

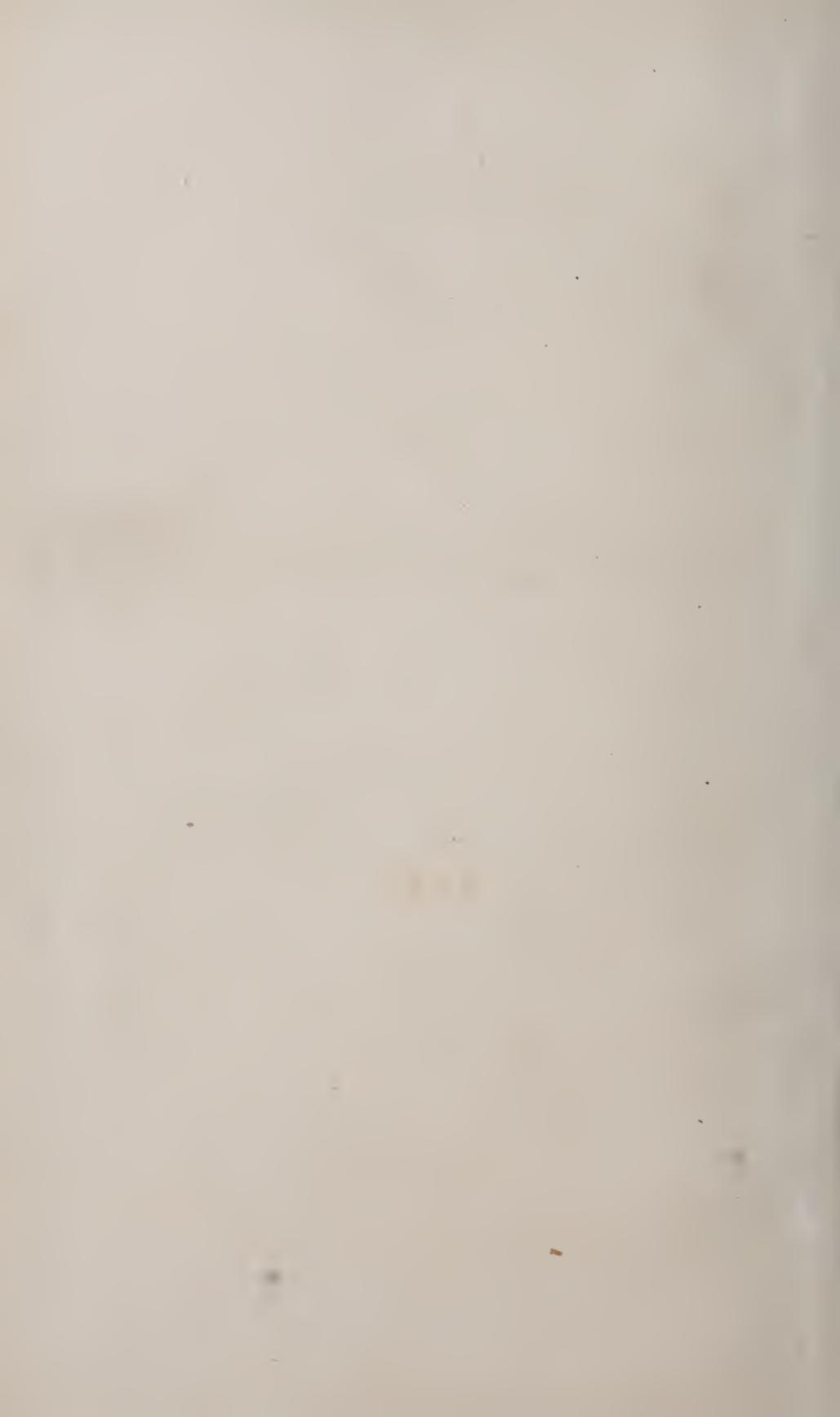
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

[SMITHSONIAN DEPOSIT.]

Chap. BX 8713

Shelf . P 32

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



ESSAYS.

BY

THEOPHILUS PARSONS.
||

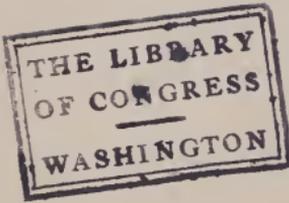
(SECOND SERIES.)

6090.

BOSTON:
CROSBY, NICHOLS, AND COMPANY.

M.DCCC.LVI.

+



BX8713
P32

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by
THEOPHILUS PARSONS,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

CAMBRIDGE:
STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY METCALF AND COMPANY.

CONTENTS.

	Page
THE SEEMING AND THE ACTUAL	1
THE SENSES	49
THE MINISTRY OF SORROW	115
THE SABBATH	149
THE FOUNDATION OF DUTY	215
DEATH AND LIFE	255

NOTE

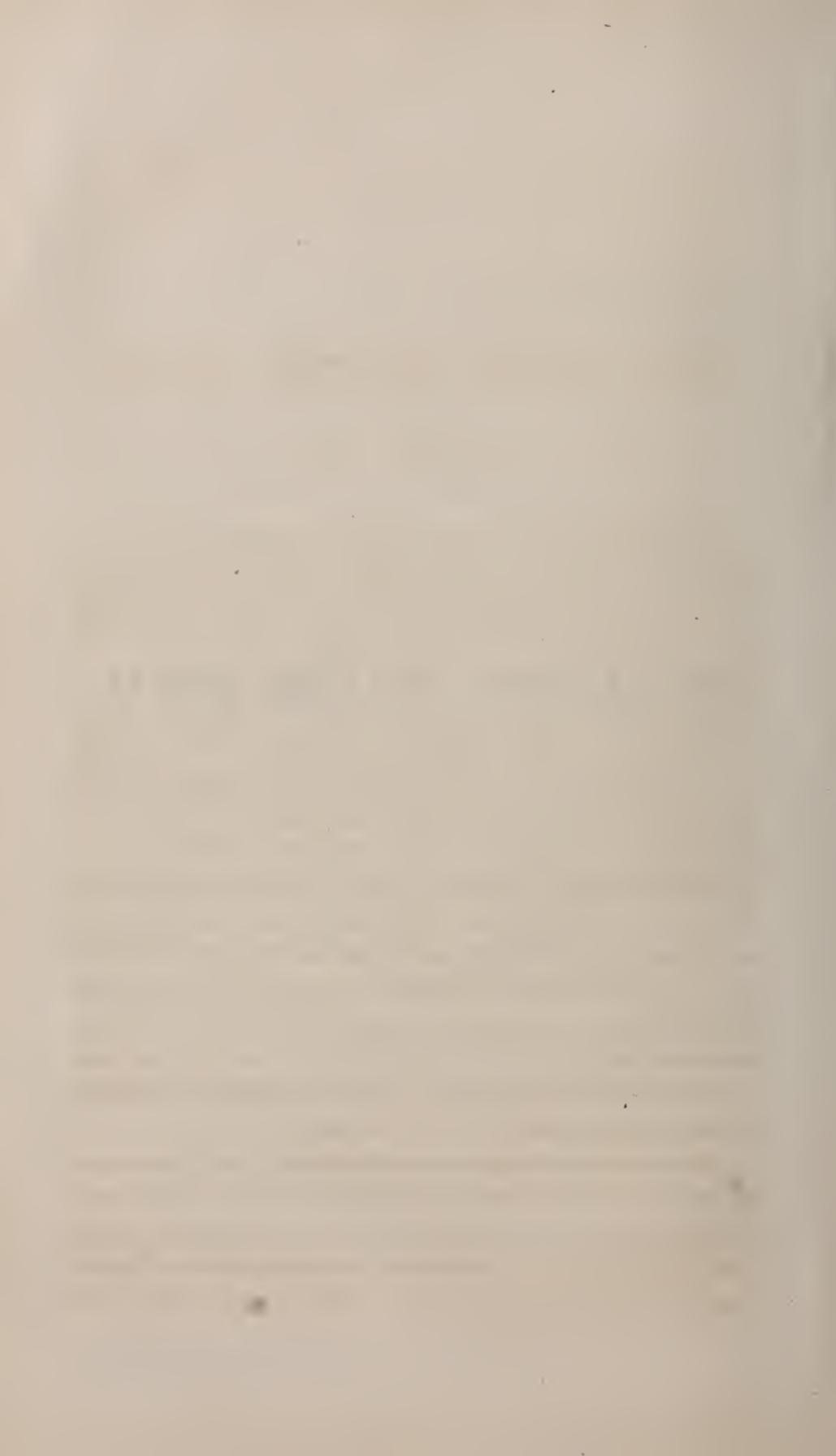
THE first series of my Essays was published ten years ago ; and these have been written at various periods since. They are now published, after a long delay, from a conviction that it is not right to withhold what may do some good, only because it cannot do much.

No systematic exposition of the doctrines of the New Church is attempted in either volume. The topics discussed with more or less fulness in these several essays are distinct and different. They are, however, connected ; and there may seem to be much repetition, to those who do not know the interdependence of the leading doctrines of the Church. That which relates to the universal Father is the centre of all truth ; and other doctrines, as that concerning His Word ; and that concerning Life, which should be governed by His Word ; and that concerning another world in which Life is continued and developed, lie near the centre. Begin where we may, with any topic or any treatment of it, every attempt to present it accurately leads us towards these doctrines, as necessarily as the radii of a circle point towards its centre. Every essay, therefore, contains statements of these doctrines, or allusions to them. It would have been easy to have lessened the appearance of sameness ; but it was thought better to permit all these views to present themselves to the mind of the reader in the same way and in the same connection in which they occurred to the mind of the writer. In one sense there is little repetition ; for the same thing must present a different aspect when seen from a different point of view, or in a different relation. It was indeed thought that it might not be useless thus to exhibit the fact, that all religious truth flows from and returns to these central and universal doctrines ; and to show how either of them, as its face is turned towards one or another distant or particular truth, throws upon it especial illustration, and receives from it new proof and confirmation.

T. P.

CAMBRIDGE, July, 1856.

THE SEEMING AND THE ACTUAL.



THE SEEMING AND THE ACTUAL.

ALL knowledge that the Seeming is not the Actual, is a discovery. The infant sees, hears, touches, and believes. In the beginning of human experience all things are equally true and equally real, and all objects are equally near. The moon is no farther from the cradle than the lamp. Persons born blind have received sight in after years from a surgical operation ; and although they have previously learnt much of the relation of place by the experience of touch and motion, and although the process by which they learn to see things in their right places is usually brief and rapid, this is still a necessary process. With those who are born in possession of all their senses, this same process is so far completed before memory begins, that we have little or no recollection of it, and are seldom conscious of it afterwards. There is, therefore, a certain amount of correction of the Seeming which is common to all men. It is finished in early childhood ; and, while itself forgotten, it becomes thenceforth the basis of all further progress.

This progress continues through life in a great variety of forms. The most ignorant and degraded races — the natives of Australia or Patagonia — acquire, and keep up by transmission through successive generations, some knowledge of the Actual, which lies within the Seeming. As

nations advance in civilization and culture, this knowledge grows, and they grow wiser. Experience accumulates. The observation of a few discovers truth for many. And thus, in various directions, much is learnt so well and so universally, that they who learnt it forget that there was a time when they knew it not. It is difficult to convince an ignorant man that he did not know the relative distances of objects as soon as he could see; that his own child does not know it as soon as its eyes are opened. And there is a great deal of the diversified knowledge which all civilized men possess, which was gradually acquired by earlier generations and gradually learnt by themselves in early life, but which is so certainly possessed that it seems to belong to the constitution of the mind; to have never been learned, but to be seen at once, by all persons of common sense, intuitively and necessarily.

This work of correction goes on constantly, but not rapidly nor universally. And when nicer, more extended, and more patient observation has supplied materials for more profound and far-reaching thought, and wiser and classified results, then what we call Science is born. Between the ordinary knowledge of mankind, and what we mean by Science, there is no sharp dividing-line, — no exact distinction. Science is a later and a riper fruit, and usually springs from the exercise of greater powers of mind; and is, in a greater or a less degree, organized and systematic truth. But when scientific truths are discovered, they gradually become a common possession, and after a while they take their place among the facts of universal cognizance; and at length, perhaps, among those which are thought to be the spontaneous and immediate perceptions of the intellect.

The universal observation of all ages has ascertained that the sun rises from one edge of a wide-spread plain,

and sets at its opposite border. We see and we know that it leaves its eastern bed every morning, and, climbing the sky, passes through the refulgence of noon to evening, and then sinks away into its western concealment. Thousands of years ago, the knowledge that this was not just as it seemed existed, and perhaps this knowledge was never wholly lost; but not until some three centuries since was the actual fact so asserted and so proved as to take a fixed and permanent place in science. The thoughtful man who gave to his age the great truth that the daily and yearly motions of the sun are but an *appearance*, — that it remains the steadfast centre of a great system, while the round earth is ever in motion, and, by its constant revolution, gives to the sun this *seeming*, — this man was arrested and imprisoned by the dominant power of the Christian Church, and compelled to renounce, upon his knees, this heresy. But it is no longer a heresy: it is a proved and certain truth; much modified since Galileo's day, but made certain. Multitudes know it as well as they know the appearance. Greater multitudes do not yet know it; but the truth is gradually diffusing itself, and after a while it will take its place in the mass of universal knowledge.

So, too, in the unresting fluctuation of human life and the transientness of all we love and enjoy, some seek relief against this painful sense of universal and perpetual decay and change, by looking to the "everlasting hills." We see them stand there, catching the first tints that bring the promise of day, or glowing in the sunshine; and as the evening shadow climbs up their sides, we feel that through day and night, and all the days and all the nights, they have stood and will stand, unchanging in a world of change. And so we call them the everlasting hills, and drink in the lesson and the feeling of patient endurance. And now Science has touched them, and they melt away. The

clouds — the fleeting and changeful clouds, their very opposites, giving to the eye a new form, a new tint, a new place, with every new moment — are not more changeful than the hills. The waves of ocean rise and sink rapidly; the waves of the solid globe, more slowly. It is but a question of time. The moments of cloud-changes or of wave-changes must be largely accumulated to make the periods of hill-changes. But so accumulated we know they have been. We know that what we call the steadfast earth has risen and fallen, swelled and subsided, just as much as the ocean that the wind wrinkles into wave and valley, while it obeys through storm and calm the beating of its tidal pulse. But this fact is a recent discovery; as certain as any fact of science; although it is known to a much smaller number than the movement of the planets round the sun, and is much farther from the point where it will be merged in the mass of universal knowledge.

Again: Science has recently put forth an hypothesis, on grounds which sustain it in the judgment of some thinkers of great power, that all the material of the universe, all matter, is resolvable in the last analysis, not into definite atoms, occupying space, but into points of dynamic force. And the possibility is dawning upon philosophy, that the idealism which Berkeley, and some greater than he long ages before he lived, strove to establish, has a foundation in fact, though not that which they supposed; some truth, but not that which they saw; and that further thought and further discovery will give better reasons than have yet been known for believing that all outward and apparent nature is only phenomenal, in so far that it exhibits and consists of force only, and not substance. This is now only conjecture, not yet discovery; although so great a man as Faraday supposes himself able to demonstrate it. But certainly we might venture to say that it is probable, pro-

vided we are at liberty to judge by the *weight* of testimony, and permit them only to be witnesses who have confronted the question, and examined it with all the existing aids of science.

These instances are given to illustrate what seems to be one of the laws of human progress; and more might be given, almost indefinitely; for we should find them wherever there has been progress. Beginning with no knowledge that there is any difference between the Seeming and the Actual, we acquire a knowledge of this difference at a very early stage of our being. It is the first knowledge that we acquire, and the foundation of all the rest. Perhaps, too, the whole progress of each individual through life, of the race through all time, of all men through all eternity, is but the perpetual and progressive growth of this knowledge through all the successive steps of the advance of humanity, and thus an approach towards absolute truth, — an approach which will be eternal, because this truth is always infinitely far from finite comprehension.

