

SPIRITUALISM, SWEDENBORG,

AND

THE NEW CHURCH:

AN EXAMINATION OF CLAIMS.

BY

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"If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were ready to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded—I am very confident—the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of His holy word."—*Robinson, addressing the Pilgrim Fathers.*

"When the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, which denotes a new and purer state of the Christian Church, will come, no mortal, no, nor even the highest angel, but God only, can tell; but it *will* manifest itself to all the earth."—*Swedenborg, on his Death-bed.*

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PREFATORY.

THESE pages are not meant to be a portion of an interminable controversy. They are intended for such sincere and earnest minds as will read candidly for the sake of finding truth. If any inaccuracy or fallacious reasonings shall be found in them, the writer believes he shall be among those most wishful to have them corrected, and the truth elicited. It is his earnest desire also that there should not be a word in them inconsistent with true charity. The test of discipleship of Christ is mutual love,—and however opinions may vary, love ought to prevail. It is better to diminish the impetus of a truth, even with some loss of combative power, than to injure the peaceful dwellers in the heart of the city, who perhaps sympathise little with their professed defenders. Whatever is of God will stand, and what is false will die. He that grows impatient with an adversary, has begun to fight for *self* instead of *truth*. He who has not love, cannot possibly have truth;—he may have its dead forms and empty shells. If his brother be wrong, *he* cannot be right. One may be as far to the left as the other to the right, of the central truth.

If any are content with the present condition of the church and the world, and look for no higher and nobler future, the writer can only regret their state, and can scarcely hope to influence them. He writes for those who, praying for the prosperity of Zion, long ardently for the New Heavens and the New Earth wherein shall dwell Righteousness;—who look to heaven alone for infallibility; who trust not to human guides; and who, believing in no finality on earth, look for the inbeaming of

new light,—the access of new love,—until the world shall gladden in the Divine sunshine, and its kingdoms become the kingdom of the Redeemer.

Being very little known, except at home, his name will have little weight, and he would prefer that it had none. Truth should be received for itself, and not for the names that endorse it. And error is less dangerous when deprived of the influence of men of note. Reasonings should weigh only as they are rational. In the present instance the writer gives his name, solely because it is the more honest course, and he wishes no disguise. The opinions expressed are his own only. They are not those of any sect or clique, and no one else is responsible for them.

It has cost a struggle to give this utterance to views which may meet with strong objections from estimable and highly valued personal friends; but the issues are too important to permit of silence. It is painful, also, to appear to speak with any diminished degree of veneration of a specially Ordained Messenger from God to our own age, as was the great Swedenborg; but when veneration is changing into idolatry, and we begin to fall at his feet to worship, it is time to say—“See thou do it not, for he is thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (Rev. xix. 10.)

The reception or rejection of an individual, or of any special doctrine, is a slight thing in itself; but when Charity and Liberty are involved, it behoves us to contend for the truth. These are in the inmost shrine of the sanctuary. If they are violated, the overshadowing glory departs from the mercy-seat, and “Ichabod” is written upon us.

E. B.

OLD TRAFFORD, MANCHESTER,
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SPIRITUALISM, SWEDENBORG, AND THE NEW CHURCH.

I.—RETROSPECTIVE.

When first he became a reader of New Church literature, the writer was struck with the assumption involved in the title-page of the Minutes of the Conference of the denomination commonly known as "Swedenborgian." There and in other places they call themselves "*The New Church signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation.*" But on inquiring whether it really meant that this body of Christians was to be considered as the veritable "*New Jerusalem*" of which John wrote, and that no others were of that New Church, he was assured that this was not meant; so far from it, they believed that the New Church was of no one body, but consisted of the good of every denomination, rank, nation, or belief, throughout the world. With this assurance, often repeated, he was satisfied for the time, and became a member of one of their societies, looking upon the assumed name rather as an ideal set up for future attainment, than as the profession of a thing realised.

Gradually, however, he found that the assumption he first suspected really existed, and now it begins to appear more prominently. The recent advent of Mr. Harris to England has brought it fully to the surface. *He* also claimed to be a minister of the Lord's New Church. To this the ordained Conference ministers of England, and the Convention ministers of America, reply that he has no right to the name,—that his assumption of it is an attempt to mislead the public,—he is designated "an habitual and systematic deceiver," and said to be guilty of "a continual fraud." (See Int. Rep., 1860, p. 165.) By one ordaining minister in England he is accused of "blasphemous pretensions." Many other such things are said, but we are told they would not have meddled with him if he had not assumed this name, which belongs to them. (*Ibid.*, p. 297.) There is therefore now no mistaking the fact that they claim to be *the* New Church. No others have a right to the

name. They are the very people of whom John wrote in the Apocalypse. Thus the whole matter comes to an issue.

Speaking for myself, I may say that astonishment, pure and simple, was my first feeling. To me the name of "New Church" signified a belief in a glorious future, when all things shall become new,—an era towards which the prophets have looked from afar before they died, and then, content with the vision of a redeemed world, have laid them down in peace. But now, the notion seems to be that the New Jerusalem has actually come down, and become incarnated in a few thousands of people, hedged about with a ring-fence of organisation, and that whoever now assumes the name without joining them, is guilty of imposture. In the same sense as the Roman Catholic Church uses the name "*The Church*," as applied to themselves, so do they use the name of "*The New Church*," in contradistinction to the Old Church.

This has the merit of being a clear line. When such claims are made, it becomes necessary to inquire into their foundations. How did we obtain this name? We shew no miracles or signs, or fulfilled predictions, or even visions. Was the name lying, like an uninhabited island, for the first discoverers to settle upon and claim?

It is puerile to say that the real ground of complaint against Mr. Harris is that he assumes the distinctive appellation by which we are known. Why assume this appellation as specific, if they understand it generically? What right have they to degrade the universal name, to narrow it down to be the designation of a small sect? If they do not assume *to be* the universal "New Church," they are violating truth in the grossest manner *to say* that they are "the New Jerusalem signified in the Apocalypse," and that whoever without their authority assumes that name is an impostor.

Let us review our history, for the sake of obtaining a clear idea of these claims.

While Swedenborg lived, he always spoke of the New Church as a thing of the future. A little while before his death, General Tuxen asked him how many he thought there were in the world who favoured his doctrine. He replied that "there might perhaps be fifty, and, in proportion, the same number in the world of spirits." (Wilk. Life of Swed., p. 236.) And yet, two or three weeks only before his death, when he was asked by Mr. Springer, the Swedish Consul in London, "when he believed the New Jerusalem would be manifested, and if the manifestation would take place in the four quarters of the world?" His answer was, that "no mortal could tell the time; no, nor even the highest angels, but God only. Read," said he, "the Revelations xxi. 2,

and Zech. xiv. 9, and you will find past doubt that the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, which denotes a new and purer state of the Christian church, *will manifest itself to all the earth.*" It is very clear, therefore, that Swedenborg did not consider the mere reception of his writings and doctrines, even by earnest and sincere men and spirits, as the New Church, for he looked into the unknown future for it, although there were already a number of receivers.

During the sixteen or twenty years after his death, a number of sterling and warm-hearted men received and earnestly rejoiced in these heavenly truths. Among these were five ministers of the Methodist body. Two of these, Salmon and Mather, went from place to place through the country, preaching often in the open air, to audiences of thousands. One of the fruits of their efforts was the conversion of Mr. Proud, then a Baptist minister, who first came out to oppose them. This period was that of the greatest success that these doctrines have had, as regards their avowed reception. In 1788 there were already several societies in existence in different towns, besides that Mr. Clowes, and probably other Church of England and dissenting ministers, were preaching the new truths in the connexions in which they found themselves. There seems reason, indeed, to believe that few of the first receivers voluntarily separated themselves from those sections of the church to which they belonged. In this respect they followed the example of Swedenborg himself. But many were expelled, as were the Methodist preachers we have alluded to. In this year (1788), however, there seems to have arisen an idea that the receivers of these New Truths ought to be organised, and form a separate body. It was very natural, and in keeping with the universal practice of the age. Men's minds had not yet got out of the ruts of custom. The only thing they could think of was an organisation based on a creed. It is true that this was a violation of the very first principle of the New Church, which must be united by *Love only*. There is strong reason to believe that Robert Hindmarsh was the moving spirit of the attempt they made. Seventy-seven people signed a requisition or address desiring an organisation. A conference was held in East Cheap, London, at which eighteen persons were present. Two of these had already acted as ministers,—and strangely enough, these took no part in the proceedings which we have to relate. There were sixteen others, but these were too many. For some reason (probably because it was a representative and mystical number), twelve were elected by lot out of these sixteen. Of the four omitted, two are well-known names, Hawkins and Tulk. The twelve who drew lots to be electors were R. Hindmarsh, Wright, T. Willdon, J. Willdon,

Needham, Sibly, Wilderspin, Thompson, Bucknell, Swaine, Richardson, and Robinson. Few of these are now known by name. They were chiefly members of the East Cheap Society, London. These twelve, by unanimous consent, appointed Robt. Hindmarsh to be the first ordainer. He immediately ordained James Hindmarsh and Samuel Smith.

We must not, however, omit to mention a circumstance on which great stress is laid, by those who see a Divine right in ordination, namely, that Robert Hindmarsh, who managed everything, and, as secretary, prepared and distributed the tickets for the lot,—states that on one of these tickets he had written the word “*Ordain*,” without the knowledge of any of the rest; and that this very ticket was left for him, the last person who took a ticket. He did not mention this circumstance until the others had voluntarily appointed him to ordain. This is looked upon as an occurrence remarkably indicating the will of Providence in his appointment as ordainer, and therefore he is said to have been ordained “*by the Divine auspices of the Lord*.” The account of it we must give in his own words. After stating that he prepared, and put into “a receiver,” sixteen tickets, marking twelve with a cross, for those who should be the electors, and that he wrote on one ticket the word “ORDAIN,” he says—“The members being *properly arranged*,* I went round to them all; and each one took a ticket out of the receiver, leaving me *the last ticket*, on which was written, as before stated, the word “ORDAIN.”† I will not comment, and would prefer to draw a veil over the weakness of these worthy men, but truth requires the examination.

By the help of this solitary New Church lottery, which some would even now almost exalt into a miracle, was the New Authority obtained from heaven. For there is no hesitation about the claim of Divine Authority in this case. The one object they had in view was Authority. In the statement of reasons for it, this is most clearly avowed. They argue that the Lord had said, “*Behold, I make all things new*,”—therefore there must be a new power “to ordain ministers, whose authority to teach, and preach, and administer the sacraments, must be derived from the Lord alone *in His own church*.”‡ The italics here are not ours.

But let us observe the extraordinary assumptions that are made, without the slightest warrant:—

1. It is assumed that they constitute the actual New Church, or at least that they have a perfect right to consider themselves as its representatives.

2. That an external authority is necessary.

* The italics are ours.

† See New Jerusalem Magazine, Nov. 1827, p. 324.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 321, 322.

3. That granting this, that was the time to obtain it, and neither sooner nor later.

4. That casting lots, and selecting twelve electors, is the proper mode of obtaining it.

Surely with rational men there can be only one conclusion, that they were willingly self-deluded, because they were too impatient for some magnificent result. If the whole thing were not a piece of fanaticism, we know not where to look for that element.

This was no other than an attempt to found another tower of Babel. Once more, in the name of the New Truths, they said, "Let us build a city and a tower, whose top shall reach to heaven,—and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad over the whole earth." Not one of them, we believe, professed to be directed of God. They met, moved by their own wills only,—a thing unparalleled,—to bring down a new Divine power and authority to earth. And some of our brethren tell us now that no men in after times are ever to dare to supersede this authority, so obtained, or to suppose that God will manifest Himself through any other channel.

But why cast lots to appoint twelve electors out of sixteen men? This was a pure freak. Why cast lots at all? There is only one reason that can be imagined. It was the only expedient which bore the aspect of an appeal to invisible powers to decide. But do not gamblers make similar appeals every day? Would it make gambling religious to make a solemn prayer to heaven in throwing the dice? The strangeness of this proceeding is still more apparent when we remember that Swedenborg says of casting lots that "*it signifies the dissipation of truths.*"

Observe again, that they did not even cast lots to ascertain whether or no they ought to seek this Divine authority. They had made up their minds beforehand that they were to possess it. Exactly the kind of disposition actuated them which is illustrated in Judges xx. The tribe of Benjamin had done a great wrong. The rest of the tribes were justly indignant. In their anger they resolved, without asking counsel of the Lord, that they would punish Benjamin. But yet they consulted the Lord as to which tribe should go up *first*. The Lord answered them, "Judah shall go first." They went, with Judah in the van, but were defeated with great slaughter. They mourned, but again assembled at the same place against Benjamin. They were now a little humbled; but still self-will prevailed. They asked this time; "Shall we go?" The reply was again in accordance with their own wish, "Go up." But they were defeated with great slaughter again. The third time,—their will was subdued. They came to the Lord's house, and offered sacrifices, and asked whether it was His will they

should go up against their *brother* Benjamin. They had forgotten the brotherhood previously. They were told to go, and this time they prevailed. It was in the same spirit of self-will that these men came to receive authority. God permits us to have our way, though it lead to destruction. And they inflicted, in our belief, a deadly mischief on the progress of the New Doctrines by their disorderly proceedings.

In stating the reasons for their proceedings, they give one solitary show of Scriptural warrant for the casting of lots, viz., in Acts i., where the eleven apostles, thinking there must be twelve of them, and that another was required to supply the place of Judas Iscariot,—cast lots to find that other. The lot fell upon Matthias. We do not hesitate to say that the eleven here were entirely wrong. They did it from no heavenly guidance, but simply from themselves. It will be observed that this occurred before the Pentecostal Spirit came to them, when they ought simply to have been waiting for that promised Spirit. We never hear of Matthias again. He drops from history. But afterwards Paul was really divinely appointed, and sent forth to be the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

In all the instances of casting lots in the Word, Swedenborg's account of the signification is borne out. It is "the dissipation of truths." The land of Canaan was divided by lot, because of the selfishness of the tribes. Jonah the prophet was cast into the sea, by the decision of the lot. The vesture of Jesus was disposed of by lot. And finally the apostles selected by lot, one who never was an apostle.

We are glad to find that most of the receivers of Swedenborg's writings, even at that time, had nothing whatever to do with this Ordination mistake. Mr. Hartley (the friend of Swedenborg) was already removed from this life. But we do not find the names of Messiter, or Cookworthy, or Proud, or Salmon, or Mather, or Houghton among them. Clowes, as we know, strongly opposed the separate organisation, and wrote a pamphlet in opposition. Many were afterwards ordained, and adhered to the system established, probably because it *was* established, and they feared disunion.

Mr. Hindmarsh, however, was not yet satisfied. The spirit which inaugurated this mode of ordination had a still more astounding manifestation in 1793. There were two conferences in that year, sitting on the same days,—the one in Birmingham, which appears to have been well attended, and was called the General Conference,—and the other in London, where Robt. Hindmarsh, the medium of the New Authority, was. There is reason to believe that the temporary separation originated in the extremes to which the latter carried his views of ordination and

authority. The minutes of Mr. Hindmarsh's London Conference of 1793, published in a pamphlet of 56 pages, is one of the most extraordinary records of the Church. There are no statistics whatever; no name of person present except that of Robert Hindmarsh. The Conference sat five days, beginning on the 1st of April. We are told that "the senior minister took his seat as President, and appointed Mr. Robert Hindmarsh Secretary." Who the senior minister was, does not appear. Robt. Hindmarsh was himself the senior minister by the Ordination order. Referring to a Declaration made at the preceding Conference, they at once commence business. This Declaration, it appears, expressed the opinion of the minority of the preceding Conference, respecting Ecclesiastical and *Civil* government in the church. They then proceed to state that henceforth the people were to have nothing to do with the appointment of ministers, that the ministers are absolved from all control supposed to be exercised over them by the people, and that all ordination ought to be according to the *Episcopalian* plan. They proceed to make the most complete arrangements for securing the future order of the church. The trine in the ministry was here promulgated. The first priest was to be alone, the sole "*visible and representative head of the New Church under the Lord.*" A form of his ordination is given. He was to receive his appointment by solemnly, in the presence of a general assembly of ministers, laying "his right hand upon the Holy Word, while open, and taking therefrom a roll of parchment, or piece of paper, sealed with seven seals." This roll professes to be a form of appointment with *THE LORD's signature*, incredible as it may appear to us. There were to be, in the next lower order, twenty-four priests, each superintending a district or diocese; and England, Scotland, and Wales were divided into as many districts. The rest of the world was unprovided for. The ministers of the first or lowest degree were to be ministers of distinct societies.

