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DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN THE TIME OF ONE'S DEATH.

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"A Christian cannot die before his time,
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour."

"I took them as I saw good."—*Ezekiel* xvi, 50.

THERE are three distinctly marked and most important periods in the life of every one: the time of one's birth, the time of his decision for heaven or for hell, and the time of his death. From one point of view it might seem that the time of one's *birth* was the most important; for it is then that he is ushered from comparative unconsciousness into this living and breathing world, an immortal and wonderfully endowed creature; and, whatever destiny he may now choose for himself, he has clearly commenced an eternal existence. The very thought is enough to overwhelm the mind with issues of unspeakable importance. But in so far as the man himself has anything to do with his destiny, the time of his decision for heaven or for hell is by far the most important. And though it be impossible for any one to tell, precisely, when that time of great decision is, yet it must be admitted that there is such a time; and I think it will also

be admitted in general, by those who are accustomed to think seriously and deeply upon the subject, that there is, commonly, a point in a man's life-time, when, if he has not already made the heavenly choice, he will not be likely to make it. It is true, it may be with some that they will make this choice very late in life ; almost the last thing, perhaps, that they seriously set about ; but these cases are rare, if ever ; we do not *know* what may be the Divine Providence in such cases, nor is it any part of our business to try to decide : we know the general law and the general fact, that it is not what a person's character or appearance of character may be in the last hours, by any influences which then altogether operate, but of what it is in consequence of a *whole previous life*, the result and end of which may manifest itself in the last hours, and may not, very distinctly : it is *this* which decides a person's destiny. And if goodness begins to appear then, and to predominate, after a whole life of impenitence and sin, it is not because the man then wills it independently of his past course, but because that course itself, and all that pertained to it, was taken into view by the Divine Providence, and so ruled and regulated as to bring out the final result. So that, while we never know what is being wrought within a man, and he *may* turn about very late in life, seeking heaven as his chief good ; yet all our rational calculations are to be based upon the whole course of a man's probation. And we say that there is very likely to exist a point in a man's life-time, when, if he has not yet made the heavenly choice, he will not be likely to make it. This may result from the steady perseverance which he has made in sin, and the forms of evil which he has thereby organically established in his mind. He may weave for himself a spiritual body so distorted and perverted, that he not only has no desire to change it here, but which he will find it impossible and alike undesirable to unweave, when he passes out of the world where it was done. For it is here, as has been said before—here in this world of nature, that the foundation is laid, the ulti-

mates acquired, upon which the interiors of the mind must rest as a house upon its basis. One may make some *external* improvements beyond the grave; may come temporarily into less and less actual evil, and into some sort of natural external good; but he cannot, while in this position, change his motives, or be led to good from the love of good.

"The experiment was made whether they were able to resist evils whilst the punishments of hell were announced to them, yea, while they were seen and likewise felt; but still it was vain, for they hardened their minds, saying, come what will, provided only we are in the delight and joys of our hearts so long as we are here; we know things present, what is to come we are not concerned about; we shall not suffer more evil than many others; but after a stated time they are cast into hell, where they are compelled by punishments *not to do evil*; but punishments do not take away the *will*, the *intention*, and consequent *thought* of evil, *they only take away the act*."—A. E. 1165. "The evil remains within, and recurs when the fear ceases."—1164.

But note carefully that there must have been a time—a turning moment—a choice amid all other choices—(fearful and momentous consideration it is,) when the first decisive inclination to that evil life—the one which turned the scale, and kept it ever after that way, commenced in that man's history. *He* did not know it; no mortal, and perhaps no angel knew it; but God saw it, and was working in reference to it. But the man must be held in freedom. Then it was that he made the fatal choice! It determined all other choices, and involved a destiny of unimaginable horror.

Here, then, is the *second* great period of a man's life. It is when he makes his decision for heaven or for hell.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side:
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever, 'twixt that darkness and that light."

Observe, we are not saying that any man can know when that time is; we only say that such a time there must be; and to doubt that the Divine Providence is most particularly

concerned in it—that even the time of our death is wisely ordered in reference to it, would be to doubt one of the most reasonable and evident things in all theology. Religious writers have often spoken of this time as one of *unusual struggle*, and of more or less sensible surrender, either to good or evil. And why may we not suppose the angels who watch over a man's destiny, to be particularly active and anxious at such a time? Swedenborg also speaks of the particular leading of the good and evil through this world, and of a similar decision. His language, too, is remarkably discriminative.

“There are in the world men-angels and men-devils. [That is, human beings who will people heaven, and who will people hell.] With a man-angel all the degrees of his life are open even to the Lord; but with a man-devil only the ultimate degree is open, and the superior degrees are closed. A man-angel is led of the Lord, both from within and without; but a man-devil is led of himself from within, and of the Lord from without. A man-angel is continually withdrawn from evil by the Lord, and led to good; but a man-devil is continually, also, withdrawn by the Lord from evil, but from a more grievous to a less one, for he cannot be led to good. A man-angel is continually withdrawn from hell by the Lord, and is led into heaven more and more interiorly; but a man-devil is continually, also, withdrawn from hell, but from a more grievous to a milder one, for he cannot be led into heaven. A man-angel, because he is led of the Lord, is led by civil law, by moral law, and by spiritual law, on account of the Divine [principle] which is in them; a man-devil is led by the same law, but on account of what is of himself in them. * * * A man-angel and a man-devil appear like to each other as to externals, but they are altogether unlike as to internals; wherefore, when external things are laid aside by death, they are manifestly unlike; the one is taken away into heaven, and the other is conveyed down to hell.”—A. E. 1145.

Again, touching the changes and determinations of life to which we have referred, we find this language in the work on Divine Providence.

“Man [in the world] is not [in hell or heaven] as a spirit who is inscribed in the society, for man is continually in a

state of reformation ; wherefore, according to his life and its changes, he is transferred by the Lord from one society of hell into another, if he is evil ; but if he suffers himself to be reformed, he is led out of hell, and is led away into heaven, and is also transferred there from one society to another, and this until death ; after which he is no longer carried from society to society there ; because he is then no longer in a state of reformation, but remains in that in which he is according to life : wherefore, when man dies, he is inscribed in his place."—*D. P.* 307.

From the whole, then, it is evident how much the Divine Providence must have to do with the time of a man's death. However we may settle the eternity of this most sorrowful of all questions, there is enough in the *temporary* features of it—in the unimaginable ages of sin and its consequences—and the awful uncertainty which hangs around the whole theme, to convince one of the infinite importance of the results determined by this great change of worlds.

Now, whichever side a man may decide for, be it heaven or be it hell, it is the *state of his life here in the world*, the quality of his spirit, and what can be made of him in the spiritual world ; nay, it is really what he is making of himself now, and what the Lord is doing for him, both in his own soul and in the world beyond, which decides to a *moment* the time of his death, which is the third great period in the life of man.

This event is ordered, therefore, with the utmost precision. So is every other event ; but this assumes to our minds a greater importance, being so full of eternal consequences. It is alike important to the good and to the evil. In one passage of the Word it is said—"I took them away as I saw good." This is said of the evil Sodomites. And it is taught here that even with the wicked, and the most wicked, the time of their death is ordered with a no less particular reference to the utmost amount of good which can be done for them. If they cannot be regenerated, they may be reformed ; and if they cannot be in the highest sense reformed, they are capable of more or less external improvement ; at

all events, it is seen exactly what and how much *can* be done for them, and their life in the world is not permitted a moment longer than, all things considered, is for their best good throughout eternity. Sometimes they are cut off to prevent their wickedness increasing, which would make it still worse for them in the spiritual world. Sometimes they are spared for a length of time, because it is seen that they will reform and improve their condition before leaving the world ; sometimes it is seen that they will not do it here, and it is better that they should be removed, and come under the instruction and discipline of angels. In many ways, and by many secret connections, is the exactitude of Providence accomplished with them, and with the good also ; so that this mystery of death in all its forms, whether premature, as we say of it, or occurring at a ripe old age, or sudden, or accidental, with a lingering sickness or without it, is performed at the best possible time, and solely with reference to the soul's condition in eternity. "I took them away as I saw good." It is the divine announcement for the whole method of the Lord's working, "with whom is the fountain of life," and to whom also "belong the issues from death."

That there is "a time to die,"—that this, in fact, may be considered in the light of exact truth,—that no accidents can interfere with it, but must be subordinated to it, so that all apparent accident shall be merged into the great system of a connected and universal providence, may be seen from the Lord's own life upon the earth. It is in fact a fundamental characteristic of the true theology, that every point of correct faith may be seen in the great *central* doctrine of the incarnation, glorification, resurrection and ascension of the Lord. They ray out from this Centre as distinct beams from the great orb of day. Thus, regeneration is best illustrated by the Lord's glorification ; the infinite personality by his finite personality ; the infinite love by his love ; the sight, the hearing, the intimate relationship, and all the divinely human attributes and qualities which endear and

attach us to the infinite Father, by this exhibition of Himself in a finite form. So also the varied experience of man is best known as to its character and tendency by the Lord's experience when He dwelt among men as one of them. It is one of the great excellences of this doctrine of the Lord as unfolded by Swedenborg, that it accommodates *every* truth, which otherwise would lose itself in the vagueness of the infinite, to the receptive capacity of the creature. And so also this truth of the time of a man's departure from the natural world.

To borrow the language of a Christian brother, "Christ always spake as if He had an appointed time to remain on earth, a fixed work to accomplish, during the progress of which He must continue incarnate ; and until 'His hour was come,' the Jews had no power over His physical life. Twice He was delivered out of their hands in a mysterious way. But when 'He knew that His hour had come,' and that 'the Father had delivered all things into His hands,' He was given up unresistingly to the malice of His enemies. It was not that some blind fate had fixed the time of His death ; not that He had accomplished everything possible in gaining converts, or imparting truth to His disciples. His converts were very few, and His disciples, at the moment of His death, understood very little as to who and what He was. He might have lived on half a century more under the Divine Protection, teaching the truth and gaining followers, and exhibiting to the world the charms and graces of His character, and then He would only have lived through the common period of human existence. But the time came at thirty years of age when He could say, 'It is finished,' since the work for which He came into the world was done. What was it ? Evidently the very thing we have been describing. It was His glorification. It was when the material had served its end as the basis of the spiritual, and within its continents the divine organism was completed whose processions of power were to come in Pentecostal

gales, and sweep down our human nature till they woke from it new tongues of utterance, and drew lyric praises from all its strings." *

And so it is in the corresponding work of our regeneration, and in the removal of the good and evil from this world. It is no more blind fate than the time of our Lord's crucifixion. It is when the utmost of that work is done which can be done in the human spirit, to fit it for eternity. This, and this alone, is the signal for the flight to the unseen world. No matter if a man goes from the gallows ; if Providence so orders, it is best he should be off ; and, indeed, when a man has come to that pass that he can be guilty of the crime of murder, it may be that he has filled up the measure of his iniquity, and indicated such a state as is more hopeless for him in this world than it is in the next. The angels and good spirits may there do for him what man in the world cannot. Or he may be saved from going to a still lower hell. It may, therefore, in some instances, be the better charity—though I do not pretend to decide this awful question of punishment by death.

This event of death, however or whenever it may occur, is too vastly important not to be under the most particular supervision, as to all its connections. When we reflect that "as the tree falls, so it remains," as to all its prominent characteristics ; that the very degrees of a man's mind, which are the great distinguishing marks of his character in eternity, are opened or kept closed, by his conduct in the world ; that though he may progress indefinitely after death, it must be upon the plane of life which he has acquired to himself here ; that the ruling love remains in some sense to eternity ; that with the good, the progression must be immense, according to every faculty and facility they have procured to themselves here ; and with the evil, even their evils and falsities must in many cases increase, for a while, at least, until they have acted out all the evil that lay in-

* "Scars' Foregleams of Immortality," pp. 230, 231.

wardly concealed in them ; and when we consider that though this life is short, and extremely uncertain, it is still long enough to decide eternal destinies ; then we may receive from this whole subject a most solemn impression, and an admonition worthy of its greatness. Death is truly a grand and finishing point, by which, in this first sphere of conscious existence, a work for eternity is decided with wonderful precision. Not *the* finishing point of all his destiny, but a grand and finishing stroke in every man's history.

But it cannot be understood fully without a more perfect philosophy.

“ It is the concordance of the internal or spiritual man with the external or natural man, which remains where it falls ; man has both the external and the internal in the other life, but the internal or spiritual is terminated in his external or natural principle as in its ultimate. The internal or spiritual man is perfected in the other life, but only so far as it has concordance in the external or natural ; but this latter cannot be perfected in the other life, since it remains such as it was acquired in the life of the body ; and in this life it is perfected in proportion as the love of self and of the world is removed, and consequently in proportion as the good of charity and the truth of faith are received from the Lord ; *hence is the concordance or non-concordance, which is the tree with its root, which after death remains where it falls.*”—(S. D. 4646.)

The lesson which we would derive from this whole subject is, *carefulness* and *watchfulness*, *assiduity* and *practical determinateness*. The object of a knowledge of the truth, or of a new impression of it, is to make good use of it. We can do much to *affect* and *influence* our last hours. What is it, in short, but to prepare for eternity ? And we know not how near, or how distant, may be our time. It is wisely provided that we should not. If we saw it very near, we should be overwhelmed with too much consternation and alarm ; if we saw it very distant, we should lapse into indifference. But not knowing anything about it, except that it is likely to occur at *any* time, we have the advantage of continual presence, without bewildering fear or supine in-

difference. But the reflection that the *Lord* knows it—knows it to a certainty, and to a moment, and is ordering things with reference to it, with as much directness and system as we would arrange for the departure of a son for a distant country—it should make us better co-operators with the Divine Providence, and produce a deeper interest in the mighty change.

How affecting, too, are many of the connections and dependencies of death, as they relate to others with whom we are associated—both as to time and circumstance. To quote again a very instructive passage from Swedenborg,—

“If some die in infancy, others in childhood, others in youth, others in riper years, and others in the latest old age, there are four reasons for all this. The first regards man’s use in this world in reference to his fellow creatures ; the second regards his use in this world in reference to spirits and angels with whom man is in communication as to his interiors, so long as he lives in this world, which is the general ultimate and basis of all things ; the third regards man’s use in this world in reference to himself, either in order that he may be regenerated, or that he may be immersed in his own evils, lest they should be dormant, and should break out in another world, which would tend only to his eternal detriment ; the fourth regards also his use in another life, and onward to eternity.”—(S. D. 5002–3.)