Such a law, even if it have not the extent and universality supposed, may still be worth investigation. And when we look upon it, one of the first things which occurs to us is the fact, that at every stage of our progress, stand where we may, we are prone to believe that we have at last reached the solid ground of reality. From all that lies behind us the veil has been lifted: we see that we or our fathers were ignorant or mistaken; that we have gone beyond the positions then occupied; and we readily characterize the whole that *was*, not as truth, but as a way that led to the truth; that is, to the point which we have now reached. Undoubtedly Science looks forward; for it has its aspirations, its hopes, its promises, and its doubts; but even Science, which ought to know that its whole foundation consists of the ill-cemented fragments of past beliefs, —

even Science often assumes that it is now building a foundation which will never need to be shaken to pieces; and is proud of the hope that the future will only raise an ever-growing structure upon this firm basis. If we speak not of science, nor of philosophy, and not of minds which they have opened and illuminated, we find everywhere and always the most profound conviction, that precisely what is now believed to be, is. Sir William Temple says: "When a man has looked about him as far as he can, he concludes there is no more to be seen; when he is at the end of his line, he is at the bottom of the ocean; when he has shot his best, he is sure none ever did or ever can shoot better or beyond it; his own reason he holds to be the certain measure of truth; and his own knowledge, of what is possible in nature." He uses this language reproachfully; and undoubtedly this quality or propensity of the human mind may be carried to excess, and often is so; and then it hinders progress, and fetters thought itself with bands of iron, and brings upon mind that stagnation which is akin to death. So it does great mischief; but this is no more than can be said of every other quality or tendency of our common nature. Which of them all is not liable to excess and abuse, and may not then become the instrument and means of vast mischief? In itself, and in its rightful exercise and influence, this same disposition to plant the foot very firmly on the ground we at that moment occupy, is not bad, but good. Without this, we should live as in a dream; the present would be only an unstable point between infinite uncertainties; the past we know to have been full of error, and if we hope that the future may be full of progress, still, if we looked upon the present as only one more mistake, which will soon join the long procession of discovered fallacies, we could not have each day the energy and interest demanded by that day's duty. Every man, stand where

he will, is in the centre of the sky. Over him and around him the bending dome extends in all directions, as equally as if it were made for him, and from him as its central point. No knowledge prevents this appearance; nor should it; for in one sense it is even physically true. And let him stand where he may, the earth and the sky are his, and made for him; and as completely his for all use that is truly good, as if they were his alone. So, in whatever point of time a man stands, he is in the centre of the two eternities. All that the past has done was for this moment; and from it, as from a new beginning, the future sets forth. And it is right for a man to feel as if the present, and the work he has to do, were all the world to him; so far, at least, as this is needed to give him interest and energy. It is well that we always feel that we stand NOW upon firm ground. And there is a view of this subject which may show us that we are always — or may be always — resting upon a reality.

Appearances are of two kinds; for they come from two sources. There are man's appearances and there are God's appearances. Man sometimes invests truth with falsehood; or what he thinks to be reality with what he knows to be falsity. He wishes to disguise a fact, a feeling, or a thought, and has no means of doing so but by superinducing a veil of falsity; and if we would reach the truth, we can do so only by rending this veil away. We begin by detecting the falsity and calling it by its true name; and we pass, not *through* it, but *from* it, to the truth; from it, and to its opposite. Not so is it with the chain of appearances through which our course lies, as we advance towards that which is absolute truth. For these appearances are God's

work, and not man's. They are forms of truth ; they are truth, but truth accommodated to human perception, to human exigency, to human progress. They are envelopes, successive envelopes, which surround truth, and are themselves formed of modified truth. When, therefore, we rest upon the clear perception of any one of them, be it the outermost and the first which meets the perceptive powers, or one which lies far within and has been reached only by long and laborious efforts and after many successive steps, we may well stand upon it as upon the solid reality of actual truth.

Science has made it certain that the sun is always in the centre of the system, or rather, that the centre of the system is always in the sun, and that its apparent motion is due to the actual motion of the earth. But it is still as true as it ever was, that the sun rises and sets every day ; and that his rising and his setting make the day that summons to labor, and the night that permits repose. The discoveries of Geology only strengthen the idea of the vast permanence of the mountains. There they still stand, planted by Power itself, and still give the idea of power and permanence. There they are, anchored in the rushing stream of time ; and when the mind is tossed upon its waves, and borne by the swift current until the sense of continual change and universal fluctuation threatens to drag it into this unresting whirl,—then we may still “flee to the mountains.” We may look at them as they stand in their steadfast magnificence, and ask them to give us the thought and feeling that there are some great, enduring certainties ; some of the products of the Almighty Will, upon which the tempest and the wave beat in vain. And the answer they give, and always have given, and always will give, makes no discord with the utterance of science ; for that tells only that eternity does not belong to things

outside of the soul. And if the progress of science should hereafter count among the conjectures which it had converted into certainties, the hypothesis that the ultimate atoms of external nature are only forces, and that matter is therefore, in the last analysis, only ultimated power, it would never be the less true, that we have a solid world to stand upon, and a home wherein we may do the work appointed to us. For this certainty would not be shaken, although science should satisfy us that our first conceptions of the nature of the material world were gross and inadequate.

As knowledge grows, we know better the extent of our ignorance. Beyond the boundaries of what is known, there lies the unknown; as these enlarge, so does that; and the more we know, the more we see afar off that we do not know; and the deeper seems the mystery that covers with its clouds the distant unknown. The acquisition and enlargement of knowledge have often been compared to the ascent of a hill; and the comparison may be carried quite far. As one climbs upward, his horizon enlarges. That which before terminated his view, and was seen obscurely, now lies more beneath him, and in full sight. Beyond it spreads a broader field, wholly unseen before. And as he ascends, and his horizon widens and retreats, he not only sees much more of that which he sees dimly because it is at the farthest limit of his vision, but he sees this still more obscurely than he saw before the things which bounded his view and formed a nearer and narrower horizon. It may be so with all increase of knowledge. The perpetual law of its growth may be the continual coming within distincter perception of that which was conjectured rather than known; while all knowledge continually suggests a world of objects without its domain, of which there are yet only very dim intimations and

suppositions, or even not so much as these. Therefore progress may be eternal. We are apt to imagine the highest wisdom as not only bringing the greatest amount within the grasp of certainty, but as leaving the least uncertain. The contrary of this last proposition may be true. The highest created intelligence, that has been growing in wisdom for a time nearest to eternity, may be able to solve all the questions which perplex inferior intellects ; but may also see, along the outermost limits of his own knowledge, a vaster mystery than can be suspected to exist by those who have not ascended so high. The nearer he draws to the Infinite, the better he can measure his distance from that goal which he may ever approach but never reach ; and the more profound will be his sense of the unfathomable depth and measureless extent of truths which lie so far from him, that in an earlier stage of knowledge he could have had no intimation even of their existence. As he grows wiser, he better comprehends eternity, and acquires a more perfect belief in the infinite treasures which eternity cannot exhaust.

It may indeed be said that the increase of knowledge never answers a question of moment without suggesting more and deeper questions than it solves. This may be the law of ages as well as of individuals ; and it may be one evidence of the advanced position occupied at this day by the human mind in the more cultivated portions of our race, that strange questions and startling facts are now presented for consideration, which are deeper in their import and more difficult of solution than those which men have been in the habit of contemplating. And it may not be evidence that an individual partakes of this advance of intellect, that he ignores these questions because he cannot answer them, or denies or despises these facts because they lie beyond the limits of his customary thought, and refuse

to be classed and named and put upon the shelves which have sufficed hitherto to hold all his collections.

We have already said that the Seeming which man puts over the Actual is hypocritical and false; while the Seeming with which God clothes the Actual is itself actual; is truth, but accommodated truth. This being so wherever that which exists presents itself necessarily to human perceptions under an aspect which does not disclose all that lies within, it may be worth inquiry, how much of all existence comes under this law. It may be a question whether there is any part which does not, — whether this be not the universal law of being. Possibly we may come to ask, whether the work of creation be not itself a work of superinducing externals over internals, — of making ever-existing entities progressively apparent and perceptible, — and nothing else.

What is creation? Is it the calling of something into being out of nothingness by an Almighty fiat? This is the first and simplest idea of creation; it is implied in the very word to most minds. This, then, we will assume to be in some sort true. And it must always be and remain true, that whatever is created is then summoned to exist and come forth in a manner and form which never existed before. But this truth is perfectly consistent with the principle, that no thing was ever created out of nothingness. And these two propositions are harmonized into one truth, if we hold that God creates all things from himself; and gives to each thing its own individuality, nature, form, and function.

But how does God create all things from himself? If any one were to say, in the present state of human knowledge, that he understood this fully, and could show it clearly, the utterance of so great a folly would almost require that a sane intellect should listen to him no longer. But it may not be so foolish to say, that we may see this even now as

a very dim and distant truth, and that there are many probable facts, and some certainties, which lead toward this conclusion.

One of these is the universal gradation of being. And this fact is now admitted, and forms the basis of classification in nearly all the kingdoms of visible nature. The gradations are sometimes obscure; their special arrangement, or the scientific inferences to be drawn from them, may be uncertain. It may, for instance, be difficult to decide between some animals, which are the higher, or what standard shall determine precedence. But that there is a chain of being, of which the links all touch, and which ascend from the almost inorganic monad up to man, seems to be an almost inevitable conclusion from facts already known. So, too, of dead matter; there is a gradation from the densest solid to the ether that betrays itself only by retarding a nebulous comet as thin almost as itself; and from this ether we pass to the imponderable fluids, and find gradation in them also. And we find it also in the vegetable world, which, standing between the two kingdoms of dead matter and living animals, draws its own life from the one and then sustains the life of the other.

If now we pass in thought to the spiritual world, we shall find little reason to suppose that all who die are, by that great emancipation, made equal and alike. Probably all who believe in a life after death, believe also that we shall find our spiritual home, as we find our natural home, a "house of many mansions." And without pausing now upon the laws which may be supposed to prevail there, it is enough to say, what none will deny, that men there, as men here, must differ, "as one star differs from another star in glory."

And not this universal gradation only, but one truth at least concerning it, we may assume. For however uncer-

tain it may be where the descending series of beings ends, or however far we may be from knowing on which one of the infinite myriads of existences creative power leaves its last and lowest footstep, we may be sure that its higher extremity, its summit, its beginning, must be God.

We may suppose that the first existence proceeding from God may be that which we should describe, so far as we have words or ideas whereby to describe it, as an atmosphere surrounding him. And if we assume that in him are infinite love and wisdom, we may conclude that these would lead him to give to this, his first work, qualities which would enable it to be the medium by which further creation might go on. It would be the putting forth of his power in a form which would then become the instrument of his power. We have used the word atmosphere, in part because modern science is tending strongly to find in atmospheres the means of all action. It is certain that light is produced by the undulations of one; nearly so, that heat is caused by another; probable, that electric action, in all its vast variety of influence, is connected with another; and suggestions are thrown out from quarters whence even a hint comes with claims to attention, that gravitation may be subject to a similar explanation. This living emanation from the central Divine, call it what we will, may give birth to others, each successive one farther from the other, each adapted to be the parent of lower existences, and the instrument of lower functions. This process may go on until, somewhere, the interval which separates spirit from matter is bridged over, and then the first beginnings of the natural world exist, perhaps in the analogous forms of atmospheres, which, by gradation from the inmost and finest and nearest to spirit, pass outwards and downwards until they become as gross and palpable to sense as air and water. These fluids contain, or may contain, in solution,

all the elements of the material world, for all the metals as salts are soluble ; and from them this world may be formed, leaving these fluids to fill the space and discharge the great duties which belong to them, while the higher atmospheres remain the permanent supports of the world born of them, and their forces and activities penetrate all nature, and fill it with its proper life. If in this way we may suppose the worlds of spirit and of matter created, by a similar gradation we may believe that animated beings are formed. And we may be led, by a belief in the unity of the will and the wisdom which forms them all, to believe also that a strict connection, mutual adaptation, and interdependence must unite them all. Thus, in this world we have spirit and matter. For man's soul is spiritual, and so is whatever belongs to the soul ; but all the kingdoms and powers of nature combine to provide for his soul a fitting dwelling and adequate instruments. When the body of man decays, there is hardly a province of nature to which it does not restore something it had borrowed ; and while it still serves the soul, all of the forces and energies of nature are active in preserving it in the condition in which it may most perfectly respond to the necessities of the soul and obey its behests. And when the soul, or when man as he is a spirit, drops this body and becomes only spiritual, can it be doubted that the world of spirit can supply for him now, a home, a body, organs and senses, and all instruments and means necessary for his activity and happiness, as perfectly adapted to all his wants and powers as this far lower world could do ? Undoubtedly there will be an analogy between these two creations. The spirit, the man, remains the same. However his faculties may grow in strength and scope, they cannot so far change their nature that all that is provided to meet their demands in the one world should be wholly different from that which answers these

demands in the other. So great a change would destroy his individuality ; he could no longer be the same person. He is the same in some respects and different in others ; and all sound logic requires us to believe that so it will be with his body and with his world.

We may not have presented our dim notions of the work of creation intelligibly, or, if we have, they may not be received. But if the principle that no thing is created out of nothing be admitted in any form, and its necessary inference, that God creates all things from himself, be also admitted, the question follows necessarily, Is creation God ? and if not, how is it to be distinguished from him ?

If Pantheism means only that God is in all his works, it is most true ; it states a truth upon which all other truth must rest, and from which all true progress must begin. If Pantheism means that the existing universe in its complex constitutes God, and that there is no other God, then does it declare a falsehood which includes within itself the germs of all untruth, and from which nothing can grow but darkness and delusion. Whatever exists by his will is infinitely distinct from himself. He formed it from that which proceeded from him, and gave to it individual existence. He is in it by his love, which causes each existing thing, dead or living, to tend towards, and as it were desire, a use, a good effect, an harmonious co-operation with all other things. And his love in each thing becomes in each an energy, an active quality, a life, which may be put forth in doing the work appointed for it. He is in it with his wisdom ; and this, whether as received by the understanding of man, and in that become reason, or as in the stone or grain of sand or breath of air, where it is only adaptation to a purpose, guides each thing towards its appointed use. He is in each thing with his power, and this is received in each according to the form of each, and either with the free

will and choice of the recipient, as in the rational man, or without this, as in the lower forms of being, — in all, even the lowest, this power, derived from him and his in its origin, is the power of each thing to do its work. But infinitely above and infinitely distinct from all of these, and from the universe as a whole, is God himself. Flowing forth from himself that all may be created, sending forth life and power into all that is created, distinct from all he also dwells in his own infinity. He fills all being with his presence, and is yet the common centre of all being, towards which all things turn. Dead matter turns to him with its voiceless effort to obey his will by all the myriad activities, only the smallest portion of which we recognize; but all exist by ceaseless tendency to be useful as he bids them be. The animal creation, led by their instincts, follow in the same path. And man, made in his own image, turns to him with obedience, with worship, and with love. And this is true, so far as truth and its offspring, order, prevail throughout creation. It ceases to be true so far as man, (to whom alone freedom is given, and he alone of all the works of God may *voluntarily* obey, worship, and love his Creator and his Lord,) by the abuse of that freedom, turns himself away; and then through him there falls a blight upon the world around him, that it may still be in adaptation to him; that it may become a world for use and discipline, and not a world for use and enjoyment.