We mention this London Conference and the Ordination arrangements, because Robert Hindmarsh is the very source of the Ordination now considered valid in the New Church, and yet this is his scheme. Undoubtedly he was a man of earnestness, ability, and influence,—one of those men who, having a magnetic power over their cotemporaries, exercise it in establishing an erroneous system, towards which their antecedents strongly predispose them. But to preserve these things now,—to make them the central principles of another small Babel, and the barriers to all progress,—is not only mistaken, but criminal. In fact, the idea of supernatural influence is now no longer credited. The ceremony has become a form without meaning. Hence it is with diffi-

culty that any one can be induced to be ordained. If we are not mistaken, only one ordination has taken place during fourteen years, and during the same time five or six ministers have died. At the Conference just held, an appeal was made to leaders of societies to be ordained, even if they are shop-keepers, or otherwise engaged in business, and the reason given was, "*that legal rights may be kept up.*" Such an argument, from Ordained Ministers, we are sorry to hear. There is, happily, still so much unconfessed common sense among us, that we are getting ashamed of the pretension. At length, perhaps, the ministers themselves will be glad to find good reason for dropping it. Let us hope that higher and better feelings will have some influence also. Terrible indeed it is when sacred things are thus used,—when by a pretended holy ordinance the Divine Spirit is solemnly invoked to descend through the hands of one man and enter into another, and they who invoke have no belief in the reality of the thing;—when it is done only to meet the requirements of a legal condition which they have themselves imposed.

There is still, with some, a show of defence made for ordination, based on certain passages found in Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion," and others of his works. Into this argument we will not enter. The Gordian knot may be cut, and we think our friends will be glad to help us to cut it. If not, it will strangle their system. Swedenborg wrote, not about any new church which he proposed, but about the old church then existing. He had no other in view. Whatever he says in favour of ordination, endorses the ordination which then existed,—the ordination of the old church. If Swedenborg's authority be taken, what right had the founders of the new organization to break off from the authority which he approved, and attempt to bring down strange fire. Looked at from their point of view, this was a most dangerous and awful *Schism*.

We have entered into this examination of ordination, because it is the only foundation on which can be built any claim to the *exclusive* name of New Church. It is the very basis of the polity. It originated in the wish to establish an external order in the church. It is insisted on still; for the same reason. The Conference is now a legally incorporated body, involving, in its constitution, the necessity of continuing this ordination, and requiring its continuation in order that property in churches, chapels, and legacies, may be held. Ordination professes to be the link that brings down the power and authority of heaven to the lowest things of earth, and therefore it was incumbent on us, in examining "claims," to scrutinize this above all things.

II—INTROSPECTIVE.

But the question will occur—Supposing this matter of ordination to be a mistake,—an excrescence, or disease, that will presently disappear,—what is the condition of the “technical New Church,” in its other aspects? In reply to this, we fear we must say that we perceive few signs of what we ought to expect in the Lord’s New Church. To any one conversant with correspondences, it is evident, from Rev. xxi., that the New Jerusalem will be a *celestial church*,—not a spiritual one. Swedenborg makes this clear in *A. R.*, see especially 882 *et passim*. The reader will find that, in his perception, the celestial so preponderates, shines through, and overpowers the spiritual, that sometimes he gives no spiritual sense,—as though that had become invisible, and the celestial only was manifest. On the words—“*I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, the tabernacle of God is with men,*” &c., he says that this signifies the Lord speaking out of Divine Love, and that in the New Church which is to be formed, the Divine Humanity with respect to the Divine Love, and the Lord’s celestial kingdom, and the celestial church, will be present. He tells us that this is the celestial sense of these words. No spiritual sense is given.

The so-called New Church certainly cannot, and we believe does not, claim to be a celestial church. Its bond of union is simply *doctrine*, or *creed*. And we cannot conceal, however charitable we may wish to be, that this doctrinal bond is carried to the length of solifidianism. It is true we do not *preach* “*faith alone*.” We preach against it,—and herein we fancy ourselves safe. We rely on our truth of *doctrine*, and pride ourselves upon it; and think we are so much clearer, more rational, more spiritual than others, that we are heady with conceit, and forget that “*love is the fulfilling of the law*.” We are exceedingly sensitive to any errors in doctrine. If any one amongst us should call in question some of the teachings of Swedenborg, however pure his life, he would sink to zero in the estimation of many. There is only one thing worse than this; and that is, the manifestation of some kind of zeal, especially if it does not go in the doctrinal direction. The most dangerous and dreadful enemy is some warmth of feeling which should shock the proprieties. “Enthusiastic spirits” is the cry then raised, as if we ought to be afraid of a little enthusiasm in any good cause. “As if,” to use a figure of the editor of the “Crisis,” “we had not ice enough to give a cold bath” to any enthusiastic spirits we are likely to have come to us. So long as this fear of enthusiasm exists, there cannot possibly be much life. In all things youth is enthusiastic. There never

was a great movement, or a great reform, without enthusiasm. Was not the Redeemer Himself esteemed a fanatic by all but His own "enthusiastic" followers? The chief love which is to be found in the New Church societies is a scientific love,—a love of the scientifics of the church, and not of the church itself, or of God. As soon as any science is studied without an end of use, the science itself decays,—and this is the process we are entering upon at the present time.

And what now is the state of the world? For a century past, in political, social, civil, commercial, and religious things, all minds have been, and still are, passing through series of changes hitherto unparalleled in history. Principles ranging over wider compass than ever before, are actuating multitudes of minds. One man's opinions tend to stern despotism. His next neighbour would loosen all bonds, and permit absolute license. One man is a materialist,—a Sadducee,—an Atheist, perhaps,—the next is a fanatical follower of some false prophet. Socialism, secularism, communism, polygamy, spiritualism, positivism, ultramontaniam ;—with jesuitisms, despotisms, and liberalisms of all kinds, are seeking and finding disciples,—while sensualism and a keen worldliness are using each in turn, to loosen the joints and ungird the loins of morals and religion. Thousands are running riot in a license mis-called freedom, which is but the release of the maniac from his bonds. Europe is armed to the teeth,—each nation expecting a life-and-death struggle with its neighbour nations, but for what end they know not. The Old Despotism is doomed, and a new and perhaps more terrible Democracy awaits its advent. Wealth, increased and increasing, is under an infernal charm, yielding no enjoyment; while myriads are sunk in pagan ignorance, in misery, and in crime, in all great cities. Everywhere some apparent truth is in deadly antagonism with some other opposing principle, equally apparently true. The conflicting partizans are equally strong, and progress is stopped. Then sudden gusts and impulses seize on nations, and pass electrically through them. None can predict what coming change will bring a new and more powerful impulse to sway the multitude hither or thither. The ground grows hot beneath our feet. The old age is coming to its death-throes. Its churches and creeds,—institutions and forms,—popedoms and kaiserdoms,—will go down in the fiery wreck.

But where is that glorious New City which is to be the refuge of the world? Alas! the men who possess the ground-plan of that city, have the notion that the plan is the city itself, and they are studying it in an obscure corner, quite at ease. "But friends," say we, "the city must be built." To which they reply—"Teach not us, the city is here, and

we are authorised to describe it. Whoever attempts more, is deceiver or deceived."

The last judgment in the spiritual world took place in the middle of the last century. It needs not a prophet to tell us that this has yet to be ultimated in the natural world. A judgment took place in the spiritual world when Christ was incarnated and glorified. It began to be ultimated in the natural world twenty or thirty years afterwards, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews scattered. But this was only the beginning. The whole Roman world was afterwards over-run with barbarians, and for centuries passed through blood and terror, until new nations were established on the ruins of the old civilization. And so, after the last judgment in the spiritual world, the external crisis commenced with the French Revolution, about thirty years afterwards. But no one imagines that the new principles and forces then called into birth, have run their course. Does not every one feel that they have scarcely begun,—that every question then mooted is still unsettled,—is merely hushed and suppressed, and hardly yet proposed? Do we not feel that the present state is a temporary and a hollow truce, and that all the powers of the old age—all authorities, dogmatisms, and hoary superstitions—have been mustering their strength for a terrific combat; while on the other side is the hydra-headed monster of individual self-hood, preparing for the battle? At this moment despotism is struggling against an aggressive liberalism, which, when its end is achieved, will show itself to be nothing else than a universe of ungovernable self-hoods. In the crisis which is coming, a thousand evils have to be brought to the surface, seen in their horror, then hated and extinguished. During this process, it may seem as if mankind were rushing to destruction. The scarlet woman is in mortal struggle with the many-headed and horned beast on which she rides. The woman must first be destroyed, afterwards the beast will have its turn of domination, exalting itself to supreme power, and then will itself be destroyed. So says the Word. The length and terror of this great conflict will depend on the degree of vital reception of the truths of the New Jerusalem. What, then, are we doing? Who is seeking, not to talk about the doctrines in which these truths are held, but to solve the problems of life by their aid?

In our country, as in most, the population is divided into strata. There is an upper stratum of rank, wealth, intelligence, and influence. Next, there is a vast mass, the bulk of the nation,—its bone and sinew. Below this is another mass, of pauperism, indolence, destitution, vice, and misery of every hue. In the eye of Divine Truth these are all brethren. Jesus himself, when on earth, was one of the mass, and

scorned not the lowest. Yet the fixed habit of those who are a little raised above the rest, is to become almost indifferent to those below them. So far has this separation in sympathy gone, that not half the population has any religion, or any profession thereof. They think scarcely at all of any life but the corporeal; and if the idea of a future state be ever forced on them, they look on it as a dim, curious speculation. Their ideas of duty are limited to what will make them comfortable in this life. And these are not the vagabonds of the world, who never hear of God but in cursing, but the working mass. After a thousand years of Christianity, this is the result. We believe that centuries ago, though there was less of culture, there was more of belief. It will be said that these things only prove that the church is consumed. This is true, but we ask for the remedy.

In the meantime men are brought together in great masses, in great cities. Gigantic commercial enterprises bring closer contact, and such a chaotic mingling of human elements, good and evil, that scarcely can a man distinguish what comes from within himself from what seems to be himself, and is yet from others. Deceptions prevail on all hands. In all walks of life, and in all occupations, a science of appearances has to be studied and practised. The really useful thing is lackered, overpraised, and puffed. In the mad race of this life, the time is all too short for attention to selfish ends and animal wants. And deeper and worse than all, the great social vice of the age, sinking into the vitals, and sapping the life of the European nations, grows from year to year to more huge proportions. Generation after generation, greater numbers drop away from religious influences, and inner life seems to die out. Social organisation grows less religious; that is, less built up from ideas of duty or love, and more mercenary, that is, more based upon selfishness.

What is the future which this is preparing? We have had uninterrupted prosperity latterly. Invasion has not touched our shores for centuries. Having had the world's commerce, we have grown rich, and our people have been fed. They are apathetically content. Will there be an everlasting flow, and no ebb of the tide? Is there not coming over Europe a new spirit, overturning the old; and bringing probably a war of classes and of principles, far more terrible than a war of nations? Will our commerce not be paralyzed? Shall we be dragged into the vortex? And then these millions, uninstructed, except by demagogues, and having no belief but that they have certain rights, no thought of duty, no love or reverence for God or man, with no perception of spiritual things, with an ever-craving selfhood, severed in sympathy

from those above them, will they not put difficult questions, and make impossible demands? Will there be a war of classes here also?

If the church of the future, whatever shape or varied shapes it may take, do not re-organise society, inevitable ruin will come over Europe. This is no fanaticism, but the soberest of certainties. Religion must be the living soul of all civilisation. The old is decaying, and if the new do not take its place, chaos must come again. It is the work of religion to make the noble and rich lowly in heart, and give them a brotherly spirit towards their brothers,—to instruct the ignorant, and lead them to a living worship,—to bring down heaven, and glorify earth,—to give sanctity to all science, and hallow all earthly wealth,—to bring “peace on earth, good-will to men.” Do we make these things our mission? What kind of teaching do we hear in our pulpits, and what kind of literature do we issue? We have philosophic generalities and abstractions, dull platitudes respecting goodness and truth, principles, degrees, and correspondences. These things are useful to the student, but as they are dealt out, they can scarcely be said to constitute even a theology, but rather a nomenclature. We do not often hear preaching which probes the heart, which takes the sinner as he sits, and compels him to explore the dark places in his own bosom,—exhibits him to himself in the light of Divine Truth, until he trembles, and loathing himself, cries out—“What shall I do to be saved?” We hear little about the need of personal religion. Repentance is talked of only in the most general terms. But when are we shown, by illustrations and convincing application of Divine Truth, that individually we are turned away from God, to self, and that until we see and feel this, and become sick of ourselves, and loathe what we have thought our virtues, because our life is full of self, we are not the children of God? In the New Testament we often read of conversion, but if ever it is named among us, it is in the most general terms. There is no danger of any individual hearer suspecting an insinuation that he is required to be converted. Regeneration is also talked of vaguely, but the new birth is seldom urged as a necessity to every individual. Yet Jesus said—“Except a man be born again, he cannot (even) see the kingdom of God.” The new birth is the beginning of regeneration. If we are not spiritually born, we cannot grow.

Unless the heart be fed, holy desires prompted and kindled, and the conscience awakened, all our grand views of spiritual laws and the spiritual world will only soothe us into a false satisfaction, and at length lull the soul into the sleep of death.

Not only are there few efforts among us for the regeneration of society,

we even go out of our way to make light of those which others make. An instance occurred lately. Some earnest and active ministers in London, deeply impressed with, and deploring the growth of, that monster evil of our day, which our philosophy shows to be the symbol and out-birth of corruption in society, resolved to make an extraordinary attempt to reach the wretched women who make a trade of vice. Collecting a number of them at a midnight meeting, they spoke to them with kind expostulation, awakened long-forgotten thoughts of infancy and mother's love, brought into activity the dormant remains within them, and then fervently prayed with them. Many of the Magdalens wept, and many asked to be received into the houses opened for them. Yet in our Conference organ (*Int. Rep.*, April, 1860), one of the editors asks "what they propose by introducing the religious element?" *The religious element!* How terribly philosophical! He proceeds—"Is it to render God propitious to the undertaking?"—"in other words, to effect a change in the unchangeable? or is it with a view of changing those whom they have called together?"* Such things we observe with regret, as examples, not only of want of sympathy among us with really *New Church* efforts, but of that cool assumption of superiority, and pretension to overwhelming logic which is so characteristic, and which often will not stand a moment's examination.

A church that slights prayer speedily becomes no church. A man who neglects prayer soon ceases to have anything of a living church within him. How often does Jesus urge His followers to "ask in His name, that they may receive, and their joy may be full." While on earth, He prayed much and fervently Himself. In prayer heaven was opened to Him. (*Luke iii. 21.*) As He prayed He became transfigured. (*ix. 28, 29.*) "Prayer," says Swedenborg, "is discourse with God, and an opening of man's internals towards God." "At such times," he

* These questions we do not understand, and are still more puzzled when we find, in the very same number of the *Repository* (p. 181), the gentleman who wrote this (the Rev. Mr. Woodman), on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a new place of worship at Bury, is stated to have "offered up a prayer for the Divine blessing on the undertaking, and on the worshippers who might thereafter assemble on that spot." We cannot but ask him—"Was this to render God propitious,—in other words, to change the unchangeable?" It could not surely be "with the view of changing those whom they had called together," for he prayed for all future worshippers in this place which was yet unbuilt. Some of them are probably not yet born. But the alternative is just the same for him as for others. We agree with him "that those who take part in popular religious services ought to ask themselves in what the uses of prayer consist." These are his own words.

proceeds, "there is a certain intuition of those things which are the objects of prayer, and a correspondent influx into the thought of the mind of him who prays." And again—"If the prayer regard only celestial and spiritual things, there exists somewhat resembling a revelation." (*A. C.* 2535.) But using forms of prayer, without feeling, is not prayer. Better far is one felt utterance of the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," than many repetitions of the grandest forms, even of the Lord's prayer itself, if the soul be not in them. If earnest prayer, among individuals and among societies, were more used, a living energy and charity would speedily be developed which would burst old barriers. A divine element would descend, and fill every heart, flowing into uses, and uniting all in love and joy.

It is true enough that fallacious notions have existed among Christians with regard to the operation of prayer. Many a noble soul has struggled through a life of trial, praying and receiving the very blessings spoken of by Swedenborg, by means of his earnest prayer; and yet has had the mistaken idea that God was really made propitious by prayer. What of this? Was he any the less a Christian? Was he any less earnest, or less receptive of the Divine? Is he now any the less an angel in heaven, rejoicing in his Saviour's love? Truly he would have had higher ideas of that Saviour while here, and a higher joy, perhaps, if he had known that God was always propitious, and that the hindrances were only in himself. But he knows these things now. He was faithful over his few things, and now he is made ruler over many things. Doubtless there are many still on earth struggling through the same darkness into the light of everlasting life; and we sneer at their low ideas,—and because we sneer, we prejudice them against the truths which we possess.