Thus we see, that it is not for ourselves alone, but for others, even with reference to the spirits and angels with whom we are in association, who may, by this connection, be advanced with us. For the great Orb of being is One, embracing all in heaven, and all in hell, and all in the world between ; and the onward stream of life bears us all forward to the ever-swelling ocean of eternity. Nor can we tell what forms of use we may be filling out for the invisible company with which we are connected. Often, very often, it may be, that the silent ones gather around us in our hours of retirement, in our studies, or go with us to more active scenes, and derive a blessing from our labors, from our

thoughts and affections--something to lift them up, and to send them onward in their path of being. Yea, how true it is that all heaven is in sympathy with one man!--that our penitence rejoices, our minds assist, in this great abyss of being, above, around, and beneath us!

We shall not die, then, before all *that* work is accomplished.

The usefulness to our fellow-creatures here—to assist and regenerate them, and to fill out all the measure of charity; and to ourselves also, and sometimes even to be plunged in evils, that we may see and correct them ere it is too late—this whole use of living, and this wisest moment of dying—how affecting and practical is the lesson which it teaches!

He takes us away as He sees good. If infants die, we know that they are needed for the heaven of innocence, that they may flow back with their tender influx, and perform some of the most interior works of man's regeneration here. Moreover, they are thus saved from a dangerous and perilous life, and made safe in heaven. It is not orderly for children to die; but in the present state of disorder, the system of God's providence largely requires it. If the children of wicked parents die, we see the good providence of God in so ordering it that the very *sins* which cut off so ruthlessly the offspring of a wicked generation, are turned to an account in peopling heaven. For while by their wickedness they miserably destroy themselves, their children also die off in infancy and youth, infected and corrupted all through with disease, and go to the enlarging of all the heavens. Thus it is again, that even the *wrath* of man is made to praise the Lord, and the remainder of the wrath is always restrained. If accidents occur, and death takes frightful forms, we know that there is a permissive as well as a providive providence, and that the causes even of these disasters lie frequently concealed in the spiritual world. What is accident to us may be sometimes design and direction in the spiritual world, where is seen more fully the chain of causation, and the personal agents who are permitted to

have a part in it. Such things are indeed for the most part disorderly, but they are frequently permitted and over-ruled in a higher and more definite sense than we ever think of. If the young and the useful are taken by any means, let us call to remembrance how opportunely and quickly a death may occur.

This world is not the only field of usefulness ; and "to constitute the Grand Man," says Swedenborg, "there is need of spirits from several earths ; those who come from our earth into heaven not being sufficient for this purpose, being respectively few ; and it is provided of the Lord, that whenever there is a deficiency in any place, as to the quality or quantity of correspondence, a supply be instantly made from another earth, to fill up the deficiency, that so the proportion may be preserved, and thus heaven kept in due consistency."—(*E. U.* 9.)

Now, cannot the same be done from *our* earth ? Should it be any marvel that there are *sudden* and *unexpected* deaths ?

"But this is *Nature* operating," says one. In reply, it is merely to be remarked again, how prone are all merely natural minds to stop in second causes. It is the great error of the irreligious philosophy. True it is that nature operates, and operates according to laws ; but the Great First has included *all* causes and all effects in His Infinite Mind, and nothing transpires, or can transpire, in the world of nature, but from eternity it was seen to be so, and seen to be best in every particular. If it is wrong or evil, it was permitted as the best that could be, consistently with man's freedom. When, therefore, the thing happens, whether by nature so called, or by some angelic or other interposition in the spiritual world, it happens as it was seen and provided for from eternity ; and the *time* of the occurrence is included to a moment !

Here it may be remarked, that we do not always die by natural diseases, even when it appears so. When a person's work on earth is done, or when it is seen that he cannot or

will not do any more ; when his usefulness, therefore, is brought to its highest possible point in this world, he can easily be made to die, without waiting for the ordinary operation of merely natural laws. We live by influx from God through the heavens. And it is only necessary to cut off that influx, or for the attendant spirits to withdraw a certain distance from the man, and leave him more fully to himself, and he may sicken and die at any time, pining away for the want of that vitality. This may account for many sudden and mysterious deaths, and for many forms of misunderstood diseases. Evil spirits also, with their poisonous and fatal influx, may at any time approach the man who is in evils, being permitted by an all-seeing God.

Thus it is, from all these causes, that death walks around the world. And finally, it is to be observed, that if man had lived in true order, and not fallen into sin, he would *never* have died in infancy, nor prematurely. He would have lived without disease, and have attained a ripe old age ; and then, when the body could no longer minister to the internal man, he would have migrated easily and without pain, into the spiritual world.

But now it is not so. And since sin *has* entered into the world, and this kind of death by sin, it is provided that our life be vigilantly guarded and watched ; and from the moment of birth, to the point of great decision in every man's destiny, and to the hour of his departure, it is arranged by the Lord with the utmost precision, that we shall come and go under His all-merciful care.

And thus it is that there is "a time to die." The common sense of the world has always recognized it, in that it declares that no one goes till his time has come. And may God in mercy grant that we may live a good and useful life, that when our summons comes for the great departure, we may go,

———"Not like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach the grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

ASPIRATION.

Ye holy aspirations that e'er rise
 To heaven, as early incense mounting up
 From dewy vales in joyous lightness, seeks
 Its great creator, the all-glorious sun ;
 Are ye all lost in air, to leave no trace
 Of good, no hope of beauteous fruit to cheer ?
 Shall not each purple-winged thought that seeks
 The radiant dwelling of the Day-Spring—Source
 Of Life!—return in some fair guise to bless
 With soothing peace the wildly throbbing breast ?
 As to the fainting heart, strong words of hope
 Bring not the wished-for blessing in themselves,
 But mediately, by giving strength unto
 The willing doer ;—or, as stirring lay
 From depth of poet's heart, all living, warm
 And true, awakens energy which else
 Had slept ; so may all high and strong desire
 Breathe through the soul, and lift it from the earth.
 Learn then to wait ; and mourn no longer with
 A selfish grief, that weeps but for itself.—
 In earthly joys there will be something hid ;
 Some need the soul e'er yearns for, that doth make
 Life incomplete, and to our greatest joy
 Gives tinge of sadness,—in our happiest hours
 Leaves yet some pain.—Oh ! why is this ? Are we
 Thus drawn to heaven where all perfection dwells,
 There to be satisfied from living founts ?
 All things do whisper, Yes.—

'Tis the pursuit

Of pure, ideal excellence alone,
 That truly elevates and blesses man.
 And yet, how great injustice is oft done
 To him whose secret heart doth ever yearn
 For such high good ; whose mind untiring soars
 To things beyond himself. The widened view
 Belongs unto the spiritual state, and grows
 Beneath the gaze ; and though he rises oft

To heights from whence he sees the Harmony
That rules the whole, still, he discerns how much
Remains for man to do ; and every blot
On nature's face, doth weigh upon his soul.
For this, the worldly throng who know him not,
Nor love his ways, cry, Ingrate!—

Ah ! too much

That passes in the world for calm content,
Or pious resignation, is but dull
Indifference, that makes men, like the brutes,
Contented just to live,—no care but for
Themselves, to rouse them from this dead repose.—
Too apt are we to fancy that the world
Doth entertain, as angels unawares,
Our much neglected selves. But he who lives
In earnest, doth in deep humility
E'er turn aside from off'rings to his worth
Which kindred hearts e'er love to bring ; for far
Above, he sees the glimmering of the shrine
To which he still must urge his way. The wing
May flag, and clouds oft intervene ; he soars
Right on, towards day's high noon, impelled by faith
And one small voice within. Fear not for him !
He lives on angel's food : and leaning on
Their gentle hands, loves not to dally by
The way for useless flowers ; but, day by day,
Gains strength that can endure unto the end.

R. G.

“All instruction, and especially religious instruction, ought to minister to the cultivation of mutual kindness and good will ; for without these, our speculations, however elevated their character, and worthy of rational beings, will present not the light of true wisdom, but only a false glare, serving no other purpose than to hide our true conditions from ourselves. Experience has taught us how easy it is to talk about charity, and humility and mutual forbearance, and how apt we are to fancy ourselves in possession of these virtues, when we are no more than intellectually impressed with their value and importance.”—*Tulke's Record of Family Instruction.*

CONNECTION BETWEEN REVELATION AND SCIENCE.

BY W. H. MULLER.

(Continued from page 53.)

Now, as we wish to see the connection existing between religious truth contained in the Bible, and scientific truth contained in the works of creation, we must proceed to ascertain what is possessed in common by these two apparently distinct divisions of knowledge.

The first point in common, is, that they both have God for their Author. The Word of Revelation is from God ; the works of creation are also from Him.

In the second place, whatever proceeds from or is the work of any one mind, be the mind Divine or human, must bear the impress of that mind. If a man writes a book, or builds a house, or paints a picture, or delivers a speech, there is some peculiarity in every one of his performances, however numerous or diverse they may be, which stamps them all as the product of that single mind, and distinguishes them from the like productions of all other minds. Now, what is this peculiarity in the works that emanate from God, and which distinguishes His productions from the productions of any human mind ? It will perhaps be replied, that the Divine productions are characterized by, and exhibit, an Infinite Wisdom, Love, and Power ; that, in these qualities, the Divine productions infinitely excel all human productions. This is all true ; but it is not the answer we want. It is too general. We want to seize upon a more definite peculiarity. Now what is this ? And first, what is it as exhibited in the works of creation ? Can we not all perceive that this Divine peculiarity—the Divine style—consists in this, viz. : *That, in every Divine work, the deeper we penetrate beneath the surface, the greater and more numerous are the wonders laid open to the investigating mind ?* Take any

created object—be it a mineral, a plant, or an animal, or man himself—and in every instance it will be found that the qualities and properties that are exhibited on its surface, or that are perceivable by the external senses, are but a minute fraction of those which lie concealed in its interior, and which are perceived only by the mind's higher powers aided by the outward senses. In proportion as the perceiving mind is more opened, whether naturally or by education, does the object itself open or reveal its more interior qualities. Take, for example, a tree : We will suppose various grades of intelligence to be made aware of, or become cognizant of the tree. First, imagine an animal to approach, whom the tree serves not for shelter, nor any product of it for food. To him it is merely an obstacle to be avoided ; it is this and nothing more ; and accordingly he passes to one side. To another animal—let it be a squirrel—the tree is an object of higher interest, since it furnishes him with food and lodging. A yet higher intelligence—an observing child—comes along, and now, still more of the properties of the tree reveal themselves. Its pleasing form, its leafy crown, its great size and massive proportions of trunk and branches, the shape and color of its leaves, arrest his attention and awaken his admiration. These are some of its most external physical properties, which please the mind of the child or the uneducated person. But within these again lie concealed other physical properties, which reveal themselves only to the well-informed botanist, such as its minute organization of woody fibres, of air tubes, cellular tissue, sap-vessels, the different layers of the bark, and the microscopical structure of all these. Still deeper, beyond the scrutiny of the senses, lies the chemistry of the tree and all its parts, such as the various salts, and earths, and the carbon and gases and water which go to compose these parts or organs. Again, beyond this dead chemistry, lie the still more interior *living functions* of the tree : or the tree is to be considered in its physiological aspects, or as a living being, performing certain functions by the co-operation of all its

parts. Lastly, beyond the functions or living actions of the tree, comes the consideration of the living principle itself, which performs the functions by means of all these preceding structures. Here, then, we see that the tree has, first, its outward and inward, or its grosser and more minute anatomical structure ; then its chemical nature more hidden ; then its living functions still less exposed to view ; lastly, the living principle itself, whose mysterious nature eludes every effort of mere natural science to grasp it, but conducts the inquirer to the threshold of the spiritual world—the world of mind—and to God the supreme mind and only source of life. And each of these steps in the study of the nature of a tree, requires a higher power of the mind to perceive it and to appreciate its relations.

Or, instead of a tree, take a human being. Here also do we find wonders multiply upon us, as we proceed from the outward form to the interior nature of man ; for what fathomless depths of Divine Wisdom in his construction are veiled over by his outward form ? If we take, first, his outward form—his physical frame—we find that this in its entirety, as well as every organ of it in particular, when viewed superficially, appears to present a homogeneous nature ; it appears as if there were no difference among its constituent parts, and to be more or less simple in its structure. But by the help of the microscope, by the tests of chemistry, and by the light of thought and reason thrown upon its physiological or living action, wonders upon wonders, both of structure and of function, simple and compound, successively reveal themselves. The skin, for instance, appears to a superficial glance, to be a very simple kind of covering ; but when more interiorly examined, it is revealed as a very complicated structure, consisting of many distinct textures and organs. When the skin is removed, then appear hundreds of muscles. Each muscle appears at first glance to be but a simple mass of red flesh ; but when examined minutely, it is disclosed as a collection of bundles ; each bundle is again found composed of a collection of fine muscular

threads or fibres ; and each single fibre in turn is composed of distinct and different parts ; and this diversity of structure in the minutest parts is perceived as far as the eye can be carried by the power of the microscope. And so it is throughout every portion and organ of the body. Every discovery shows more beyond to be discovered. And when from the body we pass to the mind, the same is the case in a much greater degree. We know comparatively but the outside of either our own minds or those of others. We are aware of some general functions of the mind—we recognize some general motives of action in ourselves and others ; but the great depths of our mental nature are a *terra incognita*—an unknown region, even to those who have made a life-long study of the mind. We may continually advance in the knowledge of ourselves, and yet never reach a goal : never reach a point at which it can be said, no more is to be learned. And how can it be otherwise ? for as man is created in the image of God, if it were possible for him to know himself thoroughly, it would be possible for him to understand also thoroughly the mind of the Creator, which he can never do.

Thus we see that the peculiarity which marks the Divine authorship, as seen in the works of creation, is, that each and all of these created works contain vastly more within them than appears upon the surface ; and that the further we explore them, the more they offer for exploration. This, we say, is one mark of the Divine authorship, and distinguishes what is from God, from what is of human origin. In all human productions, when we have seen the surface, we have seen the whole. A statue, a picture, a piece of furniture, a work of mechanism, contains all that constitute its merits upon the surface only. In each of these indeed, greater and more numerous beauties may be perceived in proportion to the mental cultivation of the observer. A connoisseur will see a thousand beauties in a statue or a picture, which entirely escape the common beholder ; yet, whatever is seen in such a work of art, or whatever escapes be-

ing seen, is upon the surface only. This, then, is the peculiarity of the Divine style, and this is the mark of distinction between the style of man's productions, and the style of the Creator's works.

