in our belief, to the utmost credit. We grant, moreover, that the position is fairly open to the query, how a sense of the Word, which is *more* appropriately taken by disembodied spirits, can be suitable or necessary to men in the flesh; to which my reply is, that this internal perception may be awakened in the present life, and that every spiritually minded person does come into it more or less, in proportion as he is regenerated, or as the angelic nature predominates over the sensual and earthly, for you justly remark, that, "except in



infancy, some right knowledge of divine truth, some *spiritual discernment* of the things of religion, belong to all who are saved." Still we hold that the recognition of this internal sense is clear and definite according as the principles on which it is founded are intelligently apprehended, which is usually the result of a familiar converse with Swedenborg's writings.

I would now submit whether the view thus presented can be justly charged with anything like disparagement to the existing divine revelation. The development claimed is that of a recondite meaning in the Word, which stands in direct relation to a parallel development in the psychological nature of man. In its true character it is not, with the exception of the first few chapters of Genesis, the abolishing or superseding of the literal or historical sense which has always been assigned to the sacred record. It is simply an advance upon, or a super-addition to, that sense, and what objection can there be to a new revelation of the inner meaning of the Word, when it is in effect but a new revelation of a constituent principle of our nature, to which that meaning has a special relation?

You will read in what I have now said, an answer to your queries respecting the apostles. "They," you remark, "had not Swedenborg's discernment. They have not understood spiritual things as *he* understood them. The apostles had the promise of being guided into *all the truth*. But did they ever understand the word of God as Swedenborg did? When and where did they give such interpretations of the Scriptures as he did?" Undoubtedly no where. But what then? Does it follow from this that his interpretations are not true? Does "*all the truth*" into which they were to be guided comprise every form and department of truth—astronomical, geological, and psychological? Did Paul interpret the first chapter of Genesis as Lyell, and Silliman, and Hitchcock, and the mass of modern divines, interpret them? Did he understand the sun and moon's standing still at the command of Joshua as Newton understood it, and as you and I understand it? Does not the progress of science, as it evolves from age to age, *compel* an altered construction of the *letter* of holy writ on a variety of subjects? Can any solid reason be assigned why the progress of Anthropology should not produce the same effect? May not a fuller development of the internal powers and faculties of the human soul require a new construction of the literal purport of a multitude of passages in the sacred books? Is the clear and conclusive *exposé* of the constitution of our nature in these respects a virtual disparagement of the Bible in its present form and its hitherto established interpretation? Is it justly chargeable upon the modern Astronomy and Geology that they do in effect impeach the pious of former ages of gross ignorance on this head? Were those holy men responsible for not knowing what they could not know in the circumstances in which they were placed? And so as to the great psychological truths which Swedenborg has developed—are he and his adherents to be loaded with obloquy because they claim the possession of a knowledge, on this score, which was no more in the reach of the apostles than the results of the modern sciences of Astronomy, Geology, and Chemistry? Is it not clear that the objection redounds against the Divine Wisdom for not granting to one age what is accorded to another? And is this either piously or philosophically urged? Is no room to be allowed for the gradual unfolding of the great truths of the universe? May not the Supreme take his own time for bringing into obvious harmony the mysteries of the outer and the inner world?

The fact is, it is beyond question that Swedenborg's assertion of a spiritual sense in the Word flows directly from his disclosures of the spiritual nature of men as vouchsafed to him in his converse with the world unseen. Accordingly the only effectual mode of refuting it is, by impugning the credibility of his relations on that head. This you are prompted to do by contrasting Paul's modest silence in respect to the things seen and heard by him in his rapture to the third heavens with Swedenborg's voluminous recitals in his *Memorabilia* of celestial and infernal wonders.

"Saint Paul had the privilege of visiting the third heavens, and of hearing and seeing wonderful things there. But his modesty was such, that he was silent on the subject for fourteen years, and never mentioned the fact which so distinguished him above others, until he was compelled to do it in self-defence. And then he mentioned it only once, and that hesitatingly, and with evident embarrassment, and as though it belonged to another man. It is certain, that he did nothing, in consequence of that revelation, in the way of teaching that new sense of Scripture, or any of those new lessons, which we are now to learn from Swedenborg. And what can be the reason of this? According to Swedenborg, the angels have the Scriptures in their possession. Why did they not instruct Paul in the true sense of the word of God? Is it to be supposed that they were then ignorant of it, and that, by the diligent study of exegesis, they have since acquired the higher knowledge, which they communicated to the prophet of the New Church? Or was it a fact, that Paul's visit in heaven was not long enough to enable him to get an insight into the deeper mysteries of the Scriptures, and that these mysteries were kept in reserve, till a man of more distinguished talents and acquirements and a higher destiny should be raised up, and should have the advantage of dwelling in the heavens for a long course of years, and should thus have an opportunity, which Paul never had, to learn what no eye before had seen, and no ear had heard, and no heart conceived? Or did Paul, if supposed to have had information nearly equal to that of Swedenborg, still judge it proper to keep the more spiritual sense of Scripture which he had learned, a profound secret? And did he judge thus, because he thought the human mind not yet prepared to understand the sublimer mysteries of revelation? Or was he so occupied with preaching the plain, literal sense of Scripture, and founding churches, that he had no time to dive into deeper things? Or was his manner of thinking and writing and speaking such, as not to be so well suited to things of a celestial nature? Or were the languages which he used, that is, the Greek and Hebrew, less adapted than the Latin, in which Swedenborg wrote, to the more spiritual truths of the New Church? Or must we conclude that Paul's judging it not lawful or possible to make known the things which he had heard, was a mistake? There is certainly something very remarkable in this matter. Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, who was commissioned to teach the truths contained in the Scriptures to Jews and Gentiles, and who was caught up to heaven that he might be better qualified for his work, has not directly and expressly given us any account of the particular things which he heard or saw, but says only that they were unspeakable; while Swedenborg freely and fully relates the familiar talk he had with the angels on all sorts of subjects. There was nothing either impossible or inexpedient for him to utter. He could teach not only the inner sense of what the Scriptures declare, but many things in addition—such as the geography of the heavens, the north and the south, the east and the west, the houses and the gardens, the fruits and the flowers, the different societies of angels, the bodies and the clothing of dead men, their countenances, their limbs, their senses, their caps and turbans, the marriages of men and women, &c., although all was spiritual. \* \* \* He could fill books with these matters, more than four times as large as the Scriptures which he undertook to explain. In regard to this whole affair, there certainly was a most noticeable difference between him and the Apostle Paul; the latter being so modest and reserved as to what he had heard in heaven, the former so surpassingly communicative; the one referring to it only once, and that very reluctantly, and from necessity, and in the person of another; and then telling us that he had a special and mortify-

ing visitation from God, which he calls a thorn in the flesh, to prevent his being lifted up; the other referring to the subject continually, and talking endlessly, and with marvellous repetitions, about the great things and the little things which he saw and heard in the other world, having had revelations so much more abundant than Paul's that we should suppose that many thorns in the flesh would have been necessary to prevent him from being exalted above measure." —p. 30-34.

The scope of the reasoning throughout this paragraph is to set forth the improbability of the spiritual sense of the Word being communicated to Swedenborg when it was withheld from Paul, notwithstanding that he too was privileged with admission to the celestial abodes. The implication is very plain, that Swedenborg's claims are highly presumptuous when set by the side of those of Paul. But it is certainly conceivable that the end to be answered by the temporary translation of one person into the sphere of spirits may be different from that which was to be accomplished by the bestowment of the same privilege upon another, and under totally different circumstances. The extatic vision of Paul was evidently of very short duration, and, as far as appears from the narrative, was designed solely for his personal benefit, without reference to the instruction of Christians, whereas Swedenborg's preternatural state was continued to him for near thirty years, and that too, if he is to be believed, for the express purpose of communicating the information thence derived to the world.

As, therefore, it does not appear that Paul's rapture was *designed* for any such end as is claimed for Swedenborg's illumination, I see not that any inference adverse to this claim can be fairly drawn from it. I am unable to perceive any intrinsic necessity that a supernatural revelation alleged to have been made to one person, at one age of the world, must be rejected as fabulous because not made to another, at another age. The question is to be decided, as a question of fact, upon its own appropriate evidence. If the *possibility* of such an occurrence is foreclosed by any express declaration of Jehovah himself, then indeed we are saved the necessity of any further inquiry on the subject. Nothing remains but to reject Swedenborg's pretended visions as an arrant imposture or a pitiable delusion. But no intimation of the kind can be alleged from the sacred Scriptures. Not the least hint is afforded that the Most High has shut himself up from bestowing on his creatures new measures of revelation from the spiritual world.\* For aught that is to be read in the Old Testament or the New, just such disclosures *may* be made to men as Swedenborg declares *were* made to him, and if so it is impossible to deny that the fact of a spiritual sense pertaining to

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\* I should have been very glad, for one, if Mr. Barnes had given his authority for asserting what follows in his note on 2 Cor. 12, 4;—"We have *all* the truth which we shall ever have about heaven here below. No other messenger will come; none of the pious dead will return. If men, therefore, are not willing to be saved in view of the truth which they have, they must be lost. God will communicate no more." This is evidently spoken without any design to include Swedenborg's disclosures in the general body of truth to which he alludes, and to which we are to expect no additions from the Most High himself. The assertion is plainly unwarranted. It is what no man can affirm, in the absence of any divine declaration on the subject, unless he is prepared to say that no adequate *reasons* can ever hereafter exist for the communication of new truth to the world respecting heaven and hell and the life beyond death. It may, I think, be seriously doubted, whether Mr. B. is in possession of a sufficient amount of knowledge in respect to the divine counsels to enable him to make this assertion with much confidence.

the Word may have entered into them, inasmuch as it rests upon the spiritual nature of man, as unfolded to him in his state of translation, and which it was a great part of his mission to develop to the world. That this sense should have been made known to Paul, does not by any means follow, so long as it cannot be shown that the *end* of his ecstasy was to enlighten him into the philosophy of our being, instead of affording consolation and encouragement in the midst of his severe trials as a Christian. Your long string of interrogatories, therefore, bearing on this head seems quite irrelevant to the scope of the argument. They can possess no force except from the antecedent probability, that if such a revelation as Swedenborg claims to have been made to himself were made at all, it would have been made to Paul also, and this is but another form of maintaining that Infinite Wisdom must necessarily make all its revelations at once, or in one age, instead of observing the order of the gradual evolution of the human mind and the different exigences of the race at different periods. If this be *seriously* maintained, the whole controversy assumes a new aspect, and though I am entirely willing to meet you on this ground, it is plainly inappropriate to the object of the present discussion.

As the above objection founded upon the case of Paul has been very largely and elaborately considered by Mr. Clissold in his Letter to Archbishop Whately, I beg leave to transcribe one or two paragraphs in this connection. "The Essays refer us to the case of St. Paul. They speak of the celestial vision with which he had been favored, and observe, that he alludes, with the utmost possible brevity, to his being caught up into paradise and hearing unspeakable words, without relating any particulars of the vision: this circumstance the reader is naturally led to contrast with Swedenborg's "*copious and distinct revelations*," his "*visit to the celestial abodes*," &c., of all which it is said "he gives *minute descriptions*:" it is directly contrasted, likewise, with the narratives of Mahomed; and the Essays observe,—"*It is truly edifying to compare this with Mahomed's long and circumstantial description of his pretended visit to heaven, filled with a multitude of needless particulars, calculated to gratify an appetite for the marvellous*;" the narratives of Swedenborg being thus obviously classed with those of Mahomed. Now, with regard to the minute descriptions of the celestial abodes, pretended to be given by Swedenborg, pardon the liberty I take in observing, that I am not aware that any such are to be found in any part of his works. Swedenborg tells us that there are three heavens, the celestial, the spiritual, and the natural; and that of these, the third heaven or the highest is the celestial, being the same with that into which St. Paul declares he was caught up. The celestial abodes are the abodes in the celestial heavens; and into these Swedenborg observes that he was rarely permitted to enter; whence, so far from giving long and minute descriptions upon this subject, he is silent with regard to most of what he there saw and heard; declaring, like St. Paul, that it would be incomprehensible or incredible; consequently, on the point upon which the Essays have contrasted the writings of St. Paul with those of Swedenborg, there is much more of remarkable coincidence than of contrast. With regard to the abodes in the spiritual heavens, little is stated, compared with what Your Grace justly observes an enthusiast or impostor would probably have done; and what is stated, is stated in a way, which, as I have already shown, and shall in the sequel have further to show, renders it impossible for it to have come either from an enthusiast or impostor.—*Clissold's Letter*, p. 122.

He subsequently quotes the following passage from the *Essays*, which I here introduce in order to make way for his reply. "But the *Essays* observe, 'It is plain that nothing could have been more gratifying to the curiosity of all who had an interest in the subject, nothing more likely even to allure fresh converts, than a glowing description of the joys of heaven; it would have been easily believed, too, by those who gave credit to the writer, as it is plain Paul supposed the Corinthians did; it would have been very easy, again, for an impostor to give loose to his fancy, in inventing such a description; and to an enthusiast it would have been unavoidable; he who was passing off his day-dreams for revelations on himself as well as on others, would have been sure to dream largely on such a subject. Why then did not Paul do anything of the kind? I answer, because he was not an impostor, nor an enthusiast, but taught only what had been actually revealed to him, and what he was commissioned to reveal to others.'

"It is asked, why St. Paul did not do anything of the kind? May I answer this question by asking, 'Why is it that St. John did?' But it will be said, St. John did not give a full, minute, and engaging account. St. John wrote in types or symbols, and a type will contain as much in a short compass, as, if explained, volumes could comprise. Had Swedenborg given the symbols only, without their explanation, he might, in most instances, have been as concise as the prophets. To draw the comparison fairly between the two, the interpretations of the symbols in Scripture ought to be included; and if this be done, the argument, I presume, will be seen to be invalid. But the narratives of the prophets, it is said, are not minute. Now I reply, that some, at least, appear to be quite as minute as those of Swedenborg; and this for a good reason. If the objects presented to the spiritual vision be symbolical, then, for the purposes of interpretation, a minute description of these objects is as necessary, as, for the same purposes, a minute transcript of a hieroglyphical sentence; for if one hieroglyphic were omitted, the meaning of the whole might be altered or left imperfect. This we may see more particularly exemplified in St. John's description of the New Jerusalem.

"Why, then, was St. Paul silent as to his vision in the third heaven? Because he was not commissioned to reveal to others what he had heard and seen. Why was St. John not silent? Because the Lord said to him, 'What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.' The question, therefore, I respectfully submit, does not depend upon any antecedent views we may entertain of the propriety or impropriety of a full, minute, or engaging account; but upon the fact of what the writers themselves actually saw, and were divinely commissioned to reveal to others; and, therefore, if the foregoing objection be in any manner urged against Swedenborg, it can be valid only on the ground, that he never had any intercourse with the spiritual world, or never had any divine commission to communicate what he saw,—which is merely begging the question."—*Id.* p. 123 and 126.

To all this I would add that the original word by which Paul expresses the "unlawfulness" of uttering what he heard and saw in the third heavens implies also "impossibility," and in this intimation he agrees with Swedenborg who frequently alludes to the incompetency of human language to convey any adequate idea of the wonderful things of the angelic heaven.

In view of the "abundance of revelations" affirmed by Swedenborg to have

been made to him, you say, "we should suppose that many thorns in the flesh would have been necessary to prevent him from being exalted beyond measure." Now I would suggest it as possible, that there might have been an intrinsic native difference in the characters of the two men which rendered necessary a discipline in the one case that was not so much called for in the other. This idea is perhaps favored by the verdict of Mr. Barnes (in loc.) "There is abundant reason to believe that Paul was naturally a proud man. He was by nature self-confident; trusting in his own talents and attainments, and eminently ambitious. When he became a Christian, therefore, one of his besetting sins would be pride; and as he had been peculiarly favored in his call to the apostleship; in his success as a preacher; in the standing which he had among the other apostles, and in the revelations imparted to him, there was also peculiar danger that he would become self-confident and proud of his attainment."—*Barnes on Cor.* p. 354. If it be said that this could only be predicated of Paul's *natural* character, and that he became entirely another man after his conversion, still it would seem that the vicious taint in his spirit was not yet wholly removed—that it was still lurking within him, even at the time when he was thus favored with admission into heaven—and if we could *suppose* the bare possibility that it remained with him to the last, and went with him into the spiritual world, it would give at least a semblance of probability to what Swedenborg declares of his state in that world, which is certainly very much in accordance with Mr. Barnes' testimony cited above respecting him.

You are pleased, in this part of your work, to relieve the gravity of abstract discussion by reciting a "vision" of your own. Though dignified with the title of "vision," to bring it somewhat more into parallelism with those which you would ascribe to Swedenborg, I shall still venture to regard it as a *dream*, and that you found a warrant for the recital of it in the words of Scripture, "he that hath a dream, let him tell a dream." It is thus related:—

"This difference between Paul and Swedenborg so impressed my mind a short time since, that I too, in fact, had a vision. And yet, as I am not gifted in that way at all like Swedenborg, my vision was quite moderate and tame compared with the marvellous visions which came before his active and illuminated mind. In the thoughts of my head upon my bed, when deep sleep falleth upon men, I actually saw, very clearly and distinctly, my venerated friend, Dr. Dwight, and conversed with him familiarly, as I used to do while he lived. Nor did it occur to me, that he was dead, nor did he seem to know that he was not just as he had been on earth. I said to him, 'Dr. Dwight, I have lately been reading the account which Swedenborg gives of what he saw and heard in heaven, particularly the revelations made to him of the inner sense of the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul was once translated into heaven. But it seems that fourteen years passed away before he made any mention of that distinguished privilege of his. And although he was doubtless wonderfully enlightened and confirmed in the principles of Christianity by that celestial vision, he did not attempt to tell the world the things which he had seen and heard, saying, that they were unspeakable. But Swedenborg tells hundreds of long stories, giving the particulars of the free conversations he had with the angels for many years, and describing the spiritual meaning of Scripture which he there learned, and the various objects he saw in different parts of the upper world. Is there not, in all this, a most remarkable difference between Swedenborg and the Apostle Paul?' Dr. Dwight gravely replied, 'there surely is.'"—p. 34.

Now I agree entirely with the Doctor. He gave, in my opinion, the right an-

swer, and it affords me pleasure to believe that he had, in all probability, attained to a very correct understanding of the points in which the difference consisted. I only regret that the dialogue closed so abruptly, and that you had not the opportunity of inquiring of him whether there were not amply sufficient *reasons* for the difference in the two cases. Should the "vision" ever chance to be repeated, I could fain hope that the conversation might be resumed just at the point where it was broken off.

But leaving Paul and Dr. Dwight you return to the consideration of the *spiritual sense* of the Word. In alluding to my advocacy of Swedenborg you say, that I do not avail myself of the circumstance of his supernatural illumination as a proof of his principles—that my reliance is chiefly, if not wholly, on the *nature* of those principles—that to vindicate Swedenborg's writings, I appeal to consciousness, to psychological facts, which I esteem clear and certain—all which is undoubtedly true, and you thus make up the issue.

"What better, then, can I do, than to show you, by a sufficient number of specimens, in what manner our author interprets that portion of the Bible, which he receives as the word of God, and then to refer the whole to your sober judgment. My examples will be derived from the first volume of his Heavenly Arcana, and his work on the Apocalypse."—p. 35.

You accordingly proceed to a somewhat extended analysis of the expositions, contained in the Arcana, of several of the first chapters of Genesis, with the view to hold up his *spiritual* mode of interpreting this portion of the book, in revolting contrast with what you deem the more consistent and rational mode of *literal* interpretation. You then go on to say;

"You will keep in mind, that this mode of allegorizing or spiritualizing Scripture is now presented before you for your sober consideration. The appeal is to your reason and common sense. The question to be decided is, whether there is internal evidence of the truth of these interpretations. This is the question proposed to us by Professor Bush. He does not wish us to rely upon the authority of Swedenborg as an inspired man, but to look at the intrinsic excellence of what his writings contain. Is it then obvious to reason and common sense, that the account of the creation, above referred to, was intended to convey such a meaning as Swedenborg supposes?"—p. 38.

Substantially the same queries, somewhat varied in form, repeatedly occur in different parts of your work and as I hope to propound an answer that will cover the whole ground, I will here cite some of the principal passages.

"If all this were a matter of direct revelation from God, then we should be bound, as Christians, to believe it. But, according to Professor Bush, we are to look for an intrinsic reasonableness and excellence in these explanations of the word of God. But we look in vain. Reason and common sense can see nothing in such explanations but groundless and extravagant fancies. Reason searches for the *grounds* of any opinion; it is very much inclined to inquire for the *why*, and the *wherefore*. And in the present case, it would like to ask, *why* does the river Pison signify the intelligence of faith from love? And *why* does Gihon signify the *knowledge* of all things relating to faith and love? *Why* is it that the first relates to the *will*, and the second to the *understanding*? *Why* does Hiddekel signify *reason*, and Euphrates, *science*?"—p. 43.

"Clissold, one of the ablest advocates of Swedenborg, speaking of the *truth of the revelation of the internal sense of the Word as unfolded by Swedenborg*, says, 'the evidence of it stands upon its own basis.' I suppose he means the same as Professor Bush means, when he so frequently asserts, that in judging of Swedenborg's

principles, we are to look at their *intrinsic excellence*—that the appeal is to be made to reason, common sense, and consciousness. Now I inquire of reason, or common sense, *why* these interpretations are adopted, and why, in any case, one of them is adopted rather than another? Professor Bush says, ‘the system of Swedenborg insists upon such an interpretation of the word as shall accord with the fair and unimpeachable conclusions of reason, with the known laws, facts and principles of nature, and with internal consciousness.’ I ask then, do Swedenborg’s interpretations agree with this standard? As the appeal is to be made to reason, and reference to be had solely to the intrinsic reasonableness and excellence of Swedenborg’s writings; then, of course, we are not to be influenced by the authority which he claims as a divinely commissioned interpreter of the Scriptures. If, however, the *reason* to which the appeal is to be made, means the *illuminated reason of the man of the New Church*; then the reason of others can have nothing to do with the matter, and the question would be why *any others* are called upon to judge.”—p. 55.

“The question returns, and returns times without number,—what is there in reason, or consciousness, or common sense, or philosophy, or philology, which could lead to such interpretations of the word of God, or which can justify us in receiving them? Is there anything in the language itself, which indicates such a meaning? Is there anything in other parts of Scripture, or in the nature of the subjects introduced, which demands a spiritual or allegorical sense of what is contained in the chapters of Genesis above-mentioned? Are not the things related from the 5th to the 13th chapters as credible, as those related in the subsequent parts of the Bible, or in any other ancient history? And may we not as properly say, that all history, and all the events which take place, are to be interpreted spiritually, and have an inner sense, according to the system of correspondences? And then how shall we make out the correspondences? Shall we look for internal evidence? Shall we rely upon the intuitions of the reason? No. We must follow Swedenborg. But how did Swedenborg proceed? How did he happen to think that the six days work in the creation denote the six states of a man passing through the process of regeneration—that sun, moon and stars signify love and faith—birds, things intellectual—creeping things, scientifics, &c.? How did he happen to think of all these wonderful arcana, which no man, uninspired or inspired, ever thought of before the year 1747? How did he happen to think of these things? Why, *the angels told him*.”—p. 57.

Now in reply to all this, and much more like it, I still adhere to the position, that it rests upon *principles* which appeal to reason and consciousness. But what are these *principles*? They are those by which the truth of Swedenborg’s general claim is to be determined. I have no where intimated that the soundness of his interpretations is, in all cases, intuitively apparent, or that it is confirmed by *direct* internal evidence. Far from it. Indeed he very frequently gives us to understand, that the latent spiritual sense, in a multitude of passages, is by no means obvious from the sense of the letter, and that it does not come to the perception of one who is not acquainted with the *fundamental law* on which it rests. The discovery and announcement of this *law* is the main feature of his claim, and I say that the truth of it is to be determined at the tribunal of reason and consciousness. It is a law which he affirms to result from the constitution of the human mind. It is a grand psychological fact, and though he professes to have received the knowledge of it by means of admission into the world of spirits, yet as this will be granted to be possible, the evidence of its reality is apprehensible by the exercise of our natural faculties, and we have no hesitation to say that the evidence is sufficient to satisfy any candid mind that will adequately weigh it. We are competent to judge, from the data presented, whether the structure of the human mind is what he affirms it to be, and this we do by comparing the dictates of our reason and consciousness with his averments. He



distinctly asserts that the spiritual sense of the Word grows out of the spiritual nature of man—that just in proportion as this nature is developed an interior sense is recognized under the veil of the letter,—and that the law of *correspondence* between natural and spiritual things is the law which guides and governs the interpretation of the language employed in the inditing of the Scriptures. If, for instance, Swedenborg gives me good reasons to believe that he had good reasons for asserting, that by the law of correspondence the word “earth” or “land” signifies, to a spiritual perception, *the church*—that “horse” signifies the *understanding*, and “water” *truth*—that a “tree” signifies *perception*, and a “sword” *combat of truth with falsity*—I see not why I should refuse to accept these interpretations, even though I may be unable myself, for the present, to perceive distinctly in what manner they flow from the asserted law. He affirms, that the terms “earth,” “horse,” “water,” “tree,” “sword,” when understood according to the letter, convey *natural ideas*, whereas such is the nature of angels and spirits that they necessarily receive from these very terms *spiritual ideas*, and what these are he professes to state from the wisdom imparted to him when elevated to the sphere of angelic intelligence. He informs us, moreover, that the paramount principle of correspondence or analogy affords us a valid reason *why* such and such natural terms convey such and such spiritual ideas, and no others.

The opponents of Swedenborg can never, with the least semblance of fairness, evade the obligation of studying, weighing, and pronouncing upon his doctrine of *correspondence*. It is the very heart, and soul, and centre of the system. Until this doctrine is looked full in the face, the true genius of the system is not even approached by the assailant. One might as well essay the refutation of Newton's theory of the universe without alluding to the law of gravitation. Yet where has this been done by a single writer who has entered the lists against him? I look in vain through the ranks for an isolated instance where it seems to have been even understood. The warfare is waged on entirely other grounds. Judge then how little his defenders would be *apt* to be affected by the reasonings of his adversaries. How can they feel their force when they are conscious that their main position is not only not reached, but not perceived—it does not even come into sight. And yet this is not to be charged to the intrinsic obscurity of the principle in itself considered. It is no unintelligible proposition, that everything natural exists and subsists from a spiritual origin—that the human body, for instance, is not created immediately, but is elaborated from the soul or spirit with which it *corresponds* in structure, form, and expression—that, in like manner, the whole material universe is the product of the spiritual universe, and not of the *immediate* and *direct* fiat of Omnipotence—that every single object in nature is thus the *effect* of a spiritual *cause* with which it *corresponds*, especially as to *use*, which is, in the spiritual world, really prior to the material embodiment in the natural world\*—and that the natural language appropriate to the expres-

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\* “The reason why all and single things in the heavens or sky, and on the earth, are representative, is, because they existed, and do continually exist, that is, subsist, from an influx of the Lord through heaven. The case in this respect is like that of the human body, which exists and subsists by its soul; wherefore all and single things in the body are representative of its soul: the soul is in the use and end, but the body is in the execution of such use and end. In like manner, all effects whatever are representative of the uses which are their causes; and the uses are representative of the ends which

sion of natural objects suggests to the spiritual mind the spiritual ideas with which such objects *correspond*. As the human *hand*, for example, is an elaboration of the *executive faculty* or *power* of the soul, and thus *corresponds* with it, as an effect corresponds with its cause, so the term *hand* legitimately conveys the idea of *power*, not by any arbitrary or merely metaphorical usage, but in virtue of a fixed, definable, and invariable law. And so of a thousand other things. According to Swedenborg's profound philosophy, the spiritual world is the world of *causes*, and just in proportion as the mind is elevated above the sphere of the corporeal and the sensual, it comes into the sphere of *causes* and understands the *language of causes*, which is the language of *correspondences*. The great question to be determined in the outset is whether the *principle* is a sound one. If I am satisfied on this head, I have ample grounds, I conceive, for resting in full assurance as to the correctness of the specific applications which he makes of it. For why should he be empowered to lay open the law, unless he was qualified, at the same time, to show how it bears, in its details, upon the exposition of particular passages?

Now of a multitude of such explanations as you have cited, you remark, that "reason and common sense can see nothing in them but groundless and extravagant fancies. Reason searches for the *grounds* of any opinion; it is very much inclined to inquire for the *why* and the *wherefore*. *Why* does the river Pison signify the intelligence of faith and love, &c.?" Permit me to say, in reply, that the real point at issue is not, in the first instance, whether Swedenborg affords you at once a clear intellectual perception of the truth of the meanings which he assigns to particular terms, but whether he affords you sufficient reason for believing in the existence of the law which he affirms, and for confiding in him as duly qualified to apply it. The fundamentals of any system take precedence of its details, and the great question here is in regard to the fundamental law of the spiritual sense. It certainly goes not a little in support of Swedenborg's position that the general principle is practically recognized in the spiritual sense given, as it were, spontaneously to such terms as "Zion," "Canaan," "Jerusalem," "Babylon," &c. in the employment of which the mind does not dwell upon the *topographical* import of the words, but passes by a natural transition to an abstract or spiritual sense. In order then to grasp the *rationale* of Swedenborg's internal sense, you have but to conceive the process by which your own mind passes from the literal to the spiritual sense of the word "Zion," for instance, when in prayer you implore the Most High that he would "bless his Zion." Literally understood "Zion" is the name of a part of the ancient city of Jerusalem, but you certainly do not use it in prayer in such a sense. So also with such terms as "temple," "altar," "laver," &c., it is seldom that they are used under the gospel economy except as a kind of external covering for certain spiritual ideas familiar to all Christians. These instances are sufficient

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are their first principles. They who are in divine ideas never subsist in the objects of external sight, but continually, from them and in them, behold things internal; and internal things are, most essentially, those of the Lord's kingdom; consequently, these are in the veriest end of all. The case is similar in regard to the Word of the Lord: they who are in divine ideas never regard the Word of the Lord from the letter, but consider the letter, and the literal sense, as representative and significative of the celestial and spiritual things of the church and of the Lord's kingdom. With them the literal sense is only an instrumental means of thinking concerning those things."—A. C. 1807.

to illustrate the general principle, psychologically considered, and to show the possibility of what Swedenborg affirms to be the *truth*—that to the perception of angels the whole Word is so constructed, as that an interior spiritual purport is couched under the natural forms of expression of which human language is composed.\* At the same time, he remarks that this interior sense is not always equally remote from the literal. In some cases it is coincident with it, in others it recedes but slightly from it, and it may in this respect be compared to some of the rock strata of the earth, which for the most part are deeply concealed in the interior, but occasionally, as geologists term it, *crop out* on the surface.†

But this whole subject of the *spiritual sense of the Word* forms such an important feature in Swedenborg's system, and he is himself so incomparably the ablest expositor of his own doctrines, that I shall cite rather freely from his pages in order to present the matter in its true light. Nothing can be more evident from the paragraphs which follow than that the great question involved is a question of *psychological fact*, and that not hermeneutics merely, but metaphysics also, is concerned in the refutation of the doctrine. You will doubtless admit that there is a *philosophy* of some kind in the usage, to which I have adverted, in regard to certain terms familiar in all Christian discourse. It remains to be seen whether the same philosophy will not sustain Swedenborg's doctrine on this head.

The first extract I shall give is from the "Spiritual Diary," where, in a section headed, "*That Heaven does not see names and words, but things*," he remarks,

"From those things which have been before said concerning spirits, it is evident that corporeal things must first be put off, and, indeed, with various pains, and thus given to death. Afterwards natural things adhering to spiritual things, for such a nature cannot enter heaven. At length there remains in the spirit or mind, what is spiritual and celestial. As, therefore, corporeal and natural things, which in themselves are dead, must be put off before the soul can enter heaven, it is most manifestly evident that heaven can never hear nor understand those things which are in words, and which are corporeal and natural, but those things which are spiritual, celestial, and divine; thus which are remote, more remote, and most remote from the literal sense. As when a man thinks more sublimely than usual, he cares nothing about the words, but only about the sense arising from the words, and from the proximate sense he concludes respecting a superior or more sublime sense. Hence it is absurd to think that heaven hears and understands the Word according to the letter, or that it understands the names of men, women, cities, and the like, since heaven is in the sense of things which lie concealed within the Word. The sense of the letter does not proceed beyond the expression, or sound of the ear, consequently not beyond the body."  
—*Spir. Diary*, 612.

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\* "Whatever is written in the Word, in itself and in its essence is spiritual. That the Word is spiritual is known, but its spiritual does not appear in the letter, for in the letter it is worldly, especially in the historical parts; but when it is read by man, the worldly which is therein, becomes spiritual in the spiritual world, that is, with the angels; for they cannot think otherwise than spiritually of each thing contained in it. To think spiritually is to think of those things which are of the Lord's Kingdom, thus of those things which are of the Church."—*A. C.* 4480.

† "We have compared the letter of the Word of God to the skin that covers the body, and its hidden contents to the interior organs and members; but to illustrate the present subject, the Holy Word may be compared to a beautiful female, clothed in becoming drapery, but whose face and hands remain uncovered: thus, while the greater part of the letter of the Scriptures consists of truths veiled over by natural images, which cannot be deciphered without a key, the things most indispensable to be known are openly displayed."—*Noble's Plen. Inspir.* p. 115.

Here we have the assertion of a *principle* pertaining to our interior constitution which at once connects itself with the law of the spiritual sense of the Word. It is an affirmation upon which our reason and consciousness must decide. Have we adequate grounds, from what we know of ourselves and from rational deductions thence, to conclude that such is, in fact, the structure and working of the human mind? If not, the question, I think, will be very apt to come up—as I am sure it ought—how such a theory should ever have occurred to its propounder? How came Swedenborg to think of it? To a considerate mind there is a problem here which demands solution, for it is a principle as profound as novel, and carrying with it an air of the highest probability. And let me here remark, that in nothing am I more surprised than in witnessing the apparently slight impression made upon the mass of even thinking men by the intrinsic character of Swedenborg's psychology. How is it possible that they should not recognize its claims to the deepest consideration? Do they feel assured of resting in a philosophy more rational, more plausible, more certain? Why do they not feel the pressure of the demand to account for the stupendous inconsistency of such philosophy as his coexisting with, and emanating from, a deranged intellect? Has anything ever yet presented itself to the world more worthy of enlightened inquiry? Yet alas, with what amazing facility and apathy is this question pretermitted? It is not usually very difficult to recognize such ideas as are evidently in advance of the general state of the human mind at any particular period of its progress. We have a certain instinctive perception of whatever transcends, in any marked degree, the ordinary standard of thought, and when results are announced which plainly outreach this measure, we behold an effect for which we naturally demand the cause. It presents a problem which the existing data do not enable us to solve. This remark applies, I think, with peculiar force to the psychological system of Swedenborg. It is impossible for one to have mastered it in its details without his being struck with its palpable diversity from all previous systems, and we look in vain to all the varied influences bearing upon the man, from his earliest years, to afford a clew to the phenomenon. If we content ourselves with the supposition of a native intellect of high order—combining originality, vigor, penetration, and wideness of grasp in rare union—still the products of this genius so immeasurably surpass all that could have been anticipated from merely *natural* endowments, that the idea of the *supernatural* in their origination does scarcely any more violence to our impressions. The urgency of the demand, however, for some rational mode of solving the multitudinous problems that distinguish the case of Swedenborg is, I am satisfied, beginning to be felt both deeply and widely, and no amount of angry opposition or polemical protest can much longer stave off the issue which the philosophical mind of the age must make with these amazing developments.

But I proceed with my citations illustrative of the principle of the spiritual sense. In the following passage he still farther shows how it is that *proper names* lose their distinctive character to a spiritual perception.

“The names of men, of kingdoms, and of cities, which occur in the Word, in like manner as the expressions of human speech, perish at the first beginning of the ascent, for they are earthly, corporeal, and material, which are successively put off by souls that come into the other life, and altogether by those that come into heaven. The angels do not retain the least idea of any person mentioned in the Word, nor, consequently, of his name. What Abram is, what Isaac, and

Jacob, they no longer know, forming to themselves an idea from those things which, in the Word, are represented and signified by them. Names and vocal expressions are like earthly coverings, or scales, which fall off when they enter into heaven. Hence it may appear, that by names, in the Word, are signified nothing else than things; concerning which I have frequently discoursed with the angels, and have been fully instructed by them as to the truth. The speech of spirits among themselves is not a speech of words, but of ideas, such as are those of human thought independent of words: wherefore it is the universal of all languages: but when they speak with man, their speech falls into the words of man's language."—*A. C.* 1876.

"Names, countries, nations, and the like, are not at all known to those who are in heaven; they have no idea of such things, but of the realities signified thereby. It is from the internal sense that the Word of the Lord lives, this sense being like the soul, of which the external sense is as it were the body; and the case with the Word is as with man; when his body dies, then his soul lives, and when the soul lives, then he is no longer acquainted with the things that relate to the body: thus when he comes amongst the angels, he knows not what the Word is in its literal sense, but only what it is in its soul. Such was the man of the Most Ancient Church; were he living at this day on earth, and were he to read the Word, he would not at all remain in the sense of the letter, but it would be as if he did not see it, but only the internal sense abstracted from the letter, and this in such a manner as if the letter had no existence; thus he would dwell in the life or soul of the Word. The case is the same with every part of the Word, even with the historicals, which are altogether such as they are related; but yet not even the minutest word is given, which does not in the internal sense involve arcana, which never become apparent to those who keep their attention fixed on the historical context."—*A. C.* 1143.

I must of course be aware that the intrinsic truth of this cannot be expected to flash, as it were, upon the mind of every reader at once; but I still believe that when deliberately weighed, it will commend itself as in the highest degree rational and probable, for in the process above adverted to by which such words as "Zion," "Canaan," "Babylon," &c., lose their original import to a spiritual conception, we have a sample of the operation of precisely the same law. And so also the following, which rests upon essentially the same principle. The passage explained is Gen. xix. 2, "In the morning ye shall rise up early and go on your way."

"From this, as from other passages, it is evident how remote the internal sense is from the sense of the letter, and hence how unseen, especially in the historical parts of the Word; and that it is not made manifest, unless each particular expression be explained according to its constant signification in the Word. Wherefore when the ideas are kept confined in the sense of the letter, the internal sense appears no otherwise than as something obscure and dark; but on the other hand, when the ideas are kept in the internal sense, the sense of the letter appears in like manner obscure, yea, to the angels as nothing; for the angels are no longer in worldly and corporeal ideas, such as appertain unto man, but in spiritual and celestial ideas, into which the expressions of the sense of the letter are wonderfully changed, whilst that sense ascends from man, who reads the Word, to the sphere in which the angels are, that is, to heaven, and this from the correspondence of things spiritual with things worldly, and of things celestial with things corporeal; which correspondence is most regular and constant, but never as yet fully opened as to its quality, only now in the explication of expressions, of names, and numbers, according to their internal sense in the Word. In order to show the nature of that correspondence, or what is the same thing, how worldly and corporeal ideas pass into corresponding spiritual and celestial ideas, when they are elevated into heaven, the expressions *morning* and *way* may serve as examples; when morning is read, as in the verse before us, to rise in the morning, the angels do not conceive an idea of any morning of a day, but an

idea of morning in a spiritual sense, thus similar to what was written in *Samuel*: 'The rock of Israel, He is as the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth, a morning without a cloud,' 2 Sam. xxiii. 4: and in *Daniel*: 'The Holy One said unto me, even until evening, when the morning cometh, two thousand three hundred,' viii. 14, 26; thus instead of morning they perceive the Lord, or his kingdom, or the celestial things of love and charity, and this with a variety according to the series of things in the Word which is read. In like manner when the term *way* occurs, as here, to go on your way, the angels cannot have any idea of a way, but a spiritual or celestial one, like as in *John*; 'I am the way and the truth,' xiv. 6: and in *David*: 'O Jehovah, make known to me thy ways, lead my way in truth,' Psalm xxv. 3, 4: and in *Isaiah*: 'Thou hast caused him to know the way of intelligences,' xl. 14. Thus instead of way they perceive truth, and this, both in the historical and prophetic parts of the Word: for the angels have no longer any concern about the historicals, inasmuch as such relations are not at all adequate to their ideas, wherefore instead thereof they perceive such things as are of the Lord, and his kingdom, which also are arranged in a beautiful order, and connected series, in the internal sense; that the Word might on this account also be for the angels, all the historical relations therein are representative, and every expression significative of such things as respect the Lord and his kingdom, which circumstance is peculiar to the Word above any other writing."—A. C. 2333.

Here we have the asserted sense in which the angels understand the terms "morning" and "way." It arises from the very nature of angelic ideas, which always affix the same import to the same terms. Consequently so far as we can rest in the soundness of these interpretations, we have at least the satisfaction of knowing that we read the Word in concert with the celestial intelligences, and how far this detracts from the interest or disparages the literal verity of the inspired record, every reflecting mind can judge for itself. The only objection which I can conceive as being urged against it is, that we have no sufficient evidence that such *are* the ideas of the angels, and this is but another form of denying the fact of Swedenborg's illuminated insight into the things of the spirit-world. If this, however, is denied it must be upon other grounds than his developments of the philosophy of the spiritual sense, for there is nothing in this that intrinsically goes to militate with his claim, as there is nothing in it intrinsically unreasonable or absurd—nothing which we might not easily admit, provided we saw reason to believe in the reality of the vision upon which he affirms its existence. The proof of this is not the *present* object of discussion. We shall be better prepared for it in the sequel.

A very important principle in the spiritual interpretation of the Word grows out of the fact that the spiritual world according to Swedenborg is replete with *representative objects*, which are at the same time *significant*, and as these objects immediately suggest to the beholding spirits the *things* emblematically set forth by them, or, in the Kantian phrase, as the *phenomena* intuitively call to mind the *noumena*, so the names which designate such objects in the inspired Word summon up to the spiritual mind the spiritual realities for which they stand. This is strikingly illustrated, both as to principle and application, in what follows.

"When man's interior sight is opened, which is the sight of his spirit, then there appear the things of another life, which cannot possibly be made visible to the sight of the body. The visions of the prophets were nothing else. There are in heaven, as was said above, continual representatives of the Lord and of his kingdom; and there are also significatives; insomuch that nothing at all exists before the sight of the angels, which is not representative and significative. Hence are the representatives and significatives in the Word; for the Word is through heaven from the Lord,—A. C. 1619.

"It may appear surprising to every one, that the animals mentioned in the Word, and also those offered in sacrifices, should signify goods and truths, or what is the same, things celestial and spiritual, but it is permitted to state in a few words whence this is. In the world of spirits various representatives are exhibited, and frequently there appear before the eyes of spirits animals, as horses with various trappings, oxen, cows, lambs, and divers other kinds, sometimes such as were never seen on the earth, but are only representatives; such things were also seen by the Prophets, as they are recorded in the Word, which likewise were from thence. The animals which appear there, are representative of the affections of good and truth, and also of evil and the false: good spirits know perfectly well what they signify, and also collect thence what is the subject of discourse amongst the angels, for the discourse of the angels, when it flows down into the world of spirits, is sometimes thus exhibited in representatives. As, for example, when horses appear, the good spirits know that the discourse of the angels is about things intellectual; when oxen and cows appear, that it is about natural goods; when sheep appear, that it is about rational goods and about probity; when lambs, that it is about goods still more interior, and about innocence; and so in other cases. Inasmuch as the men of the most ancient Church, communicated with spirits and angels, and also had visions and dreams continually like those of the Prophets, hence, as soon as they saw any beast, the idea occurred to them what it signified. From them first arose representatives and significatives, which remained long after their times, and at length were held in such veneration by reason of their antiquity, that men wrote by mere representatives, and the books, which were not so written, were accounted of no value, and if written within the Church, of no sanctity: hence, and from other hidden causes, concerning which, by the Divine Mercy of the Lord, we shall speak elsewhere, the books of the Word also were so written."—A. C. 2179.

"The reason why a mountain signifies the good of love, is, because in heaven they dwell upon mountains who are principled in the good of love to the Lord, and they who are principled in charity towards their neighbor upon hills, or what amounts to the same, they who are of the Lord's celestial kingdom dwell upon mountains, and they who are of his spiritual kingdom, upon hills, and the celestial kingdom is hereby distinguished from the spiritual kingdom, that they who belong to the former are principled in love to the Lord, and they who belong to the latter in charity towards their neighbor; hence it is that by a mountain is signified the good of love to the Lord. A further reason why this is abstractedly signified by a mountain, is, because all things which are in the internal sense of the Word are spiritual, and spiritual things are to be understood abstractedly from persons and places; wherefore also the angels, inasmuch as they are spiritual, think and speak abstractedly from such things, and thereby they are in intelligence and wisdom, for an idea of persons and places bounds the thought, inasmuch as it determines to those things, and thus limits it. Such idea of the thought is properly natural, whereas an idea abstracted from persons and places extends itself into heaven in every direction, and is no otherwise bounded than as the sight of the eye whilst it views the heavens without being obstructed by intervening objects, and such an idea is properly spiritual; hence it is that a mountain, in the spiritual sense of the Word, signifies the good of love. The case is similar with respect to the signification of the earth, as denoting the church; for an idea abstracted from places, and from nations and people on the earth, is that of the church on earth or with those who live on it; and this therefore is what is signified by earth in the Word. The case is similar with other things, which are mentioned in the natural sense of the Word, as with hills, rocks, valleys, rivers, seas, cities, houses, gardens, forests, and so on."—*Apoc. Ex.* 405.

Here again is a fact asserted as to the objects seen in the spiritual world. The only rational mode of objecting to the principle affirmed is to deny the fact asserted, and this brings us on to an entirely new ground in the conduct of the debate, to which it is not expedient now to pass. If you are still at a loss to perceive the precise link of connection which binds these visual phenomena of the

other life to the verbal frame-work of the Word, let me here remark that, in the profound philosophy of Swedenborg, the actual creation of these objects in the material world proceeds from the fixing or ultimating these very representative essences—for they are *essential* or *substantial*—in material forms, so that under God, the first great cause, the one becomes the proximate cause of the other, and thus the *correspondence* between them develops itself. The philosophy of all this is very clearly unfolded in the ensuing paragraph.

“That nothing exists in nature but from a spiritual principle is, because there cannot anything be given, unless it has a soul; all that is called soul which is essence, for what has not in itself an essence, this does not exist, for it is a nonentity, because there is no *esse* from which it is; thus it is with nature; its essence from which it exists is the spiritual principle, because this has in itself the divine *esse*, and also the divine power of acting, creating, and forming, as will be seen from what follows: this essence may also be called soul: because all that is spiritual lives, and what is alive, when it acts into what is not alive, as into what is natural, causes it either to have as it were life, or to derive somewhat of the appearance thereof from the living principle: the latter [is the case] in vegetables, the former in animals. That nothing in nature exists but from what is spiritual, is because no effect is given without a cause, whatever exists in effect is from a cause; what is not from a cause, is separated; thus it is with nature; the singular and most singular things thereof are an effect from a cause which is prior to it, and which is interior to it, and which is superior to it, and also is immediately from God; for a spiritual world is given, that world is prior, interior, and superior to the natural world, wherefore everything of the spiritual world is a cause and everything of the natural world is an effect. Indeed one thing exists from another progressively even in the natural world, but this by causes from the spiritual world, for where the cause of the effect is, there also is the cause of the effect efficient; for every effect becomes an efficient cause in order even to the ultimate, where the effective power subsists; but this is effected continually from a spiritual principle, in which alone that force is; and so it is, that nothing in nature exists except from something spiritual and *by it*.”—*Ath. Creed*. 94.

If this is well founded we can no longer recognize creation as the immediate product of the divine *fiat*, but as always proceeding through the spiritual world, which itself proceeds by emanation from the Lord himself. All living organisms, whether animal or vegetable, are the elaborations of spiritual essences which become fixed and sensibly mirrored in material embodiments, and this fact discloses the true ground of *correspondences*. The idea is strikingly exhibited in an incident mentioned as a part of Swedenborg's experience in the world of spirits. “I heard two presidents of the English Royal Society, Sir Hans Sloane and Martin Folkes, conversing together in the spiritual world concerning the existence of seeds and eggs, and concerning productions from them on earth: the former ascribed them to nature, insisting that nature was, from creation, endued with powers of producing such things by means of the sun's heat; the other said that that power is continually from God the Creator in nature. In order to determine the dispute, a beautiful bird was exhibited to Sir Hans Sloane, and he was told to examine whether in any the least thing it differed from a similar bird on earth: he held it in his hand, examined it, and said that there was no difference; he knew that it was no other than an affection of a certain angel represented without him as a bird, and that it would vanish or cease with its affection; which also came to pass. Sir Hans Sloane was convinced by this experiment, that nature does not contribute at all to the production of vegetables



and animals, but only that which flows from the spiritual world into the natural ; he also said, that if that bird were to be filled in its least parts with corresponding matter from the earth, and so fixed, it would be a durable bird, as birds are on earth ; and that it is the same with things that are from hell. He added further, that if he had known what he now knew of the spiritual world, he would not have ascribed any more to nature, than that it served the spiritual principle which is from God, in fixing the things that continually flow into nature.”—(*D. L. & W.* 344.)

The essence of the bird therefore is a spiritual entity which becomes a living bird by being *fixed in*, or clothed with, a material body, and this entity is from the infinitude of the divine affections and thoughts. In the first bird created there is primarily existent a psychical form, or spiritual body, which by the inflowing of the divine Life and by the law which connects matter with spirit, works out a material body corresponding with what we may term the psychical or *soul-body* and adapted to its uses and ends in the natural world. But with all subsequent birds the case is different ; here the creation is by *procreation*, in which the parent transmits the psychical principle, the interior form, and this is endowed with the power of gathering around it the earthly elements necessary to the construction of the body of the bird, the all pervading life of the divine love meantime flowing in and animating it, and endowing it with the intelligence or instinct appropriate to the peculiar character of its reigning affection. This psychical principle, however, in birds and beasts, unlike that in man, is not immortal, but is dissipated at death. The creatures of this kind which are seen in the spiritual world are not the disembodied *souls* of birds or beasts, but mere transient representative appearances created by and flowing proximately from the internal states, as to affection and thought, of angels and spirits. Yet when I term them *appearances* I do not mean that they are not really *substantial*. The spiritual world is far more a world of *substance*—of that which *stands under*—than the material world. These visual appearances then, though intrinsically substantial, are what is *prior*, not what is *posterior*, to the earthly formations.

I am well aware that this may properly be termed wading in deep waters, but it is, I conceive, merely carrying out or illustrating the scope of what Swedenborg says, in the extract quoted above, respecting the *rationale* of creation, and my object in thus expanding the idea is to exhibit somewhat clearly the principle of *correspondence* which underlies the whole doctrine of the spiritual sense. A lamb, for instance, corresponds to innocence, “since innocence is primary in the Lord’s kingdom, and is the celestial itself there, and since sacrifices and burnt-offerings represented the spiritual and celestial things of the Lord’s kingdom, therefore the very essential of his kingdom, which is innocence, was represented by lambs. . . . The reason why a woman at her delivery, when the days of cleansing were accomplished, was to offer a lamb for a burnt-offering, or a dove, or a turtle, was that the effect of conjugal love might be signified (which is innocence), and because infants signify innocence.”—(*A. C.* 3994.) Now a lamb is a living embodiment of the affection of innocence. That affection is the proximate *cause* of its existence and its organic structure and configuration *correspond* with its internal essence. Consequently the term *lamb* denotes, in its spiritual sense, that affection wherever it occurs in the Word. This is intuitively perceived by the angels, inasmuch as whenever a lamb appears in the spiritual world

—as is usually the case when they are discoursing of innocence—they are led at once to recognize the relation between the symbol and the affection. It is fundamentally the relation of *cause* and *effect*, and this is the true nature of *correspondence*. How remote the principle is, then, from the *fanciful* and the *arbitrary*, one may perceive at a glance.

I now propose to exhibit some other phases of this doctrine of the esoteric sense of the Scriptures. Upon no point is Swedenborg more explicit than in reference to the ulterior import of the Word as having respect to the Lord himself and the spiritual and celestial things of his kingdom. It is in this import, in fact, that its true and essential divinity consists. He thus speaks on this head.

“That the Word of the Old Testament contains the arcana of heaven, and that all and everything therein regards the Lord, his heaven, the church, faith, and the things which are of faith, no mortal derives from the letter; for from the letter or literal sense, no one sees anything else than that they regard in general the externals of the Jewish Church; when yet there are internal things throughout, which are no where manifest in the externals, except a very few which the Lord revealed and explained to the apostles; as that sacrifices signify the Lord; that the land of Canaan and Jerusalem signify heaven; whence it is called the heavenly Canaan and Jerusalem; in like manner Paradise.

“But that things all and each, yea the most particular, even to the smallest jot, signify and involve spiritual and celestial things, the Christian world is hitherto profoundly ignorant; wherefore also it little regards the Old Testament. This truth, however, might appear plain from this single circumstance, that the Word, being of the Lord and from the Lord, could not possibly have any existence, unless interiorly it contained such things as are of heaven, of the church, and of faith; otherwise it could not be called the Word of the Lord, nor be said to have any life in it; for whence is the life, but from those things which are of life? that is, except from hence, that all and singular things have relation to the Lord, who is most real and essential life? Wherefore whatsoever does not interiorly regard the Lord, does not live; yea, whatsoever expression in the Word does not involve Him, or in its measure relate to Him, is not divine.

“Without such a life, the Word, as to the letter, is dead; for it is with the Word as with man, who, as is known in the Christian world, is external and internal; the external man separated from the internal is the body, and thus dead; but the internal is that which lives, and gives to the external to live; the internal man is the soul: thus the Word, as to the letter alone, is like a body without a soul.

“It is impossible to see from the sense of the letter only, when the mind abides therein, that it contains such things; as in these first chapters of Genesis, from the sense of the letter nothing else is known than that it is treated of the creation of the world, and of the garden of Eden, which is called Paradise, and also of Adam as the first created man. Who supposes anything else? But that they contain arcana, which were never heretofore revealed, will sufficiently appear from the following pages, and indeed that the first chapter of Genesis, in its internal sense, treats of the NEW CREATION of man, or of his REGENERATION, in general, and of the Most Ancient Church in particular; and this in such a manner, that there is not a single syllable which does not represent, signify, and involve it.

“But that such is the case, it is impossible for any mortal to know, except from the Lord: wherefore it is expedient here to premise, that of the Lord’s Divine Mercy it has been granted me now for several years to be constantly and uninterruptedly in the fellowship of spirits and angels, to hear them speak, and in turn to speak with them; hence it has been granted me to hear and see astonishing things which are in another life, which have never come to the knowledge of any man, nor into his idea. I have there been instructed concerning different kinds of spirits; concerning the state of souls after death; concerning hell, or the lamentable state of the unfaithful; concerning heaven, or the most happy state of the faith-

ful; especially concerning the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged in the universal heaven; on which subjects, by the divine mercy of the Lord, more will be said in the following pages."—*A. C.* 1-5.

"The historicals are what represent the Lord; the words themselves are significative of the things which are represented. But being historical, the mind of the reader cannot but be detained in the facts related, particularly at this day, when most persons, and nearly all, do not believe that there exists an internal sense, still less in each single word; nor, possibly, will they yet acknowledge it, notwithstanding it has been thus far so manifestly shown; and this also by reason that the internal sense appears so to recede from the literal, as to be scarce discernible. But they may know it from this consideration alone, that the historicals can by no means be the Word, because in them, separate from the internal sense, there is no more of divinity than in any other history; but the internal sense makes it to be divine. That the internal sense is the Word itself, appears from many things which are revealed; as, 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son,' Matt. ii. 15: besides many other passages. The Lord himself, also, after his resurrection, taught his disciples what was written concerning him in Moses and the prophets, Luke xxiv. 27; thus that there is nothing written in the Word but what has respect to him, his kingdom, and the church. These are the spiritual and celestial contents of the Word; whereas those contained in the literal sense are for the most part worldly, corporeal, and earthly, such as can by no means constitute the Word of the Lord. Men at this day are of such a character, that they perceive only such matters as these, and scarcely know what spiritual and celestial things are. It was otherwise with the men of the Most Ancient and Ancient Churches, who, should they live at this day, and read the Word, would not at all attend to the literal sense, which they would regard as none, but to the internal sense; they are exceedingly surprised that the Word is not thus perceived by all; wherefore, also, all the books of the ancients were so written, as to mean in their interior sense otherwise than in the literal sense."—*A. C.* 1540.

Now we have only to recur to the declaration of Christ himself in Luke xxiv. 25, 27, 44, to be convinced that he recognizes the truth of the *principle* here asserted, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! and beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them *in all the scriptures* the things *concerning himself*. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the *law of Moses*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms concerning me*." So also, Rev. xix. 10, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." From this it is obvious that the central theme of the Word is Jesus himself; but Jesus is Jehovah, and Jehovah is the Lord. Swedenborg's doctrine on this head receives therefore direct confirmation from the highest source. "The Lord's frequent declarations, that in Him are to be consummated and are consummated all things contained in the Scripture, involve those things which are in the internal sense of the Word, for it is there treated solely concerning the Lord's kingdom, and in the supreme sense concerning the Lord Himself. In that sense all and single things, even to every iota, or to every least point, treat of the Lord."—(*A. C.* 7933.) Again, "The Lord appears manifestly in the spiritual sense of the Word. From that sense it is discovered not only that He is the Word, that is, divine truth itself, and further that He is the inmost of the Word, and thence the all thereof, but also that He is the one God, in whom there is a trinity, consequently the only God of heaven and earth."—(*A. E.* 1232.) What disparagement do we read in all this to the superlative dignity and sanctity of the Holy Volume?

Another important point standing in direct relation with the present theme is

the distinction between *apparent* and *real* truth to be recognized in reading the Word. This will be seen to be a subject of vastly more interest than would be imagined from its bare announcement. The following paragraphs will disclose its bearing. The text is Gen. xi. 7, "Let us go down," &c.

"Hence it may appear what is the nature of the sense of the letter, for Jehovah does not go down, inasmuch as going down cannot be predicated of the Lord, because he is always in the supremes; nor does Jehovah see whether a thing be so or not, for neither can such seeing be predicated of the Lord, inasmuch as he knows all and everything from eternity: but still it is so expressed, because with man it appears as if it was so; for man is in inferiors, and when anything there exists, he does not consider, nor even know, how the case is with superiors, so neither how they flow in; for his thought reaches no further than to those things which are nearest to him, and hence he cannot perceive otherwise, than that going down and seeing signify something similar to what is implied in the expressions; and so much the more when he imagines that no one is acquainted with what he thinks; besides that he has no other idea than that it is (to descend) from what is high, and when from God, that it is from the highest, when yet it is not from the highest, but from the inmost. Hence it may appear what is the nature of the sense of the letter, viz. that it is according to appearances, and that if it were not according to appearance, no one would understand and acknowledge the Word, consequently no one would receive it: but the angels are not thus in appearances as man is, wherefore the Word, whilst as to the letter it is for man, as to the internal sense is for the angels, and also for those men, to whom, by the Divine Mercy of the Lord, it is given to be as angels during their life in the world."—A. C. 2242.

"It is frequently said in the Word, that Jehovah destroys, but in an internal sense is understood, that man destroys himself, for Jehovah or the Lord destroys no one; but whether it appears as if it was from Jehovah or the Lord, because He sees all and everything, and rules all and everything, it is thus expressed in the Word throughout, to the intent that men may be thereby kept in this most general idea, that all things are under the eyes of the Lord, and all things under his influence and government, in which idea when they are once established, they may afterwards easily be instructed; for explications of the Word, as to the internal sense, are nothing else but the particulars which elucidate a general idea. A further purpose herein is, that they who are not in love, may be kept in fear, and may thus be impressed with awe towards the Lord, and flee to Him for deliverance: hence it is evident, that there is no harm in believing the sense of the letter, although the internal sense teaches otherwise, provided it be done in simplicity of heart. The angels, who are in the internal sense of the Word, are so far from thinking that Jehovah or the Lord destroys any one, that they cannot even bear the idea of such a thing, and therefore when this and similar passages in the Word are read by man, the sense of the letter is cast as it were behind them, till at length it comes to this, that evil itself is what destroys man, and that the Lord destroys no one."—A. C. 2395.

"What appearances may appear manifestly from those passages in the Word, where it is spoken according to appearances; there are however degrees of the appearances of truth; natural appearances of truth are mostly fallacies, but when they have place with those who are in good, they are then not to be called fallacies, but appearances, and even truths in some respect, for the good which is in them, and in which is the divine, causes their essence to be different; but rational appearances of truth are more and more interior; in them are the heavens, that is, the angels who are in the heavens; that some idea may be had what the appearances of truth are, let the following cases serve for illustration. I. Man believes that he is reformed and regenerated by the truth of faith, but this is an appearance, he is reformed and regenerated by the good of faith, that is, by charity towards the neighbor, and love to the Lord. II. Man believes that truth gives to perceive what is good, because it teaches, but this is an appearance, it is good which gives to truth to perceive, for good is the soul, or life of

truth. III. Man believes that truth introduces to good, when he lives according to the truth which he has learnt, but it is good which flows into truth, and introduces it to itself. IV. It appears to man that truth perfects good, when yet good perfects truth. V. Goods of life appear to man as the fruits of faith, but they are the fruits of charity : from these few cases it may in some measure be known what the appearances of truth are ; such appearances are innumerable.—A. C. 3207.

“I have conversed with good spirits, that many things in the Word, and more than any one could believe, are spoken according to appearances, and according to the fallacies of the senses ; as that Jehovah is in wrath, anger, and fury, against the wicked, that he rejoices to destroy them and blot them out, yea, that he slays them. But these modes of speaking were used, that persuasions and lusts might not be broken, but might be bent : for to speak otherwise than man conceives, which is from appearances, fallacies, and persuasions, would have been to sow seed in the water, and to speak what would instantly be rejected. Nevertheless, those things may serve as common vessels for the containing of things spiritual and celestial, since it may be insinuated into them, that all things are from the Lord ; afterwards, that the Lord permits, but that all evil is from diabolical spirits ; next, that the Lord provides and disposes, that evils may be turned into goods ; lastly, that nothing but good is from the Lord. Thus the sense of the letter perishes as it ascends, and becomes spiritual, afterwards celestial, and lastly divine.”—A. C. 1874.

“The devastation of the church is here attributed to the angel, in the same sense in which it is elsewhere in the Word attributed to the Lord ; but this is only said of him in the sense of the letter, but it is not so understood in the spiritual sense, for truth in the sense of the letter, is as a face transparent through a veil, but truth in the spiritual sense is as the face uncovered ; or truth in the literal sense is as a cloud, but truth in the spiritual sense is as light and the splendor thereof ; or truth in the literal sense is what appears as truth before the sensual man, but truth in the spiritual sense is what appears before the spiritual rational man ; as, for example, in the Word it is said of the sun, that it rises, makes progress, sets, and makes days and years, thus altogether according to appearance before the sensual man ; but still the rational man thinks of the sun as immoveable, and of the earth as making progress ; hence it is evident that the understanding thinks inversely of those things which appear before the senses, in order that they may be presented before us in the light of truth. The case is the same with the things which are here said in the Apocalypse concerning Him who sat upon the white cloud, and concerning the angels, viz., that they thrust in the sickle into the harvest, and reap it, and that they gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, and cast them into the wine-press of the anger of God ; which things are said in like manner according to appearances before the sensual man, but are to be inverted and understood according to their spiritual sense. From these considerations it may also appear, that the sensual man, such as man is in the ages of infancy and childhood, as likewise the simple-minded, may think of and believe these and similar other things according to the sense of the letter, as that God takes away good and truth from men on account of their wickedness, but an adult man who desires to be wise, will not explain such things so as to make God do them, as that he takes away from man all good and truth, and infuses in the place thereof what is evil and false, or that He devastates the church, and that he is angry and full of wrath, for if a wise adult should explain such things according to the sense of the letter, and confirm the same by reasonings, he would thereby destroy genuine truth itself, such as it is in heaven, and consequently shut heaven against himself ; for how is it possible for any one to enter heaven with the faith that God is angry, revengeful, that he punishes, and the like, when the angels of heaven are in the perception that God is never angry, never revenges, nor punishes any one ; would they not avert themselves from him, and bid him to depart, and immediately shut the door after him ? thus also it is that heaven becomes shut to those who, during their abode in the world, explain the literal sense of the Word so as to destroy the divine truth in the heavens, which truth is also the same with that of the spiritual sense of the Word, which is contained

in singular the truths of the natural sense which constitute the sense of the letter of the Word."—*A. E.* 916.

He is also elsewhere very express as to the conditions under which such *appearances* do not exert a hurtful influence upon those who are governed by them, as in the following passage.

"From these and very many other passages of the Word it may be manifest, that it is spoken according to appearances with man, wherefore whoever is disposed to confirm false principles by the appearances according to which the Word is written, may do so from things innumerable; but there is a difference between confirming false principles by passages from the Word, and believing in simplicity what is spoken in the Word. He who confirms false principles, first assumes some principle of his own, from which he will not depart, nor in the least remit, but collects and accumulates corroborating proofs from every quarter, thus also from the Word, till he is so thoroughly self-persuaded that he can no longer see the truth. But whosoever in simplicity, or out of a simple heart, believes, does not first assume principles, but thinks what is spoken to be true, because the Lord spake it; and if he is instructed in the right understanding thereof, by other sayings of the Word, he then acquiesces, and in his heart rejoices. Even he who through simplicity believes that the Lord is wrathful, that he punishes, repents, and grieves, whereby he is restrained from evil, and led to do good, is not at all hurt thereby, for he thus believes also that the Lord sees all and everything, and when he is in such faith, he is afterwards enlightened in other things, in another life, if not before: it is different with those who are self-persuaded in consequence of principles assumed, the foul love of self and of the world conspiring."—*A. C.* 589.

Closely connected with this is the doctrine of *fallacies* appertaining to the sensual or natural man, and with which *real truth* comes into conflict in the mind and often can expel only after a long struggle.

"Inasmuch as few know what the fallacies of the senses are, and few believe that they induce so great shade upon things rational, and most especially upon the spiritual things of faith, even so as to extinguish them, principally when man at the same time is in the delight of the lusts of self-love and the love of the world, it is permitted to illustrate the subjects by examples, first what the fallacies of the senses are which are merely natural, or in those things which are in nature, and next concerning the fallacies of the senses in spiritual things. I. It is a fallacy of sense merely natural, or which is in nature, that it is believed that the sun revolves once every day round about this earth, and at the same time also the heaven with all the stars: and although it be said, that it is incredible because impossible, that so great an ocean of fire as the sun is, and not only the sun but also innumerable stars, without any change of place from each other, should every day perform one such revolution, and although it be added, that it may be seen from the planets, that the earth performs a diurnal and annual motion by circumrotations and circumgyrations, inasmuch as the planets also are earths, and some of them likewise have moons around them, and that it has been observed that they, in like manner as our earth, perform such motions, namely, diurnal and annual, still with the generality the fallacy of sense prevails, that it is so as the eye sees. II. It is a fallacy of sense merely natural, or in nature, that there is only one single atmosphere, and merely this purer successively in different parts, and that where it ceases there is a vacuum; the external sensual of man, when it alone is consulted, does not apprehend otherwise. III. It is a fallacy of sense merely natural, that from first creation there has been impressed on seeds a quality of growing up into trees and flowers, and of rendering themselves prolific, and that thence is the existence and subsistence of all things; and if it be urged, that it is not possible for anything to subsist unless it perpetually exists, according to the established maxim that subsistence is perpetual existence, also that everything which is not connected with something prior to itself falls into nothing, still the sensual of the body, and the thought from that sen-

sual, does not apprehend it, nor that all and single things subsist as they existed, by influx from the spiritual world, that is, through the spiritual world from the Divine. IV. Hence it is a fallacy of sense merely natural, that there are simple substances, which are monads and atoms, for whatever is within the external sensual, this the natural man believes, that it is such a thing or nothing. V. It is a fallacy of sense merely natural, that all things are of nature and from nature, and that indeed in purer or interior nature there is something which is not apprehended; but if it be said, that within or above nature there is the spiritual and celestial, this is rejected, and it is believed that unless it be natural, it is nothing. VI. It is a fallacy of sense, that the body alone lives, and that its life perishes when it dies; the sensual does not at all apprehend, that the internal man is in single things of the external, and that the internal man is within nature in the spiritual world: hence neither does he believe, because he does not apprehend, that he shall live after death, unless he be again clothed with a body. VII. Hence there is a fallacy of sense, that man can no more live after death than the beasts, by reason that these also have a life in many respects similar to the life of man, only that man is a more perfect animal. The sensual does not apprehend, that is, the man who thinks and concludes from the sensual, that man is above the beasts and has a superior life in this, because he can think, not only concerning the causes of things, but also concerning the Divine and by faith and love be conjoined with the Divine, and also receive influx thence, and appropriate it to himself, so that in man, because there is given a reciprocal, there is given reception, which is in no wise the case with the beasts. VIII. It is a fallacy thence, that the living principle itself with man, which is called the soul, is only something ethereal, or flamy, which is dissipated when man dies; and that it resides either in the heart, or in the brain, or in some part thereof, and that hence it rules the body as a machine; that the internal man is in single things of the external, that the eye does not see from itself but from that internal man, nor the ear hear from itself but from that, the sensual man does not apprehend. IX. It is a fallacy of sense, that light cannot be given from any other source than from the sun or elementary fire, nor heat from any other source than from the same; that there is light in which is intelligence, and heat in which is celestial love, and that all the angels are in that light and in that heat, the sensual does not apprehend. X. It is a fallacy of sense, that man believes that he lives of himself, or that he has in-given life, for to the sensual it does not appear otherwise; that it is the Divine alone which has life of itself, and thus that there is only one life, and that the lives in the world are only recipient forms, the sensual does not at all comprehend. XI. The sensual man from fallacy believes that adulteries are allowed, for from the sensual he concludes, that marriages are only with a view to order for the sake of the education of the offspring, and if that order is not destroyed, that it is a matter of indifference from what [father] the offspring comes; also that the conjugal is like other lasciviousness except as being allowed; thus also, that it would not be contrary to order to marry more wives than one, if the christian world did not from the sacred scripture prohibit it; if it be told them, that there is a correspondence between the heavenly marriage and marriages in the earths, and that no one can have in himself the conjugal, unless he be in spiritual truth and good, also that the genuine conjugal cannot be given between a husband and several wives, and hence that marriages are in themselves holy, these things the sensual man rejects as nothing. XII. It is a fallacy of sense, that the Lord's kingdom, or heaven, is of a quality resembling an earthly kingdom in this, that there it is joy and happiness for one to be greater than another, and thence in glory above another; for the sensual does not at all comprehend what is meant by the least being greatest, or the last first; if it be told them, that joy in heaven or to the angels is to serve others by doing them good, without any reflection of merit and retribution, this comes as something sad. XIII. It is a fallacy of sense, that good works are meritorious; and that to do well to any one for the sake of self is a good work. XIV. It is also a fallacy of sense, that man is saved by faith alone; and that faith can be given where there is not charity; also that the faith, not the life, remains after death. The case is similar in very many other instances; wherefore when the sensual bears rule in man, then the rational illustrated from the Divine sees nothing and

is in thick darkness, and then it is believed, that all that is rational, which is concluded from the sensual."—*A. C.* 5084.

I have been perhaps unduly full in these citations, but it has arisen from an extreme anxiety to present a great subject in its true light. It is so common to represent Swedenborg's doctrine of the spiritual sense as the *ne plus ultra* of extravagance and absurdity, that the utmost solicitude is warranted as to the full and fair exhibition of the theory in reference to the *fundamental principles* on which it rests. Its opponents seem, for the most part, to have no conception of anything like a psychological basis for what strikes them as the most *outré*, grotesque, and fantastic of all things, in Swedenborg's interpretations. Yet we here see the whole matter resolving itself into a *law* as fixed and invariable as the law of creation itself, with which, in fact, it becomes almost identical. The Bible rises under the process into a new revelation, clothed with a sublimity, sanctity, and divinity of which we had not previously the remotest conception. It stands before us the living Oracle of Truth, which we no longer separate from the very being of its Author. He is Himself in his own truth. New treasures of wisdom gleam forth from its pages, and the most barren details of history, the recorded rounds of obsolete rituals, the driest catalogues of names, the most trivial specifications of dates, places, and enactments, once touched with the mystic wand of the spiritual sense teem with the riches of angelic conceptions. The cosmogony of Genesis becomes the birth register of the new-born soul. The garden of Eden smiles in every renovated mind in the *intelligence* and *affection* emblemed in its trees, and fruits, and flowers. The watering streams are the fructifying knowledges and truths of wisdom, which make increase of the spiritual man. The Tree of Knowledge—the Tree of Life—the wily serpent—are all within us and within us all. The scenes transacted in the Paradisaic purlois are more or less the scenes of our own individual experience, and the narrative ceases to be looked upon merely as the chronicle of events that transpired thousands of years before we were born.

But I easily foresee the grand objection. The spiritual sense destroys the literal sense. It turns the history of creation into an allegory, and leaves us without a document as to the origin of things. And suppose this be so, still is it not possible to array an amount of evidence in favor of the position, that shall countervail the force of every objection? This is worth inquiry.

Nothing, I venture to say, is more really beyond debate, than that the expositions hitherto given of the inspired cosmogony of Moses have failed clearly to establish its consistency with the results of geological science. I am well aware that the assertion is reiterated from a thousand tongues, that there is no real discrepancy in the case—that even granting Geology all that it demands on the score of time, yet still the sacred text is so framed as to create no conflict between the written and the unwritten record. But I yet hesitate not to say, that no interpretation hitherto proposed by those who understand the Mosaic narrative as a veritable historic document, is in all points consistent with the inductive results of modern Geology, and of this science it is affirmed that although "it is but of very modern origin, and its researches have as yet been carried but little way, compared with what we must reasonably expect they will be; yet to that small extent its foundations have been laid in absolutely determined facts, and general



results, which are real, settled, and inductive truths, which no subsequent investigations can overthrow; which, in fact, can only be called in question on grounds which, if true, must overthrow, not only Geology, but all inductive science whatever, that is, the whole extent of human knowledge, and render our reasoning faculties useless, and all philosophy a mere illusion."—*Kitto's Bibl. Cyclop. (Art. CREATION.)*

Among the theories of solution advanced, one proposes to consider the first verse of Genesis as announcing, in a general way, the original creation of the primordial *matter or substance*, out of which the heavens and the earth were subsequently fashioned and arranged, through the period of the six days, into their present form and order. On this interpretation, the first verse is held to stand separate and independent of what follows, the break between them allowing all the time that Geology may require to work its stupendous changes. But to this it is objected, (1.) That it does violence to the *general impression* which would naturally be conveyed by the language. (2.) That the "heavens" and the "earth" said to be created in the first verse do not easily yield such an abstract and metaphysical idea as that of *elementary matter*, and that they are obviously to be understood as identical with the "heavens" and the "earth" which the writer immediately goes on to describe, v. 6-9. This makes the first verse a compend of the subsequent amplified account of the creation. (3.) That the actual discoveries of Geology make it clear that various races of animals lived and died during the very interval assigned between the original creation and the six days' work, and yet the text brings the creation of animals into the fifth and sixth days.

Another hypothesis is that of the *lengthened days*, and which supposes that the succession of geological beds exhibits a correspondence with the recorded order of formations in Genesis. But to this theory it is again objected, (1.) That the most accurate investigations do not establish the fact of such a correspondence. (2.) That such a figurative use of the term "day," however it might suit with a poetical or oratorical style of diction, were scarcely to be expected in a plain historical narrative. (3.) That if this prolonged duration be ascribed to each of the six days of the creation, it ought in fairness to hold good also of the seventh; but here the theorists go back to the ordinary sense of a natural day.

Other attempted modes of conciliation may be pointed out, but, like the preceding, they still labor under some insuperable difficulty of being brought into harmony with the demonstrated facts and inevitable inferences of Geology. I do not scruple, therefore, to affirm that all such attempts have, without exception, failed, and this has been freely admitted even by learned divines, whose reverence for the Scriptures has not at the same time prevented their recognizing the force of the geological argument. Thus the Rev. Badin Powell, Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford, one of the profoundest writers of the present day, says upon this subject: "With regard to the nature and extent of the discrepancy thus disclosed, we shall observe, that it is not a case merely involving the question of the literal acceptation of a word or phrase. It is the contradiction of existing monuments of past events with the *obvious* sense of what is recorded as a part of Divine revelation, in the form of a circumstantial narrative of the same events. And the discrepancy is not one with any theory, or partial discovery of science, which is not thoroughly made out, and which future investigations may modify or set aside; but with broad primary facts which involve

nothing hypothetical, and which are in reality identified with the first principles of all inductive truth."—*Kitto's Bibl. Cyclop.* (*Art. CREATION.*)

What then, in this exigency, is Swedenborg's construction of the Mosaic record, which construction, be it observed, was given to the world before Geology was born, and therefore could not have been proposed with a view to meet any difficulties urged on this score. He takes it at once out of all relation to veritable literal history, and instead of reading in it the account of a physical creation of the universe, interprets it of the moral re-creation or regeneration of man.\*

\* "They who do not think beyond the sense of the letter, cannot believe otherwise than that the creation, which is described in the first and second chapters of Genesis, denotes the creation of the universe, and that there were six days, within which were created the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all things which are in them, and at length man to the likeness of God; but who cannot see, if he ponders deeply on the subject, that the creation of the universe is not there meant; for such things are there described as may be known from common sense not to have been so; as that there were days before the sun and the moon, and that there was light and darkness, and that the herbs and trees budded forth; and yet that light was given by those luminaries, and a distinction was made into light and darkness, and thus days were made. In what follows in the history there are also similar things, which are scarce acknowledged by any one who thinks interiorly, to be possible, as that the woman was built from the rib of the man; also that two trees were set in paradise, the fruit of one of which it was forbidden to eat; and that a serpent from one discoursed with the wife of the man, who was the wisest of mortals, and by his discourse, which was from the mouth of the serpent, deceived them both; and that the universal human race, even to so many thousands of thousands, was on that account damned to hell; these and similar things in that history must needs appear at first thought paradoxes to those, who entertain any doubt concerning the sanctity of the Word, and must needs afterwards induce them to deny the Divine [being or principle] therein: nevertheless it is to be noted, that all and singular things in that history, even to the smallest iota, are Divine, and contain in them arcana, which before the angels in the heavens are evident as in clear day; the reason of this is, because the angels do not see the sense of the Word according to the letter, but according to those things which are therein, which are spiritual and celestial things, and in them Divine things; they, when the first chapter of Genesis is read, do not perceive any other creation, than the new creation of man, which is called regeneration; this [regeneration] is described in that history; and by paradise the wisdom of the man created anew; by the two trees in the midst thereof the two faculties of that man, viz. the will of good by the tree of life, and the understanding of truth by the tree of science; and the reason why it was forbidden to eat of this latter tree was, because the regenerate man, or he that is created anew, ought no longer to be led by the understanding of truth, but by the will of good, and if otherwise that the new principle of his life perishes; consequently that by Adam, or man, and by Eve his wife was there meant a new Church, and by eating of the tree of science the fall of that Church from good to truth, consequently from love to the Lord and towards the neighbor to faith without those loves, and this by reasoning from the intellectual proprium, which reasoning is the serpent. From these considerations it is evident, that the historicals concerning creation, and concerning the first man, and concerning paradise, are historicals so framed, which contain in them celestial and Divine things, and this according to the manner [of writing] received in the ancient Churches; which manner [of writing] also was thence derived to several who were out of the Church, who in like manner devised historicals, and involved arcana in them; as is evident from the writers of the ancient times; for in the ancient Churches it was known, what such things as are in the world signified in heaven; nor were the things transacted of so much consequence to them to describe, as the things which were of heaven; these latter things occupied their minds, by reason that they thought more interiorly than men at this day, and thereby communicated with angels, on which account it was delightful to them to connect such things; but to those things which were to be accounted holy in the Churches, they were led by the Lord; hence such things neatly contrived as fully corresponded. From these considerations it may be manifest, what is meant by heaven and earth in the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, viz. the Church internal and external; that those things are signified by heaven and earth, is manifest also from passages in the prophets, where mention is made of a new heaven and a new earth, by which a new church is meant; hence then it is evident that by in six days Jehovah made the heaven and the earth and the sea, is signified the regeneration and vivification of those things which are in the internal and in the external man."—*A. C.* 8891.