Among the startling facts which Science has recently acquired, is one respecting the latent electricity of bodies. Faraday supposes it to be proved, and in the later text-books it is stated as an ascertained fact, that every drop of

water contains within itself electricity enough to destroy many men. The discovery of latent heat, made some years ago, is somewhat akin to this. Now, we would ask two questions. One is, whether it is probable that we have now discovered all and measured all the latent forces within dead matter. Another is, whether it is most probable that this tremendous agent thus locked up within a drop of water *is doing nothing there*. We should answer both of these questions in the negative. We should say it was more probable that we had but entered upon this course of discovery; but we have gone far enough to judge of its direction, to know whither it leads, to admit among rational suppositions, that which tells us that all the great forces of nature are in all nature. In every drop, in every crystal, in every speck that the microscope can only intimate, but not define, lie these great forces. The ethers are there, if in them lie these forces. Describe, name, arrange them as we will, the powers themselves are there in their several degrees. They do not wait until the little becomes by aggregation great; they do not stand without until the mean can grow into a habitation worthy of them. Wherever nature is, there they are. Sometimes we call them latent, or we say they are in their state of repose. If we mean by this repose a peaceful activity, it is well; but probably most persons mean by this that they are doing nothing; stored up in readiness for opportunity; waiting patiently for the time to come when they may act! If we see the lightning leaping to the earth, if before our eyes it dashes a strong tree into fragments, we hear its voice and tremble, and then we say that electricity is active. Is it not, at the least, *as* active, when it holds the drop together, and preserves in its integrity this life-sustaining element? Let it cease for an instant this silent and unnoticed action, — silent and unnoticed only because normal and unimpeded,

and in the next instant, not only would mankind perish, not only would life cease from the earth, but the solid globe itself would be disintegrated and destroyed.

Science has now some acquaintance with the principal forces of nature, some knowledge of the manner and effect of their operation, and of their relation to the condition and the changes of the substances of nature. It is not far from recognizing in all these substances the perpetual presence and action of these forces, and in ascribing to this presence and action the form and quality and function of each substance. We may not yet call this an ascertained fact; but it is a highly probable inference from ascertained facts. It suggests to us the presence in all substances of creative forces and creative atmospheres, one within another, in such wise as to lead to the belief that there is gradation, not only *among* created things, but *in* each created thing. There is to everything an outside and an inside; and when, leaving the outside, we penetrate within, we find within forces and substances, finer, purer, and higher, even to the inmost. We are obliged to use these words, because we have no other; but it is obvious that such words, derived only from place, can express only by analogy the ideas we employ them to convey. But this secondary or analogous meaning is a very plain one. No one doubts what is meant when it is said that the soul is within the body, or that another motive lay within that which some person avows to explain his conduct. For all such purposes we must use words derived from sense; language is full of them. "Right" meant at first only a straight line; "rule" meant only an instrument used to make a straight line, or ascertain whether it was straight. These original meanings are retained; but the secondary and analogical meanings, the *higher* meanings, are now so well established, and in such common use, that most persons

think them primary, and the lower and external meanings secondary. Such words do not come to express these higher ideas arbitrarily, or from the poverty of human language; but because of the actual and universal analogy and correspondence between the things of sense and the things of thought; between the world of matter and the world of spirit. The words accompany the thoughts, as, led by this analogy, they rise from the contemplation of things of the body to those of the spirit.

To return to our subject. If we may assume as probable the existence of this gradation within the substances of nature, within all the things which constitute or belong to the visible creation, we may, led by the analogy and correspondence between the creation cognizable by sense and the creation which belongs to the spirit, suppose that in spiritual things there is the same gradation; in all and each of them, that which is higher and purer lying within the outermost; while the steps of this series lead towards the inmost, which is the highest and purest. From this we may at once infer and comprehend that law of human progress which we have described as requiring us to pass through Seeming after Seeming ever towards the Actual; and also the remark, that these Seemings are themselves in some sort Actual. The inmost of everything is the first emanation from the Divine; it is that sphere of existence which is nearest to himself. If the thing be an intellectual entity, a truth, then is its inmost divine truth; and therefore it is unattainable and incomprehensible by us. But this divine truth clothes itself in successive envelopes, all formed of truth so modified, that at last it is brought within reach even of a humble and feeble human intellect. No genius or great power is needed to apprehend this truth in this lowest form in which it has been, by Divine mercy, brought down within the easy reach of all. But every truth is a

ladder let down from heaven. It rests firmly on the earth; and although its higher steps, even all but those that touch the earth, may be unknown and unsuspected, none the less are they there; and the angels of heaven, the ministers of divine love and wisdom, are always descending and ascending upon them; descending to bring us instruction and light, ascending to bear our minds and thoughts upwards. Even so, and in exact parallelism, every substance in nature contains within it in regular gradation all forces even to its inmost, where is the force just emanating from the Divine,—the Divine love,—which by this gradation can come down and fill the outermost form of the substance with active utility. And thus is creation a present and a perpetual work.

Whether we call it parallelism, or analogy, or correspondence, there is a law of the universe which makes one series of beings answer to another; and this law often comes to the surface, in such wise that it cannot but be seen and acknowledged. Thus, no one in these days proposes an arrangement of the kingdoms of nature in which the series of existences begins with that of man, runs down to its lowest member, and then passing to the highest animal again runs down to the lowest, and then passing to the most perfect vegetable again runs down to the lowest, and then passing to the highest form of inorganic matter once more runs through the series, and ends at last in mud and slime. But all these distinct series, if laid by the side of or over each other, are seen to have a kind of correspondence. The highest of the one answers to the highest of another, the lowest of the one to the lowest of another, and thus their orderly arrangement is into parallel lines, one line higher than the next, and that higher than the next; but with a parallelism of the whole, and of the several parts, which runs through all the series.

This parallelism may be said to be seen very distinctly, and yet very imperfectly; for while there can be no doubt of its existence in general, yet it cannot be followed out in any direction without encountering breaks and apparent inconsistencies. Very many more facts must be accurately known before these chasms can be filled; a much more perfect recognition of the principles of creation must enter into Science before it traces out this analogy with anything like completeness. But upon this path Science has certainly entered.

We may say there is a twofold gradation of being. By degrees of one kind, things of the same class gradually differ, like more or less, greater or smaller, from one extreme to the other; and these we may call continuous degrees. By degrees of the other kind, classes of being are separated, the one class or series being above or below another, and arranged in parallelism with that other; these may be called discrete degrees. Things separated by continuous degrees, do, as it were, run into each other; those separated by discrete degrees, do not. By continuous degrees all things are arranged within their several classes or series; by discrete degrees all classes or series are arranged, one below the other, from highest to lowest. Continuous degrees exist *within* these classes; discrete degrees exist *among* them. From the parallelism between the series which are separated by discrete degrees results an analogy, or correspondence between class and class, or between series and series, and also between individual entities of one class or series, and other entities occupying an analogous position in another class or series.

The greatest and most important of these analogies is that which connects the material and the spiritual worlds, for between these worlds there exists this parallelism. Of this analogy Science knows nothing, for the plain reason

that it knows nothing of the spiritual world: it ignores this world utterly; or it has done so; and if it is beginning to recognize the existence of a spiritual world, this is but the first step in a direction which leads to the extension of this principle of analogy to this spiritual world.

If we believe that God is One, and that the indefinite variety of creation reflects the infinite variety in himself, which is still in him conjoined in perfectly harmonious unity, we might expect to find this parallelism in his works. We might expect that, when, beginning from himself, he creates a world of spirit and a world of matter, and fills these worlds with many series of beings, we should find a similarity and correspondence running through them, due to the unity of their Creator and of his ends and purposes, and due also to his wish that his universe should be harmonious and co-operative, and that all its parts should coexist in mutual adaptation to each other.

The results of this analogy or correspondence are innumerable. One of them will be this, and has already begun to be seen in relation to the natural sciences: it is that a truth discovered in relation to one member of any series, will give instruction and illumination at the analogous points through all the series. Something, though not much of this, exists already, and is recognized. Vastly more will come hereafter. Different men, directed by genius, taste, or circumstance, will apply themselves to different departments of research. Whatever fact any one discovers will no longer be his alone, no longer be communicated to his brethren merely in repayment of what they have seen and told, but will be given to them as a light which they may use. And then any truth discovered in its relation to any one of the great series of beings, will become at once, merely by application and adaptation, a truth in relation to others.

The same thing is true of Science and Religion. Between these also there is parallelism, analogy, and correspondence. Science treats of this world; Religion of the other, and of this only in its relation to the other; and between these two worlds and the things of each there is correspondence. In the future which is now dawning upon mankind, this truth will be recognized, and become operative, and fruitful of vast good. Then, what will be the relation between Science and Religion, what the splendor of the day which will rise upon both. For then will Science labor with tenfold earnestness and tenfold success, because all its discoveries will give new confirmation, illustration, growth, and force to Religion; and Religion, in addition to the inestimable blessings for which she and she alone has ever been, and must ever be, the medium between God and man, will, at every step of her own progress and development, give back to Science new means for orderly and true progress, for sound and healthy development. Then will the moon be as the sun, and the light of the sun will be increased a thousand fold.

If we seek the final cause of creation, we shall find it in the love of God. For it is of the essential nature of love to desire to give to others of its own good; to impart to others its own happiness. For this God creates the inanimate worlds, natural and spiritual; but they, because they are inanimate, cannot receive happiness from him. Therefore they are only instrumental towards the creation, nourishment, and support of animated beings who may receive this gift. To them it is given; all the animals, even the lowest, whose life is almost death, receive being and life

from him that they may be happy; and they are constructed in such varied adaptation to inanimate nature, and this in such adaptation to them, that they live upon it and by means of it with various kinds and degrees of happiness. Here therefore the purpose of creation begins to be accomplished. Only begins, however; for it is possible that created beings of another kind should receive infinitely greater and higher happiness; and the utmost that is possible in this way is that which the love of God desires and his wisdom accomplishes.

This end of the Divine love is reached through the creation of man. For man stands in the centre of the created universe. From the whole circumference converging radii meet in him. Spirit and matter meet in him. All the forces and energies of the material world compose and preserve his material body while he has need of it. All the forces and energies of the spiritual world enter into, compose, and preserve his spirit for ever. He stands in the centre of creation that he may command it all, and possess it all; and not until this is done is his destiny fulfilled. Therefore he begins existence upon the lowest plane of being; he begins to live only a creature of sense, and in utter ignorance. But from this he may go upward, and ascend through an eternity of progress. Therefore all creation is so adjusted and arranged that it offers steps for his progress. We may call these steps, if we will, by a word we have already used, — degrees. However we call them, we mean that all forms of being are connected together by regular gradation. All are in man; at first undeveloped and unknown; each successively awaking as man by his ascent gives to each opportunity for exercise, and materials to work with, and an end to work for. And so man may go for ever upwards, towards that which will for ever remain infinitely above him; at each step of his ascent

seeing more clearly the wisdom of his Father and receiving more of that wisdom into his understanding, while at every step a new glow of love warms his heart, and a new happiness fills it. And so are the great purposes of God accomplished.

To speak of such things, or think of them, while we lie grovelling here, — even to utter such a possibility, — seems to affront our degraded and humiliated nature. The very uttermost that what we call our reason, or what some at least call reason, will admit, is, that a momentary indulgence in this wild fantasy may be pardoned to enthusiasm, but on condition that, before it becomes insanity, it will awake and strive for soberness. And yet reason, if it will but shake off the incrusted slime that binds it to the earth, and begin with the acknowledgment that man and the universe are the work of one God of infinite love and infinite wisdom and infinite power, must see and say that the truth of all this is demonstrable by the severest logic. We do not mean that our argument, our process, is logically certain; very far are we from saying that. But we do say, that the general conclusion is absolutely and demonstrably certain, if only the premises we demand are given; and that where one jot of this conclusion fails or is wanting, it cannot but come from a corresponding failure or want in the recognition of such a God.

Man may begin at the lowest point, and thence ascend; and his ascent will consist of two elements: one, the acquiring a certain degree of knowledge and mastery over the plane on which he stands; the other, the passing from this as a Seeming, as an envelope; and so entering upon a new and higher plane, bearing with him all the light that he has won before. Nor will his course be always regular and uninterrupted, even if it be always upwards; nor will it be always the same. At some periods of this progress,

a new step will be an easy one, bringing with it no great, no startling accession ; and at others, the step will be like one from night to day.

One of these steps from the Seeming towards the Actual is Death. Perhaps no remark of a religious character is made more frequently, than that death discloses the utter nothingness of the things of this world, and that even the contemplation of death takes from them all charm and value, and discloses their worthlessness. And it is well that such things should be said, if death has no better way to rebuke and resist the wrongful love of the world. But there is scarcely a glimmering of truth in this saying. The revelation made by death is of a very different kind. It discloses the inexpressible and inconceivable worth of this life. It teaches him who awakes in the other world with a teachable mind, that all he saw and felt and lived for here, was, in one sense, but a shadow ; but that it was a shadow of a vast reality ; and was in its own truth, in its discipline, in its exact adaptedness to his own spiritual needs, a reality itself. He learns that the world in which he then is, and is to live for ever, causes, fashions, and governs this lower world ; and makes it an image of itself, so clothed, modified, and prepared, that he who begins existence here, and uses this world aright, becomes thereby qualified and enabled to live as God wishes him to live in the world in which he is to abide. When in this world we educate the young for the purpose of qualifying them to do their work as men and women, we endeavor to train them by similar exercises, to accustom them to similar exertions, to form in them similar habits, and so prepare them for the occupations of mature life. We look with sadness and compassion on one of either sex who, when youth has passed, is thrown into the midst of duties and employments unlike anything ever seen or known or tried. And so our

Father educates his children for the other world. He provides for them a school in which there are, if we may so speak, models and resemblances, which may call into exercise the qualities upon which we must depend when we leave this school. In the utter disorder into which the spiritual disorder of man has thrown this lower world and all that belongs to it, there is no rule that is not full of exceptions. But even now it happens not unfrequently, that one who is in heaven finds himself repeating his life on earth. But his life puts on a higher form; he repeats his work, but his work has risen with him, and from natural it has become spiritual. He may have found enjoyment while here in humble uses for the bodily welfare and comfort of his neighbors; but the body encloses the soul, and is the perfect instrument of the soul and of all its senses and faculties, and is made to be this instrument by a correspondence with the soul; therefore all duties and uses which in this world refer to the body, have analogous and corresponding uses in the other world which refer to the soul; and when these lower duties are performed here from a religious sense of duty, they rise in the other world into their corresponding spiritual duties. The same thing is true of all possible occupations upon earth, which are in themselves useful. There are in heaven analogous employments, which are to these what the soul is to the body. No doubt there are many who are liberated by death from distasteful and painful employments, which they leave for ever, and enter upon a life of happiness of an entirely distinct character. But this can only be where these very employments have been permitted to discipline the character and suppress tendencies which could find no entrance into heaven. Happier they who, even from the beginning, pass upward through a series of uses, always suited to them, always ascending with them, putting on as

they rise higher powers and wider expansion, but always the same in their essential nature that they were in their dutiful and useful, happy though humble, life on earth. "Blessed are they who die in the Lord, for . . . their works do follow with them."

Another application of this universal law of the Seeming and the Actual, or of the progress through successive envelopes towards the Actual, which is everywhere the inmost, will help to explain the successive religious dispensations by which God has made himself known to man. Take, for example, the Jewish Church, the Christian Church, and the New Jerusalem. The word given to the Jews was exactly conformed and adapted to the Jewish character; and as this was the lowest among men, so divine truth descended even to their plane, and clothed itself in such forms that even they could receive and acknowledge it. But because it was divine, it not only contained within itself the infinite wisdom of God, but sometimes brings out with a distinctness like that of an unclouded sun, the highest truth, and is thus able to lead any one of that or any age or nation, who is willing to be led, even to the presence of God. The Christian religion rejects nothing of all this; it fulfils the law, but it gives to its words higher meaning, and with this a greater power. And now the New Jerusalem clings to the words of the Jewish Scriptures and the Christian Gospels as to the elements of its life, but again gives to these words a far higher meaning and far greater power.

