

“DAVIS’ REVELATIONS” REVEALED;

BEING

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

OF THE

CHARACTER AND CLAIMS

OF THAT WORK

IN ITS RELATIONS

TO THE

TEACHINGS OF SWEDENBORG.

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P R E F A C E.

THE substance of the present pamphlet was prepared originally with a view to publication in one of the daily papers of this city. But as it formed an article of considerably greater length than we could reasonably expect the Editor of a daily paper to afford room for, as it might, moreover, provoke a reply from some quarter, and as the views which it embodies are regarded as too important to be suppressed, the writers determined on publishing it in its present form. They have not attempted to give a complete analysis of these pretended "Revelations," for that would require too much time, besides being quite unnecessary as this brief review will show. The principal reasons which have led them to notice this singular book in the manner and under the aspect they have, are, 1st. Because the name of Swedenborg occurs quite often in the volume, and has been repeatedly mentioned in connection with it in notices of the work which have appeared in several public journals. 2. Because we believe that the book contains monstrous errors, whose influence on the community we would fain do something to avert. 3. Because we think the writings of Swedenborg afforded the only satisfactory explanation of this singular phenomenon, at the same time that they lead us to expect, under all the circumstances, just such a mixture of truth and falsehood as this book contains, and show us the reason of it. To these reasons we would add our settled conviction, that even *infidel* publications had better be always met and answered by fair argument and solid facts, rather than be passed by in silence, or assailed with the poor but oft-selected weapons of denunciation and abuse. This is the best way, we think, to extract the poison from the serpent's tooth, or to render it powerless for evil. A *reasonable* public have a right to demand some rational solution of the mystery involved in this strange publication. To call it weak, or wicked, or other harder names, and leave it where it is, may be sufficient for some minds, but will not satisfy the more sensible or enquiring class. Most heartily, therefore, do we concur with a writer in one of our eastern papers,* who, in a recent notice of this book, says: "It will be read, and ought to be met, not by mere scolding and denunciation; for *that*, whether from the College, the Conventicle, or the Vatican, will be merely laughed at; not by saying that it is a wicked book, and none but wicked people will read it; hundreds of people will read it so much the more: but by showing that part of the pretended Revelation is false and absurd, and of course, that it is altogether without authority."—We have attempted this, and more than this;—have attempted (with what success our readers must judge) to *account* in some rational manner for the falsities and absurdities which the book contains. But we have not, neither do we, call in question the honesty or sincerity of the parties concerned in getting it up. We have not, neither do we, deny or doubt the substantial truth of the Scribe's Introduction. And as to

* Bristol Phoenix.

the Clairvoyant himself, we have been led from the slight acquaintance we have had with him, to form a favorable estimate of his honesty, benevolence, simple-heartedness and natural amiability. What his religious faith is in his normal state, or whether indeed he has any very clearly defined, we are not able to say. ¶ We have reasons for believing, however, that it is unsound, or deficient, and perhaps both. The Scribe in his Introduction tells us that he is "disconnected from all sects, parties, creeds, and denominations, and governed solely by his own *intuitions*." If this be indeed the fact, which we are not disposed to doubt, and if young Davis has no faith in any Divine Revelation but that of Nature, it is not difficult to account for the theology of his book. The teachings of Swedenborg would lead us to expect from *such* a clairvoyant—one who is "governed *solely* by his own intuitions," precisely such views of the Bible as we find in this volume. Those in the other world—and there are doubtless many such—who have deified and worshipped "the Principles of Nature," and listened to none but "*Her* Divine Revelations," would find in this young man a congenial spirit, and a fit subject in his abnormal state through whom to communicate just such "Revelations" and such a system of theology as his book contains. Indeed, from what we know of the doctrine of Spheres, of Influx, and of the great law of Spiritual Affinity which presides over the intercourse of spirits with each other as well as with men on earth, if the book had contained any different or truer views of the Scripture than those we find in it, we might have had more difficulty than we now have in accounting for the fact.

We concede, then, the alleged genesis of the book, the honesty of those concerned in its production, and the naturally amiable and unsophisticated character of the clairvoyant; and we venture in the following pages to propound a theory, furnished us by Swedenborg, which we trust may help to account in a rational and satisfactory manner for the strange mingling of truth and error which we find in this volume. And we would here add, that, if any one has a better theory to offer on the subject, we hope he will not fail soon to allow us and the public generally the opportunity of considering it.

G B.
B F B.

NEW YORK, Sept. 27, 1847.

EXAMINATION, &c.

THE work, to an examination of which the ensuing pages are devoted, has recently come forth among the novel developments in which the present age is so prolific. It is a singular specimen of the singular phenomena of Mesmerism. It is the crowning marvel of a class of psychological facts, which, after a rough encounter with the stubborn incredulity of the world, may be said to have vindicated their claims to the character of *reality* with at least a large portion of thinking minds in every grade of society. Though far transcending in their manifestations the sphere of the *natural*, and leaving all ordinary philosophy at fault in the attempt to proffer a satisfactory solution, still the *facts* have pressed themselves upon the senses of multitudes with such overwhelming urgency of appeal, that skepticism the most inveterate has been silenced, and the conviction become widely established, that a new world of influences from the *spiritual* realms of the universe, is here opened upon us in which alone a clew is to be found to the *causes* of the phenomena in question. A new phasis of the action of mind upon mind has been distinctly revealed in the Mesmeric developments, and the only ground on which the prominent facts alleged can be denied, is the ground which involves the great laws of human testimony in governing the belief of mankind. The theory of fraud, collusion, imposture, after weighing the facts in its balance, has itself been weighed and found wanting. It will not solve the problem, and if anything more were needed for its total discomfiture, it would be the immense and irresistible array of testimony, which goes to establish the preternatural origin of the work before us.

Indeed, were the evidence on this head less conclusive than it is, we should deem our time and labor very ill bestowed even in the task of exposing its errors and falsities. But it is not to be disguised that a prodigy wholly unparalleled in the history of the human mind meets us in the present case. If it be possible to establish *any* fact by an unimpeachable competency of proof, we hesitate not to aver that we have, in this volume, replete with deep philosophical speculation and the most varied knowledge, the emanation of the mind of an illiterate youth of twenty, given forth by a process of dictation in a state artificially induced, and ranging over a vast field of subjects of which he was and is, in his normal state, utterly and absolutely ignorant, except so far as the subsequent perusal of his own work has made him acquainted with them!

In a fact like this we find an ample apology for entering upon the task which we have proposed to ourselves, of instituting a rigid inquest into the intrinsic merits and demerits of this remarkable production. Assuming its genuineness

on the score of origin—a claim which appears to be extensively conceded it by the public—it is obvious that the general propensity to confound the *preternatural* with the *supernatural*, and the *supernatural* with the *Divine*, must clothe the work with a pre-eminent power of harm, provided its teachings on the most momentous themes are at variance with truth. This effect will be greatly enhanced by the imposing title of “Revelations” under which the book ushers itself into the world. Without, however, paring this term to the quick, or ascribing to the book the intention of arraying itself formally or by implication, against any prior revelation, it must still be confessed to bear on its face the import of a communication from a higher sphere of intelligence, and it is doubtless from this fact that it has, from its outset, challenged so large a share of the public attention. This circumstance alone would warrant the subjection of any work of the kind to the ordeal of the strictest scrutiny, more especially if it shall be found, on examination, to be in conflict, in any respect, with oracles which the world has long agreed to regard as divine and infallible. That this is the case, in the present instance, is capable of the clearest demonstration, and when it is considered that the volume is meeting an unexampled sale—that it is finding its way to the bosom of a very wide public—that its influence, for good or for ill, bids fair to tell upon large masses of mind in every variety of state—it will be easy to justify the anxiety which prompts the present publication. Add to this that the parties more immediately concerned are about starting a weekly or monthly paper designed to be the organ of propagating the doctrines contained in this volume, and that Lecturers are soon to go abroad over the land proclaiming the *Gospel of Nature*, and “her Divine Revelations,” and it will not be doubted that a loud call is made for a faithful expose of the intrinsic character of a work which is to constitute the basis of a new dispensation.

That this task should have been voluntarily assumed by us will not probably be surprising to any one who has read the work and noticed the manner in which Swedenborg and his revelations are spoken of by the “Poughkeepsie Seer.” Although the general tone of his allusions to this distinguished man is respectful and honorary, yet we propose to show that they are calculated greatly to mislead the reader as to the true character of his teachings and of the relation which they sustain to the doctrines set forth in the present volume. As the writings of Swedenborg have as yet made themselves known but to a very limited circle of the readers of Davis, they will be apt, unless otherwise advised, to accept his statements respecting them as true. It is certain, however, that these statements are, on some leading points, extremely erroneous, and we feel bound, in our public character of receivers and expounders of Swedenborg's doctrines, to disabuse the community, who may not have access to other means of information, of the false impressions on this score, which the book is calculated to produce. We are the more readily induced to enter upon this eclairsissement from two considerations ;—(1.) We are in hopes to be able to present an adequate solution of the psychological problem involved in the case—one which shall admit all the positive truth embraced in the book, and at the same time unfold the source of its errors. (2.) We are impressed by the fact that the present is no isolated case. A multitude of similar phenomena, though for the most part less striking perhaps, are revealing themselves on every side, and if

we mistake not, the indications are rife of a grand demonstration about to be made, or now being made, of the most pernicious delusions breaking forth from the world of spirits upon the world of men. In these circumstances we cannot but feel that the time has arrived for the attempt to lift up a standard against the incoming flood of falsities, and this we are persuaded can only be done by a clear exhibition of Swedenborg's teachings on this subject. He has at once unfolded the true nature of the delusions in question, and supplied the requisite safeguards. In this way and no other do we recognize any relation between the two classes of disclosures.

In such an attempt we regard it as utterly idle to deny the main facts asserted, whether in the case of Davis or of his numerous compeers in the same line of Mesmeric *extase*. The evidence on this head is too overwhelmingly abundant to admit of reasonable doubt, and in our discussion of the subject we shall waste little time in arguing the question of the *genuineness* of the present work. To say nothing of our personal acquaintance with the parties concerned, and our full assurance of their general character for uprightness and veracity—nothing of their own incompetency to such a production, which we can intimate without invidious reflection, as they have themselves made the same acknowledgment—nothing of the huge incredibility of such a fraud being concocted and successfully carried through in the midst of this community, and yet not the slightest clew obtained to its prime movers, who must have been at once somewhat numerous, profoundly learned, and detestably unprincipled—we deem the claims on this head unequivocally established, first, by the amount of testimony accumulated in the Introduction from the most respectable sources, not one iota of which has yet been impugned, and which, at the same time, is so easy of refutation if false; and, secondly, by the circumstance that the matter is reduced, even upon the admission of opponents, to the simple alternative of *human* or *superhuman* dictation, i. e. dictation from men in this world or of spirits in the other. The fact that the entire work came proximately from the lips of Davis neither is nor can be, denied by any one who has duly weighed the evidence. It is expressly conceded by Prof. Lewis, the most unsparing denouncer of the whole affair as a “shameless imposture.” As then the work came confessedly from Davis’ mouth, the only question is, how it came into his mind. Prof. L. contends that it was committed to memory and recited verbatim. Strangely regardless of the difficulties which render such an hypothesis absurd, and disdainingly to bestow the slightest attention upon the testimony to powers and performances on the part of the clairvoyant which make the present achievement credible, he contents himself with suggesting how the work *might have been* produced, when the real question is, how it *was* produced—i. e. the question of the validity of the evidence so largely proffered on this head. All this he unceremoniously sets aside by saying in reply to what he terms “the most absurd question, (*how* absurd?) *Whence came the book?*”—“we neither know nor care, so long as a great many probable suppositions may be stated, each more credible than anything which involves its preternatural origin!” That is to say, no matter what amount of testimony may be adduced in support of any alleged preternatural fact—no matter how excellent and unimpeachable the general character of the witnesses—yet they are evidently unprincipled liars and their testimony

worthless, because they testify to a fact contrary to all prior experience, and because various other hypotheses may be resorted to, which, although they do indeed outrage all the laws of human testimony, yet they save the uniformity of the divine operations, and exclude the impious idea that one generation of men may enjoy a higher light than their predecessors! This is certainly a remarkable specimen of evangelical logic. It is in fact precisely the reasoning of Hume against the admission of the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, and we have the singular spectacle of a Christian advocate staving off the pretensions of an alleged infidel work by weapons drawn from an infidel armory! Yet to this charge, as urged on former occasions, the only reply is, a burst of holy horror at the blasphemy of even presuming to *compare* the two cases; as if it were not perfectly legitimate to show how the same logical principles bear when applied to two different subjects—how a rule of reasoning, if held to be valid in one case, will infallibly be fatal in the other.

Declining then to argue further with a theory which deems it proper to set aside an impregnable body of proof simply because it conflicts with preconceived opinion, we shall assume as indubitable the asserted origination of the book. As there is no other possible alternative than that of the preternatural suggestion or the *memoriter* recitation of its contents, we hesitate not to adopt the former as far the easiest solution of the two, especially as the same testimony which ascertains the delivery at all of the Lectures by Davis, certifies also that hundreds of paragraphs were extemporaneously uttered by him, of a wholly incidental nature, which are not embodied in the volume. With the exception of Prof. L. himself, who listened to a single Lecture, the scores of witnesses, from time to time in attendance, will one and all testify their unqualified conviction, that not one page of the 800 before us was, or could have been, under the circumstances, recited from memory.