But now, if such is the peculiarity of the Divine mind when this mind is manifested in the universe of created objects, it must inevitably exist also in the written Word of Revelation ; for both have the same Author ; both emanate from the same Infinite Mind, and must bear the impress of infinity upon them, just as human productions bear the impress of their finite origin. We say, that both the Word of Revelation and the works of creation must contain within them a richness and depth of Divine love and wisdom, that, to man or angel, is fathomless ; for the very reason that they emanate from the Infinite Mind, that must of necessity stamp its own nature upon all to which it has given existence.

We are here, then, obliged to ask, *How, or in what mode, is such a depth of wisdom contained* in either the works of creation or the Word of Revelation ?

To answer this, we must for a moment turn from the consideration of the Divine Word and works, and the wisdom contained in them, to the mind of man, to whom this wisdom is addressed, and who is able to understand, appreciate, and profit by it, in proportion as he rises from the love of things earthly and temporal to the love of things spiritual and eternal. And what is the nature of this human mind ? What is its most characteristic and distinctive feature ? It is this :—That man consists of two apparently opposite natures. These in Scripture are called respectively the flesh and the spirit. We know also, that, since the fall of man from his pristine innocence, these two constituents of his mental nature are at war with each other, each striving for the mastery, which is due only to the higher or spiritual part of his being. In more ordinary language, these two elements of every human mind are, the natural man or mind, and the spiritual man or mind. The natural mind,

called in Scripture the flesh, may be described as being the *outermost layer* of the mind, or that which with all the affections and thoughts that constitute it, relates solely to the things of this world. It has *self* for its centre, and views and loves all things only as they have reference to self. It has no thought of God—does nothing from religious motives ; but its ends, aims, and actions are all worldly. This natural mind may display a great range of character, and comprehend individuals who rank high in the social scale for benevolence, amiability, and the purely moral virtues, as well as those who are antipodes in these respects, the pariahs and outcasts of society. Its distinguishing characteristic is, as just stated, that, however gifted by birth and education with whatever is lofty in morals, urbane and polished in social intercourse, or brilliant in the sphere of intellect, or the reverse, in either case it is a stranger to the love of God, and the love of the neighbor thence derived.

The spiritual man or mind, on the contrary, is, so to say, the *inner* layer of the mind, and the seat of all those affections that unite man with his Maker. God—the eternal Truth and Right—is its centre, as self is the centre of the natural mind. The spiritual mind aims in all things to do that which appears to be the will of God. God is supreme in its affections and thoughts, and the love of self is sought to be gratified only in conformity with the love and obedience due to God. The spiritual mind views the natural mind as only its servant, agent, or instrument, wherewith to perform the Divine will, and seeks to compress the love of self into that lawful limit, within which alone it can be a good servant. The powers of speech, of memory, of reason, the affection for relatives and friends, the love of power, of wealth, of the good opinion of others, the love of those things which are essential to the support and health of the body, also the love of knowledge, or of the facts which minister to the development of the mind, all these are of the natural man, and in themselves indispensable ; but they

must all be rendered subordinate and subservient to the love of God, and the doing of His will. The love of God and the love of self are the two poles upon which the moral universe revolves ; and they belong respectively to two moral hemispheres, an upper and a lower, which must be, not balanced, but subordinated, the one to the other.

Such is the distinction between the natural and the spiritual man.

Of the two emanations from the Divine Mind, then, the works of creation and the Word of Revelation, the works of creation are mainly or primarily addressed to the natural mind, its powers, and affections—and also serve for the growth and support of his natural body. The various natural sciences previously spoken of, which treat of the objects of the physical world and their relations, are the adapted material with which the powers of the natural understanding, the senses, the memory, the reason, &c., can be nourished and cultivated.

The Word of Revelation, on the other hand, is adapted and addressed to the opening and culture of man's spiritual mind.

But now the question arises, How, or by what route, is the spiritual mind addressed or reached by the spiritual instruction contained in the Word of Revelation ? The answer is, that the spiritual mind is addressed *through* the natural mind. Man in this life possesses a natural body and natural senses, as of sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch—natural powers of memory, reason and affection, by which he is placed in relation with the objects of the natural world ; first, with their more outward and sensible properties, and afterwards, by means of these sensible properties, with their interior or more hidden qualities and phenomena. It is by means of these lower powers, or the powers of perception, of language, of memory, of reason and affection, belonging to his natural mind, that he can receive the facts and statements that have reference to his spiritual mind. Thus his lower mind serves his higher. This fact, that lower powers

are designed to serve higher, is seen in the operations of the natural mind itself. We very well know, that its own higher faculties cannot be exercised except after the lower ones have performed their office ; that the mind's ability to perceive objects in the outer world remains inactive until the bodily eye has looked at, and received the image of the object upon the nerve of sight ; that the object must be perceived before it can be remembered ; and that things must be remembered before they can be reasoned upon. Thus what is true of the several steps or regions of the natural mind itself, that the lower must act before the higher can do so, is true of the entire natural mind with reference to the spiritual mind which lies above it. The natural mind must act in all its several degrees, low and high, before the spiritual mind can be reached and addressed. Hence the Word of Revelation, or the Bible, is addressed primarily to man's natural mind. It is written in natural language, the language which men employ in their intercourse with each other ; and it abounds in allusions to, and descriptions of, natural objects, as the sun, moon, stars, sky, clouds, wind, storms, rain, hail, vapors, dews, fountains, rivers, brooks, mountains, hills, valleys, plains, fields, forests, groves, gardens, &c. It speaks of minerals, plants and animals, of men and their occupations and dwelling places, of houses, cities, towns and villages, of individual men and nations, of wars, conquests and defeats ; and from such descriptions and historical narrations as can interest the mind of a child, it rises to the utterance of the loftiest truths of morals and religion which the powers of the natural man can comprehend. The Bible is thus historical, prophetic, descriptive of simple natural scenes and events, and in addition, abounds in precepts for the guidance of life, and in statements of religious doctrine. It is all this in its merely literal or natural sense ; and thus, as far as this sense goes, it is adapted to a certain extent to every grade of natural intelligence. But if the Bible is really such an astonishing thing as the Word of the Infinite God—whose sole object is to speak to man's

spiritual mind through his natural—then all this description and narration of scenes and events in the natural world, must inevitably have a spiritual significance adapted to the spiritual mind. If the Bible has not this inner significance—if such significance and spiritual meaning cannot be extracted from every word, and every even the most minute particular of the natural sense, then it fails of being a Divine Revelation. If it has not this spiritual meaning contained in the natural, how does the history of the Jews contained in the Old Testament differ from their history told by any uninspired author, provided the facts be essentially the same, though their arrangement and the language be different? Of what spiritual importance are the mere literal narratives concerning Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Esau, Joseph and his brothers? or the histories of the Jewish wars with the Assyrians, Philistines, and other nations? or the account of David, Solomon, Samson, Gideon, and the like, beyond their presenting so many instances of the special dealings of Providence with the individuals and nations treated of? If all the historical portions of the Bible are mere literal accounts of events that occurred in the natural world, and the prophetic portions mere predictions of what should happen to individuals and nations while in the life of the body, then the whole substance of the Bible is contained upon its outer surface; in fact it is all surface. Then, once read and comprehended in its literal sense—which may be done by any ordinary intelligence, leaving moral character quite out of the question—it is read and understood once for all. There remains nothing beyond; and that which purports to be a Divine communication not only has nothing in its essential nature to distinguish it from a human composition, but through the very lack of an interior wisdom, differs immensely and essentially from that other emanation of the Divine Mind, viz., the works of creation; for the latter, we have seen, display more wonders the more deeply they are investigated.

[To be continued.]

LETTER TO REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER ON
THE DIVINE TRINITY.

NUMBER II.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER :

Dear Sir :—Permit me to say, in resuming the subject on which I wrote you last month, that I write not in the interests of any sect or party—not even as a New Churchman in the popular or technical sense of that term. But I write in the interests of our common Christianity, and with the desire of promoting a cause, which, I doubt not, is as dear to your heart as to mine—the cause of pure and undefiled religion.

You, my brother, occupy no ordinary position in the church of Christ. Your learning and talents, your piety and zeal, your manly independence and noble courage, your sincerity and earnestness, your devotion to every cause which you believe good and just, combined with your vivid imagination, your fertility in resources, and your brilliant and unrivalled oratorical powers, place you deservedly among the foremost of those now occupying the American pulpit. Your influence is probably more extensive and more potent than that of any other clergyman in these United States. Your utterances are caught up by the religious and secular press, and wafted, as on the wings of the wind, to the remotest corners of our land. Where ordinary preachers count their audiences by tens (including *readers* as well as *hearers*), you may count yours by thousands. It is, therefore, far more important for *you* to be right on all questions of moment in morals or religion, than for other men—as much more important as your influence is wider and more powerful. If you go wrong, or teach something which is not true, the mischief of such teaching will be incalculably greater than though the same error had been taught by one of your humbler brethren. An ordinary minister may start from false premises, or reason badly from those that are true ; he may teach for doctrines the commandments of men,

and present for Bible truth, dogmas that are false and absurd; he may contradict himself repeatedly in the same discourse—as not unfrequently happens—and no great harm result from it. But when a minister of such commanding talents and influence as you possess, presents a defective argument on any high theme, or when he affirms things that are irreconcilable with each other and with right reason, the cause of Christ suffers more damage. His defective argument or false affirmation will be taken up and repeated by ten thousand tongues, and the error be propagated to distant lands and a remote posterity. And if there are those who perceive the defect in his logic, or the error in his statement, they will be likely to think such error or defect belongs to the Christian system itself; and so Christianity will suffer in their estimation.

It is, then, in view of your position in the American church of Christ, and your unquestionable influence in shaping the future theological thought of our country, that I am induced to write you on this subject of the Divine Trinity. It is an important subject and has ever been so regarded by Christians. It is one, about which there have been many long and angry controversies in the church. The popular doctrine on the subject—*i. e.* the doctrine of three Divine *Persons*, which has been held by the great majority of Christians ever since the Council of Nice—is confessedly embarrassed with great difficulties. Yourself and others of your own denomination are candid enough to acknowledge this. You see that it is hard—I hold it to be impossible—to believe in a *personal* God, and at the same time to believe in, or to think of, *three* Divine Persons, without believing in tri-theism—a doctrine universally conceded by Christians to be contrary alike to reason and Scripture.

It was the design of my previous letter to show, that, to believe in “three Beings with separate and distinct understandings, with separate and distinct conscience, and with separate and distinct will,”—language quoted from your sermon—and whose three-fold personality stands as clearly

defined to your mental vision, as "the existence of three different friends," according to every fair and honest use of language, is nothing less than a belief in tri-theism. And I beg you seriously to consider this, and see if it is not so. You believe in the absolute divinity of Jesus Christ; you believe Him to have been not merely a "messenger *from* God," but "God himself manifest in the flesh." The glorified Christ stands revealed to your mental perception as a Divine Person. And if you believe in a *personal* God, as you profess, it is impossible for you *to think* of the existence of any *other* Divine Person, without thinking of more Gods than one. Is it not so?

Here, then, your tri-personal doctrine is met, *in limine*, by the solid and insurmountable objection, that it necessarily involves a belief in tri-theism. And if tri-theism be not agreeable to either Scripture or reason, then it is certain that the teaching of the Bible on this subject has been misunderstood. The Trinity therein revealed must be some other than a trinity of *Persons*. And when we consider upon how many other subjects the teaching of Holy Scripture has been misunderstood, why should it be difficult for us to admit, that upon this one also its meaning may have been misapprehended? It is certainly easier to believe that Christians have misunderstood God's Word on this subject, than to believe that His Word teaches a doctrine so repugnant to enlightened reason as tri-theism, or any thing nearly allied to it. And if a belief in tri-theism be unreasonable, and unfriendly to the development of the highest religious life, might we not expect, in view of the immense multitude of persons who have accepted the tri-personal doctrine, and of the tenacity with which that doctrine has been held, that a new revelation on this subject would, some time or other, be vouchsafed to Christians? Is it reasonable to suppose, that, upon a theme of so much magnitude and importance as the nature of the Divine Trinity, the Lord would permit his church to remain forever in darkness? For when such a view of any subject is pre-

sented, as requires for its acceptance the complete surrender if not the absolute crucifixion of my reason, I call it darkness. If there *be* a true doctrine of the Trinity, different from the one which you profess, and which has been held by the great majority of Christians for so many centuries, what could be more reasonable than to expect that it would some day be revealed? And may not the revelation of the genuine truth on this subject, together with an unfolding of the deeper and truer meaning of Scripture on other subjects, be among the things pointed at in those prophetic intimations which our Saviour uttered eighteen hundred years ago? "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." I believe that the time here alluded to has already come; and that men—all, I mean, who have eyes to see—are now being shown plainly of the Father. I believe that the spirit of truth here promised—the spirit of the Divine Word—has come, and that it is even now guiding the genuine disciples of the Lord, whose hearts are open to receive it, into all truth. I believe that the true spiritual sense of the Word has been laid open by that distinguished servant of the Lord, Emanuel Swedenborg; and that among other interesting and important truths therein revealed, is that concerning the Divine Trinity. I grant that it *appears* from the literal sense of the Scripture as if there were three *persons* in the Godhead—though this is nowhere distinctly taught;—just as your three branches springing from one trunk *appear* to the superficial observer, or to one who views them "from behind a garden wall," as three trees. But the spiritual sense breaks down that garden wall, or lifts us above it;—lifts us above mere *appearances* and discloses *realities*. It shows us, that, what appears from the sense of the letter as three Divine Persons, is in reality but one Divine Person—just as a closer observation, or a

higher view, of your *apparently* three trees shows them “coming together at a point beyond your [former] sight, and standing upon one root, and making but one tree.”