There is no more important instance of the relation of the Seeming to the Actual, and no more instructive application of the principles which govern and illustrate this relation, than those which are offered to us by the Word of God. They who have any belief whatever that this is something more than the words of man, cannot doubt that

it is in some sense divine ; and that in some way it contains and expresses divine truth. Surely we have no reason to doubt that the word of God is in some analogy with all his other works. They are all results of creative power working through gradation ; through successive forms and means in a connected series. They all, in their external, come into contact with the external senses of man, and supply the wants of his external nature. They all contain within themselves latent forces and energies, and by the ascending series of these, they all communicate with and exist from the inmost and the highest ; or with and from God himself. It is so with his Word ; but in a more specific way, and with far greater intensity. The Scriptures consist of truth ; — of truth clothed with words, and written or printed, and so made accessible to all men. All therefore of the Scriptures, except the words used, and the still more external and mechanical means employed to bring these words before men, is truth ; and it is divine truth. The agency of man is made use of to supply this external. By inspiration he is made to furnish the words ; and by the use of faculties given to him, he is enabled to write and print and publish these words, and translate them from one language to another. We have here an exact dividing line between what is done by God alone, and what is done by him through human agency. But the truth which is so brought down to man is not severed from God. When the sunlight enters into a room, we cannot shut it off from its source, and enclose and retain it for our own use ; by the very act it perishes. Truth is the light of the mind ; what light is to the body, truth is to the soul ; and of the light of the soul, God is the sun ; and this light also would perish if severed from its Source. And if we would know how this light, without leaving the heavens, descends to a plane so low that the lowest of mankind may see it

and walk by it, we must look again at that part of the Word which is brought into existence through human agency.

By inspiration into man, he is made to furnish the words, and not only the words, but the thoughts also which are necessary for the purpose. Divine truth as it exists in itself is inexpressible in human language; but when it becomes human thoughts, these may be expressed in human words. But divine truth no more enters into human thoughts than into human words, until it has been previously fitted by accommodation and adaptation for this purpose. And this is effected by its descent through those who are above man and nearer to God. These are the angels. They also exist in degrees. Some are higher than others, and nearer to God; some are lower than others, and nearer to man. They who are highest and nearest to God, first receive the divine truth which flows from him, and is made by his mercy to fall into forms receivable by them. It enters into their minds and becomes their thoughts and their wisdom; and is thus so far lowered and accommodated that it is receptive by angels lower than the highest; and a similar process goes on through these successive steps of being, until the divine truth has become the thoughts and the wisdom of those in the spiritual world who are lowest among the good and wise there, and nearest to men. In their minds it has become such that it may pass into the minds of men. This is done in two ways. One of these is not inspiration; the other is. By the one way (which is not inspiration) it enters into our understanding, and is given up to our faculties, our individuality, and our freedom, and meets opposing and contrarious influences from below, and then we find it and use it as our own thoughts and our own intelligence; and these are true or false, high or low, as we are, and as

we make them to be. This is "the light which coming into the world enlighteneth every man";* but it is not inspiration. But when God wills, this truth, prepared and accommodated by this descent, but unmingled with falsehood, enters into the understanding of one whom he has chosen for an especial instrument and of whom he takes possession. All opposing influences are suppressed; his own free agency is suspended. He becomes entirely the unresisting instrument of God; and this is true not of his hand only which writes the words, nor of his memory only which supplies the words, but of his understanding also which supplies the thoughts, or, rather, which clothes with its own forms the truths which through this long descent have reached him. And every word and every thought are precisely those which are required to become an external correspondent with the divine truths within. This is inspiration; and it is thus that the Scriptures were written. And one effect of this, which makes the Bible unlike any production of man, is, that the truth it contains is unmingled with its opposite; and another effect is, that the form given to it by the angels, the thoughts which it kindled in their minds, the senses in which they understood it, and truth itself as it exists in God, all are within it. Another effect is, that it is the word of God in the inmost of the highest heavens, and with all the angels of all the heavens, at the same time that it is his word for men on earth. It is divine truth flowing as a living stream, as the river of life, from Him who is life itself, down through all modes and degrees of spiritual existence, to that lowest plane on earth upon which the spirit of man lives while here. And yet another effect is, it is a means of conjoining

* I believe, on good authority, Grotius among others, that the ninth verse of the first chapter of John should be so translated.

earth with heaven, men with angels, all with God. Not merely because it is one stream from one source of which all partake. But because whenever a man, or a child, obeys it here, or even reads it in a reverent and teachable spirit, then is there joy in heaven. For then the life of heaven is, in some degree, more free, more full, more active in its flowing forth for good; it is of the very essence of that life to love chiefly to do good, and it has received one more permission and one more opportunity to be as it would and to act as it would, when through its influence the word of God is used as it should be used. And while man makes himself happier by receiving, in such humble and imperfect measure as he may, this influent truth from heaven, which bears with it somewhat of the blessedness with which it fills the heavens, he at the same time adds to that blessedness. He reacts upon the heavens; and the dwellers there rejoice, as men rejoice in the enlargement of their power and liberty to do that which they most love to do. And thus all the links of this golden chain vibrate in unison.

Within this lowest form of the Word, or its external and literal sense, is divine truth, and all the senses in which this truth is apprehended by all the degrees of created intelligence. They rise one above the other, or rather, they lie one within the other; but all are there. And, excepting always the inmost sense, which is God's alone, there is no inherent impossibility which must prevent man, while here, from comprehending them all. He is not now, as he will be when he takes his place in heaven, in a fixed position. Every angel is perpetually advancing and improving; but always on that plane which has become his as the effect of his life on earth. There he grows in wisdom, in goodness, in usefulness, and in happiness. But as the tree falls, so it lies. There may be eternal progress in understanding any one of the spiritual senses of the Word, for all of them are

infinities ; but there is no such progress in heaven as that of passing from a lower to a higher one ; from the highest plane or degree for which a capacity was opened on earth, to a still higher. While here, we determine where we will be and what we will be hereafter. This we determine by the degree in which our minds are opened here to the reception of divine truth in the understanding and the life. There are those who have treasures of truth offered to them here which they are not ready or not willing to receive ; and to them they are offered in vain. There are others who, by a good life, by resistance to evil in all its forms, by their love to God and to their neighbor, become receptive of far higher truth than any within their reach here ; they live and die in ignorance, it may be in heathen ignorance, even in the midst of Christians ; but their receptivity of the higher forms of truth continues in the other life, and places them where truth of that degree prevails.

The earliest and the principal means by which the human understanding can acquire a knowledge of the spiritual sense of the Word is always that analogy and correspondence of which we have already spoken, which connects together the worlds of spirit and of matter. The literal sense of the Word speaks of the things of the outer and material world ; all of these things exist because something which has a correspondence with them exists in the world of thought and of affection ; and by learning the principles of this correspondence, we may pass from the lower of these worlds to the higher, from the literal sense to the spiritual. Progress in that sense, that is, from the lower spiritual to the higher spiritual and heavenly senses is progress from a Seeming towards an Actual ; progress in wisdom ; and wisdom is not merely intelligence, but intelligence which springs from the love of goodness, and is governed by it. And the growth of this wisdom opens the senses of Scrip-

ture, one after another, as they are needed to give the brighter light which is demanded by the purer and the warmer love. It may, perhaps, be well to repeat in this place what has been elsewhere said, that there are three primary degrees of life in heaven, and of divine truth, and of the senses of the Word. The lowest of these is the natural; for there is an external nature in heaven as there is here, and there are angels whose life does not rise above it; but it is spiritual-natural; and the principle of this lowest heavenly life is obedience. Next above is the spiritual degree of which the governing principle is the love of the neighbor; and above this, and the highest of all, is the true heavenly degree, of which the very life is love to the Lord. Each of these degrees is perfectly discrete, or distinct from the others; each has its appropriate wisdom, or its own appropriate way of viewing all things, — all relations, all truths, all duties; and each derives this wisdom from its own appropriate sense of the Word of God. And enough has been disclosed in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg to give us some knowledge and understanding of these three senses as they exist in many passages of Scripture. Each sense is but a Seeming, if we mean thereby truth accommodated and made apprehensible; for absolute truth or divine truth is incomprehensible by created intellects as it exists in God. Each of these senses is also a Reality; but a reality open to explanation; and the explanation of the literal sense sometimes seems to be a reversal of it.

Thus, in the texts in which God is spoken of as angry, and as a God of vengeance, and the like, that is said which is a truth, but only a truth of appearance; as entirely so as the revolving of the sun around the earth. God is love, and only love. We leave the literal sense but a very short distance before we know, that between him and everything which savors of hatred, or is not perfect love, there is an

absolute antagonism. And then we know, that, as summer passes into winter, and day into night, by a change in the relation of the earth to the sun, and not by a change in the sun itself, so it is our relation to God, and nothing in him, which gives to him the appearance of anger, hatred, or vengeance. We are opposed to him ; we are angry with him ; and we transfer these feelings from ourselves to him. But like all the seeming truths which God causes, this is most useful, and not false. While men are in that state, it is best for them to believe that he is angry with them, for fear may do a useful work where there is no love to do its better work ; and thus even “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” And moreover, it is strictly true, that, while men are in this state of mind, whether in this world or in the other, the action of Divine Providence towards or upon them, from the necessity of coercion and discipline, puts on all the aspect of anger and punishment. The devils believe and tremble. But God himself feels only love towards all in heaven, earth, or hell ; and this love is equal and impartial, because it is always perfect.

The literal sense of Scripture, as a whole, is but a Seeming ; but it is God's Seeming, and therefore it is true ; and it is truth modified and adapted to the wants and capacities of them to whom it is given. But this modification and adaptation are not arbitrary. They are precisely such as to form this literal sense into the very best introduction to the interior senses that infinite wisdom could devise ; in other words, it is perfectly adapted to this purpose. A reverent, religious reception of the literal sense into the understanding, into the affections, and into the life, opens all

for something more. It is this which more than any other thing enables the understanding to comprehend the higher senses ; and it disposes the heart to welcome the higher instruction which responds to its larger wants. There is such a thing as a merely intellectual reception of the higher senses of the Word. But this has no value in itself, and no permanence ; never indeed any value whatever, excepting as it affords a means for purifying and elevating the affections, and improving the life. On the other hand, as we have already intimated, there may be a preparation for a reception of the higher senses, which is attended by no reception of them in this life. The cause of this may be, that the higher truth is not presented here to the mind that would receive it. It may be also, that it is presented, and rejected, through the unfortunate influence of education, or of circumstances, which cover the truth with a veil and distort its features. But, in either case, and always, one thing is certain ; a sincere obedience to the literal sense, an honest and affectionate reception of it, a conformity of the life to its requirements as to the will of God, will open the understanding for a reception of the higher senses, and they will be received, in this world or in the world to come.

All this attempted explanation of the formation of the Word as the means of conjoining man with angels and with God, and of the ascent of man up its several steps, may suggest the objection, that we suppose God to be doing indirectly and circuitously that which might be done by the mere putting forth of his power ; by the fiat of almightiness. Certainly it seems to be open to this objection ; and as certainly every other explanation of the ways of God with man is open to the same objection. If, however, we *know* anything, we know that God acts by means. We may know as well, if we choose to reflect, that he acts by means, because his own perfect blessedness springs from the activity

of infinite benevolence ; from an infinite doing of good ; and he uses all that he creates as the means and instruments of his benevolence. He is able to impart to all — to each in its own degree and after its own form — a measure of his own happiness. For all happiness is from him and is his. The question therefore in respect to any theory of the divine action is, not whether it represents him as acting circuitously and indirectly, but whether it is one which brings together all these means and instruments in universal harmony, and exhibits all as living from and governed by laws of divine order, and as co-operating in the effecting of those great ends of the divine love, of which the very laws of God are but expressions and instruments.

There is such a thing as ascending or advancing in the knowledge of any truth. And as all truths radiate from one centre, they must approach each other as they approach that centre ; and truths which are apparently irreconcilable, draw near, and become consistent and harmonious, by a higher understanding of them. If we take the first and simplest truths of religion, we may find that they seem not merely distinct, but discordant or even opposite ; but when we advance along the paths they point, we shall see them converge. As we go on, we find their conformity, their conjunction, and almost their identity. We find the higher truth that lies within them ; and we find it a reconciling truth, doing the work of peace. Perhaps the simplest of all religious truths is that which commands us to cease to do evil and learn to do well. Whoever begins to obey this command supposes that he does so of himself, and with his own strength and power. But he is told also that this power is not his own ; that it is his only by continual derivation from God, whose strength in him resists evil. We have here two truths, either of which by itself is perfectly intelligible. One, that a man ought always to avoid

and resist evil, because he always has power to do so, and is a free agent therein, and must abide the responsibility of free agency. The other, that he has no power to resist evil, but that strength and disposition to do so are always given to him from God, if he only wishes to receive them ; and that this very wish, which is the condition of his receiving power, is not his own, but God's, and is given him from God. Take the one truth alone, and he is a free agent, and may be good, independently of God. Take the other truth alone, and he is but a machine ; an instrument used and impelled at the pleasure of another. But within and above these two is yet a third, which reconciles and conjoins them, and makes of them but one. This higher truth teaches, that God gives us individuality as the foundation of all further gifts, and then *with* every further gift gives liberty and freedom to use it as a free agent. To understand this truth perfectly we must stand at its source, we must have penetrated to the centre ; and therefore no created intelligence can understand it perfectly. The wisest of the angels of God may always have something more that he may learn of the great mystery which harmonizes the personal freedom of man with the absolute power, the perpetual government of God, making them both perfect. But while the wisest may for ever grow in this wisdom, the humblest may always have their portion of it. Sincere and reverent acts of religious obedience open the heart, and through the heart the mind, to some perception that he who would thus strive to be less a sinner is led and strengthened by the mercy of God, and at the same time is acting with a freedom he never knew before. This perception is even then, dim as it may be, the light of his life ; and it brightens with every step of his progress as he draws nearer to the Source of light. Its radiance shines alike upon the mercy of God, and on his own freedom. Both become clearer

each with the other, as with growing certainty he ascribes his very freedom to the mercy of God. We may at least imagine an angel, one of those who are near his throne, at every moment feeling and rejoicing in the utmost intensity of personal existence, and at the same time enjoying a perception of the government of God over him, of the influence of God within him, of the love of God towards him, and of his own utter nothingness without all these, which fills his heart with a faith that extinguishes all doubt, with a love that casteth out all fear, and with a blessing that is the shadow of the very blessedness of God.

There is yet another religious truth of which we would speak in this connection. We mean that which is expressed by such texts of Scripture as the following, from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and the twenty-second chapter of Luke.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are we healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. For the transgression of my people was he stricken. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; he shall bear their iniquities.”

“And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

In all that is said of our Lord, and in all that he says of himself, we may find the means of illustrating a principle

in conformity to which much of the Word is written ; and which has provided its enemies with the means of cavil and objection, and has not unfrequently given pain to the good, whose enemies within them infested them with falsehood. We refer at once to the apparent conflict between different passages which refer to the same subject, and to the absence of express and definite statement as to most important doctrines. Where the Word speaks of moral precepts, of the rules of life, there is no conflict, no uncertainty, no want of the most absolute precision. He who goes to it to ask what sin he should avoid, what good he should do, need never go away unanswered. But in matters of doctrine it is altogether otherwise. To explain this, we must understand that *in* the Word is all Truth ; and Truth which is *given* to all men. That is not given which is so given that it cannot be received. The Truth therefore is so given in the Word that *all* men may receive it. They who stand on so low a plane of thought, that the higher form of doctrine would be to them but a cloud and a stumbling-block, find that form of it which is adequate to them, and suits their state, their needs, and their capacity. And those who are in a higher and in the highest state of mind, find also the very words which flood their understandings with sunlight. If man were required to combine these apparent opposites, or rather to express these two forms of Truth, he could do so only by saying that in one place which must be denied and renounced by him who ascends to what is said in another. Not so is it with God. He says in one place that which is Truth, but which is a Truth that may serve as the external, as the body, of the higher Truth which is elsewhere expressed. He who reaches only the first, may stop there ; he has made some progress, if he makes no more ; but he who advances beyond this, does not lose it, for he carries it with him.