This he affirms is the sense which the angels take from this portion of the Word, and the only sense. "They know nothing at all which is of the letter, not even one word, what it proximately signifies, still less the names of countries, rivers, and persons, which occur so frequently in the historical and prophetic parts. They have only an idea of the things signified by names; as by Adam in Paradise they have a perception of the Most Ancient Church," &c.

Adam, therefore, on this interpretation, is not the name of an individual, but a generic name of the race existing as a church, and the peculiar use of the Hebrew article certainly favors the supposition, for it is an undeniable fact that the word, with four or five exceptions, invariably occurs in the original in a form equivalent to—"the Adam," i. e. the collective Adam or Mankind. Thus Gen. vi. 1, "And it came to pass when *men* began to multiply on the face of the earth," Heb. "when the Adam" began to multiply. "The reason," says Swedenborg, "why he is called Adam is, because the Hebrew word *Adam* signifies *Man*; but that he is never by name properly called *Adam*, but *Man*, is very evident from its being predicated of both the man and the woman, both together being called *man*. That it is predicated of both, every one may see from the words, for it is said, 'He called *their* name Adam (or man) in the day that they were created.' In like manner it is said in the first chapter, 'Let us make *man* (Heb. the Adam) in our own image, and let *them* have dominion over the fish of the sea,' &c. Hence it may appear that the subject treated of is not the creation of some one man who was the first of mankind, but concerning the Most Ancient Church."—(A. C. 478.)

Now whatever may be the interpretation, here stands the undeniable fact, that the name *Adam* in the original is a collective and not an individual appellation; and this fact taken in connection with the geological difficulty affords no small evidence that some other than the strictly literal construction is the true one. Let us weigh then a little more attentively the interpretation of Swedenborg. Building itself upon the legitimate plural import of the term *Adam*, it makes the history in the first few chapters the history, not of an individual, but of the race in some indefinitely distant period of the past, and composing what he denominates the Most Ancient Church. According to him the Scriptures do not contain any intimation of the time or manner of the first creation of man. It leaves the mind free to throw back his origin into the most remote period of antiquity, and make him, if you please, coeval with some of the extinct races of huge Mastodons and monsters whose embedded remains are continually at this day being brought to light. It is indeed true that no relics of human skeletons have *as yet* been discovered that can be referred to a period beyond what is called the historical; but the progress of discovery has but just commenced, and we cannot argue from what *has been* to what *may be*.\* And when we take into view the fact that the chronological archives of the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Egyptians, which have never yet been shown to be fabulous, and which are only disputed because they are supposed to conflict with the biblical record, carry back the origin of the human race to an immensely more remote period than the Mosaic annals when literally understood, we shall have no occasion to be surprised, if

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\* The recent discovery, near Natches, of a part of a human skeleton embedded among the remains of animals which must be referred to a period vastly beyond that usually ascribed to the origin of the human race, seems to require a qualification of this language; but it is one which I can well afford to make.

future geological discoveries should bring to light, from some of the earlier strata, the fossil remains of men as well as of other animals.

From this view it follows, as you will at once perceive, that the fall of man was gradual—that it was not the fall of a single individual, but the progressive decline and deterioration of the race from a previous state of integrity to a state of alienation, rebellion, corruption, and deep depravity. The race having existed through a long tract of ages, began by degrees to abuse their free will, and though the departure at first was very slight, yet each generation advancing a little farther in the downward career than the preceding, the collective humanity at length lapsed into an accumulation of evils which became perpetuated by the very law of their being, for it is a law that a man propagates his essential life. He reproduces his inmost self in his children. And in this matter we cannot separate the physical from the moral. A man's moral life affects his physical life. If his life—his essence—is evil, that evil will reappear in his children; and the evil of any one generation is the accumulated result of the evils of preceding generations. And as this evil was gradually acquired and accumulated, so it must be gradually laid off before he can ever return to his pristine condition. Man must *improve* through successive generations ere the moral image of God can be fully re-instamped upon him, and everlasting thanks are due to His goodness that provision is made for this restoration, and that He has purposed to effect it. Regeneration is the appointed means; and in regeneration there is a continued infusion of the divine principles of Love and Wisdom which elaborate a new interior life, and this by degrees works itself into the physical man, so that as far as he yields himself to its influence there is a perpetual transforming and ameliorating process going on that must inevitably show itself in his descendants from age to age. For it operates by a fixed law of life, and ten thousand volumes of a contrary theology can never countervail a settled law of the universe. As man has receded from the immutable *order* established by the Deity, and as he has done this in the exercise of his moral freedom, so he must retrace his steps in a like voluntary return.

Now I would beg you to contrast this view of the fall and the rising again—the ruin and the recovery of the human race—with that which is generally inculcated in all Christian schools. Are we not conscious of something which taxes our rational faculty in the idea, that the moral destinies of the race were first, by a federal arrangement, embodied in a single individual—that he was placed in a garden one day and sinned and fell the next—and that too by the machinations of an evil spirit in the form of a serpent of whose existence he had not been informed, and against whose arts he had not been warned! I speak with entire confidence in expressing the conviction, that every man who reflects calmly is conscious of a difficulty on this score—that there is something in the promptings of every one's bosom that leads him to ask, whether there is not some other than the literal solution of the problem of the origin of terrestrial evil? Was such a stupendous event as the fall of man—involving the eternal perdition of so many millions of human beings—brought about so *suddenly*, and by the moral act of an individual in the very infancy of his existence—not a week old—having no experience—and, as we should suppose, very little competent to weigh the amazing issues that depended upon his conduct? Who would not gladly find some other mode of explanation for this mysterious transaction if it were intrin-

sically possible? That misgivings do arise on this head in thousands of minds, is beyond all question. But they are not indulged—they are quickly suppressed by the force of the lessons of the catechism and the authority of the dogma. Prejudice, the child of tradition, reigns every where so rampant that the man of the church trembles at its frown and, under the constant teachings that Reason is forever to be held subject to Faith, he tries to throw his doubts to the winds, though, like a projected handful of feathers, they are incessantly blown back upon him.

In this emergency Swedenborg's sublime developments come in and speak peace and assurance to the laboring reason. Seizing hold of the deep inner intuitions of the soul, which lie embedded below the superincumbent strata of educational faith, they lift them up into the light of rational conviction and oracular assertion. It is like boring an Artesian well of truth down to the nethermost depths of the spirit, through which the confined and troubled waters gush up to the surface, flowing forth in streams and expanding into lakes. Such a view is indeed so entirely contrary to the apparant sense of the letter, and to the theological systems built upon it, that it must necessarily encounter a deadly opposition from the adherents of the common creeds. But Truth is armed with omnipotence, and it will gradually work its way to universal admission. It will then, I am persuaded, become as much a matter of wonder that these first chapters of Genesis were regarded as a veritable piece of history, as it now is that the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy should ever have obtained currency as a scientific scheme of the universe.

It would be easy to extend this view of Swedenborg's interpretations, and show what innumerable difficulties are avoided by applying the principle of the spiritual sense to settle the import of disputed texts. Especially would it be gratifying to be able to spread before you his expositions of the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew and other prophecies relative to the end of the World, showing that nothing is farther from the scope of these predictions than to announce a physical destruction of "the great globe which we inhabit," instead of which we are merely to read in them the passing away of an old dispensation, and the ushering in of a new one, and that no figment of fancy was ever more gross than that the Saviour is to appear visibly in the clouds of heaven and to put an end to the mundane system by a general conflagration.

May I, then, venture to consider myself as having developed, in some good degree, the true genius of the *spiritual sense of the Word*? If I have at all succeeded in this according to my hope, you will scarcely fail to have perceived, that this feature of Swedenborg's system is well entitled to that pre-eminence which is uniformly assigned to it by his adherents. It is in their estimate the crown and climax of his revelations, and though it cannot be viewed apart from the laws and phenomena of the other life, yet in a comparative view of the intrinsic importance of the two classes of disclosures we do not hesitate to give the palm to this. It invests the hallowed oracles with a glory like that which pervaded the Holy of Holies when the curtain was lifted and the eye of the High Priest gazed upon the sacred recess. The envelope of the natural sense falls off and all becomes intellectual, spiritual, and celestial.

In a little work entitled "The Record of Family Instruction," the Hon. Mr. Tulk, the author, after remarking upon the necessity of a clear and correct idea of the

*spiritual sense*, and how it differs from the literal, lest we should "mistake the one for the other, and think we had got the internal meaning, when we had obtained nothing more than a refined natural sense, by an ingenious explanation of some eastern allegory or metaphor"—goes on to observe ;—"The spiritual sense of the Word of God does not in the least relate to any event or circumstance in this natural world ; it has no relation whatever to the condition of man as a natural being, nor to any of the properties which belong to the objects of our senses. Seeing, from this part of our definition, what the spiritual sense is *not*, if we should detect anything which relates to the personal condition of man, to outward events, or to any of the properties of nature, we may be sure that we have not arrived at a clear conception of the limits of the two senses, but have been confounding them together. The spiritual sense is exclusively confined to man's spiritual condition, embracing within its circuit every possible state of the human mind, both in that arrangement and subordination of its powers to the Divine Will which are to fit man for the kingdom of heaven, and in that disarrangement and insubordination of the mind by the love of evil, which are the sure and only sources of his eternal misery. The spiritual sense of the Holy Scripture is a history of the indefinitely various states of the human mind ; consisting of a series of truths, universal, as all truths are which are abstracted from space and time, and therefore applicable to all mankind in all ages of the world. These conditions of the mind, that is, of the will and the intellect, are called the states of the church, or of the kingdom of God *in man*. Our first step must be to have it well impressed upon our minds, that the natural sense relates, generally speaking, to the circumstances, conditions, and duties of man externally, or in nature, and also to the different forms, properties, and relations which belong to the objects of nature ; and that the spiritual sense relates to the various states of man's spirit, that is, of his will in the quality of the love which animates it, and of his intellect in the quality of its knowledge."—p. 2.

It would doubtless be desirable, in this connection, to adduce an array of passages from the *Arcana* illustrative of the peculiar genius of the commentary—so immensely diverse from all others—which Swedenborg affords upon the books of Genesis and Exodus, and incidentally upon nearly every other portion of the Word. But as this would draw too largely upon my space, I will endeavor to accomplish the object by a different method. Taking the Index to that work, and turning to the article *Truth*, which alone occupies eleven pages, referring probably to upwards of one thousand sections, I will extract a sufficient portion of it to give you some idea of the general vein of exposition which distinguishes not this only, but every part of that amazing store-house of spiritual wisdom. And I would especially ask your attention to the drift of the discussions indicated by the topical heads in connection with your own idea of Swedenborg's state as that of a man who had unfortunately become *insane* upon religious subjects. I have no small curiosity to know which of the items specified you would fix upon as savoring, from the import, of the hallucination of a mind deranged. The figures you will of course understand as referring to the paragraphs of the *Arcana*. If the volumes should be accessible, and you should be disposed to turn to some of the passages cited, and see how the topics are treated, I think I may assure you of finding a vast increase of difficulty attending the supposition, that such sentiments should have emanated from an unsettled intellect.

"That there is no other truth but what is from good, illustrated by examples, n. 2434. That good cannot flow-in into truth, so long as man is in evil, n. 2388. That truth appertaining to man is according to good, in like ratio and degree, n. 2429. That the same truths with one are truths, with another less true, and with others even falses, n. 2439. That man cannot be saved by the truths of faith, but by the goods which are in truths, n. 2261. That there is an affection of good and an affection of truth, what is the distinction, n. 1967. There are two affections of good and of truth, and that the ancients instituted a marriage between them, n. 1904. What is the quality of those who are in the affection of good, and of those who are in the affection of truth, n. 2422, 2430. That there is an affection of rational truth and of scientific truth, n. 2503. That good divine flows-in into truths of every kind, but more closely into genuine truths, n. 2531. That good divine flows-in into appearances and into fallacies, n. 2554. That the truths appertaining to man are appearances imbued with fallacies, also with falses, but that the Lord still conjoins himself with man, and forms conscience in him, n. 2053. That conjunction is reciprocal, viz. of the Lord with man, and of man with the Lord, n. 2004. That things rational are appearances of truth, n. 2519. What the quality of an idea of truth without good is, and what the quality of its light in the other life, n. 2428. That rational truth without good is morose, n. 1949, 1950, 1951, 1964; but when derived from good, what its quality is, n. 1950. That truths derived from good are arranged according to affinities in heaven, n. 1900, 1928. That there is truth intellectual, rational, and scientific, concerning which, n. 1904. What celestial truth is, and what spiritual truth is, that the former flows-in with the celestial man, the latter with the spiritual man, n. 2069. Who are capable of coming into the knowledges and faith of truth, and who are not capable, n. 2689. That a distinct idea between good and truth has not been formed, n. 2507. That the Lord made himself good itself and truth itself, n. 2011. That all good and truth is from the Lord, n. 2016. That divine good elevates all to heaven, but truth damns all to hell, n. 2258, 2335. That man ought to compel himself to think what is true, and to do what is good, n. 1937, 1938. That rational truth cannot perceive divine truth, exemplified, n. 2196, 2203, 2209. That the first-formed rational principle, because it does not comprehend, makes light of intellectual truth, exemplified, n. 1911, 1936, 2634. What it is to be judged from good, and what from truth, n. 2335. That things rational and scientific are like a body and clothing to things spiritual, n. 2576. That man ought to do good and to think truth as from himself, that he may receive a celestial proprium and celestial freedom, n. 2282, 2883, 2891. That all good and truth is from the Lord, and that so far as man believes that it is from him, so far he is in his kingdom, n. 2904. That the first state of those who are regenerating is, that they suppose good and truth to be from themselves, and they are left in that opinion for reasons treated of; but when they are regenerated, they believe that good and truth are from the Lord, and at length they perceive it, n. 2946, 2960, 2974."—*Index to A. C.*

These references, I think, must strike you as indicating a calm and orderly mode of discussion, and the several theses constituting the topics such as in any other case would be consistent with the utmost soundness and sobriety of mind. They will, at any rate, appear, if I mistake not, in very marked contrast with the rhodomontade you have served up in the letters from the Worcester lunatic as containing, *in their measure*, a parallel to the revelations of Swedenborg respecting spirits and angels. And permit me here to remark, that it will scarcely avail to say, that you had in your eye, in the comparison, the *disclosures* instead of the *doctrines*, for the doctrines themselves are inseparably interwoven with the tissue of the developments made in relation to the spiritual world. The arcana of the Word and the arcana of heaven and hell must stand or fall together. Swedenborg could never have written the commentary he has if he had not been, in spirit, within the veil, and seen the hidden verities of that inner world.

Still I cannot but be conscious that even the above exhibition will fail to do

full justice to the manner in which he *intellectualises* and *spiritualises* the plainest historical details, and that too, not in accordance with the impulses of a vagarious fancy, but with the teachings of an invariable law—invariable to his perceptions, though not always, I admit, to ours. We may be unable in all cases to perceive precisely how certain moral instructions flow directly from the passages from which he elicits them, but we can usually perceive the intrinsic truth and weightiness of the lessons in themselves considered. Thus, for instance, in respect to a single item noted above—that, “rational truth without good is morose”—it may be well to adduce a few sentences to illustrate the manner in which he treats the subject and which may serve also as a specimen of his *general* manner. He is speaking of Ishmael.

“The wild-ass is a mule of the wilderness, or an ass of the forest; and it signifies the rational of man, not the rational in its complex, but only rational truth. The rational consists of good and of truth, that is, of those things which are of charity, and of those things which are of faith: rational truth is that which is signified by the wild-ass. This then is what is represented by Ishmael, and is described in this verse. No one can believe that rational truth separate from rational good is such, nor should I have known it to be such, unless instructed by lively experience. It is the same thing whether we speak of rational truth, or of a man whose rational is of such a nature: a man, whose rational is such that he is only in truth, although in the truth of faith and not at the same time in the good of charity, is altogether of this character: he is morose, impatient, opposite to all others, viewing every one as in the false, instantly rebuking, chastising, and punishing: he is without pity, neither does he apply himself and endeavor to bend the minds of others: for he regards everything from truth, and nothing from good. Every genuine rational consists of good and truth, that is, of the celestial and spiritual: good, or the celestial, is its very soul or life; truth, or the spiritual, is what thence receives its life. The rational without life from celestial good, is as is here described, viz., it fights against all, and all fight against it. Rational good never fights, howsoever it is assaulted, because it is meek and gentle, patient and yielding, for it is of love and mercy: and although it does not fight, yet it conquers all, never thinking of combat, or boasting of victory: and this because it is divine, and is safe of itself. For no evil can assault good, nor even subsist in the sphere where good is: if it only feels its approximation it recedes of itself and retires: for evil is infernal, and good is celestial.”—A. C. 1949, 1950.

Again in speaking in another place of the *essential life of truth* he says:—

“In order to constitute a truth, there must be life in it, for truth without life is not the truth of faith appertaining to man, and life is from no other source than from good, that is, by [or through] good from the Lord; if therefore the Lord be not in a truth, it is a truth without life, thus not true; but if the false be in it, or evil, the truth itself appertaining to man is false or evil; for what is within, this constitutes the essence, and also in the other life is translucent through what is external. From these considerations now it may be manifest how it is to be understood, that truths ought not to be thought of from any other source than from the Lord. Inasmuch as few know how the case is with truths which in the internal form are truths, thus which live from the Lord, it may be expedient to say something on the subject from experience: in the other life it is manifestly perceived by every one who speaks there, what is inwardly stored up in the words of his speech, as whether it be closed within, or whether it be open, also what kind of affection is in it; if the affection of good be in it, it is inwardly soft, if the affection of evil, it is inwardly hard, and so forth. With the angels of heaven, all things of their discourse are open even to the Lord, which is both clearly perceived and is also heard from its softness and the quality thereof; hence also it is known what lies stored up within in truths, whether the Lord or not; the truths in which the Lord is, are truths which are alive, but the truths in which



the Lord is not, are truths which are not alive; those which are alive are the truths of faith grounded in love to the Lord, and in charity towards the neighbor; those which are not alive are not truths, because inwardly in them is self-love and the love of the world. Spirits and angels in the other life may hereby be discerned, for every one hath truths according to his life, that is, according to what universally reigns with him."—A. C. 8868.

Now in respect to the first of these extracts, I readily grant that it is not easily apprehensible *why* Ishmael as a wild ass should convey to a spiritual perception the idea of *rational truth*, although if you consult the whole section you will see that he cites a number of passages in which the term "wild ass" must have some other than the literal sense, or it makes nonsense. But no one, I think, will refuse to admit that the sentiment educed is one intrinsically of great practical moment and every way worthy of the source from which he professes to derive it; nor do I see how any one can help acknowledging, that provided such senses can be *legitimately* drawn from the historical portions of the Word it becomes indeed a treasury of divine wisdom of which he had before but a very faint conception.

Now on this head his espousers, one and all, profess to be entirely satisfied, and that too for the most adequate reasons. As a supernatural illumination is plainly requisite to authenticate such recondite senses of the Word, so the illumination needs to be equally authenticated by its appropriate evidences. This they are assured has been amply done, though I am not at present engaged in dilating upon the various grounds on which their conviction rests. But they are fully persuaded upon what is, to them, abundant evidence, that the requisite illumination has been imparted to Swedenborg for the express purpose of solving the enigmas of the Word, and that too by restoring the lost science of *Correspondences*. This science was undoubtedly well known in the most ancient eras of the Church, and the Hieroglyphics of Egypt and the East are the obscure vestiges of a grand system of the interpretation of Nature, which universally prevailed in the first ages. Even the present *figurative* style of Asiatic literature owes its origin to the same source. But as man degenerated from the purity and lucidity of his primeval state, he gradually lost his perception of the spiritual causes of natural things, and from worshipping the divine things signified by the visible signs, he began to worship the signs themselves, and thus opened the flood-gates of idolatry upon the world. As idolatry came in, the knowledge of correspondences went out, and the science was in abeyance till Swedenborg arose and became the instrument of restoring it again to men. For this end his interior senses were opened—he was elevated into the spiritual sphere, the sphere of *causes*—and thence was enabled to reveal the hidden purport of the names of all the natural objects mentioned in the Word, and through which its spiritual truths are conveyed. We receive the expositions which he has given, even where we are unable clearly to perceive their intrinsic aptitude to express the ideas intended, because we believe he has afforded sufficient evidence of his illumination.

You will see from this, without farther explanation, the manner in which we should of course entertain the suggestions made in the following paragraph from your work.

"Now suppose I *should* admit the truth of what are considered the essential psychological or spiritual principles of the system; how would it follow from these principles, that in the six chapters preceding the 13th of Genesis, the names are not names of persons, but of churches, and that the years mentioned do not

denote periods of *time*, but states and circumstances of those ante-diluvian churches, and the whole account there given of the successive generations of men, and of the events which took place before the deluge and at the time of the deluge, instead of being what it professes to be, an account of historical verities, is a mere allegory, intended, like Bunyan's story of the Pilgrim, to convey a moral or spiritual sense? Swedenborg himself teaches, that these and many other things contained in his writings, could never have been known, had not the Lord opened his interior sight, and enabled him to see and know things which were utterly beyond the discovery of the human mind without supernatural illumination. And as Swedenborg never thought, that a supernatural sight would be the common privilege of the generations which would follow him, he must have expected that they would receive his disclosures on the ground of his authority. According to the spirit of his own repeated declarations, there was no other way for men to know the things which he revealed, but by availing themselves of his supernatural illumination, and relying implicitly on his authority."—p. 49.

We are not alarmed by the apparent dilemma in which you appear to consider us entangled. It is to us very much the same as information from Egypt or China is to you. Although you never visited either of these countries, yet you do not hesitate to receive the testimony of travellers respecting them, provided you have satisfied yourself as to their claims to credence. You would be far from insisting that they should give you internal evidence of the truth of every item of their reports concerning the laws, arts, manners, language, institutions, and monuments of the people. In the case of Swedenborg's interpretations, however, we do not regard ourselves as cut off entirely from internal evidence. A very considerable portion of them are of such a nature that, as soon as the fundamental principle is announced, they at once approve themselves to our reason as true. This naturally lays a foundation for confidence in his testimony on points that are not at present intellectually seen to be true, but which are at the same time in accordance with, or the result of, principles and facts about which the mind feels itself assured.

I deem it, however, no more than fair to acknowledge that precisely here is the point where the largest draft is made upon our assent—the point of nearest approach to what might be termed an *implicit* reliance on his averments. In all that he has taught of the state and condition of departed souls—of the facts and phenomena of the world unseen—we perceive a certain ground of intrinsic probability and such a difficulty of *conceiving otherwise*, that we can scarcely be said to take it wholly upon trust. When once the clew is given us by his alleged disclosures, the deductions of our reason seem to bring us inevitably to the same results. But when we come to the biblical interpretations, we feel, in regard to many of them, more like one who is led by the hand in the dark, though we still find it easy to justify to ourselves the most unbounded confidence in our guide. Even he himself has taught us to believe that the recognition of his truth depends very much on the development of the spiritual nature—the moral element—within us, which stands in the most intimate relation with the spiritual sense. This interior perception does not come, in our opinion, so properly within the domain of the purely *rational* faculty, however highly cultivated. As Truth is evermore truly seen from Good, so a heavenly Life is the grand requisite to deep spiritual insight. Such an instinctive perception as I am now speaking of we believe was enjoyed by the Most Ancient Church—whose wisdom really excelled ours in proportion as they were more in the good of

life—and that it will be again enjoyed at a future day, when the church shall be restored to its primeval purity and clearness of vision. There will then, we think, be little difficulty in apprehending the soundness of Swedenborg's most recondite interpretations. What might we not anticipate on this score from a general state of the inner man even approximating to that which is described in the following extract.

“There was to the man of the Most Ancient Church no other worship than internal, such as there is in heaven, for with them heaven communicated with man, so that they made a one; that communication was perception, concerning which much has been said above: thus being angelic men, they were also internal men; they perceived indeed, by sensation, the external things relating to the body and the world, but they cared not for them: in every object of sense they perceived somewhat divine and celestial; as for example, when they saw any high mountain, they did not perceive the idea of a mountain, but of height, and from height they had a perception of heaven and the Lord; hence it came to pass that the Lord was said to dwell on high, and He Himself was called the Highest and Most Exalted, and afterwards the worship of the Lord was solemnized on mountains: the case was similar in other instances; as when they perceived the morning, they did not perceive the morning itself of the day, but the celestial, which is like the morning and day-dawn in the mind; hence the Lord was called the Morning, the East, and the Dawn: in like manner when they saw a tree, with its fruits and leaves, they did not attend to them, but saw as it were man represented therein, in the fruit love and charity, in the leaves faith; hence also the man of the church was not only compared to a tree, and likewise to a paradise, and the things in man to fruit and leaves, but they were also so called. Such are they who are in a celestial and angelic idea. Every one may apprehend that the general idea rules all the particulars, thus all the objects of the senses, as well what is seen as what is heard, and indeed in such a manner, that the objects are not at all cared for, but so far as they flow into the general idea; thus to him who is joyful in mind, whatever is heard or seen appears joyful and smiling; but if the mind be affected with sorrow, whatever is heard or seen appears sad and sorrowful; so in all other cases; for the general affection is in particulars, and causes them to be seen and heard in the general affection; other things do not even appear, but are as if they were absent, or as nothing. This was the case with the man of the Most Ancient Church; whatever he saw with his eyes was to him celestial; and thus with him all things and each, were as if they were alive. Hence may appear what was the nature and quality of his divine worship, that it was internal, and in no respect external. But when the Church declined, as it did with the posterity, and when that perception or communication with heaven began to perish, then the case began to be otherwise: in sensible objects men no longer perceived what was celestial, as before, but what was worldly, and this in a greater degree, as they had less of perception remaining; till at length, in the last posterity, which was next before the flood, they apprehended nothing in sensible objects but what was worldly, corporeal, and terrestrial;—thus heaven was separated from man, and he had none but very remote communication therewith.”—A. C. 920.

We can hardly resist the inference, from the general tenor of Swedenborg's teachings, that there is a knowledge of nature intuitive to a right state of the moral affections far superior to that achieved by the science of the intellect. In this fact we have doubtless the true key to the problem found in the character of some of the philosophies which we term ancient. It has often been a question with the learned how Plato and Pythagoras, for instance, should have stumbled upon so much truth. But suppose, for a moment, that their systems were but the fragmentary relics of a still more ancient wisdom, which flowed, as it were, spontaneously from a higher state of the moral man, and the enigma is solved. This wisdom was, in fact, the wisdom of *correspondence*, or of the relation of the

natural to the spiritual world. The pride of modern science may be humiliated by the intimation, but the acknowledgment of the fact is merely putting its due honor upon the principles of Goodness in comparison with mere Intellect. *We* have reversed the true order, and the effect has been to blind us to the reality of the perversion. But this is a vein of thought which I cannot now pursue.

With one who has fully acquainted himself with Swedenborg's multifarious developements, the evidence of truth is so imperative in regard to an immense variety of points which his reason and his consciousness are able to certify, that he is content to receive other matters on the strength of a veracity which has never failed him, so far as he had the means of putting it to the test. He rests in the inward assurance that the same reasons which prevailed with the Most High for granting him admission into the spiritual world at all, required also that whatever he reported thence should be entitled to the most absolute reliance.

No persons, however, can be more deeply sensible than the members of the New Church, how much is involved in the admission of this high claim on the part of their revered teacher. The very fact, indeed, that it concedes so much to a human being in this age of the world, shows how powerful and prevailing has been the evidence that has convinced them. They will doubtless be ready, one and all, to say, that they were, at the outset—on the first annunciation of his doctrines—as much startled by them, perhaps as much opposed to them, as any one who now rejects them with no more knowledge of their peculiar character than they then possessed. But they read and pondered. They were struck, they were surprised, they were amazed, at the coincidence between his revelations and their own inner intuitions. Especially were they wrought upon by the searching and penetrating power of his exposé of the deepest principles of their nature. They found themselves strangely sifted and explored—their most hidden promptings and purposes laid open—the nicest conceivable distinctions drawn in regard to those mental and moral elements which are the spring of actions—as if every form and phase of character became transparent under his luminous development. Most deeply, moreover, were they impressed to find that notwithstanding his assertion of a supernatural insight into the truth of things, both in this world and the next, he still makes his appeal to the tribunal of reason, and protests with all earnestness against his reader's receiving anything for truth of which he does not see a rational evidence. The more they penetrated into the depths of his doctrines, the more were they astonished to find their visionary character disappear, and the strangest disclosures to assume the air of the soundest reason. Proceeding onward to a more accurate study of the genius and endowments of the man, they were smitten with wonder at the gigantic grasp of his intellect, capacious at once of the vast and the minute—at the universality of his scientific attainments—at the unrivalled logical precision of his reasoning—at the symmetry of his method—at the simplicity, clearness, and condensation of his style—and at the exuberant richness of illustration; which throws a glow over his argument without weakening its force or diverting attention from its scope. The more, in fact, they have learned of the intellectual and moral attributes of the great apostle of the New Dispensation, the more deeply grounded is their conviction of his pre-eminent qualifications for the high office he was called to sustain, so that they are ready at once to pronounce it as their calm and intelligent assurance, that were his various en-

dowments known as they know them, they would be appreciated as they appreciate them, and that if it had been left to the choice of the collective humanity of the race to select from their number an individual who should be made the medium and depository of these stupendous revelations for the benefit of his kind, the election would have fallen without a dissenting voice, upon the very man whom the Divine Providence actually set apart for the purpose. Nothing is more evident to a close survey of his personal history, than that his whole life, prior to his illumination, was a continued course of unconscious preparation for the work which he was destined to perform, nor is it easy to conceive of a human being more thoroughly accomplished for a function so sacred and grand. On the score of transcendent intellect and the highest moral worth, everything is as it should be to meet the demands of the case.

I have adverted to these considerations with a view to justify the unlimited confidence reposed by the adherents of the New Church in the spiritual interpretations given by Swedenborg to the Word. They have the most undoubting assurance that this sense builds itself on the constitutional structure of the human mind as related to the very laws of creation, and which finds its full manifestation in the spiritual world. That he was actually intromitted into that world, and has made a truthful report of its phenomena, they have not the slightest question; because as far as his statements *can* be verified to consciousness and reason, they are verified, and why should they hesitate to receive his testimony when experience fails? Even that measure of truth which we are able to authenticate by our own inductions depends upon moral conditions in the medium which, in our view, are wholly inconsistent with the idea of anything apocryphal in the remaining departments of his revelations.

But before entirely dismissing the present subject I would advert for a few moments, to an objection which may be, and has been, urged against the doctrine of the spiritual sense on the ground of the *cui bono*. Why, it is asked, if the literal sense is capable of being translated, as it is by Swedenborg, into spiritual language—why was not that language originally adopted for the purpose? Was it not as easy for the Spirit who dictated the Scriptures to have couched his revelations, in the first instance, in that form of expression into which the actual form must be rendered before it can be adequately understood? This would doubtless seem, at first blush, a weighty objection, but it is fully answered on the ground of the principles on which the whole theory rests.

“Truth Divine is not received by any one, unless it be accommodated to the apprehension, consequently unless it appear in a natural form and species; for human minds at first apprehend none but terrestrial and worldly things, and not at all spiritual and celestial things, wherefore if spiritual and celestial things were exposed nakedly, they would be rejected as if they were nothing, according to the Lord’s words in John, ‘If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how should ye believe if I should tell you super-celestial things,’ iii. 12; this was particularly the case with those who lived before the coming of the Lord, who at length were in such blindness, that they knew nothing, because they were not willing to know anything concerning the life after death, concerning the internal man, concerning charity and faith, and concerning anything celestial, which things they rejected, because they held them in aversion; for they who regard terrestrial and worldly things as an end, that is, who love them above all things, hold spiritual things in aversion, and almost abhor the very name of them; the case is nearly the same at this day; the learned of the world indeed believe, that they should receive the Word more favorably, if ce-

lestial things were exposed nakedly, and if it was not written with such simplicity; but they are very much deceived, for in such case they would have rejected it more than the simple, and would have seen in it no light, but mere gross darkness; for human learning induces this darkness with those who trust to their own intelligence, and on that account extol themselves above others.”—*A. C.* 8783.

He elsewhere teaches, with great explicitness, that the literal sense is the basis, continent, and support of the spiritual sense, and that as the connection of the two is by correspondences, and correspondences are the medium of conjunction between heaven and earth,\* if the literal sense were wanting,

—“The Word would be like a palace without a foundation; that is, like a palace in the air and not on the ground, which could only be the shadow of a palace, and must vanish away, also, that the Word, without its literal sense, would be like a temple in which are many holy things, and in the midst thereof the holy of holies, without a roof and walls to form the continents thereof; in which case its holy things would be plundered by thieves, or be violated by the beasts of the earth and the birds of heaven, and thus be dissipated. In the same manner, it would be like the tabernacle, in the inmost place whereof was the ark of the covenant, and in the middle part the golden candlestick, the golden altar for incense, and also the table for shew-bread, which were its holy things, without its ultimates, which were the curtains and vails. Yea, the Word without its literal sense would be like the human body without its coverings, which are called skins, and without its supporters, which are called bones, of which, supposing it to be deprived, its inner parts must of necessity be dispersed and perish. It would also be like the heart and the lungs in the thorax, deprived of their covering, which is called the *pleura*, and their supporters, which are called the ribs; or like the brain without its coverings, which are called the *dura* and *pia mater*, and without its common covering, continent and firmament, which is called the skull. Such would be the state of the Word without its literal sense; wherefore it is said in Isaiah, that ‘the Lord will create upon all the glory a covering’ (iv. 5).”—*D. S. S.* 33.

I give another extract in this connection describing still more fully the philosophy of the literal and spiritual sense.

“The reason why this literal sense is called a cloud is, because it is in obscurity in respect to the internal sense, for this latter is in the light of heaven; the reason why it is in obscurity and like a cloud is, because it is for man during his abode in the world, whereas the internal sense is for man when he comes into heaven: but it is to be noted that man, during his abode in the world, is at the same time in the internal sense of the Word, when he is in the genuine doctrine of the Church as to faith and as to life, for by that doctrine the internal sense of the Word is then inscribed both on his understanding and his will, on his understanding, by faith, and on his will by life. Such a man, when he comes into heaven, apprehends the Word no otherwise than entirely according to its internal sense, and knows nothing of its external sense, this latter appearing to him at that time as a cloud that absorbs the rays of his light. It is said that man then apprehends the Word according to its internal sense, and not according to its external sense; the reason of this is, because all, who are in heaven, are instructed by the Lord from Truth Divine which appertains to man, thus from the Word; the reason is, be-

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\* “The Word is written by mere correspondences, and hence it is of such a quality as to conjoin in heaven with man; for heaven is in the written sense of the Word, and the internal sense corresponds to the external sense, wherefore, where the Word is read by men, the angels, who are attendant upon him, perceive it in the spiritual sense, which is the internal sense, hence a holy principle from the angels flows-in, by which there is conjunction: for this end such a Word was given.”—*A. C.* 10,687.

cause man is in the ultimate of order, and all interior things close in the ultimate, the ultimate being as it were a prop [or support] to things interior, on which the latter subsist and rest. The Word in the letter is Divine Truth in the ultimate of order, in like manner the man of the Church, to whom Divine Truth appertains, as to his natural and sensual principle; in this latter, as in the former, interior things terminate and rest. They are as a house and its foundation; the house itself is heaven, and Divine Truth there such as the Word is as to the internal sense, and the foundation is the world, and Divine Truth there such as the Word is in the external sense. As a house rests on its foundation, so also heaven on the Church, consequently the Divine Truth in heaven upon the Divine Truth in earth; for there is a continual connexion from the Lord through heaven even to man by the Word. This is the reason why it is always provided by the Lord, that there may be a Church on earth, where Divine Truth may be in its ultimate. This is an arcanum which no one as yet knows. Let all therefore take heed to themselves, lest they injure the Word by any means, for they who injure the Word, injure the Divine [principle] itself."—A. C. 9430.

I have thus endeavored to unfold, by the light of Swedenborg's own explanations, the peculiar genius of the *spiritual sense of the Word*. It is doubtless the prominent feature of the system, and that against which objections are urged in the greatest number and with the most confidence. But they have invariably shot wide of the *principle* which forms the foundation of the theory. Yet the theory is surely entitled to be judged by its distinguishing *principle*. If this be erroneous, the fallacy would seem to be capable of being detected and pointed out. I am not aware that this has either been done or attempted. Though considerably conversant with all the works which have been published in opposition to the system of Swedenborg, I know not of a single one which has assumed to meet the argument on its true merits. They invariably blink the real question at issue, and instead of encountering the *principle*, aim their assaults entirely at the *application*. Of this we justly complain. Our belief in the soundness of the applications rests altogether in the soundness of the fundamental principle. Why is not this worthy of consideration? It lays claim to the character of reason, science, and philosophy, and I can scarcely imagine any problem in Swedenborg that should seem more staggering to a non-recipient of his views, than is that which we find in this unanimous refusal to entertain the radical principle which lies at the basis of his biblical revelations. The matter would be somewhat alleviated, if even a *reason* were assigned for thus declining to meet his adherents on the only ground on which they claim to be met; for it is on the fundamental principles of the system that their assent to it has been yielded. How then is it possible that any arguments should have weight with them which pay no attention to these principles?

I am certainly reluctant to be forced to recognize the operation of *moral causes* in the procedure to which I now advert. I do not venture to charge upon our opponents the *conscious* influence of any other than intellectual considerations in prompting the objections urged against the interior purport of the Word. But I know not that I shall wrong any one by citing two or three passages from Swedenborg himself, in which he very clearly intimates the existence of a latent aversion in many minds to the acknowledgment of any sense in the Word beyond that of the letter.

"It may be expedient here briefly to say how the case is with illustration and information from the Word; every one is illustrated and informed from the Word according to the affection of truth and the degree of the desire thereof, and

according to the faculty of receiving, they who are in illustration, as to their internal man are in the light of heaven; for the light of heaven is what illustrates man in the truths and goods of faith. They who are thus illuminated, apprehend the Word as to its interiors; wherefore they from the Word make to themselves doctrine, to which they apply the sense of the letter: but they who are not in the affection of truth from good, and thence in the desire of growing wise, are more blinded than illustrated when they read the Word, for they are not in the light of heaven; and from the light of the world, which is called the lumen of nature, they see only such things as are in agreement with worldly things, and thus from the fallacies, in which the external senses are, they lay hold of falses, which appear to them as truths. Hence the generality of them make to themselves no doctrine, but abide in the sense of the letter, which they apply to favor falses, especially such as are in agreement with the loves of self and of the world; but they who are not of this character, merely confirm the doctrinals of their own Church, and are not concerned, neither do they know, whether they be true or false."—*A. C.* 9382.

"There are spirits who are in other respects good, but who cannot as yet be admitted into heaven, because they are not willing to hear and to admit the interior, and still less the more interior, things of the Word; and who, on this account, thought evil against me and interpreted what I said in an evil sense. For those who do not approve internal things, cannot learn those things which belong to the interior and internal man; for they are ignorant that there are interior things, still less do they know that things more interior exist; hence, in respect to works of faith, they call those good which are done by good men, in obedience to the Word, and from a good heart. But when they are told that good works must be works of charity, and that charity is of mercy, and thus from the Lord the Saviour, they admit that it is so, but they do not think so profoundly as to see that it is so. Such spirits, therefore, as cannot as yet admit interior truths, cannot as yet be introduced by the way of knowledge [even] into the exterior heaven.

"Moreover, such as will not at all hear or admit of interior things, remain out of heaven, nor can they do otherwise than hate such things, because they are more or less interior, and also those who teach them. As upon earth there will, as I think, be many who will hate the interior and more inward things of the Word, because they more closely touch the life of their love, in favor of which they object to certain difficulties which appear to them as impossible to be explained; thus they rather prefer that the way to interior things should be closed against them, than that they should favor them by their assent; besides this, they are not willing to be disquieted by such things as they assert they are not capable of understanding.

"Such spirits have very often conversed with me, and have frequently reproached me for teaching interior things, because such things appeared as paradoxical to them; and also some this day who were of a similar character, and who on that account thought ill of the acts of my life. In a word, at the present time the heaven of spirits is almost filled with such;—but it is otherwise with all such as are in heaven."—*S. D.* 1139-1141.

This may well be supposed if that is true which follows:

"All in the spiritual world, who are inwardly evil, how moral soever their external life in the world has been, cannot at all bear any one who adores the Lord, and lives a life of charity; as soon as they see such persons, they infest and injure or treat them opprobriously. I have frequently wondered at this circumstance, as also all must do who are unacquainted with it, inasmuch as the same persons, when in the world, could bear to hear preachings concerning the Lord, and also concerning charity, and even spoke doctrinally upon such things themselves, and yet when they become spirits they cannot bear them; the reason however is, because this aversion is implanted or inherent in the evil in which they are immersed; for in their evil there exists enmity, yea, hatred against the Lord, and also against those who are led by the Lord, that is, who are in the life of charity; but this enmity and hatred lies concealed in their spirit,



wherefore they are in them when they become spirits, and then is disclosed that antipathy or opposition to the Lord and to such as are led by him, which is inherent in evil."—*A. E.* 394.

I have already remarked that persons in this state are not necessarily aware of the fact. They would not consciously reject the spiritual and internal things of the Word simply because they are such; but it may still be suggested whether it is not possible, that upon a rigid inquest into themselves, they might detect a hidden disrelish of the interior sense of the Scriptures as bearing upon the interior life and soul of their affections. So, on the other hand, when the spiritual state is intrinsically good, there may be an equally unconscious reception of the essential verities of the internal sense.

"The doctrine, which should be for a lamp, is what the internal sense teaches, thus it is the internal sense itself, which in some measure is evident to every one, although he is ignorant what the internal sense is, who is in the external from the internal, that is, to whom the internal man is open; for heaven, which is in the internal sense of the Word, flows in with that man when he reads the Word, enlightens him, and gives him perception, and thereby teaches him: yea, if ye are willing to believe, the internal man appertaining to man is of itself in the internal sense of the Word, since it is heaven in the least effigy, and hence is with angels in heaven when it is open, wherefore also it is in like perception with them; which also may be manifest from this consideration, that the interior intellectual ideas of man are not such as his natural ideas are, to which nevertheless they correspond; but of what quality they are, man is ignorant so long as he lives in the body, yet he comes into them spontaneously when he comes into the other life, because they are ingrafted, and by them he is instantly in consort with the angels. Hence it is evident that man, whose internal is open, is in the internal sense of the Word, although he is ignorant of it; hence he has illustration when he reads the Word, but according to the light which he is capable of having by means of the knowledges appertaining to him."—*A. C.* 10,400.

I have now accomplished what I designed in reference to the most important part of your strictures upon the system of revelation which Swedenborg has instrumentally given to the world. Although the subject is by no means exhausted, yet I may perhaps presume to think that its most prominent points are presented in tolerably full relief, so that our true position, in respect to the main theme, can scarcely be henceforth mistaken. We profess to be able to assign a rational and philosophical reason for the credence which we give to the truth, soundness, and sobriety of those interpretations of the inspired Word which seem to strike you and others as the climax of extravagance and absurdity. That the evidence which satisfies us on this head will also satisfy you, I dare not venture to anticipate. I have too clear a perception—acquired mainly from the contents of these very commentaries—of the multitudinous influences which go to mould the forms of theological opinion, to conceive it as in the least probable, that the confirmations of a long tract of years, consolidated and strengthened by powerful circumstances of place, name, association, and commitment, shall give way before the strange and startling claims of a body of disclosures professedly emanating from the spiritual world and bearing the seal of divine authority. Even though it appeals to internal evidence—relying exclusively for reception on its accordance with the clearest judgment and intuitions of the reason—and though it is solely on this ground that its claims have been admitted by all intelligent receivers, yet we find no difficulty in conceiving that, to a state

of mind formed by the prevailing dogmas of the church, the sustaining evidence of its truth shall be utterly powerless in producing conviction. The teachings of these doctrines themselves enable us to solve every apparent problem of this nature, and more especially as it respects the peculiar feature of the scheme upon which I have so fully dwelt. Instructed as we are in the close and indissoluble connection between the spiritual sense and the spiritual world, we can easily understand how a dominant incredulity as to all extraordinary insight in the one department shall effectually bar the admission of any special illumination in the other. Yet whatever may be the result, I shall by no means deem it lost labor to have presented the subject as I have done above, as it has enabled me clearly to *define our position*, and to show the exact point on which the issue between us and our censors is to be joined. It has also afforded me an opportunity to spread fairly before the reader a series of interesting and important extracts from Swedenborg himself, of which it may be presumed a tolerably wide perusal will be secured. This is always gratifying to a New Churchman, as he cannot but indulge the belief that the *undefinable something*—the ineffable air and character—which breathes through his pages, will strike others in some degree as it strikes them. So far from being able to conceive that they offer indications of a mind unhinged, they can scarcely imagine any attribute of the soundest and profoundest intellect which does not display itself in his writings, to say nothing of the vein of simplicity, sincerity, and deep religious reverence, which pervades every sentence. But he can have lived and observed to very little purpose who has not learnt the power of adverse preconception to neutralise and nullify the strongest evidence of truth. Our assurance, therefore, of the intrinsically impregnable strength of our position is by no means the measure of our confidence in the conquests they shall win over the rooted skepticism of the Christian mind. We can only say to ourselves, respecting our faith, as our illumined teacher says of some point which he is arguing with irresistible force in the face of opponents—"Though they may not admit it, yet they cannot deny it."

Very respectfully,

Yours, &c.

GEO. BUSH.

#### LETTER VI.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :

It is very much of a settled principle with the adherents of Swedenborg, that it is absolutely impossible to *report* the evidence of the truth of his disclosures. It must be seen by its own light in the works in which it is embodied. I presume it will be confidently said by every present receiver of the system, who has not imbibed it from childhood, that nothing but the *actual perusal* of the writings could, by any possibility, have wrought the conviction which has sprung up in his mind. If interrogated as to what it is, precisely, in these writings to which the effect is owing, they will perhaps be unable to give a more definite answer than to say, that it is a certain indescribable coincidence between their teachings and the deductions, intuitions, and, more than all, the sentiments, of their own minds. They find in them a wonderful response to the voice of their inmost souls, of which they can convey no more fitting idea than by referring to the effect of the Christian Scriptures upon the mind of a skeptical inquirer.

You will doubtless agree with me that there is no possible process of reasoning—no presentation of evidence—so likely to prevail with an infidel in proof of the truth of Christianity, as a candid perusal of the documents of our faith, contained in the New Testament. If conviction fails to be the result in such a case, you cannot but doubt as to the presence of the condition—*candor*. At any rate you have but little hope of a favorable issue from any other source. If John and Matthew and Paul fail to impress him, you can place but little reliance on Paley and Watson and Chalmers. So in regard to Swedenborg. *He must be read in order to be believed*. I repeat it with all emphasis, that nothing but the actual perusal of his works in his own words will, in one case in ten thousand, produce the conviction of his truth; and when this is done, in a spirit of candor, I cannot conceive that in one case in ten thousand it should *not* produce this effect. This persuasion grows out of my view of the very structure and laws of the human mind. I confess myself utterly unable to imagine that *your* verdict on the subject should be different from mine, provided we are both in possession of the same premises, and both are governed by an equally sincere and simple-hearted desire to ascertain the truth of God. The only reason, as I conceive, why I have embraced the system and you have not, is because I have read more and pondered more on the subject, and because, from circumstances for which I take no credit, my mind is more free from influences adverse to reception. But however this may be, I am positively certain that in my own case *belief* has followed *knowledge*. On no point is my assurance more firm than that, without reading Swedenborg, not entire, but extensively, I never could have received his doctrines, for from no other source could I ever have felt the force of the evidence by which they are sustained.

I could therefore wish it to be distinctly understood, that the grand scope of the work in which I am now engaged is not so much to establish affirmatively the truth of his system, as to repel the force of objections against it. The one can be done independently of the other. Nor do I doubt that confirmations, more or less strong, in support of the system may be drawn from the developments of various sciences, especially physiology and psychology. But in general, the proof positive must come from the revelations themselves as *Swedenborg has given them*. No amount of *writing* about them will stand in the place of the *actual reading* of them. Sketches, compends, extracts, all fail to produce the effect. They are to the system what a *herbarium* is to a garden. The *living* doctrines must be studied in the books in which they are embodied. We can only say, with the Mystic Animal of the Apocalypse, when the sealed book is opened, "Come and see."

But while I essay, not so much in these letters, to array the arguments going to prove that the system *is* true, the attempt is legitimate to show that those urged against it do not prove that it is *not* true; and in this attempt I am brought to the chapter in your work in which you offer a series of "Hints as to Swedenborg's visionary state—his revelations—visits to the planets," &c. The term "visionary," in ordinary usage, has very much the import of *fanciful* or *fantastic*, and though I am strongly impressed that you intended it to bear, in this connection, an invidious sense, yet as "visionary state" may also imply a *state of receiving visions*, such as Swedenborg affirms were vouchsafed to him, I shall not at present debate the propriety of the phrase. The "hints" are the main things to be considered. Your opening on this head is as follows:

"We are now to consider *the visions of Swedenborg, or the revelations made to him in the world of spirits*. He says, that his interiors were opened, and that he saw things in the other world, and had free conference with the inhabitants for a long course of years. And, in different parts of his writings, he gives us particular relations, which he calls "*memorable relations*," of what he saw and heard, and what he himself said, in his intercourse with the world of spirits. He says, he saw and heard the things related, not in sleep, but when he was wide awake. And what is very marvellous, he had intercourse with men and things in this world, as we commonly do, at the same time that his interiors, i. e. the powers of his spirit, or, as the transcendentalists say, *the depths of his being*, were opened, so that he was conversant with the affairs of the three heavens, and also of the hells.

"And here let me advertise you, that I feel myself under no obligation to account for the state of mind which Swedenborg had, or for the things which are set forth in his *memorable relations*. Various inquiries naturally present themselves to our consideration, among which are the following, namely, whether Swedenborg was really under a supernatural influence, and whether in consequence of this, his teachings in regard to the Scriptures and the things of heaven and hell are clothed with divine authority and are binding upon our faith; or whether he was in a state similar to what is produced by *Animal Magnetism*, or *Mesmerism*; or whether he was the subject of a remarkable kind of *insanity*. I shall not turn aside from my present object so much, as to attempt to give a definite reply to these inquiries. My purpose is, to proceed according to the direction of the ablest advocates of Swedenborg, and to look directly at the *nature* of his communications. If they appear to possess an *intrinsic excellence*, and to be consistent with our settled views of the word and works of God, they ought to be cordially received; if otherwise, to be rejected. Or if there is found to be a mixture of truth and error, the truth is to be received, and the error rejected."—p. 59.

And here I am struck with abundant matter for admiration. The announcement of "the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted" could scarcely awaken an odder train of ideas, than the grave intimation, that you feel "under no obligation to account for the state of mind which Swedenborg had," and that it would be "turning aside from your present object to attempt to give a definite reply to the inquiries" that might be started on this head. To these various inquiries which you say "naturally present themselves for consideration," I will venture to suggest that still another may be added, viz. what object you could have had in writing, if it were one which would allow you to waive the settlement of the very question which lies at the foundation of the whole subject. I must indeed confess to no very familiar acquaintance with the etiquette of controversial debate, but I had, in my simplicity, supposed that when a supernatural revelation was expressly claimed, and this revelation was held to be marked by certain phenomena which could only be accounted for by supposing its truth, it fairly devolved on the dissentient to show, either that the asserted phenomena did not exist, or, if they did, that they could be *adequately* explained on some other hypothesis than that of the truth of the revelation. It had never occurred to me that a mere random guess at a solution—a purely *perchance* hypothesis—the assignment of a cause equally apocryphal with that rejected—could be seriously proposed by one who was dealing in earnest with argument, and addressing himself to men who could hardly be supposed incapable of seeing at once and feeling very painfully the evasion.

Let me endeavor to present the matter in its true light and bearings. Here are certain facts or phenomena, in the form of *Memorable Relations of things heard and seen in Heaven and Hell*. How are these facts and phenomena to be accounted for? The Seer himself accounts for them by ascribing them to a supernatural

origin, and his followers, if you so please to term them, are satisfied, judging from their intrinsic nature, that this is the true and the only solution. You do not deny the fact of the Relations having been given, or that they are, in many respects, very remarkable, but you think differently as to their source. You suggest that they *may* have proceeded from quite another state than that assumed—that that state *may* have been a state of *Mesmerism*, or one similar to it—that it *may* have been a state of *insanity*—or, finally, it *may* have been a state of *dreaming*. Now what is more obvious than that you are bound, in fairness, to show that one or all of these hypothecated states is capable of originating the phenomena in question? If not, to what purpose are they adduced? But have you attempted in the least to show this? Have you made the slightest approach towards a clear exposé of the laws of mental action under the influence of either of these causes? Have you even intimated your own personal belief in the *reality* of those phenomena which are usually termed Mesmeric? And can this be considered fair dealing with your readers—not only to assign causes which you do not profess to demonstrate as sufficient to produce the effects, but some of which you do not even profess to believe to be real? I am aware, indeed, that you have something to say of the tendency of fixed habits of thought and a propensity to theorizing to convert ideal conceptions into living entities, but I still insist that you have not, in the present case, laid open the matter in that full and formal manner which the peculiar character of the facts required. If previous opinion is prone to run into visions, the objects seen in the visions may ordinarily be expected to agree with the opinions. In this instance, they do in multitudes of particulars, contradict previous impressions as might easily be shown. The causes assigned, therefore, are not at all adequate to the effects. Indeed, you will excuse me if I say, that your reasoning in the premises reminds me of nothing more forcibly than of the logic of the wondering multitude on the day of Pentecost. “And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.” Here was one inexplicable fact sagely attempted to be accounted for by another equally inexplicable; for who had ever dreamed that the most abundant potations of new wine could impart the gift of new tongues?

But you will perhaps refer me to the sequel of the paragraph for your reply. You there say, “My purpose is to proceed according to the direction of the ablest advocates of Swedenborg, and to look directly at the *nature* of his communications. If they appear to possess an *intrinsic excellence*, and to be consistent with our settled views of the word and works of God, they ought to be cordially received; if otherwise, to be rejected. Or, if there is found to be a mixture of truth and error, the truth is to be received and the error rejected.” Your purpose, then, is to appeal to the *nature* of the communications, and to judge of them by their *intrinsic excellence*. The phraseology I think peculiarly unhappy and calculated to throw somewhat of a cloud over the real point at issue. The question concerns not so much the *intrinsic excellence* of the subject-matter of the Memorabilia, as its *intrinsic truth*. What is true may indeed be admitted to be excellent, but the term suggests rather the *moral quality* of the subject than its *logical verity*, and when matters of fact are in question the verdict is to be rendered upon their *truth* or *falsity*, and not upon their *excellence* or *vileness*. I am willing, however, to waive any critical distinction of this nature and to take

your meaning as virtually explained by what follows—viz. as that which is “consistent with our settled views of the word and works of God,” for doubtless that of which this may be predicated is *excellent*, provided such *settled* views are *true* views, which may perhaps be as much a matter of question as anything involved in the controversy. But of this I may say more hereafter.

Now in “looking directly at the *nature* of the communications” made in the Memorable Relations—and this is the present theme of discussion—it is to be borne in mind, that the things made known in them have relation mainly to the state of spirits and angels—to the objects and scenery which surround them—and to the modes of their intercourse with each other and with men on the earth. These are the matters which come before us for consideration. The statements respecting them are what we are called to pronounce judgment upon. Swedenborg affirms that these are things which he saw and heard in the other world in consequence of a peculiar and supernatural translation of his spirit into that world, which left his body comparatively unaffected. The ultimate question to be decided is the question as to the fact of such a translation. The real object of a searching inquiry into the *nature* of the communications is, to learn whether they are such as to warrant the inference that they are to be ascribed to such a source and to that only. If he was indeed actually illuminated by a supernatural divine influence, I presume I am at liberty to suppose, that you would feel bound to accept his utterances as being virtually the voice of God himself and clothed with all the authority that you regard as necessarily pertaining to a revelation from heaven. At present, however, you are not satisfied on this head, and therefore feel constrained to submit the *nature* of his disclosures to a very close examination.

In doing this an obvious question arises as to the *test* by which their truth and reliability is to be tried. If you insist upon the literal record of the Scriptures being made the standard, then it is to be determined how far, in this direction, the informations of the Scriptures extend—what measure of actual revelation, on this head, they profess to give. We may safely assume, I think, that so far as his disclosures run parallel with those of the Bible, they must be consistent with them, when the latter are rightly understood, in order to be entitled to belief, and that they are so, I do not at all hesitate to affirm. Whether, however, they shall in all points agree with what you would term the ordinary “settled views” of the mass of Christians, is another question, on which you and I might differ. But this creates a new issue—viz. what is the genuine teaching of Scripture. And on this point I cannot consent that the prevalent opinions of the Church shall be made the criterion of the truth or falsehood of his disclosures. Take, for instance, the tenet of the resurrection. Swedenborg assures us that the only resurrection which is ever to take place, takes place at death, and is merely resuscitation into the new life of the spirit-world. The mass of the Christian church believes the true doctrine to be that of the resurrection of the buried body, in some sense or other, at some far distant period of time. Here then is a direct conflict of views, and issue is to be joined on the manner in which the inspired declarations are properly to be interpreted. My own conviction and that of multitudes of others who are not governed by Swedenborg’s construction, is firm and unwavering that the scriptures, rightly understood, do not sanction the common theory. I do not see, therefore, that you can justly pronounce against the *nature* of the disclo-

tures on this point, because the true question is a question of *interpretation*. But, passing this, the fact is unquestionable that the amount of *precise* scriptural information in respect to the state beyond death is extremely small. The extent, therefore, to which the two classes of disclosures can be compared, and one made the test of the truth of the other, is proportionably limited. But I repeat the admission made above, that as far as they *do* run parallel, Swedenborg must be consistent with the true sense of the Bible in order to be credible.

But we are forced upon another supposition. Suppose that Swedenborg goes, in his revelations, *beyond* the point to which the inspired oracles conduct us, and professedly gives forth an immense mass of information concerning the future life, which we have no means of submitting to an explicit Scriptural test, in what light is his claim then to be viewed? You must, I think, either decide that the alleged discoveries are false of course and not to be entertained at all, or that they also are to be tried on the ground above indicated—viz. their *intrinsic nature*, as consistent or inconsistent, not with the “settled views of the word of God,” which is excluded by the supposition, but with the dictates and deductions of right reason—reason, however, instructed by the *general tenor* of revelation. If you take the former position, then it will devolve upon you to show that every such claim is precluded in the nature of the case as involving an impossibility *per se*, or by some express declaration of Jehovah himself forbidding the anticipation of any new light from any source whatever relative to the eternal future before us. I am so little able to perceive any plausible ground for this assumption, that I shall venture to take it for granted that you do not plant yourself upon it. The tribunal before which you would cite the Relations is that of Reason, enlightened by Revelation, and to this tribunal I will accompany them, after having adverted to your preliminary remarks.

“I will however turn your thoughts to a few suggestions in regard to the general subject before us. We will then take the position, that Swedenborg was not divinely inspired. Now whether he had dreams, either asleep or awake, or was in a Mesmeric state, or was the subject of an extraordinary kind of insanity; it was perfectly natural that the actings of his mind should be according to his settled character and habits. As he had a powerful intellect and a vivid imagination, it was a matter of course, that the operations of his mind, whether dreaming, or Mesmerized, or insane, would be vivid and powerful. And as he had previously formed a habit of meditating and theorizing upon moral and religious subjects, upon the things of earth and heaven and hell; then, whether he was under the influence of dreaming, or Mesmerism, or mono-mania, it was very natural that his mind should dwell on these same subjects, and that these subjects and his theories upon them should not only be revolved in his excited imagination, but should be presented before him with extraordinary vividness, and in such forms as he never conceived before. The general theories or principles were, we may suppose, already fixed in his mind; and in his visionary state they received their particular form and costume. In each of the states above-mentioned, the imagination possesses a wonderfully creative power, and even the intellect is endued with unwonted energy. If then a mind, endued with such strength and fecundity as that of Swedenborg, and furnished with such habits of thinking and philosophizing, is found, in either of the states supposed, to be the subject of operations singularly various and lively, and sometimes, delightful and sublime; we have no occasion to be stumbled or surprised.”—p. 60.

“We will take the position that Swedenborg was not divinely inspired.” As New Churchmen are not in the habit of claiming *inspiration* for Swedenborg, it

would have been more to the purpose had you said, "We will take the position that Swedenborg was not *divinely illuminated*." This position you are certainly at liberty to take, provided you can find some satisfactory mode of accounting for those phenomena of his case which we confidently believe can never be solved on any other hypothesis than that of the alleged illumination. In propounding your own solution, however, you are, as I conceive, fairly bound to make it appear, at least to yourself, that the cause assigned is equal to the production of the effect, and moreover that it shall be a real and not a supposititious or hypothetical cause, as such a character completely enervates all its argumentative efficacy. Bringing then your proposed solution to this ordeal, what shall be said of it? First conceding that Swedenborg possessed "a powerful intellect and a vivid imagination" and then assuming that his mind was *somehow* brought into an abnormal state, either by dreaming, Mesmerism, or insanity, you remark that it is perfectly natural that its actings, in that state, should be according to his settled character and habits—that having previously formed a habit of meditating and theorizing on moral and religious subjects, upon the things of heaven and hell, he would of course dwell, in his abnormal and excited state, upon these same subjects, and they, and his theories upon them, would be presented before him with extraordinary vividness, and in such forms as he never before conceived. Now, while I do not refuse to admit, in the abstract, the soundness of the general principle, yet I am compelled to say, that the reasoning in the present instance is vitiated by a radical defect in the very ground-work, and that is the entire lack of evidence in regard to the main assumption. The hypothesis of such a previous habit of meditating and *theorizing* on the phenomena of the other life, *to the degree which would warrant your explanation*, is purely gratuitous. As Swedenborg was an eminently pious and devout man, we may indeed suppose that his thoughts, like those of every other man of the same character, were very conversant with the themes of the spiritual world, and being also of a philosophical genius, we may well suppose that his mind was no stranger to meditations on the *philosophy* of man's future existence. But all this may be said of hundreds of other good men, and I should feel that I run very little risk in affirming the same thing of yourself. I should by no means think it strange, could the truth be known, that you had pondered as deeply and speculated as much on the destiny of the soul, as Swedenborg had, prior to what he terms his illumination. But if you should suddenly lay claim to supernatural revelations, I should not deem myself warranted in saying that the fact could be sufficiently accounted for by a simple reference to your former habits of religious meditation; for in that case I could not see why multitudes of other men in the community should not, for the same reason, rise up and assert the same claims. In a word, the suggested cause would not appear to me adequate to account for the effect. So also in regard to Swedenborg. I contend that you have no sufficient grounds for supposing the existence of such a previous intellectual and moral state as that upon which you would build your solution of the facts in his case. "The general theories or principles were, *we may suppose*, already fixed in his mind, and in his visionary state they received their particular form and costume." But what authority have you for making this supposition? And to what does it amount to say that in such a state "the imagination possesses a wonderfully creative power, and even the intellect is endued with unwont-



ed energy," so long as you have no evidence that the state described was his? You have clearly *postulated* your solution of the case upon conditions arbitrarily assumed, and have reasoned as though the *postulates* were *axioms*. This may do in science, but it is a very equivocal procedure in regard to moral subjects.

I shall venture, then, to affirm that you have not as yet succeeded in setting aside the evidence, drawn from facts, of Swedenborg's illumination, because the mode in which you account for these facts rests upon a merely conjectural basis of which not the slightest *proof* is adduced. His biography is open to you, and if you find in that a warrant for your assumptions, let it be produced. I have not found it. Still I do not deny but that other modes of solution remain which may be argumentatively available, and these I shall consider when they come up. All that I at present assert is, that you have offered an explanation of a mental phenomenon, which rests solely on a gratuitous assumption, and which is therefore of no value.

But supposing yourself in possession of the true key to the marvel, you go on to apply the theory to the Relation concerning the state of infants in the other life. Proceeding on the presumption that this had been a theme of much previous reflection, your fancy can easily shadow forth his, and you have no difficulty in seeing how his dreaming, or Mesmerised, or insane imagination could have dressed up the ruling idea that had taken possession of his mind in the forms presented in his writings. Without here adverting to the lack of all testimony to the fact of such former profound study upon this particular point, it will be seen upon reference to his Relations that they involve numerous items of statement intimately connected with his entire system of the future life, and which are as remote as possible from the ideas that would naturally enter into a mere dreaming representation of the heaven of infants. Thus, for instance, he says their first speech is merely a sound of affection, which by degrees becomes more distinct, as the ideas of thought enter; for the ideas of thought from the affections constitute all angelic speech. This refers us not only to what he says elsewhere of vocal sound among spirits, but also to his profound philosophy in regard to the relation between affection and thought. Again he says that some infants are of the disposition of the spiritual, and some of the celestial angels; hinting herein at a distinction of the angelic orders which is expanded elsewhere at great length and set forth as pre-eminently important. He remarks, moreover, that in the Grand Man of heaven all infants are in the province of the eyes, those in the province of the left eye, who are of a spiritual disposition, and those in the province of the right eye, who are of a celestial disposition, I am not here discussing the question of the truth of these representations, as whether heaven is, in any sense, arranged into the human form, which is itself a very strange dream if it is *merely* a dream; but my object is to show that what he asserts of the state of infants in the other world, is simply a part of a stupendous scheme of spiritual existence which is throughout so perfectly adjusted and harmonized in all its parts, and embodying so sublime a conception, that whenever properly apprehended, the idea of its being the product of a mere dreaming, excited, or insane imagination, is no less extravagant than would be that of the Pyramids of Egypt having been built by myriads of men in a state of somnambulism.

So also as to what is contained in the following paragraph.

"Suppose a man accustomed to profound thinking, and to moral and philosophical speculation, like Swedenborg. Looking at the mixed characters of men in the present life, he finds it difficult to see how they can be at once received either into heaven, or hell; and he begins to think there may be an intermediate state, where those who die, will undergo a farther process of discipline, which will more completely develop and fix their character, and thus fit them for the world of happiness, or of woe. This idea may at length become settled in his mind, not perhaps as an article of faith, but as an *opinion*, which appears suited to remove his difficulties, and to satisfy his feelings. Now let the subject be carried into his dreams, or into some of the more active states of monomania; and his opinion, or speculation will become a living reality, and he will see dead men in the other world very much in the condition in which he had seen them here—engaging in conversation and controversy, pursuing various occupations, and passing through various scenes of trial, and all, of course, *more humano*. So long as he continues in this state, all the objects of his thoughts will stand before his mind as *realities* and *certainities*. And it will be nothing strange, if he should imagine, that these creations of his excited mind are all from God, and ought to be received as divine revelations."—p. 63.

This you regard as an adequate view of the process by which a man "accustomed to profound thinking and to moral and philosophical speculation," may have been led from the entertainment of an opinion to the ideal creation of a world of corresponding phantasms, and to the belief of a consequent divine mission. Such is the *genesis*, in your judgment, of the hallucination of an intellect gifted by nature and by culture far beyond the standard of ordinary minds. You do not indeed say, in express terms, that you regard the dominant idea which has thus passed, in his mind, into definite form and feature, as erroneous, but this is evidently implied, for if you deemed it accordant with reason or revelation you would scarce feel under the necessity of accounting for it from the play of an active fancy ministering to the workings of a morbid speculation. The only question, in that case, would be as to the probability of his having seen the truth by any other than the ordinary intellectual eye—the same eye by which you profess to see it not to be the truth. Now you will allow me to suggest, first, that, as already remarked, you have no positive evidence whatever, that the current of his prior speculations ran peculiarly in this channel; and, secondly, that in stating the facts as he does on this head, he professes to give the most rational and philosophical reasons for the existence of such an intermediate state of souls as he describes, referring it to the very nature and constitution of man, and the necessary operation of the laws by which he is governed as a being of affection and intellect; and moreover that the force of these reasons must be in some way neutralized before the asserted fact can be fairly enrolled in the category of mental delusions. The reasons adduced have been found adequate, by multitudes of intelligent minds, to command their full conviction, so that if they are fallacious there is more of a problem to be accounted for than Swedenborg's own hallucination. How happens it that his reveries or ravings carry with them such a power of rational evidence as to infect the sanest and soberest minds with the most confident persuasion of their truth?

But the main point on which I take exceptions to your remarks on this head is, that you have assumed the leading idea respecting an intermediate state to be false, and on this assumption have endeavored to account for the fact of his affirming it. Now if the thing asserted be intrinsically true, that truth *may* account for the assertion and supersede the necessity of any other mode of explaining it. The only question to be determined, is as to the fact of the *superna-*

*tural seeing.* This would probably create little difficulty to your mind, provided only the things seen were intrinsically true; and this is the ground which I venture to take. I maintain the fact of an intermediate state, and found the position upon the nature of man, as absolutely requiring it. It is not, however, demanded of me to argue the point, since, as you take its falsity for granted, you have brought no arguments against it to which I can reply. Whenever you see fit to do this, I will pledge myself to meet you in the open field of debate. If you hold that the nature of man is not the true criterion, but that every question of this kind is to be decided by the testimony of the Word of God, I shall not shrink from an endeavor to show the contrary, viz. that there are multitudes of truths relating to our being and destiny which are determinable on their own evidence, and which compel assent as imperiously as anything in the letter of Scripture, although it is, at the same time impossible that they should, when settled, be in conflict with the *true sense* of Scripture, as this would be to set one class of truths at war with another, which, of course, can never be. And I must here be permitted to say, that I know of no principle more disastrous to the interests of the Christian faith, than that the express letter of revelation is to be made the standard of all attainable knowledge in the various departments of science, physical and psychological. The results reached in those sciences will inevitably trench, in some part or other, upon the announcements of holy writ, just as Geology, for instance, has come in contact, not to say collision, with the literal record, and the established construction, of Genesis. These results it is utterly impossible, on good grounds, to gainsay. The Author of our nature has so formed the human mind that it cannot resist the strength of the evidence when it is fairly arrayed before it, and if this evidence is of such a character that the ordinary interpretation of the *letter* of the Scriptures cannot stand before it, that interpretation will give way, as it assuredly ought. But what then? Is the essential truth of the Word thereby endangered? Not in the least. The intended Truth will stand forth eliminated from all factitious appendages and be seen to be of such a nature as to be entirely consistent with every sound development in whatever sphere of research and discovery. And as it is with physical science, so will it be with psychological. The attempt is utterly vain to repress the spirit of inquiry which is pushing inwards, outwards, upwards, and downwards, intent upon exploring the depths of all being, and especially of solving the problem of man's compound nature, and through the medium of the body of reaching the mystery of the soul. By the issues of these investigations, carefully and scientifically conducted, the mind will infallibly abide. If it finds intrinsic truth in Swedenborg's disclosures, it will receive it and rest in it, whether, for the present, it can harmonize it with the verbal declarations of Scripture or not. The pious zeal which would fain stay this process, from ostensible reverence for the Bible, builds itself upon a fundamental fallacy, to wit, that we can be more certain of having compassed the true sense of revelation than we can be of the soundness of our conclusions, drawn from scientific premises. The delusion will doubtless be eventually dispelled, but only in consequence of a long and arduous struggle, and from a clear conviction of the vantage-ground given by it to the infidel in his warfare against the Word. It is not impossible that all this may strike you as little less than infidelity itself, but I have weighed my words and cancel them not.

The specimens which you are pleased to give of the "visions" of Swedenborg you preface with the remark, that they have "manifestly the quality, the texture, and the dress of what often occurs in dreaming, or in the mental exercises of the insane." Upon this I would observe, in passing, that dreams ordinarily occur in the state of sleep, and that if all Swedenborg's visions took place while he was asleep, the sleeping portion of his existence must have been enormously great, and as it would doubtless take as long to write them as to dream them, it would seem that his whole life, for thirty years, must have been divided between dreaming and writing out his dreams, for his works, which contain them are exceedingly voluminous, and it is not easy to see what time he could have had for anything else. Yet it is clear that he *must*, in some way, have found time for extended study, as these works contain expositions of thousands upon thousands of texts, which we cannot but suppose he consulted in the pages of the Bible. How then could he have contrived to compress so much labor into his waking hours? This difficulty is enhanced by the fact that his life was not strictly that of a recluse, but more or less that of a public man, who was much in society, who entertained a great deal of company, and was very frequent in journeys and voyages to and from his native country. The only solution that I can think of is, that what you would term his dreaming state must have been his ordinary state, and that he wrote down his visions while he was in the very act of beholding them; and this would seem to force upon us the conclusion, that he was either insane, as you would probably infer, or that he was truly the subject of true revelations. The latter supposition, if admitted, will solve all the difficulties; but if we adopt the former, it will be obviously a fair question, whether a man could remain for a long course of years day and night in a state of monomania, fancying himself in converse with spirits and angels, which were all the time the mere phantoms of his own brain, and yet in his intercourse with the world, at home and abroad, and in a wide correspondence with his friends, betray no palpable symptoms of mental aberration. Read his biography—read the Eulogy of Sandel—the testimony of Hartley, Springer, Colin, and others who were honored with his acquaintance, and I will venture to say that you will find nothing from either of these sources, other than the claim itself to spiritual insight, to warrant the idea of anything in his speech or demeanor indicative of insanity. Yet I ask whether it be in the range of probability, that a mind like that of Swedenborg could pass, by a transition totally unperceived by all around him, from the most perfect soundness to a confirmed dementation? Would not the eclipse of such a luminary in the firmament of science be widely noted, chronicled, and deplored? That inuendos of a mind diseased were here and there scattered abroad by certain of the Swedish clergy who were opposed to his doctrines, does not vacate the evidence of the general fact that he was uniformly regarded by all his most intimate friends—mainly men of name and distinction in the realm—as a man of sane and sober mind, although his addiction to abstruse speculations was well known.\*

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\* "As Swedenborg in his youth had no thought of the employment of his coming life, it may be easily believed that he was not only a learned man and a gentleman after the manner of the times, but a man so distinguished for wisdom as to be celebrated throughout Europe, and also possessed a propriety of manners that rendered him everywhere an honored and acceptable companion. Thus he continued to old age, serene, cheerful and agreeable, with a countenance always illuminated by the light of his un-

I must then be allowed to think, that there is a problem here which deserves far more attention than you have given it. The hypothesis proposed is encumbered with real difficulties of *fact* which have been strangely overlooked, not by yourself only, but by many others who have adopted your view of Swedenborg's case. If his Relations are the product of insanity, we wish to know more about the laws of insanity, and especially how far a man can be under its influence all the time for thirty years, and yet succeed in hiding it from his most intimate friends.

But you proceed to furnish your readers with a portion of the evidence that Swedenborg's visions have manifestly the quality, texture, and dress of what often occurs in dreaming and insanity. As a proof that these visions, upon close inspection, resolve themselves into "such stuff as dreams are made of," you adduce one of the memorable Relations setting forth "the lot of those after death who have confirmed themselves in *faith alone unto justification*," adding the remark, that this is "a point which he looked upon with the utmost dislike, and which it was the object of many of his revelations to refute;" as to which I would observe, it would be more correct to say—"which it was the object of many of his *arguments* to refute," for as to having himself any *object* in his revelations, such as might naturally be supposed to control their form or scope—any conscious design or ability of his own to apply them to a particular purpose—we do not by any means allow the supposition. Whatever *object* there was in these revelations, it was the object of Him who granted them, and not of him who received them. What should we think of the intimation, that Daniel or John had a special *object* to accomplish by their revelations? If you had said it was the object of Swedenborg's revelations to *expose* the falsities of the tenet of *justification by faith alone*, I should have no objection to the language, but that would have been the Lord's object, and not his.

But to the vision itself. And here I am forced at the outset to confess to a peculiar difficulty in treating the matter from not knowing precisely the point of view in which you object to this vision. I am obliged, therefore, to suppose either,

(1.) That you deny the main position which the vision seems designed to establish, or at least to imply, viz. the falsity of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and consequently that such is the lot, in the other life, of those who have held the doctrine on earth. Or,

(2.) That whether Swedenborg's view of the doctrine be theologically true or false, you still deem it incredible that the state described, can be such as he represents it. Or,

(3.) That, conceding the truth to be intrinsically what he affirms, both as to the doctrine and the state, you do not believe he was enabled to see it by a spiritual vision.

Upon one or the other of these bases I think your objections must rest. I will

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common genius. How he was looked upon in foreign lands I do not know; but in Stockholm, even those who could not read his writings were always pleased to meet him in company, and paid respectful attention to whatever he said."—*Robsam's Memoire, Hobart's Life of Swedenborg*, p. 220.