The doctrine concerning the Divine Trinity, therefore, to which I invite your serious attention, is none other than that revealed for the New Church through Swedenborg. But no especial indulgence is claimed for the view I am about to present, on the score of Swedenborg’s alleged or admitted illumination. You are not asked to accept it on Swedenborg’s authority, but simply to examine it with candor in the light of both reason and Revelation. But if I succeed in showing you that it has the testimony of both these witnesses, I am encouraged to believe that you will accept it with your whole heart; for you say in your late sermon, “Surely, I should change my view if another one were presented to me which reconciled and harmonized every passage of the New Testament.” I think the New Church doctrine on the subject does this. And though you may not agree with me, I trust you will give to what I say a candid hearing.

And I rejoice that you and I have so much common ground to stand upon. The points upon which we agree, touching the great central doctrine of Christianity—the doctrine concerning the true Object of worship—are numerous and important. My first notice of your sermon on “Understanding God” must have satisfied you of this. We even agree as to the fact of a trinity in God, and differ only as to the nature of this trinity. I accept, too, what you say about the measure of our ability to understand or interpret God. And as it seems to have an important bearing upon the subject under discussion, you will pardon me for introducing here a few extracts from your late sermon.

“First, in further opening this subject, I remark that man’s own being is given to him as the determining element by which he is to understand all things outside of himself. This is the only means by which we can measure and understand things foreign to ourselves; and I do not hesitate to say that no man can understand anything of which there is not in himself an element or analogue.”

"The moment you undertake to understand anything predicated of the Divine Being, of which there is not some germ, some seed-form, in yourself, to stand as an analogue, that very moment you fall into confusion."

"It has been thought to be the right way of exalting God to teach that He is absolutely different from men. . . . It has been thought to be presumption to take that which is God-like in man, and by it to represent truthfully God's nature. It has been supposed that all of God's likening himself to man in the Bible, is on account of our weakness ; and that accordingly, it is to be interpreted as giving us some proximate idea of what God is, but not as giving us the real truth. Well, what is the use of proximate truth, that is not a bit like the real truth ?"

"I aver that the quality of love in God is exactly like the quality of love in you. . . . If a man says that love in me is no fit measure of the depth, or the breadth, or the length, or the versatility of the love of God, he is right ; but yet it is a true criterion by which to judge of the essential quality of love in God."

"What an utter wreck and ruin would be presented if that false notion of God which some persons hold, namely, that we can have no real knowledge of Him, but only a kind of false representation, which comes nearer representing Him than anything else, but still is nothing like a true representation—what an utter wreck and ruin, I say, would be presented of this false notion, if every conscientious man were to admit that God is in no respect different, in the essential elements of his character, from men, but a Being whom we ourselves come nearer representing than anything else !"

"The Scripture teaching on this point is simply this—that man was made in the image of God, in order, as we suppose, that he might understand Him. The spiritual and the higher nature of man is really, absolutely like God's ; just as red is like red, just as green is like green."

"We are so like God in this respect, that if you know what disinterested love is, then you know the kind of love that God feels ; if you know what true justice is, you know what God regards as justice. You know not the whole experience of God ; but if you know one letter in the alphabet of a knowledge of God, that letter gives you a correct conception of Him as far as it goes."

"Right thinking, based upon right living, is the philosophical method of finding out God.

"Let us turn to a saying of the Apostle John, which has an intimate bearing upon this subject : 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God !' Children are like their parents. They inherit their nature from their parents. Like begets like, everywhere. From the beginning of the world to the present, the declaration has been ringing that we are God's children ? that we are like God ; that we were made in God's image ; that God is our Father ; that the parental likeness is given us in its elements."

"That is the way you are going to see God—by your own consciousness, and the qualities in you answering to a like consciousness and to like qualities in Him. And no man can know one whit more of God than he possesses in his own being. We can comprehend God only to the degree that His power, in dwelling in us, causes our higher nature to act as His nature acts, thus rendering us interpreters of Him."

Now I accept what you here say as at once rational and Scriptural. You have only stated in varied language what is more summarily expressed in the language of Holy Writ : "So God created man in His own image ; in the image of God created He him." But let us apply this sound and excellent teaching to the subject under consideration.

You maintain that "you cannot understand anything predicated of the Divine Being of which there is not some germ, some seed-form in yourself." You reject as "a false notion," the doctrine which teaches "that He is absolutely different from men," and declare your belief "that God is in no respect different, in the essential elements of His character, from men, but a Being whom we ourselves come nearer representing than anything else." And, consistently enough, you add : "Right thinking, based upon right living, is the philosophical method of finding out God." Your meaning here seems quite intelligible—and alike rational and Scriptural. It is, that we understand or "find out" God more and more, the more we become *like* Him in the spirit and

temper of our minds. By "right living," I suppose you mean *willing* right and *acting* right ; for both willing and acting are involved in living. Then your meaning in the last sentence quoted must be, that the best and truly philosophic method of finding out God, is, to think right, to feel or will right, and to act right. And you will no doubt agree with me, that to think right on moral and spiritual themes, is to think according to the will of God as revealed in His Holy Word ; or, to think in accordance with the laws of heavenly order—to think according to the truths of spiritual and heavenly life. But you very well know that right *thinking*, however indispensable this may be to right acting, is not alone sufficient to constitute one a good man or a genuine Christian. Therefore you have wisely coupled with this, right *living*. And right living clearly involves two things : First, a right purpose of the heart—a pure motive—a right determination of the will ; and second, the ultimation of that right purpose, or the carrying of our good intentions into outward act. In other words, when the ruling purpose of a man's heart is to do right, or, what is the same, to do God's will without any thought of recompense, then his motive is pure—his will has a right determination. And when he carries his good purpose into effect, that is, when he actually *does* God's will, from love to Him, or from a desire to please Him, then he lives right. Then he *lives* or *acts* according to those laws of heavenly order, in agreement with which he *thinks* and *wills*. His thoughts and feelings are heavenly ; and his deeds outflowing therefrom, are of a corresponding character. Such a man is in the likeness of God, for he has God's image in himself. And by virtue of this in-dwelling of the Divine likeness, he is enabled to understand God—to see Him mentally or spiritually. And this is the only way that God can be truly seen or understood. Hence it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God ;" that is, shall mentally perceive Him—shall understand His true character.

This I understand to be the obvious meaning of what is

taught in your sermon. This is your own view without any essential modification, and but slightly expanded. It is what I gather from your own language when you say: "That is the way you are going to see God—by your own consciousness, and the qualities in you answering to a like consciousness and to like qualities in Him. And no man can know one whit more of God than he possesses in his own being. We can comprehend God only to the degree that His power, in dwelling in us, causes our higher nature to act as His nature acts, thus rendering us interpreters of Him."

You will not fail to discover the purpose for which I make these quotations from your sermon. They are extremely pertinent to the subject under discussion. For if we "are going to see God" by having in ourselves elements or qualities which answer to like elements or qualities in Him, then should we not look to our own souls in order to see, that is, to understand, the true nature of the trinity in God? If, as you affirm, "no man can know one whit more of God than he possesses in his own being," then what can we know of the nature of the Divine Trinity, except so far as we have the image and likeness of that Trinity in ourselves? Do you say we know nothing, and therefore can affirm nothing, in regard to the nature of the Divine Trinity? I answer that *you do* affirm something in regard to the nature of this Trinity, when you declare your belief in three Divine *Persons*. You affirm it to be *tri-personal* in its nature. I, on the contrary, maintain that the trinity in God is *not* tri-personal, but that it is precisely such in its nature as is the trinity in every good or regenerating man; and even in a bad man, we have an inverted image of this Trinity. And for this I think you must concede that I have the warrant of Holy Scripture. The Bible declares that man was originally made in the image of God. Then, whatever be the nature of the Trinity in God, there must have been originally an image of that Trinity in man; and from the nature of the finite human trinity, we ought to be able to learn that of the Infinite Divine Trinity—just as

from the nature or quality of our finite human love, we may learn that of the Infinite Divine Love ; and you yourself believe that we can learn the nature of God's love in no other way. "I aver," say you, "that the quality of love in God is exactly like the quality of love in you. As for power of love, and as for all manner of multitudinous disclosures, of course God is tropical, and we are like Nova Zembla ; but as to the matter of loving, He loves just as we love. I, with the little spark in my bosom, love just as God loves with the vast flame which is ever bursting forth from His great nature." And notwithstanding God's image in the soul of man has been terribly marred and distorted by sin, it has ever been, and is still, the belief of Christians, that, by regeneration the Divine image is restored to us. This renewal or restoration of God's image in the soul, is obviously what is meant by the *new man* and the *new creation* of which Paul speaks ; for, writing to the Ephesian brethren on the subject of this inward spiritual renewal, he exhorts them to "put on the new man, which, *after God*, is created in righteousness and true holiness." And again, writing to the Colossians, he speaks of "the new man" as one "which is renewed in knowledge *after the image* of Him that created him." And elsewhere in the Bible the regenerate are spoken of as the sons or children of God, and as created anew in His own image and likeness. Thus, in a passage quoted in your sermon (1 *John* iii. 2) : "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him* ; for we shall see Him as He is." And upon this you justly remark, that "we shall see Him just as He is, because we shall be like Him." That is, we shall understand God in the degree that we become spiritually like Him—in the degree that we are created anew after His Divine likeness. Or, to cite again your own language, "The moment we begin to grow like Christ, that moment we begin to understand Him better ; and the more we grow like Him, the better we shall understand Him."

We have, then, the indisputable warrant of Holy Scripture for saying that man was originally created in the image of God. And the same high authority assures us, that, although this image has been defaced, and almost blotted out, through the malign power of evil, yet by the new spiritual birth the Divine likeness is restored to the soul. By following the Lord in the regeneration, man is re-created in the image of his Maker. This is so clearly taught in the Bible, that it is believed by nearly all Christendom. It is your own belief. And I submit that the logical and necessary inference from this, is, that, whatever be the nature of the Divine Trinity, the *image* of that Trinity must be found in every regenerate or regenerating soul. And if we are not justified in calling a regenerate man tri-personal, no more are we justified in speaking or thinking of a tri-personal God. We have not the least warrant, either from Scripture or reason, for believing in or talking of any other *kind* of trinity in God, than that which exists in every man who has been created anew in God's own image. And when men *do* think of any different kind—when they talk of a *tri-personal* God, to cite the language of our candid brother Bushnell, “they only confuse their understanding, and call their confusion faith.” What can we understand—what ought we, therefore, to believe or teach—concerning any trinity in God, other than that, whose image, seed-form, or analogue we find in ourselves? For, as you yourself have truly said, “the moment you undertake to understand anything predicated of the Divine Being, of which there is not some germ, some seed-form, in yourself, to stand as an analogue, that moment you fall into confusion.” And when you talk about a trinity in God, to which we find nothing analogous in the human soul—a trinity of such a nature that there is nothing in man, or known to man, which resembles it, or gives us the least idea of it—a trinity of which it is not pretended that any human understanding is able to take cognizance, or one which, *if* there be any such pretense, leads by the strictest logical necessity, to tri-theism—when you talk, I say, of

such an unknown and incomprehensible trinity, "I am,"—to use you own language in reference to certain abstract qualities that do not centre in a *personal* God—"I am crazed by it." You talk of a trinity, the image of which is unknown on earth, and whose nature there is nothing in my soul that explains, or furnishes the least clue to it. It is as if you talked in Sanscrit, or discoursed to me of a sixth sense. And, to quote again from your generally excellent sermon, "when you attempt to conceive of a sixth sense unlike anything in you, every one feels that there is no such thing as understanding such a sense, because there is nothing in ourselves by which to interpret it."

I maintain, therefore, that the true nature of the Divine Trinity reveals itself in the constitution of the human soul, and finds here its only complete and rational explanation. The image of this trinity is and must be in ourselves, because we were created to be images and likenesses of God. We were made to be the recipients, in a finite degree, of each and every element that enters into the Divine character. We can know nothing of God's love save as its nature or quality is revealed to us in the love that we feel, and which flows into our hearts from Him who is Love Itself. We can know nothing of God's wisdom, except so far as that humble measure of our human wisdom, which we receive from Him, shadows forth, or in some measure images, the Divine. And so of God's mercy, justice, long-suffering, tenderness, benevolence, foresight, righteousness, and all the other Divine attributes ; we can have no knowledge of them, and of course cannot talk of them intelligently, except in the degree that we have some measure—some faint image at least—of these same attributes in ourselves. And this doubtless you will concede, since it follows as a logical inference from your own affirmations, that "it is the spiritual nature [in us] that interprets God ;" that "as to the matter of loving, He loves just as we love ;" and that "the quality of love in God is exactly like the quality of love in you," only immeasurably superior in purity, amplitude and power.

Rely upon it, then, my brother, the true doctrine concerning the Divine Trinity, like every other doctrine concerning the Divine character and attributes, must base itself upon the constitution of our inner spiritual being, and find its image, and so its rational interpretation there. Any doctrine which fails to do this, will sooner or later be seen to have no foundation, and will be discarded by the wise and good as a mere human invention.

But what is the trinity in man which is supposed to image forth, and so to interpret for us, the nature of the Divine Trinity? I should weary you, were I to enter upon the explanation of this now, and do any thing like tolerable justice to the subject. Although it has been hinted at, and indistinctly shadowed forth in a portion of the present letter, I trust to be able in my next to make the matter so plain, that no lingering doubt about it shall remain in any honest mind. And if I succeed in satisfying you that this finite human trinity, the nature of which I propose to exhibit, is the analogue or image, and therefore the true interpreter for us, of the Infinite Divine Trinity, I shall feel that I have been amply rewarded for my humble effort. Meanwhile—begging that you will weigh with seriousness and candor what I have here said, for it has an important bearing on what I have yet to say—I subscribe myself

Your Friend and Brother,

Orange, July 12, 1859.

B. F. BARRETT.

“Every man, as created in the image of God, carries about him a kind of emblem of the divine nature, in the three-fold distinction of his own; which, if he did not every minute find it by experience to be a fact, would doubtless appear to him altogether as mysterious and incomprehensible as the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity.”—*Augustine*.

“When you talk of a man, I would not have you tack flesh and blood to the notion, nor those limbs either which are made out of it; these are but tools for the soul to work with, and no more a part of a man than an ax or a plane is a piece of a carpenter.”—*Collier*.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

BY JOHN DOUGHTY.

“And God spake all these words, saying ; Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.”