Thus, in reference to our Lord, there are texts which assert most positively his humanity; which even declare that he is a man like unto ourselves. And then there are other and independent texts, which assert with equal distinctness that he is absolutely one with the Father. And there are no texts which reconcile these *logically*; that is, which give the doctrinal and scientific explanation of their relation. But of such texts as these last, there is no need. They who have received the first aright, and hold the humanity of our Lord aright, or rather not wrongly, do not perhaps go farther, either for assent or denial. Nor could they be led farther by any logical exposition of doctrine with any benefit to themselves. For this would be a very doubtful advantage while they are not able to see it, there where it is. And they who hold his divinity aright have lost nothing of his humanity, but have them both, and with them the reconciling truth which constitutes and discloses their conjunction and their unity. There are those who hold the humanity of our Lord in a sad and wrongful way. They are led to deny utterly all his divinity, by that state of mind and heart which cannot see that all that is truly good must have in it something that is divine. They are unhappy, and must be so. For never, while in that state of mind, can they know what is truly good, or receive any genuine good into their affections or their lives. So, too, there are those who hold to his divinity sadly and wrongfully. For they are led to separate it from his humanity by that state of mind which cannot see that in all that is truly good there must be something which is truly human; something which belongs to essential humanity; something which must belong to a glorified and perfected humanity. They cannot see that the divine clothes itself with the human in us and in our race, in everything which is really good, and for the completion of all its work.

They crucify our Lord anew; and rend his robe from off him and tear it into pieces; and the inner garment which in its perfect unity is without seam, falls not to their lot. They have not one God; but they strive to have three, and therefore they have none. They are unhappy, and must be so. For they are contented with their own goodness, and ask not that the divine should vivify their human nature. They are satisfied with faith alone, without love, and without life; and therefore they will never have more, and even that they have will be taken from them. But let me not be misunderstood. I do not say this of all who hold the doctrines which lead to this conclusion. I hope, and more than hope, for I am sure, that multitudes of them who profess these doctrines, and intellectually perhaps see nothing beyond them, yet love and live beyond them, and are preparing to exchange them for the truth in another stage of being. And to such persons we fear that we may give pain and offence, by seeming to say, that what they hold, and are sure that they hold, as the means of their progress and the foundation of their hope, is only falsity or nothingness. But we trust also, that some at least will understand us better. But to return.

If we regard our Lord as only man, there is no difficulty in understanding the statements which we have cited from the Word as expressing metaphorically a solemn truth; there is no difficulty in believing that he endured great suffering with a perfect patience, to set us an example of self-sacrifice and of unresisting obedience, and so inducing us to practise the same virtues. But when he also says of himself, that he is one with the Father, — “Before the world was, I am,” — that he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, and that all power in heaven and earth is given unto him; and when one of his Apostles says, that in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead, bodily; and

when these and similar texts persuade us that he is God, — then we find it difficult to reconcile this belief with the facts asserted of him in the texts first quoted; for how can God be bruised, and suffer; and bear our iniquities? Nevertheless, both of these things are true. The belief in the texts which tell us how much he suffered for us is essential to the faith of a Christian; so essential, that we find no words with which we could endeavor to express how essential. When this belief passes away, there is no belief, no faith, left. The simplest, most childlike and unquestioning belief of these texts is infinitely better than any theory or any explanation which would reconcile the reason to them at the expense of the slightest portion of the reality of the fact. But when this belief is fixed in the mind, and too deeply rooted there to be shaken or disturbed, then the contemplation of the other fact, that it was God himself who thus took upon himself our miseries that he might take them away from us, only adds to the fervent gratitude, the adoration, and the love, which such infinite goodness should excite within us. And then we may safely begin our approach towards a perception of the truth which harmonizes these two facts. The difficulty which separates them is the difficulty of supposing that God could become man, and that an unchangeable, an omnipotent, and ineffably blessed Being could come down and walk our earth, and bear the buffets of his children, and suffer. But we may get a glimpse of the truth, that we are already men only because God created us of himself and is within us; that humanity is not the image only but the child of divinity; and that in taking our human form and nature, and filling it wholly with himself, there was not so wide a departure from that general law by which the human nature of each of us is created and filled with life, that we have a right to say or to think it is an act

which is of necessity impossible. And when we remember the love of God, and his desire to make us good and therefore happy, and remember also how very much of all that is human is neither good nor happy, but bad and very miserable, and therefore must disappoint the wishes of our Father, we may conclude that all this does not give pleasure to him, but must give that which is the opposite of pleasure, however we may call it. And then it becomes difficult to say that the divine nature must necessarily exclude everything which is not happiness. And possibly, if we know by experience what that parental love is, which, coming from him, and his first in its purity and its infinity, descending from this perfection fills the heart of a parent, we may almost begin to understand that the endurance of suffering for the good of the child may not be incompatible with the divine blessedness. If, from this, we can still go forward, and find some explanatory truth that would teach us *how* our Father by this work of infinite mercy provided infinite means of good to his children, we might begin to see that there is nothing of inconsistency between the fact that our Lord and Saviour was our Heavenly Father, and that other fact, that he took upon himself our nature, and was bruised for our sins. And this explanatory truth is given in these later days, to them who will receive it like manna dropping from Heaven; and it will rise before the rising intellect, and enlarge that it may still fill the swelling heart, so long as Eternity itself expands before expanding Immortality.

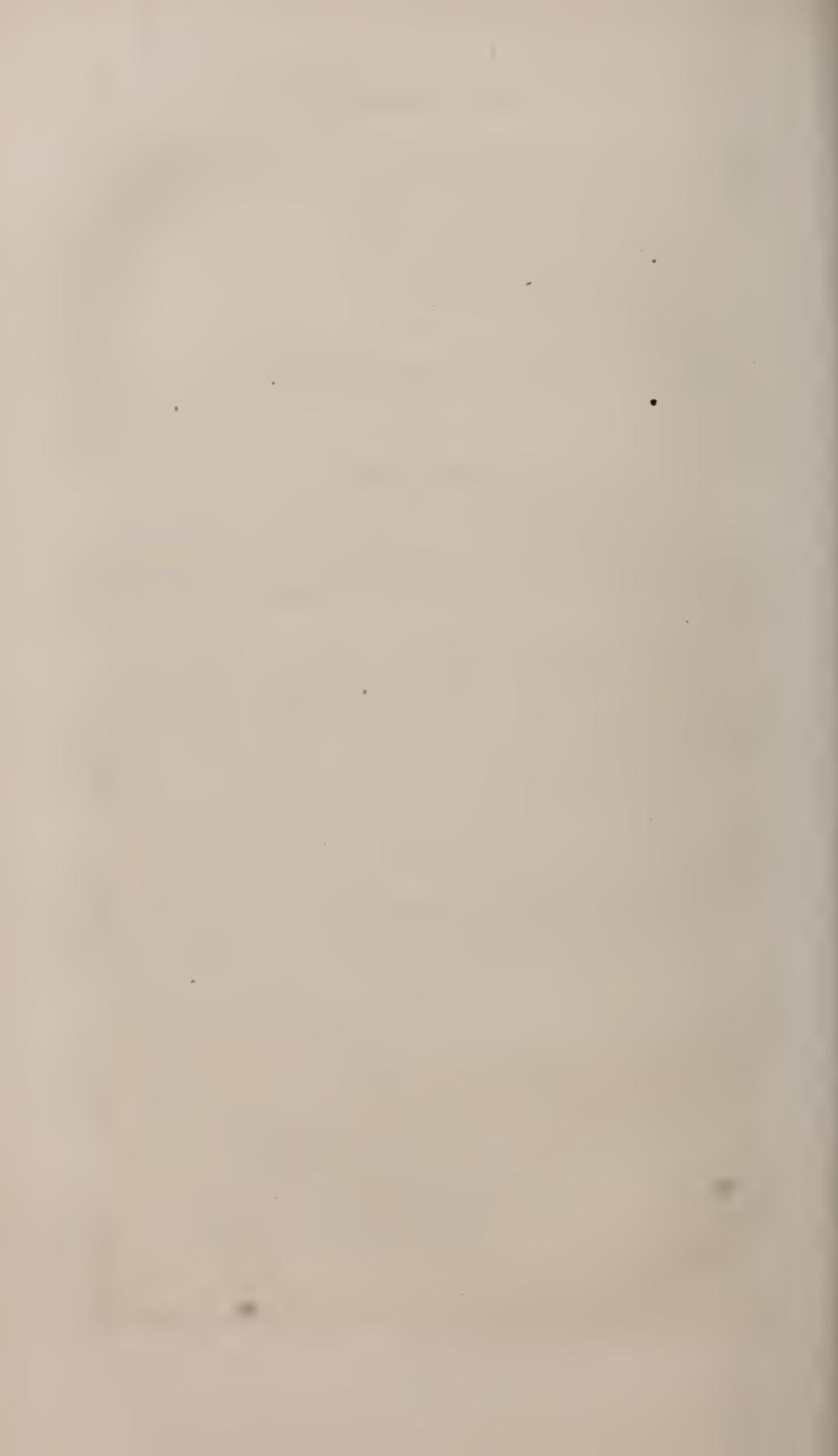
The Seeming and the Actual. Let us understand their relation; let us recognize the universality of the law which

connects them; and let us learn that upon this rests all progress, and the power of progress, and the universal and constant duty of progress; and let us also learn from it that what is without, and what is lower, is the form, and the representative, and should be the gate of entrance to all that is within. Let us know also that our Father in heaven became Emanuel, or God with us, that we, from the low plane on which he stood with us, might rise with him. That he bows the heavens and comes down to us from the moment that we live, — yea, yet earlier, — to give us life. That he comes always in his Love and in his Wisdom, and presents himself in his Word, and in a Creation in which he is, and in which he enwraps his presence with coverings which are very many, and, for the weak eye that cannot bear the light, very dense. “With many parables spake he unto them, and without a parable spake he not unto them.” This is a universal truth and a necessary truth. He cannot speak to men excepting in a parable, and speak intelligibly. The whole external universe is a parable, and it means a spiritual universe. And this again is a parable, and it means God. He himself said, “Thou canst not see my face and live.” And everything between us and him, everything between our own souls and his essential divinity, is but a series of veils which hide his face from us so that we may not be blinded; and at the same time a series of revelations bringing to us all the light we can bear or use. Let them become the very steps and means of our ascent, and with our ascent, they will, one after the other, become more translucent. Through them, Faith, Reason, Science, and Religion will penetrate towards a centre which will always draw them forward, and always reward their progress. And at every step of that progress, Science will the more rejoice in its successful labor as the servant of Religion, and Religion will be more

clearly recognized as the guide and animating spirit of all true science, and as advancing in strict companionship with all advancing truth; and as itself the highest science.

The Seeming and the Actual. By understanding the distinction and the relation between these two, we may acquire an immovable foundation for belief, and most of all for religious belief. The thoughtful man cannot reflect upon the worlds within and without him, and fail to see so much uncertainty, and to see also that the limits and scope of this uncertainty are so uncertain, that doubt begins as soon as thought begins. And doubt goes on, mingled perhaps with fear, possibly exasperated by efforts in a wrong direction, until whatever of belief does not fall away, becomes too often mere opinion, or, at most, a hope. And this is because whatever is presented to the senses or to the intellect is found to be, on the first rigid analysis, Seeming. But then what light breaks upon the mind when it is also found, that this Seeming is God's work, is woven by him of truth, covering, but not wholly concealing, inner truth, which rises by an infinite series even to Him who is himself the Truth. Then belief becomes Faith; and it is the rest, the undisturbed rest, of the mind. Then is Hope strong, cheerful, and fearless. There is no dread of fallacy, no fear of any advance in knowledge; but courage to think, to inquire, to meet the questions which come from every quarter. The dangers and temptations from which we cannot be free while we live on earth, still call, as they ever call, for watchfulness and prayer. But through them all, Faith is steadfast, and Hope assured, and Peace, the angel Peace, even if it be disturbed, flies not away, but hovers near, and soon alights again.

THE SENSES.



THE SENSES.

THE song of triumph which Moses and the children of Israel sang unto the Lord on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, spake their gladness and their gratitude for the deliverance which his hand had wrought. But its tones had scarcely died away, before they began to encounter the terrors and the plagues of the desert. One of these is recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Numbers. At the time of its occurrence, the Israelites were no longer in bondage to Pharaoh. Between them and the land of Egypt lay that sea, which, summoned by the Lord to testify his power and work his vengeance, had stood like a wall on the right hand and the left while the escaping slaves passed through, and then closed over the heads of their oppressors. They were far from Egypt; so far, at least, that they forgot their tasks, their stripes, their wretchedness, and longed for the flesh-pots which had given them strength to toil. The Promised Land lay before them; but it seemed, and it was, still distant. Upon its frontiers were fierce and strong nations; and the land of Edom, which the wanderers could not pass through, lay between. "And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wil-

derness? for there is no bread, neither any water, and our soul loathes this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee. Pray unto the Lord that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

This is a part of the Word of God; and who can look upon it with this belief, — even if it be weakened by whatever theory would seek to explain it away, or lowered down to the very earth by a sensuous apprehension of the divine nature and operation, — without feeling that these words must derive, from their infinite source, more of meaning than meets the eye, more of dignity, worth, and usefulness, than the letter exhibits. This feeling, taking hue and shape from the peculiarities of every mind, cannot but be known to all who read the Scriptures with any sense of their divine origin; and it has expressed itself in the many endeavors to find out this inner meaning. But no one has brought from the deep this pearl of price, and made the treasure his own. Nor was this a work for any man to do, nor was it a work to be done, until it pleased Him who gave his Word to man to give to him also the key to its interior meaning. This key has now been given; given by the disclosure, through Emanuel Swedenborg, of the analogy between the Word and the Works of God.

It is the constant labor of science, and ever has been and

ever must be, to discover what may be called the interior truth of the works of God. Every object in nature offers itself to the senses in a manner appreciable by all; and has also within this appearance secrets that neither the eye nor the touch discloses at once. Man walks through the paths of life, his feet resting upon the earth, and his head lifted towards the sky, rejoicing in powers which subdue all existences to his will. But within him is a wondrous mechanism, of infinite mystery; and science has never rested from its endeavors to fathom this mystery. On a lower scale, and in more simplicity, yet still removed in its inmost secret far beyond finite comprehension, every animal and every plant, every straw that the wind plays with, the dust whose atoms the sporting breeze heaps into masses, and every mote which a casual sunbeam shines upon and reveals, has, within the appearance which the animals and men like animals perceive at a glance and are contented with, texture, principles, and qualities which task inexhaustibly the most careful investigation and the patient thought of the strongest intellects. These things are all the works of God; and will a reasonable mind be surprised to hear, that it is just so with his Word?

It was said that the key to the interior meaning of the Scriptures is to be found in the analogy between the Works and the Word of God. The origin of both is the same. They are brought into being by the same love and wisdom, and for the same purpose. When Infinite Love creates the human race that it may employ itself in blessing them, it creates for them and gives to them the world in which they dwell. And it fills this world with exuberant and living beauty, and forms it into an infinitely varied instrument, which may meet and supply their real wants in all possible states of their earthly existence. It also speaks for them and gives to them its Word; and fills this also with

a beauty higher than the other, as the soul is more than the body, and forms this also into an instrument of infinitely greater and more various power, as it is adapted to purposes of infinitely higher worth. And these its two instruments it links together. Each illuminates the other. They are both vocal; and their tones mingle in a harmony which swells upon the opening ear and opening heart, as man rises towards that Divine Source in whose image they are made. At every step of this infinite ascent, they tell him with a louder and a clearer voice, that both are revelations from him, and revelations of him.

They are linked together. They are connected by the law which makes them the interpreter and exponent of each other. And it is by virtue of this law, that all things of the one correspond to, represent, and indicate the things of the other.

As it is with the investigation of the secret things of nature, so, in the study of the inner senses of the Word, there are some truths which lie upon the surface, and it is easy to discern and comprehend them; while others are more deeply hidden, and are reached only by a longer labor. But the deepest to which we can attain, whether we examine the Works or the Word of God, tell us, as their universal lesson, that within them lie richer treasures, requiring and rewarding further efforts. Every truth, like every living seed, — and seeds are the representatives and correspondents of germinating truths, — has within it qualities which image forth the infinity and eternity of the Universal Father; his infinity by its tendency to multiply itself indefinitely in its progeny, and his eternity by its power to reproduce itself in its kindred by successive evolvments for ever.

It is said that some of the inner truths of the Word lie near the surface, and are easily discerned and comprehended. Thus, that Egypt represents a state of darkness and bond-

age, while the Holy Land signifies a condition of light and freedom, has always been apparent; and although often called an "Oriental metaphor," or by some equally unmeaning name, this resemblance and signification have been known in all ages of the Church, and constantly made use of in homilies and other religious writings.

