

# The Herald of Light,

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE LORD'S NEW CHURCH.



The New Church is the body of Christ, including within itself the good, of every sect and persuasion, throughout the world, excluding none. In its visible form it embraces all who confess that Jesus is the Lord; receive the Holy Scriptures as his Divine Word, and accept the Doctrine of Regeneration, through obedience to its commandments and in the uses of a godly and self-denying life.

REV. T. L. HARRIS, EDITOR.

VOL. II.]

DECEMBER, 1858.

[No. 8.]

## CONTENTS:

	Page.
Prospective Fields of New Church action, . . . . .	339
The Golden Days of Charity, . . . . .	349
The New Christian Age, . . . . .	350
Budding Poetry, . . . . .	360
The Children of Hymen, . . . . .	361
Who and What is Jesus Christ? . . . . .	364
Funeral Hymn, . . . . .	375
The Fiery Baptism, . . . . .	376
A Letter, . . . . .	377
A Fragment, . . . . .	380
Baptism, . . . . .	381
Progress of Religion, . . . . .	384
First Book of the Christian Religion, . . . . .	385

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# THE HERALD OF LIGHT.

VOL. II.

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## PROSPECTIVE FIELDS OF NEW CHURCH ACTION.

Every successive wave of the Divine charity in Christendom, while it rises up into a clearer brightness of the Heavens, beats down also against a darker malignity of the Hells. Wesleyanism was a new wave of God's providence a century ago. The Anglican church at that time was a petrified and white-washed respectability, and sat like a dumb statue, with folded hands, leaving God's helpless ones to perish. The Lord put His spirit upon a little band of Oxford collegians, and the results of that movement have blessed four continents, nor is the impulse yet exhausted. When the celestial fire blazed upon their hearts, they did not begin their work among those well cared for minds who worshiped in the comfortable chapels of the Dissenter, or made themselves at ease within the ancient temples of their own recognised faith. The cry of an embruted, ignorant, degraded populace, whom existing modes of ministration had no power to influence,—this cry, so wild, so woful, yet often more like the roaring of a wild beast than the articulate accents of a man, smote them to the quick. They preached the Gospel to those who were heathen in a nominally Christian land.

Church ministrations at the present day, in Protestant countries, chiefly gather in those who are at least respectable, who are able to afford the luxury of a pew, or at any rate, can walk to the temple, on the Sabbath, with wife and children in decent and suitable attire. The church-going people, even in the humblest Protestant congregations, go well clad; they are not without home blessings, not without improving associations.

Protestantism has made great strides since Wesley's day. Christians were never as much alive as now, since the days of the Reformation, to the importance of evangelising the world.

When we come, however, nearer, especially in our own city, this flattering view gives place to one that is truly horrible. There are at least five classes to whom the religious ministrations of the day seem all but empty, hollow pretences.

It is not for us to discuss, at present, how much of truth, how much of grave mistake, is to be found in the objections which they urge against the various modes of worship, the various bodies of believers, our present task being barely to state the fact as we find it.

First, we find those who complain that they have been frozen or starved out of religion. The First Christian Church existed, in its origin, not as a mob, but as a confraternity. The apostles would have been horrified at one of our gaily dressed and reputable congregations. Fused into a glowing unity around a heart-centre of Incarnate Love, the primitive believers, all swayed with the same breath of inspiration as a bed of garden flowers before morning air, gave out their quickened affections in a blended and universal fragrance. They loved each other as members of one family, finding the ties of regeneration warmer, nearer, more imperishable than the ties of blood.

At the present day, we need not say how melancholy is the falling off. Parties sit at the same communion table who would scorn even an introduction to sisters at the same board. The world has driven home its poisoned pride-weapon, through the bleeding ventricles of the Church's heart. Of all people in the world, those who live the Christian life, are the most sympathetic. The very essence of their faith is sympathy. Yet members of societies sit, even on the Sabbath, wrapt in garments of isolation, and, if sheep at all, they are flocks scattered from each other and then snowed in. The complaint of Christians in the churches is a dearth of love. What wonder then if outsiders echo it and feel it. The sharp, ringing motto, "Take care of number one," pelts the brain at every turning. Struggling, toiling, often deeply suffering, deeply yearning, men and women cry, "For Christ's sweet sake, human brothers, human sisters, give us a little sympathy, a little love." Alas, a deathly winter benumbs the worshipers. They hear not these cries because their spiritual ears are gross and heavy; and nineteen-twentieths of them

would call this a "humbug" or an "infatuation." But oh! reader, heart-hunger is an awful thing, heart-cold when the shivering, naked soul, cut to the quick by human selfishness, longs for a little warmth,—heart-cold, we say, is worse than any pang the poor body can be made to feel. Thousands of good, honest men turn from the churches where they found no warmth, to the various secret societies. Thousands more have plunged into various reform movements. Thousands more into Spiritualism, using the word not in its Christian but in its popular sense. And how are they warmed? Are they fed in spirit? Their condition is like that of a man who, wearied in the snow drifts, beats his breast and stamps the ground, and calls out thus a little more of the reactive power of the system, and keeps off the chill from the heart a little longer, and then sinks down exhausted.

These human brothers, these human sisters of ours are often of the most generous, the most ardent, and even celestial genius; those who put the soul in whatever thing they undertake; those, alas, whose inversions of character drive them into extremes of bitter hatred, of contemptuous aversion. Yet here opens the real field for the New Church Missionary. Among this very class we are to find believers, teachers, saints, if need be martyrs. Even among Spiritualists, who have cast the Bible out of their families, and adopted in place of it the Deism that is taught by deceiving spirits, closed, as thousands of them are, against present acceptance of the Christian religion,—among these there is such a field of prospective labor as might make an Angel's heart leap for joy.

There is a tree that grows in the West Indies which presents to the stranger a delicious fruit. It is eagerly partaken of, and pronounced as food for all men. Soon the system recoils in itself against its poisonous properties, and exhibits all the symptoms of coming death. In the third stage, rejecting the pernicious mass, the man is left purged of the bilious secretions of months or years. Popular Spiritualism is like the fruit of this tree. It seems delicious when first partaken of, especially that great doctrine of Natural Progression which underlies the scheme. The pulse bounds with a new motion, the eye glitters with an unknown fire; but when the more interior nature of the



man, if there is any good left in him, absorbs the spirit of the doctrine, he sickens nigh unto death, he grows joyless and indifferent, or melancholy, or morose. His laugh may become more frequent, but mirth is forced. There is, in spite of all the sophistries that becloud the reason, a vague and creeping wretchedness. Spiritual circles, pantheistic writings, beguiling communications from personating spirits, but aggravate after a while this sad condition. His mind seems loosing itself in labyrinths that lead only from perplexity to perplexity. Soon the oracles lose their power and a Voice from the soul's deeps, that will not sleep, warns him of impending peril. The man, perhaps, becomes obsessed and sins deeply, forgets the covenant of his youth, and hungers after forbidden idols; perhaps is made use of by subtle fiends to ruin the faith of others; but if, as was said, there is any element of good left, if he is not morally dead, he but journeys to a crisis. When it comes, he begins to hate and loathe his spiritual obsessions, as a convict hates the cell, as a serf revolts against a cruel taskmaster. Oh! the melancholy that wastes, the deep despair that gnaws him. Reason seems tottering. The faces of his kind grow hateful. But if he passes this, sorely bruised and rent, he comes into another state. The poison has spent its force and been ejected from the system. Few are in a condition to be reached by the existing churches, however useful they may be to other classes of mankind. Much less can a nominal New Church, as practically stupid as it is theoretically wise, be made an instrument for their relief. Driven by the hunger of the soul to feed on a spiritual food that is poisonous, they now require a spiritual food that is nutritious. Taken advantage of, upon their sympathetic side, by deceivers from pandemonium, left lonely and bleeding, the clinging fibers of their natures are in a condition to be wound around the Rod of the stem of Jesse. Babies whom the perilous ocean of falses has not been able to swallow up, yet stranded upon the shore, they require thy uplifting hands, thy genial breast, our Mother! City of God! The Church of Love! the New Jerusalem!

The Church of God is a pure charity, and, as a charity, will reappear, at first, as a germ, till finally it becomes the mightiest of all visible institutions. Since all growth is from center to

circumference we can only expect it to unfold in its mighty power through a class of men who are raised up especially to serve as the points around which the crystallization is to occur. When they have been trained and qualified for the holy function the ministry of the Gospel will be entrusted to their hands. In the entire abnegation of the selfhood each will live as a pivotal servant of the Lord.

The preaching will be such as the world never hears in these days. The very atmosphere of the place of worship will be surcharged with Divine Influences. The effect of the discourses will be at once marked and obvious. The soul will feel the live words leaping to the onset. The effect on all who hear will be to produce finally that mighty crisis in which the soul takes its stand to meet the issues of eternity. After a while, as the Heavenly Spirit organizes together a group of affiliated believers, all in the same zeal of charity, combating as one, loving and hoping and striving as one, receiving the Lord as one, the New Church will become visible.

Then the new religious ordinances will begin to be observed. Strong in the charity, inspired through the celestial sense of the Word, and moved thereto by a mighty internal impulse, young and old will present themselves to receive that crowning baptism by which the receivers of the faith of charity are welcomed into a new relation and conjoined to those especial societies of the Heavens which descend to operate in the opening of the New and Crowning Age. This rite, as it is administered, will be attended with such holy fires and fervors in the heart, such sweet and incommunicable emotions within the bosom, that at once the receivers will feel cut off from the world and gathered into the Savior's own visible dwelling place.

Then, as they go up to partake of the divine supper, the Lord himself will impart to the bread and wine a real presence, making use of the consecrated elements as a medium by which to reach the ultimates of the organization. It will be partaken of with consciousness, growing at last to a complete conception, than no less a presence than that of the feast's great Master is in the midst. So the rites will vindicate themselves.

The Church thus established, wherever it unfolds for the tim

being around especial and pivotal centers, will in its ministry embrace a trine. Inmost, tried most deeply, experienced most thoroughly, bearing burdens heavily and continuously, wholly given up to work the works of God, communicating solely as he is moved upon by the Holy Ghost, will be the priest. As the inspirations fall more perfectly and are received more fully, a novitiate priesthood will grow up around that center of ministration. Outwardly in this Divine order will stand godly and experienced men and women, bearing the more external of the spiritual burdens of the charge. By this means the church will become organized. As this organization more completely unfolds, it will become a center of Divine force to the community in which it is established. Kept itself in a continuous reviving of religion, all of its members advancing, through spiritual combats and labors, faithfully performed, to the point where the selfhood dies and Christ is all in all, it will become a training school, preparing men to preach the gospel.