To him who seeks in all sincerity
The way of Life, the Lord hath many voices.
To him, who 'mid the follies of the earth
And 'mid its tangled maze of wickedness ;—
Who from amid the halo dazzling bright,
Wherewith the evils of the world surround
Their dark deformities, and immolate
Their victims, while with sweet though cunning sounds
They drown their senses and destroy their souls ;—
Who from the mental caverns dark and deep
Where *Self* enchains each man, a willing slave,
Can lift his eyes and heart in prayer to God ;—
To such an one the Lord hath many voices.
He speaks amid the storm, when earth and sky
Are blazing with the lightning's sheeted flame,
And all the hidden forces of the air
Break maddened forth in deep and dreadful thunders.
He speaks where summer winds do softly play,
Or waves are dashing on the ocean's shore ;
Where gaily plumaged birds, 'mid buds and flowers,
Fill the delighted air with notes of joy ;
Where music mingles sounds of harmony,
And voices all forgetful of the tones
Of envy or of passion, join in song,
And fill the air with sweet, concordant notes,
A distant echo of the courts of heaven.
He speaks his word of inmost innocence
In every prattle of the gentle child
That smiles and nestles in a mother's arms,
In every word that falls from happy lips,
In every tone of pity or of love,
In every look where true affection shines,
And heart speaks unto heart that silent language
No other heart interprets but its own.

These are the voices in the outer world,
That cast a holy influence o'er the heart
That loves to listen and to linger near them.
But God hath other ways of counseling
With man, of calling to the measureless
And mystic caverns of the human soul,
Which he, who wildly deems himself so wise,
Hath never known of and can never know.
He speaks his constant warning from the depths
Of man's own inner being ; for 'tis there
Within the deepest heaven of his soul,
The Lord hath settled his eternal home.
At times when all is calm, serenely calm,
And man lays schemes to gratify his *self*,
When riches, honors, all he wooed and won,
Gather around him in unending store,
And all goes smiling as an azure morn ;
That voice starts forth in tones most terrible,
And thunders loud and deep break o'er the soul.
He feels as though the fountains of his life
Were broken up, and learns there's naught so dire
In all the realms of spirit or of earth,
As the mad tempest that shall sweep his soul
When in his seeming anger, God hath spoke !
But when he lowly bends, and casts away
Power, and pride, and all his self-hood wooed
And in his folly won ; when he shall fall
At God's deep voice, and bless his holy name,
Then like the murmur of the summer wind,
Soft breathing through the gardens of the mind,
And with the perfume of a thousand flowers
Its wings all laden, thus the Lord doth speak
'Mid skies serene, and sweeter music than
The winds discourse through harps Æolian ;
For 'tis the heavenly music of the soul !
For every state he hath a voice—of hope—
Of fear—of consolation or remorse—
To lead His erring children to Himself,
To guide their worship to the only God.

Far from the busy haunts of worldly strife,
Away within the deepest realms of heaven,

Beyond, above, within the souls of men,
Afar from all the discord of the world,
And yet in all that hath a ray of life,
Divinely grand, the Lord doth dwell enthroned.
And there are rays of being infinite
That in undying stream flow forth around
And fill the mighty universe with life.
These are the voices given unto man,
The voices these life-laden and divine.
They speak, creation infinite obeys ;
And the great universe its solemn march,
With stately cadence blended, doth begin ;
And countless worlds in one grand harmony,
Roll ceaseless through the sky, its solemn depths
As measureless as its Creator's soul.
And still they speak ; trees grow and flowers bloom,
And fruits are ripe ; and tree, and flower and fruit,
Grow, bloom and ripen, each in its own set kind,
Eternally the same. The air is filled
With bright-wing'd, warbling birds ; beasts roam the plains ;
And creatures never to be seen of men
Fill the vast earth and ocean, fire and air.
And still they speak ; and tender waves of life,
Woven of spirit-tissues which out-vie
The airy lightness of the gossamer,
More subtle than the lightnings and more swift,
Uncarthy in their essence, gleam and roll
Through worlds of mystery and lands of light ;
Yet often through a midnight world of gloom.
Fain would they light the garden of the soul,
And show a paradise of buds and flowers.
For there are laws outspoken at the first,
Which bid those waves, if unimpeded there,
Course o'er the fibres of the spirit man,
And then project themselves, above, around,
In one wild blaze of beauty ; taking forms
Of love and happiness, and breathing forth
In every shape of life, and light, in all
The spirit dare to hope for or to love.
And this is heaven ! This the dwelling place
Of him who worships the one only God !

All nature strict obedience yields to God.
There's not a jar in all Creation's move,
Except in man, the archetype of all.
He, the free born, alone, in mood profane,
Rolls back the wave of life upon itself,
And makes the stream so pure all bitterness,
And impiously twists the fibres of his life
By passions dark and dire, creating forms
About his spirit world, so monstrous, foul,
And steeped in ugliness, that angels turn
And fly afar with cheeks all blanched with fear.

And what is worship? Is't the prayer profane
That droppeth from the lips of hypocrites;—
The bending of the knee, and solemn face
To draw the praise of men for sanctity:—
The charity that vaunts itself in words?
Is it the service of the heedless heart
That doeth well nor knows a reason why;—
The babble of the self-sufficient fool
That knows no good but that which he has found,
And all condemns who will not think with him?
No! 'tis the answer that the true heart gives
When God doth speak. It is to open wide
The inmost portals of the inner mind,
And let the stream divine of Love and Truth
Go rolling, surging in its happy course.
It is to listen to his voices clear,
And sweep and garnish every chamber,
So that his blessed Word may echo back,
And still re-echo lovingly again,
And thrill along each fibre of the soul.
But when the portals of the heart are closed
Against the life-waves of divinity,
Then shall the man draw from the world and hell
His stream of life. Darkness and death are there,
And he shall to his bosom, as his love,
Press the foul things to which the stream gives birth.
Then shall he raise gross idols in his heart
And bow in worship to his very *self*.
There Pride and Pleasure, and foul Avarice,
And Gluttony, and Drunkenness, and all

The evils that unchecked have prowled abroad,
And grown and fattened since the world began,
Shall each in turn his maddened worship share.
For who a single evil cherisheth
Or loves, to that he payeth homage,—
The worship that the Lord alone can claim,—
And breaks his first command.

O listen then
To all the voices which shall greet thee from
Without or from within. Let not a word
Of warning, not a single hope or fear,
No gentle intimation ever speak,
Either amid the careless hours of life,
Or 'mid the worldly cares of business
To stay thee or to cheer, thou heedeth not.
Each present moment seize, and let thy prayer
Be the true heart's unceasing life of truth.
In every season, and in every time,
Yield thy heart open to the stream of life;
So shalt thou have no other God to reign
Within, than Jesus, who is Lord of all.

Then, when thy chastened soul shall in itself
And all around, in every subtle form
Of its own being, and in every shape
Which breathes of life, within its holy sphere,
Be but the finite image of the Lord,
The living representative of Him,
The infinite, eternal Man Divine,
So shalt thou worship, that when thou shalt raise
Thy voice in prayer, the incense will arise
Acceptable unto the throne of Grace.
For then thy voice will be in unison
With all thy inner being; and the soul
In every trouble, will responsive thrill
To that sweet voice which is but an echo
In lower spheres of some delightful song
Which rose more sweetly in the spirit world.
So worship that while still a dweller here,
Angels shall love to linger in thy path,
And all unseen to minister to thee.

Then drink so deeply of the fount divine,
Inhale so deeply of the sphere of Life,
That when, obedient to the spirit's laws,
They mirror thine own soul in space around,
Thou shalt, when time to thee shall be no more,
Throw off the leaden coil of earthly life,
And thus emerge into the spirit land,
A wilderness of beauty and of bloom,
A home of joy, and love, and happiness,
In perfect concord with the worship thou
Didst raise unto the true and only God!

DEGREES OF THE DIVINE WORD.

Swedenborg tells us that there are three degrees in the DIVINE WORD, celestial, spiritual, and natural; and that, of these three, the natural meaning is that with which man has most to do; that the spiritual meaning is chiefly intended for the angels.

In the first states of our regeneration we are apt to confound things natural with things spiritual, and to think sometimes that we see the spiritual meaning; when we are only in a perception of the spiritual in the natural.

There are degrees within degrees, and the natural degree of the Word, like the natural degree of the mind, consists of three distinct planes: The letter of the Word, which, like the material man, is mobile and easily changed according to circumstances, being either Hebrew, Greek, Latin, &c. Then the historical facts of the Word, which, as they appeal to the senses, correspond with the sensual mind, and are above the letter of the Word, as the sensual man is above and within the material body.

Now, it is easy to see, that the historical facts of the Bible may be received and believed, without in the least influencing our states; consequently, we must ascend from these facts or knowledges, which Swedenborg calls "scientifics," to a higher degree which are "Doctrinals" deduced

from these facts, and corresponding with the rational degree of the mind.

Thus we have three external degrees in the Divine Word, which correspond to the material, sensual, and reasoning man ; and thus we see that we may be in the letter, in the science, and the doctrine of the Word, and yet not in its interior reception, which is essential to the new birth—to our entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Above these three degrees of material thought, of scientific knowledges, and reasonings thence, is an inner and higher degree, which is the inmost of our external natural mind. This is the intellectual principle which may turn itself within and above, and become conscious of changes of state going on within our hearts and minds, with respect to spiritual things in the natural ; or it may close itself above and look out only upon things of memory and reason—i. e., the scientifics and doctrines of the Divine Word.

To illustrate our meaning we will take a passage from the Word : “ Behold ! a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.” (*Isaiah* vii. 14.)

The letter of the Word can be taken in by any material eye, whether of a believer or an unbeliever ; and produces no more effect upon the unbeliever than seeing a body without a soul, would. The scientific of the Word is received by those who acknowledge its historical truth. The doctrine of the Word is received by those who reason concerning salvation by faith and charity, from a belief in the Divine Incarnation ; and these are they in whom the rational degree is opened.

But the intellectual reception of this Word reveals to us a new birth in our mind and heart. The letter, the science, and the doctrine are filled with life through this intellectual reception, which gives the power to see that the “*virgin*” represents an affection, or love-principle in man, which has not been married to the things of the earth. This affection is turned heavenward and becomes receptive of the influx of the Divine Spirit, when slowly and gradually, according

to the order of development, an image of the Divine is born into the mind of man. It is a form of *truth*; hence it is called a "son," and His name is "Immanuel," *God with us*.

"Butter and honey shall he eat,
That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."

It is the image or the idea of the Divine in us, which appropriates the butter and honey—i. e., celestial knowledges and delight in them—through which we come to know the distinction between good and evil. Thus we see that we have ascended by the external degrees of the Word as on a ladder, each step of which is absolutely essential; and the letter, science, doctrine, and intellectual reception, constitute our natural degree. For all of these degrees are born and developed upon the natural plane, or in the external world.

Now let us glance at that wondrous interior spiritual meaning which is for the angels. We know that the angelic heaven is in the form of a man—that is, in human order; and that we upon earth, are the outer body of the interior man of the heavens. We know that for us our Lord has descended into the ultimates of a material existence; that He was born literally and externally of a virgin upon the earth, and thus developed himself to our material consciousness or senses. In coming down to us, the Lord passed through the heavens, so that His descent was a spiritual fact to the angels as well as a natural fact to men. His descent upon earth reduced all things to order in the heavens by making the influx of the heavens into the earth possible; thereby stupendous changes must have been wrought in the interior man or spiritual heavens. The history or science of this must be an everlasting joy to the angels. And we know that the history of the Church upon earth, or the development of good and truth in man, has a universal or general application and also a special and individual meaning, so that it becomes the history of each man's regeneration in the natural degree of life. Thus it must be with the angels. The Divine Word must be to them a history of their development in the spiritual world.

And now we come to that inmost Divine meaning of the Holy Word, which is called CELESTIAL, and treats wholly of love ; and this beautiful meaning is for men upon earth, even as it is for the highest celestial angels.

God descended upon the earth, and revealed Himself in a material body. He took upon Himself our finite senses ; bound His thought and feeling in the swaddling bands of space and time ; was enveloped in all the ignorance and folly and falsity and evil of our nature, and opened it up from its finiteness to the Infinite ; so that He brought the Divine down into the sensual and corporeal mind and stood as God, manifest upon the earth, irradiating our whole nature with the light and glory of the Divine Presence. The Divine Word, from Genesis to Malachi, is the history of this regeneration of the finite assumed humanity. The New Testament is the living out of this Divine history, which opened the heavens to us. This is the celestial in the natural, and is for man, who is yet in the natural world. The celestial of the spiritual is for the angels, and narrates how our Lord, who ascended from the inmosts to the outermosts and perfected the nature of angels as well as of men, in His descent and ascent, coming down through these degrees and opening them up into more interior perceptions, as He returned into the bosom of the Father. While the celestial of the celestial, is the history of the Divine Incarnation in the first finite degree of the celestial angels when He descended to the earth. It is delightful to realize that all these meanings, which in fact fill the universe, are yet embodied in the very letter of the Word, and that when we read the words,

“The people that walked in darkness—
Have seen a great light—”

this Word thrills back to the celestial heaven, and comes home to the experience of every angel there ; for they too are finite, and oftentimes realize this finiteness, as the “shadow of Death,” and then look up and see the glory of

God in a new perception of His perfectness of being ; and they too, have a living experience of that beautiful Divine Word which descends into our heart's love—

“ For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given ;
And His name shall be called
Wonderful ! Counselor, the Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

This birth takes place in us, after each combat and struggle in our mind and heart against the false and the evil. “CHILD” represents the Divine innocence, which is perceived by us only when we have put off the evil ; it is a perception of love, and signifies the reception of the Divine innocence in our will. When He descends into the understanding He is called a “Son,” because love then assumes a definite form, and manifests its name or quality, which is “Wonderful,” because the Infinite is incomprehensible to our finiteness. And with this perception of unlimited being, comes a trust in Him as our “Counselor,” and submission to Him as the “Mighty God,” from whom we have received our being—the “Everlasting Father.” And from all these perceptions, He at last reigns in us as the “Prince of Peace,” bringing all things into harmony and unity in our wills and understandings.

The Divine Word thus brings the heavens and the earth into harmony and oneness. And the letter of the Word becomes delightful and valuable to us in proportion to our ability to realize the soul embosomed in it, and in proportion to our perception of our own history reflected in its pages. It must become to us a living Word, written in our present consciousness, and not simply a history of external facts belonging to the dead past. It is this history of the regeneration of the natural man, with which we have most concern while in the natural degree. And it is the individual application of it, which develops in us successive stages or planes of regeneration.