"He spoke very deliberately, and it was a great pleasure to sit with him at table. As soon as he began to speak all conversation ceased, and the slowness of his delivery served to increase the curiosity of the listeners."—*Id.* p. 212.

advert to them in order. As to the first, it is plain that it amounts to a purely theological question, viz. what is the true Scripture doctrine of justification, and this is a question to be decided upon its own merits independent of all visions, whether of Swedenborg or any one else. You are required to meet him on this ground simply as a theologian. But this you have declined to do. You have not seen fit to advance the shadow of an argument in refutation of his teachings, but have evidently *assumed* that they are false and heretical of course, because at variance with the accredited doctrine of the creeds esteemed evangelical and orthodox. This therefore leaves me nothing to say, unless I choose to launch out into a broad discussion of the subject of *justification*, without any distinct propositions to guide the course of argument; for I have long since learned that there are no formulas of belief on any point among Protestant sects by the exact phraseology of which, as written in their creeds, their advocates feel themselves bound to abide. Every one puts his own construction upon them, and deems himself called to defend only his own personal belief. I can only say, therefore, that whenever you shall see fit to state your own views on the subject, or your own definite objections to Swedenborg's views, I shall be happy to enter into the discussion. It is a topic which the receivers of his system have no desire to evade.

As this, then, cannot justly be regarded as the ground of a valid objection against the vision in debate, inasmuch as it is a pure question of theology to be determined independent of all visions, I come to the second hypothesis, which supposes that whether his view of justification be theologically true or false, yet we have no sufficient reasons for believing that his Relations on this head describe a veritable state of things among spirits in the other life. This doubtless sets before us the true point at issue, and it will be well to look somewhat minutely at the different items of the description as they are numbered and arranged by Swedenborg himself.

"1. When they are dead, and revive as to their spirit, which commonly happens on the third day after the heart has ceased to beat, they appear to themselves in a body like that which they had before in the world, so that they know no otherwise than that they are living in the former world; yet they are not in a material body, but in a spiritual body, this appearing to their senses, which are also spiritual, as if it was material, although it is not so."—p. 64.

This is his uniform teaching as to the state of men immediately after death, and I should be gratified to know in what respects, and for what reasons, you conceive the fact to be otherwise. There is certainly something which survives the body, and goes into the spiritual world at death. This you call *the man*—the *essential person* who is said to die—for you say expressly in your work that you believe "the mind or spirit is essentially *the man*—that he continues to exist after the death of the body, a real and true man, in the full possession of the power of perceiving and knowing, of loving and hating, enjoying and suffering—and that he has all his mental powers and faculties, as a rational and moral being, in a higher degree of activity and perfection than before."—(p. 116.) If then *the man* thus exists after death as "a real and true man," he must exist as a *substance*, and if so, in a *form*, for I will venture to say that you cannot conceive anything more impossible than that a *substance* can exist without a form.\* I do not say that this

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\* "It is known, in the learned world, that essence without form, and form without essence, is not anything; for essence has no quality except from form, nor is form any

is instantaneously perceived, but I am confident the experiment will satisfy any one of its truth. *Nothing* alone is without form. Now if a man passes into the other world in a *form*, what shall we suppose that form to be? Even if we allow some contingency in the case, are not the *chances* for its being in the human form as great as those for its being in any other? Is there not something too in the fact, that we instinctively think of our departed friends and children as retaining in heaven the form which they wore on earth? Is this a mere prejudice resting on no adequate basis? Is it not rather the effect of a *general influx* of truth into the minds of men? But let us essay to advance a little closer to the core of the question. It is certain that the intellectual and voluntary principle in man does not act upon the grosser organism of the body but through a medium, which may perhaps be most properly termed the *psychical element*, or that principle which is the grand agent in *sensation* and which has peculiar relation to the *nervous economy*. This principle lives in and pervades the entire crasser structure of the body, and to this I think Swedenborg alludes under the denomination "spirit," which in this connection is doubtless the *spiritual body*, in the following passage; "As to what concerns the spirit of man, that also is created from finite things. What is the spirit of man, but a receptacle of the life of the mind? The finite things from which that is, are the spiritual substances which are in the spiritual world, and are also brought together in our earth, and therein concealed."—(*T. C. R.* 470.) These spiritual or psychical substances pervading the body are, according to him, so closely related to the inner and essential man, that they go with him into the other world, forming the body which he then inhabits, and of which Swedenborg thus speaks;

"Man rises again immediately after death, and then appears to himself in the body altogether as in the world, with such a face, with such members, arms, hands, feet, breast, belly, loins; yea also when he sees himself and touches himself, he says that he is a man in the world: nevertheless it is not his external, which he carried about in the world, that he sees and touches, but it is the internal, which constitutes that very human which lives, and which had an external about itself or out of the single things of itself, whereby it could be in the world, and act suitably there and perform its functions; the earthly corporeal is no longer of any use to it, it being in another world where are other functions, and other powers and abilities, to which its body, such as it has there, is adapted: this body it sees with its eyes, not those which it had in the world, but those which it has there, which are the eyes of its internal man, and out of which through the eyes of the body it had before seen worldly and terrestrial things: it also feels it with the touch, not with the hands or sense of touch which it enjoyed in the world, but with the hands and sense of touch which it there enjoys, which is that from which its sense of touch in the world existed: every sense also is there more exquisite and more perfect, because it is the sense of the internal of man set loose from the external, for the internal is in a more perfect state, inasmuch as it gives to the external the power of sensation, but when it acts into the external, as in the world, then the sensation is rendered dull and obscure;

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subsisting entity, except from essence; consequently, there is not any predication concerning either when separated from the other."—*T. C. R.* 367.

\* "The soul is a human form, from which nothing at all can be taken away, and to which nothing at all can be added; and it is the inmost form of all the forms of the body; and because the forms which are without receive from the inmost both essence and form, therefore you are, as you appear to yourselves and to us, souls. In a word the soul is the man himself, because it is the inmost man; wherefore its form is fully and perfectly the human form; nevertheless it is not life, but it is the proximate receptacle of life from God, and thus the habitation of God."—*T. C. R.* 697.

moreover it is the internal which is sensible of the internal, and the external which is sensible of the external ; hence it is that men after death see each other, and are in society together according to the interiors ; that I might be certain as to these things, it has also been given me to touch spirits themselves, and to speak frequently with them on this subject.”—A. C. 5078.

Now this body, Swedenborg teaches, man takes with him into the other life *from the natural body*. It was in it while he lived, and it is eliminated out of it when he dies. You may indeed ask the evidence of all this, and I will ask the evidence on which you believe anything *contrary to it*. I maintain that it is the nearest approximation which the human mind can make to a rational conception of the subject and agrees better with the ascertained facts of our psychological nature. It is, on this ground, quite reasonable to suppose that the separation of the psychical from the corporeal element should be somewhat slow and gradual, and the space of three days may, as a general fact, be no less than the time requisite for the complete dislodgment. The phenomena of suspended animation, in cases of drowning, strangling, &c. clearly prove that life is often by no means wholly extinct, even when all outward signs of it have disappeared. Nor, if this view be admitted, am I able to see why it should not be, to the emancipated spirit, the most natural of all impressions, that it is still in possession of a body. It has still a vehicle which serves it as a medium of action. Though it has thrown off an outer garment, it still retains an inner. Though “unclothed” of its grosser covering, it is yet “clothed upon” of its finer and more ethereal. Why should it not be, to the spirit’s consciousness, as if it still abode in its earthly tabernacle ? What else, at first, can it think ? How else can it feel ? Where then lies the valid objection against the first item of the description ? I proceed to the second.

“2. After some days they see that they are in a world where there are various societies instituted, which world is called the world of spirits, and is intermediate between heaven and hell. All the societies, which are innumerable, are wonderfully arranged according to natural affections ; the societies arranged according to good natural affections communicate with heaven, and the societies arranged according to evil affections, communicate with hell.”—p. 65.

The intimation of *social arrangements* in the world of spirits contains in it, I think, nothing abhorrent to our best ideas of the state of things awaiting a being like man, nor is it at all inconsistent with what you have professed as your own belief. “We have believed that the spirits of men in another world, even before the resurrection of the body, are not only capable of intercourse with the infinite Spirit, but of communicating their thoughts and feelings to one another, and that far more perfectly than was ever done by means of bodily organs in the present life.” (p. 116). If there is intercourse in that world, there is doubtless society, and from society to *societies* the ideal transition is by no means violent. Nor can it be said that there is anything incredible in these societies being arranged according to the natural affections of those who compose them, or that those societies which are governed by good affections should communicate with heaven and those of an opposite character with hell. That this however should be “an intermediate world between heaven and hell,” you may have more difficulty in apprehending. Upon this I cannot at present expatiate, but if you will refer to Swedenborg’s chapter on this subject in his treatise on “Heaven and Hell” and give due weight to the fact that men usually die possessed of mixed characters, and



to the violence of the supposition that the simple act of dying should effect a miraculous separation of the elements of moral character, while yet all must *eventually* be fixed in a state of happiness or misery, I imagine you will come to the conclusion that this point is intrinsically no more staggering than either of the others.

"3. The novitiate spirit—is introduced into various societies, both good and evil, and examination is made whether he is affected by truths, and in what manner; and whether, and in what manner, he is affected by fables."—p. 65.

This is merely the first step of the process by which every one is gradually *arranged* into his appropriate society. This is done by applying a moral touchstone to the character.

"4. If he is affected by truths, he is withdrawn from evil societies, and introduced into good societies, and also into various ones, until he comes into a society corresponding with his own natural affection, where he enjoys the good corresponding with that affection; and this until he has put off his natural affection and has put on a spiritual affection, and then he is elevated into heaven; but this takes place with those who in the world have lived a life of charity."†—p. 65.

This completes the process. His association is according to his predominant spiritual sympathies. No force is put forth to control his destiny. Everything is so ordered as to preserve his liberty of choice intact, and he gravitates freely to his proper centre. Is there anything in this at which the reason of a saint can revolt?

"5. But they who have confirmed themselves in doctrine and life in faith alone unto justification, by reason of their not being affected by truths, but by fables, and because they have rejected the goods of charity—are withdrawn from good societies, and introduced into evil societies, and also into various ones, until they come into the society which corresponds to the concupiscences of their love."†—p. 65.

The only question here to be raised is as to the fact of confirmation in doctrine and life in faith alone necessarily supposing a rejection of the goods of charity and a rooting of the affection of fables instead of truths. If such is the real internal character accompanying this belief, then it is easy to see that the

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\* I find upon recurrence to the volume from which this is taken that a clause is omitted for which I am unable to account. It there reads thus;—"The novitiate spirit, *or the spiritual man*, is conducted, &c." So slight an addition could not materially have prolonged the extract, and thus encumbered the page, so that I am forced to ask whether there were not some design in the suppression not exactly worthy of a fair spirit of controversy.

† Here again I find a clause suppressed which I am compelled to say has a suspicious air. The whole sentence in the A. R. reads thus;—"But this takes place with those who in the world have lived a life of charity, *and thus also a life of faith, which consists in believing in the Lord, and shunning evils as sins.*" Now if the addition of this clause does not affect the tenor of the whole paragraph, I can see no reason for not inserting it. If it does, a very serious question arises as to the motives of the omission. I confess it has vastly the appearance, of a desire to keep out of view Swedenborg's asserted connection between faith and charity, that is, faith and life.

‡ Again another unaccountable suppression. Why could we not have had the sentence complete;—"And because they have rejected the goods of charity, *which are good works, from the means of salvation*, are withdrawn, &c." So also at the close of the extract—"for he who loves fables, cannot but love evils." Considering the brevity of these clauses the inference seems inevitable, that they convey a shade of meaning which would look too much in favor of the sentiments expressed to allow of their coming before the reader. If, however, any other motive can be assigned, I shall be happy to accept the explanation. ♣

withdrawment from good societies and the introduction to evil, follows as a matter of course. But Swedenborg shows that it is the very essence of this doctrine, in its practical working, to found the hope of acceptance and salvation, not upon an inward *subjective* principle of good, but upon an outward *objective* righteousness wrought by Christ, received by faith, and accounted to the believer by imputation. This view of the nature of justification he says does not necessarily militate with a man's remaining in his dominant worldly love, and consequently must leave him, in the other life, liable to "come into that society which corresponds to the concupiscences of his love." All this you may deny as a matter of theology, but you cannot deny it as a vision, unless you first show it to be dogmatically false. How much of truth and sound reasoning you may see in what follows, I know not; but I think it will be much easier to dissent from it than to disprove it.

"From what has been adduced let it be well considered, whether to have faith be anything else than to live according to it; and whether to live according to it, be not only to know and to think, but also to will and to do; for faith is not in man whilst it is only in his knowledge and thought, but when it is also in his will and in his actions. Faith in man is faith of the life, but faith not yet in man is faith of the memory and of the thought thence derived. By faith of the life is understood believing in God, but to believe those things which are from God, and not to believe in God, is mere historical faith, which is not saving. Who that is a true priest and good pastor, does not desire that men may live well? and who does not know that the faith of knowledges, obtained from hearsay, is not the faith of the life, but historical faith? Faith of the life is the faith of charity, for charity is life. But although the case is thus clear, yet I foresee, that they who have confirmed themselves in the doctrine of faith alone and justification thereby, will not recede from it by reason of their connecting falsities with truths; for they teach truths when they teach from the Word, but they teach falsities when they teach from doctrine; and hence they confound those things, by saying, that the fruits of faith are the good of life, and that these follow from faith, and yet that the goods of life contribute nothing to salvation, but faith alone. Thus do they conjoin and separate; and when they conjoin they teach truths, but only before the people, who do not know that they so invert, and say these things from necessity, in order that their doctrine may cohere with the Word; but when they separate, they teach falsities, for they say that faith saves, and not the goods of charity which are works, in this case not knowing that charity and faith act as one, and that charity consists in acting well and faith in believing well, and that to believe well without acting well is impossible; thus that there can be no faith without charity, and that charity is the *esse* of faith and its soul, hence that faith alone is faith without a soul, and thus a dead faith; and inasmuch as such faith is not faith, hence justification thereby is a mere non-entity."—A. E. 250.

The drift of this extract it will be important to bear in mind in order to a just judgment of what follows.

"6. But as in the world they had feigned good affections in externals, although in their internals there was nothing but evil affections—they are at first kept by turns in externals; and they who in the world presided over companies of men, are here and there set over societies in the world of spirits, in general or in part according to the—importance of the offices they had formerly exercised; but as they neither love truth nor justice,—therefore after some days they are dismissed. I have seen such removed from one society to another, and some administration given them in each, but only to be as quickly—dismissed."—p. 66.

\* Is it possible that mere economy of space could have dictated the exclusion of the words and phrases which I have put in Italics;—"are set over societies in the world of spirits, in general or in part according to *the extent and importance of the offices, &c.*" "But as they neither love truth nor justice, *nor are capable of being illuminated so as to*

What is here affirmed follows naturally, and I may say necessarily, from what precedes as to the internal state of those who are simply in faith without being at the same time in charity. What is said of their exercising temporary dominion flows from the general principle elsewhere asserted and largely dwelt upon, that a man's ruling love follows him to the other life, and that it then comes into corresponding manifestations, just as the tenant in the madhouse holds on in the dream of royalty, when his kingdom is commensurate with the walls of his cell, and he wields a straw for his sceptre.

"7. After frequent dismissals,—they are next led away into a desert, where there are cottages, into which they enter, and work of some kind is given them—and as they do it, they receive food, and if they do not do it, they are hungry—so that at length necessity compels them. Food there is similar to the food in this world, but it is from a spiritual origin, and is given from heaven—to all according to the uses they perform; to the idle nothing is given, because they are useless."—p. 66.

"8. After a time they loathe work, and then they go out of the cottages; and if they have been priests, they have an inclination to build; and there appear then immediately heaps of hewn stones, bricks, rafters, and boards, also heaps of reeds and bulrushes, clay, lime, and bitumen, which, when they see, the lust of building is kindled, and they begin to construct a house, taking now a stone, and then wood, now a reed, and then clay, and placing them irregularly, one upon another, but in order as it seems to themselves; but what they build by day falls down by night; and the next day they gather materials from among the rubbish, and build again, and this they continue to do, until they are tired of building. From this cause it is, they collect together fables to confirm salvation by faith alone, and such fables cannot serve to build up a church in any other manner."—p. 66.

The fundamental doctrine of correspondences is essential to the right understanding of what is here said of the occupation of the spirits described in the other life. From the very fact that they are spirits in a spiritual world, the objects and the scenery around must be of the same nature. But these visual sceneries will be necessarily in accordance with the dominant states of life growing out of the affections, thoughts, interests, and pursuits, which went to form those states while they lived on earth. If they were then in reality busied in building up a fallacious system of doctrine, as that of faith alone undoubtedly is, nothing could more strikingly represent the internal prompting by which they were actuated than the spiritual *correspondence* here set before us. They continue to do in the other world what they mainly did in this, allowing for the necessary difference of condition in a natural and a spiritual sphere of existence. And how, I ask, could the pertinency of Paul's illustration be more forcibly displayed than by the very scenery here depicted? "If any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, *wood, hay, stubble*; every man's work shall be made manifest." Here certainly are very similar materials employed in a very similar kind of building, and what is there irrational or absurd in supposing that by the laws of mental action in the other world—and this is the *only* action that can there have place—the very representative phenomena here set forth

*know what truth and justice are in themselves, therefore, &c."* "But only to be as quickly and rapidly dismissed." Similar omissions occur in the remaining extracts, and though they are in all cases indicated by a dash, they would scarcely be suspected by the ordinary reader. Still I do not regard them, for the most part, as materially affecting the sense of the context, nor do I feel at liberty to consider them as beyond the reach of a satisfactory explanation. I only speak of them as singular.

shall occur? I of course admit that the fact of the alleged phenomena in regard to the particular class of spirits alluded to, depends upon the truth of the teachings respecting the doctrine in question, and this is to be judged of entirely independent of all visionary representation. You cannot justly feel yourself at liberty to impugn the tenet on the ground of the vision, nor do I see that you can deny that if the tenet is true, the vision may be real. At any rate, this is to be determined by the soundness or sophistry of the radical principles on which this whole matter of representative scenery in the other life rests. In the determination of this question the deepest laws of our psychological being are involved. We have to meet face to face the problem of spiritual perception. Do spirits behold objects in the spiritual world? If so, what are they? Material things are excluded in the very nature of the case. Can you conceive that those objects shall be any other than spiritual, and if so, must they not be mental creations? But will not mental creations be shaped and moulded by the interior states of the minds from which they flow? And is not this *correspondence*?\* And is not the law of *correspondence* the central theme of Swedenborg's disclosures? How then can it be imagined for a moment, that a system developing this magnificent law is to be turned from with a smile of mingled pity and contempt as the dream of a mystic? What approach to justice is to be recognized in the attempt to deal with the visions, while no regard is had to the philosophical basis on which they are built?

And may I now be permitted to ask whether your exhibition of this particular feature of the Relations can justly be deemed a valid impeachment of its credibility? You have avowed the purpose of looking directly at the *nature* of the alleged communications. Do you find anything in the *nature* of the present which is inconsistent with the fundamental law of the whole, and do you find anything in that law inconsistent with the deductions of reason or the informations of holy writ?

The remarks which I have ventured to offer on the vision now considered apply, in their general scope, to all the rest. In presenting these visions to your readers you have avoided the least reference to the laws of psychology on which they are professedly founded. Your exhibit of the details is, therefore, at once partial and distorted. The reader is furnished with no clew to guide him to the fundamental law—with no hints that can operate to prevent his regarding them as the height of absurdity and madness. And so far as the relations are intended to set forth the falsities of certain doctrines generally received in the Christian church, whether that of the Trinity, Justification, Atonement, or Regeneration, you do not condescend to argue these points on their own merits, but taking for granted the truth of the prevalent constructions, you hold up the visions in an odious light, because their scope seems to contravene the purport of

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\* This is strikingly illustrated in the explanation of Ex. xxii. 1, "If in digging a thief be caught," &c. which signifies, he says, in the internal sense, the taking away of good and truth. That digging through a house denotes to take away the good of another in secret, derives its origin from representations in another life. In that life, when the angels are discoursing concerning the false destroying the good in secret, it is represented below, where the angelic discourse is exhibited to the sight, by the digging through a wall, and on the other hand, when the angelic discourse is concerning truth acceding to good conjoining itself to it, it is represented by an open door, through which there is entrance."—A. C. 9126. This throws additional light upon what we have previously said of the philosophy of the spiritual sense.

the popular creeds; whereas if the doctrinal positions are sound, the visions assume at once an entirely new phasis. They can then be met only on the third ground above assumed, viz. that the fact of their being enjoyed at all is intrinsically incredible—a point which now comes to be considered, as the second has been already replied to in what I have said above.

The paramount claim asserted in behalf of Swedenborg is that of the opening of his spiritual senses, in consequence of which he was favored with the privilege of converse with the spiritual world, and made supernaturally cognizant of its facts, phenomena, and laws. The credibility of such a state must first be tried by the test of its possibility. On this point, however, I cannot deem it needful to enlarge, as I do not know that a question has ever been raised upon it. It is, I believe, by universal consent admitted, that such a translation of the spirit as Swedenborg alleges of himself is intrinsically possible. At any rate, it cannot well be denied by those who concede the truth of the prophetic ecstasy, or the occasional rapture of the souls of holy men whose earthly experience, particularly upon the death-beds, has antedated celestial joys. Is there anything, for instance, in the statement that follows to which a believer in the Bible can reasonably object as intrinsically incredible or absurd?

“When man is in this state (in the spirit), the things which exist in the spiritual world appear to him as clearly as the objects in the natural world; but the objects then seen by him, because they are from a spiritual origin, are in themselves spiritual, and such things as are of celestial wisdom are presented to him as it were in natural images. Thus divine things are presented in visible forms before the eyes of spirits and angels; hence it is that all things which are seen in heaven, are representatives and significatives, as were also the things seen by John, which are treated of in the Apocalypse. Whilst man is in the body he does not see the things that are in heaven, unless the sight of his spirit is opened but when this sight is opened, he sees them; thus John saw the things which are described in the Apocalypse, and in like manner also the prophets saw, who are therefore called *Seers*, and are said to have had their *eyes opened*; thus also angels were seen in ancient times, and thus also the Lord was seen by the disciples after his resurrection. This sight is the sight of the spiritual man; and because in such case all things seen appear representatively, therefore it was opened in John. He who does not know anything of this sight, believes that angels, when they were seen by men, assumed a human form, and that when they vanished out of sight, they laid it aside; this, however, was not the case, but angels then appeared in their own form, which is the human form, not before the sight of the bodily eyes, but before the sight of the spirit, which sight was then opened: this is evident from the Lord being seen by the disciples after his resurrection, when he himself showed them that he was a man in a perfect human form; and nevertheless he became invisible; for when they saw him, the eyes of their spirits were opened, but when he became invisible they were closed. That man has such a sight, is manifest to me from much experience, for all the things which I have seen in the heavens were seen by that sight, and on those occasions I was in a like state of wakefulness as when they were not seen; but that sight is seldom opened to any one by the Lord at this day, and that for many reasons.”—*A. E.* 53.

This certainly shows the fact of the *possibility* of such a state as Swedenborg asserts of himself, and this fact I regard as of immense importance in reference to his claim. I cannot but think a great advance is made towards establishing that claim when the conviction is firmly seated in the mind, that his assumption on this score *may possibly have been true*. It is gratifying to be able to hold this position unchallenged, that what is intrinsically possible in any case *may have been*

true in his case. This, however, is a question of evidence. The probability of the truth of his claim has to be pronounced upon, and the judgment formed will inevitably be governed by an intelligent estimate of the *reasons* which may be urged in its support, and of the *kind of testimony* by which it shall be sustained. On the first head, or that of the *reasons*, our grand appeal is to the asserted fact of the Lord's Second Coming at the time and in the manner which Swedenborg maintains. As this lies at the foundation of the whole matter, we are warranted to demand that this question shall first of all be considered, and the exegetical error, if it be an error, which we have embraced, be pointed out. It is to be shown also that the asserted relation between the Second Advent and the ushering in of that grand final dispensation termed the *New Jerusalem*, and announced in the closing chapters of the Apocalypse, is a fallacy. Every other professed refutation of Swedenborg's scheme which I have seen is as barren of argument on this head as your own. They seem determined to assault the fabric of the disclosures at every point but the right one. Not the slightest impression, however, can ever be made on the faith of Swedenborg's advocates, except by an exposure of the falsity of their views on this cardinal tenet of the Lord's Second Coming. The very attempt at such an exposure is still *in futuro*. The prevailing Church seems to have agreed, by common consent, to waive every discussion which involves the question of *eschatology*, or the *doctrine of the consummation*. My own belief is that they dare not touch it, from a certain prophetic intuition, that as they do not know precisely what the Scriptures mean on this head, the displacement of a single stone would be followed by the subversion of the whole theological edifice which ages have conspired to build and which they are virtually pledged to uphold. If by any possibility it should appear, that the Second Advent has already taken place, or is now in the course of accomplishment, what becomes of the General Judgment, the Resurrection, and the End of the World, all which, in the established belief, are inseparably linked with the Advent? They must necessarily "shoot madly from their spheres," and the scheme will be seen to break up like the dissolving of a constellation in the heavens, the stars bidding farewell to each other. If, however, any other reason can be assigned for the stern refusal to consider this feature of our system, I shall readily withdraw my imputation. As the subject lies before our own minds, we see nothing more reasonable or probable, than that the occurrence of such a stupendous event as the Second Advent of the Lord should be attended with the in-flowing into the human mind of new light and truth from heaven relative to the spiritual world—to heaven and hell—and to the nature and destiny of the human soul. The grand object of that Advent we conceive to be, to pour a flood of light upon the connection between the inner and the outer world; to reinstate regenerate man in the lost prerogatives of his creation; and we see no mode of accomplishing this so analogous to the ordinary procedures of the Divine Wisdom, as to select and endow an individual for the purpose, and make him the depository of the revelation for the benefit of his fellow-men. In this then we perceive an abundant fulness of *reasons* to warrant the claim which he makes.

And then as to the *kind of evidence* by which such an illumination is to be authenticated, we know not what to ask for which we do not find. We cannot rely upon miracles, for your own reasoning shows that whatever might be the testimony of their truth, they would not be believed to be miracles, but would

be explained away by some plausible solution on the score of juggling, legerdemain, or occult arts. After citing the facts mentioned by Kant in proof of Swedenborg's intercourse with the spiritual world, and his supernatural knowledge, you say;—"I shall not undertake to search out the hidden causes of these marvellous events. The means of doing this are not in my power. But what then? We have heard stories of fortune tellers, jugglers, and dreamers, and persons magnetized, quite as unaccountable and astounding as these. And who can account for some of the feats of insanity?" Again you say, that you would not undertake to disprove the authenticity of the stories related of Swedenborg, and why? Because, forsooth, in all ages wizards and witches have said and done things seemingly preternatural and very astonishing. Now as a somewhat curious specimen of the different manner in which the same things will strike different minds, I adduce a short extract from a very elaborate article on Swedenborg in the Southern Quarterly Review (Oct. 1846). After citing in full the relations to which you allude, the writer adds;—"It would be easy to multiply cases equally remarkable—but these will suffice. Such testimony would be admitted, be respected, and obtain confidence in any court in Christendom. Of what does it consist? Not of the solitary declaration of a single individual, whose motives might be suspected, but of a combination of concurring testimonies from different quarters and different persons, of the highest character, so that if there is any force in human testimony at all, we have just as much authority for believing that Swedenborg had intercourse with the spiritual world, as we have for believing that Victoria is the present reigning Queen of Great Britain."

I ask then, my dear sir, if it is not clear, that were the evidence of these alleged facts increased an hundred fold, they would still be powerless to work, in your mind, a conviction of their supernatural character? The preconceived idea that the age of miraculous manifestations is past, is doubtless so rooted and grounded within you, that all testimony to the contrary would be unavailing, and you would consider it to be your *duty* to reject it, as you could scarcely conceive its admission in any other light than as derogatory to the fulness and sufficiency of the Scriptural revelation. I do not speak of this as by any means a peculiarity of your own mind above that of other men. It is merely the assertion of a general fact, arising from the operation of general causes, and producing with us an overwhelming conviction, that the evidence of miracles in support of such revelations as Swedenborg has given, would be totally inapposite. We see therefore the superlative wisdom evinced in his disclaimer of miracles as the guaranty of his truth. He refers directly to the internal evidence of what he professes to make known, both in the department of doctrine and disclosure. The force of this evidence, however, will make itself felt more in regard to the *principles* than to the *details* of the system. As the asserted phenomena of the other life cannot be verified by experience in the present world, we can only judge of them by their accordance with what we are able to ascertain of the deeper psychological laws of our being, and by their moral tendencies. If there is nothing in these respects inconsistent with our soundest inductions; if, on the other hand, they are seen to build themselves upon a truly philosophical basis, and the results announced flow legitimately from the principles assumed, why should they not be received as embodying the actual verities of the world

unseen? For ourselves, we are constrained unanimously to say, that the disclosures in question do abide the most rigid ordeal to which we have been able to submit them. From the most thorough and careful investigation of which we are capable, we have attained to an unwavering assurance in our own minds that Swedenborg's developments of the *state* of spirits must be true, because they are founded on a doctrine of the *nature* of spirits which we believe to be impregnably sound. If this evidence is not decisive with others, our only solution is, that they have not weighed the data as we have; and we feel at liberty to draw this inference, inasmuch as our opponents do not meet us in argument on the soundness of the data, but on the absurdity of the conclusion. They cannot see how it is possible that such representations as they find in Swedenborg's visions of the scenes of the other life should be true. But do they *know* that they are not true? If so, it can only be by knowing that the laws of mind, of which they are the result, are not what Swedenborg and all his adherents affirm them to be. If they know this, why do they not make known their knowledge? Why not expose the fallacy of our *fundamental principles*, instead of holding up to ridicule and odium what may be termed the *details* of the revelations? These principles are, that man lives after the death of the body "a real and true man," as you have yourself expressed it—that as the body is necessarily the elaboration of the soul, or *essential principle*, of the man, just as the body of a tree is the product of its soul or *organizing life*, so the spiritual man is of the same form with the natural or corporeal man—that in the other life he has perceptive and sensitive powers as really as he has here—consequently that he has there appropriate objects of perception and sensation—that still these objects, as they cannot be material, must be spiritual, and if spiritual, mental, that is to say, they must be an exterior objective development of all those thoughts, feelings, and affections, which are stored up in the minds of spirits, and which are thus adumbrated in corresponding forms of scenery, whether beautiful and splendid, or hideous and revolting. This is Swedenborg's view of the other life, and the question is, whether it is psychologically true or false? If the fact be not thus, how is it? What theory do you propose of the phenomena of the spirit-world? You cannot pronounce it false, except from its discrepancy with some other view which you believe to be true, or more true. What is this? I have the greatest curiosity to know what is the counter-statement which you have to offer on this head. Have you any? I suspect not; and the only reply which I anticipate is, that we neither know, nor can know, anything on the subject—that it is something wisely reserved, as a *terra incognita*, from human intelligence—and that the light of that world alone can reveal its verities. This, I am satisfied, is all that can be said by way of denial and offset to Swedenborg's declarations. And yet is this validly urged? The knowledge is surely possible, if God sees fit to grant it. It was possible to Swedenborg, provided Infinite Wisdom was pleased to make him a recipient of it. It is possible to us, if it was possible for Swedenborg to impart it, and without the design of its being imparted to us, we cannot well conceive of its being imparted to him. We are therefore perfectly convinced ourselves that the above opinion is unfounded; but we cannot convince others. He that is wise must here be wise for himself. We can, however, enter very fully into the state of mind which judges of our position. We can easily perceive that it is a secret assurance that we do not know what we are equally assured we do



know. The knowledge of our opponents pronounces an internal judgment on our non-knowledge. That is to say, they profess to know that we *cannot* know certain things which they do not know themselves—their *nescience* being made to nullify our *science*. This renders the case very similar to that in which one man has an inward conviction that another cannot possibly have the same evidence of the truth of certain doctrines that *he* has of their falsity, and who consequently feels constrained to doubt of the other's moral state. But I have before ventured to say, that this is an extremely fallacious ground of judgment, inasmuch as no merely *intellectual form* of belief is an infallible criterion of *moral state*; for the Divine Good, the only principle of eternal life, may flow more freely into the mental falsities of one man than into the truths of another. "The truths of faith," says Swedenborg, "are vessels receptive of good, and they receive good in proportion as man recedes from evil; for good is continually flowing in from the Lord, but it is the evil of life which hinders it being received in the truths which are with man, in his memory or science; hence as far as man recedes from evil, so far good enters and applies itself into his truths; then the truth of faith becomes with him the good of faith. Man indeed may know truth, and also make confession thereof from some worldly motive, yea, and even be persuaded that it is truth, but still this truth does not live in him so long as he is in the life of evil; for such a man is like a tree on which are leaves and no fruit, and that truth is like light in which is no heat, as is the case in winter, when nothing grows; but when heat is in it, then it is like light in the time of spring, when all things begin to vegetate." Again, "That truths, which are in themselves truths, with one person are more true, with another less true, with some altogether untrue, yea false, may appear from almost all those things which in themselves are true, for they vary with the man with whom they are, according to his affections." From this it appears that but little is to be made of the most confident style of predication as to points of mere *doctrinal* import, when their relation to *life* is overlooked.

I do not assume the entire parallelism of the two cases, but I hesitate not to affirm that it is as incompetent for you to sit in judgment upon our intellectual state, in view of the assent we yield to Swedenborg's disclosures, as it is to pronounce upon our moral state in view of the faith we repose in his doctrines. We say that we are assured of their truth because we are assured of the truth of the principles on which they rest, and these principles appeal to our intuitions and inductions. That they do not command the same assent with you, is no adequate evidence that the process of conviction in our minds is fallacious and sophistical. There are a thousand hidden causes that mould the form and govern the law of mental operations on a subject like the present, and one mind cannot, on good grounds, ignore the results which another reaches, if its inquiries have been conducted with intelligence, caution and candor, and even of this it must be its own judge. Allow me then to say, in fine, that inasmuch as the abstract possibility of Swedenborg's revelations is not denied—as their *actuality* is to be established, not by external, but by internal, evidence—as this evidence refers itself to the tribunal of reason and consciousness bringing to the test the *fundamental principles* involved—and as *our* reason and consciousness, acting by legitimate rules, assent to the truth of these principles—we recognize no adequate grounds for the position, that such knowledge of the facts and laws of the

spiritual world as Swedenborg professes to communicate, is, in the present life, unattainable. Our position, therefore, relative to Swedenborg's revelations of the other world is affirmative. Yours, in relation to ours, is not in reality even negative, for you do not assume that it is false, only you do not find evidence that it is true. In these circumstances it can scarcely be expected that our positive assent should be at all weakened by the force of arguments which at best can go only to produce a demur as to the confidence of belief, especially when they fall so far short of touching the groundwork of our conviction.

Having thus presented what I conceive to be the true principles on which I conceive the question of the "visions" is to be determined, I shall forego the examination of the various specific items in this department to which you allude. The remarks which hold good of one hold good of all. They come into the same category, and are to be determined by the same rules.

As to the alleged parallel to the case of Swedenborg—parallel in *kind*, though not in *degree*—which you have, with a gravity that I scarce know how to account for, brought forward from the cells of the Lunatic Asylum at Worcester, you will excuse me if I should appear somewhat summary in my disposal of it. Its introduction at all into your work strikes me as a singular procedure. Had the young man himself, in some of his ecstatic flights, taken it into his head to draw such a parallel, I should not have been so much surprised; but to find such a case seriously cited by yourself as in any manner or measure akin to that of Swedenborg, almost moves the question, whether we are not all demented together, and alike "walking in a vain show." For the benefit of those who have not seen your book I will quote a few sentences from these *illuminated* letters. The reader will then be better able to judge of the correctness of the opinion, "that there was no greater difference between the visions of the two men, than there was between their previous acquisitions and habits of mind."

"*To the Trustees of the Asylum.*

"Gentlemen:—It is with the most hearty feelings for the welfare of mankind that I take my pen again this morning. Permit me to request you to preserve carefully all of my writings. I do not write as I once did. I am every moment conscious that my pen is moved by the Holy Ghost. I know that what I write is worthy of consideration, because it is not myself as I once was that writes, but God who uses me as his instrument. And I am willing to clothe myself with those humble feelings that David had when he met Goliath.

"No mortal on earth is able to appreciate fully my views and feelings. I have been taken down to the depths of hell—I have been raised to the sublimest heights of heaven; and now I am lodged again, self-balanced, and in perfect health, on this orb, our earth, where I expect, to spend some centuries in a capacity like to that of Howard the philanthropist, only more glorious, as the coming of the Son of Man is more glorious than the coming of La Fayette, or any other event in earth's history. Cheerfully will I at any time yield my title to him who will prove himself superior to myself. Who can fail to see how the elements all over the earth are working with me in this glorious enterprize. Who is it that withholds the snow from the earth, and then gives it at the appointed time, unless it be my Father who hath determined to put the government upon my shoulders, as I am convinced from the wonderful manner he hath wrought with me, and from the unexpected ways he hath communicated knowledge to me. I am a wonder to myself; and yet so long have I been filled with wonder that I have familiarized my mind to it, and have nothing to do but to be active in my high calling. Though I write for myself, yet my testimony is true. Though I write as a man, yet I hesitate not to say, under the circumstances in which I am placed, that I feel like a God, even as Jesus did."—p. 102.

"Gentlemen :—It is my duty to visit each of the States of our Union with the least possible delay. It is your duty to further this project by giving notice in the public papers. This winter and coming spring would be a favorable time to visit the southern States. God's time is always *now*. Men are too apt to wait for useless ceremony. I have no time to spend in idle visiting among friends. Do the planets stop their revolutions while men sleep, or does water cease to flow? I ought to address large bodies of people in all our States, and then go to Europe, and leave the press to follow on in my wake, or in other people's wake, just as it pleases."—*p.* 104.

"Now read, if you please, gentlemen, the 45th Psalm, and the three or four exceedingly sublime Psalms which follow. There you will see my person spoken of very particularly, as well as the great glory of the church. If you say can this be so? Then I assure you I have trampled on hell, death, the grave, and devils, and am triumphant above principalities and powers, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—*p.* 105.

"Now, gentlemen, I propose that we name the days of the week after objects that really exist in nature, and about which there can be no dispute but that they were made by the Infinite One above us. I know of no objects more suitable to select than flowers. These being common all over the earth, their appropriateness will be readily seen.

"I hope to write you to morrow."—*p.* 108.

"Gentlemen :—Let me now mention the proposed names for the days of the week; Rose-day, Pink-day, Jessamine-day, Lilly-day, Violet-day, Tulip-day, Dahlia-day. To us these names may at first seem rather awkward, though I am sure none can fail of seeing a beauty in them. And what could be more appropriate than for the daughters of a family to go into the garden, on the first day of the week, and select a boquet of Roses of various forms and colors and set them up in the parlor as the god (if I may so speak) of that day. How much less danger there would be in worshipping a boquet of Roses, than in worshipping the Penates of the Romans. Besides, no one, it would seem, would be so void of sense as really to worship the flowers, but rather that moral perfection of character in all holy beings, to which the flowers seem to direct the attention. Thus by changing the boquet of flowers every day of the week, a family would have some new object before them, to turn their thoughts to the Almighty Ruler of worlds. The change from the Rose to the Pink, from the Pink to the Jessamine, or some other flower that could be substituted for it where the Jessamine is not to be had, would be apt to suggest different attributes of character which it would be well to employ the thoughts about. And the various colors, and the sweet blending of colors, would call to mind all that is lovely in the whole realm of nature. Nothing that I can think of would have a better tendency to keep God uppermost in the minds of the people, than such a change as I now propose, by authority from heaven.

"Let us have Rose-day for our Sabbath hereafter, to the end of time. Then there will have been three Sabbaths during the history of man. Let the Tulip represent the Jewish Sabbath. Let the Dahlia represent the Christian Sabbath. Let the Rose represent the Sabbath of Millennial glory, when David's greater Son shall take the sceptre into his own hands and rule King of nations, and re-establish *justice* and *peace* on earth. Then will the nations shout aloud for joy, and America shall bud and blossom as the rose, and our mother England will rejoice at the prosperity of her child, when she shall sit as queen of nations, holding the balance of empire in her own hands."—*p.* 109.

The above is a fair specimen of the whole. The letters are made up of the wildest rhapsodies of a frenzied intellect, seized upon and carried captive by the power of some dominant idea; and yet these disjointed ravings—these maniac ebullitions—are thought not only worthy to be named in the same century with, but even arrayed by the side of, Swedenborg's profound and philosophical developments of the nature of man and the state of spirits!—the only difference

being that one is the product of the crazed imagination of a little lunatic, and the other of a great one!

I cannot forbear to insert the summing up, *a la* Plutarch, of the grand points of the parallel, which you run between the two visionaries.

"If in any respects there is a similitude between the young man referred to and Swedenborg, it can do no harm to notice it. And however unlike to the Swedish Philosopher the American youth may, in some respects, seem to be, there are not wanting points of resemblance. Had the Swede a powerful intellect and a lively fancy? So had the American youth, though in a much lower degree. Was the Swede confident that he had a commission from God to proclaim new and important truths, which were taught him from above? So was this youth. Were the conceptions of Swedenborg's mind very vivid and various, and were they exhibited in his writings with order and coherence? So it was, in a measure, with our insane youth. Had the Swede many lofty and just and pleasing thoughts? So had the youth. Did the former frequently manifest a feeling of piety towards God, and enlarged benevolence towards mankind? So did the latter. Did the one anticipate great and glorious results from his agency? So did the other. Did Swedenborg feel sure that he had intercourse with celestial beings? Our youth was also sure of this; and had he continued for twenty years to be the subject of the same extraordinary excitement, as he was during the former part of the present year, and given himself to writing, as he did for a time; might he not have competed with the Swede in the abundance of his books, and might he not have made some approximation towards him as to their quality? I have only to add, that there are more wonderful things in the actings of the human mind, whether sane or insane, than are likely to be known in our day by Swedes, or Germans, or Americans."—*p.* 114.

To the justness of the sentiment contained in the last sentence I give my hearty suffrage. It is a key to the solving of various solutions, by which I should otherwise be sadly mystified.

The title of "the Swedish madman" hitherto applied to Charles the Twelfth, must henceforth, it would seem, be made over to Swedenborg. We have lived to see the day when his sublime spiritualities, which have moved the wonder and enchained the admiration of thousands of sound and sober minds—which have lifted the veil from nature and disclosed the *causes* of her hidden operations—which have developed the mysteries of the soul and enucleated the central core of Revelation—which have taught how Wisdom is wedded to Love, and Truth to Good, and how Life is related to both—which have brought Heaven and Hell into living conjunction with the ruling loves of man—are gravely brought into comparison with the delirious babblings of an inmate of a Lunatic Asylum! And, to add to our amazement still more, it is even intimated that the powerful intellect and vivid fancy, the order and coherence, of Swedenborg, are at least *distantly* approached by the same qualities in the Bedlamite youth! With your permission I will state another parallel equally appropriate. "Did the builders of Babel erect a lofty tower on the plains of Shinar? So did the ants construct a huge ant-hill on the pampas of South America. If there is any similitude in the two cases, it can do no harm to notice it."

I scarcely know how to deal seriously with this part of your work. To say nothing of the fact, that the very attempt to make out such an affinity as you have suggested between these cases, is a constructive charge against all New Church men of taking leave of their senses at the beck and bidding of a crack-brained fanatic, I would simply refer you to the extracts given in the preceding pages, with an appeal to your candor, whether they have the air and aspect of the ef-

fusions of a disordered mind? Have you the remotest conception of any diseased state of intellect which could possibly have originated such a train of deep, rational, and connected thought as you find embodied in these citations? If it is said that these paragraphs contain the *more favorable* specimens of his writings, I reply that hundreds and thousands of pages can be adduced from his works of similar matter, and which have only to be viewed in connection with the *philosophical principles* involved, to be divested of all appearance of absurdity and to be resolved into the oracles of a wisdom which breathes of the angelic heaven. If such sentiments be an indication of madness, then I say with Coleridge respecting our author—"O thrice happy should we be, if the learned and the teachers of the present age were gifted with a similar madness!" It cannot, I think, escape you that even supposing there are certain items in Swedenborg's disclosures which have, at first blush, the air of insanity, that some plausible mode is to be adopted of accounting for the admixture of such an immense mass of *rationality* with the reputed hallucinations. It is, I am persuaded, all in vain to pass this over with a vague reference to the unaccountable freaks of diseased mental action. It is utterly unlike anything the world has ever witnessed of this nature, and demands solution. Why shall our perpetual call for light on this head be disregarded? Why shall the intelligent receivers of Swedenborg's doctrines remain under the odium of being led by the illusions of a raving monomaniac, when they are conscious of having yielded their faith on the most legitimate evidence of truth? I have no special desire to vaunt the indications of a sound mind evinced in the course of argument which I have attempted in the present series of letters, but I trust I may venture the interrogatory, whether you have met with anything that strikes you as savoring strongly of the taint of mental malady. If not—if my reasoning, whether conclusive or not, is still consecutive and plausible, and not unworthy of a sound intellect—is there not something of a problem in the fact, that such a state of mind should consist with a full and cordial reception of what you regard as the veriest dreams and vagaries of a wrecked and ruined genius? I could fain wish that you would bring your thoughts calmly concentrated to this point—that you would propose some rational solution of a mental phenomenon which is certainly deserving of thorough investigation. You will of course understand me as referring to my own case simply as a sample of hundreds of others, far more deserving of being weighed in this connection, the subjects of which would one and all affirm, that the same reasons which prompt the judgment of Swedenborg's insanity, would compel a like verdict in regard to them. The pupils are all as mad as their master, and they would be glad to be informed when the commission *de lunatico inquirendo* is to be made out. Meantime, while this is in contemplation or preparation, I remain with sentiments of respect and friendship as sane, I trust, as sincere,

Yours, &c.  
GEO. BUSH.

## LETTER VII.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :

In the opening paragraphs of your fourth Lecture I am again met by the recurrence of the convenient but gratuitous *assumption* of prior theorizing, on the part of Swedenborg, on the prevalent doctrines of the Church, as the true clew to his visionary representations. Thus you say, "It is evident that Swedenborg's powerful and contemplative mind had, previously to 1747, perceived various errors and perversions of truths, which prevailed both in the Catholic and the Protestant Church. These errors and perversions of truth, which had made a deep impression on his feelings, were carried into his visions, and a great part of what he saw and heard, and of what he himself said, in the world of spirits, was adapted to expose them." (p. 118). So in regard to the doctrine of justification by faith alone;—"This was one of the points to which his thoughts were very often directed in his visionary state, and to which they had evidently been very much directed before." (p. 118). Thus also on another page, "These doctrines, which he had unquestionably thought out for himself before his visionary state commenced, were continually mixed with the actings of his excited mind after that period." (p. 119.)

I need not repeat what I have already said on the utter groundlessness of this assumption, as far as the existence of any testimony to support it is concerned. Instead of that I will cite a remark from the *Rasselas* of Dr. Johnson. "He who will determine against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty; is not to be admitted among reasonable beings," and, "if that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty." The language is his, not mine. I should have said, in the present reference, that such an one is "not to be admitted among *sound reasoning* beings," for yours is a gratuitous *assumption* designed to ward off an irresistible but unwelcome conclusion. But as this matter has been sufficiently adverted to, I come to your grand array of doctrinal objections to the system of Swedenborg.

I. *The nature of God.* "He held that *God is very man.*" This is true, and he gives a very good reason for it, viz. that man was created in the divine image, in which is implied that the distinguishing attributes—the constituent principles—of our finite humanity exist in God in an infinite degree. And is it not so? Are not love and wisdom, or, in other words, affection and intellect, what really and essentially constitute man? And are not these the distinguishing attributes of Jehovah also? Is not that sound doctrine which we find in the following paragraphs?

"An intelligent person cannot deny in himself, but that in God there is love and wisdom, that there is mercy and clemency, that there is goodness and truth itself, because they are from Him; and forasmuch as he cannot deny that these things are in God, neither can he deny that God is a man, for no one of them can exist abstractedly from man, for man is their subject; and to separate them from their subject is to say, that they do not exist. Think of wisdom, and place it without man, and then let me ask, is it anything? Can you conceive of it as of some ethereal principle, or as of some principle of fire! You cannot, unless, possibly, as existing in these principles, and if in them, it must then be wisdom in a form, and such as pertains to man. In a word, the form of wisdom is man; and foras-

much as man is the form of wisdom, he is also the form of love, mercy, clemency, good, and truth; because these act as one with wisdom."—*D. L. & W.* 286.

After quoting the principal part of this passage, you exclaim, "such is the *argument* of Swedenborg!" And, pray, is there *not* argument in this? Can we conceive of the divine love and the divine wisdom as existing without relation to a *person* in whom they inhere? Are they not mere imaginary entities when viewed apart from such relation? But the moment they are concentrated in a *person*, we ideally reproduce our own nature infinitely exalted. We have before us a Divine Man, by whom alone the universe could have been created.

Before proceeding with the remaining extracts, I would remark, that I deem it unfortunate that in rendering into English the Latin phrase, *Deus est Homo*, Swedenborg's translators have so uniformly expressed it by, *God is a Man*, whereas the more correct version doubtless is, *God is Man*. It is true that the original *homo* may properly be rendered a *man* where the subject naturally requires it, as when we say, *Cæsar est homo*, *Cæsar is a man*, in which the force of the article is to designate Cæsar as one of the *individuals* constituting the race *homo* or *man*. But in the present case, the object is to *generalise* as much as possible, and simply to intimate, that the *constituent principles of humanity* exist in God, but of course in an infinite degree. This renders the use of the article less proper as the idea is thereby *individualized* and *corporealized* in a manner quite abhorrent to the genuine conception existing in the mind of the author. What this was will be gathered still more distinctly from what follows. He first gives us what he affirms to be the true angelic idea of man, in which, however, it is not implied that our human intelligence is incompetent to judge whether the idea is a correct one.

"That celestial and spiritual things are arranged and conjoined into that form and into that image (the human), those cannot perceive who have not a just idea concerning spiritual and celestial things: they think that the terrestrial and material things, which compose the ultimate of man, make him, and that without these man is not man. But let them know that man is not man from those things, but from this, that he can understand truth and will good: these are the spiritual and celestial things which make man. Man also knows, that every one is a man such as he is as to the understanding and the will: and he may also know, that his terrestrial body is formed to serve them in the world, and to perform uses conformably to them in the ultimate sphere of nature. Therefore also the body acts not of itself, but is actuated altogether in obedience to the dictates of the understanding and the will, insomuch, that whatever man thinks, he speaks with the tongue and mouth, and whatever he wills, he does with the body and members; so that it is the understanding and will that does, and the body does nothing of itself. Hence it is manifest, that the things of the understanding and will make man: and that they are in a similar form, because they act into the most minute particulars of the body, as an internal into an external: man therefore from them is called an internal and spiritual man. Such a man, in the greatest and most perfect form, is heaven. Such is the idea of the angels concerning man: wherefore they never attend to those things which man does with the body, but to the will from which the body does them: this they call the man himself; and the understanding, so far as it acts in unity with the will."—*H. & H.* 60–61.

The *will*, in Swedenborg's diction, is the *love* or *affection* principle. If such then is man, in his essential attributes, and if in these respects he is created in the likeness and image of God, it seems not easy to withstand the inference that God is a Divine Man. On this head he speaks as follows.

"Because the angels perceive not an invisible Divine, which they call a Divine without form, but a visible Divine in the human form, therefore it is common for them to say, that the Lord alone is Man, and that they are men from Him, and that every one is so far a man, as he receives Him. By receiving the Lord, they understand receiving good and truth, which are from Him, since the Lord is in his good and in his truth: this also they call wisdom and intelligence. They say that every one knows that intelligence and wisdom make man, and not the face without them. That it is so, appears also from the angels of the interior heavens: they, because they are in good and truth from the Lord, and thence in wisdom and intelligence, are in the most beautiful and perfect human form; and the angels of the lower heavens in a less perfect and beautiful one. But it is the opposite in hell; they who are there, in the light of heaven scarcely appear as men, but as monsters; for they are in evil and the false, and not in good and truth, and thence are in the opposites of wisdom and intelligence; wherefore also their life is not called life, but spiritual death."—*H. & H.* 80.

"The more perfectly angels receive the Divine Truth which is from the Lord, and thus the Lord Himself, so much more perfect human forms are they, and at length as perfect do their forms become, thence their beauty exceeds all belief. He who shall see them, as I have seen them, will be wrapped in astonishment, for they are heavenly loves and charities in forms that are truly human. They are such human forms because the Lord is Divine Essence in heaven, and they who receive Divine Truth from him in the goodness of their wills, are images of Him."—*A. C.* 9503.

"For 'man' signifies, in the genuine sense, that *ESSE* from which man originates. The very *ESSE* from which man originates is Divine, consequently, is celestial and spiritual; without this Divine celestial and spiritual, there is nothing human in man, but only a sort of animal nature, such as the beasts have. It is from the *ESSE* of Jehovah, or of the Lord, that every man is a man; and it is hence also that he is called a man. The celestial which constitutes him a man is that he should love the Lord, and love the neighbor: thus he is a man, because he is an image of the Lord, and because he has that celestial from the Lord; otherwise he is a wild beast."—*A. C.* 1894.

In the paragraphs that follow he develops the causes to which the errors of the common conceptions on this head are owing, and declares that there is innate in all men a latent idea of God that more nearly accords with the truth, however obscured by factitious falsities of impression.

"Some, in the christian world, have formed to themselves an idea of God as of something universal; some, as of nature in her inmost principles; some, as of a cloud in some space of ether; some, as a bright ray of light; and some, no idea at all; whilst few have formed an idea of God as of man, when yet God is man. There are several causes that christians have formed to themselves such ideas of God: the *FIRST* is, because from their doctrine they believe in three divine persons distinct from each other, in the Father as an invisible God, in the Lord also, but as to his Human not God. The *SECOND* is, that they believe God to be a spirit, and they think of a spirit as of wind, or of air, or of ether, when yet every spirit is a man. The *THIRD* is, that a christian, in consequence of his faith alone without life, has been rendered worldly, and from self-love corporeal, and a worldly and corporeal man does not see God except from space, thus God as everything inmost in the universe or in nature, consequently as extended, when yet God is not to be seen from space, for there is no space in the spiritual world, space there is only an appearance grounded on what is like it [*ex simili*]. Every sensual man sees God in like manner, because he thinks but little above the speech, and the thought of speech says to itself, 'What the eye sees and the hand touches, this I know is,' and all other things it dissipates, as if they were only things to be talked of. These are the causes that in the christian world there is no idea of God as man. That there is no such idea, yea, that there is a repugnance to it, you may know from examining yourself, and



thinking of the Divine Human, when yet the Human of the Lord is divine. Nevertheless, the above ideas of God do not appertain so much to the simple, as to the intelligent, for many of the latter are blinded by the conceit of their own intelligence, and are hence infatuated by science, according to the Lord's words, Matthew xi. 25; xiii. 13, 14, 15. But let them know, that all who see God as a man, see him from the Lord, the rest from themselves; and they who see from themselves, do not see.

"But I will relate what must needs seem wonderful: every man, in the idea of his spirit, sees God as a man, even he who in the idea of his body sees him like a cloud, a mist, air, or ether, even he who has denied that God is a man: man is in the idea of his spirit when he thinks abstractedly, and in the idea of his body when [he thinks] not abstractedly. That every man in the idea of his spirit sees God as a man, has been made evident to me from men after death, who are then in the ideas of spirit; for man after death becomes a spirit, in which case, it is impossible for them to think of God otherwise than as of a man: the experiment was made whether they could [think] otherwise, and for this purpose they were let into the state in which they were in the world, and then they thought of God, some as of something universal, some as of nature in her inmost principles, some as of a cloud in the midst of ether, some as a bright ray of light, and some in other ways; but, instantly, when they came out of that state into a state of spirit, they thought of God as of a man; which also they wondered at, and said it was implanted [*insitum*] in every spirit. But evil spirits, who in the world have denied God, deny him also after death; nevertheless, instead of God they worship some spirit, who, by diabolical arts, gains power over the rest. It was said, that to think of God as a man is implanted in every spirit: that this is effected by influx of the Lord into the interior of their thoughts, is evident from this consideration: the angels of all the heavens unitedly acknowledge the Lord; they acknowledge his Divine which is called the Father, they see his Divine Human, and they are in the Divine Proceeding, for the universal angelic heaven is the Divine Proceeding of the Lord; an angel is not an angel from anything of his own, but from the Divine which he receives from the Lord; hence they are in the Lord, and therefore, when they think of God, they cannot think of any other than of the Lord, in whom they are, and from whom they think. Add to this, that the universal angelic heaven in its complex, before the Lord, is as one man, which may be called the Grand Man, wherefore the angels in heaven are in the man, who is the Divine Proceeding of the Lord, as was said; and since their thoughts have a direction according to the form of heaven, therefore when they think of God, they cannot think otherwise than of the Lord. In a word, all the angels of the three heavens think of God as of a man, nor can they think otherwise, since if they would, thought would cease, and they would fall down from heaven. Hence now it is, that it is implanted in every spirit, and also in every man, when he is in the idea of his spirit, to think of God as a man."—*Ath. Creed*, 19, 20.

You will pardon me, I trust, for presenting this subject in Swedenborg's language, instead of my own, because of that certain indescribable self-evidencing air to which I have before adverted, and which can scarcely fail to make itself perceived by the candid reader. Especially do I rely upon this to countervail the popular impression of *insanity* in the writer. I wish to afford the world an opportunity of judging of the grounds of an imputation, under which one of the best and greatest of men has been made to suffer in his good name and memory, to a degree probably unparalleled in the history of the race. What must be the astonishment of mankind when they come to be disabused of their false impressions on this score, and to learn that it is from precisely *such views as* have been spread before the reader in these pages that the charge of *madness* has been brought against their author, and that he has been branded as the dupe of the most silly and ridiculous delusions, and the propagator of the grossest outrages upon common sense and the reverence due to divine sanctities. As such a charge

reflects of necessity upon all those who adopt his disclosures as an embodiment of the most sublime truths, we would fain point our fellow-men, in these extracts, to a perfectly fair sample of the ideas and doctrines for the embracing of which we are often commended to the christian compassion of those who think it a waste of time to examine alleged heresies before condemning them. Thus in regard to the present topic of debate, we maintain, according to Swedenborg, that *God is very man*, and we call upon our opponents to indicate distinctly in what respects the position militates with the truth. I have expounded the principles upon which the doctrine rests—that man is man solely and simply from his being constituted of the elements of love and wisdom, which exist in Jehovah in an infinite degree and which constitute *Him* what he is. The position can only be denied by denying the fundamental ground in which it plants itself. If man is not made in the image of God from his reflecting the divine love and wisdom, how is he thus made?—how does he bear this image?

But you will doubtless be prompt to reply, that if God is truly man—if He is the exemplar after which man is formed—then he must have the *form* of man, and as *form*, in all the reigning philosophies, is inherent only in matter, and as, moreover, the human form exists and is manifested in the material human body, God therefore must have a material body corresponding in form to that of man; and how this differs from the grossest anthropomorphism you will probably find yourself at a loss to conceive. Strange as it may appear, we readily admit that if the above chain of premises is sound, the conclusion is inevitable, and that there is no escape from the dilemma charged upon us. Still we do escape. A wide and open door of deliverance we find in Swedenborg's profound doctrine of Form—so profound, that to mere sensuous thought, which is so incompetent to cast off the shackles of Time and Space, it can scarcely appear otherwise than as transcendently obscure. Still we should condemn our own inductions by charging them as intrinsically unintelligible. It is to us an intelligible idea of *form* which carries it quite out of the sphere of matter, where it is usually a synonym for *shape*, and makes it the inseparable concomitant of *essence*, and equivalent to the *mode in which any thing exists*. So far from considering *form* restricted to matter, we are taught to regard it as coextensive with all being, as we cannot conceive that *any thing* should exist without existing in a form. But the forms of spirits are not bounded by space, although, when clothed with a body in the natural world, that body is defined by spatial extension. The material body, however, genetically considered, is the result of the action of the soul, and *corresponds* with its form. The one is in space, while the other is not. "Organic forms," says Swedenborg, "are not only those which appear before the eye, and which can be discovered by microscopes, but there are also organic forms still purer, which can never be discovered by any eye, whether naked or assisted. The latter forms are of an interior kind, as the forms which are of the interior sight, and finally those which are of the intellect; these are inscrutable, but still they are forms, that is, substances."

We have no hesitation to speak of the form of a rose, but how violent does it seem to us to speak of the form of its aroma or that exhalation which produces the sensation of odor. Yet this must have a form, as well as the flower, inasmuch as it is a substance, and it is the peculiar form of the aroma which produces its peculiar smell, although it is usual to refer this to

its *quality*; but *quality* when traced back to the last analysis will be found to resolve itself into form.

As to the human form, Swedenborg thus speaks. "The first rudiment of the human form, or the human form itself, with all and singular its parts, is derived from the principles continued from the brain through the nerves. After death a man comes into this form, which is then called a spirit and an angel, and which is in all perfection a man, but spiritual. The material form added and superinduced in the world, is not a human form from itself, but from the above spiritual form; being added and superinduced, to enable a man to perform uses in the natural world, and to carry along with him, from the purer substances of the world, some fixed continent for spiritual things, and so to continue and perpetuate his life. It is a tenet of angelic wisdom, that the mind of man, not only in general, but in every particular, is in a perpetual effort to the human form, because God is Man." When we speak therefore of God as having a human form, we always have in mind this interior spiritual form, from which the outer material form proceeds, and which has in itself no relation to space.\* This form, we say, pertains to God, but infinitely. He possesses a Divine Human Form. If it is objected that it is absurd to consider a human form to be divine, because form necessarily implies limit, boundary, termination; whereas God is infinite and unbounded, being every where equally present; I reply in the words of Mr. Clissold: "If we cannot attribute form to God, because it implies limit; so neither can we, for the same reason, attribute anything to Him, or frame any conception of his nature. For all the ideas we can entertain of Him, necessarily imply limit, inasmuch as the ideas themselves are limited, being those of a limited, finite creature; yet we do not, for that reason, cease to consider certain perfections as belonging to the divine nature. None but an infinite being can have infinite and therefore adequate ideas of himself; all finite ideas, however exalted, must have form, limit, and boundary, as truly so as the senses or sensations of the body. The objection, therefore, derived from the idea of form, is as applicable to all intellectual ideas, however abstracted, as it is to sensational impressions. Let any ideas of God entertained by a creature, however intellectual, however abstracted, nay, however angelic or spiritual, be embodied; and that

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\* It will be seen from this, compared with what follows, that either Professor Stuart or myself is in a very great error as to Swedenborg's real doctrine on this head. In his recently published "Miscellanies" in speaking of objections raised against the doctrine of the Trinity from the mere *forms* of expression employed in the New Testament he says;—"Their efficacy or validity as objections, depends entirely on interpreting language, as applied to the Godhead, according to its ordinary meaning when applied to other things. This cannot be any more correct than it is to say, with the Swedenborgians, that God has a *visible material form*, because man is said to be made in his image, and because the ordinary parts and powers of a human body are ascribed to Him" (p. 34). So again, to the same purpose, in another passage; "When the Scripture speaks of his (God's) having eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. all men who do not *rave* with Immanuel Swedenborg, understand these terms as being figurative" (p. 155). This was first uttered to the world in the year 1820, and however it might have then stood as a tolerably fair index of the gross misapprehensions prevalent, even among Theological Teachers, of Swedenborg's tenets, one might perhaps have reasonably supposed that the lapse of twenty-six years, during which they have been gradually spreading, and not the least slowly in the vicinity of Andover, would have brought with it somewhat of a corrective of the error. It seems, however, that in 1846 the time had not yet quite come for more truthful views in that quarter. I must confess to very great doubts whether the next twenty, or even ten years, will pass and leave such ignorance either creditable or common.

embodiment will as certainly present a definite limitation, as any object presented to the senses. The objection, therefore, derived from the idea of form, if allowed, would tend to deprive us of entertaining any idea of the Deity whatever; for the only other idea we could entertain is that which is formless; hence indefinite, indeterminate, chaotic, confused; which is virtually no idea, because it has no form; and that which has no form, has no quality; and that which has neither form nor quality is a nonentity.

"What then? Are we to attribute an external shape or figure to God like that of the human frame? The answer is, if we attribute human properties to God, why should we not attribute a human form; when this form is only the form of those properties, or that which the properties assume when they are endowed with a real substantial existence? But it is replied, we do not imagine that God possesses those identical properties, but only by way of analogy in an eminent sense. True; and we in like manner reply, that neither does God possess the human form, except by way of analogy in an eminent sense. But this, it will be said, is after all, only to deny to Him this human form; we answer, it no more denies to Him this human form, than the attribution to the Deity of Love, Wisdom, and Power, in an eminent sense, is a denial that He possesses those attributes. God is Love and Wisdom essentially; consequently they can be ascribed to Him much more truly than to man; for the same reason God is form itself; which can therefore be ascribed to Him much more perfectly than to man.

"The objection applied to the idea of form, is, that it involves limit and boundary. It is evident however that, in this case, when we so think of form, we think of it in reference to visible extension, magnitude, or space. Whereas God has no such extension, or magnitude, nor can space be attributed to Him; for He was before space. The fault here in our conception of form, is exactly the same as we have before pointed out in reference to eternity. Infinite form is no more visible form extended *ad infinitum*, than eternity is time extended *ad infinitum*; or divine love and wisdom the same with human love and wisdom, infinite in quantity.

"But it is said, form cannot be conceived of without space. Certainly, if we imagine to ourselves a mundane form, we must also imagine to ourselves a mundane space; hence, as the spirit of man has a form, though not material, so it has magnitude and space, yet not that space and magnitude which belong to material things. Hence it cannot, in relation to things material, be denominated great or small, tall or short; no, nor even in reference to time, either old or young; and as this is the case with regard to man's spirit, in its relation to matter, so also is it the case, in a higher degree, with regard to the Almighty Spirit, in his relation to creation. Hence we see the error into which the Anthropomorphites fell. They were right in conceiving of God, as St. Paul says, as possessing a form, but they were grossly wrong in the notions which they conceived of that form, and which were merely those of the natural man."—*End of the Church*, p. 393-396.

Thus it is that we explain and vindicate the position, that *God is very man*; and from this you will readily infer in what light we regard the charge that Swedenborg "expressly teaches that God cannot be truly worshiped as an *invisible Being*. The Apostle Paul, who represents the King eternal and immortal to be also *invisible*, had no authority with him." The reply to this is already prepared to my hands in what follows.

"That this church is the crown of all the churches that have hitherto been in the world, is, because it will worship one visible God, in whom is the invisible God, as the soul is in the body. That thus and no otherwise there can be conjunction of God with man, is because man is natural, and thence thinks naturally; and the conjunction must be in his thought, and thus in the affection of his love, and this is effected when man thinks of God as Man. Conjunction with an invisible God is like conjunction of the sight of the eye with the expanse of the universe, of which it sees no end; and also like sight in the middle of the ocean, which falls into the air and into the sea, and perishes; but conjunction with a visible God is like the sight of a man, in the air or on the sea, spreading out his hands and inviting to his arms; for all conjunction of God with man must also be a reciprocal one of man with God, and this other reciprocal cannot be given, except with a visible God. That God was not visible before He assumed the Human, the Lord himself also teaches in John: 'Ye have not heard the voice of the Father, at any time, nor seen his shape' (v. 37); and in Moses: 'No one can see God and live' (Exod. xxxiii. 20). But that He is seen through his Human, in John: 'No one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath brought Him forth to view' (i. 18); and again: 'Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh to the Father, except through Me. He that knoweth Me, knoweth the Father, and He that seeth Me, seeth the Father'" (xiv. 6, 7, 9).—T. C. R. 787.

As to any bold impugning of the authority of an apostle in the utterance of such views as I have cited above, it seems difficult to detect it in the simple intimation that there must be an *intellectual or spiritual vision* of God in order to any acceptable worship of Him. In no other sense did Swedenborg teach that God must be *visible* in order to be a proper object of worship. How then is it possible to make out any real conflict between the teachings, on this head, of Paul and of Swedenborg? Does Swedenborg affirm that God is visible to the outward eye? Does Paul deny that he is visible to the inward eye? How then is their testimony at variance? How is Swedenborg any more in conflict with Paul, than Paul is with Christ?

II. The *Trinity*.—"He rejects the doctrine of the Trinity as it has been and is received by the Evangelical churches, and holds a doctrine similar to Sabellianism. Although the Scriptures so often and so clearly represent the Father and the Son as distinct *persons*, and as speaking to and of each other as thus distinct, he denies this distinction and strenuously maintains that the Father and the Son are one and the same person." And sorry, indeed, should I be if he did not. He must otherwise, as I conceive, have contradicted both Scripture and Reason, and thus have forfeited all claim to be received in his professed character of a messenger of truth from heaven. But upon this I shall have more to say in the sequel. At present I beg leave to quote a paragraph from your work in connection with two or three from Prof. Stuart's Letter to Dr. Channing, which seem to show at least a very different estimate of the value of the word *person* in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity. You say:—

"Now it is my belief, and it is the common belief of the most intelligent and pious Christians, that the doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God, is one of the essential truths of our religion, and that the prayers of those who have held this doctrine, have had power with God, and have prevailed, and do prevail to bring down rich blessings upon the church and the world. The teachings of Swedenborg on this subject are manifestly Anti-Scriptural, and are in a shocking degree uncharitable and exclusive. And it will soon appear that they lead to the denial of all the doctrines of grace."—p. 122.

You intimate not the slightest breath of objection to the word *person* in connection with the general subject. Not so your venerable colleague, whom I should be sorry to think you charged with undervaluing "an essential truth of our religion."

"I could wish indeed on some accounts, that the word *person* had never come into the symbols of the churches, because it has been the occasion of so much unnecessary dispute and difficulty."—*Miscellanies*, p. 22.

"I may, on the whole, be permitted to say, that the present generation of Trinitarians do not feel responsible for the introduction of such technical terms (as that of *person*), in senses so diverse from the common ideas attached to them. They merely take them as they find them. For my own part, I have shown sufficiently that I have no attachment to them; I think them, on the whole, not very happily and warily chosen, and could rather wish they were dropped by general consent."—*Id.* p. 53.

I fear the learned Professor is not duly aware that the dropping the *term* would be a most effectual mode of dropping the *thing*: for nothing can be clearer than that the accredited doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of *three Divine Persons*, nor do I see how it could stand a day, as now understood, if the word *persons* should be given up, and its advocates should fall back upon the term *distinctions*. What would they then have to urge against Swedenborg's view, which is emphatically that of a *three-fold distinction* in the one Divine nature and person? But it would seem very obvious from the following passage that Professor Stuart is by no means strenuous for retaining the dogma in its hitherto symbolical and technical form.

"It is time to close this protracted Note. I cannot do this, however, without adding a word on the position which, as it seems to me, all evangelical churches ought to take, in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity. (1) They should insist on it, that, according to the Scriptures, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are one God, and but one, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. (2) They should maintain, that in the Lord Jesus Christ, the *divine* and *human*, in the perfection and fulness of both, are united. (3) They ought not to exact from any one, professing the Christian faith, that he should adopt any definition or description of the word *person*, as applied to the Godhead or to the Lord Jesus Christ, which mere philosophy or theology has made out, but which is not taught in the Scriptures. (4) If I might be permitted freely to speak my own opinion, I would further say, that I should regard the omission of the word *person* in all church-creeds as quite desirable, in order to avoid fruitless and endless controversy and misunderstanding. If any one is startled at this, I take shelter under a name, which, although once cast out, and abhorred by many, and often covered with reproach, now commands, among nearly all parties of the intelligent, unaffected reverence and admiration; I mean the name of Calvin. In his Institutes, I. 13. 5, he says: 'Utinam sepulta essent Nomina, constaret modo hæc inter omnes fides: Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum esse unum Deum; i. e. My wish is, that all names might be buried, provided this article of faith might be agreed upon by all: THE FATHER AND SON AND HOLY SPIRIT ARE ONE GOD.'

"I need not say how many anxious minds would be calmed by the adoption of such a noble and scriptural sentiment, and by agreeing upon it as one of the conditions of Christian confidence and communion. My belief is, that the churches must go back, and make more of the BIBLE, and less of creeds, in order to revive the spirit of the primitive ages of Christianity. When they shall be as anxious to promote brotherly harmony, and kindness, and true liberality, as they have for a long time been to inflame sectarian zeal, and increase the causes of dissension by sectarian creeds, and to treat with severity and contempt or reproach those who differ from them in matters unessential, then will the world once more be constrained to say; See how these Christians love one another! Then, to use the last words of the adorable Saviour, 'will they all be one;' and then (but not till then,) 'will the world believe that Christ is sent by the Father.'"—*Id.* p. 74.

These are very noble sentiments, and I am unable to discover in what respects the adopters of Swedenborg's system have failed to take precisely this ground. It is substantially the very position they have taken from the outset. Yet you remark in regard to it, that "the teachings of Swedenborg on this subject are manifestly Anti-Scriptural, and are in a shocking degree uncharitable and exclusive." That is to say, while one of the Professors of the Andover Seminary has pointed out a position which all evangelical churches ought to take in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, and which the Church that receives the teachings of Swedenborg has all along taken, another Professor in the same Seminary denounces as "manifestly anti-scriptural" and shockingly uncharitable, when professed by this Church, the very form of doctrine recommended by his colleague, to the adoption of all Evangelical Christian sects! This must be allowed, I think, to present a specimen of rather an anomalous kind of unity in the heads of a Theological Institute—one however to which I allude grievingly and not invidiously. Instead of dwelling upon it, I proceed to offer a few remarks on the general theme.

The process of argument which it would be proper to adopt with a Unitarian on this subject would be out of place in the controversy with you. You will concede at once the identity, in some sense, of the Jehovah of the Old Testament with the Jesus of the New. The quotations soon to be adduced put that point beyond question. But the august name Jehovah certainly indicates the one only living and true God, and if this name is applied to Jesus Christ we must demand the authority on which it is supposed to denote any less than the *whole* Godhead. What grounds are there for the assumption, that it was a *certain portion* of the Deity, to wit, the second Person, which became incarnate? The plain import of the Word is that it was the *whole divine nature* which clothed itself with humanity for the redemption of the world. It is in Jesus that "all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily." The Scriptures in teaching this teach emphatically the doctrine of the divine unity. Consequently they cannot, at the same time, teach an opposite doctrine. No view of any *personal* distinction can be admitted, which conflicts with the great cardinal truth of the essential unity of Jehovah. If the fact of a *threefold distinction* is to be acknowledged—as it undoubtedly is—it must still be such as to consist entirely with the previously established *unity*. Now we contend that the current dogma of a *Trinity of persons* is *not* consistent with such a *unity*. It is not, in fact, so much a *Trinity in unity*, as a *Trinity in unanimity*—a Trinity of three unanimous Gods acting in unison with each other for the accomplishment of a certain end. This, we are persuaded, is *practically* the doctrine received by the great mass of Christians, and we are equally persuaded that it is a view of the subject which vitiates the entire system of Christianity as generally adopted. A plurality of persons will inevitably beget the *interior* impression of a plurality of essences, which is virtually a plurality of Gods.

Far different from this is the Trinity taught by Swedenborg. This is a Trinity of Essential Attributes and Principles—Love, Wisdom, and Act—to which respectively answer the titles Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the incarnation the Divine Love, which is the very *Esse* of the Godhead, and economically termed the Father, as the ground, or producing cause, of all being, is invisibly present in the Divine Wisdom or Truth, the Divine *Existere*, termed the Son, and from both in conjunction emanates the Holy Spirit, the Divine Proceeding or operative En-

ergy and Influence by which the soul is spiritually enlivened, enlightened, and sanctified, but all constituting one Essence and one Person. Viewed in this light the whole subject assumes a new aspect. The cloud of mystery gathered around it, and which has so long darkened the Christian orb, is dispelled, and the Scriptures became intelligible in their deepest recesses, as well as those which speak of the *inferiority* of our Lord to the Father, as those which speak of his *equality*. "My Father is greater than I," that is, the *Divine Love*, being the inmost—the *Esse* of Jehovah—is superior and comparatively greater than the *Divine Wisdom*, as *affection* in all beings is an element paramount to *intellect*. Again, "The Son can do nothing of himself;" so neither in fact can the Father do anything of himself; for the *Divine Love*, signified by the Father, effects nothing but by means of the *Divine Wisdom*, signified by the Son; and the *Divine Wisdom*, of itself, can effect nothing unless the *Divine Love*, as its soul and energy, gives the power; just as *affection* in man acts conjointly with *thought*, and *thought* with *affection*. On the same ground all the *subordinate* acts and offices of the Son in the scheme of redemption are easily explicable without the least invasion of the unity of the Divine Person and Essence. Let the fundamental truth of the whole work of human redemption having direct relation to the three constituents of the Divine Nature—Love, Wisdom, and Operation—and of its being designed to bear upon the corresponding principles of human nature—affection, intellect, and action—be understood, and the subject is, in a great measure, happily relieved of doubt, mystery, and confusion.

You intimate a difficulty in understanding how it can be said that the Son was *sent* by the Father, unless the common distinction of *Persons* be maintained. But do you see no difficulty in this in your own admitted view of the essential unity of the Father and the Son? However explained, it *must* of necessity be consistent with that unity. What solution then can possibly be given, but that Jehovah *sent himself* into the world in the manifested Form of the Son, or as Swedenborg expresses it, that Jehovah descended as the Divine Truth without, at the same time separating the Divine Good? "The Lord frequently said that the Father sent Him into the world, and that he was sent by the Father, and this he says, because by being sent into the world is meant to descend and come amongst men; and this was done by the Human which He assumed by means of the virgin Mary. That by the Son of Mary is meant the merely human, is manifest from the generation of man, that the soul is from the Father, and the body from the mother; for the soul is in the seed of the father, and it is clothed with a body in the mother; or, what is the same, all the spiritual that a man has, is from the father, and all the material from the mother. As to the Lord, the Divine which he had was from Jehovah, the Father, and the human was from the mother; these two united are the Son of God."—*T. C. R.* 92. The Divine Essence is of course indivisible, and when it is said that Jesus was *born* of Jehovah, the Father, nothing else can be understood than that the Divine *Esse*, in its entirety, became *incarnate* in the Son; or in other words, that the Father *sent himself* into the world in the person of the Son. In this person he came first into a state of humiliation or exinanition, and in that state, from the necessity of the case, he adopts the language proper to an *economical subordination*. He is said to have prayed to the Father—to have done his will—to have attributed to Him his works. But consequent to this was his state of exaltation, in which his Human-



ity was glorified and fully united to the Divinity, and he then speaks no more in the language of inferiority. He henceforth speaks *as doing himself alone* all that he promises to accomplish for his disciples. Having now become the Person of the Father he utters himself in language appropriate to that character. "*In my name* they shall cast out devils," &c. "Behold, *I* send the promise of my Father upon you." "*He* breathed upon them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "To him that overcometh *will I* give to eat of the tree of life." "*I* will give to every one of you according to your works." "To him *will I* give power over the nations." Upon all this you will be prepared to make your own comments.