One trivial thing in the October number of the *Intellectual Repository* shews the exclusion of New Church Ministers from the current religious literature of the day, in a marked manner. Mr. Harris says of the shepherds of the planet Venus, that "their sheep know their voices, and follow them, but they will not follow a stranger." On this Mr. Woodman says—"What a profane perversion of the Lord's divine words, John x.!" Mr. W. evidently is not aware of what a Sunday scholar among the Methodists or any other denomination knows,—that the Lord simply adopted, as a figure, a practice common in the East, both then and now. He need go no further than Spain to find shepherds who will call their sheep by name, and they will answer to it and follow. But all facts and literature illustrating the natural sense of the Word, are almost absolutely unknown, even among the Ministers

of the New Church. They study Swedenborg and correspondences until they become mental hermits, and live in the world a kind of Robinson Crusoe life.

We might say much more on these characteristics, but space forbids. Among other denominations, a breaking down of sectarian distinctions is very evident, and a growing tendency to the recognition of Christ as the One God of Christianity. We look coldly on, and remain as distinct as ever. Again, in the reading of the Word, we almost forget the natural sense in exploring the mazes of correspondences, although Swedenborg distinctly tells us that the "natural sense is for man upon earth." In short, there is great danger that *Christianity, which is religion*, will be lost in *Swedenborgianism, which is a philosophy*.

III.—THE NEW CHURCH.

The New Church will be a Celestial Church, that is, a church whose bond is love. It will have a nobler life than we yet dream of, an unsectarian life. Its ministers will not show their title by earthly ordinations and diplomas, but will be men who, by the fruits of their labours, by their holy, self-denying lives, by the sphere of purity and heavenly power that will surround them, by their child-like simplicity, by the glow of love in their words and thoughts, by their non-assumption of dignity, their perfect humility, and their willingness to serve in any capacity, and become anything or nothing for the kingdom of heaven's sake, will prove their Divine appointment. Its people will be "all taught of the Lord,"—not taught of men, and, nevertheless, not all thinking alike, but agreeing in putting opinions very low, and love very high. Each section or society, large or small, will be a humble, loving band,—loving, because humble. The wiser they become, the more of humility and of love they will have, and the less of that self-assertion which exalts itself above others. The church of the future will not be an institution for Sunday gatherings of those who agree in opinions, or for agreeable social meetings of mere amusement, but a home of the heart, the gate of heaven, the foot of the ladder on which the angels ascend and descend. The church will be in all things, will beam in the eye, breathe in the tones, bind heart to heart, and hand to hand. It will re-organise society,—the church and society will be synonymes. Daily work will be love's work. Noble thoughts will mark our teachers in all walks of life. Political economy will be the economy of love. The captains of industry will be recognised by their wise self-sacrifice. Souls open to heaven, and hearts responsive to all noble sympathies,

will be known as the true aristocracy. We "look for new heavens and a new earth," wherein shall dwell righteousness.

The "Apocalypse Explained" of Swedenborg comes down to the execution of the Judgment upon Babylon. So far as the external history of the church is concerned, this is about the time when the author lived. Probably this is one reason why this work went no further, and was left unfinished. The smaller work completes the exposition on a less extended scale. Swedenborg clearly shews, in the last chapters of that smaller work, that the New Church is to be a Celestial Church. In some portions of the description of the New Jerusalem he seems to see so little of the spiritual sense, that he leaves it altogether, and gives only the celestial. In A. R. 908, there is this fine passage:—"Truth is seen in thought, inasmuch as it is in the light of heaven; but Good is *only felt*, because it is from the heat of heaven; and it rarely happens that any one, *when he reflects upon what he thinks, attends to what he feels, but only to what he sees*: this is the reason why the learned have attributed everything to thought, and nothing to affection; and *why the church hath attributed everything to faith, and not to love*, when nevertheless *truth, which at this day in the church is said to be of faith, or called faith, is only the form of Good, which is of Love.*"

Let us understand clearly this statement, that "*Truth is only the form of Good, which is of Love.*" How does any one who is a real believer of spiritual truths, first come to a state of faith? We do not mean a nominal believer,—one who assents to things because he has been taught them from childhood,—but one who has known doubt, and now has reached the rock. He cannot demonstrate anything that he believes, either to himself or others. Why, then, does he believe? And what is the basis of his faith? The process was this:—First, he had heart-yearnings after belief. The soul longed for support, firmer and more enduring than this world afforded, and put forth its tendrils, and climbed towards the light as a plant rooted in a cavern seeks the sun. There were spiritual instincts in him which craved the truth, as the hungry man craves food. When the truth was seen, it was recognised by these instincts, and gladly seized. It was accepted because it was that fact of the world without which answered to an inner want, and thus became a necessity of development. No possible miracles, no proofs to the intellect, could have engrafted this belief on his mind, if there had not been this previous want. Having the want, proof is unnecessary. You need not prove to the famishing man that bread will feed him. Believing is thus but calling out the heart's intuitions. If we

are in good, we shall believe truth. If we are in evil, we believe error. If we are "pure in heart, we shall see God."

If we have the Spirit of Christ,—if we are innocent and pure,—loving God and man, and keeping the heart lifted above self, no error can harm us. If not, we are vainly warned against this or the other doctrine,—as if doctrines or opinions were all we had to fear. Some would persuade us that all things are to be estimated by intellect; this doctrine is sound, and that is dangerous. As well might one think of taking a rule and compass to measure the music of a concert or the beauty of a landscape. When the life of God is within, the doctrine will crystallize, without our effort, into its own beautiful form. Love will grow into truth, and distil from the lips. Let us believe Jesus—"He that doeth the will of My Father, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Christianity has once been fossilized into dead doctrines, or grown into monstrous and hideous shapes, because men had lost its living spirit. Grave doctors built up reputations for wisdom over the ruins of the church, and imagined them to form a temple. They would do so again, but the great Head of the Church will not permit it. The living Spirit descends with so much power, that fallacies will be rent asunder.

Truth, then, is simply the form of Good,—the Celestial being the essence and "*the All of the Church.*" This can come only from the Lord. Therefore did Swedenborg look forward to a future, unseen by him, when the New Church,—the Celestial Church,—should "manifest itself to all the earth." When this comes, instead of the "Doctrine of the Lord," carefully fenced from error, fortified with arguments against tri-personalism and pantheism, and manipulated as a weapon of warfare, the church will have the real "*presence of the Lord.*" When they meet, it will be with holy joy and melting hearts, and faces often radiant through happy tears. When the Word is read, to one and another will shine, through the letter, the very truth he wants, for comfort, or guidance, or admonition. Deep within deep, height above height, of the celestial landscapes, will dawn upon the inner vision, not coming from book-lore,—for the Lord Himself only can reveal the spiritual sense,—and *He* is present, and will lead them into all truth. The inner life will be no confused dream, but the one reality. The things of the external will stand, as did Abraham's servant and beast, in the plain below, while he ascended the mountain to offer sacrifice. Hushed will be all voices of petty strife in our intercourse. Peace of heaven will descend on all hearts;—and love and gentleness flow thereout.

IV.—THE CELESTIAL SENSE.

We are prepared, then, to inquire what is the Celestial Sense of the Word. We do not now say the Celestial-natural,—but generically, *the Celestial*. Swedenborg says, as we quoted above, “Good is only felt,”—not seen. Need we point out that the appropriate representative of the Spiritual Sense is the eye,—and of the Celestial, the sense of touch. Some of our friends expect the celestial sense to be seen, and argue that it must be more difficult to see than the spiritual. If their premiss were correct, their conclusion would be inevitable. The Celestial can only be felt. Those who repress religious feeling, and look upon it as enthusiasm, are not likely to know much of the celestial sense. Swedenborg says that all the senses, even seeing included, have touch for their basis; and so it is, doubtless, because the celestial element must be in all things, or there is no life. But in seeing, light is the medium. It is not necessary to the touch.

To suppose that the Celestial consists in more difficult doctrinals than the Spiritual, is a great mistake. Wherever Swedenborg gives the celestial, he is simpler than in the spiritual. And so it might be expected to be. The child is in the celestial degree,—the wise man in the spiritual. The celestial touches the heart; and the real difficulty is to convey that quality of feeling which comes from heaven and leads to heaven. The communicator or medium must, of course, have the feeling himself, and he must also have the faculty of communicating it, by embodying or clothing it in appropriate forms, whether symbolic, historic, representative, or didactic.

For this office of communicating feeling, the poet is the man specially fitted by Divine Providence. In all ages the poet has believed in his inspiration. In olden times the poet and the prophet were one person. The prophecies of the Word are poems also. The speech of heaven is rhythmical. “But poets are so imaginative,” says the man of worldly common sense, “they utter such rant that one cannot take any notice of them.” The Jews of old were very worldly-minded men, and they killed their prophets; but when they had killed them, they found out they were prophets, and built marble tombs for them.

The poet, in his imaginings, really soars into the spiritual world. This says nothing in his favour. He may be the better or the worse for this soaring. But the fact is still the same. He is more free from the corporeal trammels,—the low material conditions of the earth. So is a man in a trance, or in a dream. Hence, in all these states, revelations have been given to mankind. A very large portion of the Word

consists of inspired poems, visions, and dreams. The reason of this is, that man, in all these states, is withdrawn somewhat from the influence of the senses. God does not disdain to convey His own eternal Word to us through the medium of a man thus withdrawn from outward consciousness, and made His passive medium. The last book given, the Apocalypse, is one of the grandest examples of this. And He gives us no other means of judging whether these dreams are a portion of His Word, than our perceptions of the Good and the True. There is absolutely no reliable external evidence. These are not speculations of ours, but undeniable facts.

If we go still deeper, we shall perceive that no man can recognise the Goods and Truths conveyed in Revelation without a degree of abstraction from the outward life, and elevation into the sphere of vision, or revelation. "Flesh and blood cannot reveal these things to us,—but the Spirit." And, let us ask—What is this outward life, which we think so true, so real? Is it sleeping or waking? We are distinctly told by the Lord's own mouth that it is sleep. The wise and foolish virgins all slumber and sleep, until the midnight cry is heard—"The Bridegroom cometh!" The great truth, that "life is sleep, and death is waking," though sometimes uttered, is seldom seen in its reality. The man most really asleep is he who is most eager in pursuit of earthly things, and to him the believer in the other life is a dreamer.

While we are on this border land between the spiritual and natural, let us look at another phase of the subject. When Jesus was brought to Pilate's bar, He said He was come "to bear witness of the truth." The Roman governor was a typical man of the world. His only idea of truth was that it consisted of real *facts* of the natural world. He could not understand what Jesus meant. "Bear witness of the truth,—what truth?" Then he questioned Him—"What is truth?" He obtained no answer which could possibly satisfy him. Jesus had little to do with the external. He spoke continually in parables, conveying spiritual wisdom or real truths. Some of His hearers might have said—"I do not credit the facts stated by Jesus in these stories,—for instance, that about the rich man and Lazarus. He gives no proof of them but His own word." You would reply—"What signify the outward forms, the reality is *within*." In short, we have to say with Swedenborg, "Truth is the form of Good." Whatever is the vehicle of Good, that is Truth. Whatever brings the soul to God, to penitence, humility, self-denial, purity, desires after holiness, and charity, is *Truth*. We have but one test, "*by their fruits ye shall know them.*"

The Spiritual world is the Ideal world. That is, Ideas come from

the Spiritual world, and can come from nowhere else. The great books in all ages have been those which are called works of Imagination. Such are those of Homer, Dante, Bunyan, and Milton. Are not such books really creative, moulding the world for ages afterwards? Their power is spiritual. The external man, of course, makes light of them, and says they deal not in truths, but fancies, or fantasies. But look at the Bible. There it is,—a standing mystery to the external man. Swedenborg and all his disciples are labouring to show that this Book of books is not to be looked on as a book of external facts,—that we can hardly distinguish between the historical and the purely symbolic,—that when we attempt to grasp the external facts, they often glide away from us, and that we must look within the symbols for the spiritual element they contain. The great teacher of this philosophy of the internal sense, Swedenborg, is a man of dreams, of trances, of visions, who shows the influence of the Spiritual and Divine in all things. Consequently the world calls him a dreamer, a visionary, a fanatic.

But this is always the way of truth's entrance into the world. Before there can be any advance towards a more perfect condition in any man, or church, or society, there must be a higher ideal. The more perfect ideal must come from the heavens, the region of perfection. First it must come to a single mind that is open for its reception. By others it is scouted and resisted. At length a few recognise it, and the effort to realise it begins. As one ideal is received, another follows,—the old resistance comes again, and again is overcome,—and so God leads mankind up through the ages. When a truth grows respectable in this world, it is already corrupted. It is always as Jesus said, "His followers will have tribulation and persecution." The followers of His followers persecute the new truth, because they are not followers of Himself.

V.—MR. HARRIS'S BOOKS.

We have not found that Mr. Harris's opponents deny the reality of his spiritual experiences. Mr. Woodman, in the *Intellectual Repository*, admits that Mr. H. is not a willing deceiver, but thinks he is deceived unconsciously by spirits. Admitting the Arcana of Christianity to be of spiritual origin therefore, we have only to discover whether its revelations are mere fantasies. His opponents have given no test of this. We therefore take the one we have already indicated, the only test we know,—do they lead to good or evil. This was the only criterion which Jesus himself proposed, by which He should be judged. Satan's kingdom would not be divided, He told them; He did not cast out devils

by Beel-zebub. "He that doeth the will of my Father, shall know of the doctrine." He never performed miracles to convince, He rather avoided doing so, but He desired to be believed for "the word's sake which He spake to them." "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God." And we have a test given by John, with regard to spirits. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit [which is] of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." (1 John iv. 1, 2.) Now we can suppose that this test of John may require to be used with a shade of meaning, at this day, different somewhat from its plain significance in his day, but it is still a substantial test of spirits. There may be spirits now who, having made on earth an external acknowledgment of Christ, and coming to those who are in an external acknowledgment, may put on a superficial confession of Christ to cover a deeper and more real belief of an opposite character; but such outward professions are easily seen through. In other spiritualists' writings of our time, where there is a kind of acknowledgment of Christ as a great teacher or chief among spiritualists, it is clear as noon-day to the real Christian that pantheism lies at the heart, or that the idea of development takes the place of regeneration, and the doctrine of affinity the place of conjugal love. Not one of them recognises the Divine Humanity. But Mr. Harris's books bear the utmost strain of the test. Indeed the acknowledgment and love of Christ as the Redeemer, Jehovah, the All in All, the very Life of all things, the Hope of the world, constitute the soul of all his books, the energy and beauty of all his glorious imagery. Come to what conclusion we will, it must be admitted that the devout and glowing love of Christ manifested in his works, is unsurpassed in any writings extant. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

It is a singular, but, we fear, a characteristic circumstance, that this test of good or evil,—though it is the only one given by Christ or the apostles, the only possible one, indeed,—is never named or thought of by Mr. Harris's opponents. They have not a word to say concerning any supposed demoralising influence of his books. Good and evil might have no existence, to judge from their mode of examination. The thing examined is *doctrine*, as to its consistency, its agreement with Swedenborg,—its novelty or its antiquity, both being alike objectionable. If his doctrines are new, they cannot be true; if clearly true, they are not new. If he agrees with Swedenborg, he has of course plagiarised; if he dis-

agrees, he is a heretic. This is the kind of criticism in vogue; while all high and noble feeling is as though it had never existed. Instead of saying, even if they thought him deluded, "Brother, in the Lord's name we receive you with open arms; you have the love of the truth; but you are mistaken, and, if not watchful, will go grievously astray,"—they utter words of scorn, sneering, and mockery; and, having first condemned him, microscopically examine his books to find all the trivial errors they can to make out the necessary list of heresies.

The word of an unknown person like myself can have little weight,—the only weight it *ought* to have is that of inducing others to read for themselves. But my feeble word shall be said. I have read his books carefully, not with predisposition to receive them, rather the reverse, yet with candour. And I can say that, with the exception of the Word, no books have so come home to my heart with the sense of holiness, of purity, of heavenliness of origin, as these. Conscientiously I believe that they lead me nearer to God; they bring self-humiliation, aspirations after a holier life; they bring, not inflation and fanaticism, but peace, and faith, and love. Some things in them I do not pretend to understand, and leave them. These are facts of spiritual experience, which, perhaps, in some future stage of life I also shall perceive. Of the indwelling soul of goodness, I am perfectly satisfied. With all my heart I embrace, as a messenger of good to me, the man who has been their medium. I hail him as one of the first-fruits of the new era, which "*will* come to all the world."

Disagreeable as the task is, it is necessary to examine some of the objections made to Mr. Harris and his books. It is impossible within my limits to reply to all, but a few of the more salient points may be touched. It is my earnest wish to be clear, for the sake of truth, but without undue severity. If I have entertained any harsh thought, or attributed any unworthy motive uncharitably, I shall be sincerely sorry. This examination has been much curtailed, from a strong indisposition to personal controversial warfare.