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CHURCH ORDER.

LETTER FROM OUR ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT.

[We invite special attention to the following able and interesting communication from our English correspondent on the principles of true order in the Church. We assure our readers that it will repay an attentive perusal. Let the views herein presented, and which are shown to be so well supported by the Word and the writings of the Church, be generally adopted by New Churchmen, and one great source of the troubles and divisions which have afflicted the Church, would be removed. The reader will not fail to see how nearly this English brother's views coincide with those of the more liberal portion of the American New Church; yet we are not aware that there has been any interchange of views between him and any of the American brethren on this subject.—Ed.]

MR. EDITOR :—My last letter to you appeared in the *Swedenborgian* for February last. Since then I have been prevented by various hindrances from sitting down and addressing you in the way I desired. Permit me now to resume my correspondence.

I have informed you of some changes which took place at our last Conference, tending to promote that co-equality between ministers and other members, which ought ever to exist in the Church. I said that what the Conference then did was in the direction of true order, and was calculated to strengthen that union, harmony, and peace, which have hitherto prevailed among us here, in matters connected with the Conference. I promised to resume the subject of Church Order, and now it is my intention to fulfill that promise.

We all allow that there should be order in the Church. There are different opinions as to what order is, or what is true order; but no one advocates what he considers to be disorder. Those who seek to establish Babylonish principles will say that those opposed to them are disorderlies; but they do this, as I have intimated before, in imitation of worldly rulers, who seek to establish tyranny and oppres-

sion by vilifying their opponents. I will not charge those opposed to my own opinions with a desire to be disorderly, but will proceed to show what appears to be true order.

God Himself is order. He is order itself, or essential order. He is so, because order is one with love and wisdom ; and these have no existence apart from God. As love and wisdom, or good and truth, are before, above, and apart from, any development of them in human minds, so is it with order. Men will see order in different ways, according to the states in which they are. The more perfect they are, the more perfect will be their perceptions of order. It is true that very imperfect men may sometimes have a *knowledge* of true order, but that is different from the perception and life of it. The perceptions of angels will be the most perfect, and hence the truest order will prevail in heaven. The Church is to be the Lord's heaven on the earth ; and therefore, the order prevailing in heaven should also prevail in the Church ; and it will prevail so far as men have the Church in themselves, or the good and truth in their minds which constitute it. The Most Ancient Church was an orderly one, for it was in the Divine image and likeness. Each member of it was such an image, because each member has in himself what belongs to the Church generally ; he is a church in its least form. Man in God's image is a form of love and charity. He appears to have self-originating life, because in God, from whom it is derived, it is self-essent. Men so created are all equal, all are brethren, all are servants one to another. Having the same capacities, they are constituted alike, which makes their equality ; being all in charity, they are a brotherhood, and this charity leads them to minister to and serve one another. Men in charity seek to serve, and not to rule. Men were thus minded in the Church of the primeval age, and hence they were in order. Each dwelt under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to make him afraid. At that time there was no selfish or worldly love, no desire of one to deprive another of his individuality : no hierarchy, no human priesthood in those

days. Each man was ruled, taught, and led by the Lord alone. But at length the fall of man took place, and then began the ruling of some and the serving of others. Men began to prey upon one another ; and then, for their mutual protection, they associated into companies, and put the most suitable man at the head of each company, to rule and command, in order that all might act together as one. In this way did human governments begin ; and they have continued through men's wickedness, and will continue until such wickedness shall be put away ; until selfish and worldly love shall cease, and men shall come again into order. In the Church of the New Era such order is to return. The Lord is again to be exalted, and all rule, authority, and power is to be given to Him alone.

The order which first prevailed, prevails always in heaven. We learn from Swedenborg, that "in heaven no one is commanded or ordered ;" "no one wills to be a lord, and thereby to regard another as a servant, but every one wills to minister, and to serve another. Hence it is evident what is the quality of the form of government in the heavens. This government is described by the Lord in Matthew, 'It shall not be so among you ; but whosoever would be great among you ought to be your minister ; and whosoever would be first ought to be your servant.' xx. 26, 27. . . And again 'He that is greatest among you shall be your servant ; and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.' xxiii. 11, 12." (A. C. 5732.) Swedenborg says of subordination in heaven, that "it is not like that of rule or authority." (A. C. 1802.) "In heaven all are as equals, for they love one another as brother loves brother ; and even one prefers another to himself, as he excels in intelligence and wisdom. The love itself of good and truth produces the effect, that each subordinates himself, as it were spontaneously, to those who exceed him in the wisdom of good and the intelligence of truth." (A. C. 7773) Again, he says, "They who are principled in doctrinals, and not so much in life, know no other than that the kingdom of heaven is similar to kingdoms on

earth in this respect, that authority over others therein constitutes greatness, the delight arising from such authority being the only delight with which they are acquainted." (*A. C.* 3417.) As to greatness, this author says, "In heaven he is greatest who is least." (*H. & H.* 408.) "To be the least is to be the greatest, to be low is to be high in heaven." (*A. C.* 4459.) "To wish to be greater than others is not heaven but hell." (*A. C.* 450.) "In heavenly joy there is not the least idea of pre-eminence over others, and in proportion as the idea of pre-eminence prevails hell prevails." (*A. C.* 1936.) "They who are in evils and falses believe themselves to be high and above others, but they who are in goods and truths believe themselves less and below others." (*A. C.* 4599.) "Man becomes a hypocrite while he thinks much about himself and prefers himself before others." (*T. C. R.* 381.)

As to being guided and led in heaven, our author speaks of the "temptation of infants, in order to accustom and inaugurate them, not only in resisting what is false and evil, but also to teach them that they should not think, speak and act from another, consequently that they should not suffer themselves to be led by any other than the Lord alone." (*H. & H.* 343.) Speaking of a heavenly choir, he says that "they all thought and spake as one . . . because no one was desirous to act at all from himself, still less to preside over the rest, and lead the choir; for whosoever does this, is of himself dissociated instantly; but they suffered themselves to be led mutually by each other, thus all in particular and in general to be led by the Lord." (*A. C.* 3350.)

I have now given ample quotations to show what heavenly order is as regards authority, government, greatness, and individuality in heaven. We see that all its blessed inhabitants are equal, all are free, all are servants one to another; the completest individuality prevails; there is no ruling by angels as men rule on earth, but the Lord alone rules, teaches and leads every one in heaven. And as to the way in which the Lord rules and governs, mark the following passage: "To rule heaven and earth, signifies to re-

ceive from Him all the good which is of love, and all the truth which is of faith, thus all intelligence and wisdom, and thereby all happiness, in fine, eternal life." (*H. & H.* 5.) Thus the Lord rules by simply supplying His children with whatever they need for their life and happiness.

He who rules in heaven rules also in the Church, for the Church is the Lord's heaven on the earth. It is His kingdom, where He is to rule as in heaven; and as the tabernacle was to be made after the pattern shown on the mount to Moses, so is the Church to be constituted after the order that we know prevails in heaven. To this end the Lord said to His disciples, who represented the men of the Church, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant." (*Matt.* xx. 25-27.) "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." "Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (*Matt.* xxiii. 8, 10, 11.) These passages show plainly that men are not to rule over men in the Church. No hierarchy, no ruling priesthood is to have place therein. The Lord will rule His Church immediately from Himself, and not mediately through others. He will not transfer or delegate His divine power to Church councils. If He so transferred it, the result would be, that, though acting from His Holy Spirit, they would all rule alike, and all rule justly. They would be infallible. If it were a principle of order that Church councils should stand in the Lord's place, and rule for Him, or rule from Him as instruments in His hands, He would undoubtedly so influence them by His Spirit that they would all teach the same thing, and rule in the same way. The fact that they differ from and oppose one another, and seek to rule in a different way from that in which the Lord Himself rules, shows sufficiently that they

are self-constituted authorities. The love itself, or lust of ruling, is a Gentile principle ; so that a Conference or Convention seeking to rule, becomes, by such seeking, a Gentile council, a synagogue of Satan. Swedenborg says, in confirmation of the idea that men are not to rule over men in the Church, or govern them according to the popular sense of the expression, "What dependence is to be placed on councils?" "Their deliberations may be compared with the steps of a blind man walking in the day, or of a man who has good eyes walking in the night, neither of whom can see the pit, before he falls headlong into it. Have there not been Councils, for instance, which have established the Pope's vicarship, the canonization of the dead, the invocation of saints as so many deities, the worship of their images, the authority of indulgences, and the division of the eucharist, with many other things of a similar nature? What dependence then is to be placed on such Councils? Has there not also been a Council which has established the horrid doctrine of predestination, and hung it up before the doors of the temple as the palladium of religion? What dependence then is to be placed on such a Council? But do you, my friend, go to the God of the Word, and thus to the Word itself, and enter by the door of the sheepfold, that is, into the Church, and you will be enlightened." (*T. C. R.* 177.) If I am to go to a Church Council, called by the name of Conference or Convention, for instruction in anything connected with my religious duties, where is my right of private judgment, that great Protestant principle established at the Reformation? The Lord says, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (*Luke* xii. 57.) If I allow myself to be taught by a Church Council, I am then seeing through the eyes of other men ; or I am as an automaton guided and led by them. E. S. says that "man, to receive a celestial *proprium*, ought to do good from himself, and think truth from himself." (*A. C.* 2883.) "Nothing can be appropriated to any one, which he does not acknowledge from his intuition, that is, which he does know from

himself, and not from another, to be so." (*A. C.* 5376.) "Man is taught and led of the Lord alone ; and the reason is, because he lives from the Lord alone." (*D. P.* 155, 156.) He is to act "from liberty according to reason." (*D. P.* 71.) "What he does from liberty appears to be his own," and "nothing can be appropriated to any one, but what is from the liberty of his will, according to the reason of his understanding." (*D. P.* 74, 138.) "Man, in proportion as he is more nearly conjoined to the Lord, in the same proportion he appears to himself more distinctly to be his own." (*D. P.* 42.)

These passages show abundantly that man is not to rule over man in the church ; each church member is to govern himself as of himself from the Lord alone ; there is to be the completest individuality among the members ; all are brethren and servants one to another ; the church is not to be a family, but a brotherhood ; it is not to become an ecclesiasticism. Whatever does not agree with these positions is disorderly.

On the principles above stated, you will have union in the church ; but on any other you will have divisions. What has caused the divisions in the Christian church from its commencement, but the assumption by some of the right to teach others or rule over them ? What has caused the divisions among New Church brethren in America, but the claim of one party to exercise authority, and teach what the church at large is to do ? Until this authority is renounced, you will never have union and peace. Swedenborg says, "So far as dominion enters, so far minds are not conjoined but divided, since dominion subjugates ; and a subjugated mind has either no will, or an opposite will. If it has no will it has no love, and if it has an opposite will, there is hatred instead of love."—(*H. H.* 380.)

It is preposterous to say that the relation of a Convention to Societies is a maternal one. Are not the men in such a body, as regards their minds, the same as those who are out of it, or the same that they themselves were before they

entered it? Are they in any wise changed by their Conventional capacity? How then can they be to Societies as a mother over children? The Lord gives the title of mother to such as do his precepts, consequently to all the Church. He says also, "Plead with your *mother*;" "Where is the bill of your *mother's* divorcement?" In which passages it is the whole Church that is meant. The Apostle meant the whole Church when he said, "Jerusalem, which is above, is the *mother* of us all." Swedenborg says, "By Father is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, and by *mother* the communion of saints; in other words, His Church dispersed throughout the world." (*T. C. R.* 307.)

There is not a particle of evidence from the Scriptures in favor of ecclesiastical authority. If order required some men to be formed into Church Councils in order to rule and lead the rest of the Church, then such Councils would have been made responsible for the men so ruled or led, as regarded any errors or evils into which they had led them. But no; we learn that every man "must give an account of himself to God." In this case it is only just that he should also judge for himself, and not have others to judge for him, as to the way in which he is to understand the truths of the Word, and ultimate them in his life and practice.

Let us see how a Convention or Conference is constituted. It is composed of ministers and representatives of Societies, who are said to be the whole Church by representation. But the ministers are not representatives. They sit by virtue of their office, even though not engaged in active duties; and they have more influence by far than all those whom they call the laity, who are really as representatives. If a Convention be the Church by representation, the ministers have no right to be present, since they represent nothing. Then again as to representing the whole of the Church: If the entire Church were represented, every Society should appear there with its full complement of representatives; whereas you will perhaps only see a third part of them at one session, so that only a third part of the Church are represented. How then can you call a Conference or Convention

the whole Church? Moreover, what is meant by the term "Church?" Is it a Society of members, or the aggregate of Societies? Swedenborg says, "The spiritual man individually is a Church, and several constitute the Church in general. If man individually were not a church, there would not be any Church in general. A congregation in general is what is commonly called a Church, but to constitute it a church it is necessary that every individual in the congregation be a Church; for every general thing implies parts similar to itself."—(A. C. 4292.) We see from this that a Society is not to be called a Church, or is not a true Church, because we know not who or how many of the members have the church in themselves. And the same rule applies to a Convention. Such a body is not a Church or a general Church, unless each member of it has the Church in himself; and if every one were thus a Church, that is to say, if every member of the Convention were a regenerate person, he would, instinctively as it were, seek to serve and not to rule; and so there could be no Convention at all as a spiritual mother to rule over the members at large. So much for the term "Church." However, let us call them Societies, and say that Societies are represented; they are represented as to the minds of the members in regard to their ecclesiastical principles. Why, sir, a large majority of the members in a Society have usually no opinions or principles of that nature; and those who have opinions differ one from another, some being liberal and others being High Church. In such a case a delegate cannot represent the opinions of a Society. And when a delegate is chosen, there are but a few persons who have a voice in choosing him. He is not chosen, perhaps, because of his correct opinions, but because convenience or some other reason has led them in the selection. These facts show the futility of seeking to form a general Council that embodies the opinions of Societies at large. It follows that in such cases the representative principle is a fallacy.

Furthermore, what right, let me ask, has a Society to del-

egate to any person or persons the duty of thinking for it, or instead of it, and so of making rules or laws by which it is to be governed? What becomes of the great principle of private judgment in this case? If such a judgment be a duty, it follows that a Society is in duty bound to think and determine for itself, regarding all that concerns its own affairs. It has no more right to relinquish its own duty of self-government, than any other party has to take that government away from it. Self-government in ecclesiastical matters is an inalienable right and duty; I mean self-government from the Lord alone.