But you go on to say, "He holds a doctrine similar to Sabellianism." It is similar in the fact that it denies the *tri-personality* of the Godhead, but it is quite diverse in other respects. Sabellius held that the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were merely the names of a three-fold manifestation of the one undistinguished essence of the Deity.\* Swedenborg, on the other hand, maintains a fundamental distinction of the principles of Love, Wisdom, and Operation, in the very inmost nature of the Divine Being, and that the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have relation respectively to these three principles, which, however, are as far from constituting *three distinct persons* as Soul, Body, and Operation or Action in man are from constituting him, individually, *three persons*. "By Father," says Mr. Noble, "when mentioned in Scripture, is not meant a God distinct from Jesus Christ, but *His* inmost principle of Divine life, answering (to compare things infinite with things finite,) to the soul in man. By the Son is not meant a Divine Being separate from the Father, but the manifested Form of the Divine Essence, answering to the body in man. And by the Holy Spirit is not meant a Divine Person distinct from both, but the operating life or influence of the Divine Essence and the Divine Form in union, answering to the operating faculty in man, or to the influence which he exercises upon persons and things within his sphere of action. Thus the whole Divine Trinity centres in the one undivided person of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit no more form three divine persons or Gods, than soul, body, and operation, in each of us, form three human persons in man."—*Sermon on the Trinity*, p. 19.

As to the assertion that "the Scriptures so often and so clearly represent the Father and the Son as distinct *persons*," you can scarcely fail to be aware that, even without the limits of the New Church, there is so large an amount of dissent as to the matter of fact on this head, that it can by no means be expected to be taken for granted, though emanating from the highest professorial chair in Christendom. I know not of a single passage in the Scriptures where any such representation is made, and so long as the following passages stand unrevoked in the Oracles of Truth I can see no possibility of regarding the Son as a different *person* from the Father.

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\* "As according to the apostle St. Paul, there is one Spirit, and yet this one Spirit worketh several ways through manifold gifts and graces; thus also he (Sabellius) says, is God the Father one and the same, but he pours himself abroad in the Son and the Holy Ghost, under which names he means to designate only two different modes of operation of the same Divine subject; namely God the Father. Therefore he says also, it is one Divine Being, as to its self-existence, which is designated by two different names according to these different modes of operation."—*Neander's Ch. Hist.* p. 380.

“ ‘ Mary said, My soul doth magnify THE LORD, and my spirit hath rejoiceth in GOD MY SAVIOUR ’ (Luke i. 46, 47). ‘ The angel said to the shepherds, Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people, that there is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR, who is CHRIST THE LORD ’ (Luke ii. 10, 11). ‘ They said, This is indeed THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR of the world ’ (John iv. 42). ‘ I will help thee, saith JEHOVAH, and THY REDEEMER, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL ’ (Isaiah xli. 14). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH THY CREATOR, O Jacob, and THY FORMER, O Israel; for I have REDEEMED thee. I am JEHOVAH THY GOD, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, THY SAVIOUR ’ (xliii. 1, 3). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH YOUR REDEEMER, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL: I AM JEHOVAH YOUR HOLY ONE, THE CREATOR OF ISRAEL, your King ’ (xlii. 14, 15). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, and his FORMER ’ (xlv. 11). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH THY REDEEMER, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL ’ (xlviii. 17). ‘ That all flesh may know that I JEHOVAH am THY SAVIOUR and THY REDEEMER, THE MIGHTY ONE OF JACOB ’ (xlix. 26). ‘ Then He shall come to Zion A REDEEMER ’ (lix. 20). ‘ That thou mayst know that I JEHOVAH am THY SAVIOUR and THY REDEEMER, THE MIGHTY ONE OF JACOB ’ (lx. 16). ‘ JEHOVAH THY FORMER from the womb ’ (xlix. 5). ‘ JEHOVAH my Rock and MY REDEEMER ’ (Psalm xix. 14). ‘ They remembered that God was their rock, and THE HIGH GOD THEIR REDEEMER ’ (lxxxviii. 35). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH, THY REDEEMER, and THY FORMER from the womb ’ (Isaiah xlv. 24). ‘ As for our REDEEMER, JEHOVAH OF HOSTS is his name, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL ’ (xlvii. 4). ‘ With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith JEHOVAH THY REDEEMER ’ (liv. 8). ‘ Their REDEEMER is strong, JEHOVAH OF HOSTS is his name ’ (Jerem. i. 34). ‘ Let Israel hope in JEHOVAH, for with JEHOVAH there is mercy, and with Him plenteous REDEMPTION. He shall REDEEM Israel from all his iniquities ’ (Psalm cxxx. 7, 8). ‘ JEHOVAH my rock, my fortress, and the horn of my salvation, my SAVIOUR ’ (2 Samuel xxii. 2, 3). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH, THE REDEEMER of Israel, HIS HOLY ONE; Kings shall see and arise because of the Lord, who is faithful, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, who hath chosen Thee ’ (Isaiah xlix. 7). ‘ Surely God is in thee, and there is no OTHER GOD BESIDES. Verily thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O GOD OF ISRAEL THE SAVIOUR ’ (xlv. 14, 15). ‘ Thus saith JEHOVAH, the King of Israel, and his REDEEMER, JEHOVAH OF HOSTS, BESIDE ME THERE IS NO GOD ’ (xlv. 6). ‘ I am JEHOVAH, and beside Me there is no SAVIOUR ’ (xliii. 11). ‘ Am not I JEHOVAH, and there is no other beside Me; and a SAVIOUR, there is none beside Me ’ (xlv. 21). ‘ I am JEHOVAH thy God, thou shalt know no God but Me, for there is no SAVIOUR beside Me ’ (Hosea xiii. 4). ‘ Look unto Me, that ye may be SAVED, all ye ends of the earth; because I am God, and there is none else ’ (Isaiah xlv. 22). ‘ JEHOVAH OF HOSTS is his name, and THY REDEEMER THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, THE GOD of the whole earth shall He be called ’ (liv. 5). From these it may be seen, that the Divine of the Lord, which is called the Father, and here Jehovah and God, and the Divine Human which is called the Son, and here Redeemer and Saviour, also Former, that is, Reformer and Regenerator, are not two but one; for not only is it said, Jehovah God and the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer and Saviour; but also it is said, Jehovah the Redeemer and Saviour; yea also it is said, ‘ I am Jehovah, and beside Me there is no Saviour. ’ From which it manifestly appears, that the Divine and Human in the Lord are one person.”—*Doct. of the Lord*, 54.

From this you will readily perceive, that in the doctrine of the New Church on this head, instead of the confused and distracting idea of the one God divided into three distinct, divine entities, one of whom is the Creator, another the Redeemer, and the third the Regenerator of man, we have set before us the one glorious person of Jesus Christ, as the supreme and only object of our love, faith, and adoration; who in Himself comprehends the Godhead in all its divine fullness; who as to his Divinity is the Father, as to his Humanity the Son, and from whom alone proceeds the Holy Spirit; who is, therefore, at once our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Regenerator.

To the above allow me to add an extract from Swedenborg which gives a

very distinct view of his teaching on the head of the Divine Personality, the especial theme of our present remarks.\*

"It has been shown that the doctrine of faith, which has its name from Athanasius, leaves a clear idea, whilst it is read, that there are three persons, and hence that there are three unanimous Gods, and an obscure idea that God is one, and so obscure, that it does not remove the idea of three Gods: and further, that the same doctrine leaves a clear idea that the Lord has a Divine and a Human, or that the Lord is God and Man, but an obscure idea that the Divine and Human of the Lord are one person, and that his Divine is in his Human as the soul in the body. It has been also said, that nevertheless, all things in that doctrine, from beginning to end, both such as are clear and such as are obscure, agree and coincide with the truth, if instead of this, that God is one in essence and three in person, it be believed, as the real truth is, that God is one both in essence and in person. There is a trinity in God, and there is also unity; that there is a trinity may be manifest from the passages in the Word where mention is made of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and that there is unity, from the passages in the Word, where it is said that God is one. The unity in which is a trinity, or the one God in whom is a trine, is not given in the Divine which is called the Father, nor in the Divine which is called the Holy Spirit, but in the Lord alone. In the Lord there is a trine, viz. the Divine which is called the Father, the Divine Human which is called the Son, and the Divine Proceeding which is the Holy Spirit; and this trine is one, because it is of one person, and may be called a trine."—*Ath. Creed*, 13.

You will see from this the real ground of those intimations on which you have brought the charge of a shocking degree of uncharitableness and exclusiveness. If the doctrine of *three persons* is virtually the doctrine of three Gods, as he constantly affirms, an error of such magnitude in regard to the central truth of Revelation must undoubtedly have all the disastrous effects he ascribes to it. This consequence is well set forth in the following paragraph. "If the doctrine of the Trinity be a fundamental doctrine, if also we so regard it, it must of course enter, more or less, into every other doctrine of Christianity; it must, therefore, enter into that of the Atonement, which, after the Trinity, is next in importance; and if this doctrine of the Trinity enters into that of the Atonement, then must also our views of this doctrine. I take this for granted:—a universal truth must enter into all the particular truths, under it. Consequently, if there be any tritheism in our views of the doctrine of the Trinity, we must carry it into the doctrine of the Atonement; and not only so, but this tritheism must be, more or less, the basis upon which our views of the Atonement are founded; and hence the doctrine of the Atonement will be, in a greater or less degree, a practical development and application of a system of tritheism."—*Clissold's Letter*, p. 24.

But I find, as usual, that Swedenborg's own language, on this head, is more to the point than anything that is to be met with elsewhere.

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\* It cannot but be immensely curious to a New Churchman to see such an amazing specimen of theological crudity as is contained in the following extract from an English Divine of the last century.

"One consequence of the end or conclusion of Christ's spiritual Kingdom as Redeemer of the World, may not improbably be a dissolution of the Hypostatical Union of the Divine and Human natures in the person of Christ. He assumed the latter into the former, for the Redemption of mankind, and retains it still in heaven, in order to his return, as God-man to judge the world. But the Redemption and the judgment finished, the ground of our Saviour's incarnation, and all use of his present glorious body, will be taken away, and therefore we cannot well suppose, he will continue invested with a body, how glorious soever; but may reasonably conclude, he will resume that state of unclouded Majesty and Glory, of pure unmixed Divinity, he had with the Father before the world was."—*Broughton on Futurity*, p. 327.

"He who acknowledges the Lord, and does not at the same time acknowledge the Divine Principle in his Human, does not acknowledge the Lord; for the Divine Principle of the Lord is in his Human, and not out of it; for the Divine Principle is in the Human as the soul is in the body; wherefore to think of the Humanity of the Lord, and not at the same time of his Divinity, is like thinking of a man abstractedly from his soul or life, which is not to think of a man. That the Divine Principle of the Lord is in his Human, and that they are together one person, the doctrine received throughout the Christian world teaches; in which are these words: 'Although he [Christ] is God and Man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God: One altogether: not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ' (See the Athanasian Creed). Hence also it is evident, that they who distinguish the Divine Principle into three persons, ought, when they think of the Lord as another person, to think of both together, of the Human, as well as of the Divine, for it is said, that they are one person, and that they are one as the soul and body. They, therefore who think otherwise, do not think of the Lord; and they who do not thus think of the Lord, cannot think of the Divine which is called the Divine of the Father."—*A. E.* 10.

"'And from Jesus Christ'—That hereby is signified, from the Lord as to his Divine Humanity, appears from the consideration, that this was the name of the Lord in the world: thus the name of his Humanity: but, as to his Divinity, his name was Jehovah and God. It is called the Divine Humanity, because the Lord made his Humanity divine when he was in the world; for he united it to his Divinity which was in him from conception, and which he had as a soul from the Father, consequently, which was his life; for the soul of every one is his life, and the body, which is human, thence derives its life; wherefore, when the Divinity was united to the Humanity in the Lord, as the soul to the body, it is called the Divine Humanity. They, therefore, who think of the Lord's Humanity, and not at the same time of his Divinity, will on no account admit the phrase 'Divine Humanity;' for they think separately of his Humanity, and separately of his Divinity, which is like thinking of man separately from his soul or life, which, however, is not to think of a man at all; still less is it an adequate way of thinking of the Lord. In consequence of such a separate idea having place in their thought, they pray to the Father to have compassion for the sake of the Son; when, nevertheless, the Lord himself is to be prayed to that he may have compassion, in whom, according to the universal doctrine of the church, the divinity is such as pertains to the Father; for that doctrine teaches, that as the Father, so also the Son, is uncreate, infinite, eternal, almighty, God, and Lord; and neither is before or after the other, nor greater or less than the other. This also is in accordance with the doctrine taught by the Lord himself, which is: That he and the Father are one; and that he who seeth him seeth the Father, because he is in the Father, and the Father in him; that he is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no one cometh to the Father, but by him. Hence it is evident, how much they turn aside from the way and the truth, who pass by the Lord, and immediately approach the Father."—*A. E.* 26.

"The Lord is said to be rejected, when he is not approached and worshiped and also when he is approached and worshiped only as to his human principle, and not at the same time as to his divine; wherefore at this day he is rejected by those within the church who do not approach and worship him, but pray to the Father to have compassion on them for the sake of the Son, when notwithstanding no man, or angel, can ever approach the Father, and immediately worship him, for the divinity is invisible, with which no one can be conjoined in faith and love; for that which is invisible does not fall into the idea of thought, nor, consequently into the affection of the will: and what does not fall into the idea of thought, does not fall into the faith, for what pertains to the faith must be an object of thought; so likewise what does not enter into the affection of the will, does not enter into the love, for the things which pertain to the love must affect the will of man, as all the love which man has resides in the will. But the Divine Human Principle of the Lord

falls into the idea of the thought, and thus into faith, and thence into the affection of the will, or into the love; hence it is evident that there is no conjunction with the Father unless from the Lord, and in the Lord. This the Lord himself teaches very clearly in the Evangelists; as in John: 'No one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him' (i. 18). Again: 'Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his shape' (v. 37). And in Matthew: 'Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him' (xi. 27). Hence it is plain, that the Lord is rejected by those within the church, who immediately approach the Father, and pray to him to have compassion for the sake of the Son; for these cannot do otherwise than think of the humanity of the Lord, as of the humanity of another man, thus not at the same time of his Divinity in the humanity, and still less of his Divinity conjoined with his humanity, as the soul is conjoined with the body. On such occasions, they think not of one God, but of two or three. To think thus concerning the Lord is to reject him; for not to think of his divine principle in conjunction with his human, is by separation to exclude the divine, which nevertheless are not two persons but one person, and make a one as soul and body."—*A. E.* 114.

If such then be the real internal character of this belief, its moral influence must be sufficiently deleterious to authorise a very severe sentence against it; and whether this can be justly entitled to the epithet of "uncharitable and exclusive in a shocking degree," I leave it to your calm reflection to judge. The real question is, whether what he affirms respecting the character of the belief is true.

It would give me pleasure, did my limits allow, to enter much more largely into the developments of Swedenborg's doctrine of the Trinity. But it will suffice for the present to have shown, that the barely naked assertion that he denies the common tenet of *three persons* in one God is by no means adequate to produce the conviction of his error on this point. It is far from being refuted by being simply presented as in antagonism with the popular belief. Whenever you have more to say in the negative, I shall probably have quite as much more to offer in the affirmative.

III. The *Atonement*.—"He discards the doctrine of the *Atonement* which most Christians regard as the most distinguishing and precious doctrine of revelation." If your meaning, in this indictment, is what it ought to be from the veritable grounds on which it rests, it is simply that Swedenborg discards *the established and prevalent view of the Atonement*, but not the *Atonement* in itself considered; in other words, he does not discard the *Atonement* absolutely, under every form and aspect. But if this be your meaning, it is certainly most unhappily worded, and in a way calculated to do great injustice to him, and in him to truth itself. As the expression is entirely unqualified, the reader ignorant of the facts is necessarily led to infer that Swedenborg recognizes, in no sense whatever the doctrine of Christ's mediatorial and atoning work, whereas nothing can be farther from the truth. It is perpetually insisted on throughout the whole extent of his writings, as the grand, cardinal, indispensable requisite to the salvation of the saved. I admit at once that it is not *the form of the doctrine* which has obtained currency in the Christian world that Swedenborg sets forth; neither is his doctrine of the Resurrection the same *in form* with that usually taught; but would you on this account feel authorised to say, that he *absolutely* rejects this doctrine? Does he not teach a resurrection of some kind? Indeed, I perceive upon recurring to a subsequent page that you speak on this head in a more guarded manner;—

“Swedenborg rejects the *common* doctrine of the resurrection.” Why then should you not feel required by the same sense of justice to say;—“He discards the *common* doctrine of the Atonement?” The question is obviously one of *interpretation*, and every view of Christian doctrine which professes to found itself on a fair interpretation of the Sacred Oracles is entitled to be met upon the same ground.

Nothing, I think, is more evident than that the prevalent theory of Atonement is inseparably interwoven with the prevalent doctrine of the Trinity. That theory teaches that the second Person of the Trinity, assuming human nature, makes an atonement or satisfaction to the inexorable justice of the first Person. To this Swedenborg and his adherents object, that it is impossible, on good grounds, to make such an ideal separation of the attributes of the Supreme Divinity, as shall warrant this peculiar *penal* and *vicarious* scheme of redemption. As Christ is Jehovah, and whatever Trinity there is, is to be recognized as concentrated in Jehovah, we find no basis for such a special inter-relation of Divine Persons or Functions in the economy of Salvation. As the very essence of the Deity is Love and Mercy we find ourselves utterly precluded from the recognition of any such attribute of *avenging justice* as is fundamentally involved in the established tenet; nor, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is himself the Supreme and Only Jehovah, do we know of any higher being in the universe to whom such an atonement or satisfaction can be made. If then there is no other God than the Saviour, to whom did he atone? It was not one person only in the Godhead (allowing the distinction) who was offended, but the whole; how then comes it that while the Father required an atonement, neither the Son nor the Spirit united in this demand? And how could the Son, who was equally an offended party with the Father, become surety for man, while the Father could not *because* he was an offended party? Again then we ask, if Christ is Jehovah, to whom did he make the Atonement? Did he make it to Himself? If so, upon what principle does it become available to the salvation of the sinner? This is a question to which we do not anticipate an answer.

The truth is, the whole scheme is so indissolubly connected with the prevalent Tri-personal tenet that it cannot stand without it. In rejecting that tenet Swedenborg of necessity rejects the *vicarious* nature of the atonement, and by holding forth the attribute of *justice* as merely one form of the *Divine Love*, removes the very substratum on which it rests. There is no such attribute as that of *abstract justice* armed against the offender and requiring to be propitiated by a sacrifice.

The following remarks by the well known author of the *Horæ Solitariae* are in perfect harmony with the teachings of Swedenborg on this head.

“The Divine Nature could not be contaminated by, nor hold communion with, a sinful nature: and therefore there ensued a separation of God from man, which, having every dreadful consequence to the latter, is expressed by the wrath, abhorrence, vengeance, judgment, &c. of God,—terms adapted to the workings and capacities of the human mind, and used to mark out its entire alienation (with the sad effects of it) from its Maker. There is no wrath in God, as wrath, because He is wholly love; but his separation of man from the participation of his love, with all its various blessings, operates upon the human passions, now defiled with enmity, under the notions and impressions of anger and indignation. Thus God’s love, being pure and unapproachable by sin, becomes a most dreadful and even horrible attribute to a sinner, because, as a sinner, he can never come nigh to God, never hold communion with him, nor receive delight or bles-

sedness from him. And if divine wisdom had not found a method of reconciliation, human nature would and must have sustained whatever can be conceived under the awful idea of damnation, or the state of absolute rejection from the presence of God. By these considerations it might appear, were it necessary to extend them, that enmity, sin, wrath, and misery, with other words of the like import, are all correlative terms, which only variously express the nature or effects of man's alienation from God; &c. 'On the other hand, the word love is also correlative, and entirely connected with every other divine attribute and perfection, or with whatever may be called by those names: it has, and can have, no difference from them, however distinguished by a merciful condescension, for the better comprehension of our minds. Righteousness, for instance, is only a name for this love in act and exercise; for the love of God in its energies does only what is right or righteous. Love is the motive of all his actions, according to the Scriptures; and by communicating this love, he renders it the essential principle of all righteous action in man (John iii. 16; 1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c). Truth, purity, and the like, are also but love in particular forms, actions, or aspects. In short, all the attributes and perfections of the Divine Nature have their essence in love, and the term love is but a glorious title for the grand assemblage of them, denominating (as the Bible hath) the first and supreme nature. God is love, then; uniting, as in that one attribute, all the other predicaments and glories of his majesty and goodness, not *per accidens*, but in essentiality; and with respect to his creatures, there is no grace nor act of righteousness but what is an emanation from the same principle, enlivening, invigorating, and making them happy.'"  
—*Hor. Solit., Art. LOVE.*

The object to be accomplished in the counsels of the Divine Clemency, is the restoration and reconciliation of man's alienated heart to his Maker. So long as this enmity continues it will operate to work an internal consciousness of opposition between the soul and its Divine Source. Being placed by his moral state in a posture of antagonism with the perfections of Jehovah, the sinner *feels the Divine Love itself to be to him an attribute of consuming wrath*. But the Lord's love is Love still; its nature is not changed; and what atoning sacrifice does Love demand? To say that this Love is felt by sinful man as avenging Justice is but another form of saying that the Divine Love *appears* to him as avenging Justice or wrath, and, consequently, as we have already seen that the language of Scripture is constructed very much on the principle of *appearances*, we find numerous passages which savor indeed in the *letter* of the spirit of an angry Deity, prompted by vindictive Justice, but as we rise above the literal semblances of truth into its essential reality, this apprehended attribute of Jehovah disappears and is lost in that of Love. By the same process the dogma of Atonement, as popularly held, disappears likewise, and nothing remains but that of *actual reconciliation*, which is, in fact, the true Scriptural idea of Atonement.

I will here adduce a few paragraphs from "Law's Spirit of Love," a work which, notwithstanding its occasional sprinklings of mysticism, contains a vein of the strongest reasoning in regard to the true nature and grounds of the Atonement which I have any where seen out of the New Church writings.

"The doctrine of the atonement made by Christ, and the absolute necessity and real efficacy of it, to *satisfy* the righteousness, or justice of God, is the very ground and foundation of christian redemption, and the life and strength of every part of it. But then, this very doctrine is so far from favoring the opinion of a wrath in the Deity itself, that it is an absolute full denial of it, and the strongest of demonstrations, that the wrath or resentment, that is to be pacified, or atoned, cannot possibly be in the Deity itself.

“For this wrath, that is to be *atoned* and *pacified*, is, in its whole nature, nothing else but *sin*, or *disorder* in the creature. And when sin is *extinguished* in the creature, all the wrath that is *between* God and the creature, is *fully atoned*. Search all the Bible, from one end to the other, and you will find, that the atonement of *that*, which is called the divine wrath or justice, and the *extinguishing* of sin in the creature, are only different expressions for *one and the same* individual thing. And, therefore, unless you will place sin in God, that wrath that is to be atoned or pacified, cannot be placed in him.

“The whole nature of our redemption has no other end, but to remove, or extinguish the wrath that is between God and man. When this is removed, man is *reconciled* to God. Therefore, *where* the wrath is, or *where that* is which wants to be atoned, *there* is that which is the *blameable cause* of the separation between God and man; *there* is that which Christ came into the world to extinguish, to quench, or atone. If, therefore, this wrath, which is the *blameable cause* of the separation between God and man, is in God himself; if Christ died to atone, or extinguish a wrath that was got into the holy Deity itself, then it must be said, that Christ made an atonement for God and not for man; that he died for the good and benefit of God, and not of man: and that which is called *our redemption*, ought rather to be called the redemption of God, as saving and delivering him, and not man, from his *own wrath*. This blasphemy is unavoidable, if you suppose that wrath, for which Christ died, to be a wrath in God himself.

“Again, the very nature of *atonement*, absolutely shows, that *that* which is to be atoned, cannot possibly be in God, nor even in any good being. For atonement implies the *alteration*, or removal of something that is not *as it ought to be*. And therefore, every creature, so long as it is good, and has its *proper state* of goodness, neither wants, nor can admit of any atonement, because it has nothing in it that wants to be *altered*, or *taken out* of it. And therefore, atonement cannot possibly have any place in God, because nothing in God either wants, or can receive alteration; neither can it have place in any creature, but so far as it has lost, or altered *that* which it had from God, and is fallen into disorder; and then, that which brings this creature back to its first state, which alters that which is wrong in it, and takes its evil out of it, is its *true* and *proper atonement*.

“*Water* is the proper atonement of the rage of fire; and that which *changes* a tempest into a calm, is its true atonement. And, therefore, as sure as Christ is a *propitiation* and an *atonement*, so sure is it, that *that* which he does, as a propitiation and atonement, can have no place but in altering that evil and disorder, which, in the state and life of the fallen creature, wants to be altered.

“*Hell*, *wrath*, *darkness*, *misery*, and *eternal death*, mean the same thing through all scripture, and these are the only things from which we want to be redeemed; and where there is nothing of hell, there, there is nothing of *wrath*, nor any thing that wants, or can admit of the benefits of the atonement made by Christ. Either, therefore, all hell is in the essence of the holy Deity, or nothing that wants to be atoned by the merits and death of Christ, can possibly be in the Deity itself.

“The apostle saith, that ‘we are by nature, children of wrath;’ the same thing as when the Psalmist saith, ‘I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.’ And, therefore, that wrath, which *wants* the atonement of the sufferings, blood, and death of Christ, is no other than that *sin*, or *sinful*



*state* in which we are naturally born. But now, if this *wrath* could be supposed to be in the Deity itself, then it would follow, that by 'being by nature, children of wrath,' we should thereby be the *true children* of God, we should not want any atonement, or new birth from above, to make us *partakers of the divine nature*, because that wrath that was in us, would be our dwelling in God, and he in us.

"Again, all scripture teaches us that God *wills* and desires the removal, or extinction of *that wrath*, which is *betwixt* God and the creature; and therefore, all scripture teaches, that the wrath is not in God; for God cannot will the removal, or alteration of anything that is in himself; this is as impossible, as for him to *will* the extinction of his own omnipotence. Nor can there be anything in God, contrary to, or against his own will: and yet, if God *wills* the extinction of a wrath, that is in himself, it must be in him, contrary to, or against his own will.

"This, I presume, is enough to show you, that the atonement made by Christ, is itself the greatest of all proofs, that it was not to atone or extinguish any wrath in the Deity itself; nor, indeed, in any way to affect, or alter any quality, or temper in the divine mind, but purely and solely to overcome, and remove all that death, and hell, and wrath, and darkness, that had opened itself in the nature, birth, and life of fallen man."—*Law's Spirit of Love*, p. 67-71

The grand purpose, as we have remarked, of the Divine Mercy is the re-conjunction of the sundered soul of man with Jehovah, the only source of Life and Bliss. But how was this to be effected? In the nature of the case it could not be by the substitution of an intermediate being between the Creator and the creature, who should take upon himself the penalty due to sin, for there neither is nor can be such a being in the universe, and even if there were, it is impossible to show how the translation of punishment from the guilty to the innocent satisfies the demands of Justice, whose language is, "The soul that sinneth *it* shall die." Nor have I ever seen, in all the multitudinous volumes and tractates which have come under my eye in reference to the current doctrine of the Atonement, any clear development of the *precise mode* in which the expiatory work of Christ is made to redound to the benefit of the sinner. We are not told *how* it is that the *satisfaction satisfies*. On the contrary, it is rather represented as an *ultimate fact* in the moral history of the universe, into the rationale of which it is not proper to push inquiry.

Still the question recurs, How is man to be again conjoined—brought to *at-one-ment*—with his Maker, from whom he has become separated by sin? This question can only be answered by first attaining a correct view of the *state* to which man had reduced himself by his iniquities, for as the Atonement was intended to remedy the consequences of the apostacy, the means employed must be such, in their own nature, as to answer this end. Now nothing is more evident from the infallible oracles, than the fact of the existence and agency of evil spirits, and that these spirits live and act in conjunction with the ruling loves of man; for likeness of affection necessarily conjoins, while contrariety of affection necessarily dissevers. While man retained his primeval purity, he was *united* to God by loving and abiding in good. By forsaking good and imbibing the love of evil, he became *separated* from God, and from the same cause became conjoined with the infernal spirits, who were in similar loves. He thus rendered himself liable to be acted upon, tempted, governed, made captive, and bound by them, as a complete minion of hell. From this fearful bondage he was *una-*

ble to liberate himself, for no being can *directly* will opposite to a dominant evil love. In these circumstances, the paramount evil in man and the power of hell mutually strengthened each other. Delighting in his chains, they were continually drawn closer and closer around him, till a voluntary release became utterly hopeless. The ever merciful Jehovah still purposed his recovery, but this could not be effected except by his deliverance from the thralldom of the infernal hosts by whom he had been enslaved. But an *immediate* approach, by the ardors of the Infinite Love, either to fallen spirits or fallen men would have been followed by their instant destruction. In this sense it is emphatically true, that "God out of Christ is a consuming fire." The bright and burning beams of the Sun of Heaven must be shrouded and tempered through some interposing medium ere they can safely penetrate to the infernal abyss and reach the inmost spirits of its tenants. In this emergency the assumption of the Human by the Divine was the sublime resort. Jehovah became incarnate and by clothing himself with our nature, in its lowest principles and at the very extreme of its infirmities and degradation, put himself into the capacity of entering into combat with the powers of hell and by receiving into himself and overcoming their temptations, to achieve the very victory which was requisite for man's deliverance from their chains. This then was the *first great work* of his mediation—the subjugation of the hells in his own Divino-human person, and the removal from man of their soul-destroying influences, to such a degree as to render him capable, by the aid of the divine influx, of counter-willing their hellish promptings and of a new reception of Truth, Goodness, and celestial Life. This was the essence of the Atonement, which in the nature of things could be of no efficacy except so far as it resulted in *actual reconciliation*. The passion of the cross, so far from having concentrated in it the chief and essential virtue of the Atonement, was merely the last stage—the closing scene—of temptation and combat in which, during his whole earthly life, the Divine Redeemer was engaged. The blood-sweating at Gethsemane, and the blood-shedding at Calvary, were but part and parcel of the same atoning work which he was all the time accomplishing from the manger to the tomb.

In this process of combat and conquest, and running parallel with it, was the progressive Glorification of our Lord's Human nature, which is faintly imaged forth in the onward course of man's regeneration. Every victory achieved was an advancement of the Human towards the Divine, just as with the regenerating Christian every accession to his spiritual graces is a real bringing down of the divine principles into the ultimates of his earthly and corporeal nature, and a consequent lifting up or sublimation of that nature to a likeness to the divine, which must necessarily result in the glorification even of his "body of vileness." But this point is developed with so much clearness and the whole polity of Atonement set forth in so striking a manner by Mr. Noble in his recent volume of doctrinal Lectures, that I shall draw upon his pages for a better view of the subject than I could myself present.

"The true view of the doctrine of Atonement, that is, Agreement or Reconciliation, is this; That by the assumption of human nature by Jehovah in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the opposition or contrariety which previously existed between man and God was removed, first in his own assumed Humanity, and then, by the influence of his Spirit proceeding from his Humanity when

fully glorified and united to the Essential Divinity, in those who should acknowledge him and accept his mercies. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ consisted in the total sanctification and dedication of his human nature, till it was entirely assimilated to his Divine Nature, rendered itself Divine, and made the proper organ for the indwelling of the whole fullness of the Godhead, and for the exercise of all the energies of the Divine Omnipotence; just as man's body is the proper organ for the indwelling of the soul, and for the exercise of all the powers belonging to the compound man. By our salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, is meant, in a natural sense, by his death: without which we could not have been saved, because without it his Humanity could not have been glorified; it being absolutely necessary that the merely human life should be extinguished before the purely Divine life could descend and take its place. And the Mediation, Intercession, and Advocateship of Jesus Christ, include, both the access which is afforded for man to God by the Medium of the Glorified Humanity of Jesus Christ; and the communication from God to man, by the same blessed Medium, of all the gifts necessary to his salvation. Thus most true it is, that by the assumption and glorification of his Humanity, He made atonement for us,—that is, effected agreement between man and God, by clothing Himself with a Divine Manhood and uniting this with the Essential Godhead, and by enabling created man to desist from that which was the cause of his separation. The prophet says, 'It is your iniquities which have separated between you and your God:—the removal then of these iniquities, and the reception by man of heavenly grace, from God to adorn his mind in their place, is the making of an atonement, an *at-one-ment* or *agreement*. This would ever have been impossible, had not the Lord presented the graces of his Spirit in a form, and with a power, capable of reaching man in the state of separation in which he stood; and this could only be, by the Holy Spirit, or divine influence, proceeding from his Divine or Glorified Human Person. Before, then, such a Holy spirit could be given, or such a divine influence be imparted, it was necessary that the Humanity should be assumed by the Lord, and united to the Divinity. That the consequence of this, to those who look to the Lord in this his form of accommodation to their state, would be, the communication of every grace necessary to their reception of spiritual life, is declared by the Lord when, in a sublime passage quoted in a former Lecture, He 'stood and cried' (as it is expressed, to denote the ardor of his Divine Love, and the earnestness of his desire for man's salvation), 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink:—to thirst, is ardently to desire the truths of salvation: to go to Jesus, is to apply to Jehovah in his Humanity as their only Source: and to drink, is to receive and appropriate them. The effect hereof, in enlightening the mind and imparting spiritual life, He expresses by going on to say, 'He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;' which the evangelist explains by adding, 'This spake he of the Spirit, which they who believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.' If then his glorification, which took place at his resurrection and ascension, and of which his death, as to the maternal humanity, was a necessary preliminary, was requisite for the impartation of the saving mercies here offered, how easy is it to see what was the nature of the Atonement thus accomplished!—namely, agreement or concord between God and man, effected by

the removal of the enmity in man's heart, by the communication of that spiritual drink, which the Lord here declares is to be received from his Glorified Humanity,—that is, of those graces of the Spirit, that living water, which the evangelist affirms could not be given till his Humanity was glorified.”—*Nobles Lectures*, p. 378–380.

Such then is the view of the Atonement presented in the Theology of the New Church. While it ignores the common theory of *substituted punishment*, it recognizes and insists upon the absolute and indispensable necessity of the Lord's assumption of human nature and of his suffering and dying *for us—in our behalf—* but not *in our stead*.\* We recognize the Lord in his Humanity, as a real sacrifice offered *for us*, to effect atonement or reconciliation between man and God, as Jesus says, “*for their sakes I sanctify myself*,” and as Paul declares, “Christ our Passover is sacrificed *for us* :” not that the Father's anger required appeasement by the sight of the sufferings of his Son, but because, when the Humanity was thus sacrificed, that is, sanctified, and united to the Essential Divinity, the divine influences were accommodated to man's state, so as to be operative to the renewal of his heart and mind—to *his* sanctification also. Thus “he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

Let me here remark that we confess to no departure, in this view, from what the Scriptures so frequently declare respecting our being saved “by the blood of Christ.” So far as “blood” stands as an equivalent for the sufferings and death of Christ, which we are taught to regard as the appointed and indispensable *means* or *medium* of our salvation, we fully recognize the great truth involved in the expression. But this is not its dominant sense in our vocabulary, nor do we by any means affix the ordinary ideas of the religious world to the phrase. We cannot conceive of the mere shedding of our Lord's material blood as making atonement for sin or washing away its stains. We are forced to read the term, for the most part, as a symbol of some spiritual and divine principle which puts forth its efficacy upon the inner man. Nothing can be more palpably obvious than this from the words of the Saviour himself. “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day: For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.”—*John* vi. 53–56. These passages we feel

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\* “The God of christians is so far from being *implacable* and *revengeful* that you have seen it proved, from text to text, that the whole form and manner of our redemption comes wholly from the free, antecedent, infinite love and goodness of God towards fallen man—that the *innocent Christ* did not suffer to quiet an angry Deity, but merely as *co-operating, assisting, and uniting* with that love of God, which desired our salvation—that he did not suffer *in our place or stead*, but only *on our account*, which is quite a different matter. And to say, that he suffered *in our place or stead*, is as absurd, as contrary to Scripture, as to say, that he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, *in our place and stead*, that we might be excused from it. For his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, are all of them equally *on our account*, for our sake, for our good and benefit, but none of them possibly to be *in our stead*.

“And as scripture and truth affirm, that he ascended into heaven *for us*, though neither scripture nor truth will allow it to be *in our place and stead*: so, for the same reasons, it is strictly true, that he suffered, and died *for us*, though no more *in our place or stead*, nor any more desirable to be so, than his ascension into heaven for us should be *in our place and stead*.”—*Law's Spirit of Love*, p. 96.

ourselves authorized to make a general standard of interpretation for other passages which declare the dependence of our salvation upon the blood of Christ.

*We are saved by a blood which can be drank.* So also in regard to a multitudinous class of kindred passages which ascribe our salvation to the sufferings and death of Christ—which speak of the ransom that he paid for us—which refer us to the stripes and wounds inflicted upon him by which we are healed—and which teach us to glory in his cross. All such language is in perfect harmony with the above view of Christ's mediatorial and atoning work, because everything of this nature entered into that economy of *means* by which our recovery from sin and death was to be effected. And we hesitate not to say that the diversity of application in regard to this term which obtains in the various defences of the popular dogma of Atonement is wholly unwarranted. On what grounds are the plain declarations of our Lord in the Gospels to be strained to accommodation with the occasional apostolic usage rather than the reverse? We perceive, I repeat, no violence done to the true import of the Word by our construction.\*

I regret that my limits do not admit of a more extended detail of the various features of the scheme of Atonement as presented by Swedenborg. I am aware that your mind will still be apt to labor under some difficulty of apprehension as to the precise manner in which this doctrine of the progressive Glorification of our Lord's Humanity bears upon the process of regeneration in the souls of the saved. But deeper reflection will probably lead to a clear perception of the fact, that the requisite renewing influence which is to implant the Divine Life in the soul of man could only emanate from God *as* man, and though this influence is in ordinary theological parlance ascribed to the Holy Spirit as a Person, yet you will scarcely fail to conclude, that it is in fact nothing else than the Divine vivifying Sphere proceeding from the Glorified Humanity of God-man Mediator, who, as the second Adam, becomes the true source and fountain of spiritual life as really as the first Adam was to the race the author of natural life.† You will consequently perceive that the grand character of this scheme, so to term it, is, that it makes the whole matter of Atonement essentially *subjective*. It divests

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\* "Made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—In the literal sense of the Word, by the blood of the Lamb is understood the passion of the cross, but in the internal or spiritual sense is understood the divine truth proceeding from the Lord; for by this man is purified from falsities and evils, that is, his garments are made white. The passion of the cross was the last temptation of the Lord, by which he fully subjugated the hells, and glorified his humanity; which things being accomplished and completed, the Lord sent the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, by which is understood the divine truth proceeding from his glorified humanity, as the Lord himself teaches in John (vii. 39). The same truth is taught by the Lord in many other parts of the Word. By this, therefore, namely, by divine truth, when it is received, man is reformed and regenerated by the Lord, and saved, but not (merely) by the shedding of blood on the cross."—*A. E.* 476.

† "The matter stood thus; the seed of all mankind was in the loins of fallen *Adam*. This was unalterable in the nature of the thing, and therefore all *mankind* must come forth in his fallen state. Neither can they ever be in any state whatever, whether earthly or heavenly, but by having an earthly *man*, or a heavenly *man*, for their father. For *mankind*, as such, must of all necessity be born of, and have that nature which it hath, from a *man*. And this is the true ground and absolute necessity of the one Mediator, the *man* Christ Jesus. For seeing *mankind*, as such, must have that birth and nature which they have, from *man*, seeing they never could have had any relation to paradise, or any possibility of partaking of it, but because they had a paradisaical man for their father; never could have had any relation to this earthly world, or any possibility of being born earthly, but because they had an earthly man for their father; and seeing all this must be unalterably so for ever, it plainly follows, there was an utter impossibility for the seed of *Adam* ever to come out of its fallen state, or ever have another, or better

it entirely of the aspect of a merely *extraneous* and *forensic* transaction—a sort of *governmental commutation*—a certain something wrought in honor of *abstract law*, the effects of which are *judicially accounted* to the benefit of the penitent offender. In a word it comes near to making what you would probably term the *application of the Atonement to be the Atonement itself*. It views it incessantly in the most indissoluble connection with the *life* which it imparts. The Atonement can scarcely be said to exist for him who is not positively, by means of it, *reconciled* to God by becoming partaker of the *love* of God. Its object was not so much to take away the punishment of sin by suffering its penalty, as to destroy the power of sin and to infuse a new and divine life into the soul. By the view now presented we can see *how* it is that the Atonement has this effect. On the common view I believe it to be impossible to obtain a perfectly clear apprehension of the *mode* in which Christ's Atonement is made available to salvation; and accordingly Dr. Magee himself, the champion of the orthodox doctrine, remarks;—"I know not, nor does it concern me to know, *in what manner* the sacrifice of Christ is connected with the forgiveness of sin." To us it is the very climax of all theological paradoxes, that we are called to receive and rest in a scheme of salvation of the true nature and grounds of which we cannot gain a distinct intellectual conception. If others think it their *duty* to content themselves with a mere implicit faith in a matter involving interests so vast, we do not.

From what has now been said you can scarcely fail to be convinced of one thing—the immense diversity of the Atonement taught by Swedenborg from that exhibited in most of the Christian schools with which you are familiar. This is too palpable to need further enlargement at my hands. I will leave it for Swedenborg himself to display it in his own language.

"What doctrine doth more abound in the books of the orthodox at this day, or what is more zealously taught and insisted on in the schools of divinity, or more constantly preached and cried up in the pulpit, than this—that God the Father, being full of wrath against mankind, not only separated them from himself, but also sentenced them to universal damnation, thus excommunicated them from his favor; but because he was gracious and merciful, that he persuaded, or excited, his Son to descend, and take upon himself the determined curse, and thus expiate the wrath of his Father; and that thus, and no otherwise, could the Father be prevailed upon to look again with an eye of mercy on mankind? As also, that this was effected by the Son, who, in taking upon himself the curse pronounced against men suffered himself to be scourged by the Jews, to be spit upon, and lastly, to be crucified as the *accursed of God* (Deut. xxi. 23); and that the Father was by this means appeased, and, out of love towards his Son, cancelled the sentence of damnation, yet only in favor of those for whom the Son should intercede, who was thus to be a perpetual Mediator in the presence of the Father? These and the like doctrines are at this day trumpeted forth from the pulpit, and re-echoed from the walls of the temple, as sound is re-echoed in a wood, so that the ears of all present are filled with it. But who, that hath his reason enlightened and restored to health by the Word, cannot see that God is mercy and clemency itself, because he is love itself and goodness itself, and that these constitute his essence; and consequently, that it is a contradiction to say, that mercy itself, or goodness itself, can behold man with an angry eye, and sentence him to damnation, and still abide in his own divine es-

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life, than they had from *Adam*, unless such a son of man could be brought into existence, as had the same relation to all mankind, as *Adam* had, was as much *in them all*, as *Adam* was, and had as full power, according to the *nature of things*, to give a heavenly life to all the seed in *Adam's* loins, as *Adam* had to bring them forth in earthly flesh and blood."—*Law's Spirit of Love*, p. 114.

sence? Such dispositions are never ascribed to a good man or an angel of heaven, but only to a wicked man and spirit of hell; it is, therefore, blasphemy to ascribe them to God. But, if we inquire into the cause of this false judgment, we shall find it to be this, that men have mistaken the passion of the cross for redemption itself: hence have flowed those opinions, as falses flow in a continued series from one false principle; or, as from a cask of vinegar nothing but vinegar can come forth; or, as from an insane mind we can expect nothing but insanity. For one point being taken for granted, the conclusions that are made from it must be of the same family, because they are included in it, and are severally and successively produced from it; and from this one point concerning the passion of the cross, as constituting the sum of redemption, many more shocking and impious opinions, scandalous and disgraceful to God, may still take rise and go forth into the world, until that prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, where it is said, 'The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they stumble in judgment; all tables are full of vomit and filthiuss' (xxviii. 7, 8).

"From this idea concerning God and redemption, the whole system of theology hath lost its spirituality, and is become in the lowest degree natural. This was the necessary consequence of ascribing to God merely natural properties and attributes; and yet on the idea entertained of God, and that of redemption, which makes one with salvation, everything that hath relation to the church depends. For that idea is like the head, from which all parts of the body are derived; when, therefore, that idea is spiritual, everything that belongeth to the church becometh spiritual also; but when that idea is natural, then everything belonging to the church becomes natural. Now, forasmuch as the idea of God and of redemption is become merely natural, that is, sensual and corporeal, it follows that all those things are merely natural, which the heads and members of the church have maintained, and do maintain, in their systems and forms of doctrine. The reason why that idea must of necessity give birth to nothing but falses is, because the natural man is in continual opposition to the spiritual man, and thus regardeth spiritual things as airy and visionary phantasies. It may, therefore, be truly said, that in consequence of that sensual idea concerning redemption, and thence concerning God, the ways toward heaven which are those that lead to the Lord God the Saviour, are beset with thieves and robbers (John x. 1, 8, 9), and that the doors of the temple are thrown down, so that dragons and owls, and the *tzjim* and *jiim* have entered, and make a concert of dreadful discord. That this idea concerning redemption, and concerning God, pervades the faith which prevails at this day throughout all christendom, is an acknowledged truth; for that faith requires men to pray to God the Father, that he would remit their sins for the sake of the cross and blood of His Son; and to God the Son, that He would pray and intercede for them; and to God the Holy Ghost, that he would justify and sanctify them; and what is all this, but to supplicate three distinct Gods, one after another? And, in such a case, how can the notion which the mind forms of the divine government differ from that of an aristocratical or hierarchical government? or from that of the triumvirate which once existed at Rome, if only instead of a triumvirate it be called a tripersonate? And in such a government, what is easier than for the devil to put in practice the old maxim, *divide and govern*? that is, to distract men's minds and excite rebellious notions, sometimes against one God, and sometimes against another, as hath been his practice since the time of Arius to this day; and thus to thrust the Lord God the Saviour from His throne, 'who hath all power in heaven and in earth' (Matt. xxviii. 18), and to exalt some creature of his own in His place, and to enjoin men to worship him, or, when the folly of this is detected, to destroy the worship of the Lord Himself together with that of the imaginary idol."—T. C. R. 132.

† IV. *Justification by Faith alone.* "Swedenborg utterly discards the doctrine of justification by faith alone without the deeds of the law:—He rejects not only the perversions of the doctrine, but the doctrine itself—the doctrine taught in Scripture, and confirmed by the sober consideration of the most enlightened believers, that we are forgiven and saved, not for any works of righteousness which we have done, but by the grace of God through the blood of the cross; that we are justi-

fied by faith through the mediation of Christ, who died for us, and bore our sins in his own body on the tree." In a subsequent paragraph you aim to cut off all retreat from the ground of the broadest denial of the doctrine in its truest forms.

"It may perhaps be said, that he meant only to discard the doctrine, that we are justified by a dead faith, a faith not productive of good works. But it is a sufficient reply to this, that he expressly discarded the doctrine of justification, *as held by Luther and the Reformed Churches*, and it is well known, and he ought to have known, that this was not the doctrine which they maintained. The doctrine which he opposed was the very doctrine which Paul taught, and which results from a just view of man's sinfulness, of the death of Christ, and of salvation by grace."—p. 124.

It is, with the receivers of Swedenborg, a matter of very small moment what Luther or the Reformed Churches may have held upon this or any other subject, when we have direct access to the fountain of truth, and are competent to judge for ourselves of its genuine teaching. Nor should we here feel at liberty, were we forced—as we are not—to acknowledge any conflict on this head between Paul and Christ, to postpone the authority of the former to that of the latter. We cannot consider ourselves precluded from the privilege and duty of viewing every Christian doctrine in the light of its own intrinsic nature, in its just relations to the attributes of God, and in its legitimate bearings on the principles of our moral being. In all these respects we are sure that the genuine doctrines taught by the Saviour of men will stand the most rigid ordeal to which they can be submitted, and they, of course, must be the standard to which every other enunciation, whether inspired or uninspired, is to be referred. As to Luther, the world is doubtless very much indebted to him for the noble stand which he took in opposition to the errors and corruptions of the Romish Church, but his determined purpose to break with that Church, and to erect an impassable barrier between Papist and Protestant, caused him to go, in one respect, too far. He might have performed an invaluable service to the truth by reforming the error of a Trinity of Divine *Persons*, which has poured a deluge of falsities over Christendom, but in an evil hour he proclaimed the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as the grand article of a standing or falling church, instead of that of three Essentials in the one Person of our Lord, and thus infixed a pernicious tenet in the very heart and core of Christianity. This will doubtless strike you as a very heavy and almost sacrilegious charge against the memory of a great and good man. But I abate nothing of the strength of the assertion. I cannot regard any *mere* man—any man left solely to his own resources—as infallible, and in the case of Luther and his Protestant followers, I scruple not to say that they have built their doctrine of Justification mainly on a single passage of Paul (Rom. iii. 28), and that too erroneously understood;—"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Here it is taken for granted that the word "law" means the law of the Decalogue, the moral law, instead of the ceremonial law, or the Jewish religion in general, which is its frequent sense in his epistles. Again, it is assumed that "faith" imports the individual grace so named, instead of the *general Christian system*, which is named from one of its principal features. When he speaks of faith as one of the distinguishing graces of the individual Christian, he is very far from making it the whole groundwork of Justification. "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." This surely has very



little the air of one who designs to teach that man is justified by faith alone. It is charity and not faith which constitutes the foundation of a justified state. Thus again elsewhere; "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." Here we have the apostle's expressly declared estimate of the comparative value of the individual graces of charity and faith. What can be plainer? And who can suppose that he ever thought of teaching, that man is to be justified by the single grace of faith, and nothing else? It is clear, moreover, that in making the apostle teach the exclusive pre-eminence of faith when he says, that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," it is strangely forgotten that the same apostle asserts, and in the same epistle, that "not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law shall be justified." Does the apostle contradict himself? Or are we not forced rather to the inference, that there is something more requisite to constitute a justified state than mere faith? The truth is, we are, as we conceive, correctly taught that the distinction so studiously insisted upon in the Protestant creeds between *justification* and *sanctification* is little else than a theological fiction. We, at least, are unable to perceive any essential difference in the interior nature of the two. To *justify*, as ascribed to God, is to *make just*, to *sanctify* is to *make holy*. How does the *justice* or *righteousness* of a Christian differ from his *holiness*?

In all that we have above said respecting the teachings of Paul on this subject, we regard him as holding and inculcating a doctrine precisely in accordance with that of the Saviour himself. The tenor of His announcements uniformly is, that man is to be judged by the character of his *works*, and his *works* are the faithful index of his *life* or *love*, which if good is the very essence of *charity*. It is by this principle that he is saved, and by no other principle can he be justified than that by which he is saved. I adduce the following out of hundreds of passages speaking the same language.

"'EVERY TREE WHICH BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT, is hewn down, and cast into the fire' (Matt. vii. 19, 20, 21). 'He that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth it, WHICH ALSO BEARETH FRUIT, AND BRINGETH FORTH' (Matt. xiii. 9 to 23). 'Jesus said, My mother and My brethren are they which hear the Word of God, and do it' (Luke viii. 21). We know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshiper of God, and DOETH HIS WILL, him He heareth' (John ix. 31). 'If ye know these things, happy are ye IF YE DO THEM' (John xiii. 17). 'He that hath My commandments, and DOETH THEM, he it is that loveth Me, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him' (John xiv. 15 to 22). 'Herein is My Father glorified, THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT' (John xv. 8, 16). 'Not the hearers of the law are just before God, BUT THE DOERS OF THE LAW' (Rom. ii. 13; James i. 22). 'God, in the day of wrath, and of just judgment, will render to every man ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS' (Rom. ii. 4, 6). 'For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive THE THINGS DONE IN HIS BODY, ACCORDING TO THAT HE HATH DONE, whether it be good or bad' (2. Cor. v. 10). 'The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, and then He shall reward every one ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS' (Matt. xvi. 27). 'I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM' (Rev. xiv. 13). 'A book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to those things which were written in the books, ALL ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS' (Rev. xx. 12). 'Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man ACCORDING TO HIS WORK' (Rev. xxii. 12). 'Jehovah, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and ACCORDING TO THE FRUIT OF HIS DOINGS' (Jer. xxxii. 19). 'I will pun-

ish them for their ways, and VISIT UPON THEM FOR THEIR DOINGS' (Hosea iv. 9). 'According to our ways, and ACCORDING TO OUR DOINGS, so hath he dealt with us' (Zech. i. 6)."

What can be plainer from all this, than that a man's *works* or *doings*, the natural product and expression of his internal state as to love, are indispensable requisites in the article of Justification? Can it be for a moment supposed that judgment shall hereafter be regulated *according to man's works*, while those works have, at the same time, nothing in them to affect judgment, consequently neither to justify nor condemn? To *justify*, when spoken of a human judge, is to *pronounce just* in view of evidence. When spoken of God, who needs no evidence, but reads the heart, it denotes to *pronounce just on the ground of being made just*. It is with Him a judgment according to truth, and to suppose that all this proceeds simply on the naked ground of *faith* is to contravene the whole tenor of Scripture, as well as to set aside the clearest perceptions of the human mind. It is nothing short of the rankest Solifidianism—an error which has pervaded what are termed the *evangelical* churches to their very core, and is continually working out the most deplorable evils in legionary multitude. You will be at liberty to complain of this as an unjust and unchristian sentence when the *truth* of my position, theologically considered, is disproved.

Indeed I am forced for myself to believe that in the controversy between the Catholics and the Protestants on this doctrine of Justification, the advantage redounds beyond all question to the former. I speak of course of the Catholic doctrine as *theoretically* and not as *practically* held. The following contrasted view of the two schemes is taken from "Moehler's Symbolism." "The notions which the Protestants form of justification, is thus briefly defined in the Formulary of Concord: 'The word "justification" signifies, the declaring any one just, the acquitting him of sins, and the eternal chastisements of sin, on account of the justice of Christ which is by God imputed to faith; and it expressly says, our justice is not *of us*. With these declarations Calvin perfectly coincides. Justification, in the Protestant sense, is a judicial act of God, whereby the believing sinner is delivered from the punishments of sin, but not from sin itself: while Catholics teach that, on one hand, the remission of sin, the debt as well as the penalty, and on the other hand, positive sanctification, follows in a like way, through the divine act of justification. The great difference between the Confessions consists, accordingly, in this,—that, according to the Catholic doctrine, the justice of Christ, in the act of justification, is immediately appropriated by the believer, becoming part of his inward self, and changing his whole moral existence; while, according to the Protestant system, justice remains in Christ, passes not into the inward life of the believer, and remains in a purely outward relation to him; covering his injustice, not only past, but still outstanding, since by justification the will is not healed. We therefore may say, according to Catholic principles, Christ, by justification, stamps inwardly and outwardly his living impress on the believer; so that the latter, though a feeble and imperfect, becometh yet a real, copy of the type. On the other hand, according to the Protestant doctrine, Christ casts on the believer his shadow only, under which his continued sinfulness is merely not observed by God. Hence the explicit remark of the Formulary of Concord, that the faithful, on account of the obedience of Christ, are looked upon as just, although by vir-

tue of corrupt nature they be truly sinners, and remain such even unto death.' ”  
 —*Moehler's Symbolism*, p. 194.

That Swedenborg's view of the doctrine is much more in accordance with the Catholic than the Protestant, is beyond question. If this fact shall of itself be deemed sufficient to condemn it, I am sure the sentence will be pronounced by men of narrow minds, who are incompetent to see *any* truth where they cannot but see a great deal of error.

One who has been conversant, as I have been, with the distinguishing doctrines termed *doctrines of grace*, among *evangelical* Christians, will of course anticipate the objection that will at once utter itself against what I have now advanced. It proceeds upon a total disregard of the great principle of Atonement by which the demands of the law were satisfied by the death, sufferings, and merit of Christ, and an everlasting righteousness by this means brought in, the imputation of which to the believer is the only possible ground of his Justification—an imputation which is received by faith alone, as otherwise it could not be of grace. This grand cardinal principle you understand Swedenborg as denying, and in this you are undoubtedly correct, as the system which he has propounded knows nothing of any such scheme of diplomatic redemption, as shall save man by a putative transfer of moral character. It declares this scheme to be not only in the highest degree unscriptural and unreasonable, but intrinsically impossible. “That the merits of the Lord,” says Swedenborg, “are imputed to men, which doctrine is maintained at the present day, is an entire impossibility; the merits of the Lord are in general two—first, that of having subjugated the hells, and second that it glorified His Humanity, or of having made it divine; these merits could not possibly be imputed to any man, for they are infinite and divine; but by them the Lord has acquired the power of saving all them who come unto Him, who address their worship and prayers to Him, and who examine themselves, and shun all evils they experience in themselves as sins against God.” The doctrine of the New Church is, that “he that doeth righteousness is righteous.” It sees no possibility of one's being saved by a righteousness which is merely *imputed* without being *appropriated*, nor can it conceive it of such appropriation by faith alone without the co-operation of love, and consequently it knows nothing of a justification in which *simple faith* is the only principle concerned. Still it acknowledges no *merit* in the act of *loving affiance* by which the soul cleaves to Christ as a Saviour. It is all the fruit of his abounding grace and goodness—all the result of his mediatorial life, sufferings, and death. If we believe, love, and obey, it is solely because we receive from Him the ability to do it. And is not this putting honor upon his offices and giving Him the full glory of our salvation? How otherwise shall we do it? If this view of the subject is deemed derogatory to anything He has wrought in our behalf, may I ask in what respect? As we are very tender upon the point of rendering all due honor and glory to our Divine Redeemer, we would fain be informed in what particular any one of our tenets comes short of it.

It would seem that you intended to utter a very emphatic condemnation of Swedenborg's teachings on this subject when you say, that “he expressly discarded the doctrine of Justification, as held by Luther and the Reformed Churches, and it is well known, and he ought to have known, that this was not the doctrine which they maintained.” If you will read the treatise entitled “Brief Ex-

position," I think you will be forced to admit, that if there ever was a man who understood, to their minutest tittle, the peculiar and distinguishing doctrines of the Reformers on this subject, and the precise shades of their difference from the Romish formularies, that man was Swedenborg. The work in question is an elaborate *examen* of the precise points of difference between the Romish and Protestant symbols of faith, and for acute discrimination and masterly analysis, it is unrivalled. A body of flesh was never more skillfully dissected by the scalpel of the anatomist than is the body of divinity contained in these two creeds by the pen of our author. The conclusion to which he comes is thus stated, after quoting largely from the Augsburg Confession.

"What nation is there upon the face of the earth, possessed of religion and sound reason, that does not know and believe, that there is one God, and that to do evils is contrary to Him, and that to do good is well pleasing to Him, and that man must do this from his soul, from his heart, and from his strength, although it is by influx from God; and that herein consists religion? Who therefore does not see, that to confess three Persons in the Godhead, and to assert that in good works there is nothing of salvation, is to separate religion from the Church? Yet so it is asserted in these words, 'That faith justifies without good works,' 'that works are not necessary to salvation, nor to faith, because salvation and faith are neither preserved nor retained by good works,' consequently, that there is no bond of conjunction between faith and good works: it is indeed said afterwards, 'that good works nevertheless follow faith, as fruit is produced from a tree,' but then let us ask, who does them, nay, who thinks of them, or who is spontaneously led to perform them, while a person knows or believes that they do not at all contribute to salvation, and also, that no one can do any good thing towards salvation of himself, and so on? If it be alleged that the leaders of the church have still conjoined faith with good works, it may be said in reply, that this conjunction, when closely inspected, is not conjunction, but mere adjunction, and this only like a superfluous appendage, that neither coheres nor adheres in any other manner than as a dark background to a portrait which serves to set off the figure represented, and give it more the appearance of life: it may be said further, that inasmuch as religion has relation to life, and this consists in good works according to the truths of faith, it is evident that real religion is the portrait or figure represented of itself, and not the mere shady appendage; yea, that when good works are regarded as such an appendage, they must be reputed by many as of no more account than the tail of a horse, which, as contributing nothing to the horse's strength, may be cut off at pleasure. Who can rationally conclude otherwise, while he understands such expressions as these according to their obvious meaning: 'That it is a folly to imagine that the works of the second table of the Decalogue justify in the sight of God,' and these: 'That if any one believes he shall therefore obtain salvation, because he hath charity, he brings a reproach upon Christ;' as also these: 'That good works are utterly to be excluded, in treating of justification and eternal life;' with more to the same purpose? Who, therefore, when he reads afterwards, that good works necessarily follow faith, and that if they do not follow, the faith is a false and not a true faith, with more to the same purpose, attends to it? or if he attends to it, understands whether such good works are attended with any perception or consciousness? Yet good which proceeds from man without his having a perception or consciousness of it, has no more life in it than if it came from a statue. But if we inquire more deeply into the rise of this doctrine it will appear as though the leading Reformers first laid down faith alone as their rule, in order that they might be severed from the Roman Catholics, as mentioned above, and that afterwards they adjoined thereto the works of charity, that their system might not appear to contradict the Sacred Scriptures; but have the semblance of religion, and thus be salved over."—*Brief Expos.* p. 46.

The question now arises whether this is a just and true exhibition of the Protestant doctrine on this head. If not, in what respects is it erroneous? What is the real relation which works bear to faith in the matter of Justification? Do

works contribute *anything* towards placing the sinner in a justified state? If so, how is it that a man is justified by faith alone? If they are *not* brought into the account in this transaction, how has Swedenborg misrepresented the doctrine? And what am I to understand by the terms of your own explicit charge, that he “utterly discards the doctrine of justification *by faith alone without the deeds of the law*?” If you regard him as in error on this head, it can only be because *you*, at least, exclude everything but faith from the requisites to Justification. Is this the fact? Do you maintain that Charity, or works of charity, have absolutely nothing to do in the process by which a man is *declared to be just* in the sight of God? If not—if you contend for something more—what is it, and what is its precise relation to the justifying faith? What, moreover, do you mean by saying that the doctrine which Swedenborg discards is not the doctrine taught by Luther and the Reformers? Did not Luther deny that charity, or works of charity, had anything to do with a believer's Justification? Hear his own words. “Our papists and sophists have taught the like, to wit, that we should believe in Christ, and that faith was the ground-work of salvation; but, nevertheless, that this faith could not justify a man, unless it were the *fides formata*; that is to say, unless it first received its right form from charity. Now this is not the truth, but an idle, fictitious illusion, and a false, deceitful misrepresentation of the Gospel. On this account, what the senseless sophists have taught respecting the *fides formata*, that is to say, the faith which should receive its true form and shape from charity, is mere idle talk. For that faith alone justifies which apprehends Christ by the word of Scripture, and which adorns or decorates itself with Him, and not the faith which embraces charity.”—(*Works*, Part 1, p. 47. Ed. Wittemberg.) This is certainly very explicit, and much more of a like stamp could easily be drawn from the same source. I cannot but ask, then, how Swedenborg has misrepresented the doctrine, and if he has, what is the doctrine, in its true character, which is to be considered as adopted by the Protestant churches? I wish to know whether they adhere to the Augsburg Confession, the *Formula Concordiæ*, which teaches that good works, which are said freely and spontaneously to follow faith, and are called the fruits of faith, the works of the Spirit, and the works of grace, and which are performed in a state of justification, have no real connexion with faith, and accordingly do not contribute at all to salvation. Is it your belief that these works are merely the *signs and manifestations* of a justifying faith, but not entering at all into its essence and efficacy? I can truly say, that I am exceedingly anxious for light on this point, for in no department of Protestant Theology, excepting perhaps that of the Trinity, do I find myself so beset with mystery and confusion as in regard to the fundamental principle of a sinner's Justification. On the one hand, it is ascribed to faith to the exclusion of works, or of the moral element from which good works proceed; on the other, it is said it must not be a dead faith, or a faith not productive of such works. But a dead faith is not properly any faith at all, and no one supposes a man can be justified without a faith that is alive. But what is it that constitutes the life of faith—such a faith as actually produces Justification? Is it not love or charity, and is not this element to be taken into account in the justifying function of faith? Is not its exclusion like ascribing a moral character to an act of the

\* “That faith, separate from charity, is not faith, is because faith is the light of man's life, and charity is the heat of his life; wherefore, if charity is separated from faith, it

body with which the soul has nothing to do? What is a mere intellectual belief of the truth, however strong or confident, which is not pervaded and vitalised by the affection of love? And what a strange anomaly must it be in the Divine proceedings to account a man just in the absence of the only principle which can make him just?—to insist upon a faith which can only be a *living* because it is a *loving* faith, and yet exclude from consideration the very love which is its life? It must be confessed that we encounter a very strange theology in the accredited doctrine of Justification. While it is in one breath strenuously maintained that the faith which justifies must be *united with* charity and good works, or it is dead and worthless, yet in the next it is contended that these principles do not *conspire* to the result, but that it is effected by one of them singly, to the exclusion of the others! But look for a moment at the intrinsic necessity of the case. Man is composed of three grand constituent principles, viz. *Affection*, or a *Will-principle*, by which he can love God and his neighbor; *Understanding*, by which he can discern what the love of God and his neighbor requires of him; and *Operation* or *Action*, by which he can bring into outward effect what his will chooses and his understanding dictates. Now since these three parts or principles *together* constitute the man, and not any of them singly, or in separation from the others, therefore no man can be said to be *justified*, or *made just*, until he be renewed in all those several parts or principles of his constitution according to *justice*, that is to say, according to the pure love of God and his neighbor. This is the doctrine of Justification according to Swedenborg, for establishing which you intimate that he was driven to such straits of interpretation as to lay him under a kind of necessity of rejecting the Apostolic Epistles. “It is not difficult to see that he must have found many parts of the Acts and the Epistles very hard to be moulded according to his system. It must have been a severe and comfortless task for him, with all his learning, and with all the help he had from angels, to do away the doctrine of justification by faith from the writings of Paul, and the doctrine of the Atonement from the writings of Paul, Peter, and John. Indeed the Epistles generally, in their obvious meaning, are so much at variance with the scheme of Swedenborg, that he could not consistently do otherwise than reject them.”—*p.* 129. Again, “It is not strange that Swedenborg, with his view of the subject, and acting as he thought under a divine commission, should think unfavorably of the Apostolic Epistles, and exclude them from the word of God.”—*p.* 124.

Now granting this, for the sake of the argument, to be true, how far does it differ from the conduct of this same venerated Luther, whom you vaunt as the cham-

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is as when heat is separated from light; thence the state of man becomes such as the state of the world is, in the time of winter, when all the things upon the earth die. Charity and faith, that charity may be charity, and faith may be faith, can no more be separated, than the will and the understanding; and if these are separated, the understanding becomes nothing, and presently also the will: the reason why it is similar with charity and faith, is, because clarity resides in the will, and faith in the understanding. To separate charity from faith, is like separating essence from form: it is known, in the learned world, that essence without form and form without essence is not anything; for essence has no quality except from form, nor is form any subsisting entity, except from essence; consequently, there is not any predication concerning either, when separated from the other. Charity also is the essence of faith, and faith is the form of charity; just as it was said above, that good is the essence of truth, and truth the form of good. These two, namely, good and truth, are in each and everything that exists essentially.”—*T. C. R.* 367.

pion of the true scriptural doctrine, in question? In the *Prolegomena* to Wetsstein's edition of the Greek Testament you find him cited as using the following language:—"I do not wish to force my opinion on others, but I must say, that I do not think the Epistle of James to be an Apostolic writing, chiefly for this reason, that in direct contradiction to Paul and the whole of the Scriptures, he attributes justification to works. Besides, that James makes such a jumble and confused mixture of all that he treats upon, that I look upon him to have been some good simple soul, who merely committed to paper some sayings he caught hold of from some of the disciples of the Apostles."\* Is not this at least somewhat of a parallel to the alledged audacity of Swedenborg in ostracising certain books of the Bible? He, however, is under no necessity of giving up Paul in order to establish a view of Justification which he finds set forth in the whole tenor of the teachings of Christ and of the Sacred Writings at large. But I expatiate no further upon the subject at present. When you or any other defender of the current doctrine shall see fit to state *distinctly* what you believe and what you do not believe respecting it, I shall hope to gain the information which will enable me to discuss the theme more *in extenso*. Meantime I will conclude this article by adducing two of the Memorable Relations, the one setting forth, in strong, indeed, but I think, true colors, the prevalence and pre-eminence of the Solifidian doctrine in the Reformed Churches, and the other an attempted explanation of the *act* of justifying faith. You will, of course, exercise your own judgment as to the credibility of the matter of fact affirmed in regard to the occurrence of such a conversation in the other world. The essential question is in respect to the *intrinsic truth* of what is conveyed in the relation. This can be viewed independently of everything about it that you would probably term *visionary costume*.

"What a desolation of truth and theological leanness there are at this day in the Christian world, was made known to me from conversing with many of the laity and with many of the clergy in the spiritual world. With the latter there is such a spiritual indigence, that they scarcely know anything else than that there is a Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and that faith alone saves; and concerning the Lord Christ, only the historical things concerning Him in the Evangelists; but as to the other things which the Word of both Testaments teaches concerning Him, as that the Father and He are one; that He is in the Father and the Father in Him; that He has all power in heaven and in earth; that it is the will of the Father that they should believe in the Son, and that he that believeth in Him hath eternal life, besides many other things; these are as unknown and as hidden from them as those things which are at the bottom of the ocean; yea, as those which lie in the centre of the earth; and when those things are produced from the Word and read, they stand as if they heard and did not hear; and they enter into their ears no deeper than the whistling of the wind, or the beating of a drum. The angels, who are at times sent forth by the Lord to visit the Christian societies which are in the world of spirits, thus under heaven, lament exceedingly, saying, 'That there is almost as much dulness, and thence darkness, in the things of salvation, as in a speaking parrot; they say also that the learned among them understand, in spiritual and divine things, no more than statues. An angel once related to me the conversation which he had with two of the clergy, one who was in faith separate from charity, another who was in faith not separate. With the one who was in faith separate from charity he spoke

\* I am aware it is said that Luther retracted this opinion at a later period, but as I have never seen the passage of his works which asserts it, and know not upon what authority the intimation rests, I cite the above with the expression of my entire willingness to give him the benefit of any such retraction when the proof of it shall be adduced.

thus: 'Friend, who are you?' He replied, 'I am a Reformed Christian.' 'What is your doctrine, and thence religion?' He replied, 'It is faith.' He said, 'What is your faith?' He replied, 'My faith is, that God the Father sent the Son to take upon Him the damnation of the human race, and that we are saved by that.' He then questioned him, by saying, 'What more do you know concerning salvation?' He replied, 'Salvation is effected by faith alone.' He said, further, 'What do you know concerning redemption?' He replied, 'It was made by the passion of the cross, and the merit of it is imputed by means of that faith.' Again, 'What do you know concerning regeneration?' He answered, 'It is effected by that faith.' 'Tell what you know concerning love and charity.' He replied, 'They are that faith.' 'Tell what you think concerning the precepts of the decalogue, and concerning the other things in the Word.' He replied, 'They are in that faith.' Then he said, 'You will therefore do nothing.' He replied, 'What shall I do? I cannot do good, which is good, from myself.' He said, 'Can you have faith from yourself?' He replied, 'I do not inquire into this, I shall have faith.' At length he said, 'Do you know anything at all more concerning salvation?' He replied, 'What more, since salvation is by that faith alone?' But then the angel said, 'You answer like one who plays with one note of a harp; I hear nothing but faith; if you know that, and do not know anything besides, you know nothing. Go and see your companions.' He went and found them in a desert, where there was no grass, and he asked why it was so; and it was said, 'Because they have nothing of the church.'

"With him who was in faith conjoined to charity, the angel spoke thus: 'Friend, who are you?' He replied, 'I am a Reformed Christian.' 'What is your doctrine, and thence religion?' He replied, 'Faith and charity.' He said, 'These are two things.' He replied, 'They cannot be separated.' He said, 'What is faith?' He replied, 'To believe what the Word teaches.' He said, 'What is charity?' He answered, 'To do what the Word teaches.' He said, 'Have you only believed those things, or have you also done them?' He replied, 'I have also done them.' The angel of heaven then looked at him and said, 'My friend, come with me and dwell with us.'—*T. C. R.* 391.

"I once heard a noise as of two mill-stones rubbing against each other. I went to the sound, and it ceased; and I saw a narrow gate leading obliquely downwards to a certain vaulted house, in which were many chambers, in which were little cells, in each of which sat two persons, who were collecting from the Word confirmations in favor of justification by faith alone: one was collecting and the other was writing, and this by turns. I went up to one cell, which was near the door, and asked, 'What are you collecting and writing?' They said, 'Concerning THE ACT OF JUSTIFICATION, OR CONCERNING FAITH IN ACT, which is itself justifying, vivifying and saving faith, and the head of the doctrines of the church in our Christendom.' And then I said to him, 'Tell me some sign of that act, when that faith is introduced into the heart and into the soul of man.' He replied, 'The sign of that act is in the moment when a man is pierced with anguish on account of his condemnation, and when, in that contrition, he thinks of Christ, that He took away the condemnation of the law, and lays hold of this his merit with confidence, and with this in his thought goes to God the Father and prays.' Then said I, 'Thus the act is made, and this is the moment.' And I asked, 'How shall I comprehend what is said concerning this act, that man contributes nothing towards it, any more than he would if he were a stock or a stone; and that man, as to that act, has no power to begin, will, understand, think, operate, co-operate, apply and accommodate himself? Tell me how this coheres with what you said, that the act then happens, when man is thinking concerning the justice of the law, concerning its condemnation removed by Christ, concerning the confidence in which he lays hold of this his merit, and in thought concerning this goes to God the Father and prays. Are not all these things done by man?' But he said, 'They are not done by man actively, but passively.' And I replied, 'How can any one think, have confidence, and pray passively? Take away from man what is active and co-operative, then do you not also take away what is receptive, thus all, and with all the act itself? What then does your act become, but purely ideal, which is called an imaginary entity? I hope that you do not believe, with some, that such act, is given only with the



predestinated who know nothing at all about the infusion of faith into themselves. These can play at dice, and thereby inquire whether faith has been infused into them, or not. Wherefore, my friend, believe that man, as to charity and faith, operates of himself from the Lord, and that without this operation, your act of faith, which you called the head of all the doctrines of the church in Christendom, is nothing else than the statue of Lot's wife, tinkling from mere salt, when touched with a scribe's pen, or his finger nail (Luke xvii. 32). This I said, because you make yourselves, as to that act, similar to statues.' When I had said this, he took a candlestick, intending to throw it with all his might into my face, and the candle then suddenly being extinguished, he threw it at the forehead of his companion."—*Id.* 505.

V. *Human Depravity*.—"He rejects the doctrine of human depravity, as commonly understood. He does indeed assert that there is nothing but evil in man from his birth; that his proprium, or selfhood, as he calls it, is evil and only evil. But he does not regard this evil as belonging to man himself, so as to render him personally sinful and ill-deserving. So far as I have been able to understand him, without coming into the clear light of the New Jerusalem Church, he holds that man in himself, originally and afterwards, is a *mere recipient*, and that the evils found in him, come from evil spirits, and consist of the influxes which these spirits inject into his mind. True, man has influxes also from good spirits, and he has a will to choose between the good and bad influxes, and to determine which he will receive;—a little like Coleridge's notion, who holds something like this, that original sin comes to the mind of man at the beginning of his existence, and offers itself to him, and that he then wills whether to admit or reject it; though, mysterious as it is, the will always goes one way, and that the wrong way. According to Swedenborg, it is the great, leading fact in the history of man on earth, that angels, good and bad, are constantly making influxes into his mind, the influxes of good angels exciting good thoughts and desires, and leading to the truths of faith and the goods of charity, while the influxes of bad angels lead to falses and evil affections. And this process, this strife of good and evil angels, with their different influxes, continues not only through the present life, but for a long time in the future world, until men, during that second probation, are confirmed either in the truths of faith and the goods of charity, or in the contrary; when they go to heaven or to hell according to their respective loves. After this, those who are confirmed in good, have influxes only from good angels; and they themselves are angels, and are much employed in making influxes into the interiors of other angels, and thus their good influxes are reciprocal. These reciprocal influxes constitute a most important part of the employments of the ever active spirits in heaven; while the counterpart of all this goes on in hell; for wicked men there become evil angels or devils, and while they receive evil influxes from other devils, they impart the same to them."—*p.* 125-6.

All this is presented without the least attempt to point out its errors or fallacies, evidently under the impression that it would be intuitively seen to be false, because differing, in some way, from the prevailing creed respecting the innate depravity of man. Without any purpose of denying that there is a real and important diversity in the two classes of views on this subject, I must still be permitted to say that had you come a little more fully "into the clear light of the New Jerusalem," you would have given a very different representation of Swedenborg's doctrine on this head. "He does indeed assert that there is nothing

but evil in man from his birth; that his *proprium*, or selfhood, as he calls it, is evil, and only evil. But he does not regard this evil as belonging to man himself, so as to render him personally evil and ill-deserving." And where, pray, did you learn this? I am somewhat conversant with Swedenborg's writings, and I can safely say that I have never met with a sentence having the slightest approximation to such a sentiment as you have here ascribed to him. The influx and operation of spirits upon the minds of men he does indeed assert in the most unequivocal terms, but he never intimates that this influence interferes with man's moral freedom so as to exempt him from personal responsibility, or to take away his sinfulness and ill-desert? Why should it, any more than the suggestions and temptations of his fellow-men on earth? If one man can work upon and inflame the concupiscences of another, and thus entice him to sin without invading his moral freedom, why may not the same thing be done by spirits who have more immediate access to his interior affections and promptings? Indeed with a strange kind of *consistency* you have expressly acknowledged this, for you say that according to him, though man in himself is "a mere recipient, and the evils found in him come from evil spirits and consist of the influxes which these spirits inject into his mind, yet he has influxes also from good spirits, and a will to choose between the good and bad influxes, and to determine which he will receive." And I would fain inquire whether you do not believe this also? Is your edition of the Bible lacking in those numerous intimations of angelic and diabolical suggestion, which pious people have always been in the habit of reading in it? And have they ever supposed that these spiritual influences barred the fact of their evils "belonging to themselves and rendering them personally sinful and ill-deserving?" It must certainly be admitted to be a novel mode of controverting certain religious doctrines, to urge against them, as objections, tenets which the objector himself fully admits in his own system. If you deny the fact of such admission, you will of course be free to say so; but if you concede it, you will be bound, I conceive, to state precisely in what respects your ideas of angelic and satanic agency differ from those presented by Swedenborg. That you may know precisely what he teaches on this head, I will adduce a few extracts. They naturally arrange themselves, in reference to your remarks, under heads, showing, (1) that man's *proprium*, or selfhood, is altogether evil and depraved, and how this is inherited; (2) that man is continually operated upon by influxes from both good and evil spirits; and (3) that this fact does not at all do away his freedom as a moral agent.