As then it is beside our purpose to call in question the origin claimed for the book, so neither do we feel disposed to speak slightly of its contents. While we recognize great and grave errors in certain departments, we cannot be blind to the fact of important truths and able discussions in others. Indeed, with all our firm assurance as to the true source of the intelligence evinced in the work, we frequently stand amazed at the depth, order, and wideness of thought which it displays, and at the wondrous wealth of scientific, historical, metaphysical, and psychological resources in which the prompting mind seems to revel as it expatiates from theme to theme through the circle of nearly all knowledge. We pause to ask ourselves whether we are indeed listening to the voice of an untutored apprentice boy, utterly ignorant of all science, yet, discoursing in our ears the wisdom of sages! No abatement therefore on the score of theological or even scientific errors will prevent the book's remaining an unprecedented prodigy in the sphere of psychology, and as such claiming the profound attention of all students of the phenomena of mind. That others fail to perceive any such qualities as we have alluded to in the work, and consequently characterize it as mere incoherent rhapsody and babble, strikes us as little less wonderful than anything contained within the lids of the volume. Without consenting to be deemed the endorsers of all the scientific and philosophical theories advanced in the book, we are still satisfied for ourselves of the *general*

ability it evinces, and especially of the soundness of its leading principle of the *spiritual* origin of all *material* things*—of the progressive development of forms and organisms from the primitive substance—and of the propriety of the *method* of reasoning from *cause* to *effect*, which is well adhered to throughout the volume. We cannot think therefore of giving force to our exceptions by withholding just admissions. We conceive that all wholesale and sweeping condemnation will be seen to re-act in favor of the work, certain as we are that the deliberate verdict of the public will not sustain it. Truth is sometimes found in bad company, but it is still truth, and as such sacred, and nothing is gained by vilifying it, or by weaving the robe of reproach so wide as to enwrap both error and truth in its folds. It pleads something perhaps in favor of our solution of the matter that we can *afford* to be entirely just to the claims preferred.

So far as we are conscious of our own sentiments we have endeavored to form an impartial estimate of the volume before us. The result may be stated in the words of the prophet ;—"The Lord showed me, and behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the Lord. One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe : and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. Then said the Lord unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah ? and I said, Figs ; the good figs, very good ; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil." The *philosophy* (much of it at least) and the *theology* are, as we conceive, in two different baskets.

Such then being, in our judgment, a no unfair character of the work, the question at once occurs, how is the problem to be solved ? *Whence* came the book, and *how* came it to be what it is ? The true solution we believe to be afforded by Swedenborg, and by him alone. His disclosures of the mental laws of our being conduct us clean through the "chambers of imagery" which are opened to our view in the effects of the Mesmeric trance. An abnormal condition is induced by the manipulating process, and in certain temperaments, which measurably emancipates the spirit from the bondage of the body and renders it, for the time, more immediately accessible to spiritual influxes. These will naturally be according to the dominant moral state of the subjects from whom they emanate and of the subjects upon whom they act. Without denying that the influences radiating unconsciously from the sphere of the operator and other associates may be reflected by the mesmeric mind, we are still led to attribute far more to the effect of the inflowing of disembodied spirits. These, we learn from Swedenborg, and not less from Scripture rightly interpreted, are all from the human race of our own or other earths in the universe, and are formed into orders and societies according to their interior states of affection and thought and all living and acting in close connexion with men in the flesh. Between multitudes of these spirits and men existing on the earth the difference is little more than that made by the possession and the non-possession of a material body. All that constitutes character, moral and intellectual, goes with the translated spirit into the other world, and they will infallibly act there according

* "There is nothing at all given in the natural world, which is in order, but what derives its cause and birth from the spiritual world, that is, through the spiritual from the Divine."
—A. C. 8211.

to the ruling impulses which governed them here. If they were Deists, Atheists, Materialists, &c. here, they will be so there, for the Lord never does violence to the laws of a rational and moral nature by *forcing* the truth upon it. Truth has its appropriate evidence, and by that evidence it must be seen, whether in this world or in any other. Accordingly Swedenborg informs us that he encountered numbers in the world of spirits who yet strenuously denied the existence of any such world. However strange this may seem, yet it is doubtless accordant with the laws of our being, for if we suppose men in the present life to love a lie and to confirm themselves in it, and are therefore given up to strong delusion to believe the lie, how should the mere dissolution of the body tend to dissipate the delusion? How then can they do otherwise than act under its influence? When they speak a lie they speak of (i. e. from) their own.

We are well aware that the prevailing theology of Christendom knows little of such a *post mortem* state of being as Swedenborg discloses, and consequently it must inevitably be at fault in every attempt to dispose of such a case as that of Davis. Its holders cannot deal with it—there is no place for it in their system—they are compelled therefore to deny the facts, however palpable the evidence. Their plea is that preternatural facts require a larger amount of evidence than do natural facts, and under this plea they refuse to admit *any* amount of evidence however great; for if you stop at any given quantum of testimony they will still say that that is not enough. "Give us more" therefore really means "we will be satisfied with none."

It is beyond question that, according to the current theology, both heaven and hell are equally subjective states of truth, and they are both in effect about as little in actual contact with our earth as they are with each other. Such a thing as a vitally intimate conjunction between the spiritual and the natural spheres of existence, however admitted in words, is *practically* unknown to the mass of the Christian world.* We are thankful for clearer light on this head—a light which comes to us not on the naked authority or *ipsi dixit* of a gifted Seer, but a rational light, which finds confirmation in the whole philosophy of our being. Guided by this philosophy, so luminously unfolded by Swedenborg, we see the minds of mesmeric subjects operated upon by the mingled influences of truth and falsehood, emanating from corresponding sources in the spiritual world, and one or the other predominating, according as the established *life* and *faith* of the individual shall sway the balance; for the precise relations between the moral and the intellectual departments of our nature is by no one so clearly developed as by Swedenborg. This is the point on which all novitiate readers must be pre-

* "That there is an influx from the spiritual world into the natural world, and that the natural world thence subsists as from it it began to exist, is at the present day utterly unknown; because it is not known what the spiritual is, neither do men wish to know anything but what is natural, wherefore they deny anything else, especially the learned. Consequently it cannot be known what spiritual influx is, and that thence is the life of thought and will. Man was created to be a type of either world; his interiors to be a type of the spiritual world, and his exteriors to be a type of the natural world, to the end that in him both might be conjoined. Hence it is that his natural world, or microcosm, does not live except by influx from the spiritual world, and that there is with any one a continual *conatus* to the union of both worlds in him."—*Sp. Diary*, 4602, 4603.

pared for surprise when they come to form an acquaintance with his writings, after having been accustomed to hear him spoken of as a mere retailer of idle dreams and visions. They will find here a philosophy of which they little dreamed. Now upon no point is this enlightened teacher more explicit than in regard to the necessity of a *true faith* and a *spiritually good life*, i. e. a regenerate life, in order to a safe or reliable converse with spirits. And we may here observe, that it is not a little remarkable that Davis himself in a communication addressed to one of us from Poughkeepsie, and published in "Mesmer and Swedenborg," p. 165, was prompted to quote the following passage from Swedenborg, together with the annexed references to the *Arcana Celestia*:—"Wherefore he whose interiors are opened may discourse with them (angels and spirits) as man with man, *but not unless he be of true faith and be led by the (Divine) principle.*"—*A. C.* 784, 9438, 10, 751. The following sentences occur among the passages here referred to:

"The reason why heaven was shut up involves a great arcanum; and also why at this day it is so closed, that man does not know that he is attended by spirits, much less by angels, but supposes himself to be altogether alone when he is separate from worldly company and in meditation with himself, when nevertheless he is continually in consort with spirits, who observe and perceive what he thinks, intends, and devises, as clearly and openly as if it were exposed to the view of the whole world. Man is altogether ignorant of this, although it is a certain truth, and thus heaven is closed in respect to him, *in consequence of his not being principled in faith, and still less in the truth of faith, and least of all in charity*; for were heaven opened to him he would be exposed to the greatest danger."—*A. C.* 784.

Again; "It is given to no one as a spirit and angel to speak with angels and spirits, *unless he be of such a quality that he can consociate with them as to faith and love*; nor can he consociate unless the faith be directed to the Lord (i. e. to Christ) and the love be directed to the Lord, inasmuch as man by faith in Him, thus by truths of doctrine, and by love to Him, is conjoined, and when he is conjoined to Him, he is secure from the assaults of evil spirits who are from hell. With others the interiors cannot be opened at all, for they are not in the Lord."—*A. C.* 9438.

To the same purport is the following:

"The angels when they flow in with men, flow in, as far as possible, into his goods, and by goods into truths, the truths, that is, which he had impressed upon himself and of which he had become persuaded; that they withhold him from falses and guard him from evils. When they flow into his goods, they flow into truths, for they are conjoined, and when into truths, they flow also into goods. Evil spirits flow into the affections of evil and into falses; in a word, into one's cupidities and appetites, as also into the persuasions and principles of the false, and thus hold him captive. *If a man has not the truths of faith from the goods of charity, the angels cannot flow in, because they have no place.* But in this case they flow in through spirits into his externals, thus holding him in an honest external. This is the plane into which heaven flows at this day."—*Sp. Diary*, 4620, 4622.

"Unless a man is *in the interior persuasion of the things which pertain to faith in the Lord*, he cannot be in the angelic and celestial sphere, for there are repugnances, which repugnances expel him, nay, put him in torture. This it was given to perceive by a spiritual idea."—*Sp. Diary*, 2703.

Now in the case of Davis, as his work contains enunciations directly at variance not only with the teachings of Swedenborg, but with the creed of the whole Christian world on the great cardinal doctrines of the Bible, and in the

character and claims of the Bible itself as a divine revelation, we have no alternative but the conviction, that seeing such enunciations are manifest falsities, he is not in *true faith*, and consequently has not enjoyed a *true communication* with the spiritual spheres, as far as these points are concerned. He has doubtless been gifted with a species of internal sight—he has been brought into a condition which has opened his mind to the reception of various natural, scientific, and philosophical truths; but in all this he has not been elevated above the *intellectual plane*, and this has left him exposed to the inroads of the most grievous delusions in regard to *moral themes*, to the economy of redemption, and the whole circle of its cognate verities. This is precisely in accordance with what Swedenborg assures us of the distinction between the opening of the *spiritual sight* and the opening of the *spiritual degree of the mind*, which latter is but another name for *regeneration*.* Every one, the evil as well as the good, comes into *spiritual sight* as soon as he leaves the body, but *heavenly vision* is the privilege of those only who have entered upon the career of the regenerate life, and it is not conceivable that one who has done this should deny the existence of such a state as our clairvoyant does in his "Revelations."

As this is a point of the utmost importance in its relations to the scope of our remarks, we feel it incumbent to adduce such extracts from Swedenborg as shall evince the nature of those influences continually emanating from the world of spirits, and the necessity there is of that kind of protection which is afforded by a true faith and a good life. One cannot but be amazed at the revelation which he has made of the more than serpentine subtlety of these spirits of the other world. Their delusions flow in and mingle themselves so imperceptibly with the very intuitions of a man's mind, that he knows not how to gainsay them, nor is able to say that he "has not a lie in his right hand."

How interior evil spirits flow in.—"The deceitful spirits have flowed in for a considerable time and in some cases with so much subtlety that I knew not that it proceeded from them. For some time past a more manifest reflection has been given me, and to day a clearer still, so that I could observe how they flow into the subtle thought of man, which influx is such that man could never perceive the source of it. From close observation granted me by the Lord, I perceived this so manifestly as to notice each one of their common influxes, and if that close observation had not been granted, I should by no means have perceived whence the influx flowed, but should have taken it to be in myself and from myself, as other men

* "When a man is born, he first comes into the natural degree, and this increases in him by continuity, according to his knowledge and the understanding he acquires by it to the highest point of understanding called rationality. Nevertheless the second or spiritual degree is not hereby opened. This degree is opened by the love of uses, derived from intellectual things, that is, by the spiritual love of uses, which is love towards the neighbor. This degree likewise may increase by degrees of continuity to its summit, and it increases by the knowledges of good and truth, or by spiritual truth. Nevertheless the third or celestial degree is not opened by these, but by the celestial love of use, which is love towards the Lord; and love towards the Lord is nothing else than committing to life the commandments of the Word; of which the sum is, to flee from evils because they are infernal and diabolical, and to do goods because they are heavenly and divine. These three degrees are thus successively opened in a man." "Since these degrees are successively opened, according to a man's life, it follows that the two superior degrees may not be opened, and that man then continues in the natural or ultimate degree." "The natural man is a full man when his spiritual degree is opened; he is then in association at once with angels in heaven, and with men in the world, and in his relation to both lives under the guidance of the Lord; for the spiritual man imbibes precepts through the Word from the Lord, and executes them by the natural man.—D. L. & W. 237, 248, 252.

think and even believe. But that it is from spirits I am now able to know more distinctly than ever before. When they perceived that I was reflecting upon their influx they became highly indignant and wished, as they said, to withdraw, but they knew not whither. The things that flowed from them were contrary to the Lord and contrary to whatever is of faith. They were exceedingly complaisant to every cupidity that was given, and when they could hold men in any evil cupidity, they were then in their life and delight, as was also said to them. In such cases they suppose themselves to live as the man, for they then appropriate his life as their own, because in a similar life, consequently in society with the man. But where there is a repugnance, as with one who does not suffer himself to be perverted by them, but remains in faith, with him they cannot live, for he is not in the stream of their life."—*Sp. Diary*, 3842, 3843.

"Enthusiastic spirits have visions about matters of faith, by which they are so firmly persuaded, and persuade others, that they will swear what is false to be true, and what is fallacious to be real."—*A. C.* 1968.