Nourished, by descending inspirations, experienced in combats, with a grand symmetrical and unitary faith, whose knowledges have rather blossomed through the internals of the spirit in its regeneration, in harmony with the unfoldings of the Word, than been merely memorized or technically taken in, each youthful servant of Messiah will find, in conjunction with other uses, training and exercise for spiritual gifts. No sooner is a young man converted in the New Church than he will begin to receive from the Lord discipline qualifying him for an especial use. So the church brings forth, in perpetual series, a living priesthood, and provision is made for the preaching of the gospel far and wide.

As the general body of believers becomes more consolidated in love, it becomes a revival-center for religious awakening; the converting power begins to be made manifest, till finally, men and women are unable to restrain their interior natures from calling out for pardon and salvation. They will even linger when the services are at an end, unable to leave the place where such Divine power descends until there comes a consciousness of forgiven sin. Quietly and solemnly as the congregation disperse, the mourning suppliants will remain, with all who are moved in



the Lord. The doors will be closed and then, as prayer after prayer is offered, and the burning, ravishing heart-melodies of the New Jerusalem pour forth their music, the influence that so often attends the labors of the devoted missionary, in every true faith, will settle down like summer with all its warmth and fragrance upon a winter landscape, to melt the frozen soul, to open channels for influx and flood the happy being with peace and new-found joy.

Discussing not polemics; leaving controversialists to contend with the echo of their own voices; the zeal of conversion and regeneration will inspire the faithful. As by degrees the work extends and the body becomes energized for more aggressive action, still retaining its unity, still acting in a solid force of love, it will establish its branches, having already trained men eager in their pure youth to wrestle and plead with God in prayer, and then to issue forth and mightily utter the truth that stirs the spirit to its eternal interests. By this means the light which the Lord kindles, not hid under a bushel, but placed in a candlestick, will shed abroad its beams. Men and women saved from vortices of deep despair, from labyrinths of ruinous infatuation, from the petrification of worldliness, from the hollowness of seeming, finding Christ the Lord as really with them as he ever was with the seventy and the twelve, each becoming a burning lens through whom the Divine Sun concentrates its splendor and its heat, will enkindle each degree, each plane of social life, till at last the New Church, the Working Church, the Redeeming Church, the Heart Church, will gather her millions.

"I have come," said our Lord, "to set a fire in the earth and what if it is already kindled." Here then is the only refuge for the Spiritualist. When once the human organization has been laid open to the approach of Spirits, there is but one mode of escape, and that is the giving up of the selfhood to the Lord. It is impossible to go, with any expectation of real safety, into the External Church;—equally as impossible to go into surface Swedenborgianism; for both are unable to cope with the roused powers of the world to come. Both, however useful to the man whose interiors are closed, are useless when the interiors are opened. Of course the qualification must be inserted, that when

such churches become themselves organized unities of embattled love and spiritual force, to overcome demons, they are extensions of the New Church and fortresses against the hells.

Universalism has succeeded by the *unconverting power*, and since the period of the revolution, has become the greatest of the liberal sects. Its ministry, has, wherever successful, induced upon the intellect the fallacy that regeneration is a mere figment, that conversion to God and the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the remission of sins, and the change of will, of which the experimental Christian speaks, are so many hallucinations. Of the good and useful moralities promulgated by the teachers of this sect, and of the entire respectability and uprightness of many, both of its clerical and lay members, we do not speak at present, nor do we now attempt to show on what dim adumbrations or inversions of central truths much of their theory has been placed. This is the point, that, as a sect, they have succeeded by *unconverting men*.

The ingenuous youth hears the preaching of the Gospel, knows that he is a sinner, has deep conviction of sin, is brought to a genuine repentance and experiences the beginning of a Divine soul-work. While there is a Divine Spirit in the Old Church which moves the heart, he finds its human theology unable to meet the demands of the intellect. It is then that the Universalist slips in with labored arguments to show that conversion is but a puerile dream. In spite of the fact that many devout and good men are Universalists, the system is, as has been often said, the stepping stone to infidelity. As a theory it is infidel, or at least deistical, in that form which most commends itself to the common mind. This is evinced from the fact that pantheistic Spiritualism finds, in that great body, its most open field and runs riot among its members.

The old church is ineffectual as a means of reaching the hundreds of thousands who slumber in an easy Universalism. Oh, such generous and loving hearts, such warm and tender natures embrace this faith! It rests on a human basis of natural good which is most admirable. Originally born from the reaction of the human heart against Calvinism, it gathered up multitudes who could not believe that God was hate; that could only worship him as the All-father.

Swedenborgianism, with its grand mistake, the doctrine of eternal equilibrium between good and evil, and the ceaseless torture of human spirits in the hells, can never reach this class; for it enunciates a central fallacy, repugnant to good men every where, a doctrine at which charity revolts and which it utterly repudiates. The same objection weighs against all churches or sects which make the unending torture of human beings in the hells a cardinal doctrine.

Universalism is breaking up; its ministry decreasing; its prosperity languishing; its most devoted spirits looking about them to find a more satisfactory solution of the problem of the universe. They have given up, what was believed in by almost all of their connection till within a few years, the doctrine that retribution is confined to this life, and now have become a sect of Unitarian Restorationists, holding, for the most part, what was Unitarianism forty years ago, with the more complete expression of a faith in ultimate salvation for all mankind. The phenomena of Spiritualism have convinced many that there is a terrific vortex of evil in the next life. To the deep seeing eye the denomination exhibits a fissure; rapidly cleaving it into a party of natural progressionists, and a party of Christian Spiritualists. The progressionists can only be reached in the recoil from the fantasy into which they so rapidly plunge, but the Christian element of the denomination must open to the New Church; must open to the satisfactory solution of the great world-problem, which it presents in the unfolding of the celestial sense of the Word. This work may be slow but it will be sure.

A third class whom the New Church is specially designed to reach and influence, consists of that vast body which every year falls away from the old church into indifference. Moved upon at first by a genuine religious emotion, and receiving a direct visitation from the Lord, the youthful spirit, led perhaps by some direct out-breathing of Eternal Love is prompted to confess the Savior, and seeks the Church as a communion of kindred hearts. Finding his ideal not realized; chilled, repulsed and wounded, where he sought with all the glowing ardors of a first desire to become one with the mystical body of believers, he drops away, after a while, as silently as the leaf falls from the

tree, and, whirling and tossing upon the winds of change, lies prone at last upon the cold ground of religious insensibility.

The Church blames him as an apostate, as one who never had a seed of grace in his spirit, or as one in whom that seed fell into a scanty or thorny soil. There is a germ still extant within millions, a germ of genuine religious experience, which they themselves are unconscious of. These form a vast body beyond all visible communions. They need but the heat of the Divine Love, sweetly attuned to their state, explaining to them the causes of their religious decline, showing them their virginal experience of union with Christ to have been a blissful reality, and then the very soil of Society will heave as they come up to resurrection. So sleep the seeds of the garden, the forest and the field, beneath vast, snow-covered landscapes. The south wind blows his clarion: the dreaming buds awake: the world revives in a sudden miracle of bloom.

There are two classes which yet remain to be adverted to. The young, to whom life is a novelty: the old in sin, to whom it is a curse. Of the first, the Lord will raise, perhaps, the most fervid and earnest champions of Divine Truth, the most impassioned and apostolic organs of His Divine Love. Conversion into the New Church is totally unlike conversion into the Old, both in the serene transparency of a cloudless light of truth which illumines the understanding, and the more direct revelation of the love that renovates the breast. Hence, accepting in the Lord Jesus the Infinite Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, grasping the doctrine of the internal senses of the Divine Word with all their profound, far reaching knowledges, a few months of prayerful action does the work of years, and, from a New Church revival, the young man can go out as a New Church Missionary, in all things moved and animated by the Holy Spirit, while his life becomes a revelation of the presence of the Lord, and His power to save sinners. But he must have the baptism of the Spirit: otherwise intellectual and oratorical gifts are of no avail.

Finally, to the natures who have sinned most deeply, and suffered most profoundly, to the stormy, Impenitent Classes in Society, who ripen into human wolves, tigers and devils,—to thieves



and burglars, harlots and procuresses,—to those whom sin has taken on the decks of its pirate craft and thrust them upon the gang-plank, that already inclines to launch their souls into the waters of perdition,—to those who fester in the center of the world's corruption, and to all whose hearts are ripening to this state, though the life is masked with decorous semblances, in fine to the very chief of sinners, comes the New Church, with hand of charity, breath of mercy, lip of fire, voice that now melts into deepest pathos, now smites like a trenchant sword, cleaving away the subterfuges which the mind of Satan has woven round the intellect,—revealing to them what God's Word, what Eternity, will soon make known; yet presenting Christ as their Savior, able, with Almighty hands, to grasp the very jaws of destruction, and to pluck them from the verge of its devouring sepulchres.

Here the New Church will stand; here will it labor, and plead, and supplicate, while, from the dripping wave of evil, the wrecked on life's tempestuous ocean shall come forth to call it blessed.

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#### THE GOLDEN DAYS OF CHARITY.

The golden days of charity  
Are nearer than they seem;  
Earth, like the fragrant orange tree,  
Wakes from its winter dream:  
Through all her glad, reviving veins  
Messiah's life is poured;  
And in her inmost being reigns  
The Spirit of the Lord.

Ring on, ring on, in heaven above,  
O sweet, celestial chimes;  
To hearts that own the Savior's love  
Return the morning times:  
Ye too, lift up your lofty lays,  
Bright orbs of space afar;  
For in the Lord's divine embrace  
Revives the dying star.

## THE NEW CHRISTIAN AGE.

BY M. C. C. CHURCH.

"Behold I make all things new."—Rev. 21: 5.

THE present age is unparalleled in the history of humanity. Its marches onward in material science—its reachings after the unknown and speculative—its terrible grouping of Spiritual facts—all proclaim the startling issues and disclosures of the times. The Church, with its traditional dogmas, is no longer held sacred. Its Elusinian mysteries are brought to light, and the Vandal hand of the Unbeliever threatens to destroy forever her altars, and to put out her sacred fires. All creeds are being submitted to the test of a scrutinizing analysis, and "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin" is written upon all that cannot pass the ordeal. There is a general breaking up of things all over the world—a sundering of faiths into fragments to be re-united, we hope, into one harmonious whole. As a consequence resulting from this wide-spread desolation, we have many extremes of opinion. The vigorous and unsanctified thinker rushes wildly into the meshes of infidelity—the tame conservative, who fears, or is too indolent, to think, relapses into the deadly embrace of Romanism. Protestantism has innumerable foes within, and a rushing, sanguinary foe without. Her embattled hosts cower before the advancing steps of the Nature-worshipping Pantheists, who fill the invading armies of hell in the invisible. Her generals are falling all around us—her hitherto seemingly invulnerable panoply is pierced and her unprotected heel, smitten. She no longer stands in the vanguard of Hope and Triumph, but like the whipped dog skulking to his kennel, she trembles before her pursuers. There is apparently no hope left for man.