I. "Nothing evil and false exists which is not *proprium*, and derived from *proprium*; for man's *proprium* is essential evil, in consequence whereof man is nothing but what is evil and false; this was made clear to me from this circumstance, that when the *propriums* are rendered visible in the world of spirits, they appear so deformed, that it is impossible to paint anything more so, yet with a diversity according to the nature of the *proprium*; this deformity is so striking, that he who seeth his own *proprium* is struck with horror at himself, and wisheth to fly from himself as from a devil."—A. C. 154.

"It has been shown me by lively experience, that a man and a spirit, yea, an angel, considered in himself, that is, all his *proprium*, is the vilest of all, and that left to himself he would breathe nothing but hatred, revenge, cruelty, and the most foul adulteries; these things are his *proprium*, and his will. This may appear to every reflecting person only from this, that man when he is born, is

the vilest living thing amongst all wild beasts; and when he grows up, and is left to his own government, unless he were prevented by external restraints, which are of the law, and by restraints which he lays upon himself in order to be the greatest and richest, he would rush headlong into all wickedness, and would not rest until he had subdued all in the universe, and had amassed to himself the wealth of all, nor would he spare any but those who submitted themselves as vile slaves. Such is the nature of every man, though he does not perceive it by reason of his inability to accomplish his evil purposes, and of the impossibility of their accomplishment; nevertheless, if he had ability, and possibility, and all restraints were removed, he would rush headlong as far as he had power. Beasts are not at all such; they are born to a certain order of nature; such as are wild and rapacious commit violence on others, but it is only for the sake of preserving themselves; and that they devour others, to appease hunger, which being appeased, they cease to do harm: but it is altogether otherwise with man. Hence it appears what the proprium of man is, and what is his will. Man then being such and so great evil and pollution, it is evident that he can never of himself have dominion over evil: it is altogether a contradiction to suppose that evil can have dominion over evil, and not only over evil, but also over hell, for every man has communication with hell by means of evil spirits, whereby the evil which is in him is excited: from these considerations every one may know, and he who is of a sound mind may conclude, that it is the Lord alone who has dominion over evil in man, and over hell which is with man. That evil may be subdued in man, that is, hell, which is every moment attempting to rush in upon man, and to destroy him eternally, man is regenerated by the Lord, and is gifted with a new will, which is conscience, by which the Lord alone operates all that is good. These things are of faith, viz., that man is nothing else but evil; and that all good is from the Lord; wherefore man ought not only to know, but also to acknowledge and believe them: if he does not acknowledge and believe them in the life of the body, in another life it is shown him by living evidence."—*A. C.* 987.

"I have discoursed with the angels concerning infants, whether they are pure from evils, inasmuch as they have committed no actual evil, like the adult; but it was said to me, that they are alike in evil, yea, that they are nothing but evil; nevertheless that they, like all the angels, are withheld from evil, and preserved in good by the Lord, and this in such a sort, that it appears to them as if they were in good from themselves; wherefore also infants, after that they become adult in heaven, lest they should be in this false opinion concerning themselves, that the good with them is from them, and not from the Lord, are remitted at times into their own evils, which they have received hereditarily, and are left therein, until they know, acknowledge, and believe that the case is so. That infants, when grown adult, are remitted into the state of their hereditary evil, is not that they may suffer punishment, but it is in order to convince them, that of themselves they are nothing but evil, and that by the Lord's mercy they are raised out of hell, which is with them, into heaven, and that they are not in heaven from their own merit, but from the Lord; and thus to prevent their boasting themselves before others, for the good which they possess; for this is contrary to the good of mutual love, as it is contrary to the truth of faith."—*A. C.* 2307-8.

"Every actual evil in parents assumes an appearance of nature, and when it often recurs, it becomes natural, and is added to what was hereditary, and is transplanted into their children, and thus into their posterity, so that there is an immense increase of hereditary evil in succeeding generations; and this every one may know from the evil dispositions of children being like their parents, and forefathers. It is a most false idea to suppose with some, there is no hereditary evil but what was implanted, and as they say, by Adam; when yet every particular person, by his own actual sins, causes hereditary evil, and makes an addition to what he received from his parents, and thus accumulates what remains in all his posterity; nor does this suffer any check, except in those who are regenerated by the Lord. This is the primary cause that every church degenerates; so also with the Most Ancient Church."—*A. C.* 494.

"Every man is born of his parents into the evils of the love of self and of the world: every evil, which by habit as it were hath contracted a nature, is derived into the offspring; thus successively from parents, from grandfathers, and from great-grand-fathers, in a long series backwards: hence the derivation of evil is at length become so great, that the all of man's proper life is nothing else but evil. This continued derived evil is not broken and altered except by the life of faith and charity from the Lord. Man continually inclines and lapses into what he derives hereditarily from his parents: hence he confirms with himself that evil, and also of himself superadds more evils. These evils are altogether contrary to spiritual life, they destroy it; wherefore unless man, as to spiritual life, is by the Lord conceived anew, born anew, and educated anew, that is, is created anew, he is damned, for he wills nothing else, and hence thinks nothing else, but what is of hell."—*A. C.* 8550-52.

It would seem from the above that the *fact* of a deep, desperate, and universal depravity is held as strongly by Swedenborg as by Edwards himself, or any other Calvinist, divine who has written on the subject. I do not see that he can be regarded as coming short of the most stringent demands of orthodoxy on this head, unless perchance there should be something in the *manner* of his holding the doctrine which goes to nullify the legitimate import of the admissions now made. If this is alleged, it must be upon the ground of what he says concerning the influxes from the spiritual world. The testimony on this score is so immensely voluminous in his writings that I scarcely know how to make the most apposite selections. The following however may serve as a specimen.

II. "It is known in the church, that all good is from God, and none from man, and that therefore no one ought to ascribe any good to himself as his own; and it is also known that evil is from the devil: hence it is, that those who speak from the doctrine of the church, say of those who act well, and also of those who speak and preach piously, that they are led by God; but the contrary of those who act ill and speak impiously. These things cannot be so, unless there be to man conjunction with heaven and conjunction with hell, and unless those conjunctions be with his will and with his understanding; for from these the body acts and the mouth speaks. What that conjunction is, shall now be told. With every man there are good spirits and evil spirits; by good spirits man has conjunction with heaven, and by evil spirits with hell. Those spirits, when they come to a man, enter into all his memory, and thence into all his thought; evil spirits into those things of the memory and thought which are evil, but good spirits into those things of the memory and thought which are good. That there is such conjunction of spirits with man, has been made known to me from the continual experience of several years, so that nothing is better known. What the communication of heaven with good spirits is, and what the communication of hell with evil spirits is, and thence what the conjunction of heaven and hell with man is, shall also be told. All the spirits, who are in the world of spirits, have communication with heaven or with hell; the evil with hell, and the good with heaven. Heaven is distinguished into societies; in like manner hell. Every spirit belongs to some society, and also subsists by influx thence; thus he acts as one with it. Hence it is, that as man is conjoined with spirits, so he is conjoined with heaven or with hell, and indeed with that society there in which he is as to his affection, or as to his love; for all the societies of the heaven are distinct, according to the affections of good and of truth, and all the societies of hell according to the affections of what is evil and false.

"Such spirits are adjoined to man as he himself is as to affection or as to love; but good spirits are adjoined to him by the Lord, whereas evil spirits are invited by the man himself; but the spirits with man are changed according to the changes of his affections: thence some spirits are with him in infancy, others in childhood, others in youth and manhood, and others in old age. In infancy spirits are present who are in innocence, thus who communicate with the heaven of innocence, which is the inmost or third heaven; in childhood are present spirits who are in the affection of knowing, thus who communicate

with the ultimate or first heaven; in youth and manhood are present spirits who are in the affection of truth and good, and thence in intelligence, thus who communicate with the second or middle heaven; but in old age, spirits are present who are in wisdom and innocence, thus who communicate with the inmost or third heaven. But this adjunction is effected by the Lord with those who can be reformed and regenerated. The case is otherwise with those who cannot be reformed and regenerated: to these also good spirits are adjoined, that by them they may be withheld from evil as much as possible; but their immediate conjunction is with evil spirits, who communicate with hell, whence they have such spirits as the men themselves are. If they be lovers of themselves, or lovers of gain, or lovers of revenge, or lovers of adultery, similar spirits are present, and as it were dwell in their evil affections; and as far as man cannot be kept from evil by good spirits, so far these evil spirits inflame him; and as far as the affection reigns, so far they adhere and do not recede. Thus a bad man is conjoined to hell, and a good man is conjoined to heaven."—*H. & H.* 291–295.

This then is Swedenborg's doctrine of angelic and diabolic influx, and the question at once occurs whether his teachings on this head represent man as a "mere recipient" to such a degree as to take away his freedom as a moral agent and to prevent our regarding him as "personally sinful and ill-deserving." Out of scores of paragraphs of similar purport I adduce the following.

III. "The Lord through the angels could lead man into good ends by omnipotent might; but this would be to take life away from him, for his life is a life of loves altogether contrary to such ends. Wherefore the divine law is inviolable, that man shall be in freedom, and that good and truth, or charity and faith, shall be implanted in his free state, and in no case in a forced state; for what is received in a forced state, does not remain, but is dissipated. For to force man, is not to insinuate into his will [*velle*], inasmuch as it is the will of another, from which he then would act, and therefore when he returns to his own will, that is, to his freedom, what had been insinuated is extirpated. On this account the Lord rules man by his freedom, and as far as possible withholds him from the freedom of thinking and willing evil; for man, unless he was withheld by the Lord, would continually precipitate himself into the deepest hell. It was said, that the Lord through the angels could lead man into good ends by omnipotent might, for evil spirits may in an instant be driven away, even if myriads of them should encompass man, and this by one angel; but then man would come into such torture, and into such a hell, as he could by no means sustain, since he would be miserably deprived of his life. For the life of man is from lusts and fantasies contrary to good and truth, and unless this life were supported by evil spirits, and were thus amended, or at least guided, he would not survive a single moment, for nothing else has place in him but the love of self and of gain, and of reputation for the sake of self and gain, thus whatsoever is contrary to order; wherefore unless he were to be reduced into order moderately, and by degrees, by the guidance of his freedom, he would instantly expire."—*A. C.* 5854.

"Man, so far as he partakes of what is hereditary and thence of self, would have no life, if he were not allowed to be in evil, and none also, if he were not in freedom; and moreover, that he cannot be forced to good, and that which is forced does not adhere; as also that the good which man receives in freedom, is implanted in his will, and becomes as his own; and that hence it is that man has communication with hell, and communication with heaven."—*H. & H.* 293.

You have now the data before you on which to judge how far the doctrine of *human depravity*, as you understand it to be taught in the Scriptures, is denied by Swedenborg—consequently how far it is justly subject to the odium which your remarks are calculated to draw upon it, unaccompanied as they are with any intimations of what you conceive the real doctrine to be, or, in other words, of what he *ought* to teach on this subject in order to be consistent with truth. He certainly holds that man is by nature altogether evil and depraved, and this I

presume you also hold. He holds too that man is continually subject to infernal and celestial influxes, in which I cannot doubt that you agree with him, if you take the Scriptures as the rule of doctrine on this head. He maintains moreover that man is under no absolute compulsion as to yielding to those influences, and therefore still remains a free moral agent and of course "personally sinful and ill-deserving" as far as he complies with the promptings of evil spirits and resists those of the good. Do you not maintain the same? If you still object that there is some flaw in his reasonings on this topic, I would respectfully suggest whether it be not in some point on which your own system is equally assailable. Does not the following extract disclose the real *nodus* in the whole matter, and have you any conclusion on this head different from his?

"He who desires to investigate only the hidden things of nature, which are innumerable, with difficulty discovers a single one, and in the course of his investigation is liable to fall into many errors, as experience teaches; and how much more likely is this to be the case, in investigating the hidden things of spiritual and celestial life, where myriads of mysteries exist for one that is to be found in invisible nature! For the sake of illustrating this point, let us take the following instance; man of himself cannot do otherwise than commit evil, and turn himself away from the Lord; yet it is not man who does this, but the evil spirits who are attendant on him; nor do the evil spirits do it, but the evil itself which they have appropriated to themselves; nevertheless man does evil, and turns himself away from the Lord, and is in fault; and yet he does not live but from the Lord. So on the other hand, man of himself cannot possibly do good, and turn himself to the Lord, but by the angels; nor can the angels do this, but the Lord alone; and yet man may as of himself do good, and turn himself to the Lord: that this is really the case, neither the senses, nor science, nor philosophy can conceive, or apprehend, and therefore if they are consulted as to the truth of such propositions, they reject and deny them, when nevertheless in themselves they are most true; and thus it is also in all other cases respecting things spiritual and celestial."—A. C. 233.

The grand problems connected with this subject do undoubtedly resolve themselves at last into the *mystery of dependent life*, and although Swedenborg's disclosures lay open a world of wisdom on this theme, I cannot now enlarge upon it. If, however, you will take any of his Indexes and turning to the article *Life*, consult the references, I shall be greatly mistaken if you do not find there a depth of philosophy on that matter such as you have never met elsewhere.

VI. *Predestination*.—"The doctrine of *predestination*, as held by the Reformed Churches, is clearly demonstrable by reason, and is fully taught in the Scriptures, particularly in that part of the New Testament which Swedenborg discards. This doctrine both he and his angels grossly misrepresent, much in the manner of Tomline and Whitby, and the most violent cavillers among the Unitarians and Arminians. According to him, it implies that we have no agency in spiritual things; that man is like a stock, and is converted as inanimate, and that afterwards he does not know whether he be a stock vivified by grace, or not." Permit me here to remark, that the advocates of Swedenborg's doctrines are often thrown by their opponents into a position which is embarrassing because it is in fact a *false position*—one to which they are reduced solely by the most unjust arts of controversy. They are called upon to defend a system which is charged with contravening certain doctrines that are claimed to be the doctrines taught by the Reformers and held by what are termed *evangelical churches*. Still no reference is made to any authentic *standard* of these doctrines. We are nowhere

instructed as to what is the genuine and accredited form in which they are propounded—no affirmative statement is given of the sense in which the tenet is, or is not, to be understood by its espousers. In a word, we are left in the dark as to what the *real doctrine* is which is said to be impugned by the contrary doctrine of Swedenborg. If we turn to the Westminster Confession or Catechism, or any one of the established formularies of faith, we are met upon the threshold by the reply that that is not the form of the doctrine which the objector holds himself pledged to defend. And so let us seek it where we will, it still eludes our grasp. It assumes a thousand Protean forms. Our enemy does not meet us in the open field or in his own proper person, but hurls his missiles from behind the trees. We know not where to look for him. In the mean time the vague general charge is producing its effect in creating odium. The honest and simple-minded reader is horrified at the idea of the venerable dogmas of his church being rudely assailed, not dreaming probably that these very dogmas have been again and again called in question by multitudes who yet profess to receive them, but who feel at liberty to interpret them in a sense quite different from that which they bear on their face.

Thus in regard to the present point—that of *predestination*, by which I suppose you intend what is generally understood by the doctrine of the *divine sovereignty* in the salvation of men. You leave me wholly unresolved as to what you understand to be the genuine doctrine of the Word on that subject, or where I am to seek for an accredited exposition of it. There is a tremendous heresy somewhere, but what it is I am left to guess. You virtually charge Swedenborg with misrepresenting the doctrine, because “according to him it implies, that we have no agency in spiritual things; that man is like a stock, and is converted as inanimate.” Now I must confess for myself, that, taking the tenet as it seems generally to be apprehended and set forth, I am unable to see why the implication alleged is not well founded, with the abatement that by “no agency in spiritual things” is to be fairly understood no active agency in the particular matter of which he is treating—the conversion of the soul to God. If I understand the commonly received doctrine it is, that God, for infinitely wise reasons existing in his own mind, determined from eternity, by a decree of election, to save a certain specific number of the human race in virtue of the atoning work of Christ, and that too wholly irrespective of their own prior merits or demerits; and in this consists essentially the *sovereignty* of the saving purpose. These persons are brought successively into being, and by the peculiar orderings of Divine Providence are brought under a system of means and influences, which, though well adapted in their own nature to work efficaciously on their hearts and to result in their renewal, are yet in themselves powerless to produce that issue without the special putting forth of an act of the divine power, which shall quicken them from the death of trespasses and sins into newness of life. This is held to be an instantaneous act, though usually, perhaps always, preceded by a series of mental exercises, more or less distressing, termed *convictions*, but which have not in their own nature any intrinsic efficacy to work the requisite change, and to translate the soul from darkness into light. In this emergency the Omnipotence of grace interposes, and, in compliance with the eternal decree of election, by the infusion of a principle of divine life enables the trembling sinner to avail himself of the provided remedy and to believe to the saving of

his soul. In all this process there is indeed involved the agency of *truth* as an instrumental means to the designed end; but still in the very act and article of being born again the soul is necessarily passive, and believes and loves simply because it is enabled to do so in consequence of the present transforming influence of the Holy Spirit which makes the man a new creature in Christ Jesus. In virtue of this process all boasting on the part of man is excluded, and a ground laid for the ascription of all the glory of his salvation to the gratuitous mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and the top stone in the fabric of his praise, is laid with crying, "Grace, grace, unto it."

This, I believe, is a fair exhibition of the orthodox doctrine on this head, and I am wholly at a loss to perceive in what respect injustice is done to it by the use of language implying the utmost degree of *passivity* in the subject *at the moment of the transition*, and this moment is the hinge on which his eternal destiny turns. The doctrine certainly holds that the sinner, up to the instant of the change, is spiritually dead, and from the instant of the change, is spiritually alive; there can be, on this view, no medium between death and life. The change too is wrought by a power entirely *ab extra* to the soul itself. It is the direct act of Omnipotence. Must not the soul, then, be passive in the true regenerating process? Regeneration is on this view *re-birth*, and what active agency has the soul in this process more than the infant has in the process of natural birth? I am well aware of the various refinements which theologians have spun and woven in regard to this subject, and by which they would fain escape the conclusion of this entire and absolute *passivity* in the act of the soul's being born again, but "to this complexion it comes at last." If the subject of the work is at one moment spiritually dead, and the next spiritually alive, and the quickening has been effected by the power of God and not by the free agency of man, then I would respectfully inquire in what particular Swedenborg has misrepresented the doctrine, when he says that man in this matter is "like a stock and is converted as inanimate?" The question, you will observe, is not whether the doctrine is theologically true or false. It is simply whether he has given an unfair and distorted account of it. Of this let the candid and intelligent judge. I have very little doubt as to the verdict. The point is so palpably obvious in itself, that the infusion of divine life into a soul spiritually dead is effected without any real co-operation on the part of the subject, that there is no possibility of questioning it, nor do I anticipate from yourself the least gainsaying on this head. On the contrary, what I anticipate is the direct interrogatory, "If the fact be not so, how is it? To what is man's regeneration owing if not to the mighty power of God immediately and sovereignly exerted, and how can this be but in accomplishment of a previous *purpose* to that effect, or, in other words, in consequence of an eternal decree of election, which is but another name for the doctrine of predestination?"

This is a fair question, and though my contracted limits will prevent my doing any but a very partial justice to the subject, I will still endeavor to present Swedenborg's teachings on this point in such a light that, whether or not they shall carry with them a constraining evidence of truth, they shall at least appear in very marked contrast with the established tenet, and may possibly also produce the conviction that what he says of the *internal state* of the members of the Synod of Dort is not so very far from the truth.



And first as to *Predestination* ; so far as this doctrine coincides with the doctrine of a universal Providence acting by specific means, in accordance with the moral freedom of creatures, and with a view to eternal ends of Love and Mercy, Swedenborg instead of rejecting, unequivocally asserts it, and his elaborate treatise on "Divine Providence," of which you speak respectfully, abounds in illustrations of it. But so far as the term is employed in a technical theological sense, implying the selection, by a fixed and arbitrary decree, of a certain portion of the human race, as the subjects of salvation to the exclusion or preterition of the rest, he does indeed most emphatically discard it, as I think every one will who allows himself to reflect calmly upon the subject, and who ventures to ask himself the question, whether he can conceive the possibility of the existence, in the Divine mind, of any reasons consistent with his perfections, which should have dictated the purpose to save a part of a fallen race on the bare ground of election, when they were all in *precisely the same circumstances*, and the value of one soul, in view of its stupendous destiny, as great as that of another. I am unable to perceive, for myself, any possible way of reconciling this with the promptings which would naturally move the infinite Benevolence, on the same principles on which it could determine to save a part, to save the whole. By the very supposition, there could be no greater intrinsic obstacle to be overcome in the recovery of the whole than in that of a part. Why then should not the purpose of salvation comprise the whole? The opposite view involves the necessity of ascribing to the Most High a *partiality* which, on the ground assumed, is wholly repugnant, not only to our instinctive, but to our most enlightened, notions of the divine attributes.

I cannot, of course, be ignorant of the reply which will naturally be made to this, viz. that inasmuch as the *fact* is indisputable that a part only of the race are saved, and as they are saved by omnipotent grace, which cannot be supposed to act without a previous purpose, we are therefore shut up to the conclusion of such a purpose, and this purpose can only be regarded as eternal, and if eternal, therefore sovereign. To this I answer, that the proposed solution of the problem inevitably necessitates the consequence, that man is *absolutely passive* in the turning point from death to life, as much so as a stock or a statue, and therefore what Swedenborg has said of the doctrine in that respect is demonstratively confirmed. Are you willing to admit this? But suppose a man to be saved on this principle—suppose he finds himself in heaven, as heaven is commonly conceived, in virtue solely of a sovereign act of grace—though he may be constrained to acknowledge a discriminating mercy in his own happy lot, yet will it be no diminution of his bliss to think that he is there, while thousands of others, of equal claims with himself—that is, of none at all—are left to perish? With his mind enlarged to apprehend more fully the genius of the divine counsels which have secured his salvation, will not the thought that this amazing weight of glory is the result of a purely *arbitrary decree* of Jehovah send an inward chill upon the fervor of his grateful praise? Can the highest raptures imparted by the effluence of the divine Love to his soul, obscure his perceptions of the demands of the divine Wisdom, or blind him to the fact that that Love has wrought its issues in his behalf at the expense of Wisdom? For what idea can he have of a Wisdom which does not act from adequate Reasons? But what Reasons can he assign to himself for his being in heaven while so many others

though no more hell-deserving than himself, are yet in hell? Can he help seeing that it is in consequence solely of an *arbitrary decree*? And will not an inward shudder come over him at the bare thought of a God of infinite perfections being prompted by nothing higher than mere *arbitrary* motives to any action whatever? Would not such a conclusion mar the life of all his joys? Must not infinite Excellence suffer in his esteem? That *he* is made the beneficiary of this electing grace—that this astounding favoritism is made to redound to *his* advantage—will not of itself relieve his mind as to the overwhelming problem involved in the mode of its being conferred upon him. Neither will the assurance that no *injustice* has been done to the lost silence, the irrepressible voice of his bosom in view of the unmeasured diversity in their lot and his. His illuminated reason will never cease to demand why the same justice that *has* been meted out to them *has not* been awarded to him also; and the assertion of a mere design to illustrate the *Divine Sovereignty*—to show forth the simple *good pleasure* of the Most High—will be far from satisfying him. He can conceive of no object to be gained by the simple display of *sovereignty*, though the sovereignty of a God, which will be sufficient to countervail the disparagement that must, from such a source, accrue to his general attributes.

The only rejoinder which I can conceive as being made to this is, that such a procedure on the part of God, cannot properly be termed *arbitrary*, since, although we may be unable to apprehend them, yet we must necessarily take for granted the fact of some adequate reasons existing in the Divine mind as the basis of its determinations. But this is the very point in debate. I contend that the human mind cannot conceive the possibility of any other reason than *the bare display of sovereignty*. That is to say, that God resolves to make one to differ from another in respect to his eternal destiny simply to show that he *can* make him to differ. And how unlike is this to the case of a man who, with a chess-board before him, touches one of the squares rather than another, merely in order to evince the fact that he *can* touch any one of them that he pleases? If this is not the doctrine, what is it? What else is assigned, as the ground of election than the design to show that God may do what he will with his own? Is it affirmed that he may have other motives which he has not seen fit to reveal? If so, I ask where this is taught? Do the Scriptures declare anything of the kind? Do they give the slightest intimation that the salvation of a human soul is owing to anything else than the pure self-moving love of the infinitely benignant Jehovah, who is moved to goodness for goodness' sake, and who must, from the necessity of his nature, be as kindly affected towards one of his creatures as towards another, provided their moral position in regard to Him is the same? What possible reasons then can be, for one moment, imagined in the Divine mind on which to found a decree of election? We admit not the charge of presumption in such a sentence. While we do not assume to fathom the depths of the Infinite Wisdom, there are some conclusions which we hesitate not to affirm respecting them, because they grow directly out of the clearest intuitions of the intellect of man as constituted by its Maker; and this is one, that there could not possibly be any other than *arbitrary* reasons, which should dictate the salvation of Paul in preference to that of Judas, *when both are previously supposed to be in precisely the same circumstances*. The same promptings which would embrace one in a saving purpose must necessarily embrace the other.

But are *all* saved? Certainly not; but the reason why they are not is the farthest possible from any absolute or sovereign decree securing the salvation of one and pretermittting another. The boundless benevolence of the Deity predestinates all to heaven by the very fact of having provided a redemption which is available to all, but the scheme of this redemption is such as has respect to the *moral freedom* of its subjects. It must be *voluntarily* accepted and appropriated, inasmuch as this very appropriation is the grand constituent element of heaven. There neither is nor can be any other heaven than what consists in the right moral state of the inner man. Such a state can now be restored to man in consequence of what the Lord has done as Mediator, but the restoration can never be effected on any scheme which involves the suspension, for a single instant, of his entire freedom as a moral agent. His own active co-operation is imperatively requisite in every stage of the progress of his regeneration, or in other words, of his salvation, because the very essence of this salvation is in the state and actings of his will. To the question how the progress can begin at all, on Swedenborg's principles, when man is by nature, as he teaches, altogether evil and averse to God and goodness, and unable to originate volitions directly contrary to his ruling love, I reply, that it is essential to his freedom that he should have the power of *compelling himself* to abstinence from particular acts of evil, and of shunning them as sins against God, and when he does this there follows not merely the negation of so much evil, but the inflowing of so much positive good from the Divine fountain of good, which is like the light of the sun that is ever pressing for entrance into the least crevice or opening that will allow it to penetrate. "The life of love and charity," says Swedenborg, "opens the interior mind by the influx of light from heaven, the life of love and charity being the divine life itself; for the Lord loves every one and does good to every one from love; wherefore when that life is received, then the Lord is present, and is conjoined to the recipient, consequently he flows into his superior mind, which is called the spiritual mind, and by light from himself opens it." Every influx of this nature, though perhaps inappreciably slight at first, does *something* towards weakening the reigning power of evil, and communicating strength to resist its further encroachments. Every act of *self-compulsion* of this kind opens the way for fresh supplies of the Divine Love and Life to flow in, whereby the soul becomes more and more re-inforced by heavenly impulses and tendencies, and voluntary action in the right direction more easy and habitual. This we regard as the usual commencing process of *regeneration*, which far from being an instantaneous, is an everlasting act. The true Christian is for ever regenerating; that is, becoming more and more conformed and conjoined to the Lord. The process of the work is never, indeed, entirely uniform and equable. It proceeds by alternations and crises—by temptations and combats—by advances and recessions—but the course is on the whole onward, and the believer's removal to heaven is but one stage in this course, for he has here entered upon his true immortal life, and heaven, as a state, is but the normal form of its development. "The common idea," says Mr. Clissold, "with regard to Regeneration, is, that it signifies re-birth, or being born again, and that, as a man can be naturally born but once, so he can be spiritually born but once; the consequence is, that Regeneration, whether supposed to take place at baptism, or in subsequent life, is considered to be a simple or single act, 'incapable of latitude or increase.'

This error arises, as we conceive, like all others in theology, from a spiritual truth being naturalized, or degraded to the level of the merely natural mind. For, though a man can be born but once naturally, and hence also naturally can die but once; yet, because the body can die but once, it does not hence follow that the soul can die but once. The life of the natural body is but of one nature, which never ascends beyond that which it originally was; it can never be elevated out of itself into a life of a higher order, for animal or corporeal life is but one, and hence the body is but once born, comes to but one perfection, and dies but one death. The case is altogether different with the life of the spirit, which, while we are living in this world, may be elevated out of its plane or level, into another that is higher, and this unceasingly. Every sinful habit to which the soul dies is the occasion of a distinct death; and it may have to die as many deaths as it has sins unto which it must die. The same is true with regard to the evils inherited by birth before they descend into ultimate acts. As every evil has its own life in the soul, so also, in being destroyed, it must undergo its own death; hence the soul may die daily; and as it may die daily, so, in a corresponding sense, it may be said to be born daily; hence, as there may be a perpetual death, so may there be also a perpetual birth, hence a perpetual generation, and hence a perpetual regeneration. This state of generation and regeneration is the eternal spring of the soul; and hence we see the true reason for which, to angelic beings, heaven is a season of perpetual spring. Besides, it is to be remembered, that we cannot but affix to the term regeneration a sense more enlarged than the one it commonly bears, and which appears to be its more immediate sense; for, properly speaking, it does not signify *re-birth*, but *re-generation*, *re-begetting*, or *re-production*. Now, as all the processes of growth which take place in a plant or animal, may be said to be the processes of generation, in the more enlarged sense of that term, so every progression of the soul in spiritual life, we consider to be a process of generation; hence spiritual affections and thoughts are the result of spiritual generation, and the way to purify or exalt their nature is by a perpetual process of regeneration. This is no merely speculative or metaphysical doctrine, for it necessarily originates this practical truth, that evil is not removed from the soul in an instant, as filth is washed from the body; evil can be removed only by a death, and good can be received only by its being generated within us; hence there is no such thing as righteousness being imputed without being imparted, and the popular doctrine of Justification by Faith, is one which we consider to be contrary to God's Word, and contradictory to the real nature and constitution of things."—*Clissold's Letter*, p 48.

In following the regenerate soul ideally onward to the consummation of its bliss in the heavenly mansions, I have asked myself again and again what is lost or lacking to it, as a ground of thanksgiving and praise, on the view now presented. Is not the man saved by grace? Is he not raised to angelic beatitude solely in consequence of the gracious, unbought, unsought intervention of the Divine love and mercy in his behalf? Must he not otherwise have perished in his iniquities? Will his golden harp send forth one note less to swell the symphony of heaven, that he has been saved, not by an arbitrary act of mercy, but by a method perfectly in accordance both with the highest attributes of his Maker and with the constituent principles of his own nature—a method which has left his freedom inviolate and the perfections of the Deity unimpeached?

Nothing, meantime, is involved in the scheme now presented which derogates at all from the prescience and the *true* predestination of Jehovah. In the nature of the case he *foreknows* the moral history of every individual of the race, and the issue of every event, but he *foreordains* or *decrees* only his own acts, and not the volitions of his creatures, as this would bring him into immediate concurrence with voluntary acts opposed to his own will and which he has expressly forbidden.

Such then is the ground on which you charge the system of Swedenborg with misrepresenting and denying the received doctrine of Predestination. I do not admit that he has misrepresented it and if he has not, he ought, I conceive, to deny it, as all his adherents most unequivocally do. Still, we will reconsider our ground whenever you or any one else will show us adequate cause.

VII. *The Resurrection of the Body.*—"Swedenborg rejects the common doctrine of the *resurrection*. The Scriptures represent the resurrection of all who have died *as a future event*; and they describe the manner in which they will be raised, and the great change which will be made in the resurrection body, and the corresponding change which will be made in those who will be alive at that time. But our author denies such a resurrection, and with some false teachers mentioned by the Apostle, holds, that the resurrection of all who have died, 'is already past.' Death and resurrection take place, he says, at or near the same time. This he learnt partly, it seems, from philosophical reasoning, as Professor Bush did, and partly from the conversation of angels. But philosophical reasoning is by no means infallible; and Swedenborg's angels were only dead men, who often betrayed their ignorance, and committed many mistakes, and did not pretend to be divinely inspired, and sometimes needed and received information from Swedenborg. Both he and his followers are exceedingly confident in their denial of the future resurrection of the body, though this has been believed by the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles to the present time."

This is a point which I shall not attempt to argue. I have already dwelt somewhat upon it in a previous letter, and have through various other channels presented my own and Swedenborg's views with sufficient distinctness to the public. I content myself with simply offering one or two additional paragraphs in opposition to the current doctrine, leaving it to the reader to judge which theory carries with it the most constraining evidence of truth. As to the alleged fallibility of philosophical reasoning, so far as it implies that the results of that reasoning are not *always* sound, I have no disposition to dispute with you: but I venture to make the same assertion respecting *Scriptural interpretation*. It does not strike me that even a tenet which "has been believed by the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles to the present time" is necessarily infallible, nor do I think *any* construction of the Sacred Oracles can be either infallible or correct which conflicts with the results of *just* philosophical reasoning. And as to the mistakes and ignorance of "Swedenborg's angels," I shall be prompt to admit them when they are pointed out. You seem frequently to lose sight of the distinction which he continually makes between the angels of heaven and the spirits of the world of spirits, who are in a far inferior degree of illumination. I am not aware that Swedenborg anywhere represents the angels as needing or receiving information from him. I should certainly think, however, that they did

need it, and probably received it, if they taught that the doctrine of the resurrection was the doctrine of the resurrection of the material body to be accomplished *at some future period*.—But I yield my space to a higher authority.

“I have discoursed with some within a few days after their decease, and because they were then recently come, they were in a light there, which differed little in their sight from the light of the world. And because the light appeared such to them, they doubted whether they had light from any other source, wherefore they were taken into the first of heaven, where the light was still brighter, and from thence speaking with me, they said, that they had never before seen such a light; and this took place when the sun was already set. They then wondered that spirits had eyes by which they saw, when yet they believed in the life of the body, that the life of spirits was merely thought, and indeed abstractedly without a subject, by reason that they had not been able to think of any subject of thought, inasmuch as they had not seen any; and this being the case, they had not then perceived otherwise, than that because it was mere thought alone, it was dissipated, together with the body in which it was, just as any aura or any fire, unless it should miraculously be kept together and subsist from the Lord. And they saw then how easily the learned fall into error concerning life after death, and that they more than others do not believe except in things which they see. Therefore they were surprised now, that they not only had thought, but also sight, and likewise the other senses; and especially that they appear to themselves altogether as men, that they mutually see and hear each other, converse together, feel their own members by the touch, and this more exquisitely than in the life of the body. Hence they were amazed that man is altogether ignorant of this, while he lives in the world; and they pitied the human race, that they know nothing of such things, because they believe nothing, and more especially they who are in superior light, namely, they who are within the church, and have the Word. Some of them believed no otherwise, than that men after death would be as ghosts, in which opinion they confirmed themselves from the spectres of which they had heard; but hence they drew no other conclusion, than that it was some gross vital principle, which is first exhaled from the life of the body, but which again falls back to the dead body, and is thus extinguished. But some believed, that they were first to rise again at the time of the last judgment, when the world was to perish, and then with the body, which, though fallen into dust, would be then collected together, and thus they would rise again with bone and flesh. And whereas mankind have in vain for many ages expected that last judgment or destruction of the world, they have fallen into the error that they should never rise again; thinking nothing in this case of that which they have learned from the Word, and from which they have also sometimes so spoken, that when man dies, his soul is in the hand of God, among the happy or unhappy according to the life which he had acquainted himself with, and was become familiar to; neither of what the Lord said concerning the rich man and Lazarus. But they were instructed, that every one's last judgment is when he dies, and that then he appears to himself endowed with a body as in the world, and to enjoy every sense as in the world, but more pure and exquisite, inasmuch as corporeal things do not hinder, and those things which are of the light of the world do not overshadow those which are of the light of heaven; thus that they are in a body as it were purified; and that after death, the body cannot possibly partake of what is bony and fleshy such as it had in the world, because this would be to be again encompassed with earthly dust. With some I conversed on this subject on the same day that their bodies were entombed, who saw through my eyes their own corpse, the bier, and the ceremony of burial; and they said, that they reject that corpse, and that it had served them for uses in the world in which they had been, and that they live now in a body which serves them for uses in the world in which they now are. They wished also, that I should tell this to their relations who were in mourning: but it was given to reply, that if I should tell them, they would mock at it, inasmuch as what they cannot themselves see with their own eyes, they believe to be nothing, and thus they would reckon it among the visions which are illusions. For they cannot be brought to believe, that as men see each other

with their eyes, so spirits see each other with theirs, and that man cannot see spirits unless with the eyes of his spirit, and that he then sees them when the Lord opens the internal sight, as was done to the prophets, who saw spirits and angels, and also many things of heaven. Whether they who live at this day would have believed those things, if they had lived at that time, there is room to doubt.”—*A. C.* 4527.

VIII. *Rejection of a Portion of the Scriptures.*—“I must here notice again the doctrine of Swedenborg respecting the Scriptures; a doctrine which must be regarded as of more consequence than almost any other. He excluded from the word of God about one sixth part of the Old Testament, and about one half of the New. The books he received as the word of God are those which he found to have the *internal or spiritual sense*. He rejected so many of the books contained in our Scriptures, because he found them incapable of the internal sense or senses. All parts of what he acknowledged to be the word of God, every word, every letter, and every point had three senses, a natural sense, a spiritual sense, and a celestial sense. Why those parts of Scripture which he rejected were, in his judgment, incapable of the higher sense, more than some other parts, we are not informed. \* \* \* The attempt of Swedenborg to propagate an opinion concerning the Scriptures so contrary to the teachings of the New Testament, is sufficient completely to undermine his authority, and to cast an air of suspicion on all that he wrote.”

The grounds of this accusation have already been considered. It will be unnecessary to re-adduce them. He *excludes* nothing from the Scriptures in any other way than by indicating the fact of an interior spiritual sense pertaining to some books which he says does not attach to others; and the reasons assigned for this assertion I have already brought before you. If the present virtual charge of garbling and mutilating the Word should ever be repeated, I hope it will not be without bestowing some consideration upon the arguments urged in behalf of his positions. I merely add an extract relative to the fact of a three-fold sense which finds so little favor in your eyes and so little refutation in your logic.

“That there is an internal or spiritual sense in the Word, in its external or natural sense, as a diamond in its matrix, or as a beautiful infant in its swaddling clothes, is a truth which has heretofore been altogether unknown in the Christian world, and hence also it is altogether unknown what is meant by the Consummation of the Age, the Coming of the Lord, the Last Judgment, and by the New Jerusalem, on which subjects many things are spoken and predicted in the Word of each Testament, both Old and New. Without the unfolding and unswathing of the literal sense of the Word by its spiritual sense, who can know intellectually what is signified by the things which the Lord predicted in Matthew xxiv., and also in the Revelations, and in like manner in Daniel, and in the Prophets, in many passages? Make the experiment yourself, if you are so disposed, by reading those pages of the prophetic Word, which treat sometimes of wild beasts and cattle, sometimes of forests and brakes, sometimes of valleys and mountains, sometimes of bats, of ochim, tziim, satyrs, &c. &c.; try whether you can perceive any thing divine therein, unless you believe it to lie concealed inwardly, inasmuch as it was inspired of God, just as a diamond lies concealed in its matrix.

“To the above, I shall add somewhat new from the spiritual world. The rulers of the church, who flock into that world after death, are first taught concerning the Sacred Scripture, as containing a spiritual sense, which in the world was unknown to them, and they are also told, that the angels of heaven are in that sense, whilst man is in the sense of the letter; and further, that a translation, or change, of the latter sense, into the former, is effected with man, whilst

he reads the Word under holy influences, and that there is a kind of unfolding or unswathing, somewhat like the breaking of the shell encompassing an almond, and the casting away the shell, so that the naked almond passes into heaven, and is received by the angels; and also like a seed cast into the earth, and being there stripped of its outward coats, puts forth its germ. That seed is the Word in the sense of the letter, and the germ thence put forth is the spiritual sense, and this latter passes to the angels, but the former rests with man; still, however, that seed remains with man in his mind, as in its ground, and in time produces its germ, and fructifies it, if man, by the seeds of life, which are the truths of faith, and the good things of charity, is conjoined with the Lord, and thereby consociated with the angels."—*Hob. Life of Swed. p. 159–161.*

"The word, which is divine truth descends from the Lord through the heavens, into the world, wherefore it is adapted to the wisdom of the angels who are in the three heavens, and is also adapted to men who are in the natural world. Hence also it is, that the Word in its first origin is altogether divine, afterwards celestial, then spiritual, and lastly natural; it is celestial for the angels of the inmost or third heaven, who are called celestial angels, spiritual for the angels of the second or middle heaven, who are called spiritual angels, and celestial and spiritual-natural for the angels of the ultimate or first heaven, who are called celestial and spiritual-natural angels, and natural for men in the world, for men, so long as they live in the material body, think and speak naturally; hence then it is, that the Word is given with the angels of each heaven, but with a difference according to the degree of their wisdom, intelligence, and science; and although it differs as to the sense in each heaven, still it is the same Word. The Divine principle itself, which is in the Word from the Lord, when it descends to the inmost or third heaven, becomes divine celestial, when it thence descends to the middle or second heaven, it becomes divine spiritual, and when from this heaven it descends to the ultimate or first, it becomes divine celestial, or spiritual natural, and lastly, when it thence descends into the world, it becomes a divine natural Word, such as it is with us in the letter: these successive derivations of the divine truth proceeding from the Lord himself, exist by virtue of correspondences established from creation itself between things superior and inferior, concerning which, the Lord willing, more will be said hereafter. The reason why all strength, and all power are in the ultimates of divine truth, thus in the natural sense of the Word, which is the sense of the letter, is, because this sense is the continent of all the interior senses, viz. of the spiritual and celestial, spoken of above; and since it is the continent, it is also the basis, and in the basis lies all strength; for if things superior do not rest upon their basis, they fall down and are dissolved, as would be the case with the spiritual and celestial things of the Word if they did not rest upon the natural and literal sense, for this not only sustains the interior senses, but also contains them, wherefore the Word or divine truth, in this sense, is not only in its power, but also in its fulness. From these considerations, it also follows, that the all of the doctrine of the church ought to be confirmed from the literal sense of the Word, and that all the power of doctrine is thence derived."—*A. E. 593.*

Take the Scriptures, as we have them, in the literal sense, and trace them back to their original source in the mind of the Deity, and you are brought to the very primary element of which they consist, viz. Love and Wisdom, or in other words, Affection and Intellect. That is to say, they resolve themselves into the essential nature of their Author, with whom there can be no Truth but it is vivified and pervaded by its appropriate Good. The Truth therefore that is to us embodied in the written oracles must previously have existed in his own mind independent of human language, and supposing that Truth to go forth from him, or to descend to the spheres of created intelligences intermediate between himself and man, it must utter itself of course in the form of thought independent of vocal speech or written language; for there are no books of paper or parchment in the heavens. The divine communications as they flow down-



ward must first be published in the *interiors* of the spirits who receive them, and if you suppose an order of spirits who stand nearer to the Most High than others by reason of their being more deeply imbued with *affection* or *good*, they will naturally, from their predominant state, receive most readily that element of the descending Word which is kindred with the ruling element of their own nature, or the principle of *good*, which has relation to *uses* and *ends*, the distinguishing character of the highest or celestial degree. In this we see the basis laid for the *celestial sense* of the Word. It is the sense which has respect to the *affection* that necessarily enters in as the life and soul of all thought. In this sense are the celestial angels by the very constitution of their nature. But the Divine Word in its descent, meets with another order of beings, who, though partakers of good are yet more distinguished for *wisdom*, and therefore are not so much in *ends* as in *causes*, which are intrinsically secondary to *ends*. To them also the Word, in its progress, accommodates itself, according to the dominant principle of their nature, and the sense which yields an appropriate pabulum to them is the *spiritual*, as they are in the *spiritual degree*, which is the degree of *causes*. We are still, however, as yet above the region of *language* and *written speech*, because above the sphere of *nature*, or that of *effects*. Following the Word downward to this sphere we see it coming into *ultimates* by clothing itself in human language and yielding what is termed a *literal sense*, a sense accommodated to those who, as living in the flesh on earth, are in the *ultimates of nature*, where the *causes* operating from the spiritual sphere produce their *effects*.

Thus then we have the philosophy of the three senses of the Word, founded upon a threefold distinction in the orders of intelligent beings, and in close affinity with Swedenborg's sublime *doctrine of degrees*, the importance of which as a key to all sound knowledge in every department of the universe, the world has yet to learn. In view of the explanation now given I do not see why I am not entitled to pronounce the grand problem solved as to the grounds of his assertions respecting the existence of this threefold sense. Must not the fact *necessarily* be as he asserts? Is not the principle virtually to be recognized in the very book, the product of your own mind, which I am now reviewing? Were you not prompted, in the first instance, by an *end of affection* to the inditing of the volume? Your supreme regard to what you deem the truth of God—your love for the souls of your fellow-men—your anxiety to guard them from the inroads of error—were undoubtedly your moving impulse; and thus far you were in the sphere of *ends*. This impulse, however, you can easily perceive, is something superior, or rather interior, to thought. By it your thought or understanding was excited to put forth its activity and institute a course of mental reasoning designed to bear upon the apprehended errors and fallacies of the system that you would expose. In doing this you were operating in the sphere of *causes*. But your purpose was still lacking completion. In order to the attainment of the *end* the *cause* must pass into *effect*, and this could only be done by the writing and publishing of the book. In this act your love and wisdom really descend into *ultimates* and assume a *natural form*, and in this form the *end*, *cause*, and *effect* actually co-exist together and manifest the fulness of their power. How pertinently this illustrates Swedenborg's doctrine of the Divine Word you can scarcely fail to see, nor will you refuse to admit that it is at least somewhat curious, that the very principles on which your book is constructed—a book written, in great measure, to expose the falsities of

Swedenborg's positions respecting the nature of God's Book—afford all but a downright demonstration of his truth.

As to what you say of Swedenborg's "authority being undermined" in consequence of what he has affirmed respecting the Scriptures, I would simply remark, that as he neither claims for himself, nor his adherents for him, any other authority than that which is essentially inherent in the truths that he proclaims, so that authority can be "undermined" by nothing else than a demonstration that those asserted truths are in fact fallacies and falsities. This, I venture to say, has not yet been done, nor do I see any immediate prospect of its being done.

IX. *The Corruption and Desolation of the Old Church and the Purity and Perfection of the New.*—"Swedenborg maintains that, unless the New Jerusalem Church had been established, no flesh could have been saved; that the Protestant Church as well as the Catholic, was universally corrupt, and destitute of the faith and charity which are essential to salvation. He says, so long as the dragon and his crew continue in the world of spirits, no divine truth, united to divine good, can pass through to the men of the earth without being perverted or destroyed. And by the dragon, he says, are meant those who are in the faith of the present church. According to his teaching, all the best men of the Reformed Church, the Luthers, the Melancthons, the Calvins,—all that suffered martyrdom for their attachment to Christ in different countries,—all the Leightons, and Baxters, and Scotts, and Wilberforces, and Howards, and Martyns of Great Britain,—all the Hookers, and Mathers, the Edwardses and Brainerds and Paysons of America, belonging to the dragon and his crew. And he often expresses it as his judgment, that none, except those who constitute the New Church, have any knowledge of the true spiritual sense of the word of God, or any title to the blessings of the gospel. All except the few who belong to the Swedenborgian church, are in darkness. The disciples of Swedenborg are in the truths of faith which are from the goods of charity; but the rest are in falses, because in the use of their free will, they have opened their interiors to the influx of evil spirits."—p. 130.

There is in all this a strange mixture of truth and error, by which the reader is sadly mystified and misled. That there was a necessity for the establishment of the New Jerusalem Church is indeed affirmed by Swedenborg, because God had expressly announced it in Isaiah and the Apocalypse, and his counsel must stand of course. The fact of the ushering in of such a dispensation at some time you cannot, as a believer in Revelation, question. But you may be less ready to admit the identity of the New Jerusalem of John with that of Swedenborg, and on this head I cannot enter into a full discussion till I learn that you have satisfactorily acquainted yourself with the fundamental grounds on which he affirms this identity, and are prepared to give your reasons, as an interpreter of Scripture, for denying it. He has given the most abundant reasons for his assertion, and among them is undoubtedly the alleged fact, that at the period when this dispensation commenced (about the middle of the last century), the pre-existing Christian church, both Catholic and Protestant had lapsed into a deep and wide-spread degeneracy in consequence of the prevalent tenets of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead—of an Atonement effected by a vicarious substitution of

the innocent for the guilty—and by the separation of Charity and Faith in the matter of Justification, all which enter into the very vitals of Christian Doctrine and Life, and an erroneous view of which must necessarily corrupt and devastate the Church. The question becomes, as you will perceive, in the first instance, a simple question of fact—have these doctrines been generally taught under the aspect in which I have presented them, and then, secondly, are they under this aspect true? If not, they must assuredly be pernicious, and I do not think it an easy matter to overstate their mischievous and ruinous effects. That they are not true—that they are pre-eminently untrue—it has been the drift of my previous reasoning to evince—with what success I leave it to yourself and others to judge.

But we are pressed by the consequences. If the doctrines held and taught by such men as Leighton, Baxter, Scott, Edwards, Brainerd, Payson, and others of similar stamp, really involved grand and essential errors, do we not, by the very force of the allegation, pronounce sentence upon the men, and cut them off from all hope of heaven? Do we not consign them over to a fatal fellowship with “the dragon and his crew?” No other inference could well be drawn from the above presentation of the subject, and yet no inference could be more unjust and injurious to our author and to the true character of his system. Not the least striking among its wonderful features is that of the enlarged and catholic Charity which it breathes towards every degree of real *good*, with whatever error of understanding it is found in conjunction. The fundamental distinction upon which it every where insists between the *love or life principle* and the mere intellectual conviction of *truth*, upon the former of which and not upon the latter, salvation is suspended, enables him to recognize the heirs of eternal life in multitudes of those whose doctrinal belief is widely at variance with that which he inculcates. Indeed I have often been deeply and admiringly impressed by the *tender solicitude* he evinces so to discriminate between the falsities of the head and the heart as to embrace as many as possible within the range of the Lord's saving goodness. Nothing approaching to a spirit of stern and gloomy denunciation is to be found in his writings. It is only when falsities are intelligently *confirmed* and thence wrought into the texture of the *life*, that he despairs of a happy result. And it would certainly be strange if one who assures us that even the well-disposed heathen, who lives up to the light of his convictions, is saved as far as his goodness and truth will admit, should still exclude from the prospect of heaven such men as the pious worthies whose names you have recited. That their *faith* was at fault so far as it coincided with the leading popular dogmas upon which I have dwelt, is undoubtedly true, but you will see from the extracts which follow that their errors might still consist with a salvable state, though they must necessarily detract from that completeness and symmetry of character, which results from the fair and full conjunction of Goodness and Truth.

“The subject here treated of is those who are saved, although from the doctrine of their religion they were in falsities; for all are saved who are in the good of life according to the dogmas of their religion, which they believed to be truths, although they were not truths, for what is false is not imputed to any one who lives well according to the dogmas of his religion; for the good of life according to religion contains within itself the affection of knowing truths which such persons also learn and receive when they come into another life, for every affection

remains with man after death, and especially the affection of knowing truths, because this is a spiritual affection, and every man when he becomes a spirit is his own affection, of consequence, the truths which they desire they then imbibe, and so receive them deeply in their hearts."—*A. E.* 455.

"Inasmuch as they lived in love to God and in charity towards their neighbor, the falsities of their religion were accepted by the Lord as truths, because inwardly in their falsities there was the good of love, and the good of love qualifies all truth, and in such case qualifies the falsity which is believed by such to be truth; the good also, which lies concealed within, causes such, when they come into the other life, to perceive genuine truths, and to receive them. Moreover there are truths which are only appearances of truth, such as are those of the literal sense of the Word, which are also accepted by the Lord as genuine truths when there is in them the good of love to the Lord, and the good of love towards the neighbor, or charity; in the other life also the good which is inwardly hid with them dissipates the appearances, and makes bare the spiritual or genuine truths."—*A. E.* 625.

"They within the Church are in falses and at the same time in good, who are in heresies and in the life of good, and all out of the Church [are in falses and at the same time in good] who are in good; but falses with these do not damn, unless they be such falses as are contrary to good, and destroy the very life of good; but the falses which are not contrary to good, in themselves indeed are falses, but in respect to the good of life, which they are not contrary to, they almost put off the quality of the false, which is effected by application to good; for such falses can be applied to good, and be applied to evil; if they are applied to good, they become mild, but if to evil, they become hard; for falses can equally be applied to good, as truths to evil, for truths of every kind by applications to evil are falsified: to illustrate this by an example; it is said that faith alone saves, which in itself is false, especially with the evil, who thereby exclude the good of charity, as if it contributed nothing at all to salvation; but this false grows mild with those who are in the good of life, for they apply it to good, saying that faith alone saves, but that is not faith unless together with its fruit, consequently unless where good is; so in other cases."—*A. C.* 8311.

"The fifth cause that they who in doctrine and life confirm with themselves that faith produces good works as a tree does fruit, do not shut heaven against themselves, is, because they do not falsify the Word, like those who believe in justification and salvation by faith without good works; for they who believe in faith as justifying without good works, falsify all those parts of the Word where love, charity, goods, works, deeds, working and doing, are mentioned and commanded, and this even to the destruction of divine truth in the heavens, understanding by those expressions either faith, or the moral and civil goods of the world, or that they are said only for the vulgar, on account of the simplicity of their faith; thus destroying divine truth itself by argumentations drawn from the impotency of man to fulfil the law, from the nature of the good which is done by man, as not being good, and the merit which is inherent in such good: but they who in simplicity adjoin good works to faith, do not falsify those parts of the Word, and hence do not remove faith from love to God, and thereby admit the divine operation in everything which man is to do, as well as in everything which he is to believe? for they think and say that good works are to be done as from man, inasmuch as he who does not act and believe as of himself, believes and does nothing, and can have no religion; but still, inasmuch as they are not in genuine truths, though they do not indeed shut heaven against themselves, they cannot advance further than to the threshold of heaven: howbeit to such of them as have loved truths for the sake of truths, heaven is opened when the divine order is restored with them, which is when charity and its good is in the first place, and faith and its truth in the second, for they are then like those who go on in a straight way with the face looking forward, whereas before they were like those who go with the face looking backward."—*A. E.* 798.

The section of the "Apocalypse Explained," from which the last of the above extracts is taken, contains an extended train of admirable discriminations on

this head going to show under what circumstances falsifications may be made of the truths of the Word which still do not proceed to the extreme of closing heaven against their authors. So also in the following list of references to the "Arcana," by Swedenborg himself, you will see that he has given large consideration to the subject.

"That there are falsities of religion which agree with good, and falsities which disagree, n. 9259; that falsities of religion, if they do not disagree with good, do not produce evil, except with those who are in evil, n. 8318; that falsities of religion are not imputed to those who are in good, but to those who are in evil, n. 8051, 8149; that truths not genuine, and also falsities may be consociated with genuine truths with those who are in good, but not with those who are in evil, n. 3470, 3471, 4551, 4552, 7344, 8149, 9298; that falsities and truths are consociated by appearances from the literal sense of the Word, n. 7344; that falsities are verified and softened by good, because they are applied and made conducive to good, and to the removal of evil, n. 8149; that the falsities of religion with those who are in good, are received by the Lord as truths, n. 4736, 8149; that the good whose quality is from a false principle of religion, is accepted by the Lord, if there be ignorance, and if there be in it innocence and a good end, n. 7887; that the truths which are with man are appearances of truth and good, tinctured with fallacies, but that the Lord nevertheless adapts them to genuine truths with the man who lives in good, n. 2053; that falsities in which there is good exist with those who are out of the church and thence in ignorance of the truth, also with those within the church where there are falsities of doctrine, n. 2589-2604, 2861, 2863, 3263, 3778, 4189, 4190, 4197, 6700, 9256."

And now, in view of the above citations, I must be allowed to ask what possible ground you could have had for conveying to your readers the impression they will naturally receive from your language, that "he often expresses it as his judgment, that none except those who constitute the New Church have any knowledge of the true spiritual sense of the word of God, or any title to the blessings of the gospel?" Do these extracts sound forth a sentence of excommunication from the true Church and of exclusion from heaven against all who have not given in a formal adhesion to the doctrines I am advocating? Do the following paragraphs sound like it?

"The doctrine of charity, which is the doctrine of life, was the essential doctrine in the ancient Churches; and that doctrine conjoined all Churches, and thereby formed one Church out of many. For they acknowledged all those to be members of the Church, who lived in the good of charity, and called them brothers, however they might differ in truths, which at this day are called matters of faith. In these they instructed one another, which was amongst their works of charity; nor were they angry if any one did not accede to another's opinion, knowing that every one receives truth in such proportion as he is in good."—*H. D. N. J.* 9.

"There are two things which conjoin the men of the Church, viz.; life and doctrine; when life conjoins, doctrine does not separate; but if only doctrine conjoins, as at this day is the case within the Church, then they mutually separate, and make as many Churches as there are doctrines; when yet doctrine is for the sake of life, and life is from doctrine. That they separate themselves if only doctrine conjoins, is evident from this, that he who is of one doctrine, condemns another [of a different doctrine] sometimes to hell; but that doctrine doth not separate, if life conjoins, is evident from this, that he who is in goodness of life doth not condemn another who is of another opinion, but leaves it to his faith and conscience, and extends this rule even to those who are out of the Church, for he saith in his heart that ignorance cannot condemn any, if they live in innocence and mutual love, as infants, who are also in ignorance when they die."—*A. C.* 4468.

"It is provided, that every one in whatever heresy he is as to the understanding, may still be reformed and saved, provided he shuns evils as sins, and does not confirm heretical falsities with himself; for by shunning evils as sins, the will is reformed, and through the will the understanding, which then first comes out of darkness into light. There are three essentials of the Church, the acknowledgment of the Divine of the Lord, the acknowledgment of the sanctity of the Word, and the life which is called charity; according to the life, which is charity, every man has faith; from the Word is the knowledge of what life must be; and from the Lord is reformation and salvation. If these three had been as the essentials of the Church, intellectual dissensions would not have divided, but only varied it, as the light varies the colors in beautiful objects, and as various diadems make the beauty in a king's crown."—D. P. 259.

I beg that neither you nor any one else will infer from this, that Swedenborg represents the *truth of doctrine* as a matter of little or no importance. He is as far from this as possible. But he is, as he designs to be, very explicit in his teaching that doctrinal belief is no infallible test of moral character, and that as evil of life may co-exist with the acknowledgment of many truths, so the good of life may be found in conjunction with many falsities of doctrine.

"All except the few who belong to the Swedenborgian church are in darkness. The disciples of Swedenborg are in the truths of faith which are from the goods of charity; but the rest are in falses." Swedenborg knows no disciples, in the sense in which your language would naturally be understood. The receivers of Swedenborg's doctrines know no master but the Lord himself. Would you be willingly termed a disciple of Paul, simply because you regarded Paul as an illuminated expounder of the doctrines of Christ? Would you consent to be called a disciple of Calvin, however you might look upon him as a well instructed scribe in the mysteries of the kingdom? Would you not deem it as implying a derogation in some degree from that supreme deference which you would always desire to pay to the words of Him who has said "Call no man Father?" We respect, and honor, and reverence Swedenborg as a highly favored medium of divine communications to men; but we do not profess to be his *disciples*. The very sentiments we cherish towards him forbid the thought of assuming in regard to him a relation which, if anything could, we are sure would inflict a pang of pain upon his beatified spirit. So also in regard to what you say of the "Swedenborgian church." We know no such church. We have again and again disclaimed the denomination before the world, and though we can scarcely hope that the use of it will be waved, and though we doubt not it may be sometimes employed simply by way of characteristic designation, yet we would fain have the world distinctly understand, that we repudiate every term and title which has a *sectarian* aspect, since if our doctrines are *true* they are emphatically *the* doctrines, and the *only* doctrines which the Lord acknowledges as constituting, with the appropriate *life*, the Church, which is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," and this is the Church of the New Jerusalem.

I am sorry to be compelled to recognize, in the foregoing paragraph from your work, a certain *ad invidiam* air and tone which comes somewhat gratingly over the feelings that I like to cherish when conversing with the products of your pen. It is not, in truth, a fair representation of the fact. It does injustice to the tenor of his teachings. It attributes, moreover, a claim to the receivers of these doctrines on the score of their *personal character* which they do not venture to make for themselves. They have a strong, I may say an undoubting, intellectual con-

viction that the doctrines in the abstract are true; but they see, by the same light, that the demands of these doctrines on the *life's love* are so high and imperative, that it is only with a trembling confidence that they presume to look within for the evidence of their *power*. They are taught the fact of a heaven-wide difference between a correct *knowledge* of the "truths of faith" and a living *experience* of the "goods of charity." They find therefore a perpetual ground of humiliation and holy fear in their conscious failures to reach the high mark of their calling, and are, as a body, utter strangers to any such language of assurance or self-complacency as one would think from your remarks to be the vernacular dialect of their faith. But I would not meet such insinuations with acerbity of spirit. I would simply enter a meek protest against the view you have presented of our position as a Church. I could not desire to excite any other sentiments than those which will spontaneously spring up in any candid and ingenious mind on a clear perception that it has wronged an opponent. Least of all could I think of doing this in dealing with a spirit which I know to be, in its general actings, so tender of truth—so studious of justice—so prompt of reparation—as yours. That your statements on this head compel me to seek for them some apology, is undoubtedly true, but I find it in the inward conviction that your impressions were taken up from a partial and imperfect survey of the genuine character of the system. I do not recognize the least intention to present it under a distorted aspect.

X. *Purgatory*.—"The doctrine of a *purgatory* is found in the writings of Swedenborg,—not exactly in the Popish form, but equally contrary to the common faith of the Protestant Churches. He teaches that men are as really in a state of probation after death, as before; that in the world of spirits they go through a course of discipline more particular and thorough, than in the present state, and that, after their predominant affection has been clearly manifested,—after the remains of evil have been abstracted from those who are regenerated, and the seeming good from the rest, which requires no inconsiderable length of time, the former pass into heaven, the others into hell. This doctrine of another state of trial after death is, we think, very different from the doctrine taught by Christ and the Apostles, so that if Swedenborg was right, they were mistaken."

I deem it expedient here, as elsewhere, whenever possible, to array Swedenborg's own declarations against the counter-statements which are proposed by his opponents. A writer's own *confession of faith*, when clearly and unequivocally expressed, is to be taken as a *prima facie* exponent of his real sentiments on any particular point, though the attempt is entirely legitimate, on the part of an opponent, to show that this is inconsistent with itself, or with something else, taught by himself or others, that is beyond the reach of controversy. I am not aware that Swedenborg's writings contain anything inconsistent with the following statement.

"With respect to *purgatory*, I can aver, that it is a pure Babylonish fiction, invented for the sake of gain, and that no such place does or can exist. Every man, after death, first comes into the world of spirits, which is in the middle between heaven and hell, and is prepared there either for heaven or hell, every one according to his life in the world; and in that world no one is tormented, but the wicked then first come into torment, when after preparation, they go to hell. There are innumerable societies in that world, and enjoyments in them similar to those upon earth, by reason that they who are there are conjoined

with men upon earth, who are likewise in the midst between heaven and hell. The externals of such are successively put off, whereby their internals are laid open, till at length the ruling love, which is the life's love, and the inmost, and which governs the externals, discovers itself; when this is revealed, then the true quality of the man appears, and according to the quality of that love, he is sent forth from the world of spirits to his own place, if good, into heaven, and if bad, into hell. That this is the case, it has been given me to know of a certainty, because it has been granted me by the Lord to be with those who are in that world, and to see everything, and thus to relate all from actual experience, and this now for the space of twenty years. Wherefore I can assert that purgatory is a fiction, which may be called diabolical from its having been invented for the sake of gain, and for the sake of obtaining power over souls, even after death."—*A. R.* 784.

Here we see that he expressly denies the Popish doctrine of Purgatory, and yet you assert that the doctrine of a Purgatory is found in his writings, and you seem to rest the charge upon his alleged teaching that "men are as really in a state of probation after death as before." How this is to be made clearly consistent with what immediately follows, that men go through a course of discipline in the world of spirits in order to *manifest their predominant affection*, I am somewhat at a loss to understand, as the *manifestation* of such an affection would seem fairly to imply its previous *formation*, which of course is to be referred to the present life. But I have still greater difficulty in reconciling the statement with what Swedenborg says in the following paragraphs.

"The life of man cannot be changed after death; it remains then such as it had been; nor can the life of hell be transcribed into the life of heaven, since they are opposite. Hence it is evident that they who come into hell, remain there to eternity; and that they who come into heaven remain there to eternity."—*A. C.* 10,749.

"The man who, in the world, has begun the first state (reformation), after death can be introduced into the other (regeneration); but he who has not entered into the first state in the world, cannot, after death, be introduced into the other, thus cannot be regenerated."—*T. C. R.* 571.

"Man after death remains to eternity such as he is as to his will or reigning love.—It was said by the angels that the life of the reigning love is never changed with any one to eternity, since every one is his own reigning love; wherefore to change that love in a spirit would be to deprive him of his life, or to annihilate him."—*H. & H.* 480.

Now a man's "reigning love" is no other than his "predominant affection," and this, though "manifested" in the other life, is never changed. How then can you say that Swedenborg teaches that "men are as really in a state of probation after death, as before?" Does he not in fact, teach directly the reverse? There is, I admit, a sense of the term "probation," namely, that of *trying* or *testing*, for the purpose of *ascertaining the qualities* of anything, in which it may be said that every spirit comes at death into a state of *probation*, for he enters immediately upon a process which shall *prove* and *bring out* his interior moral character—his dominant loves and delights—by means of the spiritual associations, into which he comes; but this, as you are well aware, is not the sense which the term bears in ordinary theological usage. It there has the import of an incipient *forming* or *determining* the character to good or evil, to heaven or hell, according to the direction of a man's volitions. What else than this can you mean by calling it "the doctrine of another state of trial after death," and speak-



ing of it as something "very different from the doctrine taught by Christ and the Apostles?" Yet how is it different, if he, as well as they, teaches that there is no change, except in degrees of development, in a man's moral character after death? As you seem to have precluded yourself from all future opportunity of complying with the demands of justice in rectifying erroneous statements in regard to Swedenborg's doctrines, you will allow me, in the present instance, to "supply your lack of service" in this respect.

But does not Swedenborg, you will ask, distinctly teach, in contrariety to the whole current of Protestant creeds, that the spirits of men do not, after death, go immediately to heaven or hell, but enter into a mixed and intermediate state, where they are severally *prepared* for their final allotment of happiness or misery? He does; and all his adherents firmly believe it, because they are satisfied that he was supernaturally empowered to disclose the truth on this head, and because they perceive a rational ground for the doctrine in the elemental principles of their being. They see nothing in the nature of the change wrought by death that is especially calculated of itself to work a separation of the mingled qualities of good and evil, truth and falsity, which go to form the characters of the great mass of mankind. This elimination, however, they are convinced must take place, and in a way too that shall not suspend for a moment the free and voluntary actings of the soul. Of course they regard the process as gradual, and they not only accord most fully with the statements which Swedenborg has given in the following paragraph, but they recognize the process as based upon the soundest philosophy of our moral and intellectual constitution.\*

"As far as the truths which are of the understanding, are conjoined to the goods which are of the will, thus as far as a man wills truths and thence does them, so far he has heaven in himself, since the conjunction of good and truth is heaven: but as far as the falses which are of the understanding are conjoined to the evils which are of the will, so far man has hell in himself, because the conjunction of what is false and evil is hell: but as far as the truths which are of the understanding are not conjoined to the goods which are of the will, so far man is in a middle state. Almost every man at this day is in such a state, that he knows truths, and from science and also from understanding thinks them, and either does much of them, or little of them, or nothing of them, or contrary to them, from the love of evil and thence the faith of what is false; therefore, in order that he may have either heaven or hell, he is after death first brought into the world of spirits, and there a conjunction of good and truth is made with those who are to be elevated into heaven, and a conjunction of evil and the false with those who are to be cast into hell. For it is not permitted to any one, in heaven nor in hell, to have a divided mind, that is, to understand one thing and to will another; but what he wills, he must also understand, and what he understands, he must also will. Wherefore in heaven he who wills good must understand truth, and in hell he who wills evil must understand what is false; therefore with the good falses are there removed, and truths are given agreeable and conformable to their good, and with the evil truths are there removed, and falses are given agreeable and conformable to their evil. From these things it is evident what the world of spirits is."—*H. & H.* 425.

I add to this no comments of my own. If you do not see it to be true upon the simple perusal, I should have little hope of your being convinced by the most voluminous array of reasoning. If you demand the superadded testimony

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\* See this subject discussed at considerable length in the third and fourth Nos. of the "Swedenborg Library."

of the express chapter and verse of Scripture in support of the doctrine, I cannot give it; nor for myself do I feel the need of it. If a professed revelation respecting the conditions of the human spirit in another life appeals, for the establishment of its credibility, to the soundest rational inductions of my own mind, and contains nothing *contrary* to what I read in the general tenor of the Scriptures, why should I refuse it assent? Has truth upon these subjects no evidence whatever except what is derived from the literal affirmances of the inspired oracles? What is the authority for a thousand pulpit representations of the particular forms of the happiness of heaven and the misery of hell to which you and I have often listened? They may not be always correct—indeed I am persuaded they are generally incorrect—but they are obviously made on the assumption of the soundness of certain general principles, which are deemed sufficient to warrant the recital of various specific details growing out of them. May we not recognize as much certainty in the fundamental principles of our nature as laid down by Swedenborg, and upon which he builds all the details of his disclosures?

XI. *All Angels and Spirits from the Human Race.*—"This leads me to say, more particularly, in the 11th place, that Swedenborg's ideas of the future world, and the character and state of its inhabitants, are in various respects, at variance with the teachings of God's word. He holds that all the angels in heaven and all the devils in hell are from the human race, and once lived in this world as we do now. Of course he makes the history of paradise a mere allegory, as there could have been no wicked being to tempt the parents of the human race, and no such beings as Jude and Peter speak of, namely "the angels who kept not their first estate," and "the angels that sinned." When Christ says that, in the future world, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are *as* the angels of God in heaven, the meaning according to Swedenborg must be, they *are* angels. But this, he thinks, does not prevent their marrying; for he says they are men and women after death, as they are before, that they have conjugal love, and are joined, as male and female, in marriage—though it is all spiritual."

As you do not intimate in what respects you regard Swedenborg's ideas of the future world, and the character and state of its inhabitants, to be at variance with the teachings of the word of God, except it be in respect to the true nature of angels and devils, I presume I am at liberty to consider this as the point which you had especially in your eye in making the assertion. Upon this I have first to correct an error in your statements, and, secondly, to consider how far the alleged error in Swedenborg's statements is an error. "He holds that all the angels in heaven and all the devils in hell, are from the human race, *and once lived in this world*, as we do now." The clause in *Italics* is entirely a mistake, and one of so gross a nature that I am not a little at a loss to conceive how it could have originated. I do not well understand how a writer could have acquired sufficient knowledge of the system to feel authorized to make any denial on this subject, and should yet have failed so utterly to represent the fact as it is. Swedenborg indeed informs us that all angels and devils are from the human race, but then he expressly asserts, over and over again, that the human race is not confined to our earth, but extends throughout all the habitable earths in the universe; and, what is singular enough, you have yourself, in a previous

part of your work, made copious extracts from the little volume entitled "*Earths in the Universe*," in which you speak of his descriptions "of the *men and women* who live there, the form of their faces, their clothing," &c. You must have known, moreover, that he distinctly affirms that he gained his information respecting these various worlds and their inhabitants from the spirits that once dwelt in them, with whom his spirit had intercourse. All these spirits become angels or demons in the spiritual world. Can I then but wonder exceedingly that you should here represent him as holding, that all these beings, "once lived in this world, as we do now!" You can easily imagine how greatly my ingenuity is taxed to frame an adequate solution of the problem involved in your statement on this head.

As to the objection that he is compelled to "make the history of Paradise a mere allegory, as there could have been no wicked being to tempt the parents of the human race," methinks this does not come with the very best grace from one who insists so strenuously upon the rigor of literal interpretation, for the *letter* of the narrative speaks only of a *bona fide* serpent as the tempter, and says not a word of any spirit good or evil as having anything to do in the transaction. You must either, therefore, suppose the word *serpent* to denote an evil spirit, while no literal serpent was present, or you must hold that such a spirit employed an actual serpent as an instrument and miraculously spake through him, which, though I once believed it to be the true solution, I now, upon the ground of clearer views, reject as totally inadequate and inapposite. It is to me altogether incredible that a serpent should have uttered articulate sounds under the promptings of an intelligent agent, and that the woman should have been deceived by the machinations of a being of so much power, but of whose existence she had received not the slightest intimation. If it be replied that the whole matter is to be resolved simply into the power of the Most High, I can only say that Omnipotence alone can never solve the problems which involve the other Divine perfections, or silence the voice of our cool and reverential reason. Still I deem it probable that you have no difficulty in receiving the solution, although it is certainly advancing beyond the strictness of the letter into the region of allegory to understand by *serpent* anything but a serpent.

As to what is said by Jude and Peter of "the angels who kept not their first estate," and "the angels that sinned," I am prepared to show, upon the strictest principles of exegesis, that these passages have no reference to an event that transpired in heaven, and answering to what is termed "the fall of angels," but that it relates entirely to the apostacy of the antediluvians. I reserve the discussion however to another contemplated work.

You will not, I trust, understand me as affirming that Swedenborg adheres to the literal sense of the Mosaic narrative of the fall. Far from it. He makes the serpent to be merely a symbol of the sensual principle in man, which is continually tending to seduce his higher nature to a compliance with its dictates, and teaches that it was in this way that the fall was effected, just as every man falls at the present day. If there were diabolical influxes operating upon the sensual lusts at that time, which he does not expressly affirm, there were no doubt evil spirits in existence from some part of the universe, to act the part which they ordinarily do in tempting man to sin.

But the head of this heresy is no doubt in the position, that all angels and

spirits are from the human race, of our own or some other earth. As I propose, if life and health are spared, to treat this subject at length in a future publication, I shall at present content myself with a brief extract from "Noble's Appeal," which will lay open the grounds of the New Church doctrine in regard to the origination of angels and spirits. "What is man? The Scriptures assure us, that he is a being created in the image and likeness of God. This is the proper and intrinsic nature of *man*, however he may have departed from it: and is it possible to employ any other language that will accurately define the intrinsic nature of an *angel*? Is an angel *more* than an image and likeness of God? This would be saying that angels absolutely *are* Gods. An image and likeness of God is a being who receives life, love, and wisdom, of a genuine and heavenly nature, from God: and is not this the definition both of a man and of an angel? To possess life, love, and wisdom, in himself, is the prerogative of God alone: to possess life derivatively, accompanied with a species of love of a merely natural kind, and with instincts supplying the place of wisdom, without a capacity to recede from or alter them, belongs to the brute creation alone: and to possess life derivatively, accompanied with a power of rising from natural love to spiritual, and attaining to the enjoyment of a love and wisdom truly human, imaging the divine love and wisdom from which they are derived, belongs to the only other conceivable order of animated creatures,—the only species of being that can exist between the all-perfect, the infinitely wise and good God, and the irrational animal. Such a being is man: and such a man, when he has passed from this natural into the spiritual sphere of existence, is an angel."—p. 282.

To this I add the following from Swedenborg, as to which you will of course act your pleasure whether to regard it as a sober and veritable relation, or as the dreaming or raving of a wild hallucination. I suspect that to many of my readers it will have a certain air of rational probability that will at least create a *suspicion* that it is not very far from the truth.

"But to proceed now to experience. That angels are human forms or men, has been seen by me a thousand times. For I have spoken with them as man with man, sometimes with one, sometimes with several in company; nor have I seen with them anything different from man as to form; and I have repeatedly wondered that they were such. And lest it should be said that it was a fallacy, or a vision of phantasy, it has been given me to see them in full wakefulness, or when I was in every sense of the body, and in a state of clear perception. Frequently also I have told them, that men in the Christian world are in such blind ignorance concerning angels and spirits, that they believe them to be minds without form, and pure thoughts, concerning which they have no other idea, than as of something ethereal in which there is something vital; and because they thus ascribe to them nothing of man, except a thinking principle, they believe that they do not see, because they have no eyes, do not hear because they have no ears, and do not speak because they have not a mouth and tongue. To these things the angels said, that they knew that there was such a belief with many in the world, and that it reigned with the learned, and also, what they wondered at, with the priests. They also said the cause was, that the learned who were the leaders, and first broached such an idea concerning angels and spirits, thought from the sensuous of the external man concerning them; and they who think from those, and not from interior light, and from the general idea which is implanted in every one, cannot do otherwise than construct such fictions; since the sensuous of the external man comprehend nothing else than what is within nature, but not what is above it, thus nothing whatever concerning the spiritual world. From these leaders as guides was derived the falsity of thought concerning the angels to others, who thought not from themselves but

from them; and they who first think from others, and make those things matters of their faith, and afterwards view them with their own understanding, can scarcely recede from them; wherefore most acquiesce in confirming them. Moreover they said that the simple in faith and heart are not in that idea concerning angels, but in an idea concerning them, as concerning men of heaven, because they have not extinguished by erudition what was implanted in them from heaven, nor do they comprehend anything without a form. Hence it is, that the angels in temples, whether carved or painted, are not represented otherwise than as men. Concerning what is implanted from heaven, they said, that it is the Divine flowing in with those who are in the good of faith and life.