What is the real use of a Convention to legislate for, or regulate, the external order of the Church? Can its members know better than a Society itself what is needed for its organization? Men are in different states of mind, and are differently constituted or circumstanced in various regions of country. Would you make a Procrustean bed for them all? Would you cut the various trees of a forest all to one pattern or shape? And then as to ordinations: Can a Convention know better than a Society who should become its minister? Suppose a Convention meeting at New York, composed mainly of men from the Eastern and Central States, and a person is sent from Chicago, well known to the brethren in that city, but scarcely known to any of the people of the Convention; how are the latter to judge of the fitness of such a candidate for ministering to that Western Society? Certainly they cannot do it. They may say that they can be guided by the testimonials he brings with him. If they decide according to these, of what use is the Convention? for after all it is the Western Society that determine the matter; and they might just as well have saved themselves the trouble and expense of sending him, and have proceeded to inaugurate him themselves. The society, and the society alone, is the fit and proper party to make this man its minister. I will give you an instance showing how a Convention is useless, and worse than useless, for deciding as to the ordination of ministers. A cer-

tain man was anxious to be ordained, although unfit to be a minister. He was officiating for a Society that did not approve of his services, and would only have them provisionally. By dint of perseverance, he succeeded in prevailing on one, and then another, and another, to urge an application for his ordination, which they did simply to please him, and by no means to please themselves. They knew that he should not be their minister. The Church Council—I say not if it was a Synod, Conference or Convention—accepted him because of the application. Thus was an unsuitable person admitted, who would not have become a minister if the duty of making him one had belonged alone to the Society. Another instance : One most worthy and suitable person was unanimously proposed for ordination by the Society to which he officiated as preacher ; and all those composing the Church Council were in his favor, except one very influential individual, who had a private dislike to the candidate. He, by his arts and perseverance, turned aside the tide of approval, and the candidate was rejected. Now in this case, we have another instance of a Council being worse than useless ; for this worthy candidate would certainly have become a minister, if the Society alone had determined the question. Why then refer the ordination of ministers to parties, who, in strict reason and justice, have no business with matters of this kind ?

As to a Convention determining the organization and other matters of external order for Societies, this can at best produce only conformity and uniformity, when it is union and unity that the Church most needs. This must come from within and not from without ; from the Lord and not from man. The Church is not to be a piece of man-made machinery. Don't fetter and bind up the man-child in the swaddling clothes of a Babylonish hierarchy. Loose him and let him go. Let him breathe the air and feel the sunshine of heaven. There is no need that externals be all alike ; for variety as to outward form is pleasing, where internally all are in love and charity. Why should all men

walk alike and dress alike ? The greater the number and variety of voices and instruments in a concert, if all are in harmony, the more full and delightful is the general effect. Swedenborg says that "perfection results from variety even in heaven." "The variety of the worship of the Lord, arising from the variety of good in one society and another, is not attended with detriment, but with advantage, for the perfection of heaven is thence derived."—(*H. & H.* 56.)

But I must bring this long letter to a close. My aim throughout has been to establish the following position, as a true principle of ecclesiastical order, namely, that MAN IS TO GOVERN HIMSELF, AS OF HIMSELF, FROM THE LORD ALONE.

Excuse my adding the following by way of illustration. Picture to yourself a company of soldiers marching down one side of a street, and the usual foot-passengers going down the other side. The former are dressed alike and walk alike. They march as commanded, step by step, or right and left. Controlled by officers, they submit and obey. But those on the opposite side are clad in all variety ; they walk diversely as seemeth good to each and all of them ; and they only obey their own intuitions. Which of these two parties walks in true order ? After all that has been said, this question can be answered. The soldiers are ruled from without and not from within ; from others and not from themselves, from man and not from the Lord. They are constrained and not free ; automaton without individuality ; one in form, but not in spirit ; no variety, but sameness ; their oneness is uniformity without unity. They do not give way to others, but make others give way to them. Those, however, on the other side, one and all, give way to one another. They are ruled from within and not from without ; they act from good-will, and their spirit and actions agree ; they are various and yet united ; their individuality is complete ; they are not automaton but men ; they are free and happy, and walk in harmony and peace. *These latter, and not the soldiers, walk in true order.* So with an orderly Church. Its members walk in good and truth. Each is a

brother, and all are brethren. Every one governing himself, as of himself, from the Lord alone, they are all in charity ; they walk in love and liberty, and make together a church which can never be otherwise than one.

May 16th, 1859.

FRATER.

FARMING.

A friend asks how we like farming. That depends on what kind he means. We have no objection to—indeed we have rather a fancy for—that kind of farming for which Mr. Beecher avows his preference in the following paragraph, which we copy from a late number of the *Independent* :

“ We avow our own preference, among all kinds of agricultural procedure, to meditative and imaginative farming. Sitting in our barn-door, which, looking South, is raised one story above the yard beneath, what do we see ? Not the Hudson rolled out so wide as to take the name of Haverstraw Bay, nor the mountains beyond, nor yet the green and rounded tops of the near opposite hills, nor the fringes of forest which divide the several sections, nor the slopes, and basins, and tree-ruffled dwelling-houses. What do we see ? You would say that the object of our regard was a compost-heap. And by that polite term let it be called. But you and I do not see the same thing when looking at that soil and straw and turf and litter. You see a round heap of fermenting materials. I see flowers, and vegetables, and fruits. Out of that heap blossom, to my eye, mignonette, and phlox, and geraniums, roses, petunias, verbenas, asters, and dahlias ! I see regimental rows of currants, strawberries, and raspberries. Great red-bellied pumpkins orb up to my sight from among the withering stalks of ripened corn. Compost, indeed ! That is a grove of trees, a young orchard, long lines of elms, clumps of balmy evergreens ! That is not undigested straw, but peas and flowering beans ; that is not lumpish manure, but wheat and grapes. Why, this barn-yard is a garden, if one only looked at it aright, purpled with innumerable flowers ; it is a vineyard, all of whose broad leaf-hands cannot cover

up the purple clusters ; it is an orchard—see the trees bending with fruit, or humming with insects and bees that are regaling themselves in its blossoms ! Ah, here is a rare delight ! Here sit I, a farmer indeed, all of whose fields, planted in imagination, tilled by fancy, are reaped in visions.

“ My crops never fail. Weather never thwarts me. Everything succeeds. Men are always skillful, seed is always good, the hay is never caught by showers, the wheat escapes rust and fly, that afflict newspapers so dreadfully about these days—and, in short, as long as I have a comfortable support aside from these grounds, I mean to raise imaginations and meditations on this farm. It is a capital soil for such crops ! ”

But we are all farmers of some sort or other, whether we know it or not—compelled to be so. We all have our soil to till—some their broad acres, others their “ little patch.” We all plough and plant and hoe and reap ; and *what* we reap depends on what we plant, how we dress and tend the soil, and our industry and skill in keeping down the weeds. Some plant good seed—the seed of genuine heavenly truth ; others plant seed which is more than half tares—seed whose natural product is a harvest of vice and corruption. Some keep the soil in good condition—keep it light and mellow by often stirring it, and so fitting it the better to imbibe the sun’s light and warmth, and the sweet dews of heaven ; that is, they keep their hearts mellow by frequent exercise of their better feelings—stirring the mold in which the plants of heaven grow, and so causing it to imbibe more and more of the light of God’s wisdom and the warmth of His love. Others, through idleness or indifference, suffer a cold and calculating selfishness to gather like a hard incrustation over their souls. The soil of their hearts becomes dry and crusty, and incapable of absorbing the vital influences which descend from heaven. Some suffer the weeds to grow unchecked—and we all know how quick they spring and how rank they grow, where there is not constant watching and weeding. They allow vicious habits—habits of evil feeling, evil speaking and evil acting—to

spring up and thrive without restraint ; and who does not know how quick and fast such habits grow, and how sure they are to overshadow and choke all heavenly graces, unless they be promptly checked. Others watch the first appearance of these vicious weeds, and resolutely cut them down, or, better still,—pull them up by the roots—before they have acquired much strength. They check the growth of evil habits by resisting their first beginnings ; and in this way they promote the growth of good habits—the growth of all those celestial plants which the heavenly Father hath planted in the soul.

Among the interesting and beautiful objects which appear in heaven, are smiling landscapes, cultivated fields, and beautiful gardens. But these, like all other things which greet the eyes of the angels, are but the representations and normal out-births of their own mental states. The essence of all the beautiful things which appear to the angels, is in the soul of man ; and no one will ever look upon the magnificent scenery of heaven—no one will find himself surrounded in the other world with cultivated fields and gardens, who has in this world neglected the true and proper culture of his soul. The verdure and flowers and fruits of the celestial abodes, can only exist from the angelic love and wisdom which are their soul and creative power ; and of course they cannot be revealed—or *if* revealed, would impart no enjoyment, no delight—to any but to those who carry within themselves the angelic love and wisdom from which these things outflow.

We are all, then, spiritual husbandmen. The ground which God has given us to till, is the soil of our own hearts. And if it be a matter of importance with the natural husbandman what sort of seed he plants, and how he cultivates his soil, of how much more importance is it to the spiritual husbandman ! The natural farms which men here cultivate with so much care and toil, are theirs only for a few short years at longest ; but each one's spiritual farm, with all its high culture or wretched neglect—with all its fragrant

flowers and delicious fruits, or rank weeds and vexing thistles, as the case may be, will be his for eternity. We shall all have precisely such farms in the other world—shall inhabit precisely such regions—shall find ourselves in the midst of precisely such surroundings, as correspond to the truths we have loved, and the dispositions, feelings, and purposes we have cherished here on earth, or have allowed to spring up and acquire strength within us.

It is true now, therefore, as in the Adamic age, that every man whom God creates, has a “garden” given him, which he is commanded “to dress and keep.” And it is also true now as then, that, through disobedience of the divine commands—the everlasting laws of the spirit’s life—this God-given ground is “cursed ;” and the divine declaration receives its spiritual fulfilment, “In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth.”

Hence it is that the Lord’s Church—and the church is *within* men, just as the “kingdom of heaven is within”—in its corrupt and fallen state, is so often spoken of in the Scripture as a wilderness and desert—a land desolate and forsaken—overrun with brambles, and inhabited by all doleful creatures. Thus in Isaiah, it is said of Zion, by which all Christians understand that the Church is meant,—“the land thereof shall become burning pitch. . . . From generation to generation it shall lie waste. . . . And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof ; and it shall be a habitation for dragons and a court for owls.” And concerning the renovation of the church, or the establishment of Christ’s kingdom in the hearts of men by the truths of the Gospel, we read : “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing : the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.”

From this it is easy to believe what is taught in the writings of the New Church, that some who have lived evil lives on earth—who have rejected the Word and darkened their minds by falsities in which they have confirmed themselves—when they enter the other world, “shun the light of heaven, and plunge into places under ground, which appear from without to be very dark, and into clefts of rocks where they hide themselves :” while others, who have been learned in the doctrinals of the church, but who have not religiously applied the truths they have known to the removal of their evil loves, in the other life “choose rocky places, and dwell there among heaps of stones, shunning cultivated regions because they dislike them.” While on the other hand it is said : “They who love divine truths and the Word from interior affection, or from the affection of truth itself, dwell in the other life in light, in elevated places which appear like mountains, bright with the continual glory of heaven. They have no idea of darkness like that of night in the world. The climate in which they live is spring-like, while fields and vineyards adorn the prospect, and harvests wave before them. Every thing in their houses is refulgent as if made of precious stones, and when they look through the windows, it is like looking through pure crystal. These are the delightful objects of their sight, but the same things are interiorly delightful from their correspondence with heavenly divine things ; for the truths derived from the Word which they have loved, correspond to crops of corn, vineyards, precious stones, windows and crystals.”—(*H. H.* 489.)

This spiritual farming, then, though not much talked about in the newspapers—not well understood nor much thought of by the majority of people—we take to be a matter of some importance. If the estate we are to possess and the harvests we are to reap through the ages of eternity, depend on the manner in which the domains of the heart are cultivated here on earth,—upon the kind of seed we sow, and the care and labor we bestow in keeping down the weeds and bringing all heavenly plants to maturity—we

submit that this spiritual farming is deserving of more attention than most people are disposed to give it. It is more important, we think, than growing wheat or corn, peas, pumpkins or potatoes, for the body. Better let our prairies go untilled, or be overrun with weeds, than neglect the proper culture of the soul, or suffer our spiritual land—the soil of the heart—to be cursed with thorns and thistles. No light or fancy work is this either ;—no merely “meditative” or “imaginative” farming. On the contrary it is right solid and laborious work. The hardest ploughing ever done in this world, is that which *breaks up* the natural selfishness of the human heart ; and the hardest hoeing is that which succeeds in destroying the rank growth of weeds in one’s own mind. It is indeed true that “the bread of God cometh down from heaven ;” but it is also true that he who would “eat” of this bread, must do so “in the sweat of his face.”

Yes, there is a higher kind of farming than the “meditative and imaginative.” There are more substantial and enduring fields than those “planted in imagination, tilled by fancy, and reaped in visions.” And there are more valuable crops than “imagination and meditations”—though these latter are not to be despised.

B.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

A. S. PRINTING & PUBLISHING SOCIETY.—At the last monthly meeting of this Society, July 6th, the Depository Committee reported sales at the Book Room for the month of June, to the amount of \$83 37. Receipts from dues and donations during the same month, \$31 00.

The Printing and Binding Committee reported that the New Indexes to Heaven and Hell, Conjugal Love, and Divine Providence were printed, and now on sale at the Book Room.

The Auditing Committee reported bills payable for paper, printing, binding and advertising, to the amount of \$305 42.

The Society resolved to present to the American Institute, to be paid for out of the income from the McCrea legacy, the following works,

viz.: *Arcana Coelestia* (10 vols.), *Apocalypse Revealed* (2 vols.), *Conjugal Love*, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, and *Four Leading Doctrines*.

A copy of a memorial, prepared and sent unofficially to the General Convention, respectfully requesting that body to unite its Book Room in the city of New York with that of the Printing Society, was presented and read by Mr. Hoyt. Whereupon the following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted :

Whereas, The General Convention of the New Church in the United States have appointed a committee with full powers to treat with this Society in relation to the union of the Book Room established by said Convention in this city, with that of this Society, therefore,

Resolved, That Messrs. Sullivan, Hoyt and Hitchcock be a Committee with full powers to treat with said Committee, and conclude such an arrangement as they may unanimously agree upon.