Again—strange wonders are transpiring. The veil of the invisible has been torn aside. Its terrible realities loom up before us—its heaven of glorious light, its hell of hideous night, are revealed in their, to us, unexpressed significance. The Ancient World, with its unsolved problems, is again coming to claim the investigation and attention of mankind. That vast Heathenism, with its conflicting philosophies, which over-spread the East,

and darkened all with the sable pall of night, and which was only illumined by the glorious sun which arose on the planes of Palestine, is being re-inaugurated. Through the *False* phase of Modern Spiritualism we are having re-enacted the devilism of the Ancients. It comes in a specious guise—often enslaving the victim ere it is aware of the despoiler's approach—leaving it a wreck on the shores of Doubt and Uncertainty. Under the mask of friendship it hides a hideous face—all abloated with sensuality and sin. To the materialist this False Spiritualism comes to *demonstrate* (?) the Immortality of the soul, and to present as a faith that system of Material Pantheism, which is reflected from the hells of the Invisible—a system which destroys the freedom of man, abnegates the distinction between Good and Evil, annihilates the personality of God, and resolves everything into a terrible *necessity*. To all, it assumes a chameleon color suited to the wants and disposition of the recipient.

We have but one protection from this False Spiritualism. This protection is to be found within the Lord's New Church,—or, as some term it, Christian Spiritualism. Outside of these influences we are unsafe. From the Christian Heaven continually outflows from the Lord, the Divine Inspirations of Truth and Holiness. This inspiration is antagonistic to the mephitic vapors of the hells. The influx from the heavens is tacit and gentle, inbreathing into our souls God's Love and Wisdom. The virus from the hells is turbulent and deceptive. It destroys the freedom and makes the medium the mere machine of an arbitrary despot, injecting an infernal fire into the passions, and filling the soul with bitter hatred to all that is just, truthful and lovely. This influx wars against Christ and His true followers and in the times which are coming, all will feel its withering curse, unless there is a recognition of the true faith. And when we say *true faith*, we have no arbitrary meaning to attach to these words. We mean a discrimination between the True and the False, in Christianity—that Christianity which is adapted to all the wants of human nature. Is it the want of a true conception of God? This system gives it through the Life and Person of Jesus Christ. That is to say, through Him was revealed to the external senses and internal perceptions of

man, the absolute Godhead in unity. That, in the language of John, "He was God;" that the person of Christ was the center-point where-through the Infinite displayed His perfections. If we wish to love and adore our Heavenly Father, we do so acceptably by worshipping this sublime and exalted personage. Do we feel that our hearts are corrupt and need cleansing, He, through the fiery baptism of regeneration, purifies our natures from all that is foul and unclean. Do we wish to know the law of Eternal Truth and Right, we have it in the Word of which He is the author. Do we wish to explore the Invisible, and enjoy the communion of angels, we can do so with safety by leading the life which He lead, and recognizing Him as our Guide and Protector. The animus of this true faith is unfolded in the doctrines of the New Church. This Church is interior—and interblends the heart-natures of all the *good*, whether in Heaven or on earth, and makes them one—as the Universal Father is One and Indivisible.

In presenting its external features to the world in the Past, the Church has assumed arbitrary relations to man. After the Golden Age, when humanity fell from its primitive purity, the Noachic Church, according to the interpretations of the Word by the best illuminated seers, was established, and through it the inspirations of Truth descended from God to man. When it became corrupt, and was vastated of the true life, and the true doctrine, another Church was established, called the Jewish Church, which was representative in its character—representative of the True Church which has ever existed, but which did not find its true ultimatum until the establishment of the First Christian Church. This last church has become corrupt, and God is now, in these latter times, preparing to overthrow the Old order of things and to inaugurate the New—new only in the sense of adaptation of means to accomplish His Infinite Purposes; for strictly speaking, there is nothing new in the domain of moral truth. The same great problems,—God, Life, Freedom, the Origin of Evil, the Hereafter,—which interested the Ancients, interest us. Humanity, in retracing its pathway to the Eden, which it lost by sin, moves in cycles—each cycle bringing it into nearer relations with the Absolute and the Divine. The Present is the



Grand Cyclic Period of the Ages—the Consummation of God's purposes in the redemption of man, and in the grand unfolding of these purposes, we are to have a Cosmopolitan Church, which is to meet the intellectual and heart wants of the peoples. The various movements of the age are but so many step-stones, which lead to the vestibule of this great temple of truth. The middle of the last century saw the dawn of the NEW ERA and the light, which then flickered across the almost universal gloom, has expanded into the radiance of a glorious sun, whose effulgence is yet to fill the earth and warm the life of humanity into generous activity and health. It was the Sun of the *New Christian Age*. The world's great seer, SWEDENBORG, was permitted, under its shadowy dawn, to see and to proclaim, as far as it was in order for him to do so, the glorious truths of this New Dispensation—truths which, when understood, strip the Christian Religion of its mysticism and jargon, and show it, as it always was, the child of the Infinite One. Under his illumination this religion is made philosophical and appreciable to the common sense of mankind. He shows it in its adaptation to the wants of the masses, as well as in its adaptation to the wants of the philosopher. In his works the doctrine of the Lord, which has disturbed the peace of the Church for centuries, is reconciled on a basis which will bring together all the opposing parties, and make them one in feeling as well as in faith. It is reconciled in the doctrine of the Divine Humanity of the Lord—which was the doctrine of the Primitive Church. In His *Arcana Cœlestia*, he has laid the foundation for a true interpretation of the Word—an interpretation which will free the Sacred Text from the falsehoods of its enemies and the mistakes of its friends. It will henceforth stand as the demonstrated Word of God;—not guessed at as heretofore.

This interpretation is now being continued in the Celestial Degree of the Word, through HARRIS, in the *Arcana of Christianity*. In this work the truths of the WORD shine and sparkle and unroll before the intellectual vision, like the dew-gathered sunshine and floating clouds of a summer's morn. Even the infidel must bow, in silent admiration before the august light, which flames through the interstices of the Oracles of Truth. Under the in-

spired pen of this illuminated Seer, the Sacred Page is all a-glow with new life, and we are made to feel, whilst perusing his startling disclosures, that all human commentaries, are as the rush-light to the blazing luminary of day. That the discrepancies and apparent paradoxes in the Word, serve, like the jagged peaks and earthquake upheavals of nature, to heighten its beauty and grandeur, and to show its infinite variety of adaptation to human needs.

Swedenborg assumes that if God has a *Written Word* at all, it is in harmony with His unwritten Revelations through Nature; and that this Word can be *demonstrated* to be such, as certainly, as any problem in Mathematics, or any law in Physics; that there is as much *certainly* in this department of investigation, as there is in Material Science. With the simplicity of a child he undertook the herculean task of testing the validity of the claims set up for this book, and for the divine system which is unfolded from its pages. The world has the result of his labors, in the form of some thirty odd volumes—which are now being read and appreciated by thousands. He saw, in his interior elucidations of the great volume of Nature, that every external manifestation has an internal spirit and is the clothing of some affection of God. That all we *see* is the out-birth into space of some Divine Idea; that everything around us *corresponds* to something in the Invisible. By interior illumination seeing this great law of correspondence manifested in all Nature,—the acknowledged expression of God's Will,—he came to the conclusion that the Word must agree with this fundamental idea, in, at least, its more interior essence. He was intromitted into conditions which enabled him to see that such was the fact. He saw that the *Book of Truth* was written in symbolic language, and that within the external letter there was contained the Infinite of all Love and Wisdom.

We have not space to go into a lengthy presentation of the peculiar claims made by this extraordinary man to his high office of interpreter of the Holy Scriptures. His varied attainments as a scholar—his immense labors as an author, and above all, of his deep and fervid piety, and his child-like simplicity of character. All these are amply illustrated in his numerous works, and to these works we take pleasure in referring the reader, for infor-

mation in regard to one of the most remarkable men, take him all in all, that ever lived. These works comprise some sixty odd volumes, and more than half of them are on theological themes,—and mainly devoted to the unfolding of the Spiritual Sense of the WORD. Of these latter works, his *Arcana Cœlestia* is the most important and elaborate; and no student who values Biblical lore should be without it. In these times when everything sacred is being questioned, and the light of all *past* revelations is threatened with extinction, it is necessary, at least, that clergymen should appreciate the *real* claims of that Book, on which, as a rock, they profess to rest their faith. Infidelity is backed by the cohorts of evil in the Invisible, and unless the Bible can be sustained by better arguments than those which have hitherto emanated from the profession,—the Christianity and Bible of the external Church is doomed. But taking the stand-point of Swedenborg, and of the illuminated Seers, who are now being prepared by the Lord, to explore still further the Spiritual and Celestial senses of the WORD, the friends of the Bible are invulnerable; they can defy the leagued legions of hell.

Through Swedenborg we have partially received, and through others we are to get, a *true* conception of the terrible realities of the Life Beyond. If their representations be true, it is not what the self-satisfied Pantheist, whether of the material or ideal school, would make it,—a life without sin, where all is peace, joy and rest,—where *no evil* intervenes to stop the soul's "Eternal Progress." But it is a life where Good and Evil,—Hell and Heaven ever war,—and will ever war, until the last enemy is put underfoot. There, as here, Heaven is the reflected image of Goodness and Truth,—there, as here, Hell is a huge lie; the expression of all that is evil and false and foul in the human heart. Both are seeking to mingle these opposing elements through mankind upon the earth plane; and humanity is beginning to realize, that which the seers and prophets of the Lord, in the past and present, have so persistently stated: that man stands, on this planet, between two terrible forces,—good and evil,—and that by his ultimated words and acts he makes his election between the two; and in the other life, after such election is fully determined, he will take his position on one side or the other. He

will do this of himself, however, without any arbitrary judgment of the Lord, save by that eternal law of Justice, which even the devils must acknowledge as right,—and obey.