"From all my experience, which now is of many years, I can say and affirm, that angels as to their form are altogether men; that they have faces, eyes, ears, a breast, arms, hands, feet; that they see and hear each other, and converse together; in a word, that nothing at all is wanting to them, which belongs to man, except that they are not clothed with a material body. I have seen them in their own light, which exceeds by many degrees the meridian light of the world; and in it all things of their face were seen more distinctly and clearly than the faces of the men of the earth. It has also been given me to see an angel of the inmost heaven: he had a brighter and more resplendent face than the angels of the lower heavens; I surveyed him, and he had a human form in all perfection.

"Good spirits, with whom I have spoken also upon this subject, grieved in heart that such ignorance concerning the state of heaven and concerning spirits and angels, should be within the church: and being indignant, they said that I should certainly declare, that they are not minds without form, nor ethereal spirits, but that they are men in form; and that they see, hear, and feel, equally as those who are in the world."—*H. & H.* 74, 75, 77.

XII. *The Marriage Relation.*—"Swedenborg's ideas respecting the marriage relation rose to a marvellous height. He says, that conjugal love belongs to angels, both of the superior and the inferior heaven; that it is the head of all other loves; that it is the fundamental love of all heavenly, spiritual and natural loves; that into this love are gathered all joys and all delights from first to last; that it was the love of loves with those who formerly lived in the gold and silver and copper ages. He says, that 'true conjugal love, which is a primary characteristic of the New Jerusalem Church, is more *celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean*, than any other love in angels or men.'"

To this you object as follows.

"To such a statement as this we demur. True conjugal love is indeed a pure, virtuous and honorable affection, and is designed by our Creator for exceedingly important purposes in the church, and in civil and domestic society. But where is it spoken of in the Scriptures, as the head-spring of all holy affections, and as more celestial, spiritual, holy, pure and clean, than any other affection in heaven or earth? The first and great commandment is not that which requires love between husbands and wives, but that which requires *supreme love to God*. We must of course conclude, that this affection is of superior excellence to any other. And the second command, which requires love to our neighbors, is like the first; and this love must be considered as next in excellence to the love of God. We have regarded supreme love to God, and equal or impartial love to man, as the chief of the Christian graces. And if we change our opinion on the subject, it will be because we consider Swedenborg as invested with higher authority than Christ and the Apostles, and as commissioned to teach doctrines widely different from theirs."—*p.* 133.

It is undoubtedly true that Swedenborg gives a most exalted character to true conjugal love, and equally true is it that he gives the most ample reasons for so doing. The subject is too vast to admit of justice being done to it in the limited compass which yet remains to me, and I shall therefore attempt little more

than a brief statement, in his own words, of the grounds on which he ascribes such a pre-eminent sanctity to the marriage relation. Beginning with the citation of numerous passages in which the Lord is represented as the Husband and Bridegroom of his Spouse, the Church, he goes on;

"The reason why conjugal love considered in its essence is the foundation love of all the loves of heaven and the church, is, because it originates in the marriage of good and truth, and from this marriage proceed all the loves which constitute heaven and the church with man: the good of this marriage constitutes love, and the truth thereof constitutes wisdom; and when love accedes to wisdom, or joins itself therewith, then love becomes love; and when wisdom in its turn accedes to love, and joins itself therewith, then wisdom becomes wisdom. Love truly conjugal is the conjunction of love and wisdom. Two married partners, between or in whom this love subsists, are an effigy and form of it; all likewise in the heavens, where faces are the genuine types of the affections of every one's love, are likenesses of it; for it pervades them in the whole and in every part, as was shown above. Now as two married partners in effigy and form are this love, it follows that every love which proceeds from the form of essential love itself, is a resemblance thereof; wherefore if conjugal love be celestial and spiritual, the loves proceeding from it are also celestial and spiritual. Conjugal love therefore is as a parent, and all other loves are as the offspring. The same is evident from the creation of man: in that he was created for this love, and from his formation afterwards by means of this love. The male was created to become wisdom grounded in the love of growing wise; and the female was created to become the love of the male grounded in his wisdom, and consequently was formed according thereto; from which consideration it is manifest, that two married partners are the very forms and effigies of the marriage of love and wisdom, or of good and truth. Since natural loves flow from spiritual loves, and spiritual from celestial, therefore it is said that conjugal love is the foundation love of all celestial and spiritual loves, and *thence of all natural loves*. Natural loves relate to the loves of self and of the world; but spiritual loves to love towards the neighbor: and celestial loves to love to the Lord; and such as are the relations of the loves, it is evident in what order they follow and have place in man. When they are in this order, then the natural loves live from the spiritual, and the spiritual from the celestial, and all in this order from the Lord, in whom they originate. Into this love are collated all joys and delights from first to last. All delights whatever, of which man has any sensation, are delights of his love; the love manifesting itself, yea, existing and living thereby. That the delights are exalted in the same degree that the love is exalted, and also in the same degree that the incident affections touch the ruling love more nearly, is a known thing. Now as conjugal love is the foundation love of all good loves, and as it is inscribed on all the parts and principles of man even the most particular, as was shown above, it follows that its delights exceed the delights of all other loves, and also that it gives delight to the other loves, according to its presence and conjunction with them; for it expands the inmost principles of the mind, and at the same time the inmost principles of the body, as the delicious current of its fountain flows through and opens them.

"I am aware that few will acknowledge that all joys and delights from first to last are collated into conjugal love; because love truly conjugal, into which they are collated, is at this day so rare, that its quality is not known, and scarcely its existence; for such joys and delights exist only in genuine conjugal love; and as this is so rare on earth, it is impossible to describe its super-eminent felicities any otherwise than from the mouth of angels, because they are principled in it. It has been declared by them, that the inmost delights of this love, which are delights of the soul, into which the conjugal principle of love and wisdom, or of good and truth from the Lord, first flows, are imperceptible and thence ineffable, because they are the delights of peace and innocence conjointly; but that in their descent they become more and more perceptible: in the superior principles of the mind as beatitudes, in the inferior as satisfactions, in the breast as delights thence derived; and that from the breast they diffuse themselves into every part of the body, and at length unite themselves in ultimates and be-

come the delight of delights. Moreover the angels have related wonderful things respecting these delights; adding further, that their varieties in the souls of conjugal pairs, and from their souls in their minds, and from their minds in their breasts, are infinite and also eternal; and that they are exalted according to the prevalence of wisdom with the husband; and this, because they live to eternity in the flower of their age, and because they know no greater blessedness than to grow wiser and wiser."—*C. L.* 65–69.

It would seem from this that there can be no real conflict between the demands of this love and of that supreme love to God and the neighbor which lies at the basis of a true heavenly state. The *character* which is the subject of celestial bliss is necessarily made up of the union of goodness and truth, or love and wisdom, and this union is the very essence of the marriage relation, the man being from his nature the impersonation of the Wisdom principle and the woman of the Love principle, the actual conjunction of both being requisite to a perfect image of Jehovah, who is infinite Wisdom and infinite Love in indissoluble union. Here, then, as elsewhere, the doctrine of Swedenborg can only be denied by denying the fundamental principle on which it rests. And I would ask whether a view of this tender relation, exalting it to a dignity and sanctity which had never before been conceived of, does not entitle its author to the reverence and esteem of all those who devoutly value the Divine institutions? Could you be induced to give a candid perusal to the treatise on "Conjugal Love," you would find, I think, that however it might be on other points, yet on this your objections were super-abundantly answered.

XIII. *Enjoyments and Pleasures of Heaven.*—"And here I cannot but remark, that the general description which Swedenborg gives of the employments and pleasures of heaven falls immeasurably short of what we find in the Scriptures. He seems to attach but little importance to the Scriptural idea, that the spirits of just men in heaven are perfect in holiness; that they are with Christ, and see him face to face, and are like him; that they inherit glory, honor and immortality—an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. His heaven, as he commonly describes it, is too earthly. Its employments and pleasures are, for the most part, but little above those which are found among Christians here. The inhabitants are not united in one happy society, having the same holy and happy affection. Their opinions are different; and their characters and tastes uncongenial, and they are led to form innumerable societies, so that those who go there from different countries, as England, Holland, Germany, &c. and those who had been under different forms of religion, as Christians, Mahometans, Pagans, &c., and those who had been engaged in different occupations, as preachers, philosophers, mathematicians, &c., those who had entertained different views of religion, those who had been wise and those who had been ignorant, in short, every variety of men and women may, after a sufficient number of trials, find their proper place, and live in a society suited to their dispositions and habits.—Now, as to the heaven generally described by Swedenborg, I would seriously ask, what is it compared with the blessed state briefly described in the prayer of Christ: 'Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me *be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.*' Cudworth, and Howe, and Baxter, and other eminent divines, who have formed their habit of thinking, not from visions, but from the word of God, have

entertained views of the heavenly state unspeakably more pure, and spiritual and exalted, than those of Swedenborg."

The grand characteristic of Swedenborg's disclosures on this head is their congruity with the constituent principles of our nature as composed of Affection which has relation to Good, and of Understanding which has relation to Truth. A heaven which does not recognize these principles as its very basis in the soul of man must be the merest phantasy that can be imagined. Such undoubtedly is every idea of heaven which regards it mainly as a *place of assemblage*—the *locale* of an immense society gathered out of all nations, kindreds, and tongues—and promiscuously convened in one vast redeemed concourse. Every conception of this nature we are taught by Swedenborg to regard as the product of mere sensuous thought and partaking infinitely more of the worldly and corporeal element than that which he affords us. Nothing can be more inapposite than to regard heaven in the light of a *place*, instead of that of a *state*, from which all ideas of *place* and *space* are necessarily to be excluded. There is of course a principle of union in the common love which reigns in all the good, but as this principle co-exists with truth in its innumerable varieties of intellectual form, it must inevitably prompt to conjunction on the ground of mental sympathies and predilections, and thus give rise to societies of countless number, all which, being governed by the predominant *human* tendency, must arrange themselves into the form of the Grand Man of heaven. The prevailing idea of a kind of general fusion or amalgamation, to be effected by death, of all the diverse elements of character in those who have been born again, is to our apprehension one of the crudest that can enter the human mind. Reflect for one moment whether you are not acquainted with those of whose piety and prospects you cannot doubt, while at the same time you would shrink from the idea of a perpetual intimacy with them of the nearest kind, from the consciousness that in a thousand particulars their attainments, tastes, habits, &c. were not fully congenial with your own. You would not feel this to be any disparagement to them, or to the work of the Divine Spirit in their souls. The love in your heart must answer to the love in theirs, because it flows from the same source and tends to the same centre. But this fact cannot annul the intellectual differences by which you are severally distinguished, nor can it prevent your yielding to the attraction of more congenial spirits as your abiding associates. The reply to this will no doubt be, that we have reason to believe that the mighty leveller death will sink at once all these inequalities and bring all the good into the most perfect harmony with each other, without reference to any prior barriers to union which may have existed here. But *what* reason have we to suppose anything of the kind? Does death destroy a man's identity? Will *you* not enter the spirit-world with the same *mind* and the same *personal character* which you bring to the last moment of life? Will not your pious servant maid do the same? What solid reason then, I repeat, have you for believing that the same causes which govern your respective associations here shall not operate there also? Will the *translation*, in either case, necessarily be a *transformation*? Will she be instantaneously lifted up to the heights of your theological science, or will your elevation be depressed that you may meet on a common plane? The real *man* of the other life is the *actual mind* of the present life, and how violent the supposition that the mere transition from the one sphere of existence to the other is to effect such a stupendous



change in the fixed and characteristic attributes of the individual? Why then should not the constitutional differences of various peoples and races lay a foundation for that species of moral grouping which Swedenborg says obtains in the heavens? Why should not the pious Hindoo, the Chinaman, the Sandwich Islander, if in the good of Christian life, be more strongly attracted to kindred souls of their own respective nations, than to others whose entire course and habits of thought have been cast in a different mould? The infinitude of the Divine Good can easily flow in and accommodate itself to the various recipient forms and faculties by which they are severally distinguished, and this is of course the essence of heaven under any supposition. If Swedenborg did not represent this as the fact, we might well question the truth of his disclosures. But I beg you to run your eye over the following items, referring to the "Arcana," where the subjects are treated at length, and see if you can conceive that he lowers or lessens our *rational* ideas of the dignity, purity, blessedness, or glory of the heavenly state.

"Experiences to show that men have so general an idea concerning heaven and heavenly joy, that it amounts to none, n. 449. That the least is the greatest in heaven, because the happiest, n. 452, 1419. But that heaven consists in being least, not greatest, n. 452. Some suppose that they are to be admitted through a door into heaven, n. 453. Some that it consists in an idle life, not aware that it consists in active life, and in performing works of charity, as the angels do, n. 456, 457. That the universal heaven in itself hath reference only to the Lord, n. 551. That all and singular things of heaven, and heavenly joys, are from the Lord, n. 551, 552. That they who are in mutual love continually advance in heaven towards the spring-time of their youth, n. 553. That the evil cannot even endure the presence of an angel, n. 1271. That the evil cannot even approach to heaven, n. 1397. That heaven is never shut to eternity, but that happiness increases according to numbers, n. 2130. That the glorification of the Lord in heaven was heard and seen, n. 2133. That heaven is not on high, but within man, n. 8153. That man is heaven and the church in the least form, n. 9279. That evils and falses are removed from those who are elevated into heaven, and goods and truths from those who are cast down into hell, n. 9331. That divine truth from the Lord makes heaven, n. 9408. That in the other life all things are communicated, are received or rejected according to loves, n. 10,130. That the Lord is heaven and the church, thus all in all there, because he dwells there in his own, n. 10,125. The love of good and the faith of truth, the life of heaven, n. 10,715. That they who receive heaven in themselves come into heaven, n. 10,717. That they will good to all for the sake of good and truth, n. 10,718. That in the other life the internal is laid open, whereby it is evident whether heaven or hell be in it, n. 10,270. That love and faith have in them heavenly joy, n. 10,722. That in heaven there is a communication of all goods, and hence so great peace, intelligence, wisdom, and happiness, n. 10,723. That they who are in the loves of self and of the world do not apprehend these things, and that in them is so great happiness, n. 10,724. That the heaven of the Lord is immense for myriads of earths, n. 10,784.

In all this it will be difficult, I think, to detect an air of extravagance, or to designate any particular which is not in accordance with the *spirit* of the Scriptures, however it may transcend the *letter*. But you say, "What is all this compared with the blessed state described in the prayer of Christ, Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me *be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory*." And what I would ask, is the beholding the glory of Christ? Is it looking upon a divine splendor, or basking in the beams of what is termed the beatific vision? Is it not an intellectual converse with the high themes of heaven? Is it not a spiritual perception of the truths and the goods flowing

through redemption from the Lord to the souls of "just men made perfect?" And is not this the very employment which Swedenborg ascribes to the heirs of the heavenly kingdom? How then are his representations a disparagement of the Scriptural teachings on this head? If you do not wholly doubt their competency to bear witness in the case, ask any of his adherents whether they have found his statements to be attended with such effects as you intimate? Are they conscious of the least weakening of the power of the motives to a holy life drawn from the views of heaven which Swedenborg presents? Be assured they will, with one voice, declare, that it is increased an hundred fold. The vague generalities of their former belief were comparatively inert and lifeless. They have now a heaven set before them which is the mere crowning development of the heaven that has been implanted within them. They know what it must be, because they feel what it is. You will therefore very rightly infer that I am at the farthest possible remove from admitting the justice of your strictures on this feature of our system.

XIV. *The Sufferings and Miseries of Hell.*—"There is the same palpable difference between his ideas of hell and those of the sacred writers. The sufferings of hell, as described in the word of God, are suited to awaken the deepest emotions of fear and dread, and so to deter men from wickedness. Those who are doomed to that wretched place, are represented *as under the wrath of God, as banished from his presence, as in the blackness of darkness, as cast into unquenchable fire, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.* The most dreadful things in creation are seized upon to set forth the miseries of the infernal abode. But what is Swedenborg's hell? Why, it is a great work-house, where the people have tasks assigned them, not extremely hard,—which they are obliged to do in order to get food. It is somewhat like our State-Prison; though in some respects less dreadful to its depraved and guilty inmates."

I might here easily and properly remand the course of discussion back to the fundamental question of Swedenborg's illumination, and rest the truth or falsehood of his statements on this head upon the truth or falsehood of his general claim. If he actually *saw* the verities of heaven and hell, has he not truly described them? Can you possibly reject his statements without first disproving his pretensions? And can you discard the *improbable* in his revelations without offering some more adequate solution of the *probable* than has yet been given? But I am willing to wave this form of reply and to attempt to sustain the truth of his disclosures on the ground of their own intrinsic character. And here we are not to forget that Swedenborg lays it down as a fundamental principle, that both the celestial and infernal scenery, which appears objectively to spirits, is the mirrored representative of their internal states as to affection and thought. The scenery is, as it were, the visible form of the states, and the state of the infernals is a state constituted by the character of their ruling loves. These are the loves of self and of the world, existing in the intensest degree and at once including every wicked and baleful passion akin to them, and excluding every good and heavenly prompting opposed to them. Every spirit of hell, therefore, is a complex of the fiendish dispositions of malice, hatred, anger, envy, revenge, cruelty, lust, desire of dominion, and goaded on by a continual impulse to *act out* these horrid tempers by inflicting all possible misery upon others. Such being their dominant loves, their thoughts must correspond with them, and

as thought assumes form in the other life, and as these forms become realities from the necessity of the case, what must be the outward bodyings forth of these internal states but a complication of just such hideous and revolting scenery as Swedenborg has described? As they have no genuine truth in consequence of having deprived themselves of the kindred good, they have no true wisdom, and being destitute of true wisdom, they are destitute of true rationality, or in other words are virtually insane, though still able to exercise an infernal subtlety and cunning in compassing their pernicious ends. In this condition they must necessarily be in the indulgence of the wildest phantasies and imaginings, and consequently surrounded by mental creations of to us the most loathsome and terrific description, yet in many of which they, from the perverted actings of their moral nature, experience a certain kind of hellish delight. Hence, as their imaginings are turned into correspondent realities, their tossings upon furious horses—their wounding by venomous serpents—their rending by ravenous beasts—their murdering and being murdered by deadly weapons—and all the sad variety of tortures to which they are subject under the outbreak of their evil passions; for in proportion as they put a restraint upon their infernal impulses, the severity of their doom is mitigated, while at the same time no radical change in their nature is effected.

If such then be indeed the real internal state of the wicked in hell—if the very breathing of their souls is toward evil and destruction—shall we suppose them to be left without check? Will the infinite Love and Wisdom leave even hell itself to become a perfect chaos of conflicting elements—a raging volcano of infernal fires? Do not our best conceptions of the Divine attributes compel the belief that the hells shall be kept in some kind of order? May not the compassion of a God extend even to their wretched inmates? May he not, as far as possible, moderate and mitigate the extremities to which their evils are constantly prone to rush? But how shall this be done, consistently with their free agency, except by means of moral bonds, such as fears, threats, and punishments? And even suppose they are so far overruled as to be made subservient to certain kinds of *uses*, ought this to derogate in our esteem from the perfections that are manifested in their lot? Is it any disparagement to our criminal codes in this world that the inmates of our State-Prisons are made to labor in various useful arts and callings as a part of their penal discipline? And do we think it wrong that extra punishments should be visited upon them for extra misdemeanors during their incarceration? I should almost suppose from the following passage that your mind shrank from the idea of any kind of alleviation, from any source, of the utmost intensity of anguish among these heirs of perdition.

“Swedenborg thinks, that the Lord, being exceedingly kind and compassionate, endeavors, in all possible ways, to gratify the inclinations of the wicked in the other world, and will sometimes, at their request, admit them to heaven as a matter of trial. His indignation and wrath, i. e. his holy displeasure, against sin, is not, according to Swedenborg an *objective reality*, but an illusive apprehension, a phantasy of the guilty mind of man.”—p. 136.

It is to me, I confess, in my better moods, a subject of rejoicing to think, that the Lord is “so exceedingly kind and compassionate” as to allow such a trial as you speak of to be made; for the effect of it is plainly to evince that the Divine Mercy is conspicuous in the hells, inasmuch as if it were the design to make the

wicked as miserable as possible, they would be violently urged into heaven, which would be to them a far severer torture than they experience in hell. We see then in this a demonstration of the awful wickedness of the infernals in having acquired a character which renders the bliss of heaven an element of intolerable misery to them, and on the other hand a clear proof of the Divine clemency in having provided for every one a state best suited to his internal quality, and therefore more congenial to his tastes and wishes than any other.

But you say that according to Swedenborg, "his indignation and wrath, i. e. his holy displeasure against sin, is not an *objective reality*, but an illusive apprehension, a phantasy of the guilty mind of man." The evident implication is, that you believe in a *real* indignation and wrath in the mind of God against sin or the sinner, however the idea is apparently softened down by the somewhat milder appellation of a "holy displeasure." The receivers of Swedenborg find no authority for ascribing to the Deity any such passion as *absolute* anger or displeasure, while at the same time they clearly perceive and expressly affirm that the contrariety between the evil that is in man and the goodness and love that is in God has, to the consciousness of the offender, the same positive *effect* as if that which is *apparent* were *real*. But I have already presented our views on this point with sufficient distinctness.

"Swedenborg was indeed led, by his longer residence in the hells, to entertain other views, and to represent the punishments of the wicked as more appalling and disgusting, than the labors and sufferings of the great work-houses above-mentioned; although the punishments arose from the creations of their own dis-tempered minds, like what often takes place in delirium or insanity. He says: 'All who are in the hells, appear with their face backwards from the Lord,—and with the feet upwards and the head downwards.'"—p. 136.

I do not know precisely what you would have the reader understand by Swedenborg's "longer residence in the hells." I have not learnt from his own statements that he *resided* there at all. The term is certainly a very singular one to apply to that spiritual perception and insight, by which he was made acquainted with the condition of things in the spiritual world, including both heaven and hell. I can scarcely believe that you intended to endorse Mr. Emerson's verdict, that Swedenborg had a morbid propensity to be continually peering into infernal glooms and horrors, for, as I have shown in my reply to that gentleman, the whole tenor of his writings is directly the reverse. Yet you speak as if he had *taken up his abode* in those doleful regions, and by a long sojourn there had made himself by degrees fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the lot of their inhabitants.

Again you quote him as saying:—"All who are in the hells appear with their face backward from the Lord,—and with the feet upwards and the head downwards." These indeed are his words, but how differently does the whole matter strike the reader when he is informed, that it is only to the angels of heaven that they have this inverted appearance, whereas in their own eyes, and as seen by each other, they seem to stand normally erect, with their heads upwards and their feet downwards. The light of heaven is the light of truth, which reveals things as they are. The light of hell is a mere *fatuous lumen* which falsifies realities, for there all truth is perverted and all order inverted.

In this connection I meet with the following paragraph:—

"According to Swedenborg, these various punishments of hell are *phantasies* or *illusive apprehensions*, created by the disordered fancy of the sufferers, like the frantic and frightful conceptions of maniacs. Now is there not reason to think that the *ideas* of these things, which arose in the mind of Swedenborg, were also *phantasies*, the creations of a lively and fruitful mind, under the influence of a very singular, protracted, and profound delirium,—still resulting in a great measure, from his previous speculations on the subject of future punishment?"—*p.* 138.

This convenient theory of "previous speculations" has met us several times before, and I very much doubt whether any creation of Swedenborg's mind is more fully entitled to be termed a *phantasy* than is such a conceit in your own. But to turn for a moment to the reasoning ;—because Swedenborg declares that a great portion of the punishments among the spirits of the pit originate in *phantasy*, you would therefore have us believe that his representations themselves come into the same category. This implies at any rate that you admit the *fact* of such *phantasies*, and consequently admit the possibility of their obtaining among infernal spirits, for in granting that Swedenborg may have been imposed upon by phantasies, *because* that phantasies reign in the spiritual world, you of course concede that what he says on this subject *may* be true. The question then arises as to the *probability* of the punishments of hell originating, in great measure, from this source. Now you are aware that the use of the term, on Swedenborg's principles, does not imply that the objects of phantasy, thus mentally projected, are not *real to the percipients*. A phantastic hydra to a lost spirit is in *effect* a real hydra, because it is really seen by him, and its bite produces a real sensation of pain. The mental things of the other life are to spirits real things, and if they suffer at all from anything that is *objective* to them, why should it not be from this cause as well as any other? Is there not therefore an adequate and philosophical ground for Swedenborg's assertion on this head, and how can you fairly deduce an inference of delusion in his case from premises involving a positive truth? Is the enunciation of a sound and rational principle the proof of an unsound and *phantastic* state of mind in him who makes it? Besides, if he were the mere dupe of "illusive apprehensions" in these statements, they were no doubt injected into his mind by these very spirits whose character and condition he is setting forth, and as they live, move and breathe, in an element of falsities, it were a much more probable supposition that if they designed to play upon him by phantasies, they would never have prompted an expose of their state so marked by an air of intrinsic truth—so well calculated to stand the test of rigid psychological inquest. If they continually pour forth falsities on every other subject, why not on this also? "Let every one," says Swedenborg, "take heed to himself when he comes into the other life, lest he be illuded; for evil spirits know how to present various illusions before those who have recently come from the world, and if they cannot deceive, still they try, by those illusions, to persuade that nothing is real, but that all things are ideal, even those which are in heaven." How much more then these which are in hell!

Again, you object to that feature of his revelations respecting the hells which denies the actings of *remorse*—the pain inflicted by a guilty conscience—in the bosom of infernals. And this, you say, is very remarkable. He labors abundantly in other ways to teach us, that man in the next world will be *man still, man altogether*, possessed of all the faculties and senses and affections, which he has here; and yet he holds that the sinners in hell will be destitute of that

which is such a constant and dreadful accompaniment of guilt in the present world." Now it is in fact upon this very basis of the *permanence of man's nature and character* in the world to come, that the position in question rests. The wicked in hell are not tormented by remorse of conscience because, the very effect of their wickedness is to destroy conscience, as we see evinced beyond all question in the present life. Who but is aware that every act of crime deadens more and more the sense of guilt, till in some cases there results a perfect obtuseness of the moral sensibility? The career of iniquity does not perhaps often reach this point in the present world: but the inherent and inevitable *tendency* of all evil is to *extinguish conscience*, and consequently *remorse*, which acts by means of conscience. How often do we learn from the confessions of those who have become monsters in crime, that the inward voice of remonstrance which rebuked the first stages of their transgression, became fainter and fainter as they advanced, till at last it died away in their ear, and conscience became seared as with a red hot iron? But you will probably say of conscience in such cases that it "is not dead, but sleepeth," that its function is merely temporarily in abeyance, and that it will eventually awaken and speak in thunder tones to the ear of the soul. Yet what solid reasons have we for this opinion? I readily admit that the worst men, particularly in Christian countries, where the moral sense of the community creates a kind of *conscientious sphere* that is widely pervasive, will often experience transient pangs and checks in the progress of crime, but this is owing to the influence of *remains*, or sentiments of goodness and truth stored away in the mind in infancy and childhood, which are slow in being extinguished, but extinguished they may be, and eventually are, in all the irreclaimably evil, either in this life or the next. I admit too that when crime has lost its impunity and the offender is brought up and called to face the prospect of punishment awarded by the law, and to cast his eye directly forward into what he has been taught to consider hell—as a place of intolerable misery—he will, in conjunction with the acting of remains, be visited by a "certain fearful looking for of judgment," which is ordinarily termed the operation of *remorse*, but the emotion when analysed will be found to be mainly *prospective* in its intimations and of the same nature with *fear*. So far as it is *retrospective* it is merely the perception of the *causes* which have led to certain *effects*, from the experience of which the soul instinctively shrinks. But it does not necessarily imply any real regret—any godly sorrow—for sin as sin, since this would be a germ of repentance and reformation. All this must of course become extinct when the ultimatum is reached, and the soul is let fully in to its ruling principle and the delight of its love, as it is in hell. It is there in its very element and life, and it can have no more prompting or desire to change the current of its *life's love* than a flowing stream can have any tendency to reverse its current and flow backward. The following will be seen to be a very impressive paragraph as viewed in this connexion.

"As to what concerns resistance from the will, it is to be known that the will (i. e. the love-principle) is what rules the man. It is believed by some that the understanding rules, but the understanding does not rule unless the will inclines; for the understanding favors the will, inasmuch as the understanding, considered in itself, is nothing else but a form of the will. When it is said the will, the affection which is of the love is meant, for the will of man is nothing else; this affection is what rules man, for the affection of love is his life. If

man's affection be that of self and the world, then his whole life is nothing else, nor can he strive against it, for this would be to strive against his own life; principles of truth effect nothing; if the affection of those loves has dominion, it draws truth over to its side, and so falsifies it, and if it does not so favor, rejects it. From these considerations it may now be manifest, that man in no case sets his heart to any truth, if the will resists: hence it is that the infernals, inasmuch as they are in the affections or lusts of evil, cannot receive the truths of faith, consequently cannot be amended."—*A. C.* 7342. .

Remorse can only arise when the soul is still in a condition to array before itself, by an intellectual process, the antagonism existing between the evil which it loves and the good for which it was designed. This is the plane on which conscience can generally act in the present life, but this plane perishes when the soul passes into hell, and the evil love becomes so overwhelmingly predominant that all the opposing judgments of the intellect melt away and are absorbed into it, and the very sense of the contrariety between its present state and its original destination to a better is utterly lost. Where then is the ground for the actings of remorse? How can a soul feel remorse that has reached the point of saying, "Evil be thou my good?" "I have occasionally discoursed," says our author, "with those in another life who have been in the delights of evil and the false, and it was given me to tell them, that they have no life till they are deprived of their delights. They replied, as such people in the world say, that if they were deprived of those delights, there would be nothing of life remaining with them. But it was given me to answer, that life then first commences, and is attended with such happiness as is enjoyed in heaven, which is comparatively ineffable. *This, however, they were unable to comprehend, because what is unknown is believed to be nothing.*" It seems, therefore, that they had lost the very perception of a contrary kind of life, that is, of a contrary love.

And now permit me to ask, what there is in all this that tends to lower an intelligent estimate of the real constituents of hell? What that goes to weaken the moral power of the sanctions drawn from this source to enforce the claims of a holy life? Can a reflecting mind conceive a more terrific idea of perdition than when viewed as a state in which not only conscience and remorse have become extinct, but their very ground-work destroyed, and even the *sense* of an opposite internal state of the soul annihilated? Not but that these wretched spirits know, by a barren intellection, that there is a heaven, and that they are not in it, just as a supremely wicked man may *know* that there is such a form of character as that possessed by a devout and humble Christian. But what kind of *knowledge* is this? Does it approach to anything like a *realizing sense* of the difference between the two characters? Can it consist with the least true desire for an inward change in himself, so long as he remains under the full power of his evil, selfish, and sensual love? There is to me something inexpressibly awful in the representation given on this head in what follows, particularly the relation at the close:—

"Delight is the all of life to all in heaven, and the all of life to all in hell. Those who are in heaven, have the delight of what is good and true, but those who are in hell have the delight of what is evil and false; for all delight is of love, and love is the *esse* of the life of man; wherefore, as man is man according to the quality of his love, so he is man according to the quality of his delight. The activity of love makes the sense of delight; the activity of it in heaven is with wisdom, and the activity of it in hell is with insanity; each in its subjects

exhibits delight. But the heavens and the hells are in opposite delights; the heavens being in the love of good, and thence in the delight of doing good; but the hells, in the love of evil, and thence in the delight of doing evil. If, therefore, you know what delight is, you will know what heaven and hell are. The will, from which man is man, is not moved even a single atom, except by delight; for the will, viewed in itself, is only an affection of some love, thus of delight; for it is some pleasure, and thence satisfaction, which causes it to will; and because the will impels the understanding to think, there is not given the least of thought but from the influent delight of the will. The reason that it is so, is because the Lord, by influx from Himself, actuates all things of the soul and all things of the mind with angels, spirits and men; and He actuates by an influx of love and wisdom, and this influx is the very activity from which all delight is, which in its origin is called blessed, prosperous and happy; and in its derivation, delightful agreeable and pleasant; and in a universal sense, good. But infernal spirits invert all things with them: thus they turn the good into evil, and the true into false, delight still remaining, for unless delight remained, they would not have will, nor sensation, thus not life. Hence it is manifest, what and whence is the delight of hell, and also what and whence is the delight of heaven. \* \* \* The earth then opened, and through the opening three devils ascended, appearing ignited from the delight of their love; and because the angels who were consociated with the novitiate spirit, perceived that those three providentially ascended from hell, they cried to the devils, 'Do not come any nearer, but from the place where you are, tell something concerning your delights.' And they replied, 'Know that every one, whether he be called good or evil, is in his own delight; the good, so called, in his, and the evil, so called, in his.' And the angels asked, 'What is your delight?' They said that it was the delight of committing whoredom, of revenging, of defrauding, and of blaspheming. And again they asked, 'What is the quality of those delights, of yours?' They said, that they were perceived by others as fetid smells from dunghills, as putrid smells from dead bodies, and as noisome smells from filthy pools. And they asked, 'Are those things delightful to you?' They said, 'They are most delightful.' Then said they, 'You are like the unclean beasts that live in them.' And they replied, 'If we are, we are; but such things are the delight of our nostrils.' And they asked, 'What more?' They said, 'It is lawful for every one to be in his own delight, even the most unclean, as they call it, provided he do not infest good spirits and angels; but because, from our delight, we could not do otherwise than infest them we were cast into work-houses, where we suffer hard things. The hindering and withdrawing of our delights there are what are called the torments of hell; there is also interior pain.' And they asked, 'Why did you infest the good?' They said that 'They could not do otherwise. It is as if fury seized us, when we see any angel, and feel the divine sphere of the Lord around him.' To which we said, 'Then you are also like wild beasts.' And presently, when they saw the novitiate spirit with the angels, fury came upon the devils, which appeared like the fire of hatred; wherefore, lest they should do harm, they were cast back into hell."—*T. C. R.* 570.

You will read therefore in what I have now said an answer to your inquiry in the ensuing paragraph.

"The inquiry presents itself for our consideration, whether these detailed accounts of the various forms of punishment in hell—accounts so minute, and spun out to such a length, and often described in language which is so indecent and offensive,—whether they are likely to make as suitable and salutary an impression on the minds of men, as the brief, but striking and awful representations of future punishment which were made by Christ and the Apostles. It is sufficient for us, that they are not found in the Scriptures—that they are additions to the word of God.—*p.* 138.

Permit me to inquire whether you do not believe there will be many things found in the experience both of heaven and hell, which are not expressly mentioned in the Scriptures? The true question is, whether the *grounds* of this



experience are not laid in the constitution of man's nature, so that the experience itself shall be absolutely inevitable. I have for myself much more than a *suspicion* that all that Swedenborg has declared on this subject will be found in the issue to be true.

XV. *Miracles*.—"We have seen that Swedenborg made no pretensions to the power of working miracles, and held that miracles are not to be expected at the present day. I will not stop to inquire, how the visits he made to heaven and hell, and to the planets, and the starry worlds, and the revelations made to him there, differ essentially from miracles. My design is merely to notice the reason he gives, why miracles are not to be expected at the present day; namely, 'that they carry compulsion with them, and take away man's free will in spiritual things.' I cannot admit this reason to be valid. For if this is the nature and tendency of miracles, then all the miracles wrought by Christ to prove his Messiahship, and all those wrought by the Apostles to confirm the truth of the gospel and the faith of Christians, carried compulsion with them, and took away man's free will; and, of course, those who witnessed the miracles, so far as they experienced the designed effects of them, were under a compulsory influence, which deprived them of their free will, and rendered them incapable of anything morally excellent or praiseworthy. If such be the case, how strange it is, that Christ did so many miracles himself, and gave miraculous powers to so many of his disciples, and that such an important use was made of miracles in the propagation of the Christian religion! What a groundless fancy, that miracles such as were wrought by Moses and Joshua and Elijah, and by Christ and his Apostles, 'carried compulsion with them, and took away man's free will!'"

The use and design of miracles in connection with a revelation from heaven is often, I think, very crudely considered by theologians, and for one I feel greatly indebted to Swedenborg for the light which he has thrown on the subject. The drift of his teaching is, that the design of miracles is mainly to *compel attention* to a divine message, the constraining evidence of which is, at the same time, really in the truth itself announced. This evidence the mind must receive by the light inhering in the evidence in order to command *faith*. The intrinsic effect of miracles falls short of this, and merely produces a kind of *persuasion* affecting rather the external than the internal region of the mind. As a confirmation of moral truth a miracle undoubtedly does a species of violence to the tranquillity of rational belief, and it is only in this way that Swedenborg represents it as militating with free agency. The mind is conscious of a certain astounding and confounding effect produced upon it by an exhibition to the senses of a supernatural power, which tends to suspend, to a degree, the free and calm exercise of the judgment in view of the internal character of the doctrine proposed to be established.

But in order to assure myself of not doing an imperfect justice to Swedenborg's enunciations on this head and to give the reader the fairest opportunity to judge of their soundness, I shall make him the expounder of his own doctrine.

"*That no one is reformed by miracles and signs, because they compel.*—That man has an internal and an external of thought, and that the Lord flows in through the internal of thought into its external with man, and thus teaches and leads him, was shown above: also that it is from the Divine Providence of the Lord that man should act from freedom according to reason: both of these would perish

with man, if miracles were done, and man was driven by them to believe. That it is so, may be seen rationally thus: it cannot be denied but that miracles induce faith and strongly persuade that that is true which he who does the miracles says and teaches; and that this in the commencement so occupies the external of man's thought, that it as it were binds and enchants: but man is thereby deprived of his two faculties, which are called rationality and liberty, so that he cannot act from freedom according to reason, and then the Lord cannot flow in through the internal into the external of his thought, except only to leave to man to confirm that thing from his rationality which was made of his faith by the miracle. The state of man's thought is such, that by the internal of thought he sees a thing in the external of his thought, as in a certain mirror; for, as was said above, man can see his thought, which cannot be given except from interior thought.

"From these things it may be evident, that faith induced by miracles is not faith, but persuasion; for there is not any rational in it, still less any spiritual; for it is only an external without an internal: it is the like with all that man does from that persuasive faith, whether he acknowledges God, or worships Him at home or in temples, or does kindnesses: when a miracle alone induces man to acknowledgment, worship and piety, he acts from the natural man, and not from the spiritual; for a miracle infuses faith through an external way, and not through an internal way; thus from the world, and not from heaven; and the Lord does not enter through any other way with man but through the internal way, which is through the Word, doctrine and preachings from it: and because miracles shut this way, therefore at this day no miracles are done.

"But the effect of miracles is other with the good than with the evil; the good do not wish miracles, but believe the miracles which are in the Word; and if they hear anything concerning a miracle, they do not attend to it otherwise than as to a light argument which confirms their faith; for they think from the Word, thus from the Lord, and not from a miracle. The evil do otherwise; they indeed may be driven and compelled to faith, yea, to worship and to piety, by miracles; but only for a little time; for their evils are shut up, the concupiscences of which and the delights thence, continually act into the external of their worship and piety; and that they may get out of their confinement and burst forth, they think concerning the miracle, and at length call it a mockery and an artifice, or the work of nature, and thus they return into their evils; and he who returns into his evils after worship, profanes the truths and goods of worship; and the lot of profaners after death is the worst of all: these are they who are understood by the words of the Lord in Matt. xii. 43, 44, 45; whose latter state becomes worse than the former. Besides, if miracles were done with those who do not believe from the miracles in the Word, they would be done continually and before the sight with all such. From these things it may be evident whence it is that miracles are not done at this day."—D. P. 130-133.

The application of the general principle is made, in the ensuing extract, to the case of the Jewish nation, whom he uniformly represents as an eminently *external* people, and requiring, from their peculiar genius, a system of moral discipline that is neither called for nor appropriate under the Christian economy.

"As to what concerns prodigies and signs, which are treated of in what now follows, it is to be known that they were done amongst such as were in external worship, and did not desire to be acquainted with internal. They also who were in such worship were to be driven by external means; hence it is that miracles were done amongst the Israelitish and Jewish people, for they were solely in external worship, and in no internal; and also external worship was what they ought to be in, when they were not willing to be in internal worship, to the intent that in externals they might represent holy things, and so communication might be given with heaven, as by somewhat of a church, for correspondences, representatives, and significatives conjoin the natural world to the spiritual: hence now it was, that so many miracles were done amongst that nation. But amongst those who were in internal worship, that is, in charity and faith, miracles are not done, for they are hurtful to them, inasmuch as miracles

compel to believe, and what is of compulsion does not remain, but is dissipated. The internal things of worship, which are faith and charity, are to be implanted in a free principle, for then they are appropriated, and the things which are so appropriated remain; but the things which are implanted in a state of compulsion, remain out of the internal man in the external: for into the internal man nothing enters except by intellectual ideas, which are reasons [rationes], for the ground which there receives is the rational illustrated: hence it is that no miracles are wrought at this day. That they are also hurtful, may hence be manifest: for they drive men to believe, and fix ideas in the external man that it is so; if the internal man afterwards denies what miracles have confirmed, then an opposition and collision of the internal and external man takes place, and at length, when the ideas derived from miracles are dissipated, there is effected a conjunction of the false and the true, thus profanation. Hence it is evident, how hurtful miracles are in this day in the church, in which the internals of worship are discovered. These things are also signified by the Lord's words to Thomas, 'Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they who do not see, and believe' (John xx. 29): so also they are blessed, who do not believe by miracles. But miracles are not hurtful to those who are in external worship without internal, for with such no opposition can be given of the internal and external man, thus no collision, consequently no profanation. That miracles do not contribute anything to faith, may be sufficiently manifest from the miracles wrought amongst the people of Israel in Egypt, and in the wilderness, in that they had no effect at all upon them: for that people, although they so lately saw so many miracles in Egypt, afterwards the Red Sea divided, and the Egyptians overwhelmed therein, the pillar of the cloud going before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night, the manna, daily showering down from heaven; and although they saw Mount Sinai in smoke, and heard Jehovah thence speaking, with other miracles of a like kind; nevertheless, in the midst of such things, they declined from all faith, and from the worship of Jehovah to the worship of a calf (Exod. xxxii. 1 to the end): hence it is evident what is the effect of miracles. Still less would be their effect at this day, when it is not acknowledged that there is anything from the spiritual world, and when everything of the sort which takes place, and which is not attributed to nature, is denied: for a principle of denial universally reigns against the divine influx and government in the earths; wherefore at this day the man of the church, if he were to see the veriest divine miracles, would first bring them down into nature, and there defile them, and afterwards would reject them as phantasms, and lastly would laugh at all who attributed them to the Divine, and not to nature: that miracles are of no effect, is also evident from the Lord's words in Luke; 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead' (xvi. 31)."—A. C. 7290.

The subject is still farther prosecuted in the paragraph annexed, in which you will probably dissent from what he says respecting the church of the present day having virtually taken away the free agency of man by a formal decreeing of his impotence in spiritual things. But his proofs on this head are given in another part of the volume, where they challenge refutation, and in the mean time the burden of his doctrine on the general subject may be viewed apart from his sentiments on this special topic.

"It is asked at this day, why miracles are not done, as formerly; for it is believed that if they were done, every one would, in heart, acknowledge. But the reason that miracles are not done at this day, as before, is because miracles force, and take away free agency in spiritual things, and from spiritual make man natural. Every one in the Christian world, since the coming of the Lord, may become spiritual, and he is made spiritual solely by Him through the Word; but the faculty for this would be lost, if man were brought by miracles to believe, since these, as was said above, force and take away from him free agency in spiritual things; and everything forced in such things, brings itself into the natural man, and shuts up, as with a door, the spiritual, which is truly the internal

man, and deprives this of all power of seeing any truth in the light; wherefore afterwards he reasons concerning spiritual things from the natural man alone, which sees everything truly spiritual upside down. But the reason that miracles were done, before the coming of the Lord, was, because then the men of the church were natural, to whom spiritual things, which are the internals of the church, could not be opened; for if they had been opened, they would have profaned them. Wherefore also all their worship consisted in rituals, which represented and signified the internal things of the church; and they could not be brought to perform those rightly, except by miracles; and that they could not even by miracles, because in those representatives there was a spiritual internal, is manifest from the sons of Israel in the wilderness, who, although they had seen so many miracles in Egypt, and afterwards that greatest one upon mount Sinai, still, after a month of days, when Moses was absent, they danced around a golden calf, and cried that that had brought them forth out of Egypt. Very similar things were done by them in the land of Canaan, although they saw the excellent miracles done by Elijah and Elisha, and at last those truly divine by the Lord. Miracles are not done at this day, especially for this reason, because the church has taken away all free agency from man; and it has taken it away by this, that it has decreed that man can contribute nothing at all towards receiving faith, nor anything to conversion, and in general to salvation (see above, n. 464). The man who believes these things, becomes more and more natural, and the natural man, as was said above, beholds everything spiritual upside down, and thence thinks against it. The higher region of man's mind, where free agency in spiritual things primarily resides, would be closed up, and spiritual things, which have been, as it were, confirmed by miracles, would occupy the lower region of the mind, which is merely natural; thus above this there would remain falses concerning faith, conversion and salvation."—T. C. R. 501.

I can scarcely deem it necessary to enlarge farther upon this point. My object has been, as generally elsewhere, to exhibit Swedenborg's genuine teachings in contrast both with the erroneous presentation often made of them and with the objections urged against them when rightly presented. In the department we are now considering, I must regard his positions as intrinsically sound, and so far as he declares the absence of miraculous attestation a distinguishing feature of his mission, it commends itself more powerfully to my acceptance, and that too not only for the reasons he has assigned, but because also of my full conviction that no external miracles would be believed *to be* miracles by the great mass of men in christian countries. They would infallibly be dealt with as you deal with the remarkable occurrences which are *referred to*, but not *appealed to*, as having taken place in regard to Swedenborg himself. While you have not a word to say by way of impeaching the testimony on which the facts are affirmed, and while the sun in the heavens is not more obvious to the eye than the inference is to the reason, that if the facts are true they are supernatural—particularly those relating to the disclosures made to the Queen of Sweden, and to the fire occurring at Stockholm—yet they evidently have not the slightest effect on your mind in begetting a conviction of what we maintain to be their true character. And as it is with yourself, so doubtless would it be with the majority of mankind. Nothing short of a miracle within can make them believe in the occurrence of miracles without, and it is not according to divine order to produce conviction in this manner.

The view which Swedenborg has given of this subject may be illustrated by a supposition. Suppose, then, that Sir Isaac Newton, with all his scientific attainments, had risen up in the days of Plato and announced to him the true structure of the solar system, and in confirmation of the truth of his announcement, had been enabled to work one or more miracles. What would have been

the precise effect of the miracles, supposing them incontestable, on the mind of the philosopher? Would it not at once have produced a severe conflict between what we may term the *man of the senses* and the *man of the reason*?—a conflict extremely unfriendly to the full exercise of his mental freedom. On the one hand his senses are appealed to by a supernatural demonstration which he knows not how to resist; and on the other, his educated belief and the whole current of his convictions pronounce against the truth of the alleged theory. He is thus indeed brought into “a strait betwixt two.” He knows not what to think, and probably at first fails to think at all. A kind of paralysis has fallen upon his intellectual powers, an effect which in the parallel case Swedenborg describes as a sort of suspending of a man’s free agency—a phrase, however, which is evidently not to be pushed to the utmost extremity of its import. Suppose again that the astronomer consents to wave all appeal to the miracles, and proceeds to unfold to the philosopher on purely scientific and mathematical principles the grounds of his announcement. By a consecutive process of reasoning he leads his mind along from step to step in the demonstration, submitting every thing to the light of his understanding, till at length his hearer stands convinced that the conclusion is irresistible—that the earth revolves around the sun, and that the assumed law of gravitation is established beyond dispute. Which of these modes of proof, the miraculous or the rational, is most valuable in itself? Which state of mind the most desirable to be wrought in view of the truth proclaimed? Is there any room to hesitate in pronouncing a verdict? The miracles might be usefully available in arresting the philosopher’s attention to the proposed scientific development, if he were otherwise disposed to treat it lightly, but it is plain that the internal evidence *does the execution*. From this illustration you can at once see the grounds on which the receivers of Swedenborg’s doctrine easily and readily dispense with all miraculous testimony in support of their truth. They feel the want of no higher miracle than they perceive in the system itself.

XVI. *Swedenborg’s Intercourse with the Spiritual World*.—“In the life of Swedenborg various testimonies are given to the reality of his intercourse with the spiritual world, and of his supernatural knowledge. From these the following are selected as the most remarkable. The stories are contained in a letter of Kant, the German Philosopher.”

You go on briefly to recite these “stories,” as you are pleased to term them, namely, that which relates to Swedenborg’s divulging to the Queen of Sweden the private conversation which he had with her brother the Prince Royal of Prussia shortly before his death, which she positively affirmed that she never *had* repeated and which she was confident that he *would not*—that relating to the discovery by Mad. Harteville of a lost receipt given her deceased husband before his death, and which was found precisely as indicated by Swedenborg—and that concerning the fire which Swedenborg declared, at the very time, to have broken out at Stockholm, though he was 300 miles distant at Gothenburg, and the correctness of which, as to the time and place of its commencement, the extent of its ravages, and the period of its cessation, was minutely confirmed three or four days after.

Of these various asserted and attested facts, into which the philosopher Kar-

instituted a rigid inquiry and found nothing to countervail the testimony, you remark :

"Now I shall not undertake to search out the hidden causes of such marvellous events. The means of doing this are not in my power. But what then? We have heard stories of fortune-tellers, jugglers, and dreamers, and persons magnetized, quite as unaccountable and astounding as these. And who can account for some of the feats of insanity?—I would not undertake to disprove the authenticity of the stories related of Swedenborg. And what then? In all ages wizards and witches have said and done things seemingly preternatural and very astonishing.—Many such things have taken place; and they are certainly marvellous phenomena. But the world in general, in harmony with the sacred writers, have always looked upon persons practising such curious and wonderful arts, as deriving their extraordinary power from a very suspicious source. And who thinks of yielding himself to a fortune-teller, or a juggler, or a magnetized woman, as a *religious guide—a teacher of new doctrines, or new moral precepts*? 'He that hath a dream, let him tell a dream. And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord.' And what are all the strange workings of the human mind above referred to, whether preternatural or not, that they should turn off our affection and confidence from the sure word of God?"—p. 142–144.

It is very certain that the parallel fails, in regard to Swedenborg, in one very important particular, and that is, that the "workings" of his mind whether preternatural or not, so far from tending to "turn off our own affection and confidence from the sure word of God," tend directly to draw them to it and fix them supremely upon it. The whole scope of his writings is to inspire the most lofty, reverential, and devout conceptions of the Divine Oracles, as must have been apparent to every candid reader who has perused the foregoing series of extracts. This, methinks, should go not a little to do away the impression of their having originated from the "suspicious source" to which you allude, for it does not exactly consist with our ideas of diabolical suggestions that they should aim to exalt to the highest possible pitch of spirituality and sanctify our notions of the Scriptures of truth. The policy of infernal promptings would doubtless be very different, and I must think that the undeniable fact that Swedenborg's writings have a scope so pre-eminently scriptural renders his case an insoluble enigma in all the common modes of accounting for it. *Would* the spirits of darkness and illusion dictate such a body of disclosures and doctrines as that of which I have given so many specimens in the preceding pages? Do you not feel your mind pressed by the difficulties which crowd upon any supposition but that of their divine origin and their absolute truth? *Why* may not the system be true? Can you adduce stronger reasons against it than it spontaneously offers in its own support? *Is* there not an astonishing plausibility in its developments of our interior nature when viewed in connection with the interior purport of the Word? Does it not involve a psychological problem which *must* be solved before it can be intelligently rejected? Can you not at least perceive *so much* evidence in its favor as to account for the fact of its cordial reception by multitudes of deeply reflecting and well-balanced minds? And is a system that wins its way to assent in such circumstances deserving of the unmeasured odium and contempt which has so often been showered upon it? Do we not offer *reasons* for our belief that are well worthy of profound consideration? If Swedenborg was not favored with spiritual intercourse how—how—how—shall the amazing character of his developments be accounted for? *Insanity will not do*

it—dreaming will not do it—Mesmerism will not do it. What then remains but the alternative of its *truth*? Can the mind rest with the least assurance or satisfaction on any other theory?

But I have not yet done with the matter of miracles.

“But how singular it is, that the followers of Swedenborg should make use of any such arguments as those above mentioned! Do they not know that Swedenborg never attempted to support the truth of his pretensions by miraculous evidence? Do they not know that he expressly discarded such evidence, saying that it interfered with man’s free agency? We should expect that Swedenborgians would all be true to their Leader, as Professor Bush is, and would be careful not to resort to arguments which he rejected. The case of *Christians* is very different; for their Lord and Saviour often appealed to his miraculous works as proof of his Messiahship. And *such miracles* as he wrought did indeed bear witness of him, that the Father had sent him. And his disciples act consistently, when they appeal to his works for the same purpose. But why should the disciples of *Swedenborg* attempt to support his authority by such proofs as he declared to be inadmissible? Why should they wish to make proselytes by a kind of evidence, which would work by compulsion, and would take away man’s free will? If they yield to Swedenborg’s authority in other things, why not in this?”—*p.* 144.

We have here the most distinct intimation, that the “followers” of Swedenborg endeavor to support the truth of his pretensions by miraculous evidence and a grave lecture is read to them on the inconsistency of the proceeding. But where has this been done? What single instance can you cite in which any defender of his doctrines has taken any other ground than that which you are pleased to attribute to myself? I know not one. They could not do it without doing at the same time the most downright violence to the genius of the system. That they *refer* to the extraordinary incidents alluded to—that they challenge a refutation of the facts—that they hold them as offering a strong collateral confirmation of his claim—is most true. But that they ever make these occurrences prominent as “proofs to support his authority”—that they ever hold them forth as a fundamental ground on which to urge belief—is most untrue. They deem it the glory of their credence that it can freely dispense with everything of the kind. The fabric of their faith can stand firm with the aid of any such miraculous undershoring. As nothing more, therefore, is requisite on this head than a simple negative to the statement of fact, I bring the present letter to a close with the assurance of the respectful regards of

Yours, &c.

GEO. BUSH.

#### LETTER VIII.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

Your fifth and last Lecture is devoted to what you term “the moral code of Swedenborg,” implying, however, not as the reader might suppose from the announcement, the consideration of any *general ethical system* which you regard him as teaching, but that particular department *merely* which relates “to the intercourse of the sexes in particular cases.” The true character of his doctrine, viewed under any aspect, is undoubtedly a fair theme of inquiry, but it is proper that the reader should be advised, that Swedenborg delivers no *ethical* code separate from his *spiritual* code. He treats largely indeed of *life* in its vari-

ous duties and relations, but simply as the expression of internal spiritual principles, whether of goodness and truth, or their opposites. The distinction often made in other systems between what are termed *credenda* and *agenda*—things to be *believed* and things to be *done*—almost wholly disappears in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem. Truth, according to them, is addressed to the love-principle as much as to the understanding-principle, and is therefore as much to be *done* as to be *believed*, and with the angels of the highest heavens, Swedenborg informs us that truth is never a matter of reasoning, or even of conversation, but always of *practice*. What you term therefore “the moral principles of his writings” are in fact no other than the spiritual principles flowing from the constitution of the Divine and human nature, and which characterise alike every portion of his teachings and disclosures. No one part of them can be justly regarded as embodying a “moral code” more than any other. By elevating the conjugal relation, for instance, as he does, into the very highest form of religious affection, making its fundamental principle essentially the same with that which effects conjunction with the Lord himself, he must necessarily treat its opposite, not only as the breach of a moral institute established by divine authority among men, but as a violence done to the very inmost life and soul of celestial bliss. It is, in fact, impossible to conceive anything of higher sanctity in matters of *faith*, than what Swedenborg affirms of the actings of *life* in its various spheres of operation, for the *life* is as the *love*, and the *love* is the ground-element in all the relations which man sustains to his Maker.

The subject which now comes under discussion is undoubtedly one of the greatest importance in its bearings on the general estimate formed of the system, which has probably suffered more from impressions derived from this source than from those originating in any other. It is a very easy matter, as experience has shown; by overlooking or suppressing the general scope of the work which especially treats of this theme, and by disregarding the various qualifications, the nice discriminations, and the solicitous cautions, which accompany his teachings on this head, to present them under an aspect odious and shocking in the highest degree; and on the same principle the Bible itself might be made out to be one of the most immoral books in existence. Nothing, however, is plainer than that every man is entitled to the fairest exhibition of his real sentiments on any subject—especially when those sentiments may be likely, on a superficial survey, to subject him to censure, or to mar the effect of other inculcations to which no exceptions are taken. The claim, in such cases, to the most rigid justice would seem to be imperative in proportion to the evidence afforded of an otherwise blameless character, of a devout spirit, of an upright aim, and of a dominant salutary tendency in the general vein of a man’s writings. If he is one whose private and public life has been beyond reproach—whose grand object has been, as far as the testimony of his friends and the spirit of his works can attest, to promote the interests of solid virtue, to exalt the “blessed and only Potentate” in the universal esteem of mankind, to lead all classes and degrees of his fellow-men to prefer the glories and bliss of another life to the vain phantoms of the present world, and to display before them the most constraining motives to the pursuit, then it is obviously due, not only to the personal character of such a man, but to the most sacred claims of Truth and Charity, represented in him, that a peculiar tenderness shall be evinced towards his reputation, and that



no sinister impression shall be taken up respecting himself or his doctrines but upon the most ample grounds. If any imputations are cast upon his teachings, let him be heard to the fullest extent in his own defence; let the most patient audience be given to the statement which he makes of the elemental *grounds* and *reasons* of every decision; and freely accord to him the advantage of every sound distinction, of every just limitation, of every prudent reserve, of every wholesome admonition, with which he would surround, and guard, and sanction his positions. All this is the dictate of that common equity to which no Christian mind can be insensible, and before a tribunal constituted of those with whom such considerations shall weigh, the adherents of Swedenborg are perfectly willing that his doctrines of Conjugal and Scortatory love should be cited. They regret to say, that, out of the bounds of the New Church, such a tribunal they have not yet been so happy as to find, nor are they by any means sanguine of being more fortunate in time to come. Still they are prompted by the duty of expounding and the hope of vindicating the doctrines of their teacher on this as well as all other points, and if they are discarded and denounced, it shall not be our fault if this is done upon a false and mistaken view of their true character.

And let me here remark, in the outset, that some consideration is obviously due to the *state of mind* in which this feature of Swedenborg's system has been received by the great mass of those who adopt it. In view of the revolting nature of the principles set forth in their *prima facie* character, or as usually presented by opponents, it can scarcely be conceived that they should be insensible to the shock which they are calculated to give to all those settled preconceptions which they would naturally entertain on this department of the rigid *morale* of the Gospel. The individuals who have, one after another, yielded their assent to the claims of Swedenborg, have been mostly from among the members of what are termed evangelical churches, and who cannot fairly be supposed to have adopted a more lax standard of morals on this subject than the majority of their brethren. What reason then is there to believe that they should fail to be equally outraged and scandalized by the naked assertion that Swedenborg *allows* the "keeping a mistress and a concubine" with the mass of the Christian community? How were it possible that they should be blind to the absolute atrocity of the doctrines charged upon Swedenborg on this subject, provided the charge were true? Is not the very supposition a virtual reflection of the gravest character either upon their understandings or their moral principles? Does it not impeach them of a mental weakness transcending belief, or of a moral corruption more to be detested than deplored? Yet here is the obvious fact, that these persons have actually embraced the system as a whole, and that too in full view of all the alleged abominations on this score which it is said to involve. We have therefore a problem to be solved. How is this admission of the system to be explained consistently with a charitable construction as to the mental and moral state of its subjects? How have they been able to overcome, to their own satisfaction, the force of objections which appear so formidable to others—objections which they *must* have felt in all their weight? To say that they have been strongly drawn to the doctrines by certain of their attractive features, and that, blinded by favoritism, they are morally unable to perceive the enormities in question, is to impute to them the grossest mental imbecility—a charge as unworthy the charity of those who make it, as it is re-

voluting to the consciousness of those against whom it is brought. Some other solution is imperatively called for, and, I am happy to say, can easily be given. The process of conviction has been with them entirely rational and logical, and their conscious experience will generally respond to their accuracy of the ensuing description of it.

(1.) On revolving the pages of Swedenborg and pondering the general import of his revelations, they were compelled to the belief, from their intrinsic character, that they were of God. They became satisfied in their own minds that nothing short of a supernatural opening of his spiritual senses could have enabled him to make those astonishing disclosures of the interior nature of man, and of the spiritual world, which everywhere abound in his writings, and which they felt to be so perfectly in accordance with the higher oracles of their own reason. But this conviction they saw could not stand for a moment by the side of the suggestion, that the subject of a divine illumination—the selected instrument of a message of truth to the world—should, at the same time, be left so far to the falsities of his own mind, as to be allowed to give forth to his fellow-man, under the alleged impulse of the Deity, a code of moral conduct on a particular subject, founded upon the most erroneous principles, and tending to work incalculable mischief to the best interests of society. They could not conceive the possibility that a messenger of Jehovah should be permitted to convert himself into a minister of sin, and under the very plea of elevating the law of the sexual relation to a pitch of angelic purity, pander to the vilest corruptions of the human heart, open the floodgates of the foulest iniquity, and eventually degrade man to a condition below that “in which God had created him or to which sin had sunk him.” Could such sweet and bitter waters proceed from the same fountain? Just in proportion, then, to the strength of the evidence in favor of the divine origin of his doctrines is the fulness of their assurance that no part of them can be, *when rightly understood and estimated*, of the character usually attributed to the “Scortatory Love.” The supposition instantly confounds all their best ideas of the counsels of Infinite Wisdom. That you felt yourself the pressure of the problem on this head is evident from the drift of the following paragraph.

“Here in regard to the particular subject referred to, we meet with painful disclosures—disclosures which it is difficult to reconcile with the justness and purity of his general remarks on conjugal affection and the conjugal state. Who can account for some things which he has written on this point, without supposing, what the Apostle speaks of as sometimes taking place, that Satan transformed himself into an angel of light, and that our author, amidst the throng of angelic beings that surrounded him, was sometimes so far off his guard, or so confused, that he actually mistook the influxes of evil spirits for those of good spirits? And we are sure that those infernal beings, who are enemies to all that is pure and just and of good report, will be able very easily to dispose of all the high and deep things, and all the right things, which Swedenborg has taught respecting conjugal love, if men can only have the license which he gives for the indulgence of their passions in other ways.”—p. 148.

I say nothing at present of the solution you propose by which to account for the apparent inconsistency between the general vein of his sentiments on the subject of conjugal love and that which is evinced on the particular topic we are now considering. You may ascribe it, if you please, to the delusive agency of evil spirits; but the point which I would especially urge is, the *fact* of such an apparent incongruity as I have dwelt upon, and the *fact* too that his “followers” could not but

have been equally aware of it, and must therefore have had some mode of explaining it to their own satisfaction. Whether this would be satisfactory to you, is another question. But I strenuously insist that the most latent implication, that here is a formidable objection meeting us on the very threshold of the system which has been overlooked or disregarded by his friends, is the height of injustice. Such an implication is undoubtedly conveyed in the entire absence of all allusion to any reasonings or apologies they may have offered, or could be supposed to offer, in behalf of their faith, as if nothing more were necessary to satisfy the demands of truth than the naked statement of the objection.

(2.) Their conclusion on this head was vastly strengthened by what they actually found to be the prevailing tone and spirit of his writings. They know not how to conceive anything on this head more pure, more sacred, more holy, than the vein which pervades the entire mass of his voluminous expositions of Scripture, and his other theological works. Referring the essence of all true religion to the actings of Divine love in the soul of man, he is perpetually aiming to impress upon him the indispensable necessity of putting away every evil of heart and life which prevents the fullest conjunction with the Lord as the only source of true blessedness, as the only preparation for heaven, as the only mode of fulfilling the great ends of human destiny. The character formed under the genuine influence of his doctrines cannot be otherwise than pure and heavenly in an eminent degree, for the love of God cannot subsist apart from the love of the neighbor, and the love of the neighbor must necessarily lay an everlasting interdict upon any single act or any course of conduct that is at war with his truest and highest good. And yet if the representations often made by his opponents are well founded, Swedenborg not only sanctions, but expressly inculcates, principles diametrically opposite to all neighborly love, and calculated to poison the fountains of domestic peace and purity, and to pour a deluge of abominations over the bosom of society! Can this be possible? How is the astounding paradox to be explained? What is the solution of this huge inconsistency? What conceivable motive can be assigned for thus zealously building up with one hand, and ruthlessly throwing down with the other? Was he incapable of perceiving that all the lessons of all the angels, on the demands of a holy life, would be utterly nullified, and become a solemn mockery, if wound up with a grave license to give loose to the promptings of unbridled lust, only with the reserve of certain conditions which would be a mere spider's web before the sophistry of rampant appetite? Was not Swedenborg in possession of common sense? Had not the ordinary principles which govern men in the adaptation of means to ends a place in his mind? Was he not prompted by rational motives? If he were, what possible end could he have proposed to himself, in the labors of a long and virtuous life, directed supremely to the moral improvement of the race, and under the full faith of a divine commission, while yet in a single treatise of 90 pages he completely stultifies himself, and virtually renders void the salutary effect of scores of volumes of the most elaborate morality replete with the professed wisdom of angels? Who does not see that here is a solecism that staggers all belief? Who that is acquainted with the tenor of his writings will for one moment admit that he ever *could* have penned what he has, if, at the same time, the state of his mind had been such as to originate so corrupt a system of sexual ethics as his opponents charge upon him? It is utterly in vain to

slur over this stupendous anomaly with the idle intimation of a brain disordered by excess of study on mystical themes, or of a mind natively given to dreaming rhapsodies. Such a solution denies the asserted intrinsic character of his other works, and such a denial we know can proceed only from an ignorance which in the eye of right reason utterly incapacitates a man from making it. We appeal to the only true standard of judgment—the writings themselves. We challenge the production of a single sentence from his voluminous composures on every other subject of doctrine and duty which goes to relax the bonds of wholesome restraint on the passions, or to weaken the sentiments of the most rigid virtue. If our position on this point be unassailable, then we demand that some rational solution be given of the phenomenon of a strain of teaching so wholly at war with everything else that has proceeded from his pen, and so outrageously abhorrent to every better feeling of the Christian bosom. We urge this demand as founded upon an obligation that presses universally and equally upon all good men. The claims of Truth are of no restricted application. If Emanuel Swedenborg, in the great body of his writings, has but reasserted the eternal Truth of Jehovah, it is vain to suppose that those who are termed his “followers” are alone concerned in them, or that it devolves upon them only to attempt to reconcile their apparent inconsistency with other truths or principles regarded as settled beyond debate. If, as I affirm with all assurance, this wonderful man, in the general drift of his doctrines and developments, has spoken to the world what God, by inward teaching, spake to him—if, as I again affirm, you are unable to invalidate the essential verity or to gainsay the ineffable importance of what he has uttered—then I appeal, reverend sir, unhesitatingly to the tribunal of your own bosom, and call upon you to make common cause with me in clearing up every apparent discrepancy between what he *has* taught, and what he *ought* to have taught. I have no deeper concern in this matter than you have. Swedenborg has said nothing to me which he has not said to you. From the bonds of this obligation you can be freed only by the most clear and intelligent assurance of the fallacy and insanity of his claims to a divine mission; and this assurance can never be reached but by means of a thorough and searching examination into the real character of these claims. Of the result of *such* an examination, even in your own case, I have no fear. In nothing is my confidence stronger than in the conviction, that no candid and enlightened mind can really and truly understand the system, and yet reject it. The grand difficulty is in persuading men to bestow upon it sufficient attention to enable them to master its *principles*, which, unless they do, they will reject the *details* as a matter of course.

(3.) In addition to the foregoing evidence of a *presumptive* kind, the practical effect actually wrought upon their own minds by Swedenborg's presentation both of the nature and consequences of all illicit sexual indulgence confirmed amazingly their faith in its truth. It must indeed be admitted that this effect can only be expected to follow where the conviction has taken root that the *law of connection* between character and destiny as developed by Swedenborg is indeed founded in the very elements of our nature. But of this they usually become assured before entering upon the close study of the Conjugal and Scortatory doctrines. When they do this, with the requisite pre-acquaintance with the system, it is impossible for language to describe the horrifying effect produced upon them by the fearful unveiling of the doom that awaits the transgressor in the life beyond death. If

they had ever wavered for a moment before, they are fixed beyond deliberation now. So profound is the philosophy of sex as unfolded in these wondrous pages—so clear is the discovery of the celestial origin and the pre-eminent sanctity of the conjugal principle—that they see beyond question that everything opposed to it must of necessity proceed from hell as its source and lead to hell as its issue. Its very soul and essence and acting is all hellish. And with their general views of the relation between the present and the future life can they but be keenly alive to the practical impression resulting from such developments as he makes of the consequences? As the true measure of every evil is the preciousness of the good to which it stands opposed, the bare thought of doing violence to a principle which lies so near to the very life of the heavenly beatitudes strikes an ineffable awe upon their spirits, and makes them shudder as over the opened pit of perdition when tempted to parley with passion.

In all this, I beg you to be assured, I am merely exhibiting what will be universally affirmed, by the adherents of Swedenborg, to be the native and legitimate effect of his teachings on the point in question. It is impossible that it should be otherwise, if they really *believe* what they profess to believe respecting the condition of human spirits in the other life, as the inevitable result of character and conduct in the present life. If you are at a loss to conceive it, it can only be from a failure to apprehend, as they do, the overwhelming evidence of the truth of these revelations viewed as a whole.

Such I believe to be, in the main, a correct exhibition of the process through which all those have passed who now stand forth as the avowed receivers of what we venture to denominate the Heavenly Doctrines proclaimed by Swedenborg, and who assent as cordially to what he has taught on this particular topic, as to any other part of the system. How far the considerations cited are entitled to weigh, I leave it to the candid censor to judge. To me they appear to possess great intrinsic weight. I am wholly unwilling to admit the virtual implication, that the members of the New Church are incompetent to feel the force of the objections urged, or that they have not been governed by adequate reasons in obviating them to their own minds. These reasons I have as yet however but very partially presented, nor can I do anything like justice to the subject without entering into a more detailed examination of those features of the system to which exceptions are taken. This is fully warranted by the importance of the theme.

And let me here remark in the outset, that I wholly deny and repudiate the charge constructively made in the inuendos respecting the immodesty and indecency of Swedenborg's style in treating of this subject. From some sentences in your own and Dr. Pond's work the uninstructed reader would infer, that the treatise was marked by a baldness and grossness of language outrageously revolting to the refined and virtuous ear. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Indeed I cannot well conceive the possibility of a more faultless mode of treating the subject than Swedenborg has evinced. There is a delicacy of tact—a studied chasteness of phrase—a felicity of *allusion* where plainness of speech would be offensive—that I do not believe is paralleled by any other writer. The subject itself is undoubtedly of a peculiar character, but *if it is to be treated at all*, I question if it could be done in a more unexceptionable manner than it is done in the work we are now considering. And this probably will be after all re-

garded as the "head and front of his offending," that he has said anything whatever on the theme. But why shall this be a *tabooed* subject in a scheme of theology and morality so comprehensive as that of Swedenborg? Does it not involve questions of the most momentous bearings upon the interests of religion and sound morals? Is there any form of evil more rife in all communities than those which grow out of the relation of the sexes? Is not a fearful lesson on this subject taught to every man who walks the streets of our great cities after night-fall? And is not a light estimate of the true nature and ends of the conjugal principle evermore at the bottom of these abominations? How shall the root of the evil be reached but by an impressive display of the pre-eminent and inviolable sanctity of the relation of the sexes as founded upon the law of their creation? Such a discovery Swedenborg has made. He has elevated the love of man and woman from the sensual to the spiritual, and even celestial, degree of affection, and brought it into the closest affinity with the principle that conjoins the soul to the Lord himself. He has clothed it, in fine, with all the sacredness pertaining to the highest *religious* actings of the mind, and in so doing has presented a standard by which to judge of the moral character of its least violation. And is not this the true method of procedure? Is not the conviction of sin wrought by the knowledge of the law? Is there any mode of displaying the true character of evil so effectual as that of arraying over against it the good to which it is opposed? Or, on the other hand, can the claims of any form of good be, by any means, so powerfully set forth as by contrasting it with its opposite evil? Are not the blessings of peace most loudly proclaimed by the horrors of war—the value of freedom by the bitterness of bondage—the advantages of temperance by the woes of ebriety—the beauty of benevolence by the deformity of selfishness—the excellence of justice by the foulness of wrong—and so, *vice versa*, of the whole catalogue? Why then shall not the Christian moralist be permitted to depict the hideousness of lust and debauchery by contrasting it in like manner with the superlative loveliness of a chaste and pure and well-ordered intercourse between the sexes? Or why, on the other hand, shall he not be allowed to commend the angelic attributes of a true conjugal love by exposing the infernal quality and infinite mischiefs of all scortatory promptings? This is what Swedenborg has done. His grand aim is to show that the conjugal principle is from heaven and essentially allied to its highest bliss, while everything opposed to it is from the pit of hell and fraught with its direful and loathsome influxes. Is this wrong? Is it a fair ground of impeachment? Has the theme no claims upon the profoundest consideration of good men? But could he or any one else respond to those claims without speaking intelligibly on the subject? Is it not a mawkish and affected sensibility which, under the plea of indelicacy, would inhibit the free exposure of the intrinsic nature and the baleful effects of licentious indulgence? Must the physician stand aloof from the "putrifying sore" because the sight of it is disgusting, or because the removal of the bandage would offend any other sense? If Swedenborg is condemned for his bold and explicit utterances on this subject, let it be shown that the root of the evil can be reached in any other way. And before the charge of grossness of phrase is preferred, let it be shown that if the *thing* is to be treated at all it would be possible to do it in more guarded and unexceptionable language than he has employed. This, I am confident, can never be done, and I therefore unhesitat-

ingly affirm, that *there is nothing more objectionable in his phraseology than in the subject-matter itself*, and that this is pre-eminently worthy of being treated distinctly and emphatically in the great doctrines of faith and life. I am compelled, therefore, to regard all insinuations about a revolting baldness and indecency in his expressions—all pretences to the necessity of suppressing his own *ipsissima verba*—all intimations of the danger of defilement by coming in contact with his disclosures—as a positive slander and defamation, as intended to create an odium for which there is no sufficient ground. And I must be permitted to remind the authors of such intimations, that it is as much a command of the decalogue that “thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor” as it is that “thou shalt not commit adultery.” The effect of all verbal exhibitions of this subject is generally governed by the state of mind of the reader. “To the pure all things are pure,” but to the prurient imagination all things are defiled. Even the sanctity of holy writ will not prevent some minds from feeding their depraved fancies upon the images suggested by the language employed in it. How much more then in the case of a merely human writer, however pure his inward thought, and however free from any prompting but that of stern fidelity to the sense of duty? If the parallel do not degrade the gravity of the theme, Swedenborg is entitled to say in the words of one of Shakespeare’s *dramatis personæ*—“an’ wrong thinking do not wrest true speaking, my words will offend nobody.” Why is not the same charge brought against other writers who have treated the subject of sexual morality? Is it not because they have for the most part been *silent* respecting this department of it? And yet is it a point on which *silence* is to be commended? If not, let those who are constrained to speak “show a more excellent way” of speaking than Swedenborg has evinced. Let them not take the credit of shunning his alleged faults, while those very faults arose from the discharge of a duty which they forbear to perform.

The claims of justice and truth compel me to advert to another feature of your strictures on this head. You say that you feel required to exhibit the views of Swedenborg with some particularity; and that in doing this you shall exhibit his own language, except when decency absolutely forbids it (decency does not forbid it at all). You then observe,—“The citations are made from his work on *Scortatory Love*.”

Now as you could not but have known that there is no *separate* work of his bearing this title—that it is an integral part of the general treatise on “*Conjugal Love*”—allow me to ask, whether you could have felt yourself absolved, in fairness, from giving to your reader some intimation of this fact? Were you at liberty, *in foro conscientiae*, to leave him in total ignorance of the nature, design, and relations of that treatise, and to deprive the author of the advantage that might accrue from a clear and accurate understanding of the object he had in view in writing it? Does this procedure savor more of the frankness and candor of a Christian censor, or of the sinister spirit of an unscrupulous opponent, who would overwhelm with obloquy what he regards with aversion? Suppose the case made your own—should you not protest against the manifest unfairness of such a garbled and distorted exhibition of your views as would be made by violently dislocating one part of your argument from another, and suppressing a statement absolutely necessary to put the reader in full possession of

your scope? Yet this is precisely the effect of dealing as you and others have done with Swedenborg's doctrine on the relation of the sexes. That you have *intended* to do him injustice, I do not assert; but still injustice has been done, and this makes it necessary for me to endeavor to re-poise the scales by going into a somewhat fuller display of his genuine teachings than would otherwise be called for.

The general title of the work in question is—"The Delights of Wisdom concerning Conjugal Love: after which follow the Pleasures of Insanity concerning Scortatory Love."\* It is palpably *one work* treating its main subject under two distinct heads, just as a writer might indite a treatise on Temperance and divide it into two branches, the one treating of the blessings of Temperance, and the other of the miseries of Intemperance. You can easily perceive that if the author, in the course of his discussion, should perchance have intimated that when a man *would* drink, at all events, if no inducement he could hold out would persuade him to abandon his cups and become a sober man, it were better that he should drink wine than brandy—nothing could be more unjust in an opponent than on this ground to represent the writer as an advocate for the use of intoxicating liquors, and in order to prove it should quote the latter part of his work without alluding to the former, or giving the reader any intimation of its existence. It may indeed be a question in casuistry how far it were proper in such cases even to *speak* of anything short of total abstinence, but it is evidently calumnious, on this ground alone, to charge a writer with abetting the very vice which it is the grand object of his work to arrest, and that mainly by a powerful exhibition of the opposite virtue. Yet this is a perfect parallel to the measure which has been dealt out to Swedenborg in view of his enunciations on the subject of Scortatory love.

But to return to the book. The edition now lying before me (Lond. 1841) consists of 430 pages, of which 344 are devoted to Conjugal Love, and the remainder, 86 pages, to Scortatory Love.† The latter part, therefore, bears comparatively a small proportion to the former, yet it is an integral and inseparable portion of it, and this fact ought always to be made known to those who are appealed to by any statements or remonstrances in regard to it, and whose prejudices it is intended to enlist against it. The truth gains nothing in the end by such palpable infractions of its own laws, and justice outraged by controversial tricks will be sure to make heavy reprisals at last. It would have given me pleasure could I have managed this part of my reply without reminding you of so injurious an omission in your statements and strictures on this head.