One of the first English objectors was O. P. H., in an article in the *Int. Rep.*, 1860 (p. 155). Here the dogma of *Authority* is stated in full force. It is stated that we must believe things on the sole authority of Swedenborg, whether we understand them or not. In support of this view, Swedenborg is quoted as follows:—"Genuine faith is an acknowledgment that a thing is so, because it is *true*. For he who is in genuine faith thinks and speaks to this effect—'This is true, and *therefore* I believe it.' " We confess we do not see how the quotation supports the proposition. It seems to us opposed to it. But the strange thing is,

that three lines further on, in the same paragraph from which O. P. H. quotes (*Doct. of Faith*, n. 2), Swedenborg says these words:—"A person of this character (*i. e.*, one in genuine faith), if he does not comprehend a sentiment, and see its truth, will say—"I do not know whether this is true or not; therefore I do not yet believe it. How can I believe what I do not comprehend? Perhaps it may be false." What are we to make of this? O. P. H. quotes from this very paragraph. How is it he did not see these words? Swedenborg here says just the opposite of what he is trying to prove. This strange argument, with its reference, occurs in an article directed against Mr. Harris, which misleads by its very title—"Are we to expect another Swedenborg?" Assuredly not. Let us make better use of the first. What if Mr. Harris had made such the "claim" to be believed on his bare word! Yet he would have the same right to do so as Swedenborg. We need not fear, however, this kind of authority any more. This old giant was seen by John Bunyan in his day, toothless and helpless, at his cave's mouth,—and now he is still more decrepid.

It is but fair to say that the doctrine of O. P. H. that we should believe a thing because Swedenborg says it, whether it is understood or not, finds scarcely any response among Swedenborgians, and that Mr. Woodman has distinctly repudiated it in the *Intellectual Repository*.

A grand objection to the "*Arcana of Christianity*" is that, professing to be the Celestial sense, it comes down to natural things. And does not the celestial come down to natural things? Is not the celestial the life of all things, mediately from the Lord? What Mr. Harris says is, that it gives the lowest fringe of the celestial-natural. What this will be may be gathered from Swedenborg. In *T. C. R.* 308, he tells of a divine sphere of celestial love which descends from the Lord. From this celestial sphere originates a natural sphere which affects plants, birds, and beasts. Here it will be observed there is *no intervening spiritual sphere*,—the celestial originates the natural. And this is true to our experience. Instinct and Intuition are celestial in origin. Reason is spiritual. Swedenborg goes on to say that, for the purpose of operating on inanimate nature, the Lord formed the sun to be in the natural world as a father, while the earth supplies the place of a mother. "The influx of that celestial sphere into the natural world," he proceeds, "gives birth to all the wonderful progression of vegetation from the seed to the fruit, and from thence to new seeds." He goes on to describe that hence shrubs and flowers turn to the sun, birds sing most sweetly at dawn, and all things, animal and vegetable, honour their father and mother,—the sun and the earth. This is Swedenborg's account of the *celestial-*

natural sphere. And another very remarkable circumstance is, that this account occurs in what Swedenborg himself calls the "CELESTIAL SENSE" of the fourth commandment. We leave it to our readers to say whether Swedenborg's account of the *celestial-natural* is not exactly co-incident with Mr. Harris's, and whether Swedenborg does not further justify Mr. H. in saying that his glowing descriptions of world-formations,—suns and planets,—supposing them true,—belong to the Celestial Sense, and spring therefrom.

It appears to us that the celestial-natural is just that region of perception required to be opened, in order to see the flora and fauna of all natural worlds, and the ever unfolding and inter-blending harmonies of nature in all the universe. And if the Divine Word be infinite, as we believe, all sciences must be involved therein. Through that Word will all future ages enjoy perpetually new developments of revelation. We begin to see now that Geology, which at first seemed to oppose the Mosaic account of the Creation, is actually involved and contained in the first chapter of Genesis; and the successive epochs of creation, recognized indistinctly as yet by scientific men, are there clearly indicated in their natural order.

The celestial-natural is often spoken of by Swedenborg, but much overlooked by his followers. Celestial-natural men are those in simple good, and it is among these the New Church will descend. In many places also he tells us, that in all the heavens and through the universe, there are two kingdoms, the celestial and the spiritual,—and that all men are of one or the other genius.

A series of articles is appearing in the Intellectual Repository on "Spiritualism," by the Rev. W. Woodman. He thinks that nothing is to be feared from controversy, that it is sometimes needful, and that specially this subject "requires ventilating" in the Repository. We have no objection; but we understand by a candid discussion, hearing both sides. In this case one side is heard and the other shut out.

Mr. Woodman goes on to say, that the Lord has warned us against false Christs and false prophets at the time of the Second Advent. This means, he says, that we must expect many deceivers to "assume the position of Swedenborg." Swedenborg is at once put, by assumption, in the place of Christ in His Second Advent. Mr. Woodman, and possibly some of his readers, may assume this position. I, and many others, dissent from it, emphatically and distinctly. As he has not argued in favour of it, we need not argue against it. We will merely say, that we deny the "position" to Swedenborg, to Harris, and to every other man, however great. And we will just carry Mr. Woodman a

sentence further in his reading of the prediction of our Lord. He tells us, that when the Second Advent shall take place, there will be no possibility of mistaking it,—for “*as the lightning shineth from the east even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be.*” And Swedenborg said the same thing, in other words,—“It will manifest itself to all the earth.”

Mr. Woodman, then, after saying something to Mr. Rich, with which we have nothing to do, comes to Mr. Harris, and, in a peremptory manner, says—“We shall demand that he rationally demonstrate the divinity he claims for his book.” “*Rationally demonstrate divinity!*” Surely this is a temporary forgetfulness of the meaning of the terms. We are obliged to bring him to Swedenborg at once. He will find in *A.C.* 2203, Swedenborg says—“The human rational as to truth is such, that it cannot understand what the Divine is.” And again (2196)—“Rational human truth doth not comprehend things Divine, because such things are above the sphere of its understanding.” In 2209, again, he says of the “rational in general,” “that when it thinks of Divine things, especially if it thinks of them from the principle of truth, which appertaineth to it, it can by no means believe that such things are,” &c. In fact, the Divine only can comprehend the Divine. It is true the Divine can enter into the Rational, and then it becomes Divine-Rational; but this is never the subject of demonstration, but of perception only. To ask any one to “rationally demonstrate the Divine, is equivalent to asking one to exhibit a feeling or a volition to the natural eyesight. The two things, “rational demonstration” and “the Divine,” are in different discrete degrees,—they are even at the opposite extremes of the whole scale of being.

It is impossible to demonstrate even spiritual truth, still less celestial; but the Divine,—how can the thing be thought of? In short, this is an instance of what we have before alluded to,—the fact that when doctrine alone is thought of, the perception of doctrine itself becomes confused, and insensibly truth decays, because the heart is astray. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and Divine things also.

All “ratiocinations” (as Swedenborg calls them), such as are Mr. Woodman’s, and such as are these replies to him, are addressed to the natural or “human reason,” and it requires the Divine to enter into the human reason, in order to receive the Divine without;—but this Divine can in no case be brought to the test of natural reasonings. The Bible is the least demonstrable of books. You cannot prove its divinity; you cannot prove even its historical details to be facts. You are obliged to give up many of them, and you can seldom tell where fact

ends and allegory begins. The believer only can recognise the Divine in it. And Christ never would force belief, but avoided distinct announcement even, that He was the Christ. It may be said to me—"Why, then, do you argue to convince us?" Friend, I am not doing so. I write to shew to any candid reader that misrepresentation has been used. I write to clear this away, and to induce my readers carefully and honestly to read these books for themselves; and I write, lastly, to bring out more clearly, in earnest, thinking minds, the true tests of all such writings, and of all writings whatever.

Mr. Woodman (p. 260), speaking on the question whether a new revelation is necessary, or may be expected, says that he thinks two conditions are necessary before another revelation can be possible,—1. That the whole of Swedenborg's teachings shall have been incorporated by the church, and all the instruction possible to be obtained from correspondences deduced from the Word; and 2. That the new message shall be as far in advance of Swedenborg, as was *his* message of the state of theology in his day.

These tests bear strong marks of invention for this special occasion. Let us try them by any former occasion. As regards the first test, we ask—Had the Jews incorporated and put into life the whole law of Moses, when Samuel or any of the later prophets came? Had they done so when Jesus came? Did the prophets come only when the law of Moses was fulfilled? Was it not rather because it had not been fulfilled that the prophets came? As regards the second test, if we accept Mr. Woodman's second condition, we ought necessarily to reject John's Gospel because others were written before it, unless it can be shewn that John's Gospel is very much in advance of the others. The Epistles certainly must be rejected, and the Apocalypse will have no chance whatever. This second condition is a slight modification of the Caliph Omar's. "Whatever agrees with the Koran is useless, whatever is in opposition to it is mischievous,—therefore burn the Alexandrian library." How can Mr. Woodman accept Swedenborg, or even look at him, if he sets up such preliminary conditions? According to this rule, in order to suppose Swedenborg's mission possible,—1st. All previous revelation should have been incorporated by the church, and all its instruction deduced from the *natural* sense of the Word; and 2ndly. Swedenborg's message should have been as far in advance of the Word, as the Word was in advance of paganism or polytheism. The strangeness of such arguments surprisus us. Mr. W. says that those who are attracted by Mr. Harris are the "less thoughtful and less intelligent portion of the New Church," and he seems to be addressing that class

of people. We may safely say that he will not satisfy the thoughtful and intelligent.

In p. 370, Mr. W. says—"To pass by the inconsistency of ascribing 'affections' to the Divine Nature, except to remark that 'to affect,' signifying 'to act upon, as the body is affected by cold,' or 'to move the feelings, as the mind is affected with grief,' and 'affection,' signifying 'the *state* of being acted on,' to attribute affections to God is evidently to predicate to Him what is creaturely;—there is beyond this the gross profanity underlying the preceding extract, of resolving the Divine Nature into an Infinite Selfishness."

We have quoted the whole of this sentence, because we could not tell where to stop. Its meaning is obscure, but the thing which is clear is, that Mr. W. supposes the ascribing of affections to the Divine Nature is an inconsistency, and "predicates to [of] God what is creaturely." That a gentleman who has so long been a student and a propounder of Swedenborg's doctrines, should write this, and that the editor should insert it as authoritative teaching, are remarkable facts. Will Mr. W. revive the old dogma against which he has so often argued, that God is without "body, parts, or *passions*"? Does he forget that "*God is Love*"?—that "His tender mercies are over all His works"?—that "He pitieth them that fear Him, as a father pitieth his children"? Will he say that love is not an affection? If so, our word is unavailing, and so we must bring him again to Swedenborg, who says, in *A. E.* 547, "By affection is meant the affection of love, or love in its continuity." He says also, in the same place, that "affection is the very life of thought," and that "affection, which is of the will, causes all understanding in man." Affection here is synonymous with love. But we know that however clear this may be, it will not be admitted unless we give Swedenborg's words. This must be our apology for constant references to him. If Mr. Harris had used the word "affection" in an unusual sense, we might have found some explanation of Mr. W.'s antagonism. But he uses it simply as the synonyme of Love, as does Swedenborg. If there were no affections in the Divine, there could of course be none in man. They exist in man because they are in God, who is the Supreme Man.

In a lengthy argument, Mr. W. endeavours to shew (p. 377) that Mr. Harris's statement respecting the Divine Trinity being "Infinite Masculinity (*vir*), Infinite Femininity (*mulier*), and Infinite Proceeding Operation" is "sheer nonsense." That the two sexes originate in the Divine, he thinks wild and absurd; and ridicules the doctrine, especially with relation to the Holy Spirit, in terms which reverence forbids us

here to repeat. He "marvels how any sensible New Churchman can forsake the clear teachings of Swedenborg for such a vagary," &c. Now it is a singular circumstance that a New Church authority in America, the Rev. Mr. Barrett, editor of "The Swedenborgian," takes an exactly opposite course, and reproaches Mr. Harris with regard to this very doctrine, for pretending to reveal as new that which, he says, Swedenborg taught clearly enough. We do not think Mr. Barrett was quite right; but we think Mr. Harris's doctrine is easily deducible from Swedenborg, and is the only rational deduction, notwithstanding Mr. W.'s surprise. On the words "*Honour thy father and mother*," Swedenborg says (*Sac. Scr.* 69), "The celestial angels by *father* understand the Divine Love of the Lord, by *mother* His Divine Wisdom." This, it will be observed, is the celestial sense, as it is from the celestial heavens, and Mr. Harris speaks only of the celestial sense. Again, in *A. C.* 478, Mr. W. will find that the Lord is the only true Man, and that in the celestial sense and the celestial church, *man* (*homo*) means both male and female. What can be inferred but that in the Divine *homo* are both masculine and feminine? If more be wanted, he will find (*A. C.* 2803, 3703, 3704) that the Divine Good is signified by the Father, the Divine Truth or Wisdom by the Son. Thus, Swedenborg makes Divine Love and Wisdom, in the celestial sense, to be Father and Mother; in the spiritual, Father and Son. We hope Mr. W. will acknowledge, in the next number of the Repository, that he has made the mistakes we here point out.

Mr. Woodman attempts ridicule in some places. We are quite aware that this is a powerful weapon with the unreflecting, but it is the weapon of the destroyer, not of the builder. Any spiritual truths may be ridiculed to the natural man: Who is more open to it than Swedenborg? Mr. Woodman, for instance, affects to treat as very absurd, the notion of large lion-like horses, with flashing electric manes, on the planet Jupiter. Yet he makes no objection to Swedenborg's account of some of the intelligent and excellent men of Jupiter, whose mode of locomotion was going upon all-fours. The latter he would admit to be a *cosmical* truth, but the former, he thinks, should be called *comical*. What there is more absurd in the former account than in the latter we cannot see.

Again, he objects to Mr. Harris's explanation of the numbers of the days in Gen. i. One means one thing, and another another, without reason, he observes. I have nothing to do with defending these meanings given by Mr. Harris, but can Mr. Woodman then explain to us why it is that Swedenborg, in the same places, gives only the simple natural signification of the numbers of the days? Elsewhere he tells

us that all numbers have a spiritual signification, but here he says that the *first* day means a *first* state, the *second* day a *second* state of regeneration, and so forth. Now each of the numbers should have some special quality hidden in itself, but here it is only first, second, and so forth, until we come to the sixth and seventh, which mean respectively *conflict* and the *celestial* state.

If such discrepancies are to be the only tests for such books, then we must give up Swedenborg at once, to be consistent. They may be found by hundreds in his writings. In saying this, we must also say that probably many of them may be explained as light increases, and that the defect is probably as much ours as his. Take as an instance *A. C.* 931, where he says—"Hence it may also be seen, that the earth will not endure for ever, but that it likewise will have its end," &c. Now the general idea drawn from Swedenborg is, that the earth *will* endure for ever; and Mr. Harris is looked upon as contradicting Swedenborg, because he says it will not. Perhaps some friend will tell us, in the Intellectual Repository, whether Swedenborg does say the world will never end, and thus contradict himself; or whether he agrees with Mr. Harris. Again, in 930 and 931, Swedenborg says that "'all the days of the earth' means all time." This is a simple natural sense, and not correspondential at all. By correspondence, day should mean *state*, and earth *the church*. Again, "all flesh" is said to mean "*every man*," which is a natural meaning, and not correspondential. If we take a microscope to look at Swedenborg's imperfections, he is found to be, after all, human and fallible. If we have "*genuine faith*,"—not a faith built on human testimony, but faith springing from love,—these things are of slight consequence; but if our faith in things divine is built on him or any man, it is not worth a straw. The first wind will scatter it.

I cannot leave Mr. Woodman's papers without another word or two. First, I think he will see that it is unjust to attribute Mr. Robinson's views to Mr. Harris, as he has done. Mr. R. does not consult others about what he says or publishes; and to give what he, or I, or any other person may say, as Mr. Harris's views, propounded by such and such a person, is not just. Mr. H. speaks for himself, and does not interfere with the freedom of others. He does not seek to found a party, or a sect. He inculcates that the Lord is the only Master, and he practises His teaching. Let it be understood that what I may say is entirely unknown before publication to Mr. H., as much as to Mr. W., and that I speak out my own perceptions with freedom, believing also that some things that I say may not be in accordance with Mr. Harris's views. The admission of the principle "*nunc licet*" by Mr. Woodman is a sign that

freedom is not yet destroyed. Let this motto be taken in the right spirit, not in self-will or in the pride of logic, but in an humble, prayerful spirit, looking to the Lord alone for guidance, and the truth will be given. The second word is, that his criticism of Mr. Harris is so manifestly made with a determination to damage, that it cannot have any weight. There is no candour in it. Truth is not the thing sought, but the finding or making of error. It is just the temper with which a determined unbeliever comes to the Word of God. He intends only to ridicule. And he finds abundant scope, even in the Bible.

One or two doctrines are prominent in Mr. Harris's books, which strike the reader as startling novelties in philosophic shape, though older than history in traditional guise. One of these is the Doctrine of World-souls, the other the much-questioned subject of Fay-souls and Fairies. What we shall here say will be for the purpose of shewing that there is, at least, no intrinsic absurdity in them, and that the balance of probability is in their favour. Let those who think that the idea of fay-souls is untenable, weigh the following considerations, and, in the Intellectual Repository, or elsewhere, shew us their worthlessness.