While this resemblance or analogy is regarded as only a metaphor, it is believed to be true only in general, or at most in a few of the most prominent particulars. Thus, if Egypt is regarded as a state of spiritual bondage, and the Holy Land as one of freedom and elevation, the toilsome journey of the children of Israel from the one land to the other is often held to represent in some obscure way the more toilsome journey from the one state of mind to the other. But they who go farthest in the perception of the analogies of Scripture do not pretend, nor attempt, to see this representation in all the details of this journey. Nor could it be seen there without the help of the science and laws of correspondence.

All men are by nature that which they are not when thoroughly under the influence of religion. The first condition of the mind, in which all must begin, may be called the natural state; the latter, into which religion seeks to lead all, may be called a spiritual state of mind. The natural state of every mind differs from that of every other mind, in the particulars which belong specifically to each person. This is equally true of the spiritual state of mind; and also of the progress, the means, the rapidity, the ease or difficulty of the transition from the former state to the latter. Hence, as to all these three subjects, namely, the

natural state of mind, the spiritual state of mind, and the progress from the one state to the other, there are things proper and peculiar to each individual case; and there are also things which are common to all cases and true of them all. Now these universal truths in respect to the natural condition of the human mind, the ways and means by which the natural man may become a spiritual man, and the condition of the man when he has become spiritual, are contained generally in the inner senses of those parts of the Word which speak of Egypt, of Zion, and of the way from Egypt to Zion. For Egypt represents the natural state, while Zion represents the spiritual state, and the way from Egypt to Zion represents the way from the one state to the other.

Thus it is said, that "the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way." This represents a universal truth. None ever passed by that strait and narrow way without feeling this discouragement. Nor is it difficult to see that this must be so, if we understand that the change from Egypt to Zion, or the change which is called in the New Testament regeneration, implies a change of the whole heart, and of all the dispositions and affections; a change which must be gradual and slow, and is effected by Providence only when the man himself labors earnestly in the same work. When the truths of religion are first distinctly seen in their beauty and their holiness, we think we can never lose sight of them again. The night has passed, and it is forgotten while we are gladdened by the sweet influences of the morning. This quiet has not come upon us without some knowledge of our own state and wants, some struggle against the habits or passions or propensities which we had begun to call by their true name, some internal conflict between the powers of good and evil. But the storm of that time has gone by; the winds no longer rave

or moan around us, the waves are still, and the unruffled waters reflect the heavens and give us the happiness and the promise of Peace.

If this peace were now permanent, we should never know what we were, nor what regeneration means, nor by whom or how it is effected. We are therefore permitted to fall back, not into all the illusions, errors, and sins from which we had escaped, but near enough to them to feel their influence. The dispositions and propensities of an earlier day awake, and they disturb us. We long for those old indulgences which were once habitual; they gratified our senses, or our love of the world, or our love of self; and we remember them well. As yet we stand aloof from them; but our faces are turned thither, and the very distance clothes them in a beauty not their own. And what have we to compare with these pleasures which thus press themselves upon recollection, and stir up passions and desires that slumber has strengthened? Nothing but the MANNA, the simple food which has sustained us thus far; and we "loathe this light bread." What is this Manna?

When the first enthusiasm of reform abates, and the way which leads from the fields of life in which we have found enjoyment seems to open before us like a far-reaching and lifeless desert, we are still enabled to go on for a season; to persevere, to advance even into this desert, by the consciousness that we are doing right; that we have left behind us habits or sins which held us in bondage; that it is good for us to renounce error and evil, come of it what may. The love of truth and of goodness which first set us on this toilsome way, goes with us, and is gratified as we go on; and this is the happiness which sustains us. This is the manna of the desert. It comes from the Lord, and because we are now looking to Him, we can see that it is his gift, — that it comes to us from the heavens. We know that there it is,

as it is called in the Word, "angels' food"; and as the children of Israel called it "Manna," or "What is it?" — because it was wholly new to them, for they had never seen its like before, — so to us it is a new thing, for we knew not its taste while we tarried in Egypt. But after a while this is not enough. It palls upon our taste; we remember the flesh-pots of Egypt, and remember them with longing; and we loathe the light bread which is as yet our only nourishment.

Then, we speak against God and against Moses. We were led from Egypt by the Divine Truth. It found us there, and touched our chains, and they fell. Amid the darkness it shone upon our path to freedom. It pointed out the way by which we might escape for ever; it pointed to the Holy Land, to the city of God upon the mountains of Zion. It went with us, directing our every step, always our leader and our guide. It was for us, the servant of God. It was and is to us what Moses was to the children of Israel; and it is precisely that which Moses represented and denotes. And now we speak against God and against Moses. We complain against the very Truth which we have followed; we complain that it has led us away from all that made our life pleasant and delightful, and has brought us forth to die in a wilderness. There is a promise, that whatsoever we give up for His name's sake, be it never so dear, we shall receive a thousand-fold more, even in this life, *with persecution*. But we feel the persecution, and we forget the promise, or believe its fulfilment to be impossible.

This is the moment of our extremest danger. It is then that fiery serpents bite us, and much people die.

To understand what this means, we must ask of the science of correspondence, what is the relation which exists between man and the lower animals, and learn something

of the characteristic correspondence and representation of the different species.

All things which exist include a mystery, and this is made apparent by the first earnest effort to investigate them. Hence every science gratifies its votaries by the discovery of new truths, and leads them forward by the promise of further revelations, and this it will continue to do for ever. No one of them can ever be completed. And when any seems to be so, it is only to him whose weakened eye refuses to look forward to the light; for as he turns away from it, and measures the narrow domain which past inquiry has won, the infinite then lies behind him, and he believes it is nothing. To him it is nothing; and it has happened more than once in the history of man, that an age has also been thus contented with its inheritance, and believed itself to be complete in wisdom, only because it was satisfied with ignorance. Not so is it with our own age. And it is because this present period is marked by an unprecedented energy of investigation, that difficulties and uncertainties cluster in massy clouds about the termini which all the sciences have reached. Of all of them is this true; and of no one more so than of that which is called Natural History. There has been and there continues to be much endeavor to discover the true relations of animals to each other and to man. Theory after theory is propounded and assailed and defended. The progressive development of Lamarck, the analogies of Cuvier, the circular systems of McLeay and Swainson, all of them have their defenders; and they should have, for all of them, not entirely excepting even that of Lamarck, have some truth. But none of them are established, because they are all fragmentary, isolated, and exclusive. The central truth, which will hereafter attract to itself and rearrange all the scattered and wandering rays of light, is that which places

man in the centre of existence, and makes the life of all lower beings dependent upon and determined by a constant reference to him.

Man is not one among the animals ; for he includes in his own nature the essential elements and characteristics of all of them. While they, on the other hand, taken altogether, compose and represent a whole which is the image of humanity. As they are naturally divided into great classes, which are again divisible into orders, and genera, and species, and indefinitely into individuals no two of whom are or ever were or ever can be precisely alike, so it is with the characteristic qualities of the spirit of man, which these animals represent and live by representing. Let it not be supposed, however, that if we could form, or if there could exist, an animal in the human form, clothed with all the powers analogous to those of humanity scattered among the various tribes which fill the broad realms of nature with life and joy, — such an animal would be a man. Not so. It would be as far from this goal as ever ; as far as the worm we tread upon ; as far as the microscopic creature which the unassisted eye vainly strives to detect. The animal world, regarded as a whole, represents humanity, but not the whole of humanity. It represents only the externals of humanity. Within all that is so represented, far within, and far elevated above our consciousness, — light and life, from the central source of life, from God, impart to human nature what exists nowhere else. Descending from its original elevation, coming forth from this inmost sanctuary, it descends and reaches and fills the consciousness of man. It forms his Reason. It becomes that faculty in him, which employs all his faculties as animals cannot employ theirs, and uses all that these faculties disclose or give as they cannot, and utters a promise which they cannot hear, and gives a happiness they

cannot receive. It makes him immortal ; and it becomes and gives that faculty which may make of all his lower nature, a means of an immortality of happiness.

From the first moment when men began to inquire into the difference between them and the animal world, it has been a constant difficulty to define this difference in respect to the intellectual powers. That there is a difference is a palpable fact ; not to be denied or doubted ; but when men endeavor to define this difference, they find the work not very easy. All are familiar with the epithet of " half-reasoning," applied to some creatures who seem almost to imitate man, as if in mockery of their sovereign ; and may have thought the phrase fully justified by known instances of design and sagacity. Nor is it merely that they imitate us closely ; for how much is there which they do with easy and spontaneous perfection, while we could accomplish it, if at all, only after careful training and many efforts ! Long would it be, before we could make a bird's-nest. The butterfly, who never knew its parent, lays its eggs with unerring accuracy only upon the very tree whose foliage will give food to the offspring that the parent can never know. The honey-bee constructs his cell and joins the opposite cells together in a manner so admirably fitted to save space and give strength, that it has required the application of the highest mathematics to investigate and determine this perfection. The bee has built his cell always just so ; but only within a few years has the human mind advanced sufficiently in the appropriate science, to be able to perceive and measure and demonstrate this wonderful result. At the beginning of insect life, this busy little creature thus offered to the mind of man a profound problem ; and ages must pass away before that mind could lay hold upon the problem, and great and long-continued efforts must be made before it could be resolved, and doubtless it includes a

mass of wisdom which will lie latent for ages to come. We say it was Instinct which taught the bee to work this wonder; but what do we mean by Instinct? The word has been long known; and the question of its meaning has often been asked; and many and earnest have been the endeavors of thoughtful men to answer it, — many and earnest, but never successful. The world knows no more now what Instinct means than when the question was first asked, and the wisest can answer the question no better than the most ignorant. And yet, if I mistake not, the doctrines of the New Church have at length met this question with an answer that is clear and certain. At this time I can only suggest this answer.

Paradoxical as it may seem to those unacquainted with these doctrines, it is nevertheless true, that the cause why men could never resolve this question, and explain the nature of Animal Instinct, was a *moral cause*.

Their difficulty arose from the constant habit of appropriating to themselves what belongs to God, and thus permitting self-conceit to close their eyes.

The New Church, among its first, most essential, and fundamental truths, asserts that God alone has in himself Life and Love and Wisdom; and that wherever these exist, whatever be their measure, form, or manifestation, they are all from him and are his. It also asserts, that they are all infinites, composed of infinites, in him; and as they flow forth into beings which are fitting vessels to receive them, they are exquisitely adapted to each one of them, so that every being receives and has the life that is exactly appropriate to his own form, and the love and the wisdom which are required for his needs and uses, while these in all their variety have but one source, or rather are but one Life, one Love, one Wisdom. If we accept these truths honestly, and take them with us to the investigation of instinct, we shall find little difficulty there.

When Koenig, an eminent mathematician, successfully applied his subtle analysis to the form of the bee's cell, whose was the wisdom which solved this difficult problem? He thought it was his own, and the world thought so too; and he honored himself, and the world honored him accordingly. That the little insect should practically work out a problem which no man before him had comprehended, seemed to him a mystery indeed. For he did not know that the very same wisdom which through his mind had solved that problem, had previously entered into the bee, and, adapting itself to his formation and functions, through that form had built that cell. And just so it is with every instance of instinct.

The same infinite wisdom descends into the dead earth, and fills and moves the materials which are there, acting upon and in and through each subject in exact accordance with its internal form and purpose and function; and crystallization begins its wondrous work, and the diamond and the ruby assume their invariable structure and their radiant beauty; and, in utter ignorance of its true origin and nature, men speculate about this power, and call it one of the forces of dead matter. It enters into the seed, and again, working through its internal form, bids the root descend and search out its nutriment, and the stem rise into air and clothe itself with leaves and ripen its fruit; and again, with the same ignorance, we speculate about it, and this time we rank it among the living forces of organic matter. It enters into the animal, and here also exquisitely adapting itself to his form, which it has already adapted to his uses, it teaches him from birth to find or construct and use all that he needs for shelter, food, and the propagation of his kind, and all the happiness he can enjoy; and again we speculate about it, and this time we call it Instinct. It enters into man, into his understanding, which is

a far higher form than any which it found and filled in the lower realms of being; and because this is in him, and made his, and works through him, he may, if he will, go forth and investigate all that it has done in the inferior world around him, and mark and measure its traces, even while he is most blind to its origin. And now again we speculate about it; it does not occur to us that there can be any relation whatever between its present and its former manifestations; and we give to it now the name of man's own Reason.

What, then, is the distinctive difference between Reason and Instinct? We ask this question in vain, if we look at them in their source, or in their own original and essential nature; for there they are one and the same. But we may ask the question with better success, if we look at the distinctive differences between the functions, uses, and destinies of animals and men. We shall see that the animal, born to perish, cannot profit by the discipline and exercise and gradual development of his faculties, and the discovery of his mistakes, and the voluntary change from wrong to right; and he has therefore none of these things. The Divine Wisdom, as it constitutes and fills his mind, so constitutes that mind, and through it his external and internal organization, and so fills and acts through this organization, that it makes him to do at once, and always, and with an accuracy which is never learnt and never forgotten, all that is necessary for the use he has to perform and the good he may enjoy.

Not so is it with man. He lives in this world for the very purpose of discipline. He is not born to perish; but for objects which are to be accomplished by the gradual growth and the voluntary improvement of his mind and character, and the successive evolution of his faculties, and their slow ripening under his own culture. He is therefore

so constructed, spiritually and materially, that the Divine Wisdom, filling his understanding, adapting itself to the internal form of that understanding, and ever so working through it and in conformity with it that man may work as of himself, comes forth and manifests itself as man's Reason. Not complete and limited at once as instinct is, but while feeble in its beginnings, uncertain in its action, slow in its advance and improvement, it has before it a boundless future, which it will never measure nor fill, only because it will always remain, in man, finite.

I should not have ventured to throw out these slight intimations of the solution which a new church offers of an old and a great problem, did I not suppose that this solution is itself so certain and so clear, that, if I have not failed to express these intimations intelligibly, they will suffice to lead the mind which examines into their bearing and effect, to an understanding of the true difference between the animal that perishes and the man that lives. Nor shall we lose, by this explanation, anything of the delight with which a thoughtful mind observes and investigates what are called the wonders of animal instinct. If we can strengthen and illustrate our recognition of the omnipresence of our Father, of the unity of his creation, of the mutual interdependence and correlation of all its parts, we shall lose nothing, and we shall gain much.

If we see that the whole animal world consists of forms which are receptive of life from the same source that fills the mind of man, let us arrange these forms in reference to those passages of Scripture which have suggested these remarks.

The general distinctions among animals are obvious and indisputable, and have always been recognized. Thus, there are some whose home is in the air; others live in the waters, and there only; and of those which are confined to the solid land, some walk upon it, lifted from its surface by

appropriate limbs, while others creep or crawl upon the ground and touch it for ever. These last are the reptiles; so called from a Latin word which signifies "to creep." Although this class includes, in systematic natural history, many animals which are not serpents, yet he, the SERPENT, may be regarded as the type and the generic name of the whole.

We must pass over the families of birds and insects, of fishes and beasts, as involving considerations not now appropriate. But what is the correspondence of the serpent? In other words, what are the faculties and qualities of the human mind to which the organization of the serpent is analogous, and which, through that organization, manifest themselves as the instinct of the serpent?

Man lives in and upon and by means of an external world. There is his home; from it he procures the food by which his body and his mind live, for it yields him all the food of his body and the beginnings and foundation of all the food of his mind. Because this is so, man is endowed with faculties, bodily and mental, to recognize and make use of this external world. He may cultivate its soil, and it will bring forth food to sustain life and delight his sense of taste. He may build upon it and of the materials which it offers, a house which will shelter him and his from sun and storm and night, and be his home; and it also provides him with the means of procuring raiment, at once for his comfort and his adornment. Its relation to the mind is equally important; for as his senses open upon this world he may derive from its infinite variety of objects a boundless wealth and unending succession of thoughts and truths. Here is the necessary beginning of all knowledge; it is here that our thoughts put on their bodies and are born; here our words are made.