The New Church explains all those soul-problems which disturb sensitive natures, and which, in the weird shapes they so often take, mar the happiness of millions.\* Its theology gives us a conception, which is reasonable, of the nature of God,—of the evolution of Creation,—of the modes of life on the orderly orbs of the Universe,—of the Origin of Evil,—of how Freedom and Necessity are reconciled,—of Heaven and Hell,—of the original condition of the race,—of the fall of man, and of the great system of means which was brought into requisition for his salvation,—of the final issues of this life, and of the life to come. These knowledges and others growing out of them, never before given to the world, are now descending through those, who, in the Providence of the Lord, are being prepared, in the orderly processes of illumination, to give these Arcana to the world.

As Supply and Demand is an Eternal Mode of God's Government, no less in the Physical than in the Moral, we find that no sooner is the Celestial degree of the Church established among men, than the Celestial sense of the Word is ultimated to meet the heart demands of this new relation among men. The *Arcana of Christianity* contains the beginning of these Celestial teachings. These teachings are startling in their character, and, the men of this age must prepare, as they never have prepared before, to meet the issues which will be forced upon them. They must prepare to serve God or Baal,—they must know their familiars, and decide who they will have as their associates, the devils in hell, or the angels in heaven; for as sure as the Lord reigns supreme they must take one side or the other. No serving of God and Mammon can shield us now. The fiat has gone forth. This earth must be redeemed. And this can only be done through deep pains and soul agonies,—through the wrenching, as it were, of the spirit from the body,—and through the fiery baptism of the Holy Spirit, through the gradual process of Regeneration.

Men say, in these times of moral desolation, that Christianity is dead and rotten,—that it expired amid the rude shocks which



it sustained in the first centuries. Even good men, who, on other subjects, have philosophical foresight and insight, shake their heads and say, that Christianity has done but little for the redemption of man. Bad men say so because the wish is father to the thought,—because it comes in contact with their unholy desires and wicked hearts. It lays bare their corrupt natures, and shows them, as in a glass, their likeness as drawn by the Infinite Artist. They see scenes which make the soul quake with fear,—and the knees to tremble when no one cometh. But is the fact true? We say no. Christianity to-day is brighter,—more demonstrably Divine than at any former period of her history. For the last eighteen centuries she has mixed and mingled, and adapted herself to the rude conditions of human society. In the past she was plastic, because it was the only way she could reach the masses, but in the present and coming ages, she will assume another aspect. She will be stern and unbending,—exhibiting more the attributes of Justice, and, to the unilluminated mind, Vengeance. She will command where before she persuaded. Christianity has a heart, and weeps for the fallen. She is a daughter of the skies, virginal; she fears not to seemingly soil her robes when she can raise one soul above its former condition. It is a slander to say that she is corrupt. She cannot be corrupted. Can pure Love and Truth be corrupted? These co-related elements are her life. These she bequeaths to all. It is humanity that is corrupt, and it is it which has left the unholy touch upon the page of Time. Christianity found the race in the lowest condition; and to ameliorate this condition was her mission. Will the skeptic say she has not fulfilled her part,—fulfilled it nobly,—in the grand drama of the ages? When we reject this only true religion, and sigh for the novelties and infatuations of this age, we little think or appreciate the conditions, under which she made her advent, and performed her work. We know that the Augustin Age is extolled as the almost Golden Past of our earth. The externalist asserts this,—because he sees that which seems to him the acme of all human grandeur: the reign of peace,—the concentration of the masses into one strong earth-encompassing empire,—the encouragement and spread of Letters, and the Fine Arts, &c., &c., but

the Spiritual Philosopher, who descends beneath the surface into the world of *causes*, beholds quite a different picture. He sees that this world was bound to Satan and to Hell,—he sees that almost every inhabitant of earth was obsessed by demons; and that the philosophies of the ancients, the infernal orgies and religious rites of Paganism, which was then almost universal, had their inception in Pandemonium, and were ultimated, through impressive persons, to the external. He sees that so deep had humanity fallen,—so steeped in sensuality and crime,—so lost to every impulse to true virtue and holiness, that the Eternal Father Himself had to descend into human flesh, and bring back his erring children to the paths of rectitude and truth; and restore His own image, which had been obliterated and lost. The Spiritual Philosopher sees further that the apparent clearness of the sky, which seemed to over-arch the advent of the Saviour, was only the calm which preceded the storm. Satan saw that some movement was on foot in the heavens, for a grand event. So grand was it, that even he and his minions ceased for a while their hellish work, to notice and prepare for the issues which were being forced to a crisis. Hell was aghast, the empire of Satan was threatened,—that empire which the Lord permitted Him to consolidate and to ultimate into our earth, in the Universal Empire of the Romans,—that empire which was afterwards used in the furtherance of Christianity. That Christianity which, in its iconoclastic triumphs, destroyed the idolatry of the then recognized world; that Christianity which has since waved the torch of a higher civilization over nearly every island and continent of our sin-cursed earth.

Men do not think, or else they are blinded by their own sins, when they say that Christianity has failed. There is no explaining the government of God, without recognizing the elements of this religion. What an absurdity is Modern Pantheism, with its tadpole theory of the Creation of man—with its monstrous conception of God, which is, when resolved into fact, no God at all; its annihilation of the freedom of man, and forcing him to obey an irresistible law of Fate through all eternity, or, at least, until he becomes a *God*; with its asserted purity of the human inmost and of its denial, that there is any such thing as evil. Its

reasoning on the nature of man and his destiny is all "sound and fury signifying nothing;" it is a Babel of words. Take the hypotheses, facts and arguments of Christianity, however, on all these subjects, and they appear clear as the sun-light. We stand upon solid truth, and can grapple with error from any source, whether from the subtleties within, or from the sophistries without. Our doubts all flee, and our faith rests upon a rock. We no longer grope in darkness, but the Sun of Eternal Love and Truth shines above us, illuminating our pathway with its glorious radiance.

The great question of this age, as indeed it has been of all ages, is the question of REGENERATION. "You *must* be born again," if you would dwell in the Kingdom of our God. Although this is a question of so much importance, and is taught in nearly every church in the land,—it is strange that so few know what it means, or appreciate its significance. The common conception, that it is some instantaneous operation of the Holy Spirit on the human heart, which changes it,—in the twinkling of an eye,—from the foulest corruption to the purity of heaven; changes the man-demon into the man-angel, is all wrong. *This* idea of regeneration has done more injury to our holy religion than almost anything else. Young converts soon find that after they have gone through with what is called "getting religion," they have terrible doubts as to whether they are as *pure* and *angelic* as they thought they were. They mistake *conversion* for *regeneration*. The first is instantaneous, and is accompanied with happy experiences from the Lord, but it is only the commencement of the Christian Life,—of Regeneration, which brings us, if we are faithful, into the "Kingdom of Heaven." This doctrine is fully explained by the teachings of the Church of the New Age. Regeneration commences when we dedicate our souls,—our all, to the Lord. When this is done, He commences that course of discipline which is most suited to our nature, and by the constant operations of His Spirit, if we are true to our vow, He finally redeems us from the power of Death, Hell, and the Grave. When this new life is commenced, we begin to know what these terms mean. We pass through the most terrible temptation-combats,—both in spirit and body. The Lord, how-

ever, helps to fight our battles, and brings us off more than conquerors. During these terrible experiences, the soul is made to feel its own corruption and weakness, and that it has no help or protection except through the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Hell is a reality*; and he who does not believe it,—who does not believe that *evil* is something more than the mere absence of good, let him try to follow the example of Christ,—let him endeavor to crucify his selfishness,—to purify his affections, so that a full “regeneration of heart” may be his blessed experience,—let him endeavour to seek “first the kingdom of heaven, and His righteousness,” and he will soon see whether or not there is a devil and a hell. He will soon have a realization of the true condition of those who lived in the anterior ages of the world. He will soon *know* that nothing less than the Almighty God Himself, can redeem man from his fallen state. That so low is his condition, that nothing but a *God-man* can reach him. We who live in this age are too apt to forget the *means* which have been used to bring us into the enjoyment of our present privileges. We forget that it has been through God’s Providential Religion, Christianity, that all this has been accomplished. We fail to perceive, through the long vistas of the past, that grand linking of events which brought forth, from the womb of Time, the Manifestation of the Godhead,—in Christ,—and the Beginning, Progress, and Final Consummation of that True Church, whose glorious mission has been, and will continue to be, to redeem a lost Humanity.

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#### BUDDING POETRY.

We know a little blue-eyed girl of three years old, who was nestled in her mother’s arms, at twilight, looking out at the stars.

“Mother,” said she, it is getting dark.”

“And what makes it dark, Caroline?” said her mother.

“Because God shuts his eyes,” replied the little poet.

## THE CHILDREN OF HYMEN:

A STORY OF THE INNER LIFE.

### CHAPTER IV.

When the fifth day of regeneration dawns, the Christian, in the Lord's Church on earth, will doubt no longer that Heaven is all a Lover's Paradise. The soul's divine home will seem to him no more a dance of unsubstantial shadows, for Heaven will have begun below, and, sweetly ultimated in the natural consciousness, the pleasures of the Angels will have been tasted and enjoyed. Then the experienced believer will comprehend this truth, that God is very Man, that Christ, the Infinite Lord of Heaven and all the earths, makes His triumphal entrance into the human breast, and spreads a banquet there of richest viands, diffusing, around the most mechanical or painful life, the radiant lights of an inward paradise.

Robert Burns met me, his Highland Mary leaning on the manly arm; and now the two became transfigured and melted into one image. Watching the radiant vision recede from sight, it rose and shone in the distance, as if it were a lamb of golden fleece amidst the herbage of some ethereal meadow, where thousands of other sheep appeared disporting; then hill-tops, plains, and valleys, reaching as if into interminable space, seemed all covered with these beautiful flocks of immortals.

I hardly know how to describe in human language that which now followed. I heard a Voice. It was the Good Shepherd calling to His own, and then it was given to behold that All-radiant One appearing to each in His one Divine-human image, and calling them by name. Tears, that trembled from invisible fountains of joy, overflowed the happy eyes, and I realized, in a new sense, the profound significance of His wondrous words, *My sheep hear My voice and follow Me.*"

If there is any object in Heaven, it is the thought of Christ made visible; any music in Heaven, it is the voice of Christ made audible; any light in Heaven, it is the smile of Christ



made perceptible; any affection in Heaven, it is the love of Christ, descending into the bosoms of those He loves. There it is seen that He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. Its riches are His gifts; its palaces His handiwork; its seasons His messengers, and all the Angels are little children, who meekly sit near the Beloved, drinking in the all of existence, while He passed by. Heaven, is a state of dwelling with God.