One of the fundamentals of Swedenborg's philosophy and theology is the principle that all things are the same in leasts as in greatest. The lungs consist of multitudes of smaller lungs, down to the minutest cell form;—the heart consists of multitudes of smaller hearts. So of man. God Himself is the Divine Man,—the source of Humanity. The universal heaven is in the form of a grand man,—each separate heaven, each society in heaven, and therefore each individual in the heavens, is in human form. The hells, being perversions of humanity, are monstrous in form, as are the individuals constituting them. All the heavens, societies, and individuals, are sustained by the Divine influx. This influx is goodness and truth,—or love and wisdom, flowing down continually from God into and through the heavens, and thence outwards into the natural universe. Has this goodness and truth any form?—we ask. A Swedenborgian cannot say it is without form. What is the form, then? The influx is living,—nay, it is Life itself,—it is Divine. Can the form be any other than human? For, remember, all things are the same in leasts as in greatest. The influx from God is the Divine sphere and effluence, and must have His own form—the human. Is it not so? If we admit that it is so, then we can understand Swedenborg's account of the atmospheres of the heavens. *A. C.* 1621.

Let us ask—What are the sporting infants which Swedenborg there speaks of as constituting the very atmosphere in some of the paradises,

if they be not fay-souls? Start not, gentle reader, nor reply indignantly that he says "*as it were* of sporting infants." What does this "*as it were*" mean? He says the same of the diamond atmospheres,— "*as if they were composed of minute spherules of diamond.*" Read the whole account, *A. C.* 1619 to 1633, and you find that these sporting infants were seen just in the same way, and existed just as really, as anything else in the heavens. In 1619 he says—"*Nothing at all exists visibly before the angels which is not representative and significative.*" Yet in No. 1620 these things are said to be so vivid, and presented with such fulness of sense, that spirits and angels "*affirm them to be real things; but the things of the world to be respectively not real.*" All things there continually change as the states of the spirits and angels change. In No. 1627 he says that he saw not only cities and palaces, but "*the decorations of particular parts; as those of the steps and gates thereof: and they seemed to move as if they were alive, and to vary themselves continually with new beauty and symmetry.*" I was also informed," he continues, "*that the variations may thus succeed each other perpetually, yea, even to eternity.*" He says, also—"These were among the least astonishing things in the other life." Evidently there were things he durst not venture to tell.

The sporting infants, he says, "*were in forms most minute and indiscernible, but still perceptible to an inmost idea.*" An inmost idea, that is, a celestial idea. It is evident they were not mere pictures or fantasies. They were not easily seen by him, but yet they were perceived by an inmost idea. He says, that "*by these forms it is suggested to infants that all things around them are alive.*" Then, of course, all things are alive; otherwise such a thing would not be suggested to the infants. And of course, also, the atmosphere is alive,—for this is the very thing which they are here taught was alive. And the atmospheres have different kinds of life in the different degrees,—infants, flowers, and gems represent this. The inmost is the celestial or human atmosphere,—and here the forms of the atmospheric particles are human, of the freshest and most innocent human life,—the infantile. What more can we want? Is not this a whole philosophy of fairy-land? And if our friends cannot believe in fairy atmospheres, how can they believe in steps and gates that seem alive, and move and change continually into new forms?

A few other references to Swedenborg, in connection with fay-souls. In *Conjugal Love*, No. 183, is this remarkable passage:—"But indeed love and wisdom with use, not only make man, but also are man; yea, what perhaps you will wonder at, they propagate man, for in the seed

of the man is his soul in a perfect human form, covered with substances from the pure things of nature, out of which a body is formed," &c. Here, then, is the whole doctrine of fay-souls, except the name, put in words of Swedenborg more plain and clear than I should have ventured upon. What is the soul in the seed but a soul-germ or fay-soul? It is in "perfect human form,"—and the body is not yet formed.

In the October number of the *Intellectual Repository*, Mr. Woodman's delicacy is offended, by the saying of Mr. Harris, that "the wives of the angels enjoy the pleasures of maternity." Mr. Harris's descriptions of such things, he says, are not suitable for the *Repository*. I can only assure my readers that there is nothing in his books which, to a reader previously knowing neither writer, would be so offensive as numerous passages in Swedenborg's *Conjugal and Scortatory Love*. There is an atmosphere of purity in them which forbids grossness of thought. As regards the spiritual offspring, without saying anything of my own belief, which is of slight consequence to others, the doctrine of Mr. Harris is clearly enough to be inferred from Swedenborg. We might ask where the "perfect human form in the seed," named above, comes from? but Swedenborg himself, in other places, shews this. In *C. L.* 44, certain novitiate spirits ask the angels whether any offspring are born in the heavens;—they reply, not any natural offspring, but spiritual offspring. The novitiates ask—"What are spiritual offspring?" They are told that "love and wisdom are the spiritual offspring." That love and wisdom are human in form, we find in No. 183, where he says, "love and wisdom with use not only make man, but are man," and then tells of the soul-germ as being only love and wisdom. The chain of evidence is quite complete. And to clear the matter still further, in No. 51 we are told that it is only the natural degree that is wanting to the spiritual proflifications, in order to produce natural offspring. In addition to this, Swedenborg shews, in No. 385 *et seq.*, that two universal spheres proceed from the Lord, for preserving the universe,—one is that of procreating, the other of protecting the things procreated;—that these two universal spheres are one with conjugal love and the love of infants;—and are in the heavens as well as the earths.

I confess to difficulties in this question for myself,—but Swedenborg and Harris are alike difficult for me. The question here, is not any individual belief, but the agreement or non-agreement of these two. It is most unjust to set up Swedenborg as the truth, and Harris as a dreamer, on a subject on which they are exactly at one.

I might ask how our friends understand some passages in the Word, such as "Happy is he that taketh thy little ones (those of Babylon)

and dasheth them against the stones." The little ones of Babylon are the evils and falses of that state, they will say. True, we reply, but how did the prophet see them? As veritable beings, assuredly. And what is meant when Jesus says—"Woe to him that offendeth one of these little ones that believe in me; it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea"? He could scarcely mean the children brought to Him by their mothers. The children could not believe in Him. Did He not speak of spiritual offences,—non-reception of the innocences of heaven? And He gave the name of "little ones" to these spiritual innocents. Is not this the true spiritual form?

We have not space to discuss at length the doctrine of world-souls, though a great deal might be said on that subject. The ancient belief of this is clear enough. It is traceable as far back as any belief or notion whatever, and probably comes down from the golden age. All the planets are personifications, with the ancients. Each has its name and quality, and each its influence on earth,—its status in the heavens, its history, and its symbols. But look at the matter philosophically. We have alluded to the human as the all-inclusive and constantly repeated type-form in the heavens and in all society. The inhabitants of each planet or sun must necessarily constitute a grand man. The total of the race on each, in all its generations, constitutes its grand unitary man. It must be so, because each world must have a special genius of its own. This will probably be readily admitted,—but it will be said that this is not the world-soul at all, but the grand man of the planet, consisting of all the individual men in their order. True, but must there not be a Divine Idea of this grand man existent from the beginning. When God purposes to make a world, His purpose is complete,—the Idea is a perfect one. The plan is not built up by accident as the work proceeds. In Genesis ii. we read that the Lord God "*made every plant before it grew.*" That is, He made the archetypes. These were the Divine Ideas of the plants. And so it must be with all created things. So it must be with the grand man of each planet. You admit that He has a Divine plan or idea, of course. Well, what is this idea? It is a spiritual substance, as all ideas are. You will admit this. Then it must have form? Perhaps you will reply, that it would be a globular form. Friend, you are thinking of shapes of material worlds, not spiritual forms. The Divine Idea is that of the future grand man of a world. The material globe is a thing as subordinate as the houses on the planets. The form can be nothing else than human. It cannot yet be a responsible personality, for it is God's idea, not yet wrought out and

accomplished in living, conscious, and free men. But it must grow into a personality as it comes to its completeness. This is precisely the fundamental of the doctrine of world-souls in the Arcana of Christianity. And every individual man who lives in that world, must have his place in the grand man, and his portion of the Divine Idea of the world,—therefore he must have a part of the spiritual substance of the world-soul. And hence, as we understand Mr. H., the ultimate particles of each man's body belong to the world-soul, and he requires them for his future completeness and perfection.

Mr. Woodman finds room to object that Mr. Harris in one place calls the world-soul a personality, and in another place says it is not a personality. To a candid reader, however, it is evident that in these two cases he uses the word personality in different senses. In the instance in which he attributes personality, he speaks only of their appearance,—that of “radiant personalities,”—not of responsible character, which really constitutes personality.

I must apologise to my readers for having followed Mr. Woodman so far. They would not thank me to proceed further. It is neither pleasant nor profitable. His papers will have their use, as all things have, under Divine guidance. Therefore we bid him adieu, I hope without unkindly feeling. Mr. W.'s extracts from Mr. H.'s poems will be useful, and candid readers will be able to estimate the animus of the selection. Mr. W. does not make out a case nearly so bad against Mr. Harris as Mr. Pike does, for instance, against Swedenborg. We need not fear but that truth will prevail. If Mr. W. is sincere and earnest, he is doing his work, though I see it not. He and Eternal Rectitude have the account to settle between themselves.

With regard to other objectors, we have space only for one other reference. The excellent M. Le Boys des Guays, of St. Amand, France, has been appealed to, as an authority. A long paper from him has been translated, and given in the *Intellectual Repository*. It should be known that he cannot read English, and that Mr. Harris's books are unknown in French. The French gentleman knew nothing of Mr. H. or his books, except from his correspondent, who is a very decided opponent of Mr. H. The paper contains nothing that really bears on Mr. Harris or his books; but one thing which he makes clear, is of some value. We hope our friends the Authoritarians will take note of it. He explains that the mode of Swedenborg's illustration was just the same in kind, and differing only in degree from that which all of us experience. It was “illustration in a higher degree, because of the mission he had to fulfil, and the knowledges he had acquired in the science

of correspondences, by his long peregrinations in the spiritual world." This is a clear and rational view, entirely differing from the notion which is entertained elsewhere, that Swedenborg's illustration was something perfectly unique in the world, and that it is an impiety to suppose any one else can ever reach the same position.

M. Le Boys des Guays appeals to the experience of his readers, whether they have not found, when they were reading the Word with a sincere desire to know the truth only that they might *do it*, that it was opened and illuminated to them in a way they had not known before. Swedenborg's illustration was the same in kind, he tells us. Mr. Harris only claims this; and we claim it, with M. Le Boys des Guays, for every true New Churchman, in the degree which his life and uses may require. And so we "call no man Master." The Word is infinite, and every man may find in it not only general truths, but special ones, for his own case, at each moment of his life, and every age will find new ones. All sciences, spiritual and natural, are contained within it. It is the key of all worlds, natural and spiritual. It is the counterpart of the universe; nothing of the starry heavens, or the earth's central deeps, or the past millenniums, or future and yet unborn worlds, but are wrapped in it; for it is the *Infinite Divine Word*. God ever speaks through it. What He says to one through it can never be the same that He says to another. Some things said to Swedenborg may be partly understood by us, but only in slight degree. What concerns us is the truth given to ourselves. For, as Swedenborg says, the spiritual sense of the Word can be revealed to man, not by correspondences, but "by the Lord alone." (See *Sac. Scr.* 26.)

VI.—SPIRITUALISM.

We should be thankful to the Committee of the Swedenborg Association, or any one looking at things in general from their point of vision, to give us a clear and comprehensive definition of Spiritualism. They have recently decided that their agent is not to sell the works of Mr. Harris, or any other Spiritualistic writings. As regards Mr. H., they are definite without reason. What is meant by Spiritualism? Where does it begin, and where does it end? Is not Swedenborg at the head of modern Spiritualists? If we understand by the term those who have had spiritual intercourse, he is so, certainly. On what ground, then, is he thus separated by a discrete degree? Do they mean to condemn all who interest themselves in table-rapping, and in obtaining responses through mediums to queries? Let them say so, and let some one

without sin of this kind cast the first stone. But this would not have excluded Mr. Harris, and therefore would not have suited the present purpose; because he, more emphatically, and at greater cost to his success, than they, denounces these things. Do they wish to exclude all spirit-dictations and spirit-writing? They dare not say this, because the venerable Clowes states that he wrote under spiritual influence some of his sermons and published works,—the impulse coming to him, and prompting him to write even against his own will. (See his Letter to Mr. Hindmarsh, written 1799, and given in Int. Rep., May, 1832.) “Many of my sermons,” he says, “have been thus dictated throughout by spirits, when I have chanced to awake in the course of the night.” Nay, Swedenborg himself was often, he assures us, a writing medium for spirits. In the *Spiritual Diary*, n. 557, we read:—“They (the spirits) have sometimes; and, indeed, often, directed my hand when writing, as though it were entirely their own, so that they thought that it was they themselves who were writing.” What we want is, to know the principle which directs the decision of the Committee. We can form our own opinion of that. At present there does not appear anything more or less than a capricious distinction from pure prejudice.

And is it not the chief object of Swedenborg’s writings to disclose to us the spiritual in the Word, in the world, in ourselves? Did he not—beginning from the lowest region of existence, the mineral, through mathematics, mechanics, dynamics, anatomy, and physiology,—set this one object before him? In the prologue to the “Animal Kingdom,” published in 1744, the year that his openness to the spiritual world commenced, after speaking of the organs of the human body which he was investigating, he says—“The end I propose to myself in the work, is a knowledge of the soul; since this knowledge will constitute the crown of my studies. This, then, my labours intend, and thither they aim.” (n. 15.) Then he supposes the objection made, that this investigation is a forbidden intrusion of the intellect into the sacred things of faith, and he replies, that those who need not the intellectual discovery because they have faith, may rest satisfied with their faith,—but that his book is for those who must have things through the intellect, and have not faith. (n. 21, 22.)

Thus did he use all possible means to discover experimentally and analytically the spiritual realities which an underlying intuition dimly revealed to him from the beginning. He did not allow the prejudices of others to daunt him, but boldly took the motto “*nunc licet.*”

Again we ask—“What is Spiritualism? and what is Non-spiritualism?” Do we not rightly understand, that every man lives from

spiritual influx, and that without it he would instantly die? The difference, then, between *Spiritualism* and *Non-spiritualism* is simply the difference between the consciousness and the unconsciousness of spiritual agency. One man, having the veil partially removed, perceives the spiritual world in which he lives, or, in other words, through him the spiritual has power manifestly to penetrate to the external. In another man, the bodily garment is still too dense for the manifestation to take place. That the one who sees may be the victim of delusions is to be taken into our account in estimating the value of his experiences. It is probable that we may not be able to depend on his spiritual insight for guidance, any more than we can on the common sense of many others in the life of this world. Every man will see according to his own state. His spiritual associates will be in states similar to his own. If sinister in his motives, he will be deluded; if upright in heart, he will be led aright. These things Swedenborg makes clear, and the world wants them now for guidance. They require to be illustrated in every variety of mode, and sown broad-cast in anticipation of the coming and now growing change. To seek this openness is undoubtedly dangerous, for the reasons here indicated. It is to run into temptation.

In the resolutions excluding Spiritualist publications, passed by the Committee of the Swedenborg Society, they refer to *A. E.* 1182 *et passim*, to caution us against Spiritualism. They treat it as a thing to be *put down*, very determinedly. On referring to the passage, we find that the dangers spoken of there are just what we have named. But in the next number (1183) are these words:—"It is otherwise with those whom the Lord leads,—all such are enlightened when they read the Word: if these hear speech from spirits, which also they do occasionally, they are not taught, but led, and this so providently, that the man is left to himself, since, as before said, every man is led of the Lord by affections, and thinks from them as from himself, in freedom." So that from this very passage it appears that spirits do speak with men, and it is orderly too, for it is with those whom the Lord leads. The Committee ought to have quoted the whole.

Many passages might be quoted to show that Swedenborg's teachings are not fairly stated as against spiritual intercourse. It is easy to show that he himself was much influenced by spirits, just as we all are influenced by friends in this life. There is a well-known passage in the *Diary*, showing this. It is headed "*The stink of intemperance.*" "One evening," he says, "I took a great meal of milk and bread, more than the spirits considered good for me. On this occasion they dwelt upon intemperance, and accused me of it." He then says that they made

him sensibly perceive the foulness which their ideas attributed to him. (Wilkinson's "Swedenborg," p. 236.)

Swedenborg never imagined that his gift was unique, and that it was disorderly for all others but himself to have spiritual vision. When Ferelius visited him in company with a Danish clergyman, "they asked him why nobody but himself enjoyed such spiritual privileges? He replied that 'every man might at the present day have them, as well as in the times of the Old Testament; but that the true hindrance now is, the sensual state into which mankind has fallen.'" (Wilkinson's "Swedenborg," p. 225.) Swedenborg's indication of the danger is well conveyed in a conversation with Count Robsahm, who once questioned him, whether it would be possible for others to enjoy the same spiritual light as himself. He answered—"Take good heed upon that point: a man lays himself open to grievous errors who tries by *barely natural powers* to explore spiritual things. You know how often students, especially theologians, who have gone far in useless knowledge, have become insane." This is the grand mistake of some spiritualists in our day, "trying by *barely natural powers* to explore spiritual things." But it is a mistake to which the "theologian" is as much liable as the table-rapper. Whoever meddles with the doctrines of Christianity, without possessing or seeking the life of them, is in the same danger. He is using "*barely natural powers*."