Resolved, That the foregoing Resolution be referred to the Council of the American New Church Association for their concurrence.

AMERICAN NEW CHURCH ASSOCIATION.—The Executive Council of this Association held their first monthly since the last annual meeting, on the evening of July 6th, at the Book Room in the Cooper Institute. Present, Messrs. Wilsey, Barrett, Hitchcock, Hoyt, Barguet, Sullivan, Lowry, and Jacobson.

Mr. Jacobson was appointed Secretary of the Council for the ensuing year. And on motion of Mr. Hitchcock, the By-laws of the last Council were adopted by the present one.

The following committees were appointed by the President, Dr. F. L. Wilsey.

On Publications—Messrs. Barrett, Beswick and Hitchcock.

On Printing and Binding—Messrs. Sullivan, Lowry and Peabody

Auditing Committee—Messrs. Hoyt, Jacobson and Barguet.

Depository Committee—Messrs. Hitchcock, Hoyt and Jacobson.

Anniversary Committee—Messrs. Hoyt, Seymour and Peabody.

Missionary and Colportage Committee—Messrs. Barrett, Hitchcock and Lowry.

On motion, of Mr. Hitchcock it was

Resolved, That the Editor of the *Swedenborgian* be instructed to discontinue the work to such subscribers as have not complied with the terms of payment (in advance) for the current year.

On motion, it was also

Resolved, That the Council concur in the Resolution submitted by the A. S. P. & P. Society relative to the union of the Convention's Book Room with ours.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION.—Our brethren of Wisconsin held their second annual meeting at Horicon, on Friday June 3d—continuing until the next Sabbath. The meeting is spoken of as highly interesting and profitable to all who attended; and the reports and communications received and read show that our brethren in that State are quite in earnest, and are working with the right spirit and in the right way. Instead of sending to a remote section for an “Ordaining Minister” to come and “institute” societies among them, preside at their annual meetings, administer the ordinances, &c., or supinely folding their hands and encouraging themselves in idleness or inaction until this could be done, they have set themselves resolutely at work with such means and material as they have at hand, not caring, apparently, whether their proceedings be regarded as orderly or disorderly by the advocates of a stringent ecclesiasticism, so they be conducted in the spirit of heavenly charity, and redound to the extension and growth of the Lord’s true Church. As an illustration of the just views entertained by our Wisconsin brethren on the subject of Church Order, and as a noble vindication of the right of every society or associated body of the New Church to adopt such regulations and pursue such a course in regard to the externals of the Church as they may think proper or find convenient, take the following preamble and resolution, offered by Mr. Stringfellow and adopted by the Association :

“*Whereas*, This Association has among its members no person performing all the uses and functions of a Christian minister; and whereas, we feel the need of the services of one, who shall administer to us on this occasion the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the Association do hereby invite Bro. W. H. Butterfield to perform this rite; and that we esteem this our request, under the Lord’s blessing, to be a sufficient recognition of his fitness and authority so to do.”

This we regard as altogether proper and orderly under the circumstances. But it would have been considered, a few years ago, a bold—perhaps a presumptuous—course, for any New Church Association in our country to adopt. Yet, strange to say, we have not yet heard, from any quarter, a syllable in condemnation or reprehension of the conduct of our Wisconsin brethren. Their course may have been—probably has been—censured in some private circles, and in a quiet way; but no word of censure that we are aware of, has been publicly expressed. Who, then, can doubt, that something has been gained for freedom in the American New Church of late years?

It appears from the proceedings of the Association as published in the *New Church Herald*, that about \$340 worth of New Church books

had been purchased, and about \$160 worth disposed of, since the last annual meeting ; five or six hundred volumes—more than one hundred and twenty bound—had been sold and donated.

A number of interesting communications were read, mostly from persons within the bounds of the Association, but some from persons without. They generally breathe a resolute, earnest and hopeful spirit. Mr. M. Seavey, who sends an interesting communication from Oshkosh, reports, that, in accordance with a vote of the Association at its last annual meeting, "requesting each member of the Executive Committee to perform such missionary services in his vicinity as he could consistently with his other duties," he, during the autumn and early, part of the winter, prepared seven lectures on the following subjects : "One God ;" "Redemption ;" "Regeneration ;" "Future Life ;" "Inspiration of the Bible ;" "Creation of the World ;" "Bible Doctrine of Slavery." Some of these lectures he had delivered at ten or twelve different towns and villages, in his own and one of the adjoining counties ; and at most of the places he had been listened to by "comparatively large and attentive audiences," though only in *one* place did he "find any person who knew anything of the New Church doctrines." Liberty to ask questions was generally given at the close of the lecture, which sometimes led to an interesting conversation of an hour or more in length—leaving a favorable impression upon the minds of the listeners. He had sold a few New Church books, and loaned others ; and had learned of a few persons, who had been among his hearers, "that are reading with a degree of interest." We hope that many intelligent laymen may be induced to follow Mr. Seavey's example.

LONDON INTELLECTUAL REPOSITORY FOR JUNE.—Among the solid articles in this Number—the latest received—of our London cotemporary, are the following : "The Vicarious Sacrifice, and the Doctrine of Substitution."—"Intuitions of the Divine Human, or that God is a Divine Man in the person of Jesus Christ" (extracted from Hugh Miller's "Story of my Education").—"Assyria, and its significance in the Word of God, as illustrated by the Nineveh Sculptures" (conclusion of a Lecture by Rev. T. Chalklen on this subject).—"Notes of a Discourse on Spiritualism, by the Rev. O. Prescott Hiller."—"Wars and Rumors of Wars ;"—an article appropriate to the times, having reference to the existing European War.

This Number of the Intellectual also contains a large amount of interesting General Intelligence.—Dr. Bayley's church in Argyle Square, London, is now closed with a view to its enlargement. The Dr.,

meanwhile, is performing missionary labor, and rendering good service to the cause. He had visited Norwich, and lectured to very large and attentive audiences. The New Church friends of that place at first procured a room in the Assembly Hall sufficiently large to accommodate about 400 people, which it was supposed would afford ample room for all who might desire to hear. But when the time for the first lecture came, this hall "was packed full, and the entrance crowded." A larger room—one that would accommodate 600—was procured for the second lecture, "and this was equally crowded with an attentive audience." Seeing that a still larger room was desirable, application was made to the mayor for St. Andrew's Hall,—the most capacious room in the town,—in which to hold public services on the Sabbath. This application was kindly granted; and Sabbath morning, although rainy, "the attendance was about 700;" and at the evening service, the weather being favorable, "about fifteen hundred attentive listeners hung upon the divine lesson opened from Isaiah ix. 6. All seemed astonished, delighted and edified by what they heard; and groups formed about the hall, after the discourse, evidently exchanging their earnest thoughts about these great things."

Another meeting for Christian Inquiry was held on Monday evening, which is reported to have been "crowded and interesting." Dr. Bayley himself writes: "This whole visit adds to all my previous conviction that the fields are indeed again white for the harvest of the Lord's Second Advent. O may He send forth laborers quickly into the harvest!"

Rev. J. H. Smithson had just concluded a course of Sunday evening lectures in Manchester which had attracted much attention, and are spoken of as having tended considerably "to increase the growing reverence for the name and fame of the great and good man"—Swedenborg.

The Society at Newcastle-on-Tyne are organizing a series of ministerial visits for about a dozen discourses on striking subjects during the approaching autumn, by which it is hoped and expected to call public attention to the true nature of the Divine Word.

Mr. Gladwell, the missionary, was concentrating his efforts on North and South Shields, "where he speaks three times every Sabbath in the open air, to large numbers of people."

Rev. W. Woodman had recently visited Keighley, Embsay, and Barnoldswick, and lectured in these places to crowded audiences and with happy effect. Rev. Mr. Storry had given a series of four lectures at Baildon, Yorkshire, by means of which several persons who "have lately had their minds directed to the doctrines of the New Church, have certainly had many doubts removed."

The London New Church Missionary and Tract Society held its 38th anniversary in Cross Street, Wednesday, May 11; Rev. Mr. Clissold in the chair. Its annual Report—which has not yet been received in this country—is said to show a cheering increase in the activity and usefulness of this Society during the past year. Several interesting addresses were delivered on the occasion; and among the resolutions offered and discussed were the following:

“Resolved—That it is most gratifying to this meeting to observe the increasing interest in New Church missions, which is shown by the large attendance at the lectures, and the numerous demands to have them continued; and, while our hearts are elevated in gratitude to the Lord by these encouraging circumstances, they should stimulate us to fresh exertions in the cause of the New Jerusalem, so that it may indeed become a blessing in the midst of the land.

Resolved—That this meeting views with deep interest the workings of the Divine Providence in the introduction of the truths of the New Dispensation into Java, Mauritius, and Trinidad; and also in the opening of a communication with some of the most distant and hitherto secluded nations of the earth, whereby the knowledge of the Word—with its attendant blessings—will become extended, and, it is to be devoutly hoped, culminate in the establishment of the New Jerusalem all over the world.”

Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld, of Denmark, was present, and “in a very energetic speech, referred to the existing state of affairs on the Continent as evidence of the conflict of opinion and the striving for dominion among the ruling powers.—The Rev. A. Clissold, from recently published documents, confirmed these views, and earnestly pointed out to the meeting the importance of our being prepared to take advantage of the opening thus likely to be soon afforded for extending a knowledge of the doctrines to those from whom they have so long been withheld, and who, if the opportunity were afforded, would be likely to embrace them with avidity.”

We congratulate our English brethren on the success which has attended their efforts to disseminate the heavenly doctrines during the past year, and commend their zeal and earnestness to the attention of New Churchmen in our own country.

AMERICAN JOURNALISM.—The *N. Y. Tribune*, in an editorial on American journalism, says that “not less than *four thousand* newspapers—at least five hundred of them daily, and five hundred semi-weekly—are now published within the limits of the United States.” And, estimating their average circulation at two thousand each for the dailies, twenty-five hundred for the semi-weeklies, and fifteen hundred for the weeklies, it finds “a total circulation in this country of more

than *four hundred millions* of newspaper sheets per annum. Yet in 1813—less than half a century ago—the total circulation of newspapers in this country was estimated by Isaiah Thomas in his ‘History of Printing,’ at a little more than twenty millions of sheets per annum.” This shows an increase of about *twenty fold*, or *two thousand per cent.*, in our newspaper circulation within less than a half century. And when we reflect that other periodicals, and books also, have doubtless multiplied in as large and probably larger ratio, we may begin to conceive of the grandeur of the results, and the rapidity with which they are to be wrought out, under the New Dispensation.

LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE.—The experience of modern Spiritualists is gradually teaching many of them that there are legions of diabolical spirits, whose influence is much to be dreaded. Dr. Orton, a distinguished Spiritualist, is reported, in a late No. of the *Spiritual Telegraph*, to have said at a recent “Conference,” “that it is from this ever-flowing fountain of diabolical inspiration and obsession, that fallacy [in Spiritualism] has its rise. . . . He had once heard a medium, who was undoubtedly entranced by spirits, break out in this wise, ‘O, don’t dam up your passions, my beloved! Air your concupiscence! Ventilate the divine right to the gratification of all your appetites, lest ye be consumed in their pent-up fires!’” We rejoice to hear such honest confessions from Spiritualists themselves, and trust they will not fail to exert an influence for good.

OBITUARY.

“Died at St. Joseph, Ill., on the 25th of June Rev. ANTHONY RIKER, aged thirty-six years. His departure was sudden. On Friday afternoon, June 24th, he was seized with bilious colic, and breathed his last the next day, at 4 o’clock, P. M. He was perfectly conscious of his danger, saying on the day of his decease that he should be in the spiritual world the next day, and expressing a willingness to depart. A friend writes of him that he had been but a few weeks at St. Joseph, and began to look forward with hope to the formation of a Society there; that his faith in the New Church doctrines grew stronger during the last few months of his life. He was buried by the Masonic fraternity.”

To the above, which we copy from the *N. J. Messenger* of July 16th, the editors of that paper add a few “particulars” of the life of Mr. Riker, furnished by Rev. Thomas Storry, of Peoria, Ill., and of which the following occupies the largest space, and is made to appear most conspicuous :

"In October, 1854, he was licensed by the Illinois Association to preach the doctrines of the New Church, and acted for some time as a missionary. In August, 1856, he applied to Rev. Mr. Hibbard for ordination, which not being immediately granted, he went to New York, and was ordained by Mr. Barrett. This step, he informed me previous to his removal to St. Joseph, he very soon regretted; and becoming convinced that he had committed an error, he, with characteristic openness, publicly renounced his ordination through the columns of the *Messenger*."

We quote the above merely with a view to express our strong and unqualified disapproval of thus parading in the columns of a religious journal, and without any conceivable end of use, the weakness of a brother, after that brother has been removed from the natural sphere. That heaven-born charity, which "thinketh no evil," would rather incline us at such a time to draw the veil over his infirmities—certainly not to proclaim them unnecessarily to the world. And the course of the editors of the above-named paper seems to us the more censurable in this instance, seeing it is the third or fourth time in which the weakness of brother R. here proclaimed, has been published in the organs of the Convention. That Mr. Riker himself regarded the repudiation of his New Church ordination as a weakness and an error, which he afterwards regretted, is known to some of his intimate friends, one of whom (a New Churchman) writing the editor of this Magazine under date of April 7th, 1858, just after "a long conversation with him on the subject," says: "A grave error he made in attributing his want of success in St. Louis to his ordination or the manner in which it was performed. Riker is satisfied of his error. . . . I think he would now, after mature consideration of the course he has pursued in the matter, do anything reasonable to right the wrong he has done you, by not answering your letters as requested, and by repudiating his ordination." We deem the publication of this extract from a private letter, under existing circumstances, but an act of simple justice to a departed brother, whose weakness in the case referred to, arising no doubt from an impulsive disposition—a weakness which he himself privately regretted—has been thrice proclaimed in the columns of religious journals, whose aim it *should* be to conceal rather than publish the frailties of one whose "*intentions*," they say, "were good." We can easily forgive Mr. Riker for not himself giving greater publicity to the regret he cherished, in view of the influences by which he was surrounded, and his well-known pecuniary dependence.