A rosy, blushing maiden, in whose cheek the pure carnation glowed upon the lily's whitest petal, accosted me, with "Brother! brother!" The marvelous landscape now was shadowed with an ethereal mist, which veiled the sun till that intensely glorious luminary, which is the Lord's presence, shone as with a suspended brightness. My sister spoke again, "Brother!" I answered, "Here all are brothers, all sisters, yet some peculiar attraction draws my spirit to the tender one who now addresses me."

"But now," was the wondrous response, "I closed my eyes upon an earthly scene. My body still sleeps, while watching Angels keep guard over it. But as to my real self, I stand by your side, through whom as a beloved teacher, messages from our Lord, have often reached my external mind." I called her earth-name.

Three wives of the Angels drew near, Zalathuma, being one of the group, and said, "This is a new comer whose sleep-state has now been made complete. One brought shoes for her feet, another white raiment, in place of the floating, cloud-like halo which had hitherto enveloped the person, another a coronal of dewy blossoms yet unblown. They led her away.

Another spoke, saying "Brother, dear brother, it has been a toilsome road. I met two gigantic serpents, just as my spirit left its outward covering. They disputed my passage. A mighty Angel led the way." I clasped the new comer in my arms, and strained him to the heart, replying, "We shall both awake, ere many hours in the natural body. Outwork in faithfulness those divine truths which our blessed Lord here bestows, and both the serpents will yet be slain.

A radiant woman emerged from a banqueting house. The new comer turned toward her. They recognised each other by

some mystical internal, sympathy, and silently embraced. In the distance I heard voices singing:

"Two in one, two in one! While the earth like a bride  
Is upborne to the land where the Angels abide,  
Let us haste, let us haste, ere the rise of the sun,  
To receive the glad hearts, with the Lord who are one.

"Two in one, two in one! 'Tis the Savior who gives  
The life that the soul in its innermost lives.  
He calls and they follow, through slumbers they rise,  
To taste the delights of the beautiful skies.

"They leave, for the labors of duty below.  
Again to their dust at His mandate they go.  
But soon they will come, when their life-work is o'er,  
To part from the joys of the Angels no more.

The Zofol flowed with a clearer, fuller sound, and crimson fairies were dancing amidst the mist-flakes upon its bosom. They sang a melody of sleep; the door of a mansion opened. Accosted by a kindly voice, I could not help but listen while the friendly one spoke, "This is a house of entertainment provided for guests. All are welcome who come in the dear Lord's name. Here a place of slumber is prepared for you."

The structure was plain and unpretending in appearance, but within the atmosphere that of home. Ushered into a room provided for the reception of way-farers, I was informed that the title which it bore was the Good Samaritan. Then led into a sleeping apartment, one placed in my hands a copy of the Word, with the rules of the household, and, saying "peace," closed the door.

A plain couch, placed in an alcove, attracted my attention, above the arch of the alcove shone an inscription, in letters, apparently self-effulgent, which lit the room with a subdued radiance. The sentence was, "He giveth His beloved sleep." Here I rested until the dawn of day.

TO BE CONTINUED.

[A press of matter obliges us to exclude a portion of the "Children of Hymen" for the month. It will follow in the next.]

## WHO AND WHAT IS JESUS CHRIST?

BY WILLIAM FISHBROUGH.

### NO. XI.

It was intimated in our last chapter, that one principal purpose of the Divine Love and Wisdom, called the *Logos*, in assuming the various forms of embodiment such as are there set forth, was to employ them as *organs* to accomplish ends of use in the several spheres of being to which they relate. This, indeed, is implied in the passage, "All things were made by Him and for Him." The more *external* office which these organs perform, is to act and re-act upon each other cosmically, chemically, and mechanically for the perfecting of the whole, and also to minister to the requirements of man's corporeal nature, and phenomenally to address and enlighten his mind through the channels of the five senses. This may be called the *natural* function which they perform.

But they also have a *quasi spiritual* mode of action and re-action which, although it has within the past fifteen years been repeatedly a subject of scientific demonstration, (by those, however, who do not seem to have fully perceived its bearings,) is yet very little understood by the Christian and philosophic world. By a series of experiments, which were so ingeniously and carefully arranged, and so oft repeated, as to leave no room for doubt as to their results, Baron Von Reichenbach, the eminent Austrian Chemist, has proved that magnets, crystals, all metals and other mineral substances; that plants, animals, human beings, the earth as a whole, the sun, moon, planets and remote stars,—indeed all material bodies on earth, and in the stellar and planetary spaces, have, individually and in groups, a specific and general emanation which differs from heat, light and electricity, and is nearly allied to, and dynamically acts upon, the nervous fluid of the human organism. Indeed it was shown, by processes which it is unnecessary to describe in this place, that this fluid or potential emanation, as it proceeded from other bodies than the human, was *generically* the same with, though *specifically* different from, that emanation proceeding partly from the

body and partly from the soul of man, and which has been called *animal magnetism*. Numerous experiments also completely verified the presumption that these specific *auras* as characteristic of all bodies, were *universally transmissible* from one body to another, producing changes in the nervo-dynamic and vital influences of the recipient bodies, in a similar manner, and of an analogous nature, to the changes produced by one human being upon the soul and physiological functions of another, in the process called magnetization. In other words, it was thus proved that all physical bodies in the cosmical universe, and in the organic creations below man, *commune* with each other, so to speak, by the mutual inter-blending of their vital, *quasi* spiritual atmospheres, in a manner analogous to that in which human beings *commune* and are physically impressed by each other, by the interblending of their spheres of spiritual sympathy.\*

This doctrine of the emanative and *quasi* spiritual potency of all created existences, each in its specific degree, when considered in connection with the doctrine already established, that each divinely ordered creation, however great or small, is, in its degree, not only a *creature* but a *residence* of the Divine Logos, —will aid us to a more vivid conception of the reality of the truth, that Universal Nature is a temple of God, in which the very Divine Personal Essence dwells, being conjoined with externals by these *quasi* spiritual links of intermediation, and will also enable us to feel more vividly the reality of the communion which the well ordered soul of man may enjoy with him through the inmosts of these universal spiritual emanations.

While the investigations, above alluded to were being prosecuted by Reichenbach in Vienna, the essential conclusions at which he arrived were being demonstrated by totally independent processes, in this country, by Dr. J. R. Buchanan, of Cincinnati; and by the latter gentleman the fact was discovered and made definitely known, that a man leaves the "*spherical*" influence or *spiritual impress* of his own character on the works of his hands, and especially upon his chirography, and that, too, in so definite and positive a manner that a spiritually sensitive person by

\* See Reichenbach's *Dynamics of Magnetism*, &c.

simply holding the writing of another,—a stranger,—in his hand, abstracting the mind from outer things, and opening the soul to the inflowing magnetic or spiritual influences, may detect the whole qualities of the writer's soul. Incredible as this may seem to the merely materialistic reasoner, it has been demonstrated by innumerable tests, and should it be disputed, authentic facts are on record, and, under suitable conditions, may at any time be reproduced, that are sufficient to satisfy any amount of *reasonable* skepticism upon the point. This process of psychical investigation has received the name of "psychometry," or soul-measuring. \*

There are many historical and traditional facts and fragments of philosophy to show that the *principle* involved in the above facts and phenomena, developed by Reichenbach and Buchanan, were well understood by the people of the ancient, and the *most* ancient church, before the Word was *written*, and a *perversion* and *corruption* of which knowledge led to the subsequent *idolatrous* worship of the sun, moon, and stars, and other *material* objects; and of which a still farther perversion, or rather total *inversion* and falsification, led to Pantheism. The practice of divination by the positions and influence of the stars, and by various terrestrial as well as celestial phenomena; the system of zodiacal hieroglyphics, and the doctrine of the *anima mundi*, or soul of the World, as the connecting link between the natural and spiritual universes, could, it seems to me, have had no other origin than this supposed wisdom of the golden age, now lost, but which, I think, is soon to be revived, demonstrated, purified, and extended, as constituting one of the essential doctrines of the grand, free, and spiritual catholicity of the millennial day.

Though neither Reichenbach nor Buchanan seem to have perceived the distinctive *spiritual* bearings of these experiments and facts, we should not scruple to elicit from them any light which they may throw upon the grand theme of our present inquiries. If the Psalmist, in illustration of Divine Truth, could point to the heavens, which "declare the glory of God, and the firmament which sheweth his handy work;" and if the Savior,

\* See Buchanan's articles on "Psychometry," in his "Journal of Man" and in his "Anthropology."



for the same purpose, could point to the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field, the falling sparrow, and even the hairs of a man's head, then whatever indices or illustrations of Divine Truth we may find in these scientific facts, or in any others, may be legitimately employed for this purpose, if employed in a *reverent* manner. We proceed, therefore, to remark, that if these psychodynamic and *quasi* spiritual emanations of all things are universally impartable from object to object, and if *man*, especially, thus leaves his potential and active soul-impress upon the works of *his* hands, and particularly upon his *writing*, then still more emphatically may it be supposed that the infinite and omnipresent God would, *on the same principle*, leave his own operative, divine spiritual impress,—his substantial and absolute presence, *perceptible to the spiritually sensitive*,—upon the works of *his* hands, or the forms which he has instituted as the habitations of his indwelling *Logos*.

These considerations may serve to bring a *grand scripture* doctrine within the comprehension, and to commend it to the appreciation, of the rational intellect, and thus to meet skepticism on its own chosen ground, as also to deepen and immensely vitalize existing religious faith; and now, in the light of this philosophy, let us turn to Holy Writ, and briefly trace this doctrine through its pages. We will first call attention to the remarkable dynamic influence which appears to have accompanied the ark of the testament, which contained the tables of stone on which was *written, by the finger of God*, the law of the ten commandments, and which constituted the center and most vital part of the Word of the Old Testament. This *writing* of God contained, so to speak, God's own "spherical," or "*psychometric*" impress, and through it God *spiritually* or "*spherally*" acted not only on the souls of His people, but through them on outer objects, as the historical facts sufficiently show. Thus it will be remembered that when the children of Israel were about to pass over Jordan into the promised land, the priests, at the command of the Lord through Joshua, conveyed the ark to the river, and as their feet touched the rim of the water, the water parted, and as they stood with the ark in the midst of the river, the people went over dry shod. (Josh. iii: 14, et. seq.) Thus also, at the besieging of Jericho,

the priests, bearing the ark, were commanded to encompass the walls of the city once a day for six days, and on the seventh day to encompass it seven times, all the while bearing the ark, and blowing rams' horns, when, at a preconcerted shout, the walls of the city fell flat to the ground. (Josh. vi.) If there was not an actual spiritual presence with the ark, which conjoined with and acted upon outer things through their corresponding spheres, then this ceremony of carrying the ark, as described, was a mere *dead form*, and the result which ensued was without conceivable cause.