Does Mr. Harris, then, encourage disorderly attempts to communicate with spirits? So far from it, he has spoken out most distinctly in his writings everywhere, and especially in the little work, "Modern Spiritualism," against such attempts. Far more clearly and definitely has he pointed out the danger, than any of those who profess to condemn him because he is a spiritualist. Indeed it is notorious that both in America and in England he has alienated many of his warmest personal friends, by his resolute and severe denunciations of "Disorderly Spiritualism."

If rightly seen, spiritualism is a far more important phenomenon than most readers of Swedenborg appear to know. It is man's birth-right to know both worlds. Humanity is passing through the throes of a new birth,—is awaking from a long and death-like sleep. Like the Lazarus of the Gospel, the whole of humanity has been in the grave. The four-days-buried dead is now called forth by the Divine Voice. His eyes are opening,—he moves. The command is given—"Loose him, and let him go." Dream-land dies away, and dawn is coming. The actual world around is beginning to be realised. What if eye, or foot, or ear should at first fail, if he is confused in the new

light. Shall we therefore say he is unfit to come from his grave, and re-consign him there?

Since the middle of the last century, it is evident that there has been an upheaving of spiritual forces, such as never before has been witnessed. Man's intellect has acquired greater force and vivacity. Troops of new sciences have been born into the world; because faculties which heretofore were dormant, have been awakened into life. And even phrenology, materialising as its tendency is supposed to be, can show that this intensifying of mental power—this birth of new faculties,—must necessarily result in changes in the bodily organisation. This has really occurred, and is occurring. The spiritual is gradually shining out through the material,—saturating and flooding it. At length, it must dominate sensibly, and entirely govern, even to the lowest things of life, and perfect and open communication be established.

And, on the other hand, if the greater vigour of intellectual life which prevails in our age be recognised as one of the signs of an approximation towards a more spiritualised condition of human life, must we not look on the numerous crimes of the present time as the shade of the same picture? Who does not perceive and lament the more free access and more terrific influence of infernal spirits in the daily murders and poisonings, in the increased number of suicides which the newspapers make so painfully conspicuous to us, and in the lamentable growth of insanity? This result may be expected also. According to Swedenborg, the most fearfully corrupt men who have ever lived on earth were Antediluvians who were contemporaneous with the most ancient church. So potent for evil are these that, lest they should destroy the whole human race, they are shut up in the lowest hell, and not allowed communication with men. But we know that as the individual man rises to higher states of spiritual perception, he is exposed to fiercer temptations. So it must be with the race also; and, consequently, contemporaneous with the descent of higher truth and good from heaven, will be the ascent of more terrible evils and fallacies from the hells. Humanity is redeemed by the Lord, and prepared or preparing for this fiercer conflict with evil, as the means of ultimate restoration. That is the only hope of the world's future. The Divine Sphere, which since the Incarnation has penetrated and operated upon the race, is gradually bringing it back to a higher rationality and openness to the spiritual world; and at length man will be able to bear the assaults of those fiercer foes from whom he has hitherto been shielded. The whole human race, the grand man of the earth, must follow the Redeemer Himself in this path. He was tempted, step by step, through life, and

exposed at length to the fiercest assaults of the deepest hells; and in this, as in all things, He is our leader and guide. His power will sustain us in the combat, and prepare us for it. It will be the final struggle of humanity, and then will come in "eternal righteousness."

Swedenborg fully recognises this gradual return of the human race to its normal condition. He tells us that the reason why man no longer had spiritual communications, the reason why the knowledge of correspondences and an internal sense in the Word had been lost, was that man had sunk into a merely sensual and corporeal condition, in which these things would only have been mischievous. But in his time man had already begun to rise; and he tells us that the reason why now the knowledge of correspondences, and of an internal sense of the Word, could begin to be restored, was that in his day men were beginning to be receptive of genuine truths. (See *S. S.* n. 25.) But yet, as he elsewhere says, mankind did not in his day even know what spiritual temptation meant. Spiritual temptations will have to be borne, and passed through,—and we believe they are now beginning to come.

Swedenborg looked forward to a higher condition of the human race in the future. Of that higher condition of the New Age he was the herald and the first-fruit. A very few years before he left the earth, and when his work was almost complete, he wrote of the coming era—"The end of the present church approaches, and the beginning of a new one is at hand, which will be the New Jerusalem." (*A. E.* 1183.) Then he goes on to tell the things which "*are to be revealed*" to that church. All the things he names are to be found in his works, yet he does not allude to the expected influence of his books at all; and he concludes the enumeration of the revelations with these words,—"*besides many other things* which are effects of the light now arising after darkness." In many places he speaks of this New Church as one "*to be established*" by the Lord, and to be formed through the New Heaven. (*A. R.* 880 and 876.) This New Christian Heaven was not fully formed in his time, as he said just at the close of his life,—and from this New Christian Heaven only could the New Church descend.

An excellent tract on "The Word of God and Spirit Manifestations," written by the Rev. J. H. Smithson, two or three years ago, and published by the Manchester New Jerusalem Tract Society, at the request and cost of the Rev. Mr. Clissold, ought to be known by those who wish to understand Spiritualism. Mr. Smithson there gives a number of very important quotations from Swedenborg. *A. C.* 1880, he says—"Man was so created that, during his life on earth amongst men, he might, at the same time, also live in heaven amongst angels,

and during his life amongst angels, he might at the same time also live on earth amongst men, so that heaven and earth might be together, and form a one; men knowing what is in heaven, and angels what is in the world." "But as man became so corporeal, he closed heaven against himself."

In the *Spiritual Diary*, 2541, he says—"I have often conversed with spirits, stating that if men were in faith in the Lord, heaven might thus be opened to them, or that an interior way towards heaven might be opened, which is [now] shut; and this in a manner almost similar to that which, through the Lord's mercy, has occurred to me." "Thus," he says, "men in the world, and spirits and angels, might live together and enjoy mutual intercourse." In 2542—"It has thus been ordained by the Lord from eternity, that there should be such an intercourse and communion between men and angels, and also that man, when he has come to his full age, should not know that he is living in the body; and that thus, when the body is rejected, he might immediately enter into heaven."

Mr. Smithson, commenting on some of these passages, says—"From this we learn that by creation it is not only possible for man to have open intercourse with angels, but that it is the Creator's design and good pleasure that he should enjoy this intercourse." This conclusion, however, clearly and distinctly stated as it is, is not carried to its legitimate consequences; for afterwards he endeavours to convince us that we had better not look for or desire intercourse, on account of its danger, and that a good man will not desire it. We cannot but point out that if, as he says, "it is the Creator's design and good pleasure that we should enjoy this intercourse," we run in opposition to the Divine will by shunning it.

Mr. Smithson says that "many generations must elapse" before we are in a state fit for this intercourse. No doubt it is true that many generations of progressive advancement were necessary to prepare mankind; but from what period do we date? The work has not now to begin. It began at the first advent. All through these Christian ages it has been going on. And when Swedenborg lived, it had so far advanced that the open intercourse was already possible.

One other point, and we leave this useful tract. Mr. Smithson says the object of it is to shew the injurious tendency of *seeking* an open intercourse with spirits. There should be some limitation to the understanding of this. We in reality seek intercourse *with heaven* when we read the Word or pray. These are appointed means. We ought thus to seek. The mistake is when we seek by the other modes

Mr. Smithson points out. But if we seek only by the appointed means, and clear open intercourse comes, as it certainly at some time will, from Mr. Smithson's own shewing, we are in the way of Divine order.

Great changes are now very rapidly going forward. The march of the ages is bringing us into the new era. The time to come will be one of higher good and fiercer evil, of more glorious truth and more terrible delusion, of conflict and convulsion. "Nation will rise upon nation, and kingdom upon kingdom. There will be earthquakes and famines in divers places, a time of trouble such as never was." The battle of the aerial hosts will no longer be in remote atmospheric regions out of our sight; but will sweep the solid earth with tempest. The keen lightning of the spirit will come near to rending the material dwelling-place, so that "if those days be not shortened, no flesh shall be saved." The phenomena which we call Spiritualism are signs of the times,— "the branch of the fig tree is tender, and putteth forth leaves."

Even "Disorderly Spiritualism" will have its uses in the hands of Divine Providence, and those not small ones. The first of these will be that many who have had no true belief in a spiritual world, will be brought to a belief from external evidence. It will be an external belief, it is true, but it will be their own fault if it does not lead to a more interior one. But a second, and very important end, though a fearful one to contemplate, will be that the old theological beliefs, and theory of the spiritual world, will be wrecked and rent asunder as by an earthquake. Hitherto the only weapon used against them has been the natural reason, showing their inconsistency and absurdity. But this has not penetrated to the spiritual nature in man. This Nemesis of the Old Church,— "Spiritualism,"—comes from that very spiritual world it has vainly laboured to make credible. It is as though the defenders of an impregnable fortress were hurled into the air, along with their fortress, by the explosion of their own magazine. Whether Spiritualism be true or false, right or wrong, good or evil,—this result is rapidly advancing in America, and will come, where spirit-communications spread. It is an absolute and stupendous power of destruction, whatever theory we may adopt with regard to it. By its means the Old Church, which has already decayed in its outward power and influence, will become a wreck from the explosion of its own spiritual forces; and through Europe and the world, we think we can perceive that from the operation of this cause alone, incalculable results must ensue. Except where the New Church exists, men will be untrammelled by Divine law, or human reverence. The political changes now impending over Europe will be trifling in their influence compared with this, which will be the real destruction of the scarlet woman by the beast on which she rode.

The teachings of spirit-communicators in America are singularly uniform. The fundamentals are—Denial of any Divine authority in the Word,—pretended acknowledgment of Christ as an advanced medium,—assumption of superiority to Him,—a claim for this New Era of an exaltation above all former ages,—scorn of any notions of moral evil,—universal progression and continual development,—and liberty to break off the marriage bond where not congenial. These views are often inculcated by spirits who pretend to be deceased relatives and friends of those who consult, and thus come with an influence which human teaching can never possess. In this way the contagion of pantheism and absolute selfishness is spreading, under a thin guise of benevolence and a pretence of new light. Inspired mediums travel from place to place teaching these things, and Spiritualism seems to be almost the only living belief.

How vain to think of keeping man's interiors closed. Let us talk of stopping the motion of the earth in its orbit. Spiritualism is a part of the road along which man must travel through the ages. It is the enchanted ground of the Pilgrim's Progress,—dangerous indeed,—but it lies between us and the land of Beulah. Its haunting voices, its blasphemies, and its demoniac spells, are fearful to encounter,—but let the pilgrim keep the roll in his bosom, his armour girt about him, the sword of the Spirit by his side; and let him watch and be vigilant,—and above all, let him not tamper with the foe. And the Lord will lead us safely through this terror, if we trust in Him only.

The earliest receivers of the New Church doctrines talked plainly enough of the possibilities of spiritual intercourse. Hartley, in lamenting the materialism and unbelief of the time, tells, as an instance, of a pious and devout lady whom he knew, who, for avowing that she had converse with spirits, was confined in a lunatic asylum. Whoever has read the brief autobiography of Clowes, knows that it consists of a series of spiritual experiences. One of the most remarkable of these was in connection with his introduction to the knowledge of Swedenborg. The Seer's "*Vera Christiana Religio*" was providentially brought to his notice. He procured the book, but felt so strong a distaste for it, that he left it lying unread for some time. Taking it up casually one day, he saw the words "*Divinum humanum.*" Still he took no notice of it, but went from home to pay a customary annual visit. After some days spent at a friend's house, on awaking one morning, a singularly tranquil state of inward recollection came upon him, then a delightful harmony in the interiors of his mind, with a peace and heavenly joy never before experienced. Then "instantly there was

made manifest, in the same recesses of his spirit," he says, "what he could call by no other name than a divine glory, surpassing all description, and exciting the most profound adoration. But what seemed to him," he says, "the most singular circumstance, was, that he was strongly impressed by a kind of internal dictate, that the glory was in close connection with that *Divinum humanum* above mentioned, and proceeded from it as its proper Divine source." The glory continued a full hour. Sometimes he closed his bodily eyes, and then opened them again, thus "viewing and analysing," but the glory remained the same, with his eyes either open or closed. He did not see a human form, but had a strong persuasion that the glory proceeded from a form, which was no other than the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ. It gradually disappeared, and then so strong a desire to read Swedenborg's book suddenly sprang up, that he could not remain longer with his friend, but made an excuse for returning home, where he began ardently to read, and his whole mind was revolutionised by it.

Such things are, of course, looked upon by worldly-minded men as somewhat fanatical, and therefore are sneered at. Is it not possible that the dread of these sneers, and the desire to preserve a kind of respect from the world, makes some of us willing now to put down as delusion every genuine spiritual manifestation? Respect for the proprieties is often one of the most dangerous temptations. Let us ask whether it is error we really fear, or whether it is not rather the world's opinion. What if some man who fills a large place in the world's esteem should be prevented paying us the same respect he otherwise would, because we really believe that the spiritual world is openly active among us at the present day,—what if he should think us somewhat fanatical,—will it repay us to give up the truth to gain him, even if he were a Bishop? With all the fervour of my being I would condemn such tendency. It is antichristian, pharisaic, and destructive of all good and truth. It will, in the speediest possible way, bring the contempt which is feared, not upon Swedenborg, but upon those who thus barter truth for the world's approving smile.

One word more, on the subject of "*Disorderly Spiritualism*." After reading Swedenborg's account of the real source of danger in spiritual communications, viz., "seeking to explore spiritual things by barely natural powers," how shall we classify the casting of lots to obtain authority to ordain ministers? This was certainly an attempt at spiritual communication. There were only the "barest natural" means used. You may say it was not "*exploring*" spiritual things. Well, then, it was still more awful, it was *assuming*. Either there was spiritual power

obtained, or not. If obtained, it was by a disorderly attempt; there was no warrant for it anywhere, in heaven or earth. If any power came, therefore, it is of infernal origin. If no power was obtained, then the present ordination is a false pretence,—and the more awful from its having to do with the highest things. We ask, then, who is guilty of “*disorderly spiritualism?*” Is it Mr. Harris, or his opponents?

VII.—RESPIRATION.

It may perhaps be looked on as temerity in the writer to speak of a subject so little understood, and so generally avoided by Swedenborg's followers. Conscious that it requires far higher powers than he can bring, perhaps he may still be able to draw attention to a matter of great importance, and it may be better understood in consequence.

We have already observed the fact that the human body passes through states of change coterminously with the spirit. This is seen in many ways. It is well known that when a nation sinks into barbarism, first the expression,—then the features,—then the limbs and the bony structure, especially the skull,—assume a lower type-form. The whole body sinks from the human shape towards the brute. The Divine works by laws—and not by violation of laws; and therefore when the flood came,—that suffocation by the stoppage of internal respiration, of which Swedenborg tells,—it must have been the operation of a normal and universal law, producing a necessary organic change in the bodies of the human race. It must have been also by the operation of the same law, producing another effect, because acting on other conditions, that the men of the Noetic period were enabled to pass over the crisis into a different state of breathing. The same law must be,—latently perhaps,—still in existence; that is, the organic conditions of our own bodies involve them. The difference between those who died and those who lived was simply a difference of spiritual states of the men themselves.

The phenomena of breathing are little noticed, because common,—though more marvellous than any miracle. With the first breath we draw comes the first consciousness of external life. With failing breath, consciousness fades away. When we fall asleep, there is a change in the breathing, accompanied by the changed consciousness. In drowning, or in fainting, as breathing ceases, we sink away from our hold on the outward life, and the consciousness retreats further and further. Those who have passed through the first stages of drowning tell us that there seems to be a rush of the soul back through the brain,

and a moment brings up in panoramic vision the scenes of a life. It is like the sweeping of a strong wind over the strings of some grand æolian harp, awaking all its tones and chords, its memories and sympathies. The next moment the living consciousness has passed from the region of the outer brain, and we know no more of its experience when we return. In states of trance the breathing ceases. In some instances the soul's experiences during trance can be brought back to the outer life; in others, this seems impossible. When, in our ordinary condition, we breathe quickly, we are scarcely capable of thinking at all; but when we are in deep thought, we have long-suspended breaths. These are common phenomena, referred to here only to recall the fact of the intimate connection existing between breathing and consciousness.

Swedenborg makes many allusions to respiration as the connecting link between the inner and the outer lives,—between the soul and the body. Expiration and inspiration are the unceasing action and reaction of the spiritual and the natural. He also tells us, that holding back the breath is equivalent to intercourse with the soul, and drawing it in amounts to intercourse with the body. He says that his own respiration differed from that of other men, and that external breathing appeared to be suspended for almost an hour together, when heaven was opened to him, and he spoke with spirits. In this way he was gradually introduced by the Lord into inward breathing. He speaks of many species of respirations, according as his states were more or less interior. (*Sp. Diary*, 3464.)