While man is thus employed in gathering in the fruits of

the external world, in acquiring or constructing from it the means of food, clothing, and shelter for his body, or in collecting and arranging the rudiments of thought and knowledge, he is using a variety of faculties, all of which, taken together, constitute his *sensuous nature*, and may be comprehended under that name. This sensuous nature is always in close contact with the external world; in and by this contact it lives. And it is precisely this whole sensuous nature which the great family of Reptilia, or the serpent tribe, corresponds to and denotes.

Man has, as was before suggested, other powers; and by them he may do other and very different things. He may walk erect upon that earth which forms the external of his mind, and lift his thoughts above it; he may dive into the great ocean of natural truth, and explore its deepest recesses; he may soar into the upper regions of a purer and more luminous intellectuality; and in so doing he may use the various faculties, represented by different classes of animals. But none of these things can his sensuous nature do; none of these things could the man do if he had no other than a sensuous nature; none of these things can he do by means of his sensuous nature; and therefore the bodily faculties and habits analogous to these things are not those proper to that tribe of animals which corresponds to and represents that sensuous nature; for upon them the doom is spoken, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

It will be obvious, upon a very little reflection, that the serpent of our sensuous nature may bite us in two ways; for we have understanding and will, and to both of

these this serpent has access ; or, in other words, our sensuous nature appeals in one way to our understanding and in another way to our affections.

The serpent of our minds, or that sensuous nature which the serpent represents, bites us in the first of these ways, and pours his deadly venom into the understanding, when he makes us believe that there is nothing else than that external world which our sensuous nature perceives and uses. It is often very easy for him to do this. The external world we have, and we know that we have it. That which we can see and hear, touch and feel, certainly exists. We recognize it, we make it our own. We measure its dimensions, we investigate its qualities and effects. We bring science to bear upon it, and search into its hidden nature, and place it in orderly arrangement, or connect it with daily use. If our tastes lead in that direction, we may luxuriate in the delightful contemplation of the great laws and truths which bind together all matter, in all its forms and all its activities. Far otherwise is it with spiritual existences. We ask, Who will come from the grave and assure us that a world of life lies beyond that broad, black veil? — and we ask the question in the mistaken belief, that, if one would come and tell us this, we should believe him. Who has brought us a piece of spiritual substance, that we might hold it in the hand, and measure it by the rule, and weigh it in scales? Where is the accurate and intelligible science whose home is in the realms of mind and feeling, — the science that has climbed the ascending steps of demonstration even to the height of spiritual being, and brought thence unquestionable gains? What shall prove to us that the busy world around us, in which we are so busy, and in whose loveliness we find so much to love, is not all that is? Often, very often, are men persuaded that the be-all and the end-all are indeed here ; and this is the serpent's work. It

is then that the senses delude the understanding ; then, that the serpent bites.

“Now the serpent is more subtle than any beast of the field ” ; and his work is accomplished while we know it not. The venom is in our hearts, and the stealthy step of death is near, although we felt no sting, and perhaps should be somewhat angry with the physician who ventured to point out the wound. Are we infidels? would be the reproachful answer. Were we not born and bred in a Christian land? Do we not believe as our neighbors believe, and as we were taught to believe? Such would be the response ; and yet some doubt might exist on the subject ; and as it is of some importance to every individual to know whether he too be sound or stricken, it is well that we have a test not difficult in its application, and very reliable in its information. This test we have, in the fact that an actual belief in spiritual existence, in a supersensuous world, in a life really and truly succeeding death, produces a class of thoughts and feelings, of interests, purposes, and pursuits, wholly different from those which accompany unbelief. There are some things common to both of these states of mind. In either of them we may lead a lawful, orderly, and useful life. In either of them we may call ourselves by the name of Christian, and contribute our share to the support of the particular tenets we favor, and, resting from our labors on the day of rest, help to swell the multitudes who listen in all the churches of our land to words of prayer and praise. All these things we may be and do, from habit or education, or from a sense of propriety, or from a conviction that this is the easiest way to live in comfort, or from a deep sense of the advantages which in this community wait upon a decent respect for religion ; or because we really think we are religious, and are well content to pay this price for the pleasure and quiet of believing so.

All these things we may be and do, with very little genuine belief in the reality or the utility and worth of spiritual things. But there are some other things which we cannot so do. We cannot carry with us through the week of labor, and keep before us amid all the anxieties of a busy thrift or of domestic care, the one great purpose of growth in goodness, as a perpetual light, which no darkness is permitted to obscure, no whirlwind of care extinguish, no intervening interest or pleasure hide. When death is near, or has stricken down one who is dear to us, we cannot see that this blow falls not on us, but on our fetters, and that the call which fills the world with mourning and with terror is but a summons unto life. We are placed in this world to prepare for another; but if all religion so declares, how much is there of human life which negatives this truth. If we would learn how large a proportion of our own life implies this denial, how much of it makes manifest the influence of the serpent, the way to this knowledge lies open before us. We have but to ask ourselves what part of our thoughts and cares, of the common and habitual interests, purposes, and pleasures which fill up every day, would be just what they now are if the grave were to close them all; and in what proportion of them the thought and purpose of preparation for a world beyond the grave are cognizable and influential.

Hitherto I have spoken only of opinion and belief; but there is yet another way in which the serpent bites us; for man is not *merely* a thinking being. His Father thinks, intends, designs; and hence man, his child, has understanding and thought. But the thoughts and purposes of the Almighty do themselves spring from another element of his own divine nature: from his love. For he not only thinks, but he wills: he loves. Because it is of the nature and essence of love to give of itself to another, he creates man to become the recipient of both of these elements of his

divine nature. He creates man with a capacity of receiving of his own divine wisdom; and this capacity is man's understanding, into which the divine wisdom flows, and, being there modified and accommodated to man's own nature, becomes man's own thoughts. He also creates man with a capacity of receiving his love; and this capacity is man's will, into which the divine love flows, and, being there similarly modified and accommodated, becomes man's own love, or desires, or affections. Now the external or sensuous nature of man, which the serpent tribe typifies, belongs to both of these capacities; and is the instrument, the servant, of both of them alike. It is their servant for good or their servant for evil. We have seen how this sensuous nature becomes a serpent, stinging the mind, the thoughts, the understanding. Let us now see how he pours his "fiery" venom into the affections, the will, the heart.

Here too, as before, we must begin with looking at the good which the sensuous nature may do, in relation to the will. For as all falsity is but a negation or a corruption of the truth, so all evil is but a perversion or abuse of good.

As the sensuous part of our nature supplies the understanding, by means of sensations, with all the elements of thought, so it supplies the will, by means of sensations, with the earliest and simplest objects of desire or aversion. There, on these outermost borders of our being, where we learn to think, we learn also to feel, to enjoy, to suffer; to seek after that which gives us pleasure, to shrink from that which inflicts pain. As, in the relation of the understanding to sensation, the mind should soon rise above mere sensation, and use the materials which sensation supplies as food and means of higher thought, so also is it in the relation of the will or the affections to sensation. For they also should soon rise above this lowest plane, and find other

things to love or hate ; other pleasures and other pains, above those of the senses. Still, through the periods of a never-ending life, the senses remain a basis for the will as for the understanding. They instruct us continually. It is one of the general laws or truths of our being, that pain is associated with the things we should not do, while pleasure is closely connected with the things we should do. The irrational habits and corrupted tastes of customary life weaken the efficacy of this law, and sometimes indeed reverse it ; but that is because evil has falsified the truth. The pleasures of the senses prompt us to those acts which are necessary for the preservation of life and strength and usefulness, while the pains of hunger, of exposure, and of sickness work in unison with those pleasures, by inducing acts or efforts to restore and preserve our health ; and there are yet other pains, as all of those that follow intemperance and excess of any kind, whose office it is to guard the narrow passage where wholesome pleasure passes over into lawless indulgence.

Such is the proper influence and effect of the pains and pleasures of the senses. But it would not be well for man that they should always be ready with their unerring guidance, for then they would supersede that employment of the reason, that discipline of self-control, that wakefulness and energy of conscience, which are necessary for man's growth in goodness and in wisdom. Therefore they often fail. Often, their true and permanent result, in a pleasure which rewards good conduct or a pain which punishes demerit, is remote, while a false and transient pain or pleasure, near at hand, seduces or terrifies us into misconduct.

We have in this one of the many examples of that providential mercy which causes evil to bring with it its remedy. When and so far as we are irrational, or subdued by sense or lust, what we need for thorough reformation is not the

compulsory instruction or restraint which would come irresistibly if all pleasure withered at the touch of sin, and pain guarded the way to sin as with a fiery sword. We need the means and opportunity of becoming rational by listening of our own choice to reason while it rebukes habit or passion, and of giving up the pleasures which entice and ensnare us, because we hear the voice of truth and of religion bidding us renounce them. We are in the condition in which we need self-discipline ; only by it, only by overcoming our own evil love, and voluntarily abandoning the thing we desire, can we make the tempter flee, and establish in our minds those affections which belong to regenerate and purified humanity. Therefore, while we are in this state, the true functions of pleasure and of pain, of spontaneous emotion and desire, are, in a greater or a less degree, suspended. We must now look, not to them, but from them ; and it is to reason, truth, and religion, in hostility to them, that we must give our allegiance. But when this work is done, then the proper functions of pain and pleasure revive in their full vigor. With our growth in goodness, there comes reformation of habit and purification of taste ; and then follows that state of which we can hardly form a distinct conception upon earth, but which is the ruling state of heaven. Then pain and pleasure, directly and apparently, at once, and not as before remotely, declare themselves the immediate exponents of truth and the guides to good. Then, life is no longer resistance and combat ; but a yielding to desires and emotions, and a ready and fearless acceptance of pleasures which are constantly offering themselves to regenerated affections. For one definition of heaven might be, the state in which purified and gratified desire indulges and confirms goodness.

In this world, now, and probably always, the influence of the senses, in their power of giving pain or pleasure, is two-

fold. On the one hand this influence is instructive; it is a friend, a guide, a safeguard. On the other, it is dangerous and delusive. That it may be a safe and valuable friend, our senses and our tastes must not be corrupted by foolish habits and sinful indulgences. More important is it that our reason should control our appetites, and that our senses, content with the work of service, claim no mastery. But most essential is it that the objects and ends of our life — those which direct and animate our conduct and determine our course, and point out the goal we are to reach — should be wisely chosen, always remembered, and constantly preferred. This last condition is the greatest of all. If this fail, the senses then burn with venom and strike the hot poison into every vital part. If it fail, if our ends and objects are so unwisely chosen, that in the immediate or the near we forget the future and the permanent, then is our whole nature distorted and deformed, and our life becomes a living death. The pleasure which was given to us as a blessing is transformed into a curse. It was given that we might enjoy life while sustaining, preserving, and perpetuating life. It was bidden to wait upon healthy appetite, upon the senses in all their modes of orderly activity, upon gratified desire in all legitimate and wholesome forms. And men have made of it a nutriment for the gross selfishness of gluttony and intemperance, for the more elegant but yet polluted luxuries of depraved art, or for the fierce lust and license which would break down and overleap all barriers, and spoil with desolation the lovely world of domestic happiness; — that last retreat where there are still some gardens of God, where there yet lingers a dream of Paradise, and the hopes of Paradise unfold their blossoms.

Then has the fiery serpent coiled himself about our unresisting limbs; we breathe his hot breath; he bites even to the heart; “and much people die.”

We are much exposed to this assault, after we have begun our journey towards the Holy Land, but are yet in the wilderness which intervenes between that state of quiet contentment without good *from* which we go, and the state of quiet possession of good to which our weary steps are turned. The first denials sharpen the appetite ; as the conflict begins, the combatants put on their strength. But now we begin also to know what it is that assails us ; to recognize the sting and acknowledge the venom. Therefore it was in this wilderness that the children of Israel are said to have been bitten by their fiery enemies, and it was in this wilderness that they found a remedy.

It is said, that when much people of Israel had died, "Therefore the people came unto Moses and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee. Pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole ; * and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole ; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

When we feel the wound and know our danger, the first step is repentance and confession. The next is prayer to God for deliverance. Thus the people called upon Moses, and by his means, through his intercession, sought their safety. And so must we, when the serpent is near, raising

* There is no authority in the original Hebrew for the phrase "set it upon a pole." The words mean simply "to lift up," or, more exactly, "to lift up as a standard." It is this idea which the Vulgate and Septuagint translators express. It may be added, that the word translated "brass" is elsewhere translated "copper," and is supposed to have been used in either sense.

his crest and threatening to strike ; and still more when he has stricken, and the burning venom is active within us, — then we too must look to Moses. We must look to that divine truth which Moses represented and denotes ; to that which is for us what Moses was to the Jews ; to that which has led us from Egypt, and guides our weary way, and utters to us the word of God.

At first, we wish ourselves wholly freed from the senses. All their pleasures seem dangerous, all their influence seductive and deceptive. We would renounce them all, because this renunciation seems to be the only way of escape. Thus the Israelites said in their extremity, “ Pray unto the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” From this dread and abhorrence of sensual enjoyment has sprung, in every age of every church, some form of asceticism. Always, this has been better than a depraved sensual indulgence ; and it has always saved many from that indulgence. It has seemed to be the only way of escape, because the other way was not fully opened to men. That self and sense bring death in their train is certain, and has always become obvious to all who have endeavored to walk in the ways of life. The direct and apparently inevitable deduction from this truth pronounced the doom of condemnation upon self and sense. For that even these enemies of our souls, that the very love of self, the love of the world, and the pleasures of sense, could themselves be regenerated and made the ministers of salvation, was not known. It could not be known for any practical good, until it could be made rationally apparent ; and for this purpose it must be viewed as a part of, or an inference from, a system of truth, which, embracing all the laws and existences of creation, shows how the regenerate mind of man (who is himself a world) should be builded again into the image and likeness of God, with all his powers and functions in perfect health, because in perfect order.

Hence, when the cry has gone up from humanity wearied and wasted in the conflict with sense, "Take away the serpents from us," it has been permitted that asceticism should come in answer to this prayer. For it is always "profitable unto thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell."

But there is another answer; and it is higher in the scale of mercy, and is given now in the opened senses of the words of Scripture. It tells us to lift the serpent from the ground; and if we obey this command, and make the serpent of brass, and raise it on high, "Lo! every wounded soul, when he looketh upon it, shall live."

We lift the serpent from the ground, when we permit a spiritual and elevating influence to operate upon our sensuous nature. He grovels upon the earth, when we think no thoughts but those the senses suggest, and believe no truth that they do not confirm. He is lifted above the ground, when our minds construct upon the basis which the senses build a temple about which the winds of heaven play, and upon which the sun of heaven shines. He lies along the ground, when, in the endeavor to slake our thirst for knowledge at the fountains of science, we see in the mysteries of nature and in its wondrous laws nothing of the design which rules, the wisdom which forms, or the love which animates these laws, but only fortunate accidents, or a wonderful exhibition of some distant and unknown God. He rises above the earth, when the torch of science shines upon an ascending path, and the opened pages of creation become the record of the presence and operation of a revealed God, our Father and our Saviour. The serpent lies in contact with the ground, when, in sweet sounds and odors, and in the beauty of art or the greater loveliness of nature, we revel, and permit these things to fill our capacity of enjoyment and deaden all wish for more. He rises

above the ground, when we most enjoy all beauty, because we know that it has been wrapt like a transparent vesture around the works of God, that through it his love and wisdom might shine more radiantly. He grovels low on the earth and his poison festers into the most fatal ripeness, when we indulge our appetites until it is for them we live ; and suffer our passions to become inflamed into lusts, and in the gratification of them forget the sin and the cruelty of our conduct. He is lifted above the ground, when we compel these pleasures to hold in our thoughts their proper place of *means*, and not *ends*, and assert successfully the rightful sovereignty of affection over passion.

But the children of Israel made the serpent, whom they lifted up, a *brazen serpent*. Are we to do this also ? .