At a subsequent time the ark was taken from the then spiritually degenerated Israelites, by the Philistines, in battle. The greatest consternation among the Israelites was the result of this event, believing, as they did, that their strength and glory had thus departed; and when Eli, the aged priest, heard of it, he fell from his seat and expired. But it was not long before the Philistines were glad to get rid of their prize, finding that the powerful influence of which it was the medium, brought fearful judgments upon them as the votaries and mediums of *false gods*. They placed the ark in the temple of Dagon, their god, at Ashdod, and on the next morning they found that the image of their idol had fallen on its face before the ark. They set up the image again, but on the morrow they found that it had again fallen before the ark, and its head and hands were broken off. A sore pestilence also prevailed among the Philistines in consequence of the presence of the ark, and this pestilence followed it to different places to which it had been sent, until, at the end of seven months, the Philistines, no longer able to endure the sore calamities of which its profane detention among them was the occasion, concluded, with suitable ceremonies and offerings, to send it home. When it arrived at Bethshemsh, the populace to the number of fifty thousand, three score and ten men profanely gazed into it, and were smitten and slain by the powerful influence of which it was the medium. (See the account in 1 Sam., Chaps. 4th, 5th and 6th.)

Again, in 1 Chron. 13, we have an account of David's bringing the ark from Kirjath-jearim; and it is said that when Uzza, who drove the cart bearing it, imprudently put forth his hand to

steady it, an influence proceeding from it, which (speaking according to *appearance* and not the *reality*,) was called "the *anger* of the Lord," smote him, and he died. David, alarmed by this event, and not daring to bring the ark to his own house as he had intended, left it in the house of Obed-edom, and it is said, "the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom, in his house, three months, and the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that he had."

This doctrine of a dynamic spiritual influence being connected with physical objects that have been duly consecrated and appropriated to some orderly spiritual use, is also illustrated, though in a less striking manner, by the rods of Moses and Aaron by which they wrought their miracles in Egypt. It appears to have been well understood by Elijah, the prophet, when he sent his staff by the hand of his servant to be laid upon the dead body of the son of the Shumanite woman, in order to restore him to life. (2 Kings, iv.) It is also demonstrated by the fact that many diseased persons were restored to health by touching the hem of the Savior's garment, (Matt. xiv: 36,) and by the miracles of healing, and casting out of evil spirits, which were due to the spiritual influences accompanying the handkerchiefs and aprons brought from Paul's body to those who were afflicted. (Acts xix: 13.) Though, of course, as to the *dignity* and *importance* of these facts and divine manifestations, we draw no comparison between them and the phenomena of modern "psychometry," yet the trivial uses or even abuses to which the latter have been subject, should not prevent us from profiting by all the illustrations which they afford of the *modus* and spiritually-scientific basis of an august divine truth.

The ark of the testament, impressed, as before shown, by the dynamic spiritual influence of the Divine Presence, and being thus, as it were, a medium of connection between God and the world of outer existences, was considered so holy as to impart a holiness to the places where it rested. Thus said Solomon, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David, King of Israel, because the places are holy whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come." (2 Chron. viii: 11.) It was for this reason that it was placed in the most holy place, the inmost sanctuary, of the tab-

ernacle and the temple, and was overshadowed by the Cherubim, where the Shekinah or divine radiance preternaturally descended, and where the high priest, with correspondential ceremonies, entered once a year to perform the great sacrifice of the atonement, and to receive oracles or communications from God,—another evidence that God, by a divine potential and “spherical” impress was actually present in the ark.

Again: The tabernacle, and after it the temple, consisted of *three general departments*, viz: an outer court, a middle court, and an inmost sanctuary, called the Holy of Holies. This triune structure corresponded, in a general way, to the trine in the Godhead,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—as also to the triune nature of man,—the outer or sensuous nature; the mediatorial, intellectual or wisdom nature, and the inmost which is the affectional or love nature. This triune structure, therefore, was capable of becoming, by correspondence, a spiritual dwelling place for the entire of the divine and the entire of the human natures, admitting, thus, of a conjunction and *communion* between the two. The inmost sanctuary, containing the ark and its contents, corresponded to the Father or God as to his divine love; and thus it was the center and origin of the holiness which appertained to the other parts, even as the inmost or love nature of man is the center and origin of his whole life and character.

And this view of the subject explains and verifies, while in turn it is verified by, those numerous declarations which assert or imply that the temple was actually a *dwelling place* of God (the Word)—a place of absolute, active divine presence, as distinguished, in some sense, from all other places. The passages in which this idea is conveyed are too numerous, and too familiar to readers of the Bible, to require much specification; but attention may particularly be directed to the following: In 1 Kings, chap. viii, which gives an account of the dedication of Solomon's Temple, we read that when the priests, after depositing the ark in the holy place, came out into the middle court, “the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. Then spake Solomon,

"The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever," (vs. 6-13.) This "cloud" or "glory of the Lord" (which, in modern phrase, may be understood as a "spherical" influence, embracing the entire qualities and potencies of the Divine Nature as veiled and adapted to human endurance,) was undoubtedly the same as the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, which led the children of Israel from Egypt to the promised land. Of course it was not a *material* but a *spiritual* "cloud" or "glory," and as such it had a positive dynamic and sensible spiritual influence, as is shown by its effects upon the priests who could not stand before it.

In accordance with this doctrine, and in confirmation of it, the prophet Habakkuk exclaimed, "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him," (chap. ii: 20.) This sentence, expressive of the feeling and faith of every devout Jew on entering into his place of worship, has also been adopted in the liturgy of a prominent denomination of Christians as an initial proclamation at the opening of public worship. We fear, however, that these words are often used by the minister, and are listened to by the people, with little faith in the reality of that which they seem to express. We believe it to be true, however, that a *proper* consecration of a *christian* temple, accompanied with due faith, and a reverent and heartfelt disposition to make it in *reality* an offering to God, will, (of course with the concurrence of the divine will,) be the means of communicating to the very walls, pulpit, internal atmosphere, &c., an actual, substantial, though immaterial, divine *aura*, and thus will constitute it a place of *special* divine presence and influence in the same way, if not to the same extent, that the Jewish temple was. And this appears to have been understood by the Christians during the earlier ages of the church, and who, in this faith, built their churches in a correspondential manner, having *three* departments, and many other features of significant architecture, which, though differing in form, were of the same spiritual import with the architecture of the Jewish temple; and all having reference to the inhabitation and communion of the divine and human spirits. Their churches were generally kept open at all hours of the day,



and they were the constant resort of the devout who actually felt a deep and mysterious influence pervading their sacred enclosures, and by the numerous and diversified architectural and other symbols which everywhere met their eyes, were constantly reminded of, and impressed with, divine things, whether they heard the voice of a preacher or not. And after a temple had been dedicated to God, they never permitted it to be used for any other than *religious* purposes, believing that employing it for any other uses would be desecrating it, destroying its holiness, and making it the center of an evil emanation rather than a good one.

Those spiritualists who are acquainted with the history and phenomena of "*spirit rooms*"—rooms specially and emblematically fitted up for, and devoted to, spirit manifestations—will be able, by analogical reasoning, to appreciate what is said above, and also some things that will follow in the sequel of this chapter.

But there is a farther view of this subject, which, when properly apprehended, will tend to inweave it still more closely with the *human* sympathies of some. We have before shown that a fully regenerated human spirit is in the highest sense a temple of God,—a form of the indwelling Word. This would make each spirit and angel in the heavens above, an individual temple, and the whole heavens collectively, a grand temple in the complex form, pervaded in whole and all its numerous parts, by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus it is that in approaching the ultimates of the mundane world, God makes angels and glorified spirits his messengers and potential media, while in a more interior way he also approaches us directly.

His "spherical" presence, in the ark and the temple, therefore, may be supposed to have included the presence of innumerable angels and spirits by their sphere of *rapport* with the church upon earth, and with each of its devout members. And these innumerable invisible intelligences, headed and represented, perhaps, by an individual angel, appear sometimes to be spoken of in the *unitary* form, as if they were but *one* personality; in the same way as the whole Isrealitish nation is brought into the form of individualized representation by being called by the *personal* name of Jacob or Israel.

The "Angel of the Lord," whether in the sense of an individual spirit, of a heavenly society, or of the whole heavens as one, is thus, in scripture phrase, to be generally understood as equivalent to the Lord himself in the form of the *Logos*. This is seen by the declaration in Numbers, xx., 16: "He sent an angel and hath brought us out of Egypt"—also by corresponding declarations in Exodus, xxiii., 20, 23, and elsewhere; whereas in most other places the Lord himself is mentioned as the agent of this deliverance of his people. In the above view there is no contradiction in these statements.

That a numerous and divinely pervaded spiritual host were present and flowed through the ark, and perhaps also the personal mediumship of the priests, on the occasion of the preternatural overthrow of the walls of Jericho, (Jos. vi.) is rendered more than probable by the visitation to Joshua of an angel who declared himself the "Captain of the host of the Lord," immediately preceding that event. (Jos., v. 14).

Moreover the three departments of the temple, before spoken of, with all their included symbolism, were such as to adapt the temple, by correspondence, to *rapport* and conjunction with the *three heavens* alluded to by Solomon when he speaks of the "heaven and the heaven of heavens, (i. Kings, viii.) and by Paul, when he speaks of the "Third Heaven," (2. Cor., xii. 2). Now it was the presence of these innumerable angels and spirits, (such as are called by Paul a "cloud of witnesses,") which doubtless constituted the "cloud" that was present in Solomon's temple at its dedication, and also the "cloud" that led the Israelites to the promised land.

That angels or spirits were, by their "spherical" influence, present in the subsequent Jewish temple as its guardians, up to the time when it was given over to destruction, is inferable from the phenomenon mentioned by Josephus in his Wars of the Jews, B. vi. Chap., v., Sec. 3., viz: when, at a feast of the pentecost not long before the destruction of the city and temple by the Romans, "as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple to perform their sacred ministrations, they said, that in the first place they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a multitude, say-

ing, 'Let us remove hence.' This voice was doubtless that of the guardian spirits and angels of the sacred edifice in abandoning it to its fate; and, accordingly, immediately after this, the temple, the city, and the whole nation, seemed to be the scene of the most direful demoniac influences, under which the Jews rushed madly into destruction.