For a moment, as we think on these things, that mysterious connection which subsists between soul and body is presented to us as a problem we are about to solve. We seem to perceive, on one side of the delicate membrane of the air-cell of the lungs, the spiritual aura, and on the other side, the outer air,—the swaying balance of the two keeping up the equilibrium of life. But then the question recurs, would not this view make the spiritual to be only another material? We must go further. Swedenborg says that the respiration of the men of the golden age was entirely different from ours. They had no respiration of the external atmosphere but what was tacit, or insensible. They lived from internal respiration. They did not use the external air even for speech, for their speech was not sonorous, and did not enter the external ear of the listener. They communicated their thoughts by the internal breath. Speech with them, he says, was "by innumerable series of muscular fibres in the face and lips, which are not unfolded at the present day." And, he says, that this speech was far

more expressive than that of words. (*A. C.* 607.) In *A. C.* 1118, he says, the respiration from within proceeded outwards from the navel through the lips and face, and the speech therefrom entered the ear of the listener by an internal way,—in fact, by the Eustachian tube, which is a tube opening from the inside of the mouth and entering the interior of the ear, just behind the tympanum or drum. The only use known for this tube by physiologists at present, is that of keeping a supply of air inside of the drum of the ear. This internal speech, coming from the internal or spiritual breath, evidently could not be merely gesture or pantomime, read by the eye. It was a spiritual speech, that is, a conveyance of thought and feeling,—and consequently the speaker and listener must have been in relative states, which we should designate *en rapport*.

It would appear, then, that when man was in his pristine condition, the internal or spiritual respiration was dominant. The respiration of atmospheric air was insensible, and subordinate. But as men declined into evil, the internal respiration gradually changed, the initiatory point of the breaths, removing from the front, through the abdomen, to the back, as the decline continued; at last the internal breathing entirely ceased, and the breathing became external in those who were able to pass through the crisis, and in the rest suffocation, or incapacity to breathe at all, closed their earthly lives.

At present we are scarcely conscious of any other respiration than that of the earth's atmosphere. The outer has usurped the power of the inner breathing. Life does not flow out from us and subdue the world, but the world flows in and subdues the soul. The imprisoned spirit is shut in behind the wall of the lungs, and nature, once plastic to its power, is to us stern and adamant. In Christ, the perfect Man visited the earth, and His breath was law to the Universe. When He spoke, it was done. And when His earthly life was accomplished,—breathing on His disciples, He said—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

In the knowledge which the ancient nations had of this intimate connection between breath and the life or soul, we find it explained why the same word which designates air or wind, signifies also, in all languages, spirit; and why *inspiration*, which literally means an in-breathing, signifies also the coming into man of a spiritual influence. The two things were at first undistinguishable in the breath, which is the outflow of man's life. The one merges into the other. With us the air is the vehicle of the spirit. Formerly the spiritual element appears to have been almost unclothed, and to have leapt glowing from soul to soul. Even now, the words we utter, which are air-shapes, moulded by the organs of voice,

must each have its own invisible form, and must have that form created by the affection and thought which gives it birth.

"Inspiration," says Swedenborg, "is not dictation, but influx." Man's life at first was a continual, open, and conscious inspiration. It was the spiritual, flowing immediately through him, which originated every action. Now, the inspiration is unconscious and perverted. But all through the ages there have been minds of high order, into whom has consciously descended the influx of the heavens. They have known that their thoughts were not their own, but that they were open to, and swayed by, invisible powers. The pagan poets called these invisible powers gods, or muses. Modern Christian poets, having no theory of inspiration, yet more than half believing it, have used the old formulæ, and put on a pagan dress.

The spiritual man, breathing in the spiritual world, and the natural man, breathing air, make one man on the earth. The two breaths blend, as the spiritual and the material blend. As the spiritual man comes more fully to life, and conquers the natural, the combined respirations will have a preponderance of the spiritual;—but if the spiritual dies back, and the natural governs, there is but sufficient of the spiritual to retain its tenancy of a prison-dwelling in the body.

According to Swedenborg, the deluge was not a flood of water, but yet there was an actual suffocation of the corrupt men of the most ancient church. The suffocation was produced by the closing of some communication, to us unknown, between the spirit and the body, by which the two were before openly and consciously one. We cannot suppose the closing of the communication was a violation of a Divine or Natural law. It must have resulted from the complete perversion in men of the influx from the heavens. A certain portion of the men of the time were able to bear this closure, no doubt because they were grounded in a degree of good which had its operation in an exterior phase of life. They brought out their good into the lowest things of their condition, and therefore they were able to breathe externally, and to live a kind of life before unknown to them. In the first age, men needed no instruction from the external. They were openly, but internally, led from heaven, and lived in heaven. As they declined, doctrines were formed, signified in Enoch, and instruction was necessary. Then, when the flood took place, the external teaching became all-important, because the internal was closed. This is signified by the Ark with its limitations, enclosing all living things. Thus, changes of consciousness and thought were contemporaneous with the changes of breathing.

Swedenborg says that in himself was partially restored this condition of internal respiration. It is evident that his state was greatly different

from that of the men of the Golden Age. When he spoke with spirits in his ordinary condition, he did not use the tacit speech he speaks of, for he sometimes astonished those about him, by holding dialogues with spirits whom they could not see, speaking in a loud tone to them.

The subject of Respiration is one of great range and importance. Swedenborg has merely given some pregnant hints. One inference, however, we may venture upon, which is, that in the future Golden Age, internal respiration will return. This will be the time of "the restitution of all things." If we believe in internal respiration at all, and that it belongs to the normal condition of mankind, we cannot refuse to believe in its future restoration.

This, Mr. Harris affirms, and declares that he has himself entered into the condition spoken of. As I have had frequent opportunities of private intercourse with him, I am satisfied that he possesses a mode of breathing of a nature widely differing from that of any other person I have ever known. The phenomena are so peculiar that I cannot venture on an attempt to describe them. It is only occasionally, when some change of state takes place that this peculiar breathing is manifest, and never in his public ministrations. The breaths are sometimes of an incredible length and volume. But at other times, in states of trance, the breath seems entirely suspended for long periods, as though life had ceased.

Knowing that Dr. J. J. Garth Wilkinson had attended Mr. Harris professionally while he was in London, I wrote to him, when contemplating the present publication, asking him for any information on the subject of Mr. Harris's peculiar states of respiration which he thought proper to give. At the same time I asked him one or two questions respecting the fragment of a Diary of Swedenborg, only lately discovered, written in Swedish, of which he (Dr. W.) has made an English translation for the Rev. A. Clissold, who has presented it to the Swedenborg Society. From previous information respecting this fragment, which consists chiefly of dreams, and bears that name, I had put down two statements, and I asked Dr. W. whether I should be justified in publicly stating them. They were as follows:—

1st. That Swedenborg passed, in 1743—1744, when his spiritual opening commenced, through states such as are described by Wesleyans and other evangelical Christians, as conviction and conversion.

2nd. That the phenomena of respiration described by Swedenborg as his own experience, were of the same kind, but not so perfect or powerful in degree, as those which are apparent in Mr. Harris.

The following are extracts from his reply, dated August 23rd, 1860:—

"The two positions which you affirm with regard to Swedenborg's *Dreams*, are exactly true: this little book contains a record of the pangs of Swedenborg's conviction of sin, and of his conversion. It is evangelical in the best Scriptural, and also in the modern technical sense; and contains, in my opinion, higher truths of faith than the *Doctrine of Faith for the New Jerusalem*, which he afterwards published."—"In fact, these *Dreams* are, *par excellence*, the spiritual record in all Swedenborg's career. All else is science, rising from mathematics to reals, from the world to the body, from the body to the soul, from the soul to heaven, and from heaven to the humanity of the Lord, a process of science with a divine accident of seership, carrying it beyond the mundane sphere. But this little book is influx, and instead of an unsleeping schoolmaster, you see a penitent sinner on his knees.

"During many medical visits to Mr. Harris, it became necessary on one occasion to examine his chest, and I found it was peculiarly formed. At first sight, it appeared weak and contracted; in fact, malformed; great depression about the sternum; and the lower ribs folded in and as it were packed away under each other. This was while the lungs were moving but little. The examination, and direction of his mind to the subject of the lungs, excited the deeper respiration; and now the depressions on the sternum were expanded, the ribs came forth and opened out, and the breast swelled to huge proportions. I never saw such capacity of respiration in any other person; though, as you may conceive, I examine a good many subjects annually on this very point.

"With regard to *internal* respiration I have no experience, and though I listen, and do not reject, I have nothing to do with it short of experience. With regard, however, to respiration or breathing by influx, as distinguished from respiration consentaneous with thought, emotion, passion, or the natural life, it is a phenomenon which I have observed. It is, however, vain to tell of it to persons who know nothing of influx by their own experience.

"It will, in time, be worth while to shew that as words can come into the mind by conscious influx, and as streams of thought can come by conscious influx, so breaths can come by conscious influx; and instead of being consentaneous with thought and the natural man, govern thought and the natural mind, and swell the boundaries of breathing, and therewith all the powers of the body, beyond the limits of mere nature. Of this Mr. Harris is at present a remarkable instance.

"Yours, &c.,

"J. J. GARTH WILKINSON."

It is somewhat remarkable that the biographer of Swedenborg,—the most philosophic student of his writings, and more recently the translator of the newly exhumed diary, which comes at the moment it seemed to be required,—should be the man to examine into the phenomena of respiration in Mr. Harris, and to declare the identity of the two cases. Is there not a providential purpose in this?

But to resume the subject,—I understand the change in Mr. Harris's

respiration commenced from seven to eight years ago,—it was comparatively slight at first,—and has been gradually progressing during the whole time. At first he was unaware of the nature of the phenomena. The peculiar deep breathing alluded to by Dr. W., usually accompanies a change of state, that is, of spiritual locality,—as in passing into or out of a state of trance, or from state to state during trance, or sometimes when in the ordinary condition. With every different internal condition, there is a different mode of breathing, so that the breaths are almost infinitely varied. These particulars I relate from memory, as I have understood them from Mr. H. in conversation.

The inquiry cannot but suggest itself—Has the peculiar formation, even in the bony structure, stated by Dr. W., resulted from the changed respiration?—or has he been prepared from birth, as Swedenborg seems to intimate with regard to himself, for a special office?

It was noticed above that Swedenborg's peculiarity of state, as regards respiration, differed essentially from that which he described as existing in the First Age. The first men had not external respiration, except tacitly. The opening of our present respiration, which took place at the diluvian period, was accompanied by a stoppage of the internal. With Swedenborg both kinds existed. And it can hardly be a question whether the two will not co-exist in the future age. The most ancient people were the infants of the race. Probably the opening of respiration in the external would have been a necessary step in the maturing of mankind, if the fall had not taken place. In that case the external could have been opened, while the internal was still unclosed. The atmospheric respiration brought a descent into the corporeal condition, which is most likely correspondent to that which takes place in individuals when the child passes out of the fairy-land of its infantile fancies to the hard realities of the work-day world. And if this supposition be correct, it is not probable that when internal respiration is restored we shall return again to that pristine state. It is probable rather that the two worlds will both be more fully open to us, in the ripe wisdom of humanity, than either of them has been at any former period.

Some of the worst of the infernals are men that lived on earth and became terrifically corrupt in that early time. Does it not seem, therefore, that the beginning of external respiration was a necessary stage of development of the race? The destruction of some by this opening, and the closing of the internal respiration with the rest, were results of the fall. And, when man is redeemed, he will be replaced in the condition which he ought then to have attained,—that of being in the full consciousness of existence in both worlds at the same time.

A passage already quoted from Swedenborg, as given by Mr. Smithson, seems to favour this view. In *Spiritual Diary*, 2542, he says—"It has been ordained by the Lord from eternity that there should be such an intercourse and communion between men and angels, and also that man, when he has come to his full age, should not know that he is living in the body; and that thus, when the body is rejected, he might immediately enter into heaven." Observe here the words—"when he has come to his full age." The meaning must include the full age, or maturity, of the human race, as well as of the individual. Mr. Smithson, after the words—"should not know," inserts "[when enjoying this intercourse]." This interpolation does not seem necessary to Swedenborg's meaning, which is simply that when man has become fully regenerate, and before he finally leaves this world, he will come into a condition in which the angelic and the natural worlds will be equally present with him. The heavenly intercourse will be constant. The natural will be so penetrated by the spiritual,—so plastic and subordinate to it, that the man will gradually become unconscious of the natural, and be at last translated,—“the body rejected,”—and finally pass entirely into the heavens. Whoever has read in Mr. Harris's "*Arcana of Christianity*" those wonderfully glorious and touching accounts of such translations in the unfallen worlds, will understand at once the meaning of this passage. In short, it will be found necessary to explain many hitherto unexplored portions of Swedenborg's writings by the light of Mr. Harris's books.

But to return;—if both modes of respiration are to co-exist in the future man, we may expect that the external will dominate in the earlier states of the individual, and that the internal respiration will be a gradual progression. Man will begin life from the corporeal, and advance to the spiritual plane.

The co-existence of the two will be the cause, doubtless, of those peculiarities of external breathing already noticed in Swedenborg and in Mr. Harris. It is possible these may not exist in all cases of internal respiration. A suspension of the outward breathing appears to be a kind of necessity of seer-ship. The ordinary condition of life requiring external breathing, necessitates some change unknown by us, to adapt the body to the new conditions of long-suspended respiration, and partial separation of the spiritual from the natural. We cannot suppose the true internal breathing to manifest itself in physical phenomena which can be observed by others. But it may produce manifest changes in the bodily organism, such as are described by Dr. Wilkinson in the case of Mr. Harris. So that we do not suppose those peculiar breathings which are externally

manifest, to be internal respiration, but phenomena shewing the adaptation of the body to internal respiration, and specially necessary to trance and seer-ship. They result from the co-existence of the two respirations.

Mr. Harris says that as there was a great crisis when the first change in breathing took place, so there will be another on the advent of the now impending change,—the complement and counterpart of the deluge. This, he considers, will be the fire-deluge spoken of by the apostles and prophets. Thus the representatives of the baptism of water and the Spirit will be fulfilled in the world's history. The first was not a watery flood, but the lusts and fantasies of the men of that age, choking the spiritual breath by which they lived. The second, he says, will not be an external fiery catastrophe, but the incoming of the Spirit, as a consuming fire, within the very bodies of the wicked. Thus literally with "the breath of His mouth He will slay the wicked." "The sinners in Zion are afraid; terror hath seized the hypocrites. Who among us can abide this devouring fire? who among us can abide these everlasting burnings? He that walketh in justice, and speaketh right things; who despiseth the gain of oppressions; who shaketh his hands from holding a bribe; who stoppeth his ear from the hearing of bloodshed; who shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." (Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15.)* As the deluge was not a destruction of a mass of people all at once by a flood of water, but a death of one by one, as the internal heavenly influx was checked and stopped by passing through organs inverted by lust, and issued in suffocation; so the future crisis will be the letting again into the natural organs of the same heavenly influx, which to the unregenerate will be "a consuming fire."

All heavenly operation in man is inspiration. True love and true faith can only come from the Spirit of God. Earnest prayer is nothing but respiration from and to the heavens. He who has not had moments of devout aspiration, in which he has felt the swell of the celestial influx, has not yet begun the true life of the soul,—he is like the prodigal son, living in a far country, forgetting his father's house, and seeking to feed on the husks of swine. This is the true internal respiration. But it is, in our present ordinary state, separated from the outer life by a discrete degree. The change Mr. Harris speaks of, is a conscious opening of this internal to the external; so that body and soul, now so distinct, shall be united in consciousness and feeling, and man become a unity. This was Swedenborg's condition also; and was, as he tells us, at the base of his openness to both worlds.

Among manifest results of this opening would certainly be a more

* Smithsonian's Translation.

spiritualised condition of the natural life,—a more glowing love and energy,—a clearer and firmer belief,—a suffusion of the whole man with the atmosphere of heaven. And as we reflect on this, we cannot but think that this opening of internal respiration is the most probable solution of the question—How is the New Church to descend? It must consist of men exalted far above our present standard; and how is this higher standard to be attained?

“Internal Respiration” may be looked at in two aspects,—the first, that of the spirit breathing in concert with the heavens; the other, that of a direct intercourse from spiritual into natural. It is every one’s duty and privilege to have the first,—the breathing of holy thoughts, impulses, and prayers. We should see that this is constantly kept in activity. But we need not seek the opening to the external. We may much deceive ourselves. As we cannot “make one hair white or black, or add one cubit to our stature,” we do not observe such changes. We ought to have the same disposition with regard to all things of the body,—striving to keep its health for the sake of use. If the change is to come, it will be an orderly development, as nobler features and superior brain come, from purer tendencies and higher use. The interior life of the church is our want. If we make that our care, its external manifestations will come without our interference, just as the body grows without our knowing how. It is not signs and miracles we require, but a penetration and suffusion of the whole man with the life of heaven. The fewer of mere wonder-manifestations we have, and the better. Nevertheless it may be important that we should be made aware of such a coming change.