As I have already remarked, the scope of the entire treatise is to heighten to the utmost our estimate of the nature and ends of the marriage relation by a most elaborate development of the interior principles on which it rests. It is for the most part occupied with a profound exposition of the laws which govern the union of the sexes. It sets the divine institution of marriage in its true light. It lays it down as a fundamental principle, that love truly conjugal, or the

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\* "Delitiæ Sapientiæ de Amore Conjugiali; post quas sequuntur Voluptates Insaniæ de Amore Scortatorio."

† For the reason of the use of the term "conjugal," instead of "conjugal," in all that Swedenborg says on this subject, see "Swedenborg Library," Nos. 12 & 13, on "The Conjugal Relation and the Distinction of Sex in Heaven."



chaste love subsisting between one husband and one wife, originates in the marriage or conjunction of good and truth; that it corresponds to the marriage of the Lord and his Church; that it is thus love celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, in a pre-eminent degree; and that it is the foundation of every species of heavenly love and affection, with all their innumerable felicities. But I shall feel at liberty to demand special attention to his own language in propounding the doctrines which he has given forth to the world on this point. It is proper that the Christian community should at least know what he has actually advanced in his writings relative to the general subject of Conjugal Love, since the soundness of his doctrines here must first be disproved before any headway can be made against the general principles embodied in the *Scottatory Love*. As my object is simply to exhibit a perfectly faithful view of what Swedenborg has taught, not in one place or one work only on this subject, I shall not deem it necessary to draw my extracts solely from the single volume in question.

“The reason why none can be principled in love truly conjugal but those who receive it from the Lord, that is, who come directly to him, and by derivation from him live the life of the church, is, because this love, considered in its origin and correspondence, is celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, above every love implanted in the angels of heaven and the men of the church; and these its distinguishing characters and qualities cannot possibly exist, except with those who are conjoined to the Lord, and by him are consociated with the angels of heaven; for these shun extra-conjugal loves, which are conjunctions with others than their own proper conjugal partners, as they would shun the loss of the soul and the lakes of hell; and in proportion as married partners shun such conjunctions, even as to the libidinous desires of the will and the intentions thence derived, so far love truly conjugal is purified with them, and becomes successively spiritual, first during their abode on earth, and afterwards in heaven. The reason why none can be principled in spiritual conjugal love, but those who are of the above description by virtue of conjunction with the Lord, is, because heaven is in this love; and the natural man, whose conjugal love derives its pleasure only from the flesh, cannot approach to heaven, nor to any angel, no, nor to any man principled in this love, it being the foundation love of all celestial and spiritual loves.”—*C. L.* 71.

“That marriage is heaven, and that adultery is hell, cannot be better seen than from their origin. The origin of love truly conjugal is the love of the Lord towards the church, whence the Lord is called, in the Word, the Bridegroom, and Husband, and the church bride and wife: from this marriage the church is a church in general and in particular; the church in particular is the man in whom the church is: hence it is evident, that the conjunction of the Lord with the man of the church is the very origin of love truly conjugal. But how that conjunction can be the origin shall also be explained: the conjunction of the Lord with the man of the church is the conjunction of good and truth; from the Lord is good, and with man is truth; and hence is the conjunction which is called the heavenly marriage, from which marriage exists love truly conjugal between two married partners, who are in such conjunction with the Lord: hence it is first evident, that love truly conjugal is from the Lord alone, and with those who are in the conjunction of good and truth from the Lord: inasmuch as this conjunction is reciprocal, it is described by the Lord, that ‘*They are in Him and He in them*’ (John xiv. 20). This conjunction or this marriage was thus established from creation: the man [*vir*] was created to be the understanding of truth, and the woman [*femina*] to be the affection of good, consequently the man to be truth and the woman good; when the understanding of truth, which is with the man, makes one with the affection of good, which is with the woman, there is a conjunction of two minds into one; this conjunction is the spiritual marriage, from which descends conjugal love: for when two minds are conjoined to be as one mind, there is between them love, and this love, which is the love of

spiritual marriage, whilst it descends into the body, becomes the love of natural marriage. That this is the case, any one may, if he be willing, clearly perceive: the married pair, who interiorly as to their minds love each other mutually and interchangeably, also love each other mutually and interchangeably as to their bodies: it is well known, that all love descends into the body from the affection of the mind, and that without that origin not any love exists. Now inasmuch as the origin of conjugal love is the marriage of good and truth, which marriage in its essence is heaven, it is manifest that the origin of the love of adultery is the marriage of evil and the false which in its essence is hell. The reason why heaven is marriage, is, because all who are in the heavens are in the marriage of good and truth; and the reason why hell is adultery, is, because all who are in the hells, are in the marriage of evil and the false: hence it follows of consequence, that marriage and adultery, are as opposite to each other, as heaven and hell."—*A. E.* 983.

"They who are in love truly conjugal, after death, when they become angels, return into youth and adolescence; the males, however worn out with age, become young men; and the wives, however worn out with age, become young women; each conjugal partner returns into the flower and into the joys of the age in which love conjugal begins to exalt the life with new delights, and to inspire sportiveness for the sake of proliferation: into this state, first exteriorly, afterwards more and more interiorly to eternity, comes the man who had fled adulteries as sins, and was inaugurated by the Lord into conjugal love whilst he lived in the world. Inasmuch as they are always growing young more interiorly, it follows that love truly conjugal increases and enters into its delights and satisfactions, which were provided for it from the creation of the world, and which are the delights and satisfactions of the inmost heaven arising from the love of the Lord towards heaven and the church, and thence from the love of good and truth between each other, from which loves is derived every joy in the heavens. The reason why man thus grows young in heaven, is, because he then enters into the marriage of good and truth, and there is in good an effort of continually loving truth, and in truth there is an effort of continually loving good, and then the wife is good in its form, and the man is truth in its form: from that effort man puts off all the severity, sadness and dryness appertaining to age, and puts on the liveliness, gladness and freshness of youth, from which the effort lives and becomes joy. It has been told me from heaven, that they have then a life of love, which cannot otherwise be described, than as being the life of joy itself."—*A. E.* 1000.

"THE CHASTITY OF MARRIAGE EXISTS BY A TOTAL ABDICATION OF WHOREDOMS FROM A PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION. The reason is, because chastity is the removal of unchastity; it being a universal law, that so far as any one removes evils, so far a capacity is given for good to succeed in its place; and further, so far as evil is hated, so far good is loved; and also *vice versa*; consequently, so far as whoredom is renounced, so far the chastity of marriage enters. That conjugal love is purified and rectified according to the renunciation of whoredoms, every one sees from common perception, as soon as it is mentioned and heard; thus before confirmation: but as all have not common perception, it is of importance that the subject should also be illustrated in the way of proof by such considerations as may tend to confirm it. These considerations are, that conjugal love grows cold as soon as it is divided, and this coldness causes it to perish; for the heat of unchaste love extinguishes it; as two opposite heats cannot exist together, but one must needs reject the other, and deprive it of its potency. Whenever therefore the heat of conjugal love removes and rejects the heat of scortatory love, conjugal love begins to acquire a pleasant warmth, and from a sensation of its delights to bud and flourish, like an orchard and garden in the time of spring; the latter from the vernal temperament of light and heat from the sun of the natural world: but the former from the vernal temperament of light and heat from the sun of the spiritual world."—*C. L.* 147.

"As few know the distinction between the love of the sex and conjugal love, it may be expedient briefly to point out this distinction. The love of the sex is a

love directed to several, and contracted with several of the sex; whereas conjugal love is only directed to one, and contracted with one of the sex. Moreover, love directed to several and contracted with several is a natural love, for it is common to man with beasts and birds, which are natural; whereas conjugal love is a spiritual love, and peculiar and proper to men, because men were created, and are therefore born to become spiritual; wherefore so far as man becomes spiritual, so far he puts off the love of the sex, and puts on conjugal love."—*C. L.* 48.

"But no others come into this love, and can be in it, except such as come to the Lord, and love the truths of the church, and practise its goods. The reason of this is, because monogamical marriages, which are of one husband with one wife, correspond to the marriage of the Lord and the church, and because such marriages originate in the marriage of good and truth. Hence it follows, that conjugal love with man is according to the state of the church with him."—*C. L.* 70.

"The Christian conjugal principle alone is chaste. Christians, in case they marry more wives than one, commit not only natural, but also spiritual adultery."—*C. L.* 142.

The question now arises, are these principles sound? Is such in fact the essential nature of Conjugal Love? Are you prepared to deny or dispute a single position here advanced? If not—if the ground-work is unassailable—then I would ask if what follows respecting the opposite of this love be not equally sound and impregnable?

"Scortatory love is opposite to conjugal love, as hell is opposite to heaven."—*C. L.* 429.

"The delights of conjugal love ascend to the highest heaven, and join themselves in the way thither and there with the delights of all heavenly loves, and thereby enter into their happiness, which endures for ever; the reason is, because the delights of that love are also the delights of wisdom. But the pleasures of scortatory love descend even to the lowest hell, and join themselves in the way thither and there with the pleasures of all infernal loves, and thereby enter into their unhappiness, which consists in the wretchedness of all heart-delights; the reason is, because the pleasures of that love are also the pleasures of insanity."—*C. L.* 294.

"Forasmuch as adultery is hell with man, and marriage is heaven with him, it follows, that in proportion as man loves adultery, in the same proportion he removes himself from heaven, consequently that adulteries shut heaven and open hell; this they do in proportion as they are believed to be lawful, and are perceived as delightful above marriages; wherefore the man who confirms adulteries with himself and commits them from leave and consent of his will, and is averse from marriages, shuts heaven against himself, until at length he does not believe anything of the church or of the Word, and becomes altogether a sensual man, and after death an infernal spirit; for, as was said above, adultery is hell, and hence an adulterer is a form of hell. Inasmuch as adultery is hell, it follows, that unless man abstain from adulteries, and shun and be averse from them as infernal, he closes heaven against himself, nor can he receive the least influx thence; he afterwards reasons that marriages and adulteries are similar, but that marriages are to be guarded in kingdoms for the sake of order, and the education of the offspring; and that adulteries are not criminal, inasmuch as an offspring is born from them equally as from marriages, and that they are no injury to women, because they can endure them; and further, that by them the procreation of the human race is promoted: not knowing that such reasonings, and similar others in favor of adulteries, ascend from the Stygian waters of hell, and that the libidinous and bestial nature of man, which he has inherent from nativity, attracts and sucks them, as a hog does the filth of a dunghill, with delight."—*A. E.* 982.

"Man is born into the love of evil and the false, which love is the love of adultery, and this love cannot be converted and changed into spiritual love, which is an image of God, and still less into celestial love, which is a likeness of God, except by the marriage of good and truth from the Lord, and not fully except by the marriage of two minds and of two bodies. Hence it is evident whence it is that marriages are celestial and adulteries infernal; for marriage is an image of heaven, and love truly conjugal an image of the Lord; and adultery is an image of hell, and the love of adultery an image of the devil: love conjugal also appears in the spiritual world in form as an angel, and the love of adultery in form as a devil. Reader, treasure this in thy mind, and inquire whether it be true when thou livest a man-spirit after death, and thou wilt see."—*A. E.* 984.

Such is an extremely general and cursory view of Swedenborg's teachings as to the intrinsic character of these opposite and antagonist loves. In his mode of presenting them, they cannot possibly be viewed apart from each other. To pretend to exhibit a correct idea of his sentiments on the subject by quoting detached portions of the latter treatise, without affording any hint of the purport of the former, would be as clamant an act of injustice as to adduce a dozen sentences from the latter part of the work on "Heaven and Hell," containing a description of the hells, and to palm them upon the world as affording a specimen of his ideas of *heaven*. What could be imagined more utterly at war with all the dictates of Christian equity?

Have we then, thus far, encountered anything on this subject that can justly be deemed open to censure?—anything which goes counter to the laws of a sound and irreproachable morality? Has he given an overwrought estimate of the sanctity of what he terms the "conjugal" principle, and of the marriage relation which is founded upon it? Has he either too darkly, or not darkly enough, colored the portrait of the opposite principle in its essence and actings? Do not our inmost minds respond to the substantial truth of his representations? If the one principle be angelic and heavenly, *must* not the other be devilish and hellish? And is it any disparagement to this view, that he draws his sanctions, on either head, from the *intrinsic nature* of man viewed in reference to this grand department of his being? I am well aware that theologians are prone to rest the stress of obligation to moral duties upon the *naked authority of the Divine law*. The *uttered will* of Jehovah they seem to regard as the all-sufficient basis of every precept and prohibition, and any reference to the laws growing by necessity out of our constitution as creatures, they are prone to look upon as in some way derogatory to the honor of the Supreme Lawgiver. Jehovah's *legislative glory* is virtually made the foundation of every claim upon human obedience, and little or nothing is thought of the grounds laid in the very structure of our being for right feeling and action. Now it is to be known that, whether sound or unsound, Swedenborg's theology is built throughout upon *the laws of creation*. He knows nothing of *mere abstract law*—of *simple authoritative volition*—as the basis of moral obligation. He shows a reason in the constitution of things for every form of legal enactment proceeding from the Deity, and to this view of the matter his advocates cordially assent. If the principle is unsound, they demand it shall be shown in what respect. It is in their esteem a principle of pre-eminent importance, and one, the fallacy of which, if it be fallacious, deserves to be distinctly pointed out at the hand of their opponents. Yet, where has the slightest attempt at this been made, notwithstanding the principle lies at

the foundation of all that Swedenborg has taught on the subject of Conjugal and Scortatory love?

I must then, at this point, again repeat the question, whether we have thus far met with anything that can be validly objected to on the score of a lax morality, or of an erroneous exhibition of the physical and psychological principles which underlie the whole subject? Can the most critical inspection detect aught in these principles which strikes at the root of any Scriptural precept bearing upon the commerce of the sexes? If so, I am eager to be informed wherein.

The reply will doubtless be, that although there may be nothing objectionable in the principles thus far laid down, yet as we proceed to the sequel we come upon doctrines and applications of quite another aspect and fraught with the most pernicious results so far as they are acted upon. This would certainly be a well founded charge if in what you say of his allowance of mistress-keeping, you had conveyed to your reader a correct and fair impression of the real drift of his statements on that head. This, however, I shall hope to show is far from being the case, notwithstanding that you have quoted, in some instances, his own express words; for a partial quotation from any writer may give but a partial view of his sense, and thus do him great injury. Now it is certain that the tenor of your remarks conveys the impression that Swedenborg unqualifiedly *approves* and *sanctions* a resort to pellicacy in the case of those who, while they are from various causes prevented from entering into the marriage state, are yet the subjects of strong sexual passions. But how is this credible in view of what he is perpetually insisting upon, that "scortatory love is opposite to conjugal love as hell is to heaven"—that, "the impurity of hell is from scortatory love"—that "adulterers become more and more not men, but demons"—that such as are intent upon making a prey of female innocence are atrocious robbers and pirates—that heaven is entirely closed against them—that they come into the most grievous hells—and that their lot after death is unspeakably terrible? Is this the view of one who is at the same time an open advocate of licentiousness *per se*, and who industriously lays down a method of perpetrating systematically and with impunity the very evils which he denounces as the outbirth of hell and the seal of condemnation to its fiercest wrath? Is the same breath to be supposed to blow hot and cold in this manner at the same time?

But how is his own language to be explained? Does he not expressly say that in cases where a man cannot contain, and where from various causes, he cannot marry at an early age, there is found a sort of "refuge or asylum" in a provisional compact of pellicacy with a single female, who is neither a virgin nor a married woman? This he undoubtedly does say, and in view of his language I beg the reader to suspend his judgment till it be fairly weighed. Nothing can be more just than that the words shall be interpreted, *if possible*, consistently with what is said above, and with the obvious design and drift of the whole book. I say *if possible*, because I do not scruple to affirm that with the evidence already arrayed before us, in regard to the dominant scope of the "Conjugal Love," no man can justly impute to Swedenborg an *intention* to inculcate doctrines on this head at war with good morals. A purpose so suicidal to his manifest aim, so absurd and monstrous, cannot be attributed to a writer governed by rational motives, and whose general enunciations on this and other themes, are marked by so profound a wisdom. If then he is absolved on the score of *intention*, the most that

can be said is, that he has *erred in judgment*, that he has been in some way misled in his casuistry, and that while aiming at a good end, he has still been betrayed by a mistaken leniency towards human frailty, to lay down principles of action contrary to the strict requisitions of the Gospel law. Even admitting this to be the case, the purity of his *intention* is entitled to weigh somewhat in abating the severity of the sentence that shall be pronounced upon his errors. I do not say that it will excuse them, but it certainly goes to palliate them. But I do not propose to rebut the force of the charge on this ground. I believe there is a much stronger.

To a candid mind, I am persuaded, nothing can be more obvious than that Swedenborg is here to be understood as speaking of *providential permissions* in respect to worldly and natural men, who are not yet brought under the government of sound religious principle. As a sensible man, he could not be blind to the fact, that there are those who are so immersed in sensuality, so obsequiously led by their lusts, so deaf to the voice of conscience, and so dead to the sentiments of piety, that, *in their present state*, they cannot be expected to feel the force of the motives which address themselves to men who fear God and love righteousness. Goaded on by powerful passion they *cannot*, because they *will not*, control its actings. The inability does not excuse their indulgence, nor will you find a sentence in Swedenborg which declares the *innocence* of such persons in yielding to their impulses. Yet he uses the term *cannot* just as the sacred writers use it in reference to precisely the same prompting: "Having eyes full of adultery which *cannot* cease from sin;" "If a man *cannot* contain," &c. Here is the simple recognition of a *fact*, which no one will deny, and which may be spoken of as a *fact* without special reference to its moral character, much less without any implied approval or sanction of it. It is a *fact* that there are such men; it is a *fact* that they act from such instigations; it is a *fact* that the Divine Providence does not prevent it, that is, that it *permits* it; inasmuch as the world is not governed on the principle of *forced* but of *voluntary* obedience. The Most High does not *command* his lightnings to kindle upon the houses of ill-fame in our large cities. He does not come forth "terrible from his holy places" and smite the frequenter of these houses as he puts his foot upon the threshold. In accordance with the general scheme of his administration, He leaves every one to the freedom of his own will, and to construct his destiny by forming his *life* according to his *love*. He holds out every variety of motive—admonitions, warnings, invitations, threatenings—to induce him as a free rational being, to "cease to do evil, to learn to do well"—to repent, believe, and be saved—but he will not *violently compel* him to renounce iniquity and cleave to good. In other words, he *permits* the evil to do evil.

The question now arises, whether the Christian moralist is warranted in recognizing the fact of these *permissions*, and in speaking of one form or degree of evil as less heinous than another, when all are bad. The answer to this question will determine the character of Swedenborg's teachings on the point under consideration. If it be in no circumstances lawful to discriminate between the relative degrees of moral turpitude, or to assume to show that one kind of vice is less grievous and destructive of happiness than another, then doubtless a verdict must be pronounced against Swedenborg, for this is precisely what he has done. His offence "hath this extent, no more." He has done what you would do if

you should say to an incorrigible drunkard, "If you *will* drink in spite of every remonstrance, then I beseech you to confine yourself to wine instead of a beverage more fully drugged with the poison of alcohol." Would you feel that you were guilty of a moral wrong in uttering these words? Would you deem it a just imputation that you were hereby countenancing intemperance? What would be your crime in the case? You tell the man that entire abstinence were infinitely better than drinking at all; you do all in your power to dissuade from giving way to his appetite, but if in spite of everything he will still persist—if neither the fear of God nor regard for man will weigh with him—would you feel that you were wronging the interests of law or righteousness by saying to him that of two evils he had better choose the least? If you cannot save him entirely, is it wrong to endeavor to save him as far as you can? Now this is what I understand to be the principle on which Swedenborg proceeds in treating the subject of scortation. There is not the slightest approach to anything like an *absolute* approval or countenance of licentious indulgence, and this is confirmed by his own express declaration, that "these things are not said to those who are able to restrain the heat of lust, nor to those that are able to enter into marriage immediately upon their becoming mature." In the latter case he would undoubtedly prescribe the apostle's remedy—"If they cannot contain, let them marry." But suppose a man who is not yet principled in religion is unable, from various causes, to marry, while still the sexual stimulus is strong and urgent within him, prompting to promiscuous indulgence; although entire continence were every way preferable, yet inasmuch as religious considerations do not bear sway, may it not be said to him, or rather may it not be said *of* him, that it were better that he should confine himself to one mistress, than that he should give loose to his passions in roaming and unlimited amours?

But I anticipate the obvious reply. We are to make no allowances—we are to give no quarters to any form or degree of what is intrinsically evil—we have nothing to do with drawing nice distinctions which will be perverted to the accommodation of depraved men in the indulgence of their lusts. It is all evil—evil only—evil continually. What have good men to do with the accursed thing but to denounce and condemn it under every conceivable aspect? This has doubtless a plausible air, but it is not, I think, beyond question. I am at any rate unable for myself to refuse assent to the soundness of what is contained in the following paragraph.

"There are degrees of the qualities of evil, as there are degrees of the qualities of good; wherefore every evil is lighter and more grievous, as every good is better and more excellent. The case is the same with fornication; which, as being a lust, and a lust of the natural man not yet purified, is an evil; but as every man is capable of being purified, therefore so far as it accedes to a purified state, so far that evil becomes a lighter evil, for so far it is wiped away; thus so far as fornication accedes to conjugal love, which is a purified state of the love of the sex, [so far it becomes a lighter evil]: that the evil of fornication is more grievous, so far as it accedes to the love of adultery, will be seen in the subsequent article. The reason why fornication is light, so far as it looks to conjugal love is, because it then looks from the unchaste state wherein it is, to a chaste state; and so far as it gives a preference to the latter, so far it is also in it as to the understanding; and so far as it not only prefers it, but also pre-loves it, so far it is also in it as to the will, thus as to the internal man; and in this case fornication, if the man nevertheless persists in it, is to him a necessity, the causes whereof he well examines in himself. There are two reasons which

render fornication light with those who prefer and pre-love the conjugal state; the first is, that conjugal life is their purpose, intention, or end; the other is, that they separate good from evil with themselves. In regard to the *FIRST*,—that conjugal life is their purpose, intention, or end, it has the above effect, inasmuch as a man is such a man as he is in his purpose, intention, or end, and is also such before the Lord and the angels; yea, he is likewise regarded as such by the wise in the world; for intention is the soul of all actions, and causes blamableness and unblamableness in the world, and after death imputation. In regard to the *OTHER* reason,—that those who prefer conjugal love to the lust of fornication, separate evil from good, thus what is unchaste from what is chaste, it has the above effect, inasmuch as those who separate those two principles by perception and intention, before they are in good or the chaste principle, are also separated and purified from the evil of that lust, when they come into the conjugal state.”—*C. L.* 452.

Now if the main principle here asserted *be* in itself a sound principle, why may it not be *said* to be so? If the judgment of God is according to truth, and it be a truth that one evil is intrinsically greater than another, will He not so account it? Is it said that the Scriptures know no such distinction, but that all evil is by them indiscriminately condemned, and that it is relaxing the vigor of the divine law to make the slightest concessions to human infirmity, and especially to build anything upon the fact that the Lord in his providence *permits* aught that he has forbidden in his word? But it is palpably impossible to get over the fact that the Scriptures themselves do recognize the doctrine of *permissions*, and that even the positive legislation of Jehovah among the Jews was, in several points, ordered in reference to certain things which were in themselves evil, and which were *permitted* with a view to the avoidance of greater evils. Indeed a stronger term than *permission* is warranted by the facts of the case. It was a species of *winking* at the prevalence of practices which were at the same time at variance with the general scope of the divine statutes. Polygamy was in itself an infraction of the primitive ordinance of monogamical marriage. Yet polygamy was tolerated, and express laws were enacted to regulate it. Divorce, except for a single cause, was equally abhorrent to the true nature and ends of the marriage institute, and yet a clement consideration of the “hardness of heart” of that people led to an abatement of the original rigor with which the sacred covenant was enjoined. These are facts which it is impossible by any sophistry to deny, and I adduce them to show that Swedenborg has powerful precedent to plead when he makes *providential permissions* the basis of *prudential suggestions* applicable to those who are not at present accessible to higher motives. It avails nothing to say, in regard to these ancient allowances, that they are done away under the gospel. Even conceding this, still the fact that they existed is not done away, and never can be, and this fact proves the soundness of the general principle; for if polygamy and divorce for the reason intimated, are in their own nature diametrically opposite to and destructive of the conjugal union, they could no more have been allowed under the law than under the gospel, much less could they have been the subject of direct regulation on the part of the Divine Lawgiver. The reasoning of Milton on this head in his “*Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*” I regard as absolutely unanswerable. He shows by a process of moral logic too luminous to have been expected from any other poet than himself, that to allow absolute sin by law, is against the nature of law, the end of the lawgiver, and the good of the people, and therefore impossible in the



law of God. "Be it yielded," says he, "that in matters not very bad or impure, a human lawgiver may slacken something of that which is exactly good, to the disposition of the people and the times; but if the perfect, the pure, the righteous law, of God be found to have allowed smoothly, without any certain reprehension, that which Christ afterward declares to be adultery, how can we free this law from the horrible indictment of being both impure, unjust, and fallacious?" "If the law allow sin, it enters into a kind of covenant with sin; and if it do, there is not a greater sinner in the world than the law itself."—"Did God for this come down and cover the mount of Sinai with his glory, uttering in thunder those his sacred ordinances out of the bottomless treasures of his wisdom and infinite pureness, to patch up an ulcerous and rotten commonwealth with strict and stern injunctions to wash the skin and garments for every unclean touch; and (yet) such easy permission given to pollute the soul with adulteries by public authority, without disgrace or question? No, it had been better that man had never known law or matrimony, than that such foul iniquity should be fastened upon the Holy One of Israel, the Judge of all the earth; and such a piece of folly as Beelzebub would not commit, to divide against himself and prevent his own ends."—"The vigor of his law could no more remit, than the hallowed fire upon his altar could be let go out. The lamps that burned before him might need snuffing, but the light of his law never."

、 All this I have cited to show that there is such a thing in the divine government as the *kindly consideration* of certain circumstances and conditions which go to modify the character of moral actions, and to which we are not required to be blinded by the fact that they are capable of perversion and abuse. Who can suppose that the sufferance accorded to the Jews on the ground of "hardness of heart" was not sometimes abused under vain and injurious pretexts? Yet the concession was not thereby revoked. So in regard to an important item occurring in the above quotation from Swedenborg;—"In this case fornication, if the man nevertheless persists in it, is to him a necessity, *the causes whereof he well examines in himself* (in explorato apud illum sunt)." Let this be viewed in its connection with the context and it will be seen to be a case of real, but *comparatively* light, infraction of the law of chastity. It is repdered thus light by the fact, that the man really prefers and pre-loves the conjugal state, and is only prevented from marriage by the force of accidental causes. Still he has it in view as his fixed purpose and end, and is prompted solely by what *he deems*, whether correctly or not, a present *necessity* in antedating marital privileges. The grounds of such apprehended necessity are stated elsewhere, and will soon come before us. How far they are intrinsically valid, men will judge for themselves, and this is plainly hinted at in the expression—"the causes whereof he well examines in himself." As Swedenborg regards him as a natural man, it does not follow that the same reasons which satisfy him would satisfy a spiritual man, but still his imagined *causes* go to relieve his conscience, and he has not therefore the guilt of one who sins against light. The case however is not mentioned by way of approval, but simply as an instance of the operation of circumstances in rendering an act more venial than it would otherwise be. And to what Swedenborg has said it may be added, that the essence of marriage is in the mutual consent and soul-affiancing of the parties, and not in the nuptial rite performed at the altar; so that there is plainly less violence

done to the marriage tie in proportion as the fixed intention of marriage enters into the act in question.

What then is more palpable than the truth of the principle, that there are *degrees* in the evil of fornication? And if such be the fact, cannot it be stated by the moralist without weakening the sanctions of virtue or legitimating the issues of vice? The principle is undoubtedly capable of abuse—as what true principle is not?—but the abuse is not justly chargeable upon its simple enunciation. This is not necessarily responsible for the use that may be made of it. He that will pervert it to the justification of his wrongs, does it at his peril. The fact I believe to be that Swedenborg's teachings on this subject are not so much designed to lay down *rules of action* as *rules of judgment* in regard to actions having reference to the intercourse of the sexes. It is little else than a part of his grand doctrine of Providence, upon the interior springs of which he has poured a light never before accorded to the Christian world. In his treatise on that subject he has shown, for instance, that the Mahometan religion was specially raised up to accomplish important purposes of the Divine Wisdom in respect to the Oriental nations, more particularly in effecting the extirpation of idolatries, which could never have been brought about but by a certain degree of connivance at the doctrinal tenets embraced in that religion. But shall a Christian teacher be precluded from laying open the laws of this providential economy, because forsooth his readers might be led to suppose that he was sanctioning the Koran and setting aside the Bible? If one does not perceive somewhat of the principles upon which the Lord proceeds in the ordering of his providence in regard to the evils of evil men, controlling their conduct, while he still preserves their freedom, such an one is not in a condition to pronounce upon the purport of Swedenborg's doctrines in the work under consideration. He cannot appreciate the light of intelligence with which his receivers know themselves to be endowed in contemplating the great truths of the Divine order. Their claims on this head may be arraigned of presumption and laughed to scorn, but the perpetual hills may as soon be shaken by the breath of an infant as the strength of their interior convictions be moved.

In relation to this whole department of the subject, the following remarks from the Rev. J. H. Smithson's Letter to Rev. Mr. Gibbon, in refutation of his calumnies against Swedenborg and his writings, will be seen by the candid reader to be peculiarly appropriate and striking;—"Like a skilful physician, he marks and examines every symptom of the dreadful disease. Those symptoms which are of a less malignant character he particularly notes: upon these he rests his hopes that the patient, if he follow the prescriptions given, will eventually return to spiritual health and happiness; and yet assures him, that otherwise the disease will continue its ravages. Those symptoms, however, which are of a more grievous character he especially points out, and warns the patient, that if they are not subdued and removed, death—spiritual death—will follow; for there is '*a sin unto death*, and '*a sin not unto death*.' For the lust of fornication, as he states, is less grievous and deadly in proportion as it verges towards conjugal love, that is, towards a regenerate state; and it becomes more grievous and deadly in proportion as it verges to adultery. Now this is precisely the point of view in which Swedenborg places this subject; and the physician and the disease exactly illustrate the nature of the case. But who in his right mind, unwarped by prejudice, or not

actuated by a hostile predetermination to condemn, was ever known to allege the grossest accusations against a physician for fully exploring the nature of a disease, and discriminating between those symptoms which, with proper treatment, afford a reasonable hope of recovery, and those which infallibly prove that the disease is destructive and deadly? Does not the skill of a physician chiefly consist in being able to make this most important discrimination, as well as in pointing out the specific remedies to restore health and happiness? The remedies in this, as in every other sinful case, are, as Swedenborg so repeatedly shows, a living faith in the Lord Himself, as the great Physician of souls, and the exercise of fervent prayer and sincere repentance: these are the means by which spiritual recovery and health can be established. Now those who would allege the grossest accusations against Swedenborg on this head, are as absurd and calumnious in their conduct, as those who would lay the grossest charges against a physician because he discriminates between the more and less grievous symptoms of a complaint, and wisely prescribes according to the exigencies of the case."—*Intel. Repos.* Nov. 1841, p. 495.

With these preliminaries let us look at a sentence which you have quoted with the evident implication of its embodying an ethical enormity of the grossest character. In order to present the subject fairly I cite at some length the context. The main object of the section is to show that *pellicacy is preferable to vague amours, provided only one mistress is kept and she be neither a virgin nor a married woman, and it be kept separate from conjugal love.*

"I. The reason why only one mistress is to be kept, is, because if more than one be kept, a polygamical principle gains influence, which induces in a man a merely natural state, and thrusts him down into a sensual state, insomuch that he cannot be elevated into a spiritual state, in which conjugal love must be. II. The reason why this mistress must not be a virgin, is, because conjugal love with women acts in unity with their virginity, and hence is the chastity, purity, and sanctity of that love; wherefore when a woman makes an engagement and allotment of her virginity to any man, it is the same thing as giving him a certificate that she will love him to eternity: on this account a virgin cannot, from any rational consent, barter away her virginity, unless in case of engagement respecting the conjugal covenant; it is also the crown of her honor: wherefore to pre-seize it without a covenant of marriage, and afterwards to discard her, is to make a virgin a courtesan, who might have been a bride or a chaste wife, or to defraud some man, and each is hurtful. *Therefore whoever takes a virgin and joins her to himself as a mistress, may indeed cohabit with her, and thereby initiate her into the friendship of love, but still with a constant intention, if she do not act the wanton, that she shall be or become his wife.* III. That the kept mistress must not be a married woman, because this is adultery, is evident."—C. L. 460.

The sentence in Italics is that which you have quoted, and to which you append the remark that it is to be understood as a specimen of "the more free way of thinking in spiritual things (more properly in *carnal* things) which Swedenborg introduced."

Now nothing more is requisite than a candid perusal of the whole extract to see that this is an exception to what is taught in its general scope. A man is not to enter into a compact of pellicacy with a virgin-mistress for the reasons stated. But *if he does*, the nature of the relation is changed. His cohabitation with her is to be distinctly on the ground of intended marriage, and though the connection in this case is by no means invested with the character of innocence, yet the sincere purpose of marriage does undoubtedly avail to bring it in the category of the lighter forms of the evil, according to the distinctions laid down. But his

main drift in the section, as is evident from what follows, is to show that the love of pellicacy is to be kept separate from conjugal love. "The reason why the love of pellicacy is to be kept separate from conjugal love, is, because those loves are distinct, and therefore ought not to be mixed together; for the love of pellicacy is love unchaste, natural, and external; whereas the love of marriage is chaste, spiritual, and internal. The love of pellicacy makes distinct the souls of two persons, and conjoins only the sensual principles of the body; but the love of marriage conjoins souls, and from the union of souls conjoins also the sensual principles of the body, until from two they become as one, which is one flesh." "If the love of pellicacy becomes the love of marriage, the man cannot, from any right, recede, without the violation of conjugal union; and if he does recede and marry another, conjugal love perishes from the breach of it. It ought to be known that the love of pellicacy is held separate from conjugal love, in that he does not promise marriage to the mistress, nor lead her into any hope of marriage." Be it observed, however, that in all this he is speaking of the natural man under the influence of natural principles; that he regards the whole thing as intrinsically a form of evil; and accordingly he winds up with saying;—"Yet it is better that the torch of the love of the sex should be kindled with a wife."

I must here be permitted to request that your eye may be turned back for a moment to the second of the reasons given in the above quoted paragraph. It is of the utmost importance as viewed in connection with Swedenborg's whole doctrine of scortatory love. You will see from it that he neither allows nor permits, in any possible circumstances, the wanton violation of female innocence. No plea of necessity or expediency can avail for one moment to justify the spoilation of the priceless pearl of maiden purity. To the same purpose he remarks on a subsequent page, that "the defloration of a virgin without a view to marriage as an end, is the villany of a robber." The grounds of this emphatic reprobation of the vile seducer exist in the fact that "virginity is not only the crown of chastity, but it is also called the certificate of conjugal love, because a certificate has relation to a covenant; and the covenant is, that love may unite them into one man, or one flesh. The men themselves also before marriage regard the virginity of the bride as a crown of her chastity, and as a pledge of conjugal love, and as the very dainty from which the delights of that love are about to commence and to be perpetuated. From these considerations it is manifest that after the zone is taken away, and the virginity is sipped, the virgin becomes a wife, and if not a wife, she becomes a harlot." Now I beg it may be considered whether his actual prohibition on this score does not in fact strike at the root of all his alleged allowances on every other. Do not his teachings on this point carry with them the germ of an eventual superseding of even every apparent and reputed license that may be said to mark or mar the system? If "where no wood is the fire goeth out," so there certainly can be no pellicacy where there are no *pellices*, and where can they be found if there are no seductions? But seductions can never occur where Swedenborg's principles are acted upon, so that whatever bane may be charged upon his precepts, they assuredly carry their own antidote with them. How then can the indictment stand against him of inculcating a lax morality on the score of the intercourse of the sexes?

"But does he not sanction pellicacy?" If so, how? As to the general proposition, that pellicacy is preferable to vague amours, under the conditions

which he specifies, I would respectfully inquire if you do not yourself pronounce the same verdict. Does not your calm reason decide, that if there is no rational ground to hope that the evil will be speedily entirely abolished, it would be infinitely preferable that the abandoned women in our populous cities should forego promiscuous intercourse and confine themselves each to a single paramour, rather than venally bestow themselves, as they do, upon every vile solicitor? And so, on the other hand, with the opposite party. I admit of course that even this is worse than something better; but is it not also better than something worse? Is there not in this a faint shadow of the conjugal relation—something in a degree conservative of the radical principle of its love, and which, with the full concession of its shortcomings, may still be regarded with *some* measure of forbearance when the strength of the sexual impulse and the political or social obstacles to marriage are taken into the account? I would not for the world advance a sentiment on this subject which could be *legitimately* construed into a sanction of vice, but I am unable to perceive anything derogatory to the true character of Christianity in supposing it capable of a certain kind and generous *consideration* of evils which have been vastly aggravated by factitious and accidental causes. May not the Gospel, as well as the Law, evince *some* sympathy with human infirmities, and may not a benevolent teacher of its doctrines, who has given so much evidence of speaking the language of superhuman wisdom, be permitted to hint at a mode of mitigating ills which cannot at be once eradicated, without exposing himself to the charge of aiming at a total subversion of the laws of moral purity? Has he not shown a higher estimate of those laws and traced them to a deeper foundation than any other man? Can he be a *real* enemy to the good which their observance is calculated to produce?

I have, I believe, in what precedes exposed to view those portions of Swedenborg's doctrine of pellicacy which are usually regarded as most exceptionable. But I would deal with the utmost fairness by my readers, and shall therefore go still more fully into the subject, and appeal to his candid judgment in the array of the following propositions, for the most part in Swedenborg's own words:—

(1.) "That it is not known what is the quality of scortatory love, unless it be known what is the quality of conjugal love." Is not this a fact?

(2.) "That scortatory love is opposed to conjugal love." Is not this a fact?

(3.) "That scortatory love is opposed to conjugal love, as the natural man viewed in himself is opposed to the spiritual man." Is not this a fact?

(4.) "That scortatory love is opposed to conjugal love, as the connubial connection of what is evil and false is opposed to the marriage of good and truth." Is not this a fact?

(5.) "That hence scortatory love is opposed to conjugal love, as hell is opposed to heaven." Is not this a fact?

(6.) "That scortatory love makes a man more and more not a man, and that conjugal love makes a man more and more a man." Is not this a fact? Is he not rendered by this vile love more and more a brute?

(7.) "That the delights of scortatory love commence from the flesh, and are of the flesh even in the spirit; but that the delights of conjugal love commence in the spirit and are of the spirit even in the flesh." Is not this a fact?

(8.) "That the delights of scortatory love are the pleasures of insanity, but that the delights of conjugal love are the delights of wisdom." Is not this a fact?

(9.) "That fornication is of the natural man." Is not this a fact?

(10.) "That fornication is lust, but not the lust of adultery." Is not this a fact?

(11.) "That, with some men the love of the sex cannot be, without hurt, totally checked from going forth into fornication." Is not this a fact, when understood according to its evident import, viz. that a certain constitutional aptency is often attended with injurious effects, both physically and mentally, when restrained from its *natural* mode of gratification; which is palpably all that is intended by fornication in this connection. "It is needless," says he, "to recount the mischiefs which may be caused and produced by too great a check of the love of the sex, with such persons as labor under a superabundant venereal heat; from this source are to be traced the origins of certain bodily diseases and of distempers of the mind, not to mention unknown evils, which are not to be named. It is otherwise with those whose love of the sex is so scanty, that they can resist the sallies of its lust; also with those who are at liberty to introduce themselves into a legitimate partnership of the bed, while they are young, without doing injury to their worldly fortunes, thus under the first favorable impressions." He then alludes to the difficulties often occurring on this score in the present world, "where matrimonial engagements cannot be contracted till the season of youth is past, and where, during that season, the generality live within forms of government, where a length of time is required to serve offices, and to acquire the property necessary to support a house and family, and then first a worthy wife is to be courted." And so all along he gives peculiar prominence to the fact, that the most serious obstacles to marriage exist with multitudes growing out of the governmental polities and social systems generally prevalent. Yet still these multitudes are men. Now of all these considerations we can only say, *Valeant quantum valent—let them weigh as much as they are entitled to weigh*. It is said by the biographers both of Swift and of Cowper that their mental diseases arose from this cause, and I believe that physicians are often consulted by those for whom they see that marriage is the proper remedy. Yet I do not plead any such necessity as an excuse for forbidden indulgence, nor does Swedenborg speak of such a resort as exempting any man from reaping the legitimate fruits of his conduct in the consequences of the transgression of a general law. Still I do not know that it militates with the higher and better movements of the Christian spirit to allow its due weight to every consideration which may fairly go to *alleviate* the criminality of moral acts. The sexual passion is in most men exceedingly strong, and when the artificial and corrupt institutions of society have interposed barriers to the lawful mode of gratifying it, this fact would seem at least to dictate as mild a judgment as possible of the infractions of a law the observance of which is made so much more difficult by man than it is by God. Even moral evils growing out of a social constitution in which *power* and *wealth* are the all-prevailing and all-moulding principles, and where man's higher interests and relations are systematically and forcibly subordinated to the low, secular, and sensual aims of the worldly mind, demand a charitable consideration. If we place ourselves in our author's circumstances when he wrote we may form a juster estimate of *what* he wrote. On the one hand, he could not but be aware of the strength and urgency of the passion in question, of which every man has probably a deeper sense than he often cares to express. On the other, he looked abroad over the face of society and saw it oppressed by governmental systems bearing so heavily upon thousands of the more

numerous classes, that the resort to marriage was frequently next to impossible. But a free scope to licentiousness is the destruction of the conjugal principle, and the source of ineffable evils. Is there then no remedy? God has implanted the passion; man has virtually interdicted its legitimate gratification. The proper exercise of religious principle would even in these circumstances impose the requisite restraint; but this could not reasonably be anticipated in regard to the great mass of men, for the very genius of the despotisms which are the occasion of the abounding of sexual immoralities is essentially adverse to the prevalence of true piety. Yet the civil interests of all communities demand that some remedy should be prescribed to the ravages of lust. In this condition of things, with a broad survey and a benevolent consideration of the *causes* which were mainly operative in producing the evil, Swedenborg comes forward, and in view of the certainty that some men would be inaccessible to all higher motives to continence, suggests an expedient, addressing itself to lower principles, but by which a host of evils otherwise inevitable might be avoided, and the sacred conjugal germ, the jewel of the soul, still be preserved from utter extinction. In doing this he speaks in the character of a *Christian Montesquieu* unfolding "the spirit of" ethical "laws," and propounding to rulers measures to check *as far as possible* the progress of a moral pestilence of the deadliest type. Freely conceding that something higher and better is infinitely desirable, yet who will say that the remedy is worse than the disease, and who is entitled to denounce the propounder, while *he* simply contents himself with deploring abominations too mighty for human conflict, because too deeply entrenched behind the bulwarks reared around them by the traitorous servility of a false public sentiment which decks itself with the name of *delicacy*. But to return to the propositions.

(12.) "That therefore in populous cities public stews are tolerated." Is not this a fact, and is anything more than the fact asserted? I will give the whole section. "This is adduced as a confirmation of the preceding article. That they are tolerated by kings, magistrates, and thence by judges, inquisitors, and the people, at London, Amsterdam, Paris, Vienna, Venice, and Naples, and even at Rome, besides many other places, is well known; among the reasons of this toleration are those also abovementioned." This is all. There is no absolute approval of the toleration, yet there is doubtless the implication of a latent sense in the minds of the rulers of these countries that *in existing circumstances* this toleration is the least of two evils. And here it will be proper to recite the reasons which Swedenborg specifies as assignable for the policy suggested. "That in kingdoms, where forms and orders of government prevail, matrimonial engagements cannot be contracted by many, till the season of youth is past; for offices are first to be served, and property is to be acquired necessary for the support of a house and family, and then first a worthy wife is to be courted; and yet in the preceding season of youth, few are able to keep the springing fountain of virtue closed up, and reserved for a wife; *it is better indeed that it should be reserved*; but if this cannot be done on account of the unbridled power of lust, a question occurs, whether there may not be an intermediate means, whereby conjugal love may be prevented from perishing in the mean time. That pellicacy is such a means, the following considerations advise: I. That by this means promiscuous inordinate fornications are restrained and limited, and thus a more constricted state is induced, which is more nearly related to conjugal life.

II. That the ardor of venereal propensities, which in the beginning is boiling hot, and as it were burning, is appeased and mitigated; and that thereby the lascivious passion for the sex, which is filthy, is tempered by somewhat analogous to marriage. III. By this means too the strength is not cast away, neither are weaknesses contracted, as by vague and unlimited amours. IV. By this means also disease of the body and insanity of mind, are avoided. V. In like manner by this means adulteries, which are whoredoms with wives, and debaucheries, which are violations of virgins, are guarded against; to say nothing of such criminal acts as are not to be named. VI. By pellicacy neither is access given to the four kinds of lusts, which are in the highest degree destructive of conjugal love,—the lust of defloration, the lust of varieties, the lust of violation, and the lust of seducing innocences, which are treated of in the following pages. But these observations are not intended for those who can check the tide of lust; nor for those who can enter into marriage during the season of youth, and offer and impart to their wives the first fruits of their ability.”—*C. L.* 459. Intimations of this nature can of course be deemed little requisite to Christian men, who have a deeper insight into the grounds and sanctions of moral obligation, but think for a moment of the immense numbers of those who know no such restraints, and whom yet it is so vastly desirable to have restrained by rational checks.

How far these reasons have weight, is left for every one to judge; but I know of nothing in the treatise more likely to encounter reproach than this. In forming an opinion it will be important to bear in mind his own cautionary remarks, that “it is better that the fountain of ability should be reserved,” and that what he says is “not said to those who are able to restrain the heat of lust, nor to those who can marry early.” It is not therefore a general license, but a provisional expedient, founded upon contingent circumstances occurring under the Divine Providence, and which he regards as calling for adapted remedial measures of some kind. That the evils which the measures contemplate are really of the most stupendous magnitude, I think no one can deny. That the universal prevalence of right religious sentiment and action would effectually abolish them, is equally beyond dispute. But seeing such a state of things does not at present exist, and is not soon to be rationally anticipated, the question is doubtless a fair one in morals, whether a Christian teacher is not at liberty to *suggest*, under due limitations and cautions, a palliative remedy which, though it does not accomplish all that could be desired, does yet go to lessen immensely the evils at which it aims. It appeals to lower motives in those whom it contemplates simply because, in their present state, no higher motives can be expected to reach them. Might we not on the same principle say to the slaveholder that although we were constrained to regard the system as entirely wrong, and that all selling and buying of human beings is contrary to the fundamental law of Christianity, yet if he could not be made to feel the force of the obligations requiring the total abandonment of the traffic, we would still suggest that he should never sell a slave except when he had good reason to believe that he would be well treated by his master? Could not this be said by a Christian minister without a virtual surrender of his judgment respecting the moral character of slavery, and without a criminal recreancy to the testimony which he was called to bear against it? This is doubtless a question involving a grave general principle in casuistry, and this



principle obviously lies at the foundation of all that Swedenborg has said on the subject of pellicacy. His doctrine is proclaimed in respect to a particular class of men in a peculiar state of mind. It is easily capable of abuse; it is capable also of being acted upon *comparatively* without abuse *in the state of mind supposed*.

If now it be replied that such doctrine is false, pernicious, and destructive to the interests of religion and virtue, the question, I think, may be proposed, who will be likely to be injured by being influenced by it when viewed in its alleged character? The charge is brought, that Swedenborg, under the claim to a divine commission, inculcates a most lax morality, that he gives the reins to lust, that he virtually sanctions unlimited indulgence. How is this teaching to be practically productive of its legitimate results? Can it be without some kind of belief in his *authority* as an illuminated guide to moral and religious truth? But the moment this belief is established in any mind a new and impressive view of the whole subject of scortatory love is begotten, which completely nullifies the force of any imaginary license which he may have thought himself to have found in his writings. With such a presentation of the nature and effects of that love as Swedenborg sets before him, one *cannot* avail himself of any immunities which he may fancy held out to him without at once proving his faith hypocrisy. So far as he is from this possibility, so far is your statement on this head from the truth. "These are the directions which his admirers are to feel themselves at liberty to follow. And if they do not follow them it is for some other reason than a regard to his principles." Nay, verily, it is for no other reason whatever; for they cannot even begin to conceive any stronger dissuasive than they meet with in these very principles. This you could easily understand if you were once to put yourself in possession of the evidence which has wrought, in their minds, so profound a conviction of his truth in what he has delivered on this head.

It is not the New Churchman then whose moral code or whose practical conduct will be apt to be injured by the exceptionable doctrines of this book. Nor will injury be likely to accrue to any one who really *believes* in the tissue of spiritual developments which are as fully brought out in this as in any other part of Swedenborg's writings. Who then is the threatened victim to the disastrous doctrines of the "Pleasures of Insanity concerning Scortatory Love?" Is it the man, however sensual and depraved, who neither believes nor respects Swedenborg in his assumed character of an illuminated seer? Will he not share in the general estimate of the man as a crazed enthusiast? And are the utterances of such a man likely to be pleaded by him as a warrant for a carnal career? Will they be apt to countervail in any degree the force of those vague and slight, yet scarcely effaceable, impressions of sinful wrong, which in a Christian country float, as it were, about the consciences of the worst of men, and which are to be traced to the *moral sphere* emanating from the Bible? The matter then, as it strikes me, is reduced to a very narrow compass. If a man really believes that Swedenborg speaks on this subject with *authority*, he *cannot* be injured by what he says; if he does not believe this, he *will not*; for what reason can be assigned why any one should be influenced by a reputed license to do wrong when he sees no credentials of authority in the licenser?

But if neither the adopters nor the rejectors of Swedenborg's doctrines on this head are liable to be practically influenced by them, for what purpose were they given? Upon what class of men are they designed to bear? Is not a great amount

of logical and casuistical refinement thrown away? I am not sure that I shall answer this question precisely in the manner in which it would be answered by most of my brethren in the faith, but I can see for myself an important end accomplished by enabling us to form a *proper estimate* of the evils in question. His teachings elevate us to a region whence we can look down upon the field before us, and intelligently contemplate the workings of the Divine Providence in regard to men of all classes and characters, and as prompted by all kinds of motives. In this survey we are enabled to perceive that according to the state of mind and the force of circumstances in which actions are put forth by merely natural men, they are marked by various degrees of criminality, and are therefore to have accorded to them various degrees of toleration in the legislative and judicial economies which come into the grand system of moral machinery, by which an all-wise Providence governs the world. There is indeed an interior kingdom, composed of spiritual men, and under the direct governance of spiritual laws, which brook no known infractions by their subjects; but there is also an *external* kingdom, composed of worldly men, unsusceptible in their present state of being controlled by the highest class of motives, but whose welfare is yet regarded by the Universal Father, and whose policies are secretly overruled by the Divine Wisdom in such a manner as to prevent the extinction of all order and of all evil, and social good. This end is sometimes attained by the permission of a lesser evil in order to the warding off of a greater, and the present moral state of the agents, which is evermore exquisitely perceived and regarded by the Lord, being such as to prevent the peril of *profanation*, we can see the quality of the permission. Without the least stain to his own immaculate rectitude, the Most High *looks into* without *entering into*, *necessitating*, or *patronizing* the allowed volitions and actions of his free creatures, and in another life will *judge*, by *active imputation*, and with unerring justice, the moral character of the one and the other. The spiritual man, who is truly conjoined to the Lord in his affection, is gifted with some measure of his own divine perception of motives and ends. He looks forth from his elevated interior sphere into this exterior kingdom of providence, somewhat as the soul contemplates the things of its body, and judges of whatever is below it, while it remains itself unjudged except by the Omniscient. In the more advanced state of things in the present world which Swedenborg's system all along interiorly respects, I have little doubt that civil rulers will see in his developments a *measure of judgment* by which they shall be governed in administering the interests of justice among men, and that too without compromising the demands of a more spiritual law applicable to spiritual men. Just in proportion as the conjugal element of our nature shall rise in general appreciation, will be the estimate formed of the provisions suggested for its preservation.

The course of discussion brings me to the consideration of another department of the general subject of Scortatory Love—that of *Concubinage*, in regard to which you remark :

“With a most remarkable philanthropy, he extends his care over the conjugal state, and makes provision, which will be welcome to a certain class of men, for cases which not unfrequently occur. He objects strongly to a man's cohabiting with a wife and a mistress *at the same time*. But if men have what he calls ‘legitimate, just, and truly conscientious causes to separate themselves and keep apart from a wife as to actual love,’ he allows them ‘to have another woman in keeping.’ He specifies a variety of these causes, that is, causes for keeping

apart from a wife and having a mistress; such as vitiated states of the wife's body, fevers, leprosies, cancers,—offensive diseases inward or outward, especially those which defile the face, faintness epilepsy, rupture, &c.—also intemperance, telling family secrets, disputing, striking, internal dissimilitude, antipathy, coldness, &c. In these cases, a man may very justly and conscientiously separate himself from his diseased and suffering, or offending wife, and keep a mistress. And our author goes still further, and palliates the crime of adultery in other circumstances; namely, 'when a wife by craftiness captivates a man's mind, enticing him into her bed-chamber, and inflaming his passions,' or when a man entices another man's wife, and inflames *her* passions. These and like circumstances, he says,—operate as reasonable apologies in favor of the party seduced."—p. 149.

The only reply to this is to be drawn from a full and accurate exhibition of what Swedenborg has said on the subject of the concubinary relation, especially as viewed by the light of his general doctrine concerning the conjugal principle, apart from which it cannot be, by any means, properly appreciated. And, first, let it be observed that he lays it down in several propositions, that "concubinage conjointly with a wife is unlawful to Christians, and detestable"—that "it is polygamy, which is condemned, and to be condemned, by the Christian world"—that it is "unlawful because it is against the conjugal covenant; and that it is detestable, because it is against religion, and what is against the latter and at the same time against the former, is against the Lord"—that "as soon as any one, without real sufficient cause, adjoins a concubine to a wife, heaven is closed to him, and by the angels he is no more numbered amongst Christians." He then proceeds to state, that concubinage apart from the wife, when engaged in from just, legitimate, and truly sufficient causes is not illicit. In the distinct specification of these causes, he classes them under three heads, the first of which he terms *legitimate*, as being identical with the causes that warrant divorce understood as the abolition of the conjugal covenant, and thence plenary separation, leaving the man at entire liberty to marry another wife. The sole cause of this total separation, or divorce, he says, "is scortation, according to the precept of the Lord, Matt. xix. 9. That scortation is the sole cause of divorce, is because it is diametrically opposite to the life of conjugal love, and destroys it even to extinction." He then goes on to observe that there may be cases where, although actual ground for plenary divorce exists, yet particular reasons may operate for "retaining the adulterous wife at home." A number of such reasons he particularly recites, which it is not necessary here to mention. The fact however of the scortation actually dissolves the *vinculum matrimonii*, and the man is therefore left in circumstances that release him from any marriage tie which would stand in the way of such *permitted* cohabitation as might take place if he had never been married at all. Concubinage then with him would be but another name for the pellicacy already treated of, and the requisite conditions of which have been distinctly stated. But the point especially to be noted in this connection is, that the *legitimate* causes of plenary divorce are the *legitimate* causes of concubinage or, in other words, of pellicacy, which concubinage in this instance becomes. These causes however are to be established "by the edicts of judges," that is, decided and proclaimed by the proper courts of law, and not left to his own private or personal adjudication. This is the first head of the causes of concubinage, and no one, I think, can deny that if there are *any* legitimate causes for such a relation, the legitimate causes for a full divorce are among them.

But he remarks farther, that in addition to what he terms *legitimate* there are also *just* causes of concubinage, which are to be adjudged by the man alone, acting however under the influence of sound and conscientious principles. These causes are the "just causes of separation from the bed," while at the same time, the conjugal bond is not dissolved, nor the wife abandoned, nor any of the domestic duties of a husband relaxed or intermitted, except it be a case, for instance, like that of confirmed lunacy or idiocy, where a wife is removed to a hospital or asylum. In the following paragraphs are enumerated at considerable length the causes of thoral separation and consequent concubinage, which he denominates *just*, and of which every man is to judge for himself in the fear of God. I quote from "Conj. Love," 251-254.

"There are given separations from the bed and separations from the house; the causes of separation from the bed are numerous, equally so are the separations from the house; but here it is treated of legitimate ones. (In the subsequent treatise he terms these causes *just*.) Since the causes of separation coincide with the causes of concubinage, concerning which in the following part of this work, in its own chapter, therefore the reader is referred thither that he may see the causes in their order. The legitimate causes of separation are those which follow.

"THAT THE FIRST CAUSE OF LEGITIMATE SEPARATION IS A VITIATED STATE OF MIND. The reason of this is, because conjugal love is a conjunction of minds; wherefore if the mind of one of the parties takes a direction different from that of the other, such conjunction is dissolved, and with the conjunction the love vanishes. The states of vitiation of the mind, which cause separation, may appear from enumerating them, and which for the most part are as follow: madness, frenzy, furious wildness, actual foolishness and idiocy, loss of memory, violent hysterics, extreme silliness so as to admit of no perception of good and truth, a high degree of stubbornness in refusing to obey what is just and equitable; a high degree of pleasure in talkativeness and discoursing only on insignificant and trifling subjects; an unbridled desire to publish family secrets, also to quarrel, to strike, to take revenge, to do evil, to steal, to tell lies, to deceive, to blaspheme; carelessness about the children, intemperance, luxury, excessive prodigality, drunkenness, uncleanness, immodesty, application to magic and witchcraft, impiety, with several other causes. By legitimate causes are not here meant judicial causes, but such as are legitimate in regard to the other married partner.

"THAT THE SECOND CAUSE OF LEGITIMATE SEPARATION IS A VITIATED STATE OF BODY. By vitiated states of body are not meant accidental diseases, which happen to either of the married partners within the time of their marriage, and pass away; but by vitiated states of body are meant inherent diseases, which do not pass away. The science of pathology teaches what these are. They are manifold, such as diseases whereby the whole body is so far infected, that the contagion may prove fatal; of this nature are malignant and pestilential fevers, leprosies, the venereal disease, gangrenes, cancers, and the like; also diseases whereby the whole body is so far weighed down, as to admit of no consociability, and from which exhale dangerous effluvia and noxious vapors, whether from the surface of the body, or from its inward parts, in particular from the stomach and lungs: from the surface of the body proceed malignant pocks, warts, pustules, scorbutic phthisic, virulent scab, especially if the face be defiled thereby: from the stomach proceed foul, fetid, rank, and crude eructations: from the lungs, filthy and putrid exhalations, arising from imposthumes, ulcers, abscesses, or from vitiated blood or lymph therein. Besides these there are also various other diseases, as lipothamia, which is a total faintness of body and defect of strength; paralysis, which is a loosing and relaxation of the membranes and ligaments which serve for motion; certain chronical diseases, arising from a loss of the sensibility and elasticity of the nerves, or from too great a thickness, tenacity, and acrimony of the humors; epilepsy; fixed weakness arising from apoplexy; certain phthisical complaints, whereby the body is wasted; the cholic, cæliac affection, rupture, and other like diseases.

"THAT THE THIRD CAUSE OF LEGITIMATE SEPARATION IS IMPOTENCE BEFORE MARRIAGE. The reason why this is a cause of separation is, because the end of marriage is the procreation of children, which cannot take place where this cause of separation operates; and as this is foreknown by the parties, they are deliberately deprived of the hope of it, which hope nevertheless nourishes and strengthens their conjugal love."

The remaining class of causes are what he terms *sonticæ*, or *vere sonticæ*, which although rendered in the earlier translation of the "Conjugal Love," *conscientious*, and *truly conscientious*, are undoubtedly more correctly represented by *sufficient* or *valid*, a rendering which has been adopted in the later revised American edition. These are thus specified, with preliminary remarks.

"THAT THE SUFFICIENT CAUSES OF THIS CONCUBINAGE, ARE REAL AND NOT REAL. Since besides just causes which are just causes of separation, and thence become just causes of concubinage, there are also sufficient causes, which depend on judgment and justice with the man; therefore these also are to be mentioned: but as the judgments of justice may be perverted and be converted by confirmations into the appearances of what is just, therefore these causes are distinguished into, sufficient causes real and not real, and are described separately

"THAT THE REAL SUFFICIENT CAUSES ARE SUCH AS ARE GROUNDED IN WHAT IS JUST. To know these causes, it may be sufficient to recount some of them; such as no natural affection towards children, and a consequent rejection of them, intemperance, drunkenness, uncleanness, immodesty, a desire of promulgating family secrets, of disputing, of striking, of taking revenge, of doing evil, of stealing, of deceiving; internal dissimilitude, whence comes antipathy; froward requirement of the conjugal debt, whence the man becomes a cold stone; application to magic and witchcraft; an extreme degree of impiety; and other similar evils."

Aware, however, of the strength of corrupt nature and the tendency of its pleadings to falsify and sophisticate sound principles, he proceeds to designate the not real or fictitious causes which men would be very apt to assign to themselves by way of justifying a conduct prompted by passion and at war with morality and religion.

"THAT CAUSES SUFFICIENT NOT REAL ARE SUCH AS ARE NOT GROUNDED IN WHAT IS JUST, ALTHOUGH IN THE APPEARANCE OF WHAT IS JUST. These are known from the sufficient real causes above mentioned, and, if not rightly explored, may appear as just, and yet are unjust; as that times of abstinence are required after the bringing forth of children, transitory sicknesses of wives, from these and other causes a check to procreation, polygamy permitted to the Israelites, and other like causes of no weight as grounded in justice. These are fabricated by the men after the contracting of cold, when unchaste lusts have deprived them of conjugal love, and have infatuated them with an idea of its likeness to scoratory love. Such men, when they engage in concubinage, to prevent defamation, make such spurious and fallacious causes real and genuine, and very frequently also forge and charge them against the wife, their companions, assenting to and re-echoing them according to favor."—C. L. 474.

I have now stated the grounds on which is built the proposition, that *concubinage apart from a wife, when engaged in from causes legitimate, just, and truly sufficient, is not illicit*. The bare announcement of this proposition is undoubtedly calculated to occasion a shock to the prevailing sentiments of the Christian world, and perhaps to a degree that may close the mind against even any attempted *explanation* of what is really and truly intended by it. The very term *concubine* awakens at once a train of revolting associations, and the idea of any pos-

## REPLY TO DR. WOODS.

sible form of toleration allowed to this kind of sexual relation operates with a species of torpedo touch upon all the virtuous sensibilities of the bosom in which piety and refined intelligence have found a home. The spontaneous verdict is prone to be, that nothing—not a syllable—can be uttered in its defence without meeting an instant repulse and condemnation from the spirit which has been formed by the pure precepts of Christianity, or without betraying, on the part of the utterer, an open or latent design to sap the very foundation of everything lovely and of good report in the sphere of life's tenderest and most hallowed relations. I should be sorry to think that I failed in any measure to appreciate the value of such sentiments, or that I had assumed the advocacy of doctrines which went legitimately to disturb or outrage them. But I have ventured to think it possible so to present the views advanced by Swedenborg as to divest them of that character of extreme repugnancy to preconceived ideas with which they at first blush array themselves before the mind. And to this end I observe,

(1.) That it is proper to refer everything said on this head to the general aim and object of the whole book, which is to elevate and consecrate the conjugal principle and the conjugal relation above all the ordinary estimates which have ever been formed on the subject. It is impossible, I think, to doubt that this is our author's real and supreme intention, and that everything he has said on the opposite or scortatory principle is designed to act, in a reflex way, in heightening our conceptions of the superlative worth and excellence of that element of our being to which it stands opposed. In the endeavor to compass this end it may be said that he has enlisted false principles—that he is inconsistent with himself—that his reasoning destroys his conclusions—and that consequently the results are not only fallacious, but pernicious. This remains to be seen; but what I at present insist upon is, that the entire drift of his discussion in the body of the work, as well as innumerable passages in his other writings, cannot in fairness be otherwise viewed than as aiming at a good end or, in other words, as evincing a good intention. If notwithstanding he can be shown, on adequate grounds, to have been mistaken, the mistake, I should suppose, may still be affirmed in such a manner as to leave unimpaired all the credit due to a worthy and unexceptionable object.

(2.) It is to be constantly borne in mind that Swedenborg plants himself most distinctly and emphatically on Scripture ground in maintaining but one sufficient cause of plenary divorce, viz. that of adultery. It is impossible for language to be more explicit than that which he employs on this head. He cannot, therefore, be justly charged with teaching doctrines that go to countenance a light esteem of the legal bond of matrimony, or to favor a facility in obtaining release from its obligations. This is still more evident from the following paragraph from another work which is palpably the language of a very serious mind. "From what has been said it may without difficulty be concluded and seen, whether a man be a Christian or not, yea, whether he has any religion or not: for whosoever does not regard adulteries as sins, in faith and life, is not a Christian, neither has he any religion. But on the other hand, whosoever shuns adulteries as sins, especially if he holds them in aversion by reason of their being sins, and still more, if he abominates them on that account, has religion, and if he be in the Christian Church, is a Christian."—*Doct. of Life*, 77.

(3.) It is of the utmost importance that a correct idea should be formed of what Swedenborg understands by the *concubinage* of which he speaks, and of its true relation to the conjugal union. In our common parlance a *concubine* is little less than a *harlot*, but the term has not that opprobrious sense in the sacred writings, where it is used to denote a lawful wife, but of secondary rank, one who enjoyed no conjugal right but that of cohabitation, and whom the husband could repudiate and send away with a small present. The *concubine* of Swedenborg, however, is not properly a *wife*, as this would be *polygamy* which he pointedly condemns as illicit to Christians under any circumstances whatever, as being directly subversive of the true conjugal relation which can only subsist between two. The nature of these secondary marriages and the grounds of the permission on which they were founded, are thus unfolded by him in the commentary on Gen. xxv. 5, 6.

“In order that both the celestial and the spiritual might be represented in marriages formerly, it was allowed besides a wife to have also a concubine; such concubine was given to the husband by the wife, and was then called his woman, or was said to be given to him for a woman, as when Hagar the Egyptian was given to Abraham by Sarah, when Bilhah the handmaid was given to Jacob by Rachel, and the handmaid Silpah given to Jacob by Leah, where they are called women, but in other places concubines, as Hagar the Egyptian in this verse, and Bilhah, also Keturah herself. That these ancients had concubines besides a wife, as not only Abraham and Jacob, but also their posterity, as Gideon, Saul, David, and Solomon, was of permission, for the sake of representation, viz., of the celestial church by a wife, and of the spiritual church by a concubine; it was of permission, because they were such that they had no conjugal love, thus neither was marriage to them marriage, but only carnal copulation for the sake of procreating offspring, and to such there might be permissions, without the injury of conjugal love and the covenant thence derived, but in nowise to those who are in good and in truth, and who are internal men or can become so; for as soon as man is in good and truth, and in things internal, such things cease; hence it is not allowable for Christians, as for Jews, to take to themselves a concubine with a wife, and that this is adultery.”—A. C. 3246.

From this it appears very evident that what may be termed the *license of concubinage* is not granted by him to *real Christians*, or men in a spiritual state of mind, but *permissively* to those who have not yet advanced beyond the state of natural men. I am aware that the propriety of any such species of teaching on the part of a Christian will be vehemently protested against, but as I have already dwelt upon this point and may advert to it again in the sequel, I wave all discussion at present, and proceed to remark, that Swedenborg alone has drawn the true distinction between *concubinage* and *polygamy*, the former of which was permissively granted to the sons of Jacob, and the latter to the sons of Ishmael. Polygamy is a kind of diffusion or dissolution of the conjugal love over the sex in general, whereby it in fact loses its peculiar distinctive character, and is resolved into a mere prompting of lasciviousness. “The reason is, because the love thereof is divided amongst several, and is the love of the sex, and the love of the external or natural man, and this is not conjugal love, which alone is given chaste. That polygamical love is a love divided amongst several, is a known thing, and divided love is not conjugal love, for this latter love is not to be divided from one of the sex, hence the former love is lascivious, and polygamy is lasciviousness.” (C. L. 345). He accordingly affirms that “with polygamists conjugal chastity, purity, and sanctity cannot be given, nor can a polygamist, so long as he remains a polygamist, be made spiritual.” Polygamy,

however, is permissively allowed to the Mahometans because love "truly conjugal which subsists only between one man and one wife, could not be given, inasmuch as they do not, from a religious principle, acknowledge the Lord (i. e. Christ) as equal to God the Father, and thus as the God of heaven and earth." He also in the same connection lays down the following principles, which will be seen to have an important bearing upon the whole subject, particularly so far as moral conduct is related to the prevailing state of mind of the agent.

"THAT POLYGAMY IS NOT SIN WITH THOSE WHO LIVE IN IT FROM A RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE. All that which is contrary to religion is believed to be sin, because it is contrary to God; and on the other hand, all that which agrees with religion, is believed not to be sin, because it agrees with God; and as polygamy existed with the sons of Israel from a principle of religion, and in like manner at this day with the Mahometans, it could not, and cannot, be imputed to them as sin. Moreover, to prevent its being sin to them, they remain natural, and do not become spiritual; and the natural man cannot see that there is anything of sin in such things as appertain to received religion; this is seen only by the spiritual man. It is on this account, that although the Mahometans are taught by the Alcoran to acknowledge our Lord as the son of God, still they do not come to him, but to Mahomet; and so long they remain natural, and consequently do not know that there is in polygamy any evil, nor indeed any lasciviousness. The Lord also saith, '*If ye were blind ye would not have sin; but now you say we see, therefore your sin remaineth*' (John ix. 41). Since polygamy cannot convict them of sin, therefore after death they have their heavens, n. 343; and therein have joys according to their life.

"THAT POLYGAMY IS NOT SIN WITH THOSE WHO ARE IN IGNORANCE CONCERNING THE LORD. This is, because love truly conjugal is from the Lord only, and cannot be imparted by the Lord to any others than those who know him, acknowledge him, believe on him, and live the life which is from him; and those to whom that love cannot be imparted, know no other than that the love of the sex and conjugal love are the same thing; consequently also polygamy. Add to this, that polygamists, who know nothing of the Lord, remain natural: for a man is made spiritual only from the Lord; and that is not imputed to the natural man as sin, which is according to the laws of religion and at the same time of society: he also acts according to his reason; and the reason of the natural man is in mere darkness respecting love truly conjugal; and this love in excellence is spiritual. Nevertheless the reason of polygamists is taught from experience, that both public and private peace require, that promiscuous lust in general should be restrained, and be left to every one within his own house: hence comes polygamy."—C. L. 348, 349.

More will probably be said upon this point hereafter. At present I remark that polygamy, strictly speaking, is a divided bestowment of whatever conjugal love a man has upon several objects instead of one. Concubinage, strictly speaking, is a separation or segregation of the true conjugal principle, which is inwardly stored up in the mind, and the allotment of the merely external and sensual principle, from motives of physical necessity, to the person of a *succuba lecti*, or *substituted partner of the bed*. The propriety of this relation will of course be judged of according to the validity of the reasons urging it, and according to the state of mind of the parties having recourse to it. The positions advanced in the preceding extracts are certainly entitled to enter into the estimate formed of the *morale* of such connections, while the very fact that a man is able to appreciate them, renders any practical decision in regard to his own case extremely perilous; for it supposes his understanding to be elevated out of its native darkness into a degree of rational and moral light which confers a higher responsibility on all his acts.



Still it must be said that your representations on the subject give a very distorted view of the teachings of Swedenborg. The concubinage of which he speaks, and which, under the specified conditions, he declares not to be illicit, is the farthest possible remove from an authorized sundering of the relation between husband and wife, or an exemption from the discharge of its duties. The impression which would be naturally conveyed of his teaching by the following extract from your work is exceedingly wide of the truth.

"And shall I advert again to the other case? A man has a wife, whom he has solemnly promised and vowed to love and cherish and comfort while life lasts. She is the wife of his youth, his faithful, affectionate partner, and the loving mother of his children. But she is visited with painful and exhausting sickness, it may be with fever, or cancer, or epilepsy, or paralysis, or consumption. Her low and suffering state calls for the kindest attentions and the tenderest sympathy of her husband. But instead of these kind and solicitous attentions and this tender sympathy towards his innocent and faithful, but suffering wife, he is to turn away from her to enjoy the society of a kept mistress! What shall we say to these things? Why, if a book containing these principles should be published in Massachusetts, the author would be liable to punishment for violating the wholesome laws of the Commonwealth."—p. 152.

If such an indictment were drawn up against the real purport of Swedenborg's doctrine on this subject, it would be simply upon this ground—that in cases where the physical or mental condition of a wife was such as to preclude entirely the possibility of that connubial commerce which enters so deeply into the design and the delights of marriage, an emergency arises for which, as some provision is naturally felt to be desirable, so it is suggested in the temporary expedient, which, for want of a better term, is here denominated *concubinage*. It is an expedient suggested by the fact, that the causes which incapacitate a wife from rendering that "due benevolence" to a partner which he may properly seek, still leave the husband under the full promptings of a constitutional appetite which craves the indulgence that was among the lawful motives to marriage. These promptings, however strong, he had no thought of gratifying in any other than the appointed way so long as the opportunity remained to him. He cherishes the most unfeigned and devoted affection for his suffering companion. He relaxes in no duty of the most tender friend. With a sedulous sympathy he waits upon her wants, and with yearning anxiety hails every symptom of returning health or sanity. But his temperament allows him not to forget, meantime, that he is a man, or, to suppress the query, whether any other course remains than a calm submission to a privation which unforeseen circumstances have brought upon him. This query is undoubtedly proposed in a thousand instances in the depths of the soul, and no answer is returned that fully satisfies the interrogating spirit. The action will usually be according to the dominant character of the individual concerned. With a religious man, governed by a tender conscience, the conclusion will scarcely fail to be, that he is to recognize in such an extremity, a special ordainment of the Divine providence, intended as a trial of his faith and patience, and that the only alternative is a meek acquiescence in the wise will of his Heavenly Father, and when the affection for his wife is deep and intense, he will find, I presume, comparatively little inconvenience in submitting to his lot. It is at any rate, on all accounts the soundest and safest course, and he that adopts it will be acting on the true principles of Swedenborg's conjugal doctrines.

But suppose the case of one of a different character, a man whose breast is not profoundly penetrated by religious principles, but who is yet of kindly affections, of fair external deportment, and unexceptionable in his civil and domestic relations—one who, in ordinary parlance, would be termed a good citizen, a good neighbor, a good husband, but who at the same time has not come under that peculiar *experimental* influence of religious truth which we usually associate with the highest type of moral character. He is not devoid of conscience; he feels and acknowledges the obligation of the marriage tie; he has no disposition to slight the claims of an affectionate wife; but he is still conscious of the pressure of natural promptings, and he is inwardly sensible to what he deems an urgent “necessity” on this score, to the demands of which he feels that he might yield without detriment to his conjugal love, provided it could be done, without at the same time, doing violence to his conscience. It is doubtless such a case that Swedenborg’s suggestions more particularly contemplate, and the question is how far he is warranted in even *hinting* at a course made permissible only in very peculiar circumstances, and in a state of mind that comes short of the full requirements of a spiritual law. I am well aware of the delicacy and the difficulty of the subject, and my grand reliance, in attempting to rebut the force of your objections, is in presenting distinctly the views of Swedenborg, and the reasons which he urges in their support. Judgment will then be pronounced upon their intrinsic merits.

That there is at least something *hard* in the compulsory seclusion supposed, especially with men of ardent temperament, will doubtless be generally admitted, even when it is still looked upon as an allotment that admits of no remedy, as, for instance, in the case of one whose wife has become the hopeless inmate of a lunatic asylum. That it is moreover, a case in which inquiry often arises as to the possibility of a dispensation consistent with human and divine laws, is beyond doubt. Equally indubitable is the fact, that both civil and ecclesiastical tribunals have, in many instances, been prone to lean to the side of lenity in deciding upon extreme cases of this kind.\* It has indeed for the most part assumed the form of a question respecting the right of polygamy where the ends of a prior marriage were frustrated, and in this form it came prominently before the Reformers, who were evidently greatly perplexed by it. The following extract from Michelet’s *Life of Luther*, will serve as a specimen of the *cases of con-*

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\* The subjoined extract does not present a case entirely parallel to that we are now considering, but it shows that *concubinage* has not been altogether unknown in the Christian church.

“The first council of Toledo (A. D. 400) has this canon:—‘*He who with a believing wife, hath a concubine is excommunicated; but if his concubine is in stead of a wife, and he adheres to her alone, whether she be called a wife or a concubine, he is not to be rejected from communion.*’” This Canon, says Fleury, “shows that there were concubines approved by the Church. According to the Roman laws, every woman could not be the legitimate wife of every man. Both were to be Roman citizens and of a suitable condition. A senator could not marry a freed woman: a free man could not marry a slave; and the cohabitation of slaves was not called by the name of marriage. But a woman who could not be taken as a wife, might be taken as a concubine; and the laws allowed it, provided the man had only one concubine, and was not a married man. The children of such marriages were neither legitimate nor bastards, but natural children acknowledged by the father, and capable of receiving legacies. The Church meddled not with these distinctions of the civil laws; but regarding only the law of nature, approved of every conjunction of one woman, if it was one woman only, and perpetual; and the more so, because the Holy Scriptures employ the name of wife or of concubine indifferently.”—(*Jortin’s Rem. on Eccles. Hist.* Vol. 1. p. 422.)

science that were sometimes brought before them. The letter of the Landgrave of Hesse shows a curious and even amusing conflict between the promptings of the lower and the dictates of the higher nature.