This is very explicit, but still more so is that which follows:—

"*That spirits relate things exceedingly fictitious, and lie.*—When spirits begin to speak with man, he must beware lest he believe them in anything; for they say almost anything; things are fabricated by them, and they lie: for if they were permitted to relate what heaven is, and how things are in the heavens, they would tell so many lies, and indeed with solemn affirmation, that man would be astonished; wherefore, when spirits were speaking, I was not permitted to have faith in the things which they related. For they are extremely fond of fabricating; and whenever any subject of discourse is proposed, they think that they know it, and give their opinions upon it one after another, one in one way and another in another, altogether as if they knew; and if man then listens and believes, they press on, and deceive and seduce in divers ways: for example, if they were permitted to tell about things to come, about things unknown in the universal heaven, about all things whatsoever that man desires, yet [they would tell] all the things falsely, while from themselves: wherefore let men beware lest they believe them. On this account the state of speaking with spirits on this earth is most perilous, *unless one is in true faith.* They induce so strong a persuasion that it is the Lord Himself, who speaks and who commands, that man cannot but believe and obey."—*Sp. Diary*, 1622.

"*That spirits speaking are little to be believed.*—That nothing is more familiar to spirits who are speaking, than to say that a thing is so or so; for they think that they know everything, and indeed solemnly assert that it is so, when yet it is not so. From experiments made several times, it may be evident of what quality they are, and how they are to be believed: when it is asked [of them] whether they know how this or that is, then one after another says that it is so, one differently from another: even if there were a hundred, one would say differently from another; and indeed for the time with confidence, as if it were so, when yet it is not so. As soon as they notice anything which they do not know, they immediately say that it is so: besides very many other proofs that they speak as if they knew, when yet they do not know."—*Sp. Diary*, 1902.

Indeed we are informed that spirits have the power of simulating other persons to such a degree that their identity cannot be determined.

"*That spirits may be induced, who represent another person; and the spirit, as also he who was known to the spirit, cannot know otherwise than that he was the same.*—This has many times been shown to me, that the spirits speaking with me did not know otherwise than that they were the men who were the subject of thought; and neither did other spirits know otherwise; as yesterday and to-day, some one known to me in life [was represented by one]

who was so like him, in all things which belonged to him, so far as they were known to me, that nothing was more like : wherefore, let those who speak with spirits beware lest they be deceived, when they say that they are those whom they know, and that they are dead.

"For there are genera and species of spirits of a like faculty ; and when similar things are called up in the memory of man, and are thus represented to them, they think that they are the same person : then all the things are called forth from the memory which represent those persons, both the words, the speech, the tone, the gesture, and other things ; besides that they are induced to think thus, when other spirits inspire them ; for then they are in the phantasy of those, and think that they are the same."—*Sp. Diary*, 2960, 2961.

From this it appears to be so much more than possible, that it is very easy for one to come, when least suspecting it, under a delusive influence from this source, that shall prompt the most egregious falsities which neither the subject himself nor his favoring auditors may be able to detect owing to their accordance with that moral state which exercises so marked a control over his views of truth. That young Davis has unwittingly fallen under the action of these subtle prompters, is, we fear, but too transparently evident from the tenor of his givings-out on a variety of subjects.

But we here anticipate a query which is by no means unnatural in view of what has just been said. If all this be so, why may not Swedenborg himself have been equally liable to delusion and thus his reports from the other world be entitled to little credit ? We would say in reply, that one's being enabled at all to disclose such fallacies affords a strong presumption of his being armed against them, for why should he otherwise have been thus empowered ? But this is not all. We have his own explicit statement on this head in the following language :—

"That the things which I learned in representations, visions, and from discourses with spirits and angels, are from the Lord alone—Whenever there was any representation, vision, and discourse, I was kept interiorly and most interiorly in reflection upon it, as to what thence was useful and good, thus what I might learn therefrom ; which reflection was not thus attended to by those who presented the representations and visions, and who were speaking ; yea, sometimes they were indignant, when they perceived that I was reflecting. Thus have I been instructed ; consequently by no spirit, nor by any angel, but by the Lord alone, from Whom is all truth and good : yea, when they wished to instruct me concerning various things, there was scarcely anything but what was false : wherefore I was prohibited from believing anything that they spake ; nor was I permitted to infer any such thing as was proper to them. Besides, when they wished to persuade me, I perceived an interior or most interior persuasion that the thing was such, and not as they wished ; which also they wondered at : the perception was manifest, but cannot be easily described to the apprehension of men."—*Sp. Diary*, 1647.

In a letter to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, after speaking of the favor which the Lord had granted to himself in opening the eyes of his spirit, and thus introducing him into the spiritual world, he says :

"The gift of conversing with spirits and angels cannot be transmitted from one person to another, unless the Lord Himself opens the spiritual sight of that person. It is sometimes permitted to a spirit to enter into a man, and to communicate to him some truth ; but it is not granted to the man to speak mouth to mouth with the spirit. It is even a *very dangerous thing*, because the spirit enters into the affection of man's self-love which does not agree with the affection of heavenly love."—(*Hobart's Life of Emanuel Swedenborg*, p. 176.)

So also in the work on Divine Providence when treating of the inherent inefficacy of miracles, signs, visions, conversing with the dead, &c. to work a saving reformation in men, he says ;—

"Yet speaking with spirits, but rarely with angels of heaven, is still given, and has been given for many ages back ; but when it is given they speak with man in his mother-tongue, yet only a few words : but they who speak from permission of the Lord, never speak any thing which takes away freedom of reason, nor teach ; for the Lord alone teaches man, but mediately through the Word in illustration. That it is so, it has been given me to know from my own experience ; I have had speech with spirits and angels now for many years, neither has any spirit dared, nor any angel wished, to tell me anything, still less to instruct me concerning any things in the Word, or concerning any doctrinal from the Word ; but the Lord alone has taught me."—*D. P.* 135.

Every one will judge of course for himself of the trustworthiness of one who speaks thus the language of calm assurance and apparent truth. For ourselves we are very far from doubting it, and we think too that the gratitude of all sober and devout minds is largely drawn upon by such an exposure as he has made of the fallacies, phantasies, and delusions originating in the world of spirits. These influxes are so amazingly subtle—they come oftentimes in a guise so exquisitely specious—they form themselves into propositions so apparently rational and logical—their persuasive power is so well nigh irresistible—that but for some such spiritual "counterfeit detector" as Swedenborg furnishes, multitudes of unsuspecting minds would be at this day in danger of being duped into the belief of the most infernal falsities, simply from the force of the current idea, that what is, in the ordinary sense of the term, supernatural, must of necessity be true. Thanks to the grace of the Lord's providence that we are not left to be led at the mercy of these seducing spirits !—that we are abundantly warned of the peril of committing ourselves to the guidance of these fatuous lights ! Availing ourselves of the benefit of Swedenborg's illumination, we may adopt a prophylactic policy which shall guard us against the pernicious illusions to which our moral obliquities render us liable, and which we can scarcely suppose would have been allowed at this day to break forth, like an armed man, from the spiritual sphere, had not the appropriate safeguards been afforded prior to their invasion.

The errors of the present volume which menace the most mischief to the unwary reader are those which are conveyed in its theological teachings. The evident drift of the work is to elevate and enthrone Natural above Revealed Religion. Taking advantage of philosophical principles, which are in the main sound, it goes to erect upon them a system of pure unmitigated Theism, which utterly ignores any other Divine Revelation than that which is made in the volume of Nature. The idea of an inspired Book embodying the counsels of the Divine Will and Wisdom, and serving as a medium of conjunction between heaven and earth, it not only does not admit, but openly scouts and ridicules, and occasionally in language strangely at variance with its predominant tone, which is calm and dignified. But although the argument on this head is for the most part specious, and considerations are occasionally urged which involve real difficulties on the ground ordinarily assumed in regard to the biblical writings, yet it can be easily shown that a fundamental fallacy pervades the whole, by

making the minds of the sacred penmen the original prompting and producing *causes* of the thoughts of which their language is the vehicle. One would think that the analogy of his own case would have suggested the possibility of a spiritual influx from the fountain-head of Truth, altogether over and above anything that might have entered into their own personal and conscious intention, which is doubtless the true idea of inspiration.* Now in regard to the nature of that influence under which the Bible was written, Davis recognizes merely the prompting of the spirits of the writers, and consequently on the score of interpretation, he denies to Swedenborg the credit of having developed an interior spiritual sense which *natively* pertains to the sacred text, and simply ascribes to him a new application of the letter of the record. "His writings do not unfold a germ of spiritual truth in those primitive pages, because it is impossible for them to contain such, inasmuch as they are only historical accounts, and not spiritual revelations. So he does not unfold an *interior* meaning from these writings, but develops a novel *exterior* application and signification, which robs the Old and New Testaments of their present garb, and clothes them in a garment of spiritual beauty of which they are unworthy." We shall by and by expose the author's inconsistency on this subject, but we would here advert simply to the fundamental principle affirmed, which is, that as the books of the Bible are the product of the minds of the writers, whose thoughts were the *causes* of their expressions, and as these *causes* did not involve any Divine element, therefore no such element exists in their writings. This is repeatedly intimated in different parts of the volume, but nowhere perhaps more explicitly than in the following passages;—"In speaking of superstitions and false interpretations, I refer to the fact that it is taught with a great deal of sanctimoniousness, that its contents are an influx from the Divine Mind into the minds of those who wrote it. I am distinctly impressed with the conviction that no book, or any other superficial production of man, can legitimately and truthfully claim such inspiration. For nothing can be of divine origin which is not inseparably connected

* In Swedenborg's *Adversaria* on Num. xi. 9, in speaking of the falling of the manna with dew upon the camp, he says;—"What is signified by this was revealed to me in a wonderful manner; without revelation such things cannot be understood. It was wonderfully dictated in the thought, and the thought was led to the understanding of these words, and the idea was held fixedly upon each single expression, as if detained by a heavenly force; thus the revelation was sensibly made. Concerning other species of revelations, which are numerous, I shall with the favor of God Messiah, speak elsewhere. They are otherwise effected when the thought is manifestly illustrated by a certain light, and the writing is so guided that not the least word can be written otherwise than it is. Sometimes however it is more insensible; sometimes again so sensible, that the finger is conducted in the writing by a higher power in such a way that if an attempt were made to write otherwise it would be impossible; and this not only with an adjoined perception of the subject, but even—what has again and again happened to me—without this perception, so that I was ignorant of the series of things till after they were written; but this in very rare instances, and only for the sake of informing us that revelations are made in this manner. Those papers therefore were destroyed, as God Messiah did not design that the revelation (through me) should be thus made. Neither is it permitted to dictate anything *viva voce*, although a *viva voce* discourse (with spirits) has been enjoyed by me almost continually for so long a time; but whenever I wrote they were silent. Concerning these things, God Messiah permitting, I shall speak more fully in another place, that men may know how the case was in regard to revelations in the primitive church, afterwards in the representative, and finally in the symbolical church, that they may thence acknowledge that there is not even a jot in the books of Moses, of the prophets, and of David, which is not inspired, and that these celestial things are invariably contained under the forms of natural things, which are the letters by which they are expressed.—*Advers. Vol. III.* 7167.

with, and incessantly developed by, the laws, qualities, and principles, contained in the great Tree of universal causation. And I have shown that that which man creates or invents merely by his evanescent imagination, can not be any thing more than a mass of imperfection."—p. 533.

"Giving to any book or its contents a 'spiritual signification,' is not to unfold an interior origin or cause of the ideas expressed; but it is merely setting aside its literal signification, and clothing its teachings with a spiritual garment. This is manifestly covering or concealing expressions, which are sometimes loose, unguarded, and even unrighteous and insignificant, with a brilliant external and ornamental garment. But it is distinctly clear that in order to search into the *interior* or *germ* of a thought, the mind must become acquainted with the *causes* engaged in developing that germ into the form of a written expression. And it is absolutely impossible to give a *real* signification to expressions the *soul* or *cause* of which originated merely in the theology and mythology of an age when misdirection and unreasonable hallucination had possession, to a great extent, of the mind of every human being."—p. 540.

"I am particularly desirous of being apprehended aright in speaking of this important distinction between the *interior signification* of a term or expression, and that *spiritual application* which has been called an interior meaning. In order to be distinctly understood, I again repeat that no mind can search into and analyze the interior meaning or origin of words and expressions, without arriving irresistibly at the conclusion which has been heretofore attained—that the contents of the Bible, like those of all other books, have originated among a number of productive causes, all of which must be taken into consideration before any validity or importance can be attached to the records therein contained."—p. 541.

"These considerations show that it is impossible to give an interior signification of a *spiritual* character to that which does not already contain a Divine and celestial element."—p. 541.

Now Swedenborg teaches that although the words of the sacred writers were in a sense, their own, and expressive of certain ideas in their minds, yet that there was an influx or infusion of the Divine principle into their language giving it a meaning beyond their personal intention, and that in this their real sanctity and divinity consists. In other terms, their words are *receptive vessels* into which the divine ideas flowed, which thus constitute an essential element of the Word, and make it a truly *inspired* composition. "Inspiration implies that in all parts of the Word, even the most minute, as well historical as others, are contained celestial things which are of love, or good, and spiritual things which are of faith, or truth; consequently, things divine. For what is inspired by the Lord descends from Him through the angelic heaven, and thus through the world of spirits, till it reaches man, before whom it presents itself such as it is in the letter."—A. C. 1887. "The literal sense of the Word is representative of divine arcana, and is a receptacle and thus a repository of the celestial and spiritual things of the Lord."—A. C. 1888. This truth our "Seer's" faculty did not enable him to discern, although it is in fact in full accordance with the better part of his own philosophy, which recognizes the principle of *correspondence* between spiritual and natural things—essentially relative between cause and effect—and

on which principle the sacred Word is constructed. Thus, for instance, as the affection of *meekness* is the spiritual cause of the existence of a *dove*, the term *dove* necessarily conveys to a spiritual mind the idea of *meekness*, and this is its interior sense; and such a sense Swedenborg informs us runs through the entire Word, a sense based upon a uniform law, and a sense, *which it was his grand mission to develop*. As Davis himself knew nothing at the time on this subject one way or the other, what deplorable fatuity or consummate effrontery must have moved his prompting spirits to deny so palpable a point as Swedenborg's disclosure of the fact and the law of a spiritual signification inhering in the letter of the Word! But we are expressly assured that the same denial of the interior sense of the Word obtains among the spiritual sophists of the other world. From the internal repugnancy growing out of the state of their affections towards Divine things, they often persist in the stubborn rejection of that latent spiritual import which constitutes in fact the very soul of Revelation. We see this strikingly illustrated in the following passages:

"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."—*Sp. Diary*, 1139–1141.