VIII.—SWEDENBORG’S “DREAMS.”

Since receiving the letter above quoted from Dr. Wilkinson, I have been favoured with sight of two different translations of this fragment of Swenenborg’s diary. One of them is by Baron Dirkinck Holmfeld. The importance of the document, as a contribution to Swedenborg’s biography, can scarcely be over-estimated. It must necessarily be made public. Dr. Wilkinson’s translation is now in the hands of the Swedenborg Society. If they do not publish it entire, there is no reason why nine-tenths of it should not be published *verbatim*, and a faithful account be given of the rest. What the world wants is truth, and all attempts at concealment will fail. We anxiously wait for the decision of the Society, whose special duty it is to furnish to the world the writings of this herald of the New Jerusalem and first-fruit of the new age.

Having carefully read the "Dreams," I have thought that a brief account of this document may, in the absence of other information, be of interest. It is fragmentary, brief, and sometimes obscure in diction. There is much more of homeliness of feeling than in his other writings, probably because it was written in his mother-tongue. The whole period covered is from July, 1743, to October, 1744; but the larger portion of it is written in the spring of 1744. During the whole time he was engaged in his work *The Animal Kingdom*. But he was also most deeply exercised in mind respecting his spiritual condition. Sometimes he is in a despairing state. He sees himself to be utterly corrupt,—nothing but "stinking carrion," as he phrases it. Fervent prayer brings him to Christ,—and he relies on him for salvation. "Jesus is my best of friends," is his favourite hymn.

During April, 1744, perhaps he passed through his fiercest spiritual struggles. April 3 \times 4 he dreamt he was journeying, he knew not where,—he was driven off. About morning it was shown him where he was going, but it was dark,—and he had gone astray. Then light came, and he saw the way. He awoke, and thoughts came about the first life and the second, and he says—"Methought all is full of grace. Fell a-weeping, because I had not loved at all, but continually had rather angered Him that had led me, and shown me the way that leads at last to the kingdom of grace; and because I had grown unworthy to be taken to grace."

5 \times 6 April.

"Yesterday was the 5th April. I went to God's table. The temptation continued, principally after dinner, till six o'clock, but undefined. It was a feeling of wretchedness, as of final condemnation, and as of being in Hell. Still there was always the hope that the Holy Spirit gave; and power therein, as in Paul. (Rom. v. 5.) The wicked one had power given him to disturb the innermost with many thoughts. At Whitsuntide, after the Lord's Supper, I was exceedingly happy, yet externally in affliction, in quite another way, but strong,—for I was assured of having my sins forgiven, yet I could not at all control my flying thoughts going against my better knowledge; which was the work of the wicked one, through permission. Prayer calmed down these thoughts, and also God's Word. Faith was there in fulness; but confidence and reliance and love seemed to be absent. I went to bed at nine o'clock. The temptation, accompanied with trembling, continued till half-past ten. I then fell into a sleep, in which the whole of my temptation was represented to me, &c."

After this, he says the temptation passed away, and in the warmest terms he expressed his thanks for God's grace which had worked in him to the resistance of the temptation, and then given him all the advantage of the victory; and he then says that in the night he "was in a great life and glory,—in a word, in heaven." It was clear to him at the time,

but afterwards he could give no account of it,—he heard speech that no living human tongue can utter. He then says—"Except for this, I was in a waking state,—like a heavenly *extase* (trance), which is indescribable."

He frequently mentions this state of *extase*, as a common experience. No doubt it is the same state which was afterwards exalted into clear heavenly intercourse. In the same entry in the *Diary*, he speaks of the great happiness it would be to die a martyr's death. Love to God so fills his heart, that it "would be the least possible thing to offer up his life."

6 × 7 April.

He relates a wonderful experience. He first, sitting before his fire in the evening, falls into thought about the conflict of the natural understanding with the things of faith. "He believed, and yet did not believe;"—it is on account of this state of the philosophic mind, he tells us, that the angels showed themselves to shepherds, but never to philosophers. He saw the folly of this unbelief from the natural reason, yet "his faith was by no means firm." The whole of this day he had been influenced by the spirit, which he then found with him, with deep and lovely spiritual thoughts. At ten o'clock he went to bed. Half an hour later he heard a noise under his head, and thought the tempter was leaving him. Then shudderings came from the head downwards, with a noise of thunder. This was repeated several times. Then he slept, and after some hours the same experiences,—shuddering, thundering, and noise as if tempests beat over and shook him. It prostrated him on his face. At this moment he was wide awake, wondered what the meaning of it was. He spoke, but found the words were not his own, but put into his mouth:—

"And oh! Almighty Jesus Christ, that Thou of Thy so great mercy condescendest to come to so great a sinner, make me to be worthy of Thy grace.' I held together my hands," he continues, "and prayed, and there came a hand, and squeezed my hand hard. Then I continued my prayer, and said—'Thou hast promised to take to Thy mercy all sinners;—Thou canst do nothing else than to keep Thy word.' At that moment I sat in His bosom, and saw Him face to face: it was a face of holy mien, and indescribable, and He smiled, so that I believe that His face had indeed been like this when He lived on earth. He spoke to me; asked if I had a clear bill of health. I answered, 'Lord, Thou knowest that better than I.' 'Well, do so,' said He; that is, as I found in my mind it signified 'Love me in reality,' or 'Do as thou hast promised.' God give me grace thereto; I found that it was not in my power. Wakened, with tremblings. Fell again into a state of thought, neither asleep nor awake. Thought, What can this be? Is it Christ, God's Son?"

Then he reasons, and finally comes to the conclusion that it was He,—who had prostrated him, spoken and prayed through him. Then he fell to prayer, for grace [forgiveness] that he had doubted, and afterwards prayed for love, “which,” he says, “is Jesus Christ’s work and none of mine.”

If any one can here take exception to his want of true doctrine in the expression—“Christ, God’s Son,” I cannot envy his state, either of thought or feeling.

He says that during all this period of his temptations he had preternatural sleep,—often he slept ten, eleven, twelve, and even thirteen hours. His dreams, as he records them, were often very commonplace, sometimes grotesque and ludicrous; and to any one else, would seem meaningless. Yet in the most absurd or trivial of them he traces a spiritual significancy. In many instances they are unquestionably impure. He confesses that “love of the other sex has been his strongest passion,” and his chambers of imagery are manifestly tainted. His previous state, however, we cannot judge by our present standard. His times and his position were such as to foster the corruption of every merely natural man to the utmost. But in the bitterness of his soul he now repents of his evils, and he says that by the Divine Mercy this evil tendency is suppressed. In short, he underwent at this period, as far as we can judge, a complete and thorough conversion.

About this time he appears to have been much attracted by the Moravians,—frequently attending their worship. He wished to become one of their community, and offered himself; but they rejected him, apparently because they had not confidence in his sufficient advancement in religious things. When he came to London in 1744, he went to the Moravian chapel, and says it was the very place and people he had seen in vision in Sweden three months previously.

This diary makes it clear that at this period he also passed through such spiritual experiences of vision and impression, that if he had revealed them to any acquaintance as they are here revealed, he would have been looked upon as insane. And unquestionably those who would now set him up as infallible, would have joined in this decision had they been appealed to. To the natural eye, it seems as though the whole foundations of his being were breaking up into chaos.

But, in the words of Dr. Wilkinson (“Life of Swedenborg,” p. 234)—“Were it sure that he was stark mad, it would not dispossess us of one truth or vision in his writings: these would survive the grave of his personal reputation, and bring us back to the ancient faith, that madness, too, has a divine side, and in its natural heedlessness sparkles

with wisdom and prophecy, or even sometimes is interpolated with the directer oracles of God."

If our faith in New Church truths is dependent on our confidence in Swedenborg, or any man, the sooner it is dissolved, as it certainly will some time be, the better for us. But if it is based on our perceptions, and springs from our own life, it will be rather confirmed than shaken by our discovery of the weakness or unreliableness of the human medium.

From Swedenborg's principles, no other conclusion is possible with regard to insanity than that it is the result of openness to infernal spirits. "All evil is insanity," he tells us,—"the hells are nothing but insanities,"—and, as man constantly acts and thinks from spirits, his insanity must be from them. He tells us, long after the period of these "dreams," that spirits have so influenced him that they have moved his hand to commit petty thefts (*Spiritual Diary* 457), and once that he had so great difficulty in restraining himself from committing suicide that he had to hide the knife from himself. (*Spiritual Diary*, 4530.) These experiences were necessary temptations for him, and are recorded in his works for our instruction and benefit. The Gospels invariably attribute madness to evil spirits. Among the ancients this has ever been, and in the East still remains, the prevalent belief. Modern superficial science sees in it only disease of the brain, without asking whence the disease comes, because it meddles not with the cause-world, and is, in the main, unbelieving. But Swedenborg tells us that *all* disease is from the hells. Abundant evidence may be gathered to shew that the insane are often as much open to the spiritual world as is a prophet or seer. Hence it is that openness to the spiritual often leads directly to insanity. This is the very ground of Swedenborg's caution respecting spiritual intercourse, already quoted. In such openness, unless we keep very close to the Lord Himself, and are continually preserved by Him, some form of insanity is sure to overtake us.

This subject is too extensive to enter upon here. It expands before us till it includes the whole problem of life; it embraces all revelation, true and false, and all inspiration and genius.

After reading this diary, one can well understand the deep feeling with which he warns us never to seek to explore spiritual things by "barely natural powers." And through the whole one feels towards Swedenborg a warmer sympathy, a deeper love and reverence, than in reading all his noble theological and philosophical works. His clear, manly, yet simple and childlike truthfulness is almost unparalleled. We feel him to be a noble brother, who has gone before us, and fought life's battle valiantly.

This diary comes at a most critical time. It could not have been understood before, and might have been mischievous. The hand of Providence is equally seen in its preservation and in its long concealment. It is somewhat singular that in the first volume of the "Herald of Light" (1857), Mr. Harris, in speaking of Swedenborg, says it was given him to see him in vision during some of these preliminary states, and his description coincides almost exactly with that which this diary discloses. That account, by Mr. Harris, has excited some of his opponents to use very opprobrious terms respecting him. Now, we have the relation in Swedenborg's own words.

Swedenborg will have to be entirely revised in the light of this document. His biography must be re-written: it is the link hitherto wanting which connects his former with his later states; it shews how the calm philosopher, the courtier and senator, with worldly views, though of religious nature, and with powerful and subtle intellect, passed into the humble "servant of the Lord," the theologian, secluded and devout, caring little for the opinion of the world, even when it pronounced him insane or fanatical, as it generally does its great teachers. I have referred to it because I think it will prove, incontestably, that Swedenborg's peculiar state of openness to the heavens came as the result of his being really born again,—becoming a new man in Christ Jesus. His state of heart changed before his state of head; he was melted down into penitence and humility, and became a converted man. This is the only possible beginning of the New Church in any man.

This document will prove to be iconoclastic. It will break the image which some have already set up. We are fervently thankful for it on this account. If men will have idols, nothing will prevent them; but this will, in the present instance, disintegrate the worshippers, and "confound their language."

IX.—CONCLUSION.

If, in this brief and discursive attempt, I have spoken unkindly, it is unwittingly. If there be any truth whatever in those principles which we term the "heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem," they are a thousand times more important than any denominational interest of ours,—than any position we may occupy in the world. Do we believe them? If we do, the love of them will glow through us,—the truth will shine from us; we shall be "the city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid." The present is not a question of individual character or recognition. The necessity of individual union with God,—conscious and

inmost union,—the continual Divine operation within us, subduing evil,—the efficacy of prayer,—the celestial and unsectarian nature of the church,—and the future open union of the church with the heavens;—these things are the essentials of the New Jerusalem, neglected by us, forgotten by us—not lived, or taught. If we are lovers of Truth and Good, we shall clasp their herald to our hearts, and receive him as a messenger from heaven, because he brings us back to them. If we reject and scorn his message, darkness will come. All new or resuscitated truth is a judgment upon us. If self prevail, we shall look to antecedents, and fear future declensions or extravagances. We shall be very Pharisaic in our dread of worldly condemnation: we shall say—“No good thing can come out of Nazareth;” we shall be very fearful about enthusiasm. No generation is left without its test men and test principles—its judgment truths. If we look for and love the good above all things, we shall embrace the living truth at all risks, and wherever we find it.

In this instance, he who brings the message lives the life he teaches. Refusing worldly wealth, except as he requires it for present wants, declining intercourse even with the world's honoured ones, except where the one end of a living faith is sought, warning against fallacies even when friends have to be alienated by the warning, possessing faculties of poetry and eloquence which might set him on the pinnacle of fame, yet sacrificing them at the shrine of truth, he chooses isolation and obloquy, because his devotion to good is steadfast. Whoever has been privileged to spend hours of private converse with him, knows how his belief lives in all his life. And further, there are phenomena of physical structure and functions, unmistakeable, that appear similar to those manifested in Swedenborg, but even more prominently marked. There can be no self-delusion here. These phenomena are clearly and distinctly connected with his whole life, writings and preaching. If there is any sincerity of belief in Swedenborg,—if we really desire truth,—if we are not actuated by the most wretched bigotry and opposition to truth, we shall enquire into this subject of respiration. Mr. Harris's opponents never allude to it hitherto.

My own conviction is, that this peculiarity of respiration has an intimate connection with his states of thought and feeling. The wonderful power and clearness of his writings, preaching, and conversation result from the more direct and full operation of the spiritual through him. I give this as individual belief, to be taken for what it is worth.

When was it known that a new message from God came through the recognized authorities? Sometimes a prince, sometimes a cowherd—is

called to be a prophet; sometimes a fisherman, sometimes a publican—becomes an apostle, but a priest or a Levite never. Swedenborg did not wear clerical sleeves, as he perceives in one of his “dreams.” God never endorses men’s claims to authority; He does not give the real power of the heavens to earth-ordained men, clothed in their assumed “dignity.” The responsibility of those who handle New Church doctrines is such as has not been before in any church. They may clearly know these things. If they stand on the hollow mockery of authority, and urge their right thence derived, their position is far more to be dreaded than that of any others.

But when was it known that a hierarchy was open to new truths? When did they not resist them and fight against them to the utmost? There is no exception to the universal course of opposition they have offered to progress. Herein is the danger and mischief of external authority. No more in this world’s history, must the church see this terror. The awful incubus is happily gone for ever.

I am perfectly certain that many others than those who have openly and gratefully received Mr. Harris’s message, have felt its power more than they like to acknowledge; but they wait for further developments, fearing something which may make them ashamed. “Have any of the rulers believed?” say they. And some even of the public teachers of New Church doctrines are in the same uncertainty. Is not this worldly wisdom? I urge to no declaration before you are prepared. Be careful, but beware. Are your motives pure? How much weight have your position, worldly prospects, and care for the esteem of friends, in your balancing of evidence?

It is a very small thing to believe or disbelieve in world-souls, fay-souls, a lost planet, or in the habitableness or non-habitableness of suns or planets, or in many things told us by both Swedenborg and Harris; but truth, charity, life or death, heaven or hell, in ourselves, and for ever, are involved in the acceptance or rejection of those vital teachings which we may inmosty perceive to be true, and yet from external motives may persuade ourselves to reject. We have a battle to fight,—a pilgrimage to make. Hosts of foes are without, and traitors are within. The night is far spent,—the morning comes. If we love the night, and seek darkness, blindness and despair will fall upon us,—our foes will hold us captive in an everlasting bondage.

Oh, for purity! Purity of motive,—freedom from our thousand bonds of selfishness, sectarianism, our pet views and projects,—our ties of natural affection and affinity,—our prejudices and idiosyncrasies,—our conceit of our own abilities,—our little pride and ignoble jealousy.

The pure in heart *shall* see God. Do we doubt this? The pure shall know the truth. If we could but see our selfish follies, hate them, and loathe them, and then come to God with an utter humiliation, casting away care for self, wishing only to see and love Him in His Divine Holiness and Truth, what revelations would come to us,—what a divine region we should behold around us,—what a new and firm and hallowing faith would be given. We have not yet known what the New Church is. We have seen but the outside of the Holy City, shining in the distance. Let us ascend the mountain, and breathe that diviner air, and drink in that radiance;—let us enter those pearly gates, and walk those streets of gold, and bathe in the river of living waters, and be healed with the leaves, and eat the fruit, of the Tree of Life. Before the Lamb upon the throne, the Infinitely Holy Innocence and Purity, let us bow, and cast down for ever, as a stone in the depths, all selfhood, individual or collective,—all Babylonish doctrines,—and become as little children. Our worldly wisdom, our subtlety of intellect, will never bring us there. But lowliness and purity of worship will bring down heaven to our hearts, and raise us to the mount of God.