We have already seen how the Christians of the early ages considered their consecrated churches as dwelling-places of the divine influence; that they also considered their churches under the guardianship and patronage of *spirits and angels*, is, I believe, too generally understood to require special proof in this place; and this doctrine is, in some form, held by the Roman Catholic Church even at this day. It is a beautiful and consoling thought, that not only the "innumerable company of angels," but "the spirits of the just made perfect," including our near and dear Christian friends who have gone hence, actually meet and conjoin with us in the worship of God in his earthly temples, by their sweet and gentle influence, lifting our minds from earthly to the contemplation of heavenly things; and that although in our grossness we may not perceive them, they are intimately cognizant of all our joys and sorrows, and even of our most secret thoughts!

A proper understanding of the *principles* involved in the foregoing remarks will also aid us to a *rational*, and we might almost say, absolutely *scientific* and *demonstrative* faith in the actual *spiritual* presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist. It may be seen, in other words, how the solemn act of consecration of the elements, in faith and prayer, may be the appointed and *rational* means of bringing them *en rapport* with the divine Master, and actually infusing them with his "spherical" presence, so that in partaking of them worthily, we may, as to our spirits, be actually partaking of his immaterial body and blood, and thus incorporating his very *divine substance* with our own souls. On this point we would lay special stress, and we esteem it a matter of fervent thankfulness that a doctrine which is so very dear to the devout soul, is thus not left destitute of the triumphant defenses of enlightened *reason*.

These remarks are intended to illustrate some of the ways in which the divine *Logos*,—the divine communicative and formative Essence which was finally made man,—has always been present with and operative upon the world, as also to illustrate one way in which is fulfilled the promise of Jesus Christ to be always with his disciples, even unto the end of the world. Of course the *inward* manifestation of this divine Presence,—its manifestation in the *hearts* of men,—is that which is all important to us, and is that for which all other manifestations are but subordinate and subsidiary; and unless we can worship Him “in spirit and in truth, in the sanctuaries of our own souls, we truly worship Him not at all. Nevertheless, that the *collective body* of worshipers may have, as a body, and as “members in particular,” the highest *external* aids to *internal* religion, it seems to me highly necessary that this philosophy of the divine Presence and influence in the things of the external, should be much better understood than it now is in the religious world, and that the laws and conditions of its full operations should be strictly observed.

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#### A FUNERAL HYMN.

Rejoice, rejoice, the morning breaks  
 Upon our dear departed:  
 The friend we love in glory wakes,  
 With Angels, gentle hearted.

On earth she sought in paths to tread  
 By love and mercy given:  
 Now, to the Lord of mercy wed,  
 She wakes and smiles in Heaven.

Wreath ye the altar of the Lord  
 With flowers that sweetest cluster:  
 Shine forth, shine forth, thou Holy Word,  
 With truths of inmost lustre!

She is not lost but gone before,  
 That friend of our affection,  
 And walks upon the heavenly shore  
 In lovely resurrection.

### THE FIERY BAPTISM.

Before the final crisis in the experience of the writer, which witnessed the entire surrendry of the soul to be all the Lord's, and precluding the combats which preceded rest and victory, the poem which follows was communicated as a message through the Heavens. Obscure then, and not entirely fulfilled even now, it is given as an encouragement to those who are passing through deep waters. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and the affliction which is for a moment works out to the faithful an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I give to thee the cup of tears,  
    Pressed from the grapes of sorrow's vine.  
The silent agony of years,  
    Child of the cross, is thine.

All who the Savior now confess,  
    Must share this bitter cup with thee,—  
The anguish of the world's distress,  
    The new Gethsemane.

The Martyr Ages dawn again;  
    Press onward through the fiery flood,—  
Fear not, but trust thy Savior when  
    The waters turn to blood.

When friends forsake and foes deride,  
    When dying pains invade thy breast,  
When inly thou art crucified  
    And pierced in heart and breast,—

When o'er thy spirit hangs a pall,  
    And grieving nature hopes no more;  
When from the deeps the demons call,  
    "Our foeman's life is o'er,"

Rejoice, rejoice, for God is nigh,  
    Thy foes shall fall beneath thy feet,  
And Christ descend with victory  
    Eternal and complete.

Yield up thy spirit to the strife,—  
    Tread onward through the world's alarms,  
And find thy true, thy endless life,  
    Safe in a Savior's arms.



## A LETTER.

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—

I promised, on leaving home, to give you some account of my journey and visit here, and of the conditions of those things in which we feel so deep an interest, as I should actually find them; and as I purposed to do the same for several others, you will pardon me if I address you all at the same time, through the Herald of Light. Brother W. and I preached one long sermon,—all the way from Georgia to this place. Everywhere we find minds opening to the reception of the great truths of the Lords New Church; hearts quickened and expanding with the affections of the Life from heaven. And sitting oft, not in circles for “Spiritual Manifestations,” but for religious communion and prayer, one feels that the Lord is indeed descending to renovate the earth, not by power nor by might, but by His love-diffusing Spirit.

One by one, I have taken the hands of that little band gathered by the Lord through the ministrations of Brother Harris, called here the Church of the Good Shepherd. Through private interviews and social gatherings, meetings for conference and prayer and the services of the Sabbath, I have come to know and love them, and feel that it is good for me to be here. They are a heart-people, receiving in the inmost planes of the affections the great truths of Christianity,—held by the good in all ages,—but filled out and brought home to the heart, by the unfolding of the internal senses of the Divine Word. The great doctrine of the Divine Humanity, that God is an Infinite Man, that our Lord who walked in Judea, blessing the marriage at Cana, weeping at the grave of Lazarus, supporting upon his own bosom the head of the beloved disciple, is, in very deed, the Infinite God, is the great central truth. Nor are the gracious means of reaching the untouched heart, or building up a true Christian Character, known to the Old Church, neglected in the New. It is sweet to hear the mild youth and gentle maiden, with men and women of maturer years, in childlike simplicity, and

with devout earnestness, pouring forth their hearts unto God; or, breathing in glad accord, those sweet "Hymns of Spiritual Devotion," which are truly "songs of deliverance" for the New Church. Could those journalists, who have so bitterly opposed these developments, in their form of public expression, the issues of the Society, meet with us, with unprejudiced minds and hearts quickened with even common Christian sympathy, they would hesitate ere they pronounced the movement of one Antichrist; lest haply they be found to fight even against their coming Lord. Satan, we read, often transforms himself into an angel of Light, but not to an angel of love. Where charity rules, and meek and loving hearts keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, there is little room to doubt the source of their inspirations. Perfect love casteth out all fear, because it removes all cause for fear. To ascribe, therefore, the workings of the Spirit to the Embodiment of Evil, is a sin not to be lightly dared!

But how shall I describe to you the services of the Sabbath? A revival without coarse excitement; preaching at once heart-searching, calm and dispassionate; prayer fervent and heart-moving, in which you hear only the still small voice of the spirit, and not the storm of human passion,—all these influences seemed to enfold, fill and bless every heart. There was also a special directness, an aptness and vividness of illustration, a universal receptivity in the audience, such as I have witnessed nowhere else. The preaching at the Church of the Good Shepherd, is *a plain talk right out of the heart to the heart*, and every word tells. People who are not willing to give up all their evils and be led wholly by the Lord, will not long listen to it. Hence we have here what is to be found nowhere else in Protestant Christendom; namely, a church and congregation which are nearly identical, one, and the same body. Thus, I noticed, Sunday evening, at the close of the regular services, when those who felt so moved were invited to remain for prayer, but two of the whole assembly left. And that joyous *re-union*, at the conclusion of all the exercises, the warm and hearty grasp of the hand, the speaking eye, and the lingering stay, sometimes for nearly an hour, as if they could not separate, nor tear themselves away from the sacred precincts where their hearts had been blessed,—

all this was to me an anomaly, and called to mind the intensity of feeling that united the primitive Christians. Distinctions of rank and position seem utterly unknown and forgotten; those being most esteemed who breathe most of the Spirit of their common Lord.

I have given you no report of the discourses; for it seems to me impossible. To attempt it would seem almost like trying to gather up the silent dews and sunshine that have gone forth upon their heavenly mission. The words are for the occasion, and according to the heart-wants of these present. They seem to emanate from the sphere of Divine Love, and to penetrate to the inmosts. Each hears for himself and feels that he is specially addressed, and that he is only truly receptive as he ultimates all in the uses of life.

But I must close: the New Church Publishing Association are making every effort to present to the world, the treasures of Interior Wisdom, as they unfold from the Lord; but with all their diligence, such is the affluence of the source, that manuscripts accumulate; and it may in truth be said, that the Lord hath opened the windows of heaven to pour us out a blessing, and there is not room enough to receive it. Let us then, one and all, open wide our hearts, expand our minds, and, each according to ability, lend our aid, that we may receive, and understand, and spread abroad, the great truths and disclosures made known in our midst.

There is much of a more interior nature of which I would gladly speak; of that power that seems working here, binding the influences of evil, lifting the bowed head and healing the broken-heart. But I must leave all this to another occasion, or other hands.

Sincerely yours,

S. E. B.

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“Scratch the green rind of a sapling, or wantonly twist it in the soil, and the scarred and crooked oak will tell of thee for centuries to come.” How forcible does this beautiful figure teach the lesson of giving right instead of wrong tendencies to the young mind.

## A FRAGMENT.

As Dante trod o'er purgatorial coals  
I haunt the sands of life's drear wilderness,  
Wrung with the agonies of ruined souls,  
Death-bound in sin's invincible duress.  
I cry aloud until the startled air  
Echoes my hollow voice; and, where I pass,  
Destruction threatens me with sabre bare,  
And evil Spirits curse. Alas! alas!  
They mock my sorrows. Woe, ah! woe is me!  
Time smites the dumb lips of Eternity,  
And startles at the hollow undertone  
Of the great heart that can but inly groan.

The multitudes around my feet are dying  
Like Summer insects, killed by Autumn frost.  
The plague of sin upon the soul is lying.—  
Restless on troubled seas mankind is tossed.  
While error eats its path with silent curse,  
The stars come forth, that living universe,  
Arrayed on thrones of unpavilioned light:—  
Earth, like a skulking thief, prowls through the night.