What then can be fairly inferred but that the young man has been obsessed by precisely this class of spirits, and under their instigations has given forth this pernicious heresy to the world? It is obviously impossible that such sentiments could have come from heaven, and yet the proof we deem equally conclusive that they have not, in this case, come from earth. How inevitable then the inference, that communications may emanate from the spiritual world, and yet be replete with the most diabolical falsities. And what a commentary do we read

in this on the truth of Swedenborg's disclosures of the other life. Indeed, we are fully persuaded that this is in fact the true *providential mission* of the book. In itself and its sequences it is expressly designed to be overruled to the furtherance of that very system of revelations against which, on several points, it sets itself in hostile array. While its friends and favorers are dreaming of entirely another issue, and look upon it as a fresh apocalypse of celestial verities, which are destined to demolish the old crazy citadel of biblical Christianity, the result will doubtless be that the weapon will be quietly taken out of their hands, and the whole demonstration made to tell in the establishment of the grand truths of the New Jerusalem. Reflecting minds cannot be insensible to the ground occupied by a system which takes the most perfect cognizance of the phenomenon exhibited in the present work, treating it as a matter of course from its own stand-point, and pressing even its most egregious falsities into the service and confirmation of paramount truths. Thus the arch-deceiver will be found to have outwitted himself in aiming to ply this master-piece of infernal cunning against the immovable fabric of Revelation. We say "cunning," which applies to it for the most part, though it must be confessed that we not unfrequently discern a shallowness in the devices of the book which savors but little of the proverbial craft of their origin, while at the same time their singular *boldness* precludes the supposition of human imposture. What *man* in his right senses would ever think that such crudities could be digested by the gastric potencies of the stomach of any christian community as the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures from Persian manuscript during the captivity in Babylon—the divination of the *mythos* of the biblical Trinity from the Hindoo legends respecting Parama, Vishnu, and Siva—the passing over of the idea of *hell* from its birth place in central America, to the Jewish nation in Asia, and, though last not least, the grave account of 318 bishops assembled under Constantine at the Council of Nice deciding upon the Canon of Scripture, when church history does not whisper a syllable of any such action on the part of that body. It would seem as if the poet's hint of occasional *Homeric dermitations* were so far applicable in the present case as to allow of a change of the epithet into *Satanic*. To receive such "revelations" as true would at any rate, imply, not a mere *drowsy nodding*, but a *profound slumber*, on the part of the reader. But to return.

The *theology* of the Bible, Davis perpetually confounds with *mythology*, of which he regards it as a form, and by thus investing it with the air of *fable*, he paves the way for the universal desecration of whatever is most holy and reverend in the estimation of all pious minds. The sentiments with which the sacred books have always been cherished by Christians he invariably treats as "affections for erroneous principles created only by early impressions," and seems to be wholly unaware that his reiterated demand for appeal to the decisions of "reason," of "judgment," of the "spiritual sensibilities," has been fully responded to by thousands of enlightened minds, in every age, who have attained to a full assurance of the divinity of these lively oracles, by applying to them the same principles of evidence on which we are required to receive the *dicta* of this book in opposition to them.

Now however strange it may appear that this kind of sophistry, of which, shallow as it is, the young man himself is utterly incapable, should be a faith

ful reflex of the speculations of spirits in the other world, yet the following extract from Swedenborg's *Spiritual Diary* will show how accurately the utterance on the stage corresponds with the prompting behind the scenes. The article is headed ;—*Concerning revealed Theology, or the Word, and natural Theology.*

"For several days an earnest dispute was kept up between certain spirits who believed in the Word, and that it was all from the Divine, and Divine in itself, and certain others who, in the life of the body, had believed that natural Theology was to be preferred, and that this shed light upon that, and not *vice versa*. The dispute was such as to enkindle enmity, but only on the part of those who argued for natural theology, and not of those who contended for the Word; the former cruelly infested the latter for some days, and breathed nothing less than their destruction both in body and soul. They even admitted the infernals into themselves, who acted from their own promptings, and while these infernals spake through them, they not only denied that the Word or revelation was anything, but they despised it for its simple and uncouth style, as they termed it, and utterly rejected it in their hearts. It was then said to them that the style was such from its containing within itself the deepest arcana which are laid open in order in their heavens, and because the Divine wisdom inheres in it, from whence is celestial and spiritual nourishment; for the heavens are conjoined with men, especially those of the church, and they dwell in their good affections, thus making one with the men of the church through the Word. Still they could not receive this; they understood indeed that it was so, and they also know it in the other life; but because they were such as they were, in the life of the body, it did not remain with them, but the infernals continued to act through them, and therefore they burnt to destroy those who had faith in the Word. Thence it was manifest how the case is with those who believe that it may be known from nature that there is a Divine being, of what quality he is, that there is a heaven and a hell, and a life after death—viz. that they believe absolutely nothing of all this, the reason of which is, that they are in the lumen of nature, and not in the light of heaven, thus with infernals, and not with celestials."—*Sp. Diary*, 4757.

We are well aware that the world is not indebted to Swedenborg alone for sound views on the inadequacy of Natural Religion to meet the demands of man's moral nature, but the train of reflection on this head embodied in the following paragraph, will be seen to be of great importance in connexion with this mass of *anti-revelation* "*revelments*."

"It is believed in the world, that man from the lumen of nature, thus without revelation, can know several things which relate to religion, as that there is a God, that He is to be worshipped, and also that He is to be loved, likewise that man is to live after death, with several truths besides which depend on these; and yet they are such as are derived from self-intelligence: but I have been instructed from much experience, that man himself knows nothing at all concerning Divine things, and concerning those things which relate to celestial and spiritual life, without revelation; for man is born into the evils of the love of self and of the world, which are such as preclude influx from the heavens, and open influx from the hells; thus such as make man blind, and incline him to deny the existence of the Divine, of heaven and hell, and of the life after death. This is very manifest from the learned ones of the world, who by sciences have raised the lumen of their nature above others, for it is known that these deny the Divine, and acknowledge nature instead of the Divine, more than others; and also when they speak from the heart and not from doctrine, that they deny the life after death, likewise heaven and hell, consequently all things which are of faith, which they call restraints for the vulgar; hence it is evident, what is the quality of the lumen of

nature without revelation. It has also been shown, that several who have written natural theology, and from the lumen of their own nature have dexterously confirmed those things which related to the doctrine of their own church, in the other life deny those things in heart more than others do, and also deny the Word itself, which they attempt altogether to destroy, for in the other life hearts speak; it hath been also shown, that the same can receive nothing of influx out of heaven, but only from the hells: hence it has appeared evident what is the quality of the lumen of nature without revelation, consequently what is the quality of that which comes from self-intelligence. But two considerations have occurred, which place the mind in doubt on this subject; first, that the ancients, who were Gentiles, still knew that there is a Divine, that It is to be worshipped, and that man as to the soul is immortal; secondly, that these things are known also to several nations at this day, with whom there is no revelation. But as to what concerns the ancients it is to be observed, that they did not know those things from the lumen of their own nature, but from revelation, which flowed down even to them from the church; for the church of the Lord from the most ancient times had been in the land of Canaan; hence such things appertaining to Divine worship were diffused from them to the nations round about, and likewise to the neighboring Greeks, and from these to the Italians or Romans; hence both the latter and the former had knowledges respecting the Supreme Deity, and concerning the immortality of the soul, on which subjects their learned men have written. As to what concerns the nations at this day, who are also acquainted with the existence of the Divine, and of a life after death, they have not derived this knowledge from the lumen of their own nature, but from the religious [doctrine] handed down to them from ancient times, which was founded on such [knowledge], as by various ways had flowed down from the church which had revelation; this was of the Divine Providence of the Lord; and that such of them as from their religious persuasions acknowledge the Divine over all things, and perform offices of charity to their neighbor, in the other life, when they are instructed, receive the truths of faith and are saved."—*A. C.* 8944.

Nothing can be more evident than that a state of mind, however induced, which thus exalts the claims of natural above those of revealed religion, will infallibly prompt to just that slighting and contemptuous esteem of the Bible, as a Divine revelation, which manifests itself throughout this tissue of pseudo-theology, and the counterpart of this again we find in Swedenborg's disclosures of the discussions of the spiritual world.

"A certain society was heard where they were conversing among themselves, and saying that their discourse was concerning the Word. It was maintained that there was nothing Divine in it, and they also opened the Books of the Bible and wherever they read therein they found nothing else, as they said, than what was merely terrestrial, and nowhere any thing that was Divine; wherefore they took up the idea that the Word was not divine, but that it was merely accepted and held as holy. But a certain one of them, whom I heard speaking, answered that it was necessary that there should be a Divine principle inherent in the Word, and that there was something inwardly latent in the sense which is not known, and he adduced several things from the prophetic writings showing that this recondite interior meaning did not appear before man; the ground of all which (he said) was, that it was indispensable that there should be some Divine Word on the earth, because man was born that he might come into another life. He said afterwards that many of the interior things of the Word were opened to him, but that the rest could perceive nothing of them."—*Sp. Diary*, 4565.

Such then are Swedenborg's developments of the spirits of a large portion of the spiritual world. It is now submitted to the reader whether the solutions

proffered do not adequately meet the exigencies of the present case. If what is termed the Mesmeric state be a reality—if the spiritual world be a reality—do we not find the two here presented in such relation to each other as to account satisfactorily for the extraordinary features of the work before us? The phenomena of the case must be explained in some way. It is certain that here is a book which, with all its errors, discovers an amount of knowledge, a reach of thought, and sometimes a force of reasoning, which is confessedly of a high order. It is certain that this book came from or through the mind of a young man, concerning whom it is clearly in evidence, that, considered in himself, in his previous attainments, and in his general mental habits, he was utterly incompetent to its production. Yet here it is—a fixed fact incapable of denial. The work has come into existence somehow, and with it an enigma which demands to be solved. From all that has been disclosed of the effects of the Mesmeric trance it appears beyond question that persons in that state frequently evince a degree of intelligence incomparably beyond that of their ordinary state, and as no experiments or indications have as yet set limits to this intelligence, it cannot be said to be absolutely incredible that the state should have given birth to the work before us. It differs rather in degree than in kind from various other manifestations of the same power which have approved themselves as real to a very large class of observers. Assuming, on the other hand, the truth of Swedenborg's representations of the other world merely as a hypothesis, the facts developed in this case are certainly such as we should be authorized to anticipate provided what he says were true. As the minds of men are continually in contact with the minds of spirits, and as these spirits are distinguished by the same diversities of moral character with those upon whom they act in this world, what more natural than that a two-fold influx of truth and falsehood should emanate from their sphere, and show itself visible in the utterances put forth by mesmeric subjects? And what more natural again than that the predominance of the one or the other should depend upon the interior moral state of the recipient? Every man, we are informed, is actually though unconsciously associated with spirits who are in the same ruling love with himself, which is in all cases the infallible touch-stone of his moral state in the sight of God. It is not however to be inferred that one who is dominantly in evil receives none but evil influences, any more than that he who is dominantly in good receives none but good influences. As man's states in this world are mostly mixed states, so they are liable to mixed influences from the world of spirits. But as the ruling love, or the will principle, always moulds the form of intellectual belief, and as this principle is as truly operative in the mesmeric state as in any other, it will naturally follow that those persuasions will hold the ascendancy which are most in accordance with the love that determines the moral state. "Inasmuch," says Swedenborg, "as good and truth are a one in the Lord, and proceed as a one from him, it follows, that good loves truth, and truth loves good, and that they desire to be a one. The like is true of their opposites: evil loves the false, and the false loves evil, and they are desirous of being a one."—"Good relates to the will, truth to the understanding. From the love of good in the will, proceeds the love of truth in the understanding."

from the love of truth proceeds the perception of truth ; from the perception of truth the thought of truth ; and from these comes the acknowledgment of truth, which is faith in its genuine sense."—*D. L.* 33, 36.

In the present instance it is perfectly palpable that Davis, under some kind of spiritual prompting, denies without reserve the grand central truths which have always been held by the mass of Christians as inseparably connected with the good which forms the ground-element of their character. Instead of regarding Christ as Divine in the highest and truest sense, that is, as Jehovah incarnate, he speaks of him simply as a "great Moral Reformer," purely human, the son of Joseph and Mary by natural generation, and knows nothing of him in his asserted character of Redeemer and Saviour of a fallen race. Now apply to this the test of the apostle ;—"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." The work before us has no other confession on this head than that Christ has come in the flesh just as Plato, and Socrates, and Confucius came in the flesh, which is a manifest contradiction of the true purport of the apostolic testimony. We allude to this not for the purpose of arguing the question, but to sustain our inference of delusion as respects the influxes under which he has uttered his "revelations."