"We noticed at an early period of this narrative, the melancholy state of dependence in which the Reformation was placed on the princes that espoused the cause. Luther had time to foresee the results. These princes were men, with men's caprices and passions. And hence concessions, which, without being contrary to the principles of the reformation, seemed to redound little to the honor of the reformers. The most warlike of these princes, the hotheaded landgrave of Hesse, submitted to Luther and the Protestant ministers, that his health would not allow of his confining himself to one wife. His instructions to Bucer for the negotiation of this matter with the theologians of Wittemberg, are a curious mixture of sensuality, of religious fears, and of daring simplicity. 'Ever since I have been married,' he writes, 'I have lived in adultery and fornication; and as I won't give up this way of living, I cannot present myself at the holy table; for St. Paul has said, that the adulterer shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.' He proceeds to state the reasons which drive him into this course: 'My wife is neither good looking nor good-tempered; she is not sweet; she drinks, and my chamberlains can tell what she then does, &c. I am of a warm complexion, as the physicians can prove; and as I often attend the imperial diets, where the body is pampered with high living, how am I to manage there without a wife, especially as I can't be always taking a seraglio about with me? . . . How can I punish fornication and other crimes, when all may turn round and say, "Master, begin with yourself?" . . . Were I to take up arms for the Gospel's sake, I could only do so with a troubled conscience, for I should say to myself, "If you die in this war, you go to the devil." . . . I have read both the Old and New Testament carefully, and find no other help indicated than to take a second wife; and I ask before God why cannot I do what Abraham, Jacob, David, Lamech, and Solomon have done?' The question of polygamy had been agitated from the very beginning of Protestantism, which professed to restore the world to scriptural life; and, whatever his repugnance, Luther durst not condemn the Old Testament. Besides, the Protestants held marriage to be *res politica*, and subject to the regulations of the civil power. Luther, too, had already held, theoretically, and without advising it to be put in practice, the very doctrine advanced by the landgrave. He had written years before: . . . 'I confess, I cannot say that polygamy is repugnant to Holy Scripture, yet would not have the practice introduced amongst Christians, who ought to abstain even from what is lawful, in order to avoid scandal, and in order to maintain that *honestas* (decorum) which St. Paul requireth under all circumstances.'—(Jan. 13th, 1524.) 'Polygamy is not allowable amongst Christians, *except in cases of absolute necessity, as when a man is forced to separate from a leprous wife,*' &c.

"Luther was greatly embarrassed by the landgrave's message. All the theologians of Wittemberg assembled to draw up an answer, and the result was a compromise. He was allowed a double marriage, on condition that his second wife should not be publicly recognized. 'Your highness must be aware of the difference between establishing a universal and granting an exceptional law. . . . We cannot publicly sanction a plurality of wives. . . . We pray your highness to consider the dangers in which a man would stand who should introduce a

law that would disunite families, and plunge them into endless law-suits. . . . Your highness' constitution is weak, you sleep badly, and your health requires every care. . . . The great Scanderbeg often exhorted his soldiers to chastity, saying that nothing was so injurious in their calling as incontinence. . . . We pray your highness seriously to take into consideration the scandals, cares, labors, griefs, and infirmities herein brought under your notice. . . . *If nevertheless your highness is fully resolved to take a second wife, we are of opinion that the marriage should be secret.* . . . Given at Wittemberg, after the festival of St. Nicholas, 1539.—MARTIN LUTHER, PHILIP MELANCTHON, MARTIN BUCER, ANTONY CORVIN, ADAM, JOHN LENING, JUSTIN WINTFERT, DIONISIUS MELANTHER.'—p. 169-171.

Here is certainly a concession made to virtual *concubinage* by these grave and reverend men, and that too on the ground of the urgent solicitations of the flesh to which, in natural men, Swedenborg intimates that some clemency may be shown. And that Luther himself had a tolerably high idea of the strength of these propensities is very clear from the extracts which follow. "Luther being asked whether a Christian preacher, who is bound to suffer imprisonment and persecution for the word's sake, ought not much more to do without marriage? replied; 'It is easier to endure imprisonment than desire, as I know in my own person. The more I strove to macerate and subdue the flesh, the more I lusted.'" To a friend he writes; "If you lust, marry . . . No one will ever have to repent rising early and marrying young . . . It is no more possible to do without a wife than without eating and drinking. Conceived, nourished, and born within the body of woman, our flesh is mainly hers, and it is impossible for us ever to separate wholly from her."—(*Mitchelet*, p. 175, 176).

It will be observed that in the sentence of the venerable conclave at Wittemberg the matter is put very much upon the basis mentioned by Swedenborg. *He* says it is better that one should be wholly continent, but if, from the ardor of his temperament, he *cannot* contain, then let the intercourse be restricted to one woman rather than let passion run riot with many. So in the Wittemberg decree; although a rigid self denial would be vastly preferable, yet "nevertheless if your highness is fully resolved to take a second wife, we are of the opinion that the marriage should be secret." The "Antichristicide" and his associates herein display a complaisance to the prince and an estimate of the pressure of "the present necessity" which, I doubt, would hardly meet a favoring response from their most fervent admirers of later times.

The dubious Landgrave was at a loss, it seems, to know why the license accorded to Abraham, Jacob, David, Lamech, and Solomon, could not be granted to him also. Had the "Conjugal Love" then been written, and had Luther been somewhat more of a Swedenborgian than Swedenborg was a Lutheran, he would have been very apt to quote for the querists' edification the ensuing paragraph.

"THAT THE ISRAELITISH NATION WAS PERMITTED TO MARRY A PLURALITY OF WIVES, BECAUSE THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH WAS NOT WITH THAT NATION, AND CONSEQUENTLY LOVE TRULY CONJUGIAL COULD NOT EXIST THERE. There are some at this day whose thoughts are fluctuating respecting the institution relative to monogamical marriages, or those of one man with one wife, and who are distracted by opposite reasonings on the subject; being led to suppose that because polygamical marriages were openly permitted in the case of the Israelitish nation, and its kings, and in the case of David and Solomon, they are also in themselves permissible to Christians; but such persons have no distinct knowledge concerning the Israelitish nation and the Christian, nor concerning the externals and internals of the

church, nor concerning the change of the church from external to internal by the Lord; consequently they know nothing from interior judgment concerning marriages. In general it is to be observed, that a man is born natural in order that he may be made spiritual; and that so long as he remains natural, he is in the night, and as it were in sleep concerning things spiritual; and that in this case he does not even know the difference between the external natural man and the internal spiritual. That the Christian church was not with the Israelitish nation, is known from the Word; for they expected the Messiah, as they still expect him, who was to exalt them above all nations and people in the world; wherefore if they had been told, and were still to be told, that the Messiah's kingdom is over the heavens, and thence over all nations, they would have accounted it an idle tale; hence it was, that they not only did not acknowledge Christ or the Messiah, our Lord, when he came into the world, but also barbarously took him away out of the world. From these considerations it is evident, that the Christian church was not with that nation, as neither is it at this day; and those with whom the Christian church is not, are natural men both externally and internally; and to such polygamy is not hurtful, since it is inscribed on the natural man; for, in regard to love in marriages, the natural man perceives, nothing but what appertains to lust. This is meant by these words of the Lord *'That Moses because of the HARDNESS OF THEIR HEART suffered them to put away their wives; but that from the beginning it was not so'* (Matt. xix. 8).—C. L. 340.

If this be sound reasoning, there was an actual concession made, under the ancient economy, to the infirmities of human nature, and yet it was one which had special relation to the state of mind of the parties concerned, and one which could only receive toleration on the ground of that state. It would seem that Luther was at a loss to perceive why the *principle* thus recognized under the divine administration should not operate where the original grounds and reasons for it were equally cogent. He would probably have been strongly predisposed to side with the reasoning of Milton; "If the law will afford no reason why the Jew should be more gently dealt with than the Christian, then surely the gospel can afford as little why the Christian should be less gently dealt with than the Jew. The gospel indeed exhorts to highest perfection, but bears with weakest infirmity more than the law. Hence those indulgences, 'all cannot receive this saying; every man hath his proper gift,' with express charges not to 'lay on yokes which our fathers could not bear.'" "The nature of man still is as weak, and yet as hard; and that weakness and hardness as unfit and as unteachable to be hardly used as ever." . . . "If those indulgences were safe and sinless, out of tenderness and compassion, as indeed they were, and yet shall be abrogated by the gospel; then the law, whose end is by rigor to magnify grace, shall itself give grace, and pluck a fair plume from the gospel." . . . "If the gospel require perfecter obedience than the law as a duty, it exalts the law and abases itself, which is dishonorable to the work of our redemption. Seeing therefore that all the causes of any allowance that the Jews might have, remain as well to the Christians; this is a certain rule, that so long as the causes remain, the allowance ought."

That there actually was something in the Jewish code analogous to the expedients pointed out by Swedenborg, is beyond all question. Thus from Ex. xxi. 9, it appears that parents, in order to guard their adult male offspring from debauchery before marriage, used to give them one of their female slaves as a concubine. This was undoubtedly on the principle of consulting just such an *apprehended necessity* as Swedenborg speaks of in what he says of pellicacy, and this provision stands indelible in the book of God, and as an integral part of that system of enactments which he gave to the chosen people. I do not refer

to it with the design to imply that *Christian men* are now at liberty to avail themselves of such a provision, but simply to show that the grand *principle* which lies at the foundation of these scortatory doctrines has been distinctly recognized in the Divine economy as set forth in the inspired writings, and consequently that there is some sense in which such permissions are not irreconcilably at war with the will of Jehovah. If they were intrinsically in absolute antagonism with the moral precepts of the Decalogue they could no more have been allowed under the law than under the gospel, nor will it be easy to say why they should be any *less* allowed under the gospel than under the law. The matter then resolves itself into the question, whether the strength of the rational conviction on this head may not be such as to make it at least very difficult to conceive that our Lord, who himself gave the Jews their laws, really *intended* to do away all such permissions, *not in regard to his own true disciples*, but in regard to those who were not at present sufficiently in the light of truth or the love of good to heed the demands of a higher precept. If, notwithstanding, it be maintained that the strictness of the letter on this point is to be unabatingly adhered to, how shall we suffer ourselves to relax the rigor of the requisitions which occur in the same connection, in the Sermon on the Mount? "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." Who understands this literally? "I say unto you, swear not at all. Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay." Is this literally acted upon by the mass of Christians? Are not oaths every where in use? "Whosoever shall smite thee upon thy right cheek turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Is this precept ever looked upon as literally binding? "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." What kind of commentary do we read upon this text in the daily lives of professed Christians? It will doubtless be said that in all these cases the mind readily perceives the *general spirit* of the lesson taught, and acknowledges no violence done to the Saviour's scope, though the express terms of the letter are not punctiliously adhered to. A *principle* is elicited, and even the very principle which was virtually inculcated in the Mosaic law, but which had been perverted and abused by the national usage. Why then shall we any more insist that the *principle* which dictated certain permissions in certain circumstances under the former economy shall not be allowed to operate, in the same circumstances, under the gospel dispensation? Are "the letters to be turned into palisadoes to stake out all requisite sense from entering into their due enlargement?"

As I have quoted Martin Luther, I will here adduce the words of Martin Bucer, one of his illustrious compeers in the work of the Reformation. He is indeed urging a plea for *divorce*, which I do not endorse, but the grounds of his plea are equally applicable to the *separation* of which I am treating; and the same remark I would make in reference to all my citations from Milton. His *reasonings* I consider valid, but I do not agree with his *conclusions* respecting the proper remedy. "It cannot be doubted by them to whom it is given to know God and his judgments out of his own words, but that, what means of peace and safety God ever granted and ordained to his elected people, the same he grants and ordains to men of all ages, who have equally need of the same remedies. And who, that is but a knowing man, dares say there are not husbands and wives now to be found in such hardness of heart, that they will not per-

form either conjugal affection, or any requisite duty thereof, though it be most deserved at their hands? Neither can any one defer to confess, but that God, whose property it is to judge the causes of them that suffer injury, has provided for innocent and honest persons wedded, how they might free themselves by lawful means of divorce, from the bondage and iniquity of those who are falsely termed their husbands or their wives. This is clear out of Deut. xxiv. 1; Mal. ii; Mat. xix. 1; 1 Cor. vii; and out of those principles which the Scripture every where teaches, that God changes not his mind, dissents not from himself, is no acceptor of persons; but allows the same remedies to all men oppressed with the same necessities and infirmities; yea, requires that we should use them. This he will easily perceive, who considers these things in the spirit of the Lord."—*Judg. of Divorce*, ch. xxxvi. The sentiment here advanced may not perhaps find general assent in the present state of religious opinion, but it is worth inquiry whether those who reject it may not mistake a "letter-bound servility to canon doctors," for the voice of God speaking through the living oracles of the word-enlightened spirit. The permissions conceded in the Mosaic law, or rather the causes on which they are founded, appear to be occasionally recognized in the subsequent Scriptures, as where Solomon says, for instance, "It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house." And again, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman." This surely means something, and I see not how it can amount to anything less than a warrant for domiciliary separation, which goes at least *so far* towards sustaining what Swedenborg has said on that subject. As to any ulterior resort in such a case, this must be judged of by the sufficiency of the grounds alleged for it. By a Jew it would doubtless be understood as authorizing recourse to divorce on the basis of Deut. xxiv. 1. It is cited here simply as an illustration of the *principle of concession*, of which it is difficult to see why it should not always operate where the original causes operate. So also, Mal. 2. 16, "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away." This is undoubtedly an erroneous rendering instead of the genuine, "He that hateth, let him put away," as the great current of versions and commentators have it. Venema has elaborately shown that the words come in as a counterplea of the Jews, to whom it is said in the preceding verse, "Take heed to your spirit, and let none of you deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." "But," reply the reprimanded people, "the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, He that hateth his wife let him put her away." "Nay," rejoins the Prophet, "although that is true, yet this is an abuse of the divine clemency; ye have made it a plea for the grossest wrong which ye would fain cloak under the alleged license; but such a plea will no more conceal it than will a garment an act of violence. Therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously." The principle is allowed, but its perversion condemned. Again, we find something analogous in the words of Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 15, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases." The supposed cause of separation here is a difference of religion, but the principle involved is substantially the same. It is a relaxation of the iron rigor of the law of marriage in accommodation to the force of circumstances.

(4.) Having thus obtained a tolerably correct view of the *nature* of the relation which Swedenborg denominates *concubinage*—having seen that the term indi-

cates a species of connection which has not, in Scripture, the opprobrious character that in our ordinary parlance attaches to it—and having learnt that it does not imply that heartless abandonment which you have ascribed to it—it remains to advert to the *causes* which he, with so much caution and discrimination, pronounces “legitimate, just, and really sufficient.” These he says are various “vitiated states of mind and body,” which he enumerates, and of which a man is constituted himself the sole judge. I have little to say in regard to these causes in addition to what I find said by the author himself. In regard to most of them they do, I confess, strike me as answering to the character described; as going to frustrate some of the important ends of marriage; and therefore as entitled to weigh in the case of a resort to the alternative suggested. In respect to some others, such as “loss of memory,”—“extreme simplicity,”—“unbridled eagerness to talk upon insignificant and trifling things, and to publish the secrets of the house”——“detrimental effluvia exhaled from the body or the lungs,” &c., I am somewhat less clear in my mind from not knowing precisely the extent of the author’s meaning, or the *degree* in which he supposes the different ailments should exist in order to legitimate them as grounds of separation from the bed, which, by the way, is all that he speaks of in the former part of the work where he first enumerates them. Still, if I were better instructed as to the real meaning of Swedenborg, I presume I should have little difficulty in conceding the validity of all the causes cited; but as it is, I have no difficulty in assenting to the position, that the man himself, or, on the other hand, the woman, is to be the exclusive judge of the supposed necessity of the case. A married partner may sometimes be reduced to a state of living martyrdom by a complication of grievances and vexations which he could never think of divulging to the world, or it may be to the most intimate friend. He can only say with the old Roman, Paulus Emilius, when asked why he would put away his wife for no visible reason; “This shoe,” said he, holding it out on his foot, “is a neat shoe, a new shoe, and yet none of you can tell where it pinches me.” The secrets of the parlor or the bed-chamber are not to be proclaimed upon the house-tops. The design of marriage is to promote the mental and corporeal happiness of the wedded pair. If this end is, in either department, defeated by the hopeless infirmities or the ingrained and incurable perversities of a partner, and the religious principle is not sufficiently strong to dictate an uncomplaining submission to the cross, Swedenborg says *of* such an one—not *to* him—that recourse *ad exigentiam* to concubinage is not illicit. It is made *licit* by his present state of mind, on the same principle on which he says that polygamy is not a sin, to those who practise it under the sanction of the religion in which they have been reared, for “to him that thinketh anything to be sin, to him it is sin.” The permission is clearly liable to abuse, and a man may capriciously endow himself with a license at which strict justice would revolt. On this head he is to be studiously on his guard. Thus as to bodily diseases, he *may* take undue advantage of a mere transient indisposition, whereas Swedenborg is very express in saying, that “by vitiated states of body are not meant accidental diseases which befall one or other conjugal partner within the time of their marriage, and pass away; but by vitiated states of body, are meant inherent diseases, which do not pass away.” And so, by parity of reasoning, of all other causes assigned, a man is to “judge righteous judgment,” and the more so, if possible, inasmuch as he acknow-



ledges no other tribunal than that of his own conscience before God. With a man of honorable and generous sentiments it may be presumed that he will shrink from anything really injurious to the feelings of a wife whom he tenderly esteems, and it is very conceivable that on her part she may, in peculiar circumstances, so far appreciate the force of a partner's plea, as voluntarily to accord to the promptings of the *man* a privilege which she deems would not necessarily withdraw from her the affections of a *husband*. We can scarcely suppose that Sarah in giving her maid Hagar to Abraham, or Rachel in giving Bilhah to Jacob, or Leah in giving him Zilpah, regarded themselves as signing away their title to their husband's love.

If it be said that this is a vein of remark utterly *inapropos* to anything that can be conceived of the workings of a Christian mind, I have only to say in reply, that this entire discussion has reference to the *opposite* of true conjugal love, and of course to the exercises and judgments of truly regenerate men. It is not supposed that they apply to Christians acting as Christians. All scortatory demonstrations are a form of evil, and falling without the sphere of genuine good, and are viewed by Swedenborg in this light throughout every page of his treatise. Still he does not consider himself precluded from speaking of them, from characterizing them, or drawing important distinctions concerning them. If a missionary of the New Church were to go to the Mahometans to preach to them its doctrines, he would undoubtedly assure them that their polygamy was directly at war with the essential genius of the conjugal relation, and consequently with the laws of their spiritual being, and that without renouncing it they could never enter the Christian's heaven; and yet he would not feel disposed to cancel a page of the work on "Conjugal Love," nor to conceal from any one who could intelligently receive them the principles it contains respecting the bearing which the dominant mental and moral state of every individual has upon the character of his actions and the determination of his destiny. He would doubtless feel bound to exercise a wise discretion, but if duly called upon, and especially if unjustly accused in regard to the scope of his teachings, why should he shrink from the enunciation of positive truth? And under parallel circumstances why should not the course which would be proper at Constantinople, be proper also at London or New York? Let it be clearly shown that a Christian moralist has in no case a *right* to discriminate between the different degrees of evil—to treat of the laws of permission as well as the laws of command—to point out, in reference to a certain class of men, the mode by which a great evil may be coerced, limited, and reduced to a less, while there is no rational prospect of its being at present extirpated—and we shall then begin to question in earnest the propriety of upholding Swedenborg's doctrine respecting the intercourse of the sexes. But till this is done, we see not why his leading positions, which are in full accord with the fundamental doctrines he has taught, should not be regarded as sound. They can only, however, be justly appreciated by being viewed in connection with what he has said of the grounds on which judgment on human actions is pronounced in the other life. To this point I shall soon advert.

(5.) As I have before remarked, the true character of the conjugal principle is the true measure of judgment in respect to all that he has said on the subject under discussion. This principle he treats as a strictly religious element in our

being, receiving its character from its origin in the union of love and wisdom, or truth and good, by which alone the soul is conjoined or *married* to the Lord, on the ground of which He is pleased to style himself the Husband and the Church his Bride or Wife, and to which Paul evidently alludes as a "great mystery" shadowed forth in the marriage relation.\* I am well aware that such language as Swedenborg employs in the following paragraphs will be deemed extravagant by those who have never been in the habit of referring natural loves to spiritual principles, but let the assertions be tried by the reasons adduced in their support, and then see if their truth can be gainsayed.

"INASMUCH AS THE CONJUGIAL PRINCIPLE OF ONE MAN WITH ONE WIFE IS THE STORE-HOUSE OF HUMAN LIFE, AND THE RESERVOIR OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. These two things are what have been demonstrated universally and singularly in the whole preceding part concerning conjugal love and the delights of its wisdom. The reason why it is the storehouse of human life is, because a man's life is of a quality according to the quality of that love with him; since that love constitutes the inmost principle of his life: for it is the life of wisdom cohabiting with its love, and of love cohabiting with its wisdom, and hence it is the life of the delights of each; in a word, a man is a soul living by means of that love: hence it is, that the conjugal tie of one man with one wife is called the storehouse of human life. This is confirmed from the following articles above adduced, That with one wife there exist truly conjugal friendship, confidence and potency, because a union of minds, n. 333, 334. That in a union with one wife, and from it, exist celestial blessednesses, spiritual satisfactions, and thence natural delights, which from the beginning have been provided for those who are in love truly conjugal, n. 335. That it is the foundation love of all celestial, spiritual, and derivative natural loves, and that into that love are collated all joys and delights from first to last, n. 65 to 69; and that viewed in its origin, it is the sport of wisdom and love, has been fully demonstrated in the DELIGHTS OF WISDOM CONCERNING CONJUGIAL LOVE, which constitute the first part of this work.

"The reason why that love is the reservoir of the Christian religion is, because this religion makes one with that love, and cohabits with it; for it was shown,

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\* "I spake with them concerning marriages—that marriages or conjugal love was the foundation of all loves, which is confirmed from the consideration, that thence is the propagation of human society, and consequently of celestial societies, wherefore it has imparted to it a corporeal pleasure surpassing all others, for delights are adjoined according to the necessities of ends, and conjugal love is pleasanter and happier than any other love, so that a right conjugal union is heaven upon earth, thus is celestial love, from which flow all other loves, being originally derived from the love or merely of the Lord towards heaven, the church, and the universal human race, and descending from Him alone; from which it appears how sacred marriages ought to be held."—*S. D.* 3778.

"After this I conversed with the angels, informing them, that somewhat further is revealed in the world by the Lord. They asked, 'What further?' I said, 'Concerning love truly conjugal, and concerning its heavenly delights.' The angels said, 'Who does not know, that the delights of conjugal love exceed the delights of all loves? and who cannot see, that into some love are collated all the blessednesses, satisfactions, and delights, which can possibly be conferred by the Lord, and that the receptacle thereof is love truly conjugal, which is capable of receiving and perceiving them to a full sensibility?' I replied, 'They do not know this, because they have not come to the Lord, and lived according to his precepts by shunning evils as sins, and by doing goods; and love truly conjugal with its delights is solely from the Lord, and is given to those who live according to his precepts; thus it is given to those, who are received into the Lord's new church, which is meant in the Apocalypse by the New Jerusalem.' To this I added, 'I am in doubt whether in the world at this day they are willing to believe, that this love in itself is a spiritual love, and hence grounded in religion, because they entertain only a corporeal idea respecting it.' They then said unto me, 'Write respecting it, and follow revelation; and afterwards the book written respecting it shall be sent down from us out of heaven, and we shall see whether the things contained in it are received; and at the same time whether they are willing to acknowledge, that that love is according to religion with man, spiritual with the spiritual, natural with the natural, and merely carnal with adulterers.'—*C. L.* 534.

that none come into that love, and can be in it, but those who approach the Lord, and do the truths of his church and its goods, n. 70, 71. That that love is from the Lord alone, and that hence it exists with those who are of the Christian religion, n. 131, 335, 336. That that love is according to the state of the church, because it is according to the state of wisdom with man, n. 130. That these things are so, was confirmed in the chapter throughout, concerning the correspondence of that love with the marriage of the Lord and the church, n. 116 to 131: and in the chapter concerning the origin of that love from the marriage of good and truth, n. 83 to 102."—*C. L.* 457–458.

No slight confirmation is afforded to this by what Paley says of the natural effect of licentiousness. "However it be accounted for, the criminal commerce of the sexes corrupts and depraves the mind and moral character more than any single species of vice whatsoever. That ready perception of guilt, that prompt and decisive resolution against it, which constitute a virtuous character, is seldom found in persons addicted to these indulgences. They prepare an easy admission for every sin that seeks it, and are, in low life, usually the first stage in men's progress to the most desperate villanies; and in high life, to that lamented dissoluteness of principle which manifests itself in a profligacy of public conduct, and a contempt of the obligations of religion and of moral probity. Add to this, that habits of libertinism incapacitate and indispose the mind for all intellectual, and moral, and religious pleasures."—(*Mor. Philos.* B. III., P. III., Ch. II.)

Who but will subscribe to the truth of this, though Swedenborg alone has solved the problem of its rationale? Who can be insensible to the immense difficulty of obtaining a lodgment for the claims of the gospel in a mind thus depraved and abandoned to the dominance of sensual appetites? The moral sense, which in other cases we may hope to reach and awaken, is in such persons well nigh annihilated. The plane into which the Divine good and truth may flow as the ground of regeneration has with men of this stamp all but perished, and it is a forlorn hope indeed which encourages any appeal to their inner man. And if this be so, is it not a great object to preserve, if possible, the life of the conjugal love? And where there is danger of its being lost, does it not warrant the striking a balance between the evil of the extinction of such a principle, and the evil of the *permitted* yielding, by natural men, to the promptings of the mere animal or corporeal instinct in which the spiritual principle is enwrapped? In other words, is there not an intrinsic weight in what is said in the ensuing extract in reference to the reasons on which the provisional permission is founded, and in respect to the true relation which the disorderly bears to the orderly acting of this radical love? "This concubinage is not a separation from conjugal love; for when legitimate, or just, or real sufficient causes intercede, persuade, and compel, conjugal love is not separated with marriage, but is only interrupted; and love interrupted, and not separated, remains in the subject: this case is like that of a person who is in a function which he loves, and is withheld from it by company, or by public shows, or by travelling; still he does not lose the love of the function: and it is like that of one, who loves generous men; still, while he drinks that which is not noble, he does not lose the taste and appetite for that which is generous. That this concubinage is only a covering around of conjugal love is because the love of concubinage is natural, and the love of marriage spiritual, and natural love covers over the spiritual, while the latter is intercept-

ed; that it is so, the lover does not know, because spiritual love is no sensibly perceived of itself, but by means of natural; and it is felt as delight in which is blessedness from heaven; but natural love, by itself, is felt only as delight."

Intimations like these could never have proceeded from the pure pen of the apostle of the New Church, were they not founded upon a fundamental doctrine of conjugal love drawn from the very depths of celestial wisdom—a doctrine which makes that love the gem of the soul and the "reconditory" of the Christian religion. The doctrine may be taxed as the wildest of the reveries incorporated into a strange fabric of spiritual mysticisms, but the system knows well how to account for such an imputation. "With those who reject the holy things of the church, there is not any good love; . . . for all things of the church which they reject are spiritual; and because love truly conjugal is the fundamental of all spiritual loves, it is manifest that there is an intrinsecal hatred against that, and that the intrinsecal or proper love with them is in favor of the opposite, and is the love of adultery; wherefore those more than others will laugh to scorn this truth, that conjugal love with every one is according to the state of the church (with him); yea, at the naming of love truly conjugal they will perhaps laugh outright; but be it so: nevertheless they are to be forgiven, for it is as impossible for them to distinguish in thought between the marriage embrace and the scortatory embrace, as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

We have here the true point against which all severity of censure, all fierceness of condemnation, on the score of Swedenborg's scortatory teaching must spend itself. The intensest power of the *virus* of his doctrines concentrates itself in the assertion of the religious nature and the transcendent purity and sanctity of the conjugal principle. This is the central and vital position of the whole doctrine, and if it be said of the system that thus viewed "the whole head is sick and whole heart faint; that from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores," here is the real seat of the deadly gangrene, in the distinct declaration of the heavenly origin, the spiritual character, the angelic affinities, of *the love of marriage*. Let this position be overthrown, and we may well waver in our defence. But our feet know no titubation so long as they stand upon the immovable rock on which we feel that they are planted. Meantime we have the satisfaction of the assurance, that we are not called to the vindication of a scheme of ethics which transforms the evils of pellicacy, adultery, and concubinage into the goods of Christian or civil life. They are all the evils of "scortation" in some of its forms; they all pertain to the natural and not to the spiritual man. The man who is formed by the genuine doctrines of Swedenborg has nothing to do with them. He is a *spiritual* man. "He does not," says Mr. Bailey, "indulge his flesh; he subdues it. His motives are pure, because derived from love to God, and pregnant with love to man. His life is pure, because inspired by these. To restrain him from sin, it is not necessary that all the shades of evil should be declared condemnable in the same degree. He can judge justly even of the depraved, without partaking of their depravity. He can admit that fornication is a less evil than adultery, without being enticed to either. He can acknowledge concubinage to be less interiorly base than incest, without being attracted by concubinage. He knows that though this latter would not plunge him into an

abyss of impiety so abominable as many other evils, yet it is of the earth, earthy. It would retard him in his upward career. It would make him the creature of his natural propensities; not their lord. It may be an evil less heinous than some others, but he is to love no evil. He is daily to increase in the possession of goodness. It is an insanity of a lighter kind, but he is the follower of wisdom. The world has doubtless its various degrees of vice, but his aim is to higher states of purity, more full communion with God, a more glorious impress of heaven. He soars, therefore, above *all* the walks of vice, and daily makes it his study to acquire more fully the image, likeness, and spirit of his Master. . . Does any one ask whether we can judge of the degrees of evils, and assign the relative iniquity to each, without being allured by the love of any? We reply, look at our lives. Where is there a real New Churchman who lives in concubinage? Had Swedenborg really recommended concubinage, is it conceivable that out of so many who have embraced his views, not one should practise it? When John said, 'All unrighteousness is sin; and *there is a sin not unto death*,' was he preaching up these sins? He was but discriminating truly. And when Swedenborg distinguishes one crime from another, he does not sanction the commission of any, but accords to each its proper condemnation."—(*Bailey's Reply to Roebuck*, p. 34.)

(6.) Another consideration of the utmost moment to a fair estimate of Swedenborg's averments on this subject, is the doctrine of *imputation*, or the *ground of judgment*, by which the whole matter is wound up, eclaired, and guarded, and which yet is next to never adverted to by his opponents. There is obviously no question of more importance to a candidate for eternity than that which concerns the grounds and reasons of the judgment that fixes unalterably his state in the other world. That these have relation to his *character* as good or evil, can admit of no doubt; his works and deeds enter into the account no farther than as they are a true index to the *internal man*, or, in one word, to the *heart*.

"It is well known, that there are two principles which make a man's life, the will and the understanding; and that all things which are done by a man, are done from his will and his understanding; and that without these acting principles a man would not have either action or speech, otherwise than as a machine: hence it is evident, that such as a man's will and understanding are, such is the man; and further, that a man's action in itself is such, as is the affection of his will which produces it, and that a man's discourse in itself is such, as is the thought of his understanding which produces it: wherefore several men may act and speak alike, and yet they act and speak unlike; one from a depraved will and thought, the other from an upright will and thought. From these considerations it is manifest, what is meant by the deeds or works, according to which every one will be judged; that will and understanding are meant, consequently that by evil works are meant the works of an evil will, whatever has been their appearance in externals, and that by good works are meant the works of a good will, although in externals they have appeared like the works wrought by an evil man. All things which are done from a man's interior will, are done from purpose; since that will proposes to itself what it acts by its intention; and all things which are done from the understanding, are done from confirmation, since the understanding confirms. From these considerations it may appear, that evil or good is imputed to every one according to the quality of his will therein, and according to the quality of his understanding concerning them. These observations I am allowed to confirm by the following relation: In the spiritual world I have met several, who in the natural world had lived like others, being sumptuous in their apparel, costly in their entertainments, frequenting the exhibitions of the stage, jesting on love topics as from a libidinous principle,

with other like practices; and yet the angels charged those things to some as evils of sin, and to some they did not impute them as evils, and declared the latter guiltless, but the former guilty. Being questioned why they did so, when yet all had done alike, they replied, that they view all from purpose, intention, or end, and distinguish accordingly; and that therefore they excuse or condemn those whom the end either excuses or condemns, since an end of good influences all in heaven, and an end of evil all in hell."—C. L. 527.

The character of the man, then, is the character of his will, or in other words of his ruling love, and this character is continually being formed and *inscribed* upon his inmost being, by the course of his acting in the present life. This character is latent to human view while man sojourns upon the earth, and therefore it is evermore unlawful for a fellow-being to pronounce upon it, as we are taught in what follows:—

"The Lord says, JUDGE NOT THAT YE MAY NOT BE CONDEMNED (Matt. vii. 1); by which words cannot in anywise be meant judgment respecting any one's moral and civil life in the world, but judgment respecting his spiritual and celestial life. Who does not see, that unless it was allowed a man to judge respecting the moral life of those who live with him in the world, society would perish? What would society be, if there were no public judicature, and if every one did not exercise his judgment respecting another? But to judge what is the quality of the interior mind, or soul, thus what is the quality of any one's spiritual state, and thence what his lot is after death, is not allowed, since it is known to the Lord alone; neither does the Lord reveal this till after the person's decease, to the intent that every one may act from a free principle in all he acts, and thereby that good or evil may be from him, and thus in him, and that thence he may live to himself and live his own to eternity. The reason why the interiors of the mind, which are kept hid in the world, are revealed after death, is, because this is of concern and advantage to the societies into which man then comes; for all in those societies are spiritual. That those interiors are then revealed, is manifest from these words of the Lord, 'There is nothing concealed, which shall not be revealed, or hidden, which shall not be known; therefore whatsoever things ye have said in darkness, shall be heard in light; and what ye have spoken to the ear in closets, shall be preached on the house-tops' (Luke xii. 2, 3). A common judgment, as this for instance, 'If you are such in internals as you appear to be in externals, you will be saved or condemned,' is allowed; but a particular judgment, as this for instance, 'You are such in internals, therefore you will be saved or condemned,' is not allowed. Judgment concerning the spiritual life of man, or the internal life of the soul, is meant by the imputation which is here treated of. Can any human being know and decide who is a scortator in heart, and who is a conjugal partner in heart? And yet the thoughts of the heart, which are the purposes of the will, judge every one."—C. L. 523.

This then discloses to us the true nature of that *imputation* which awaits every one in the world to come, and which our author teaches is as far as possible from a mere judicial *reckoning* or *accounting* any one to be either good or evil on any other ground than the actual intrinsic quality of the man. It is no other in fact than the simple manifestation of the truth as it is. The character in its inmost attributes is necessarily revealed, in the world of spirits, by the very law of our being, and consequently the man virtually *adjudges himself* to heaven or hell by the development which is made of his interior affinities with the one or the other. Swedenborg speaking on this head, remarks:—

"In order that this may be understood, I will relate an arcanum: Heaven is distinguished into innumerable societies, in like manner hell, derived from an opposite principle; and the mind of every man, according to his will and consequent understanding, actually dwells in one society, and intends and thinks in

like manner with those who compose the society. If the mind be in any society of heaven, it then intends and thinks in like manner with those who compose that society; if it be in any society of hell, it intends and thinks in like manner with those who are in the same society; but so long as a man lives in the world, so long he migrates from one society to another, according to the changes of the affections of his will and of the consequent thoughts of his mind; but after death his peregrinations are collected, and from the collection thereof into one, a place is allotted him, in hell if he is evil, in heaven if he is good."—C. L. 536.

As therefore the internal character there *stands out*, as it were, in legible aspect, it is subject to the *exploration* of good spirits, whose judgment of the man coincides with that of the Lord himself, because they are, in their measure, in the divine good and truth which becomes the criterion that determines his final allotment.

"That every one's own life remains with him after death, it is known in the church from the Word, and from these passages therein; 'The Son of man will come, and will then render to every one according to his deeds' (Matt. xvi. 27). 'I saw the books open, and all were judged according to their works' (Rev. xxi. 12, 13). 'In the day of judgment God will render to every one according to his works' (Rom. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 10). The works, according to which it will be rendered to every one, are the life, because the life does the works, and they are according to the life. As I have been permitted for several years to be together with the angels, and to converse with the deceased, I can testify for certain, that every one is then explored as to the quality of the life which he has lived, and that the life which he has contracted in the world, abides with him to eternity. I have conversed with those who have lived ages ago, whose life I have been acquainted with from history, and I have known it to be like the description given of it; and I have heard from the angels, that no one's life after death can be changed, because it is organized according to his love and consequent works; and that if it were changed, the organization would be rent asunder, which cannot be done in any case; also that a change of organization cannot possibly be effected except in the material body, and is utterly impossible in the spiritual body, after the former has been rejected. That to an evil person is then imputed the evil of his life, and to a good person is imputed the good of his life, it is to be observed, that the imputation of evil is not accusation, incusation, inculpation, and judication, as in the world, but evil itself produces this effect; for the evil, from their free principle, separate themselves from the good, inasmuch as they cannot be together. The delights of the love of evil are averse from the delights of the love of good; and delights exhale from every one, as odors do from every vegetable in the world; for they are not absorbed and concealed by the material body as heretofore, but flow forth freely from their loves into the spiritual *aura*: and whereas evil is there made sensible as in its odor, it is this which accuses, incuses, fixes blame, and judges—not before any judge, but before every one who is principled in good; and this is what is meant by imputation. Moreover, an evil person chooses companions, with whom he may live in his delights: and because he is averse from the delight of good, he spontaneously betakes himself to his own in hell. The imputation of good is effected in like manner, and takes place with those who in the world have acknowledged that all good in them is from the Lord, and nothing from themselves. These, after they have been prepared, are let into the interior delights of good, and then there is opened to them a way into heaven, to the society where its homogeneous delights are: this is effected by the Lord."—C. L. 524.

The result of the whole is summed up in what follows, from which it appears that judgment proceeds according to the real internal state and quality of the will by which action is prompted, for it is from this that their character is viewed and estimated by Him who "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men."

"Now since all in hell are influenced by a will of evil, all are viewed there from that will; and since all in heaven are influenced by a will of good, all are viewed there from that will; wherefore imputations after death take place according to the quality of every one's will and understanding. The case is similar with scortations, whether they be fornications, pellicacies, concubinages, or adulteries; for those things are imputed to every one, not according to the deeds themselves, but according to the state of the mind in the deeds; for deeds follow the body into the tomb, whereas the mind rises again. Appearances in externals conclude nothing concerning imputation: the one single thing which concludes is the conjugal principle, in that it abides in every one's will, and is guarded, in whatever state of marriage a man is. That conjugal principle is like a scale, in which that love is weighed; for the conjugal principle of one man with one wife is the storehouse of human life, and the reservoir of the Christian religion; and this being the case, it is possible that that love may exist with one married partner, and not at the same time with the other; and that it may lie deeper hid, than that the man himself can observe anything concerning it; and also it may be inscribed in a successive progress of the life. The reason of this is, because that love in its progress accompanies religion, and religion, as it is the marriage of the Lord and the church, is the initiament and inoculation of that love; wherefore conjugal love is imputed to every one after death according to his spiritual rational life; and for him, to whom that love is imputed, a marriage in heaven is provided after his decease, whatever has been his marriage in the world. From these considerations then results this short concluding observation, that no inference is to be drawn concerning any one, from appearances of marriages, nor from appearances of scortations, whereby to decide that he has conjugal love or not; wherefore *Judge not, lest ye be condemned* (Matt. vii. 1)." — *C. L.* 530, 531.

I know not that any special comment upon these extracts is called for. If they do not approve themselves by their own evidence to the reflecting mind, it is not probable that their claims to belief could be enforced by any remarks of mine. Yet the principles advanced in them obviously lie at the foundation of the whole subject. The leading drift of Swedenborg's doctrine is, that although Truth is in itself as immutable as its source, yet in its descent into the minds of all created beings it is accommodated to their states of reception. The degree of every man's *duty* is measured by the degree of *truth* of which he is in possession; he fulfils his duty in proportion as he is faithful to that truth. Thoughts and actions are regarded as more or less sinful according as they are more or less opposed to revealed truth, and according also to the purity and elevation of the truths to which they are opposed. In judging, therefore, of the character of the moral actions of different men, we are led to inquire as to the degree in which their minds are opened to the light of truth, which involves an admission of the fact, that truth is variously accommodated to the state of mind of the recipient, and that the same measure of virtue, or exemption from vice, is not to be expected of all. Whatever degree of truth, however, be actually received, it is adapted, in its own nature, to raise every man from the state of evil in which he may be to a higher state. Its office is continually to lessen the interval of separation or spiritual distance from the Lord, and to elevate and bring back and save the soul as far and as fast as it can be done consistently with the preservation of freedom. The message of truth is essentially the same to men of all characters and conditions. It says to all; "Repent; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." But in accordance with the internal state of every one, it requires of him less, for the time being, than of one who is



in a higher state. But one degree of obedience to truth received prepares the way for a higher and purer form of it, and for a corresponding obedience; and in the other life *judgment* or *imputation* will be strictly according to the degree of obedience rendered to the light of truth enjoyed. "A man," says Swedenborg, "from rational conviction, according to circumstances and contingencies, may absolve a person when a judge, whilst he sits in judgment, cannot absolve from the law; and also a judge may absolve a person who after death is condemned. The reason is, because a judge gives sentence according to actions done, whereas after death every one is judged according to the intentions of the will, and thence of the understanding, and according to the confirmations of the understanding and thence of the will. These intentions and confirmations a judge does not see; nevertheless each judgment is just, one for the sake of the good of civil society, the other for the sake of the good of heavenly society." The leading idea is well expressed in the following paragraphs:—"To those who are in a less degree of evil, or are less confirmed in evil, truth is accommodated so as to teach just so much as they are in a state to comprehend and *improve*. It teaches them to repent, and how to repent. It does not at first, disclose to them the highest degrees of purity, nor any degree distinctly, except that which is the next above their own state. It teaches them to fear becoming more evil, and how to avoid it; and it also shows them plainly what is the next less evil state, and how to shun their present measure of evil and advance to that state.—I do not mean to be understood strictly as saying that this is the exact order in which men are enlightened. Some who are very evil, do understand truth which they will not improve, and hence are made worse by it. But the Divine Providence guards evil men against being thus enlightened, so far as it can guard them and still allow their free agency. Truth as it thus comes down to the conditions of men in various degrees and kinds of evil, does, at first, exact greater degrees of holiness or purity of some, than of others; but its end with each one is the same. It teaches each one to *rise*; and having taught him and enabled him to rise *one* degree, it teaches and enables him to rise *another* degree. It indulges less evils to prevent greater; and teaches man continually that, although he can never become absolutely *good*, yet he can shun evils, and receive good from the Lord. And by shunning the evil actions to which his present evil affections lead, he will continually advance in the work of repentance and reformation, provided he shuns them because they are sins against God.

"To the Jews many laws and permissions were given, not because they were right or orderly in themselves, but because the state of Jewish minds required them. They could not receive purer truths or precepts of life. Because of the hardness of their hearts Moses wrote those things. Such were the laws respecting sacrifices, and some of the laws respecting retaliation. Such also were the permissions concerning concubinage, and putting away their wives for slight causes. (See Matt. xix. 3-12). Without proceeding farther with this view, I say that Divine truth, in that degree of it which descended to the Jewish state of character, required a less degree of purity than it requires of angels, or of any men who are elevated in any degree above Jewish character. Men of every religious sect act on this principle, so far as they follow the Lord, in judging of their fellow-men. Who is there, who is regarded as judging fairly, that does not make *allowance* and *excuses* for his neighbor on account of his strong hereditary

propensities to certain evils,—his bad education,—his long habits of sin before he commenced reformation,—the short time that he has had for reformation since he commenced it—and on many other considerations. And where is the wrong of saying to our neighbor, ‘My friend, you are greatly immersed in evil, and are sadly enslaved by it. You can, however, do better than you are accustomed to do: You can avoid the present gross degree of your evil, and do thus and so to mitigate it, and elevate yourself above your present state, even if you cannot avoid the whole evil; and by such improvement you will be prepared for still greater reformation, and will avoid sinking lower: *Do as well as you can*; and if you cannot be perfect, or rise at once even to the purity of the best of men, yet *rise as much as you can, and keep on rising.*’”—(*Remarks on Several Common Errors respecting the Writings of Swedenborg*, p. 42, 46.)

The principle in all this is, I think, easily perceived to be a sound one, and that it is Scriptural appears from its being said of the servant that knew his Lord’s will and did it not, that he should “be beaten with many stripes,” while “he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.” The law of this proceeding is then stated; “Unto whom much is given, of him shall be much required.” So again, our Lord says to the Jews, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.” This principle evidently lies at the foundation of all that Swedenborg has taught concerning the grounds of *judicial imputation* in respect to the class of sins and evils treated of in the work on *Scottatory Love*, and I leave it to be pronounced upon according to the verdict formed in your own and every intelligent mind.

I had intended to notice, at an earlier stage of the discussion, one other passage occurring in the preface to your work, and to which I cannot but advert, though it must be briefly. It bears directly on the topic which I have last considered.

“The precepts of Swedenborg respecting works of charity and various other duties, are generally what they should be. But his precepts, or rather the *permissions* he gives, respecting the intercourse of the sexes in particular cases, must be reprobated by every pure and pious mind. And I should by no means have deemed it proper to publish them in these Lectures, had not judicious men who have been consulted, given advice in favor of it, and had it not been plainly demanded by fidelity to the cause of truth. And should any admirer of Swedenborg attempt to apologize for him by saying, that the principles of *Scottatory love* which he has published, come up from the hells, or are dictated by evil spirits; my reply is, that we are far from wishing the morals of the hells to be published for the use of men on the earth, who are quite enough inclined to travel the downward road, without the help of a book, written by the Prophet of the New Jerusalem church, and containing the precepts or permissions of devils. Nor can we think it any credit to Swedenborg, that he should have a voluntary agency in bringing out principles of such an infernal character before the face of the world, and should do it not only without blushing, but expressly with his own sanction.”—p. 6.

I should probably be greatly at a loss to point to any single paragraph in your book, so laden with matter of astonishment as this. I can scarcely doubt that you will yourself share in the astonishment upon a cool review. The development of hellish promptings equivalent to teaching, i. e. inculcating, the morals of the hells! The intimation has but to be named to make palpable its absurdity. Who ever heard of such a charge before? It is no credit, you say, to Sweden-

borg that "he should have a voluntary agency in bringing out principles of such an infernal character before the face of the world." And what then, I pray you, becomes of the credit of Paul in reciting such a catalogue of the works of the flesh as the following;—"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I tell you before as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Are not these things from hell? Are they not the inbreathed lustings of the devil, the "god of this world, who rules in the children of disobedience?" But is the apostle in reciting them inculcating upon his fellow-men a system of infernal morality? Does he endorse "the doctrines of devils," and endeavor to make them pass current among good Christians by the weight of his sanction and authority? Is it the same thing to *detect* and *expose* and *characterise* the subtle influences of the spirits of darkness, in order to put men on their guard against them, and to *approve*, *patronize*, and *enjoin* them? Does not the wisdom of Solomon inform us, that "in vain is the net spread in sight of any bird?" Can men be secured against the assaults of hell unless its diabolical wiles and influxes are clearly pointed out? Must we be left ignorant of Satan's devices for fear that the exposure of them will be mistaken for a commendation of their cunning and craft? Is the man who publishes a "counterfeit-detector" liable to an indictment for endeavoring to palm bad bills upon the community? I confess myself altogether nonplussed by your logic in this passage. What *can* be your meaning in speaking of Swedenborg's work on this subject as "containing the precepts or permissions of devils?" It contains no *precepts* at all, and as to *permissions*, he speaks of the permissions of heaven, and not of hell. How this is to be understood, I have already explained. It is a doctrine which cannot be objected to without arraigning at once the clearest demonstrations of the Divine providence and the most express letter of the Old Testament. Do you suppose that Moses was teaching "the morals of the hells" when he authorized the giving of a concubine by a father to his son, as a succedaneum for a wife till he became subsequently married to another? Let it be shown that Swedenborg has uttered one sentence by way of *absolute approval* of any of the forms of scortation which he declares to originate from infernal sources, and we shall then admit the charge in all its *gravamen*, but not till then.

On the subject of *Adultery* and the remaining forms of Scortatory transgression, I do not deem it needful to enlarge. They all come into the same general category with the preceding, and I believe that as Swedenborg condemns adultery in all its forms, and degrees, as also all kinds of violations of female innocence, and that too under the most fearful sanctions, comparatively little fault is found with this department of his work. To one sentence, however, quoted above from your Lectures, I must for a moment advert. It refers to the fact of Swedenborg's maintaining that the crime of adultery is distinguished by different degrees of mildness and aggravation. "Our author goes still further, and palliates the crime of adultery in other circumstances; namely, 'when a wife by craftiness captivates a man's mind, enticing him into her bed-chamber, and inflaming his passions, or when a man entices another man's wife and inflames *her* passions. These and like circumstances, he says,—operate as reasonable apologies in favor of the party seduced.'" This, however, is not his language. "That

these and like contingent circumstances lessen the grievousness of adultery, and give a milder turn to the predication of the blame thereof, in favor of the party seduced, is agreeable to the dictates and conclusions of reason." And, pray, is it not? Does not every man assent to the truth of the principle? I do not ask whether such circumstances *excuse* the crime, but do they not *palliate* it?—which is all that Swedenborg affirms. Let the reader judge for himself of the soundness of what follows.

"There are two principles, which, in the beginning, with every man who from natural is made spiritual, are at strife together, which are commonly called the spirit and the flesh; and since the love of marriage is of the spirit, and the love of adultery is of the flesh, in such case there is also a combat between those loves. If the love of marriage conquers, it gains dominion over and subjugates the love of adultery, which is effected by its removal; but if it happens, that the lust of the flesh is excited to a heat greater than what the spirit can control from reason, it follows that the state is inverted, and the heat of lust infuses allurements into the spirit, to such a degree, that it is no longer master of its reason and thence of itself: this is meant by adulteries of the second degree, which are committed by those who indeed are able to consult the understanding, but by reason of contingent causes at the moment are not able. But the matter may be illustrated by particular cases; as in case a meretricious wife by craftiness captivates a man's mind enticing him into her bed-chamber, and inflaming his passions to such a degree as to leave him no longer master of his judgment; and especially if, on such occasion, she threatens to expose him if he does not consent: in like manner, in case any meretricious wife is well skilled in deceitful allurements, or by powerful stimulants inflames the man to such a degree, that the raging lust of the flesh deprives the understanding of the free use of reason: in like manner, in case a man, by powerful enticements, so far works upon another's wife, as to leave her no longer mistress of herself, by reason of the fire kindled in her will; besides other like cases. That these and similar contingent circumstances lessen the grievousness of adultery, and give a milder turn to the predication of the blame thereof in favor of the party seduced, is agreeable to the dictates and conclusions of reasons."—C. L. 488.

Is it possible that you should have any question as to the truth of the distinction here asserted? Is it not the universal sense of mankind, that every crime is more or less aggravated according to the circumstances accompanying it? Does not every judge in the land act on this principle, and do not all laws recognize its validity? Who does not know that even the taking of human life, is regarded as more or less a heinous crime according to its circumstances? Does not a fixed and deliberate purpose, prompted by *malice prepense*, constitute the slayer a murderer, whereas if the rash act has been perpetrated in a moment of sudden excitement, when the judgment was overthrown by the violence of passion, a verdict of manslaughter only is rendered? Do you really suppose that no heavier condemnation should be awarded to David, who committed adultery with Bathsheba of set purpose, while her husband was fighting the battles of his country, and who procured that husband to be slain to conceal his baseness, than *should have been* meted out to Joseph, had he fallen before the enticements and threatenings of his mistress? If so, your standard of the criminality of actions must be a very strange one; and yet I am unable to see upon what other grounds you can object to the positions of Swedenborg, which are more distinctly enounced, in the ensuing paragraph.

"All evils, and thus also all adulteries, viewed in themselves, are together of the internal and external man; the internal intends them, and the external does

them; such therefore as the internal man is in the deeds done by the external, such are the deeds viewed in themselves: but since the internal man with his intention does not appear before man, every one must be judged in a human court from deeds and words according to the law in force and its provisions: the interior sense of the law is also to be regarded by the judge. But to illustrate the case by examples: if adultery be committed by a youth, who does not know as yet that adultery is a greater evil than fornication; if the like be committed by a man of extreme simplicity; if it be committed by a person who is deprived by disease of the full powers of judgment; or by a person, as is sometimes the case, who is delirious by fits, and is at the time in a state of actual delirium; yet further, if it be committed in a fit of insane drunkenness, and so forth; it is evident, that in such cases, the internal man, or mind, is not present in the external, scarcely any otherwise than in an irrational person. Adulteries in these instances are predicated by a rational man according to the above circumstances; nevertheless the perpetrator is charged with blame by the same rational man as a judge, and is punished by the law; but after death those adulteries are imputed according to the presence, quality, and faculty of understanding in the will of the perpetrators."—C. L. 486.

And here my limits compel me to waive any farther discussion of the present topic. I have aimed to exhibit fairly and faithfully the teachings of Swedenborg, even in their most offensive features, together with the fundamental principles on which his positions are founded, relative to those *laws of permission* which he declares applicable, in certain circumstances, to the intercourse of the sexes. In doing this I beg to be understood as *assuming* nothing more than the attempt to present, in their just bearings, an expose of his real sentiments and inculcations on this subject. I *adopt* nothing more of his doctrines on this, nor in fact on any other head, than I see to be sustained by satisfactory evidence of truth as addressed to my calm and unbiassed reason. In regard to everything that Swedenborg has written, it must eventually stand or fall by its own intrinsic merits. The labors of his adherents may subserve its interests by setting his utterances occasionally in a clearer light—by confirmations and illustrations drawn from other quarters—by disabusing the public mind of false impressions as to their genuine drift—but originating, as, in our esteem, they do, from a source incomparably higher than human reason, human reason can add nothing directly to the internal evidence, much less to the authority, with which they address themselves to the seriously pondering mind. We have *defended* them most successfully when we have *propounded* them most clearly. As the result, however, of a careful, deliberate, and, I think I may say, impartial, inquiry into the purport and scope of the treatise on "*Scortatory Love*," I am free to declare myself unable to see the peculiar dangerous tendency charged upon it. Provided it be understood in its true-meant design and drift, and received with all the accompanying limitations and cautions, and especially as viewed in its connections with the fundamental principles that distinguish the entire system, I do not perceive the point in which its mischief is concentrated. It is impossible that it should be a directory to govern the practical conduct of the member of the New Church, for the reasons already specified, and upon those who reject the doctrines and the claims of Swedenborg it can of course have no influence. The true question involved in regard to it is, mainly a question of fact—whether the Lord, in the conduct of his Providence, does act on the asserted principle of *permissions*, in view of the present state of mind of certain classes of men, and whether it be right and proper for a Christian teacher to state distinctly this fact. If it be said

that Swedenborg has done more than this—that he has not only laid down the abstract proposition, but has also assumed to designate the specific kinds of these permissions, and so to discriminate the various grades of evil in point of demerit as in effect to *authorise* and *allow* the lesser, I can only say in reply, that this charge cannot be made good against him on any other grounds than those on which it may be preferred against Moses. A *providential allowance* is indeed asserted, but its moral conditions are so expressly defined that whoever avails himself of it must do it upon his own responsibility, and this is attended with extreme peril. Yet even this I think could never have been properly attempted in the full and specific manner which Swedenborg has done, but upon the ground of a conscious illumination enabling him to lay open the principles on which all actions coming under this head are judged in the other life. There is frequently an explicit, and all along through the treatise a tacit, reference to those principles which are embodied in the closing chapter on Judgment and Imputation, and from which I have quoted so freely in the preceding pages. This chapter is a kind of rear-guard to the marshalled array of propositions forming the body of the work, and the task of refutation must be commenced in the denial and disproof of these principles. For ourselves we are assured that the disclosures it contains could never have proceeded from one who had not been supernaturally instructed in the sublimest truths of the spiritual world, and consequently that they cannot be viewed apart from a *character of authority* on this and all other subjects on which he has treated.

With sentiments of respect,

Yours, &c.,

GEO. BUSH.

#### LETTER IX.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

The extent to which I have followed out the train of your strictures on the doctrines of Swedenborg, and the minute attention which I have hitherto paid to every important objection urged, have already carried me so far beyond the limits that I had originally proposed to myself, that I am compelled to a somewhat abrupt conclusion of my remarks. There are several additional items in your Lectures to which I should have been glad to be able to reply at length, as I am not aware of a single point of objection in the whole volume which I should hesitate for a moment to meet on the ground of the fairest argumentation. But I must content myself mainly with what I have already written, and this, I am happy to think, embraces an answer not only to all the important objections against our system urged by yourself, but also to all the more standing and popular protests which are every where bruited by our opponents against the doctrines in question. Many of these have already been answered, and probably in a more able manner, by former apologists, and in ordinary cases I should say that there was an obligation on the part of new assailants to bestow some attention upon the replies already given by New Churchmen to the very arguments which they perpetually bring forward, as if they had never before been propounded or responded to. Thus your own volume, for instance, does not seem to recognize the fact that substantially the same things that you have said have

been said again and again by your predecessors in the controversy, and have been again and again replied to. Why do not the just laws of polemics require you to advert to those replies, and to show wherein they fail to annul the force of the objections urged? Yet the whole tenor of your Lectures is just what it might have been if Clowes, and Hindmarsh, and Noble, and Bailey, and Smithson, and Goyder, had never penned a syllable on the subject. It evidently *knows* nothing of any prior assault or any prior defence; and the case is very much the same with the kindred work of Dr. Pond, although as his line of investigation is more original, he has made several new points of objection, particularly in the scientific department. I think we have reason to complain of this, as an act of injustice, as you would probably yourself complain if a Unitarian writer were to repeat all the common arguments against Orthodoxy to which you replied some years ago in your letters to Dr. Ware, and that without paying the least attention to your published defence. Still I do not intimate any regret that an occasion has arisen which has led to the present Reply to your pamphlet. It has doubtless given me an opportunity of saying some things which had not been said before—of putting some things in a true light which had been wrongly represented—and above all of making Swedenborg the pleader of his own cause in the extended array of citations from his works, which may find their way to numerous inquiring minds with some degree, I trust, of useful effect. They can, at any rate, scarcely fail to correct many false impressions, and to beget the belief that the system he has announced is marked by features of so wonderful a character, that its claims to investigation can no longer be properly staved off. This is the grand point upon which his advocates insist. They do not challenge *reception* forthwith, but they do demand *inquiry*. They most confidently affirm that the phenomena connected with the man, and the problems involved in the system, imperiously call for some solution other than that which has hitherto been offered by the deniers of his high assumptions. The plea of *insanity* has for the most part been condescendingly put in, in his behalf, by such of his opponents as have seen too much obvious sincerity and profound sense in his works to allow the open charge of sheer imposture. But nothing more, I am persuaded, is necessary than the simple perusal of the extracts I have given to compel the testimony from every candid mind that “these are not the words of one that is mad, or of him that hath a devil.” No madness that the world has witnessed ever uttered itself in the language of such surpassing wisdom; and that it is wisdom I defy any one to deny who has given it more than a cursory glance.

Here too is the indubitable fact that growing numbers of intelligent and cool-judging minds—minds of the most serious complexion, at the farthest remove from enthusiastic tendencies, and trained to habits of rigid requisition of evidence—are everywhere awaking to the conviction, that both the man and the doctrine have been misapprehended, misrepresented, and condemned without a fair hearing, and are embracing the system without reserve. They are ready at once to declare that however formidable appears the *prima facie* evidence against it, and of which they are no less sensible than others, yet to their calmest judgment the evidence in its favor overwhelmingly bears down the evidence against it. This, I maintain, is a fact that requires in some way to be accounted for. How have they come to this result? It cannot be said to be from a cursory and superficial view of the revelations; for they will with one accord declare that

upon such a view of the system they would infallibly have rejected it. It is precisely *because* they have thoroughly examined and tested it, that they adopt it. And who, they ask, that has not gone through a similar process is entitled to sit in judgment on their decision? How is one competent to pronounce a fair verdict on the conclusions to which they have come, if he has not studiously weighed the *reasons* that have determined them? Now we *know* that our opponents have not done this, because we invariably see that in all their assaults they do not treat the *reasons*, but wage their war with the *conclusions*. Thus, for instance, not a syllable is ever uttered on the subject of Swedenborg's psychology. Yet this lies at the foundation of the whole scheme. Nothing is said on the principle of *correspondence*, while this is the fundamental law of the spiritual sense of the Word, which constitutes a prime feature of his disclosures. And so of numerous other items which mark the system. Let us be encountered on the *primary grounds* of our belief by those who really understand what they are, and somewhat of a true issue will be made. But I must be allowed to say, that upon this basis we anticipate few adversaries. It is not from those who have fully put themselves in possession of our creed, and of the grounds of it, that we count upon opposition. This will doubtless ever be dictated, as it ever has been, by a *prejudice* that refuses to invoke *knowledge* into its counsels. In regard to your own work, while I do not retract the concession made in the outset, that it does not deal in vituperation, nor dispense with argument, I am still constrained to say that it does not, in the main, touch the true merits of the theme. It *supposes* the error of Swedenborg's system, on a multitude of points, simply because it differs from accredited tenets. On these heads you evidently deem the system unworthy of being reasoned with. On other points it fails to convey the right impression on the score of facts as to what he does really teach. In confirmation of all this I have only to appeal to your concluding remarks, in which you specify to your pupils what they must do "if they would yield themselves up to Swedenborg as a divinely commissioned teacher, and confide in him as the great prophet of the only true church."

(1.) "You must exclude from the word of God one sixth part of the Old Testament and half of the New." Not a syllable is to be excluded from either. A distinction in the *degree* of inspiration is maintained in reference to the several books, but the fact of their all being inspired in some degree is not denied.

(2.) "You must hold Swedenborg as superior to all the inspired teachers who were raised up before him." No such comparison is required to be made. It is simply requisite to recognize such claims as are established by appropriate evidence. Whatever the degree of his illumination, it was such, we hold, as the Lord saw fit to impart to him, and whether the measure of it were superior or inferior to that of apostles and prophets, is a question in itself of comparatively little moment. Like them, we hold that he spake "according to the wisdom given him." Our only question concerns the truth of what he has said and the source of it. He institutes no such comparisons himself, nor do we.

(3.) "You must receive all his interpretations of the word of God as infallible." And why not, if we admit that they are the product of a supernatural state into which he was brought by God himself, and for the express purpose of laying open the laws of a spiritual interpretation vastly transcending that of the letter? The evidence of the truth of his interpretations depends upon the evidence of the reality of his illumination, and when it can be shown that the *ends* of such



an illumination could be consistent with a fallacious mode of unfolding the interior purport of the Scriptures, we shall feel at liberty to doubt whether it be indeed infallible. Meantime we shall continue to regard his interpretations as infallible, till some stronger reason is given for believing the reverse.

(4.) "You must follow him in regard to the doctrines of religion." These you go on to specify as follows;—"As he rejects the common doctrine of the Trinity, denying the distinct personality not only of the Holy Spirit, but also of the Father and the Son; so must you. As he rejects that centre-doctrine of the Gospel, the doctrine of the atonement, or the vicarious sufferings of Christ as a propitiation for sin; so must you. As he rejects the doctrine of Justification by Faith, that great doctrine of the New Testament and of the churches of the Reformation; you must do the same. As he rejects the evidence of miracles as what carries compulsion with it and takes away man's free will; so must you. As he rejects the worship of an *invisible* God, a pure and perfect Spirit, and maintains that God is *very man*, and is worshiped as a *man* by all in heaven, and by all the men of the church; you must do likewise. As he sternly rejects the common doctrine of Native Depravity, and the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty and Predestination; so must you. As he holds a doctrine very like the Popish doctrine of Purgatory; so must you. That the present life is the only time of probation, you can no longer believe. And you can no longer say to men, with the awakening emphasis which the language usually carries with it, *Behold now is the accepted time! Behold now is the day of salvation! Repent, and prepare to meet your God.*"—p. 163. Now in regard to every one of these points I would respectfully submit whether I have not shown in my preceding pages that your allegations are calculated to convey an entirely erroneous impression of the truth. He does indeed reject the "common doctrine of the Trinity, denying the distinct personality, not only of the Holy Spirit, but also of the Father and the Son," and I trust to have shown that he had very good reasons for so doing, and that not Swedenborg, but yourself and the *soi-disant* orthodox churches, take unscriptural ground on this head. But as to all the other items, I am unable to see wherein I have failed in showing either that you have not represented the *fact* of his teachings correctly, or that where you have, the *intrinsic truth* is on the side of Swedenborg, and not on that of his gainsayers. I leave it, however, to the judgment of the reader.

(5.) "You must follow your teacher also in the denial of the Resurrection of the body." Certainly we follow him in the denial of the resurrection of the *material* body, because we follow him in the assertion of the resurrection of the *spiritual* body, other than which we know nothing of any body at all after death. If you *do*, and can enlighten us by the light either of Scripture or reason on the subject we shall "lend an attent ear" to all such elucidations. As at present advised, we find in the sacred writers no announcement of any body to be raised but a *spiritual* one, and as all our rational inductions agree with Swedenborg in assuring us that such a body is actually involved and enwrapped in the *material* body, and as the separation of these bodies takes place at death, we infer that the only resurrection ever to occur will occur at death. We are not disturbed by any intimation that this view is contrary to the plain language of Scripture, for our concern is no less with what Scripture *means* than with what it *says*.

(6.) "You must adopt his code of morals, which, though abounding in sound

principles respecting the love of our neighbor, and the duties of morality flowing from it, and in general respecting the domestic relations, does, after all, allow unmarried men, in cases which often occur, to keep a mistress, and accommodates married men in the same way, when they have 'just and conscientious reasons,' as he thinks they frequently have." My reply to this must be fresh upon the reader's mind. He has by this time found himself able to judge how far Swedenborg grants *allowance* and *accommodation* either to married or unmarried men. But you add, "I do not say that the followers of Swedenborg must, in their own practice, conform to what is corrupt and abominable in his moral code; but I say they must admit it as a part of Swedenborg's theory, and must hold that it is *allowable* to conform to it." Allowable to whom, and under what conditions? This is the core of the whole matter, and on this point you have, whether *wisely* or *otherwise*, suppressed all qualifications, and thus presented a glaringly distorted view of the whole scope of his statements. But the grounds of a truer judgment are now before the reader, and it may be presumed that he will give them their due weight.

You sum up the whole in the following words:—

"Such as I have mentioned, are the doctrines of Scripture and of the Christian church, which you must reject, and such the moral and religious principles which you must embrace, if you become consistent followers of Swedenborg. In some respects your principles must nearly agree with those of Sabellians; in some respects, with those of Unitarians; in some respects, with those of libertines; and in some respects, you must adopt principles, which neither Prophets nor Apostles, neither men nor angels, ever before taught in our world, but which were revealed to the great Teacher of the New Jerusalem church."—*p.* 164.

Our affinities, according to this, are quite multifarious, and so far as the elements of goodness and truth exist in any system of religion, we should probably admit a harmonizing tendency even to a greater extent than you have indicated, with the exception, however of the *sect* of "libertines," with which we are unable to recognize the points of contact. Indeed we see for ourselves rather more relationship in that direction in Luther's grand doctrine of justification by faith alone, at least as held by himself. "Now thou seest how rich is the Christian or the baptized man; for though he will he cannot lose his salvation, *however great his sins may be*, unless he refuses to believe. No sin can damn him, but unbelief alone."—(*De Captiv. Bab. Tom.* II. fol. 264.) "Sin lustily, but be yet more lusty in faith, and rejoice in Christ. From him no sin will sever us, *though a million times a day we should fornicate or commit murder.*" (*Epist. ad Aurifab. Tom.* I. p. 545.) "If in faith an adultery could be committed, it would be no sin." (*Disput. Tom.* I. p. 523). This has at least, I think, as much of a *squinting* towards libertinism as anything in Swedenborg. I am aware it is but hypothetically put, yet it is clear that the hypothesis is very wild, very useless, in superlatively bad taste, and not altogether free from bad tendency. Melancthon falls but little short of this. "Whatever thou mayest do, whether thou eatest, drinkest, workest, teachest, I may add, shouldst thou even sin therewith, look not to thy works; weigh the promise of God." This is like supposing the co-existence of day and night, which were hardly to be expected from a wise man.

But I will not bandy imputations of this kind. We are neither of us sworn to the maintenance of any tenets but those that we see, by the light of right reason, to be *true*. In the brief space that remains to me I would prefer to appeal, in

behalf of the cause for which I plead, to those sentiments of devout reverence for whatever "God the Lord hath spoken," which I am sure pervade your bosom. I cannot do you the injustice to doubt, that you would not knowingly turn a deaf ear to any message that you had the least reason to believe was really from God and designed to make known his mind to his creatures. You would not need to be previously assured that every such communication was dictated by infinite benevolence, was intended for our highest good, and, coming from the Most High himself, was pre-eminently worthy of all acceptance. I can easily picture to myself the retrospective regret of a devoutly ingenuous and deeply pious mind in case it should ultimately receive the conviction that it had unwittingly put away from itself a *bona fide* revelation from the Lord of hosts, and that too under the influence of a general state of mind which would have leaped to the recognition of the truth, had it but rationally perceived it. Now in the present case I think you must admit that there is at least a *possibility* that Emanuel Swedenborg may have been a veritable messenger from God to man. You cannot, I am persuaded, put your finger upon any express declaration of the Word which absolutely forbids the expectancy of any farther disclosures by the Lord himself of the spiritual world, the scene of our immortal existence. Such disclosures *may* then be made, and if so, what more probable than that they should be made through the agency of some individual raised up and remarkably endowed as a selected medium for the purpose. The question then occurs as to the nature of the *evidence* by which such a claim is to be substantiated. I think I have proposed some valid reasons for doubting whether the evidence of miracles would be fairly to be expected at this day, in proof of a divine mission. It would be rather an evidence involved in the intrinsic character of the doctrines announced; and one of its distinguishing features would be apt to be the development of the relation between the inner constituent principles of our nature and the great truths of revelation—a development unfolding the precise *manner* in which our future destiny is controlled by our present character. But this could scarcely be done without at the same time disclosing the fundamental relation between *all* natural and spiritual truth, between the two worlds of matter and of mind, and this is virtually showing the indissoluble connection between science and revelation. It is clothing theology with the character of a divine philosophy. And this we believe has been accomplished in the sublime apocalypse of which Swedenborg has been made the instrument. The great problems of Creation, of Life, of Affection, of Thought, of Free Will, of Redemption, of Regeneration, of Providence, have been solved, if he has uttered truth. The enucleation of the profounder mysteries of our being in all its ramified relations is no longer banned by the inscription, hitherto read over the entrance of the Temple of Truth, "NON LICET," but is ceded by the cheering title, "NUNC LICET."\* The door is open, and he that is reverently disposed to worship and learn within the sanctuary is freely permitted to enter.

This then is the leading character of the evidence which Swedenborg affords

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\* Swedenborg in one of his visions in the spiritual world, beheld a splendid temple illuminated by the light flowing from the interior sense of the Word, after describing which he says;—"When I came up nearer, I saw these words written on the gate, NUNC LICET, now it is lawful; which signified that now it is lawful to enter intellectually into the secrets of faith."—T. C. R. 508.

of the truth of his mission. To a calm reflection I think it must appear as the most appropriate and convincing species of evidence that can be adduced. At the same time I am fully aware of the obstacles with which the reception of such a claim as his must inevitably have to contend. It is adverse to all our settled preconceptions—it makes a kind of havoc of our most cherished notions on the constitution of the universe, the doctrines of religion, and the state after death—it strikes us, at first blush, as an actual superseding of all prior knowledges on the subjects of the Christian revelation—in a word, a sort of moral paralysis seems to fall upon the entire body of our faith on the supposition that Swedenborg is true. Still he *may* be true, and his truth may be of the most transcendent moment to the world. Our own conviction on this head arises in great measure from the utter impossibility we find of accounting for the facts of Swedenborg's case on any other theory than that of the reality of his supernatural insight, and of conceiving the truth on the various subjects he has treated to be otherwise than he affirms. And we feel strongly, in reference to any attempt to refute our positions, the force of Mr. Mill's remark in his *Logic* (p. 551), that "it is a rule both of justice and good sense, to grapple not with the absurdest, but with the most reasonable form of a wrong opinion." The more deeply we have investigated, the more firm the assurance that prompts the exclamation;—"Plato, thou reasonest well; *it must be so.*" To our faith rendered under such circumstances we may apply the remark made by Swedenborg himself in one of his scientific works, that "if any one tells me the same thing that I have myself arrived at, I am bound to believe him on the simple ground that I believe myself."—(*Philos. of the Infinite*, p. 64.)

With men of advanced years and confirmed opinions we can be but little sanguine in our anticipations of so great a change of views as is necessarily supposed in the adoption of this remarkable system. But I have been much impressed by the following resolution of President Edwards, a name that I doubt not carries more than ordinary authority with you as that of a profoundly enlightened and eminently holy man;—"If I ever live to years, I will be impartial to hear reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I may have been used to another way of thinking." If this appears to you a reasonable principle of action, I cannot entirely forego the hope that you may yet review the tenor of your objections, and putting them in contrast with the real character of the doctrines against which they are urged, may eventually reach the conclusion, that if they are not true, still they have so much of the semblance of truth, and are built upon principles so profoundly rational and philosophical, that no man can be justified in lightly estimating or hastily dismissing them.

In drawing my lengthened reply to a close, I have only to request that if I have in anything done injustice to your arguments, or spoken in a manner inconsistent with the spirit of a religion whose genius and motto is CHARITY, or unsuited to the respect and reverence which I have long sincerely cherished towards you, you will put it to the account of anything rather than an *intention* to disregard the least of the requisites to a truly Christian style of religious controversy. With the assurance of my high personal regard and my best wishes for your welfare I remain,

Dear Sir, Yours, &c.  
GEO. BUSH.

## APPENDIX.

The case of the Landgrave of Hesse, alluded to on a preceding page, exhibits so curious a chapter in ecclesiastical history, and affords so striking an instance of the practical adoption of the *principles* asserted by Swedenborg, that we have been induced to present the affair somewhat more in detail as given in "Bossuet's Variations," vol. 1. p. 231-251. As he adduces original documents, no charge of partizan injustice can be brought against the statement. The Reply of the Reformers to the application of the Landgrave considers his reasons at length, and after dwelling upon the original design of the marriage institute goes on to observe :

"Lamech was the first that married many wives, and the Scripture witnesses that this custom was introduced contrary to the first institution. It nevertheless passed into custom among infidel nations; and we even find afterwards, that Abraham and his posterity had many wives. It is also certain from Deuteronomy, that the law of Moses permitted it afterwards, *and that God made an allowance for frail nature*. Since it is then suitable to the creation of men, and to the first establishment of their society, that each one be content with one wife, it thence follows that the law enjoining it is praiseworthy; that it ought to be received in the Church; and no law contrary thereto be introduced into it, because Jesus Christ has repeated in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew that text of Genesis, 'There shall be two in one flesh:' and brings to man's remembrance what marriage ought to have been before it degenerated from its purity. *In certain cases however, there is room for dispensation*. For example, if a married man, detained captive in a distant country, should there take a second wife, in order to preserve or recover his health; or if his own become leprous, we see not how we could condemn, in these cases, such a man as, by the advice of his Pastor, should take another wife, provided it were not with a design of introducing a new law, but with an eye only to his own particular necessities.

"As to what your Highness says, that it is not possible for you to abstain from this impure life, we wish you were in a better state before God, that you lived with a secure conscience, and labored for the salvation of your own soul, and the welfare of your subjects. But after all, if your Highness is fully resolved to marry a second wife, we judge it ought to be done secretly, as we have said with respect to the dispensation demanded on the same account, that is, that none but the person you shall wed, and a few trusty persons, know of the matter, and they, too, obliged to secrecy under the seal of confession. Hence no contradiction nor scandal of moment is to be apprehended; for it is no extraordinary thing for Princes to keep concubines; and though the vulgar should be scandalized thereat, the more intelligent would doubt of the truth, and prudent persons would approve of this moderate kind of life, as preferable to adultery, and other brutal actions. There is no need of being much concerned for what men will say, provided all goes right with conscience. So far do we approve it, and in

those circumstances only by us specified ; *for the Gospel hath neither recalled nor forbid what was permitted in the law of Moses with respect to marriage.* Jesus Christ has not changed the external economy, but added justice only, and life everlasting, for reward. He teaches the true way of obeying God, and endeavors to repair the corruption of nature. Your Highness hath therefore, in this writing, not only the approbation of us all, in case of necessity, concerning what you desire, but also the reflections we have made thereupon ; we beseech you to weigh them, as becoming a virtuous, wise, and Christian Prince. We also beg of God to direct all for his glory and your Highness's salvation."

We have then a copy of the marriage contract duly attested and authenticated, of which the following is the substance. It will be seen that the measure appears to have been regarded by all the parties concerned as quite essential to the temporal and eternal well-being of his Highness.

"Whereas the eye of God searches all things, and but little escapes the knowledge of men, his Highness declares that his will is to wed the said Lady Margaret de Saal, although the Princess his wife be still living, and that this action may not be imputed to inconstancy or curiosity, and to avoid scandal and maintain the honor of the said Lady, and the reputation of her kindred, his Highness makes oath here before God, and upon his soul and conscience, that he takes her to wife through no levity, nor curiosity, nor from any contempt of law or superiors ; but that he is obliged to it by such important, such inevitable necessities of body and conscience, that it is impossible for him to save either body or soul, without adding another wife to his first. All which his Highness hath laid before many learned, devout, prudent, and Christian preachers, and consulted them upon it. And these great men, after examining the motives represented to them, have advised his Highness to put his soul and conscience at ease by this double marriage. And the same cause and the same necessity have obliged the most serene Princess, Christina Duchess of Saxony, his Highness's first lawful wife, out of her great prudence and sincere devotion, for which she is so much to be commended, freely to consent and admit of a partner, to the end, that the soul and body of her most dear spouse may run no further risk, and the glory of God may be increased, as the deed written with this Princess's own hand sufficiently testifies. And lest occasion of scandal be taken from its not being the custom to have two wives, although this be Christian and lawful in the present case, his Highness will not solemnize these nuptials in the ordinary way, that is, publicly before many people, and with the wonted ceremonies, with the said Margaret de Saal ; but both the one and the other will join themselves in wedlock, privately and without noise, in presence only of the witnesses underwritten."

We forbear all comment upon this unique manifesto. It is quite obvious that the exculpation of Luther is the justification of Swedenborg. The German Reformer and the Swedish Innovator are here clearly in the same ship and must, in the world's sentence, reach the haven or go to the bottom together. We shall anxiously await the effect of the wind and tide of public judgment.