I call unto the deep heart of my kind,  
"Awake, for murder haunts thy drowsy head,  
And madness darts its venom through the mind,  
And Hades wakes with all its cruel dead,  
And rages, in the vices that go forth,  
Like hungry locusts, from the fallow earth."

I sow my path with ashes, for the seeds  
Of love I scatter crumble as they fall;  
But thick and branchy spread the poisoned weeds,  
Whose fruits are crimes the spirit that appal.  
Surely the beasts have knowledge; not a bird  
But knows its God; yet man rejects the Word.

Wail, ye wild pines! ye mountain cedars wave  
Your branches to the night winds! There are cries  
From hollow Orcus and the spirit-grave,—  
As rush of armies through the middle skies.  
Wail your sad message to the nations dead!  
They will not hear until the skies are red  
With the war-eagles, who have come to feast  
On dainty flesh of human kind and beast;  
While the white fire-wolves, leaping from the cloud  
Of retribution, fasten on the proud.

## BAPTISM:

### WHEN A NEW CHURCH RITE; ITS NATURE AND INFLUENCE.

THE human organization, in the degree in which man is reinstated in his normal condition, is absorptive and diffusive of the Divine Influence. In the return of internal respiration, when power has been given to cast out demons in the Lord's name, whatever be the function of the servant of the Lord, he is qualified for his use in a sense more than natural. If he preaches, it is not in the selfhood, but because the Lord has given him a message to declare. If he receives or entertains friends or strangers, it is because led by the Divine voice. If he visits those who are sick, or in any manner afflicted, it is because, at that very hour, this errand of mercy has been given him to fulfill. In the total abnegation of the selfhood, he acts by instant direction, in freedom and with rationality. This, however, can only be understood by the regenerate or those in whom that process has begun.

When the rite of baptism in the New Church is administered by the Lord's express order, it is by priests, who, as to their internals, are in the Heavens, and whose internal forms, through the opening of the internal respiratories, inhale from the celestial to the natural. It is, first, impossible for them to administer, unless the Lord Himself shall be the Inmost or Infinite Priest. When, therefore, the rite is performed, it is of the Lord, just as if administered by an angel whom the Lord sent. It is, of course, a thing most solemn, most sacred, and clothes the servant of the altar, for the time, with a resplendence which is not his own. He sees the Divine Sun; he breathes the Divine breath; he communicates Deity. This is not because of any inherent goodness in the agent, but grows out of the Divine law of descent and manifestation. As the obedient nerves receive the Divine fire, and, moved by the Divine Impulse, sprinkle upon the brow of the recipient those drops of pure water which symbolize the baptism of truth and of the Spirit, there is an actual impartation of influx from the Lord; a giving out of the very good and



truth of Deity. Well may the priest tremble, and, symbolically, put off his shoes, for the place whereon he stands is holy ground.

To be baptized is, then, more than a symbolic rite, more than a representative ceremony. It involves the outgiving and the absorption of the Holy Ghost.

The question legitimately arises, Who are worthy either to administer or receive so sacred an ordinance? and the answer is, Christ came to save sinners, died even for the chiefest of sinners; if, therefore, any man believes that Christ is able to save even unto the uttermost, and asks in good faith, that he may be saved in the extirpation of all his iniquities; and internally pledges himself, so far as he is able, God giving him strength, to fulfill his commandments; whatever may have been that man's antecedents, whatever his deep and trembling conviction of unworthiness, he may yet, in Divine order, present himself; for it requires the broken heart and the contrite spirit, and these our Lord doth not despise.

It is a custom of divines, according to the rites of their several churches, to administer the ordinance upon the demands of external prescription, doing it in the selfhood, just as in the selfhood they write sermons, deliver prayers, and perform their various ecclesiastical and civil uses. Called of the Lord to preach the Gospel, by an opening of the internal respiratories, and an intromission into the celestial sense of the Word, we have not dared to go beyond the express duties laid upon us; and, when solicited to administer baptism and the holy supper, have invariably declined; determining that nothing of the selfhood, so far as we were able to discriminate, should commingle with that holy influence, under which alone we are able to preach the Word. Only during the last month have we been authorized to break the holy bread, and to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. While conscious of hereditary or acquired evils that have penetrated to the very root, and grown up to the branches of our tree of individuality; though at times bowed down with anguish, seeing what manner of man we are, our Divine Redeemer has given us this commandment to fulfill. We, therefore, accept it with a feeling of holy awe, and give ourselves unreservedly to do his bidding.

Our dear brethren in the external form of the New Church will understand from this the causes of our unwillingness to receive ordination at their hands. However valid such commissions may be on their plane, however providential in their origin, and important in their effect, it was our deep conviction that upon the plane to which we have been appointed, being external, they were so far as of use to us but as shadows, without consistency. To us there is but ONE who can give the right to preach the Word or perform the offices of the Church,—the Lord Jesus Christ.

An entire consecration, a giving up of all for which the selfhood cares or strives, is exacted of us. We are not at liberty, as other men feel themselves to be, to do anything without an express Divine sanction. It is impossible for us to be in the selfhood during six and in the Spirit upon the seventh day; therefore, living in a continuous ministry, diversified in its branches of use, we strive to work the works of the Father while it is yet day.

Entrusted then with the administration of the baptismal sacrament, it is the Lord who descends, in this crowning act, to welcome his beloved. We shall never administer it except as he opens our internal perceptions to Himself, and except we know that He is present in the outgiving of that life which regenerates and saves. Far be it from us to act otherwise than as a willing, faithful, humble instrument. Henceforth, therefore, we feel empowered to call upon all men to repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The call of the New Church is not to speculation but to repentance, to heart-felt sorrow and remorse for sin, to the casting down of every proud imagination, to the giving up of every iniquity. Then when humbleness of heart receives the promise of a present Christ, cleansing the soul from guilt, in baptism, we say, "receive the Holy Spirit; a gift of grace imparted to the very externals of the frame; a soothing, strengthening power that comes to arm you, in the very flesh and blood, against infesting and obsessing spirits; not a semblance, not a symbol, but an authentic fact."

Some will say "We have never heard it preached in this man-

ner." And we answer, What is that baptism of which the New Testament speaks. It was water and the spirit, not the spirit without the external medium, not the medium without the indwelling spirit; but the two in one, a baptism in which there was an actual descent of the Holy Comforter of God."

And thou, oh, Lord! Who art Thyself that Comforter, grant we beseech Thee, that, as Thy children meekly wait within Thy temple, to receive the promised gift, Thy Spirit may descend upon them, imparting to each that special power of which they stand in need; and so prepare them, through a life of faithful service here, to enjoy Thy beatitudes in a world without end. Amen.

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#### PROGRESS OF RELIGION.

The progress of Christianity is from heart to heart. The unfoldings of the Divine Word and their faithful presentation never leave man as they find him; He is either better or worse. Such as reject truth, because they are in the love of any evil against which it makes war, become at last the deadly enemies of the highest and the noblest sentiments and strive against them with an insane ferocity. Those who, when a new truth is presented, adopt it because they see the Lord's charity flowing through it, are invariably led, if faithful, to a nobler and purer moral state; for more interior truths bring more expansive and tender charities and march to a more stirring music through the world. Every advanced truth is in many respects a bestower of heart-treasures, inconceivably precious to mankind, for it must be repeated that the truths of God come allied to the charities of God and cannot be separated without violence. It will not do to say that "We have more truth than others," until we exhibit more charity. We do not have truths, in the sense of real possession, till they are married to their own affections in the heart. We may admire them and believe them without their actual possession. Those who take truths into the mind for selfish and improper ends are like persons who covet children and adopt them into their families for the purpose of making slaves of them.

## FIRST BOOK OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION :

Through T. L. HARRIS: New Church Publishing Association.  
1858.

The rapidity with which Mr. HARRIS dictates from the Interior, of which the outside public can form but a poor conception, notwithstanding nearly every number of "*The Herald of Light*" announces some new volume from his pen, is the highest external evidence of the claim advanced for these emanations from the Spiritual. The style of these books—their adaptation to the interior wants of his readers, and, above all, the Divine Sphere of *love* which outstreams from them, show that his inspirations come from a Source which knows the heart-wants of men, and, knowing, has the ability to supply this need. Outside of the works of Mr. Harris, the Spiritual Literature of this age has been addressed more to the head than to the heart. We have *light* enough—we want more *love*, and any works of this character, therefore, we hail with pleasure and delight. Although the little work before us is not professedly addressed to the devotional nature as some of the more interior works of this author, yet we are glad to know that his inspirations, when not employed on his larger and more elaborate works, are taking the direction which this initial volume to a series would seem to indicate. We need catechetical works for children, and, in this age, older heads would do well to review their first principles and see where they stand. The volume before us is certainly suited to the wants of all. Whilst it comes in the old form of *questions* and *answers*, there is involved a wealth of thought and knowledge which have to be *studied* by those of maturer years, whilst the intuitive, celestial nature of the child takes them in as the food of its little soul. In the earlier ages of the Church this form of instruction was universal, and was productive of the highest results, both to the Church and to the catechumen. It is true this department has been very much abused; but what has not? It may, in this more enlightened age, be *used*, and as the *New Church* is planting her standard on the "*Newness*," she must give to the world

that which the world needs in all the varied avenues of human thought and effort. But the Lord will send all in His appointed time. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Let us pray that He will send more into the field.

"A leaf placed before the eye will hide the universe." The gangrene of prejudice has been diffused to such an extent by Pantheism, and its kindred literature and influence from the Invisible, that it is almost impossible for a Higher Christianity to give tone and expression to its love-thought without being assailed as *Sectarianism*—seeking to inaugurate the old forms of the Orthodox Religion. If this was true, there would be some justice in the charge. But it is not. This cry, from the infidelity of the age, only shows how deeply rooted is the empire of Satan. In the name of all that is holy, whither are we tending? Has man no God to worship! There is none, according to the speculations of the times. Has man no devotional or religious nature to cultivate? Pantheism would present the works of Davis to feed a hungry, God-seeking soul! Madam Guyon, Fenelon, Ware and Channing would be scouted, and the hallucinations of pseudo Swedenborgs, Bacons and Thos. Paines given as the pabulum for heart-worshippers! Thank the Lord a Diviner Christianity is dawning upon the world—a Christianity which will feed the poor, hungry, starving millions—a Christianity which will give a *varied* expression to the religious element—not arbitrary and confined to this or that set rule, but pure, characteristic, and as universal as the empire of God. Its pivotal centre is the Lord Jesus Christ; its circumference the radius of His boundless love. May the good Lord hasten its extension, and let *us work*.

M. C. C. C.



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