That there are those in the nominal Christian world who upon this, as well as several other of the doctrinal positions of the book, would side with the "revelator," rather than with us his impugnors, cannot operate to lower the tone of assurance with which we denominate the teachings false and prompted by spirits of falsity. The estimate formed of the character and office of Jesus we are constrained to regard as in general a just exponent of a moral posture of the soul, to which they have a direct and all-important reference. The *interior state*, lying behind or below all speculative opinions on the subject, and by which the judgment of the intellect respecting it will be governed, we consider as forming the most momentous of all distinctions among men. Upon the veritable character of this state in any given case we are not allowed to pronounce judgment, but we may be permitted to say that for ourselves the convictions we entertain on this point are to our whole system of religious faith what the heart is to the human body, and as we feel and believe, we speak. The foundations of a religious creed lie, in our view, much deeper than we are conducted by the bare interpretation of a text, and we deem it neither weakness nor narrowness to confess that we have a secret dread of being warped by our affections into anything less than the acknowledgment of God incarnate as the basis of our hope of heaven. If there is a ground for a holy jealousy on the score in our own case, it is not perhaps uncharitable to suppose it may be so with others. At any rate, we see clearly that all the other theological errors of the work in question are mere off-shoots from this parent stock of heresy in the bold denial of anything more than a simple humanity in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our conclusion therefore is that Davis has been grievously deluded by the arts and machinations of deceitful spirits and that *occasion* for this has been given by the lack of a true faith, the product of a moral state rightly affected towards all divine things. He has thus been prevented from associating with a sphere of pure truth and been made the subject of the most enormously

false impressions in regard to the whole circle of religious doctrines. We are shut up to this conviction by the very nature of his utterances. No man who is in the truth of faith can, by any possibility, so falsify and vilify the sublime doctrines of the Word as is done in the work under consideration, and no degree of native amiableness, gentleness, or benevolence can preclude the assurance of some radical defect in the moral habitudes of the soul from which such monstrosities of dogma flow forth. The supposition is doubtless entirely groundless that the young man is, in his abnormal state, freed from the influence of *moral affinities* which bring him into fellowship with spirits of a kindred stamp, which is in fact the great law of association in the other world. Consequently we cannot but recognize a very great error in the following passage of the Introduction to these Lectures, where the reporter is speaking of the peculiarities of the state into which the mesmeric subject is brought. "His mind is now entirely freed from the sphere of the body, and, consequently, from all preconceived ideas, from all theological isms, and from all influences of education and local circumstances, and all his impressions are received from the interior or spiritual world. . . . He is thus elevated above all the narrow, local, and sectarian prejudices that pervade the earth. His philosophy is only that which is involved in the laws and principles which control the Universe and mankind unerringly, and his theology is only that which is written on the wide-spread scroll of the heavens, in which every star is a word and every constellation a sentence." Bating the rhetoric, this is a virtual assumption of absolute infallibility. But to say nothing of the fact that such a mental state, if it could exist, would destroy a man's identity, it is a mere creation of the brain. It is impossible that any state should so completely divest a man of his *proprium* or self-hood. The oxydized adherences of an iron conduit will not more surely tinge the water that flows through it than will the internal moral qualities of the man affect the spiritual influxes of which he is the subject. We are aware that Mr. Davis considers himself as having been freed from every theological bias, even in his ordinary state, during the delivery of the Lectures, and that he scarcely felt himself at liberty to form a single opinion on religious doctrines lest it might interfere with that blank indifferentism which he deemed so essential to the purity and truth of his revelations. This was clearly wrong, and the very suggestion of such a surrender of liberty and rationality ought to have been regarded as the breathing of the serpent, for all such methods of receiving instruction in matters of faith are contrary to order and never to be justified by any imagined use that is to result to one's self or the world from such teachings. "Because the Lord wills," says Swedenborg, "that man should be reformed and regenerated, that he may have eternal life or the life of heaven, and no one can be reformed or regenerated unless good is appropriated to his will and truth to his understanding, and because nothing can be appropriated to any one, except what is made of the understanding from freedom of will according to reason, it follows that no one is reformed in states of non-liberty and non-rationality." Nor may we suppose for a moment that any one is ever prompted by the Divine spirit to engage in any kind of ministry for the benefit of others of such a nature as to be inconsistent with the orderly furtherance of his own regeneration.

We would not of course be understood by this as passing a sentence of condemnation upon every form of the mesmeric operations, or intimate a moral wrong in every instance in which one submits himself to the influence of that mysterious power. It is only in cases when it is resorted to as a medium for obtaining the knowledge of religious truths, that our strictures apply. It is when one resigns his moral freedom of belief and puts his waking rationality in abeyance in order to become a vehicle of sleeping oracles, that the order of heaven is departed from, and the door opened to the ingress of the most deplorable delusions.

In the work on "Pneumatology," by the celebrated Jung-Stilling of Germany, occurs the following passage which finds the most pertinent illustration, as we conceive, in the work before us.

"Experience teaches that persons far advanced in piety may fall into this state of natural magnetic sleep, and also enter into connection with good spirits, and even angels. Vain and false spirits frequently interfere on these occasions, and seek to deceive and mislead the seer. These study his inclinations and wishes, and then arrange the communications, imagery and ideas, in such a manner as to gratify his favorite inclinations. Now if he regards all this as a divine revelation, he will be satisfied that his wishes are agreeable to God, and thus he may fall into the most dangerous errors. The truth and importance of this observation *cannot be too pressingly urged*; for if a man or even a child, fall into a trance, or into any other state of supernatural elevation, and then begin to preach repentance, predict future things, and speak in a style to which he is naturally incompetent, the common spectator, especially if he is religiously inclined, regards it all as divine influence and revelation; and the poor somnambulist himself believes it also, rejoices at it, is deeply affected by it, thanks God for it, and now the thought secretly arises in his mind, that he is something particular, and that God has some great object in view with him; he comes into connection with false spirits of light, who strengthen him in such ideas by a variety of delusive imagery, and then the arch-enthusiast is completed."—*Theory of Pneumatology*, p. 69.

Still more amply is this idea confirmed by Swedenborg in the important extract that follows from the Apocalypse Explained.

"Something shall now be said concerning the discourse of spirits with man. It is believed by many that man may be taught of the Lord by spirits speaking with him; *but they who believe this, and are willing to believe it, do not know that it is connected with danger to their souls.* As soon as spirits begin to speak with man, they come out of their spiritual state into the natural state of man, and in this case they know that they are with man, and conjoin themselves with the thoughts of his affection, and from those thoughts speak with him: they cannot enter into anything else, for similar affection and consequent thought conjoins all, and dissimilar separates. It is owing to this circumstance, that the speaking spirit *is in the same principles with the man to whom he speaks whether they be true or false*, and likewise that he excites them, and by his affection conjoined to the man's affection strongly confirms them: hence it is evident that none other than similar spirits speak with man, or manifestly operate upon him, for manifest operation coincides with speech. Hence it is that no other than enthusiastic spirits speak with enthusiasts: also, that no other than Quaker spirits operate upon Quakers, and Moravian spirits upon Moravians; the case would be similar with Arians, with Socinians, and with other heretics. All spirits speaking with man are no other than such as have been men in the world, and were then of such a quality; that this is the case hath been given me to know by repeated experience. From these considerations it is evident to *what danger man is ex-*

posed, who speaks with spirits, or who manifestly feels their operation. Man is ignorant of the quality of his own affection, whether it be good or evil, and with what other beings it is conjoined; and if he is in the conceit of his own intelligence, his attendant spirits favor every thought which is thence derived; in like manner *if any one is disposed to favor particular principles, enkindled by a certain fire*, which hath place with those who are not in truths from genuine affection; when a spirit from similar affection favors man's thoughts or principles, then one leads the other, as the blind the blind, until both fall into the pit."—*Apoc. Expl.* 1182.

It is a truth, therefore, which cannot be too deeply impressed on the minds of all, that a communication *is not necessarily true*, because it is made in a supernatural or preternatural manner. Inasmuch as there are both good and evil spirits in the other world—a heaven of angels and a hell of devils—and inasmuch as both these classes of spirits have access to human minds, and either of them may exercise a controlling influence, and infuse their own thoughts, according as the mind on which they wish to operate is directed towards the Lord and imbued with a true faith, or otherwise, therefore there may be *false* as well as *true* communications made to a man in a transic or abnormal state; and there may also, as in the case before us, be communications containing a mixture of truth and error. They may be from above, or from beneath, or from both these sources. It is, however, to be remarked, that evil spirits may for the sake of more effectually accomplishing their malignant purposes, often communicate much truth. Swedenborg declares that evil spirits can at times not only "assume the appearance of angels of light" (*A. R.* 839), but "are able to discourse [upon some subjects] so wisely, that an angel could scarce discourse more wisely."—*Ath. Creed*, 65.

We are fully aware that the current opinion among christians at the present time is contrary to what is here stated. The prevailing belief appears to be, that whatever is communicated to men in any extraordinary or preternatural manner, as is claimed for, and conceded to, the Lectures before us, must *therefore* be from heaven, and of *necessity* true. The safety of christians at the present day lies, as we conceive, in rejecting this idea as alike false and dangerous, and in adopting the more rational and scriptural doctrine on this subject presented by Swedenborg. The more Scriptural doctrine, we say: for do not the Scriptures declare that evil spirits have power to do wonderful things? Do we not read of the "spirits of devils, *working miracles*?" (*Rev.* xvi. 14.) And does not Paul speak of one to be revealed, "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and *signs*, and *lying wonders*?" (*2 Thes.* ii. 9.) And does not the Scripture authorize and *require* us to reject the communications of one who may give ample evidence even of a *prophetic* gift—who may tell us things that shall really come to pass—if his teachings do not square with "the law and the testimony," and would lead us away from the living and eternal Word? "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, *and the sign or the wonder come to pass*, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, let us go after other gods which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; *thou shalt not hearken* unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams" (*Deut.* xiii. 1, 2, 3).

Now let it be understood and admitted that falsehood as well as truth may

be communicated from the spiritual world, since there are evil and lying as well as good and truthful spirits in that world, and let the mental or moral conditions, which, according to Swedenborg, are necessary to secure any *seer* against the seductive influence of lying spirits, be clearly seen, and men will be in no danger from these "Revelations" by Davis, nor from any other similar ones. For they will see that, however the things in the book may have been preternaturally communicated, they are not *on that account* necessarily true. The seer, as well as all concerned in the book, may have been honest and well-intentioned; but still he may have been, while in the mesmeric trance, under the influence of a class of spirits, whose real character and intentions he knew nothing of; and he may have been used by them as a subject through whom to communicate great and pernicious errors.

We now proceed to show, by a few references to the volume before us, that the author must have been, some of the time at least, under the influence of spirits "from beneath;" and has therefore given utterance to such thoughts as these spirits may be supposed to have. The evidence of this, amply sufficient to satisfy every believer in the christian religion, may be seen in what he says of the Lord, the Scripture, regeneration, sin and hell. His thoughts on each of these subjects are certainly not worthy of a very exalted origin; they are worthy rather of spirits who hate the Lord and His Word—who see not by the light of heaven, but by that fatuous light which Swedenborg tells us the devils see by. No christian, therefore, needs any further evidence of the *source* of some of these "Revelations," than what they contain on these subjects.

But there may be, and probably is, a considerable class of minds, honest, but sceptically inclined who may wish for other evidence that our clairvoyant was under a delusive influence, especially when he came to discourse upon theology. For the benefit of such persons, therefore, we will refer to some of his own inconsistencies and self-contradictions, and some of his palpable contradictions of known facts, particularly in the passages where he speaks of, or alludes to, the writings of Swedenborg.

On page 348 of the volume before us, the author, after giving an account of the deluge, which differs considerably from the literal account given in the Bible, says: "The original description of the flood [i. e. the scriptural account of it] is, however, *an entire spiritual correspondence*—representing in an imperfect manner this great catastrophe, which was the basis of the whole illustration. The *exact correspondence* will be discovered and related hereafter: but it is well to mention that it was by this volcanic occurrence and this great inundation that the correspondence was suggested, having *an internal meaning*; for it is impossible for the account to have a *literal* signification.—I am impressed that the *internal meaning* of many sayings that were apparently literal has not as yet been properly and generally understood by mankind, notwithstanding their true meaning was understood by those who wrote them, and has since *been unfolded* to the world by an expanded and suitable intellect."

It is clear from this that the author recognizes an internal and spiritual sense to the Scriptural account of the flood, as well as to other parts of the Bible; and considers the science of correspondences developed by Swedenborg, as the

true key to this spiritual sense. For he declares the Bible account of the flood to be "an entire spiritual correspondence," and to possess "an internal meaning;" and adds that the "true," "internal meaning of many sayings that were apparently literal," has "been *unfolded* to the world by an expanded and suitable intellect." That *Swedenborg* is the person here referred to, is obvious from many other parts of the book.

Moreover, on a previous page the author attempts to give us the *correspondence* of several things mentioned in Genesis, as of the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve, the tree of knowledge, the aprons of fig-leaves, the land of Nod, Cain and Abel, &c. We stop not here to inquire how far his correspondences are, or are not, correct. It is sufficient for our present purpose that he declares that these things *have* a correspondence.

He also speaks repeatedly of "the *science* of correspondences" (p. 72, and elsewhere), and in one place says: "All things in forms and corporeal investiture, which exist upon the face of the earth as displaying life, *are correspondents* of their *inner* life or principle—which not only actuates them to thriftiness, but is working by an undeviating law, the refinement of all subordinate substances" (p. 20). This shows what the author would have us understand by *correspondence*, as he employs the term. It is "the relation of the inner principle or unseen essence to the outward visible form—or the relation of cause and effect."

Now all this will be recognized by those familiar with the writings of the great Swedish Seer, as very good Swedenborgian doctrine—whether true or false, is not the point which we wish our readers now to consider. But what says our clairvoyant in a subsequent part of his book? And how does it cohere with what is here said? On page 403, after citing a passage from Genesis, and mentioning the name of Swedenborg in connection with it, he adds: "But it is impossible to find in these words as originally employed in the 'primitive history,' *one particle of spiritual signification*. It is not true that he [Swedenborg], with all his enlightenment, *unfolded an interior truth* as expressed in these primitive sayings—These primitive records do not contain, as divinely originated, a minute spiritual meaning or application."

Again, he says (p. 449): "His [Swedenborg's] writings *do not unfold* a germ of spiritual truth in those primitive pages, because it is impossible for them to contain such." And stronger still, "I am not able to discover *any such* interior meaning in *any portion* of the contents of the Word as he [Swedenborg] represents" (p. 588).

The reader will not fail to discover how palpably this author contradicts himself on this subject; for in the first place he affirms that the Scripture account of the flood is "an *entire spiritual correspondence*," and has "an *internal meaning*," which, together with the *true internal* meaning of many apparently literal sayings, "*has been unfolded*" by Swedenborg; in another part of the volume he says, there is not, that he can discover, "*one particle of spiritual signification*" in the words of the "primitive history"—that Swedenborg's writings "*do not unfold* a germ of spiritual truth in those primitive pages," because no such truth resides there—and that he is unable "to discover any such in-

* By the "primitive history," he always means the Bible.

terior, meaning in *any portion* of the contents of the Word," as Swedenborg represents.

Again: The author says, (p. 589): "I am much drawn to the pure, gigantic, and powerfully-intellectual spirit of Swedenborg. His philosophical revelations are of vast importance, because of their truth; and his spiritual and psychological revelations are also *qualifiedly* true, and are susceptible of being verified in the *spiritual spheres*." And on the same page he further says, that when men's moral and spiritual perceptions shall become sufficiently elevated by an abundant supply of social requirements, "they will readily discover the signification of his [Swedenborg's] spiritual teachings, which at present, to the mass of mankind, seem like the wildest hallucinations of a misdirected and inflated mind. . . Therefore I discover this gigantic mind as in its conceptions transcending completely the ordinary powers, even of all *interiorly* enlightened men, and consequently as being removed from the natural into spiritual spheres. Hence some of his mighty revelations will only be known to be true when man ascends to a higher degree of wisdom and knowledge."

This is certainly high praise bestowed on Swedenborg, and a clear recognition of the general truth of his spiritual revelations. We should expect to find one who could say all this, agreeing pretty closely with Swedenborg's teachings, which he thinks too pure and too exalted in wisdom to suit the present age of the world. But what is the fact? We find the author, in other parts of his book, guilty of the singular inconsistency of differing *toto celo* from Swedenborg, not only upon points of minor importance, but upon those which Swedenborg regards as *fundamental* in his theology—upon the existence of a hell in the other world, upon the nature of sin, the need of regeneration, the divinity of the Lord, and the divinity and sanctity of the Word. These are among the *essential* doctrines in Swedenborg's system. Take these away, or so change them as to suit the views of this book, and what would his "spiritual teachings" amount to, or how would they cohere together? No man ever betrayed a profounder reverence for the Word of God than Swedenborg. More than three fourths of all his voluminous works on theology, are employed in unfolding the interior and spiritual sense of the Word, thereby disclosing more clearly to the minds of men its supreme divinity and sanctity. But Davis utterly denies the inspiration and sanctity of the Word, asserting that "the elements and qualities contained in the Bible, or the germ of this great theological tree, are positively impure, and unworthy of the interpretations and veneration which they have received" (p. 541). He further says that "the Bible does not present one proper conception of the constitution, character, greatness, omnipotence, and majesty of the Divine mind—Nor does it teach that holy virtue, morality and refinement, which should receive the name of religion" (p. 558). He declares that "sin, in the common acceptation of that term, does not really exist;" he denies the miraculous conception as well as the Divinity of our Saviour; and scouts the idea of regeneration, because it implies, as he says, a *degeneration*, which he denies (p. 517). And he says that "the terms 'satan,' 'hell,' 'reward,' 'punishment' &c., are terms which express as near the shadow of no substance as it is possible for the mind to conceive" (p. 528). *Nothing* could be farther from the teachings of Swedenborg than all this; and yet (strange inconsistency!) this

Clairvoyant speaks of his (Swedenborg's) "mighty revelations" and "*spiritual* teachings," as far transcending the wisdom of this age, as "in their prominent features substantially true," and "susceptible of being verified in the spiritual spheres."

And not less glaring are this author's inconsistencies on other points. Thus on page 44, he describes what he calls "*independent clairvoyance*" as a "state in which one can view with clearness things belonging to a sphere of existence higher than the natural world." And he says if any one were to go into this state *voluntarily*, i. e. without the aid of a manipulator, "that moment death would necessarily and inevitably ensue"—"*Independent clairvoyance*, therefore, must be induced by the action of another system, by which the positive power is extracted from the subject. To sustain life, *this is supplied* sympathetically by the system of the operator." He admits however, that some may "go voluntarily into a state in which the mind is greatly developed, and made cognizant of principles and truths pertaining to *this mundane sphere*." Now as Swedenborg's state (whatever it was), was one into which he went without any aid from another person, and also without suffering instant death, it could not, according to our author, be a state of "*independent clairvoyance*," such as he himself professed to enjoy; and this is positively affirmed on the next page. Swedenborg, then, *might* have been in a state to render him "cognizant of principles and truths pertaining to *this mundane sphere*," but not of "things belonging to a sphere of existence *higher than the natural world*." Yet in a subsequent part of the volume, he speaks of "*the spiritual spheres—from which*," he says, "I am deeply impressed, flowed high and truthful impressions into the expanded internal of this Swedish philosopher" (p. 403). And still later in the volume he speaks of Swedenborg's "*spiritual and psychological* revelations," and says they "are susceptible of being verified in the spiritual spheres, and will be in the disclosures soon to follow" (p. 589). And more explicit still is his language on page 674: "A mind was sufficiently illuminated to have *an actual knowledge of the relation and affinity existing between the natural and spiritual spheres, and of the spheres to one another*, and this was *Emanuel Swedenborg*." And again, he observes, "this gigantic mind—as being removed from the natural into *spiritual spheres*" (p. 589); and declares that Swedenborg's "illumination" was "*the same as his own*" (p. 675).

How these statements cohere with what the author says in his "Key" about Swedenborg's "not being in independent clairvoyance," and therefore not cognizant of "things belonging to a sphere of existence *higher than the natural world*," we leave our readers to judge. Every one must see that the statements are contradictory.

Again: this author refers his readers to Swedenborg's theological writings, and especially to a valuable work entitled "*Summaria Expositio Sensus prophetici*," "for a *truthful understanding* of the contents" of several of the books of the Bible (p. 449). Now our first remark with regard to this is, that the Seer has given *not one* third of the Latin title of the work of Swedenborg to which he here refers his readers, and has given that *wrong*. The title of the work as given by him would read, when translated, "A Summary Exposition of the *prophetic* sense"—a sense, by the way, of which Swedenborg tells us nothing. The true and full title of the

work referred to, is, *Summaria Expositio Sensus interni Librorum Prophetiarum Verbi Veteris Testamenti, necnon et Psalmorum Davidis*: "A Summary Exposition of the internal sense of the prophetic books of the Old Testament Word, and of the Psalms of David." And this title clearly expresses the design of the work, which is, to unfold very briefly the internal or spiritual sense of the Prophets and Psalms. And let the reader observe that this work is spoken of as "*especially*" valuable among the works of Swedenborg, for giving a "*truthful* understanding of the contents" of these books. Now if it has any value at all, it is on account of the *internal* or *spiritual* sense which it discloses in the Psalms and Prophets, for it has little to do with any other sense. And the *only* "understanding of the contents" of these books which it gives or attempts to give us, differing at all from what we had before, is an understanding of *their internal sense*. And if this be a "*truthful* understanding" of them, it must be because the internal sense which Swedenborg unfolds is *true*. Yet our Clairvoyant, in the face of all this, affirms repeatedly in other parts of his book, as we have already shown, that there is no such interior meaning in *any part* of the Bible as Swedenborg represents.

True, he remarks, that, in reading the *Summaria Expositio*, "in order to comprehend properly the meaning of the author, great caution should be observed in distinguishing the *prominent principles* which he develops;" a remark which betrays his utter ignorance of the character of the work of which he speaks, and involves him still deeper in inconsistency. For in the first place, it is not a treatise in which the author has attempted the *development* of any *principles*. It is merely what its title imports—a brief exposition of the internal sense of the Prophets and Psalms. And one might, with about as much propriety, speak of the *prominent principles* developed in a Dictionary, which does not profess to give you more than the definition of words, as to speak in the manner our Seer does of this little work. It needs but very little "caution," however to "distinguish" the prominent *subjects* brought to view in the *Summaria Expositio*; and these are, the advent and supreme divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the inspiration and sanctity of the Word, the *punishment* of those who falsify and profane the Word, the *reward* of the faithful, the nature and subjugation of the *hells*, the assaults of evil spirits or *devils*, and how the Lord protects men from them. Yet strange to say, Mr. Davis, in other parts of his book, utterly denies the advent and divinity of the Lord as explained by Swedenborg, rejects the inspiration and sanctity of the Word altogether, and often speaks of it derogatorily; and says that "the terms 'satan,' 'hell,' 'devil,' 'reward,' 'punishment,' &c. are terms which express as near the shadow of no substance as it is possible for the mind to conceive" (p. 528; see also p. 519).

It turns out, then, that all the prominent *subjects* explained or treated of by Swedenborg in his *Summaria Expositio*, which should be carefully distinguished, are mere dreams, phantasms, shadows—yea, worse, "the shadows of *no substance*." Yet our Seer refers his readers to this *especially*, as "a valuable work," and one from which may be derived "a truthful understanding of the contents" of the Prophets! And although this work is, to the ordinary reader, perhaps the least valuable of all Swedenborg's writings, being the most obscure of them all, because the explanations of the spiritual sense are usually so brief that it is dif-

difficult to trace their coherence, yet Mr. Davis elsewhere says, there is "too much obscurity, ambiguity, and spiritually-inflated conception, in his [Swedenborg's] psychological works, for them to be of *any particular utility* to the social world at the present time" (p. 589). Was ever such a tissue of inconsistency and contradiction woven before?

But we must tax our readers with a little more of the same sort. "There will be observed," says our Clairvoyant, "an apparent discrepancy between the things I relate [i. e. concerning the Scriptures] and those written by this Swedish philosopher: and this discrepancy will appear conspicuous when the *external* of the account only is viewed, but not when his interpretations and correspondences are properly comprehended" (p. 449). An "*apparent discrepancy!*" But one which will vanish, when Swedenborg's "interpretations and correspondences are properly comprehended!" No *real* discrepancy, then, in regard to the Scriptures between this Seer and Swedenborg—the *apparent* one arising from our not properly understanding the great Swede. Well, why don't the Seer always tell us so? Why does he elsewhere and often deny the inspiration of the Scriptures? Why does he aver that it contains "not one particle of spiritual signification?" That he is unable "to discover any such interior meaning in any portion of the contents of the Word" as Swedenborg represents? Why does he not always say that Swedenborg has taught the truth on this subject, only that he is not properly understood? Why these contradictions? Evidently because he saw not by genuine but by fatuous light.

Then as to the alleged fact of there being no *real* but merely an *apparent* discrepancy between what he and Swedenborg have related of the Scriptures, we think it would be difficult to state anything that could be farther from the truth. Champollion has deciphered the meaning of the hieroglyphics on the monuments of Egypt, and at the same time has placed in our hands a key to their mysteries, which we may apply for ourselves. Now suppose a clairvoyant should arise among us, and should give or *pretend* to give us a history of those singular inscriptions, the time when they were written and the persons who wrote them; and suppose he should make mention of the men, horses, geese, lions, and all the various symbols employed, and should at the same time affirm that these things have no such meaning as Champollion has ascribed to them—*no meaning* beyond that which discloses itself to the ordinary English eye, and then in the same breath should declare that there is no *real* but only an *apparent* discrepancy between himself and the great French hierologist, what should we think of the "clearness" of his vision? Yet the remark would not be wider of the truth, nor one whit more preposterous than this of our Poughkeepsie Clairvoyant. The cases would be perfectly parallel.

Our Seer's intimation that Swedenborg's "interpretations and correspondences" are not "properly comprehended," and hence the cause of the apparent discrepancy alluded to, only betrays more clearly his utter ignorance of the subject of which he is speaking, while it looks like an attempt at the same time to conceal his ignorance. Swedenborg declares that "the Word is written by mere correspondences," and that "the Science of Correspondences is the key to the spiritual sense of the Word." He has also explained very fully what he means by *Correspondence*. And when he tells us that every natural object and

event mentioned in the Word corresponds to something spiritual—that *light*, for example, corresponds to truth—that *fire* corresponds to love, either good or evil—that *darkness* corresponds to falsity—that the eye corresponds to the understanding, or power of mental perception—that a *mountain* corresponds to an elevated state of love or charity—that a *lamb* corresponds to innocence, &c. &c., there is not much difficulty in understanding what he means by such “correspondences.” And there is as little difficulty in understanding his “interpretations” when he has himself applied his key to the unfolding of the spiritual sense, as he has to many parts of the Word. It is pretty obvious, therefore, whence came, and what was the quality of the light by which our Clairvoyant saw, when he affirmed that the *apparent* discrepancy between his revelations and those of Swedenborg concerning the Scripture would disappear, when “the interpretations and correspondences [of the latter] are properly comprehended.” It could have been none other than the pale lurid light of the nether regions—“a light as from ignited coals.”

Again: this author is equally inconsistent with himself in what he says of the *value* or use of Swedenborg's revelations, sometimes referring his readers to them as to works of especial value, and at other times declaring them to be of *no* use. Thus the reader, as already shown, is referred *especially* to the *Summaria Expositio* as “a *valuable* work.” In another place he says: “I am also impressed to recognize the *important* revelations made by and through EMANUEL SWEDENBORG” (p. 587). And, speaking of his “*Worship and Love of God*,” he says, “this work is indeed a revelation *much to be read, appreciated, and practised*” (p. 588). Again he says, “The truths that he [Swedenborg] thus reveals concerning these things [i. e. things in ‘the spirit-world’] are *in very many particulars* susceptible of *benefitting the human race*” (*ib*). But shortly after he says, with characteristic consistency, there is “too much obscurity, ambiguity, &c. in his psychological works, for them to be of any particular utility to the social world at the present time” (p. 589). And again he says, “it is impossible to conceive of the practical utility of his spiritual revelations to the disordered world at this present time.” (*ib*).

Let these examples suffice to show our author's inconsistency with himself, in regard to what he says of Swedenborg and his writings. We might easily show him to be not less inconsistent with himself on other subjects; but it is unnecessary, and aside from our present purpose.

Now whence flowed into the mind of our Seer such *contradictory* statements as those we have referred to? If they flowed from the *same* spiritual region, it certainly could not have been a region of light. One who saw always by the light of heaven, or who was in a state “to view with clearness” the things belonging to the higher mental spheres, would not so contradict himself.

Then there are in this book some plain and palpable contradictions of known or provable facts. We shall content ourselves for the present with referring the reader to a very few instances of this kind, though it were easy to multiply them.

On page 449, after having given some account of several books in the Bible, he says: “For a *truthful* understanding of the contents of some of the previous books, *this*, and *following* ones, I would refer the reader to the theological writ

ings of SWEDENBORG, the enlightened philosopher—"especially to a valuable work entitled '*Summaria Expositio Sensus Prophetici*.'"

Here we are referred to the theological writings of Swedenborg "for a *truthful* account of the contents" of the book of *Nehemiah*, for this is the book which the author has just been speaking of, and which is referred to by the pronoun *this* in the passage cited. But unfortunately for our Seer, Swedenborg has given in his theological writings *no* account, either truthful or untruthful, of the contents of this book of *Nehemiah*. This, then, is a plain contradiction of a well known fact—a fact of which every one can easily satisfy himself.

On page 674, where the author asserts that the mind of Swedenborg "was sufficiently illuminated to have an actual knowledge of the relation and affinity existing between the natural and spiritual Spheres, and of the Spheres to one another," he adds: "He, however, employed terms to express *the same things* that I have endeavored to impress by terms of a different and more congenial character.—He describes the first three Spheres as three *hells*, inhabited by lower spirits and angels; while the three higher Spheres were the three heavens in which the higher spirits and angels dwelt.—It is, then, the use of *terms*, and their particular application, that presents the apparent discrepancy existing between his relations and these. And I can with assurance affirm, that the conceptions are *the same in substance* and *true*."

Here, then, we are told that the only difference between our Clairvoyant and Swedenborg in relation to the spiritual Spheres, is in the use of *terms*, and that their conceptions and relations on this subject "are the same in substance." Davis' "first three Spheres," are the same as Swedenborg's three *hells*, though he does not choose to call them by that name. Now how stands the fact? Our readers shall see; for Mr. Davis has given us some account of his first three Spheres, and so has Swedenborg of his three *hells*; and if what our clairvoyant affirms be true, these accounts should agree *in substance*. We will first extract a few passages from Davis' three lower Spheres, and then a few from Swedenborg's *hells*, that the reader may see whether the accounts be substantially the same, differing *only in terms*.

"The extended surface of this Sphere, I perceive, presents regular and gentle undulations, which render the whole diversified and exceedingly inviting. And very extensive plains are presented, which are clothed with great fertility, and with innumerable varieties of forms such as deck the bosom of the earth when all things are favorable to a thrifty production. In those vast plains is represented the most perfect order. There are gardens, typical of purity, unity, and celestial love. Their diversified paths continually lead to new and instructive portions, all of which are useful as displaying Divine Love and Wisdom, which generate unity and affinity in all created things. All flowers, and even their *leaves*, are observed as so many voices proclaiming the beauty of interior perfection, and the infinite Source from which they sprang. Every plant, flower, bird, and tree, is perceived and appreciated as the express creation of Divine love and Divine action. And there is a beauty in the external of each created thing, which is of itself an open expression of celestial love and wisdom. The flowers and foliage are of the most variegated appearance; and their variety renders them instructive and impressive, insomuch that they act as enchantments upon the minds of those who behold them, and induce thoughts beautiful, elevating, and edifying. A fragrance perpetually ascends from those vast plains of creation, giving life and

brilliance to the atmosphere, which is thereby rendered suitable to be inhaled as the breath of love and exhaled as the thoughts of wisdom."—p. 653.

"Moreover, I behold here some of the most magnificent creations of Will and Wisdom. It is well to remark, that everything created in this Sphere is suggested by Love and perfected by Wisdom—and is, therefore, a living projection from their minds—I discover constructions of the most grand and magnificent character, each having a brilliancy and illumination according to the advanced state of the society in which it is found.

"And there exists among them a pervading happiness; a soothing and tranquillizing element of forgiveness and universal love; a cordiality in the bestowment of inherent love upon each other, and a mingling, and yet perfect harmony, of thoughts, all of which it is delightful to contemplate."—p. 656.

"And a holy quietness pervades the whole spirit-world. There is happiness of the most inexpressible character—and ecstasies, and exultations, and glorifications, are continually ascending. There is so much purity and holiness, that my mind is scarcely capable of withstanding its moving influence."—p. 659.

"There is a translucent beauty, and glory, and holiness, and happiness, that pervade and quicken into life the spirit-home, that defy all verbal expression. There is such a specificness manifested in all things, and yet such an inseparable unity and brotherly love, as cannot be described, but is to be known only when experienced. It is impossible to portray the delights, the ecstasies, and the enchantments, which flow into the mind as it is immersed into this beautiful Sphere of spiritual existence."—p. 660.

"They have Love, Will, and Wisdom combined, and to a degree of perfection that transcends all human thought. Their love is so pure that there is a visible radiation from their countenances, and a halo of purity surrounding them that possesses inexpressible attractions.—It is attractive to behold their perfect Will, or the holy pensiveness of that faculty, which is not prompted to an improper act, or to do one thing derogatory to the general welfare."—p. 662.

"The inhabitants of the Third Sphere impart knowledge and express love to each other, as the sun imparts life and beauty to the forms of earth.

"The whole [scenery of this Sphere] forms a volume whose contents are celestial, and whose philosophy is the Divine Creator. Every passage which it contains proclaims goodness infinite, and every page unfolds volumes of immense love. The whole book is an offspring of Wisdom.—The spring, the rill, the stream, and the river, are introductions to this great volume. The groves, ravines, and forests, are margins that cast a reflection on its contents, and speak only of harmony and inherent affection. The valleys, plains, and beautiful gardens, abounding in all the luxuriant and immense creations of the spirit-home, are the impressed words on the leaves of this divine Book. And angels are the recipients of the instruction thereof, through which their interior powers are expanded to the glory of the Divine Mind for ever and ever. They drink at the fount of Wisdom, and walk in the fields and gardens of celestial Love. They are incessantly employed in imparting blessings to those who need, and meanwhile they receive in return the smiles and approbations of a delighted heaven. Such are the combined beauties of the celestial Sphere."—p. 665.

Such is the uniform tenor of our clairvoyant's account of the character and scenery belonging to the Second and Third Spheres, which, together with the First, as he assures us, answer to Swedenborg's three hells. Turn now to Swedenborg's treatise on Hell, and see how the accounts agree together. He says :

"Inasmuch as there are in general three heavens, therefore also in general there are three hells."—*Heaven & Hell*, n. 542.

"All who are in the hells are in evils and the falses thence, and no one there is in evils and at the same time in truths."—*H. & H.* n. 551.

"All spirits in the hells, when inspected in any light of heaven, appear in the form of their own evil; for every one is an effigy of his own evil.—In general they are forms of contempt of others, and of menaces against those who do not pay them respect; they are forms of hatreds of various kinds, also of various kinds of revenge; fierceness and cruelty from their interiors are transparent through those forms.—Their faces are direful and void of life like corpses.—Their bodies also are monstrous; and their speech is as the speech of anger, or of hatred or of revenge; for every one speaks from his own falsity, and the tone of his voice is from his own evil; in a word they are all images of their own hell.—It is to be known, however, that such is the appearance of the infernal spirits in the light of heaven, whereas among themselves they appear as men; this is of the Lord's mercy, lest they should seem as filthy one to another as they appear before the angels; but that appearance is a fallacy, for as soon as any ray of light from heaven is let in, their human forms are turned into monstrous forms, such as they are in themselves, as described above; for in the light of heaven everything appears as it is in itself."—*H. & H.* n. 553.

"This I can testify that their wickedness is so great, that it is hardly possible to describe even a thousandth part of it; and likewise, that unless the Lord protected man, it would not be possible for him ever to be rescued from hell; for with every man there are both spirits from hell and angels from heaven: and the Lord cannot protect man, unless man acknowledges a Divine, and unless he lives a life of faith and charity, for otherwise he averts himself from the Lord, and turns himself to infernal spirits."—*H. & H.* n. 577.

Concerning the *appearances* of the hells Swedenborg says:

"Some hells appeared to the view like caves and dens such as wild beasts inhabit in forests; some like to arched caverns and holes, such as are seen in mines.—In some hells there is an appearance as of the ruins of houses and cities after fires, in which ruins the infernal spirits dwell and conceal themselves. In the milder hells there is an appearance as of rude cottages, in some cases contiguous, having the aspect of a city with lanes and streets; within in the houses are infernal spirits, engaged in continual quarrels, enmities, blows, and fightings; in the streets and lanes robberies and depredations are committed.—There are likewise deserts, where is nothing but what is barren and sandy, and in some places ragged rocks, in which are caverns; in some places are also huts."—*H. & H.* n. 586.

"The odors which are from the perception of evil are most ungrateful, being fetid as those which arise from putrid waters, from excrements, and from dead bodies;—they who are in hell are in the spheres of such stench; and what is wonderful, they who are in them are not sensible of the horrid smell, yea, those stench are delightful to them, and when they are in them, they are in the sphere of their delights and dainties."—*Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 4628.

Such is the uniform tenor of Swedenborg's account of the character, appearance, odors, &c. of his three hells. The reader will judge for himself whether it differs from Davis' account of the First three Spheres, *only in "terms."* He will see that the two accounts, so far from being "*the same in substance,*" as our clairvoyant "*with assurance affirms,*" differ, as light and darkness, good and evil, truth and falsity, beauty and deformity, fragrance and fetor, differ.

Once more: According to our Clairvoyant, the spirits in the other life not only go on improving and perfecting in wisdom each in his own Sphere, but in the course of time they "*ascend through all the Spheres,*" from the lowest to the highest, which he calls the *Supercelestial*. "*Inasmuch as life is universal,*" he says, "*death cannot mar the divine constitution of things; and by virtue of*

this, the inhabitants of the Fourth Sphere, like those of the others, repose for a moment in silence, and awake as beings of the FIFTH SPHERE or *Superspiritual habitation*" (p. 669). Again: "As has been related of the transition of the spirits and angels of the Spheres below, so do those of the Fifth Sphere ascend to, and become the inhabitants of, the SIXTH, or the *Supercelestial habitation*" (p. 671). Thus the inhabitants of each of the three lower Spheres, which he assures us are the same as Swedenborg's three hells, are perpetually advancing towards the Sixth or Supercelestial Sphere, and will all finally attain to it.

Now the reader will please to bear in mind that our author says Swedenborg had "*an actual knowledge* of the relation and affinity existing between the natural and spiritual Spheres, and of the Spheres to one-another." And he declares that it is merely the use of terms and their particular application, "that presents the apparent discrepancy" existing between their relations concerning the Spheres. But our Clairvoyant, so far from teaching "the same in substance" as Swedenborg has taught respecting the progress of spirits in the other world from the lower to the higher Spheres, has plainly and most emphatically contradicted him. For Swedenborg uniformly teaches that those who become evil spirits, or who enter some infernal society in the other world, remain there to all eternity. There is no such thing to be found in his writings, as those in hell or the "three lower Spheres," ascending to heaven or the Spheres above them, so as permanently to dwell there. He every where declares this to be impossible. And although he teaches that the angels of each heaven will for ever continue to progress in wisdom and in love, yet their progress will be in that particular Sphere or heaven where each one finds himself in the other life. He assures us that those of the lower heavens can never advance through a discrete degree, and thus become angels of a higher heaven. (On this subject see A. C. 4588, 8206, 3993, 4464, 9594; C. L. 524; H. & H. 480, 363; D. L. W. 238.) The assertion of our Clairvoyant, therefore, that Swedenborg agrees substantially with him on this subject, is one quite contrary to the truth. The obvious disagreement is not greater in *terms*, than it is in *substance*.

But enough, and too much. We have pursued the subject considerably farther than we intended—farther than we should have done, but for the interest which this work has excited in the community. And yet we have only noticed some of the author's inconsistencies and palpable errors in point of fact, in the passages where he speaks of Swedenborg and his writings. We have taken no notice of his errors on other subjects. And this much, we think, is certain from what we have here shown, that, however learnedly and fluently the Clairvoyant may seem to discourse on some subjects, he does not always receive truthful impressions, but often those that are quite otherwise; for he repeatedly contradicts not only himself, but facts that are well known. His numerous and palpable blunders are, to our minds, sufficient to establish the genuineness or alleged origin of the book, and to repel the charge of imposture brought against the individuals concerned in getting it up. For we cannot think that any cunning or ingenious men—any men capable of writing such a book, or of conceiving such a gigantic hoax, would, in their *normal* state, have blundered so often and so stupidly as this *abnormalist* has. But we have known Clairvoyants—even the best of them—to make just such blunders before, and still to be quite as positive, even as Mr. Davis himself, that

they were right. Whoever discovers this author's mistakes on other subjects—some of which it has been our purpose here to expose, will be in little danger of being misled or harmed by his monstrous theological errors. For they will see that the *lumen* in which his mind must have been often, if not always, immersed, was of such a doubtful or peculiar nature, as to render him the most unsafe of all teachers, especially upon lofty spiritual themes. They will see that his pretended "Revelations" possess *not the slightest* authority, and that *not one word* of them, beyond what is capable of being demonstrated upon other and wholly independent grounds, is worthy the least credit. And in conclusion we would add, that the writings of Swedenborg lead us to expect, under all the circumstances, just such a mixture of truth and error as this book contains. These writings are the best "counterfeit detector" of which we have any knowledge, and we would, therefore, recommend them to others as the surest safeguard against the specious falsities of these and all similar "Revelations."

APPENDIX.

[As there is doubtless a strong propensity in the public mind, from the relations in which Swedenborg's disclosures have been presented to those of Mesmeric Clairvoyants, to regard them as substantially of the same nature, we have deemed it expedient to insert the following extract from a Review of "Mesmer and Swedenborg," published in the Boston New Jerusalem Magazine for January, 1847. The distinction so ably drawn between the case of Swedenborg and that of all magnetic subjects will scarcely leave it possible hereafter to confound them. The article is from the pen of THEROPHILUS PARSONS, Esq., of Boston, the author of the very interesting volume of "Essays" published about two years ago, which have delighted and edified so many readers.]

"Now let us compare" this case with that of Swedenborg. We perceive at once this important point of difference. Mr. Davis's normal, or natural, or common state, has no apparent connection whatever with his clairvoyant state. Doubtless there is a connection which we cannot perceive, between the peculiarities of his constitution—physical, intellectual, or moral—and this extraordinary clairvoyance. But it is certain that neither the amount nor the character of his knowledge while clairvoyant, have any perceptible relation whatever with the amount or character of his knowledge in the natural state. These two things do not differ *in degree*; that is, Davis does not know a little of cosmogony and philosophy, and think a little about them in his natural state, and then know and think a vast deal more on the same subjects while clairvoyant; but in this last state he has a marvellous quantity of knowledge on topics whereon in his natural state he has never in his life known or thought any one thing great or small.

"In the next place, it does not at all appear, that Davis's fitness or capability for this clairvoyance, or for the learning he there acquires or utters, is the result of any intellectual training. He has never been a student, never a practised and logical thinker; and has never acquired, by careful discipline and sustained endeavor, the power of profound and coherent meditation. It is not by reason of these things, or of any of them, in any degree, that he is able to learn and tell in a state of clairvoyance, the wonders of cosmogony, or of any branches of science or philosophy.

"The next thing to observe (and it is one of great importance), is, that Davis, *in his natural state*, knows nothing whatever of his magnetical state. They who looked on and saw can tell him what was done to him and what he did; they who listened and took notes can repeat to him what he said; but of all this he knows nothing himself; absolutely nothing more than if the Davis of the one

state, and the Davis of the other were two persons, living in distant countries without any intercourse with, or any knowledge of each other. And when they who heard him, repeat to him what he has said, they repeat it for the most part in vain, for he can comprehend it but very imperfectly; his own reason has not the preparation nor the power required to ascend to this lofty elevation. Thus it is with Mr. Davis; and all of this is in accordance with the usual phenomena of mesmeric clairvoyance, of which Mr. Davis may well be regarded as a type.

"And now how is it with Swedenborg? In the first place he was prepared for his illumination not only by a thoroughly moral and religious character, but by very many years most dilligently and most successfully devoted to the acquisition of a vast fund of knowledge. And this learning, immense in its extent, and embracing most of the branches of science, was nevertheless closely and definitely related to the higher learning which he afterwards acquired. It in fact became the foundation of his spiritual knowledge, and served him in comprehending spiritual truths in all their relations, and in illustrating them for the minds of others. In the next place he was prepared for his illumination by a long and careful intellectual discipline. Naturally a close and steadfast thinker, he became by study one of the first mathematicians in the world; and the effect of this exact and rigorous science, was to give clearness, precision, and accuracy to his reasoning powers. And all this was for the end that he might use these powers in understanding spiritual truth when it should be opened for him. It was designed for this end, and it had this effect. His eyes were opened, and he saw things of the spiritual world; his ears were opened and he heard its wisdom; and because of the thorough preparation of his wonderful mind, he understood what he saw, and drew just inferences from the phenomena around him, and grew in the wisdom of heaven while yet an inhabitant of earth. Lastly, and most importantly, between the state of Swedenborg when under illumination, and his normal, natural or common condition, there was no separation, no disunion, no impassable abyss. What he saw or learnt while under spiritual illumination, made him wiser in his natural condition. It was for the purpose of becoming wiser in his natural condition, that his eyes were opened, and his preternatural condition induced; because it was in and through his natural and normal faculties, and by his own laborious exertion of these faculties, that the effect of his own growth in knowledge and wisdom was to be produced upon the world.

"But Swedenborg and Davis agree in this, that their knowledge comes to them in ways which are not the common ways of human nature. Just so far as this goes, there is an analogy between them; but here is its precise limit; for if we go a step farther; if we look to see whether the ways are the same or similar in the two men, we shall find, instead of resemblance or analogy between them, the marks of difference, of contrast, of opposition. And this contrast we should express or describe as follows:

"All men receive all of life from the Lord, by the medium of the spiritual world. It is of the extremest importance that we should know this, and remember it. Consequently, nothing is more frequently, and more emphatically asserted in the works of Swedenborg. He who thinks a just thought, who knows that he has learnt some new truth, who is conscious that he has a good and pure affection.

who has the right of believing that he has done one good thing—all this good and truth, and all that is good and true in or about him, he should refer to the Lord as to the only source of all that is good and true, acknowledging that he himself is only a recipient of life from Him who is life itself. But this truth does not stand alone; nor is it the office of this truth to take from us freedom or responsibility, or plunge us into the torpor of fatality. For in connection with this truth, and always conjoined with it, is another which tells us that we have always the power, and always the duty, to be, to feel, and to act *as of ourselves*. Swedenborg says of this, in one of his relations, ‘Man can, *as of himself*, reform and regenerate himself, provided he in heart acknowledge that it is from the Lord. Every one who performs actual repentance, and believes in the Lord, is reformed and regenerated; man is to do both *as of himself*, but the *AS OF HIMSELF*, is from the Lord. . . . This is the only reciprocal of love and faith, which the Lord absolutely wills to be done to Him by man.’ T. C. R. 621.

“While it is true that whatever we have is the gift of the Lord, it is also true that among these gifts, is our own individual personality, is freedom, is rationality, and the conscious possession of these things. It is through these things, through the conscious possession of them, and through the free and voluntary use and employment of them, that we may be taught, improved, regenerated, saved. Such is the law of human life; and as far as we have any evidence whatever, the case of Swedenborg was no exception, but an instance of the most complete conformity; we have no reason to believe that there ever lived a person in regard to whom this law existed in fuller force, or with greater effect. Never was there a man farther from the state of one who is the blind and involuntary instrument of others. It was for the purposes of Providence that Swedenborg became wise beyond others, that he might teach the grounds and means of this wisdom, and thus open the way for the progress of mankind in new directions. For this purpose he was, in the first place, thoroughly educated as a youth; next, employed and practised as a man in the functions and studies adapted to invigorate and discipline his remarkable powers; and lastly, permitted to see in the various regions of the spiritual world, things which became to him food for deeper thought, and the means of higher wisdom. But they thus nourished his understanding, and gave him wisdom, for the very reason that he had been thus peculiarly and thoroughly prepared to see, and hear, and know these things profitably. And while his senses were so opened, and he was employed in gathering the gifts so vouchsafed to him, he was never any less in the exercise of his own rationality, never less free, *less himself*, than when he was a youth at college, or the great engineer and practical mathematician of his sovereign, Charles XII. In a few words, and to use an important distinction, made by Swedenborg himself in another relation, it is not accurate to say that the wisdom of the heavens came *through* Swedenborg to the earth; but that it came *first* to Swedenborg, and being possessed by him, came forth *from* him, by his own act, done *as of himself*.

“We suppose nothing of this kind, and nothing at all like it, is true in the case of Davis or of any mesmeric clairvoyant. There, the rationality of the individual is silenced, superseded, suppressed; or, it is occupied and used by others; his freedom is annihilated. In some cases, the hands and limbs move

in obedience to the will of another, and the tongue tastes, the eyes see, the ears hear, and the nose smells, as if the soul of that other was within them; and in other cases, the subject is invigorated with a life not his own, his eye brightens, and his lips pour forth the knowledge and thoughts of other minds, while the subject himself has no more to do with all this than the air whose undulations make the sounds he utters—no more than if he were dead, and it were possible to reanimate his corpse, and make it vocal by galvanism or magic. After awhile this possession passes away. The subject returns to his normal state; he is no longer a subject in any sense, but free; no longer another but himself. And then how is it? Every man who heard him speak, has somewhat of what he said when mesmerized; the sense, if it were comprehensible, or the sound of the words at all events in his memory; but the subject, or he who was the subject and then poured forth this utterance, has of it all now, now that he is *himself*, NOTHING. What else, then, can we conclude, than that the state of Swedenborg is as opposite to the state of a clairvoyant, as earnest of a high rationality is opposite to its inaction; as being one's own is opposite to being another's; as freedom itself is opposite to the absolute control of another; as the full and rejoicing exercise of all that constitutes the free, rational, conscious individual, is opposite to its sleep, suspension or suppression.

"We do not mean to say, that the clairvoyant's susceptibility or the value of his disclosures have no reference whatever to the character of his understanding. It is perhaps probably otherwise; although we do not pretend to decide this question with any confidence. They who are actually speaking through the clairvoyant, may not speak through his lips alone, but through his will and his understanding, of all of which they may have possessed themselves for that time. And the possibility of doing this, or the degree in which it may be done, doubtless depends more or less upon the original or acquired character of the man's mind or body. But what we mean is, to refer to a perfectly obvious fact, which is certainly a general if not a universal characteristic of clairvoyance of all kinds and degrees; and that is, the want of all connection between the mesmeric condition, and the state of free, voluntary, rational individuality; or, in other words the state of the man himself.

"From these views our opinion of the true relation between Mesmerism and Swedenborgianism, may easily be inferred. We hold the New Jerusalem to be eminently a free church, and a rational church. There is much involved in these few words, much that we shall perhaps take occasion hereafter to develop at greater length. In this connection we can only say, that we think an intelligent comprehension and a careful consideration of the history of preceding churches, will lead one to the conclusion, that there has been, from the beginning, a gradation in this respect, of which the New Church is the close and crown. In the most ancient times, when the inhabitants of earth breathed and pulsed with the heavens, as Swedenborg informs us, these were as the children of heaven. Afterwards, the Jewish Church was addressed by miracles of terror or persuasion, of menace or reward, and a faith was offered them which made no claims upon their understanding. Then came the first Christian Church, with its sanctions and its evidence of a far higher

character, still using miracles as its evidence, and threats and promises as its sanctions, but addressing itself, in a good degree, through the understanding to the heart. Now, from the same heavens from which all that is good and true comes down, the New Jerusalem is descending. It renounces all this kind of evidence, and all the peculiar sanctions which belong to the lower planes of the past. The church has now ascended a higher region, and appeals with pure and absolute exclusiveness to the rational faculty, and to those affections to which this faculty is an avenue. Not that she rejects all other good; she rejects no good, embracing all; the good of childlike simplicity; of mere obedience, or of motives of persuasion. But these are not the children born in her own house; and she welcomes and embraces all of them, that she may elevate them to or towards that free and voluntary reception of truth and good in the understanding and the will, which is peculiarly her own. Whatever other good may be within her borders, is not the less but the more good for being there; but it is only upon free, voluntary, rational good and truth, that her own name and seal are set.

"It is we think because the New Jerusalem has now descended with these powers and functions, that Mesmerism is now permitted to appear. It does not deal with truth, it does not quietly address the understanding and the affections, jealously respecting free and voluntary rationality, and conscious individuality, as the only basis of its own operations; but at once assails or paralyzes these, or takes plenary possession of them, or casts them into a sleep like the sleep of death; while it possesses and uses the man at its own pleasure. But a few generations since this could not have been permitted, for there was nothing upon earth able to meet and control it. Now, however, it has come. Come, liable to abuse and mischief undoubtedly, but we are willing to believe capable also of doing good and peculiar good, if, and so far as, it is under the control and government of reason and religion; of a reason rejoicing in the light and faithful to the guidance of a true religion.

"Swedenborg speaks of ancient magic as a reality. And since the existence of Mesmerism, it is common to find writers about it, explaining the strange phenomena of ancient religions or superstitions, or suggesting that they may hereafter be explained, by supposing that Mesmerism then also existed. In this there is doubtless some truth; and if any are offended by our likening Mesmerism to magic, we hope it will be remembered that magic itself was but the abuse of powers and relations which in their original purity were fruitful of good. We have yet but the beginning of Mesmerism. It may go on and develop a power of mischief, which it would fill us with horror to anticipate; but we believe it will also have a power of good, which should be turned to good account. We hope its unquestionable influence upon disease and pain will one day be hallowed by relations which will leave that power undiminished while they make it safe. And as a science, as disclosing facts and laws relating to the laws of vitality and the intercourse of the soul with the body, and the nature of spirit, we believe it may prove itself a valuable instructor."