The moment we begin to speak of the spiritual significance of the metals, we necessarily excite in every mind wholly unacquainted with the laws of the correspondence between the things of spirit and the things of nature a feeling of surprise, if not of derision ; of surprise that anything so remote from actual possibility should occur to any one ; or of derision at the weakness or the fantasy which could believe such an absurdity. If we intimate that we do this only in a fanciful or poetical way, we are safe enough, and shall be listened to. But when we plainly assert that actual, vital truth is the necessary substratum of all true poetry ; or when we declare, that all the metals are made to exist by means of the fact that they have their own precise mental, moral, and spiritual analogies, and when we undertake to show something of this, we encounter of course that ridicule which is the natural instrument and

exponent of ignorance. This must be so; for it belongs, inseparably, to perfect ignorance, to call itself knowledge, and to arm itself with the sneer which true knowledge never uses. But when the first revelation of the earliest light discloses to ignorance its own nature, there comes with the coming dawn, a suspicion, hardly yet a hope, that in the infinite unknown, there may lie a few hidden treasures. If the dawn brightens, there may follow a belief that matter and nature are not all; that what is *not* matter must necessarily stand in some definite relation to that which is; and that the relation of these two, spirit and matter, may perhaps be illustrated by a farther insight into the nature of him who is both, or into the nature of a living man. From these advances towards the truth, which a mind honestly and earnestly in search of truth can hardly fail to make, such a mind might be led, by considerations which we cannot now pause to suggest, to a belief, that, as matter, in the living man, is the envelope, the instrument, and the exponent of spirit, so the world of matter stands in a similar relation to the world of spirit. I must now, however, assuming the truth of the law and the fact of correspondence, proceed to apply it to the subject before us, and ask of it why that serpent was made of brass.

The metals would appear to be the lowest ultimate of material nature. It might seem that the solid rocks should be placed below them. But science is beginning to ascertain, and has almost accomplished the work, that the rocks themselves are but metals. It is known that potash, soda, lime, clay, and flint, which compose nearly the whole of our rocks and soil, are only metals in disguise; and a reasonable conjecture goes yet farther. Knowing that much the greater part of the ponderable matter of the globe is metallic, it follows the analogies which lead one to believe that all may be so. Formerly the metals were thought to be very

few in number. The ancients knew but seven. About three hundred and fifty years ago, the pursuits of alchemists brought a few more to light, and modern chemistry many more. The number of those known now is more than fifty, and it is constantly increasing. Of these metals some are common and abundant, and meet us everywhere; others are more rare, and some are met with seldom, and are not easily distinguished. We might, therefore, expect that the correspondence of these various metals, each having its own specific characteristics, would be wide enough to include the principal genera of the elements of humanity. If we would form any classification of the metals, these ultimates of material nature, in reference to the essential qualities or faculties of our spiritual nature, we must of course find it upon the general and universal distinction between the will and the understanding. Thoughts and affections compose the two great classes of spiritual entities; these are entirely distinct from each other, and, taken together, form the whole of our spiritual being. This distinction we find in metals, in the difference which separates the red metals from the pale or white metals. This is a difference which enters at once into obvious affinity with other distinctions which separate between the will and the understanding, and between their various representatives. Thus love and truth are, in their first material form, heat and light. It is well known to all who are acquainted with the writings of Swedenborg, that there is in the heavens a sun perpetually shining, and the heat and light which issue from it and fill the heavens become the love and wisdom which fill the minds and hearts of the angels. For the sun of the heavens is the first spiritual form of the Almighty. Heat and light being thus immediate representatives because immediate effects of love and truth, this analogy is constantly forced upon our observation. It fills our language, and is

readily enough admitted, so long as it is regarded as merely metaphorical. Every one is willing to say love warms, and that truth enlightens. But this language is metaphorical *because* it rests upon a real analogy; for it is this reality which suggests and originates the metaphor, and gives it significance and force. For the same reason, a red or highly colored light, as it suggests the idea of heat with light, is called, in common conversation, and very justly, a warm light or a warm color; while a pale, white light is called, with equal correctness, a cold or cool light or color. Apply this to minerals, and we are led at once to the conclusion that the red metals may correspond to, and in the Word signify, things of the will in which there is affection or warmth, while the white metals correspond to and signify the things of the understanding, or things in which there is only truth or light.

A little reflection shows us, that, if the things of the will or the affections be in themselves as various and diverse as the thoughts or things of the understanding, they do not seem to be so. Thoughts take form within our minds, and are easily seen there. We compare them together; from their resemblance and difference we define them and classify them. We see them clearly, and measure them minutely, and discriminate between them, separating one from the other, easily. Not so with the affections; because they are not within the province of the understanding, they do not fall so clearly under the mental sight. They are felt only. They may be strongly and profoundly felt, but are not so clearly inspected, not so distinctly discriminated, not separated into particulars, as are the things of the understanding. Hence we might expect to find in the lowest representative ultimates of nature, which are the correspondences and manifestations of these spiritual substances, that class which represents the things of the understanding

far more numerous, various, and divisible into genera and species than the class which represents the things of the will. And we find accordingly that but two of the well-known metals, gold and copper, and very few of those less known, belong to the latter class, while all the rest belong to the former class.

There is that which is good for the mind, and that which is good for the body. There is that which we call good in reference to the things of religion, to the character and eternal destiny of man; and there is that which we call good in reference to this world, to our daily needs and uses and enjoyments. There is a good which belongs to the internal life and nature of man, and a good which belongs to his external life and nature; and when we refer to these distinctions in the simplest form, we say there is *spiritual good* and there is *natural good*. So, too, there is truth which reveals, describes, and opens the way to spiritual good, and other truth which stands in a similar relation to, and performs the same office for, natural good. Or, as there is spiritual good and natural good, so also there is spiritual truth and natural truth. Let us see if we find this distinction represented in the metals.

We find gold discriminated from copper by important qualities, which give to it a superiority in worth and value that is not due merely to its rarity. It is indeed far more rare, but it is also far less destructible, and less liable to injury from the causes of tarnish or corrosion which it meets in the air, the water, and the common touch. As to the pale metals, among these silver and iron seem to be types of two classes, and about them the others may be grouped. These four metals appear to have been known during more ages and among more nations, or more constantly and more generally known and used, than any others. If we are satisfied that material things may be the

effects and the correspondents of spiritual things ; that the red metals may represent the things of the will, or in which there is affection, and that the pale metals may represent the things of the understanding, or those of which truth is the essential element, — we may then perhaps admit, that gold may represent a higher and rarer class of affections, and copper a lower and more abundant class ; and that silver may represent a higher and rarer class of truths, and iron a lower and more common form. In other words, that gold may correspond to and represent spiritual or heavenly good, and copper natural or external good ; while silver corresponds to and represents spiritual truth, and iron natural or external truth.

Such is the significance of these metals when mentioned in Scripture ; and there are many passages bearing very distinctly upon this difference in their signification. Thus it is said, in the seventeenth and eighteenth verses of the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah, “ For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver ; — violence shall be no more heard in thy land, nor wasting nor destruction within thy borders ; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” There are many other texts of similar purport, which will occur to readers conversant with the Bible. Very few persons would believe that these were to be understood in their exact literal sense ; for it would hardly be deemed a blessing for a nation, that all its brass should become gold, and all its iron silver ; nor is it obvious why such a change should be connected with the cessation of all violence and destruction. Every one whose respect for the Word of God makes him unwilling to call it utterly meaningless, regards texts like these as metaphorical ; as meaning, in some indefinite way, an improvement in the condition of that nation. But much reverence for Scripture would render one reluctant to regard it as eminently fanciful, and

as expressing its purposes and its promises only in fantastic flights of metaphor.

The science of correspondence, first asserting that the Word, in its spirit, refers only to things of the spirit, and next, that the things of material nature spoken of in the letter, are created by means of spiritual entities, and correspond to, represent, and indicate these spiritual things, upon this basis builds its structure. It substitutes for metaphor, of which the meaning is, at best, uncertain and conjectural, subject to no law and amenable to no authority, a true and exact science. By its application to texts like these, it discloses a promise to all men and nations of every age, that by obedience to the will of God they shall rise from natural good to heavenly good; and from the natural truth, which is the appropriate light for natural good, to that spiritual light which begins to shine when the elevated affections require for their guidance a brighter and more accordant illustration. He in whom only natural goodness and its appropriate intelligence prevail may be at rest; but only so long as he is contented with the lowest level of life. If he would ascend, he becomes conscious of his wants. He hungers and thirsts for the food which will sustain the new-born life within him, and give it growth and vigor. He sees how much of his nature opposes itself to good, to progress, and to elevation. He knows now what internal conflict is; and there are times when "violence, wasting, and destruction" seem to have made the land their own. But when at length for his brass he has received gold, and for his iron silver, he feels himself under a sufficient, a divine, protection. He trusts no longer in himself, and therefore he is no longer weak; he is at rest, for his defence is sure; no human hand has built the walls around him, no human hand opened the gates of his city of refuge; for those walls are Salvation, and those gates are Praise.

This distinction between natural good and heavenly good occurs constantly in the Word, where indeed the generic distinctions in the qualities and attributes of the human character constantly serve as foundations for appropriate and definite instruction; and this is expressed with boundless variety and exact precision, by means of the correspondences of which the Word is full. Nor is it only in the Scriptures that we may find these analogies. They are everywhere around us. They fill creation as they fill the Word. And they make creation echo with its myriad voices the utterance of the Word. This boundless field we cannot now explore, nor even enter upon it. It would be easy to give one or two or three instances of this correspondence; but not to present in a brief space examples so numerous, so connected and illustrated, as to assail with much force one objection, one barrier against a perception of the laws of correspondence as they are exhibited in the laws and forms of nature, that is all the more insuperable because wholly unsuspected. This is the universal belief in the power of accident. Most readers will be startled at this. There are none now who advocate the old theories of Epicurus and Lucretius; none who profess to believe that creation is the result of the fortuitous intercourse of atoms. The acknowledgment of "A First Cause," and of the universality and omnipotence of this Cause, meets us on every lip. Yet they who look into their own hearts find accident accounting there for much that happens. If they listen to their own voices, they will hear its power frequently acknowledged; and they might find that, in their system of the universe, accident has largely usurped the place and providence of God. If there be, or ever was, or ever can be, one accident, there is an end of the idea of God. Let no readers say: "Of course, this is so: there is not really any such thing as accident; nobody thinks there

is"; — and, in the same breath, say of these analogies, that they are pleasing and rather striking instances of accidental resemblance. If one thing has taken place without the cognizance of God, and away from his influence, then there are limits which divide existence into what is his and what is not his. They only who are penetrated with a deep sense of the enormous folly of this thought, can resist effectually the tendencies of all common opinion to refer to accident whatever presents any difficulty or refuses allegiance to what we are pleased to call the laws of nature. Such minds will perhaps pause to inquire whether it is more rational to refer to *accident* the analogies which the science of correspondence everywhere reveals, or to God, working through laws, which are not yet fully comprehended, but which nevertheless possess the universality, the coherence, and the importance proper to laws which are forms and instruments of divine wisdom.

Here I can only say, that if the serpent be considered as the correspondent, representative, or symbol of the sensuous part of our moral and intellectual nature, and if copper be regarded as the correspondent and symbol of natural good, we may see that a serpent made of copper should symbolize our sensuous nature, when it is good and not evil. And if this serpent be lifted from the ground, it should then be a symbol of this sensuous nature lifted above the earth, no longer insisting that sensuous truth is all truth, or that sensuous pleasure is all happiness; but rendering its indispensable service to our higher qualities and faculties, while it neither grovels itself upon the ground, nor draws them down. This serpent was not made of gold, because there is no way by which man may pass from sinfulness to internal or spiritual goodness, excepting by external or natural goodness. Many are unwilling to remember that the command is, "Cease to do evil, and learn

to do well"; and the ceasing to do evil is put first, because only through this can we learn to do well. He who does wickedly, and persists in it, and thinks that his excellent faith and sound doctrine, or his "spiritual goodness," atones in any degree for outward wickedness, only adds insanity to sin. If the senses hurt and threaten to slay us, the first step and the only first step, is to resist them, there, in the natural and external state and conduct, where they can be denied, and by denial subdued. If we remember also that Moses, who made this serpent of brass and lifted it from the ground, was the leader of the children of Israel through the wilderness, and denotes Divine Truth leading and guiding men through repentance and reformation into goodness, we may see why it was said, "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld * the serpent of brass [copper], he lived." For if we constantly look up to a sensuous nature by this instrumentality reformed, regenerated, and elevated, and regard it as the standard of that which we should endeavor, constantly and earnestly, to co-operate with the Divine influence in rendering our own sensuous nature, then, although we have been bitten, and wounded, and poisoned, we shall nevertheless live.

To him who has learnt the true relation of the Jewish Church to the Christian Church, and of the Jewish Scriptures to the Christian Scriptures, it will not be surprising

* As the Hebrew word translated "to set it upon a pole," means to "lift it up as a standard," so the word here translated "beheld" means literally "looked up to," and may be supposed to be used in the sense of regarding and acknowledging as a standard.

that a fact so full of meaning as the raising of the serpent of brass should be again alluded to in the Gospels. In the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the third chapter of John, it is said: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." And again, in the thirty-second verse of the twelfth chapter: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

I cannot withhold the declaration, that these texts involve and include the solution of all religious mysteries. I am perfectly aware that I am arraying against myself all those feelings which rise up in scorn when enthusiasm seems to be degenerating into folly, and loose and fantastic thought appears to supply its want of clearness and precision by emphasis and exaggeration. Nevertheless, I cannot withhold this declaration, for I know it to be simply true. Would that I knew as well how to make its truth obvious and intelligible! But, dim and dark as are my own perceptions of this central and infinite truth, I seek in vain for words which shall do, even to them, adequate justice.

Something has already been said of the nature of the sensuous principle of humanity, of the evils which envenom and destroy it, and of its upward course through the ascending stages of recovery and renovation. But if the sensuous nature, when as yet uncorrupted by actual sin, has not strength to sustain the attacks of the great Enemy, where, when it is weakened, blinded, maddened, and sick with sin, is it to find resistance, victory, and deliverance?

The first element of the answer to this question is to be found in the doctrine which teaches that the Lord watchfully preserves man's freedom, or all of it which can be preserved, even in man's own despite. He may plunge himself into evil; he may love his bondage and rejoice in

his chains; he may bring around him, by their sympathy with his depraved affections, spirits of the worst character and of the strongest influence, and may bow himself to the very dust and place their feet upon his neck. But while he does this, Divine Providence still sends to him counteracting influences, so that while there is life there shall be hope. If reason should awaken; if the horrible nature of sin is seen in the vivid illustration of its consequences, if affliction weakens the power of evil, if an emotion of tenderness softens the heart through some vibration of those chords of love which are woven of the kindly relations of social life or the blessed charities of home,—if by any way or any means any measure of receptiveness is produced, they who are the friends of his soul are near and ready. Their aid is offered; nor has it a less efficacy because it cannot take the form of words or manifest itself to sense; for it strives to enter into the heart, where, if anywhere, its work must be done.

But the ministering spirits whose life it is thus to lead to eternal life, are but ministers. They are but the mediums of Him who is love itself, and their love is but his love in them. That they always stand prepared and enabled thus to act as far as and whenever man will permit, and that his unflinching love renders escape from sin and sensuality always possible, is a universal and an eternal truth. It is and ever must be coexistent with human nature. But the manner in which this is effected, and the means of this salvation, are very various. They differ in the different ages of the world, with the different races of men, and with individuals. Still, however varying the means, the end is always one and the same; it is always the great thing to be done for the greatest good of man. Always the divine mercy finds itself called upon to hold him back from self and from sensuality, moral or intellectual; or lead him

back if he has fallen into the abyss. Here always is the centre of error and of evil, of sin and of death; and here therefore are they always to be combated.

For this purpose Scriptures have been given; those to which we confine the name, and others in other ages. For this, too, religions have been established, and rites, and worship. For this a thousand means of instruction, direct and indirect, have been permitted or provided. For this society has been constructed, and its anomalies watched and guarded and guided as far as human freedom might permit, in such wise as to make its influence on the whole promotive of good; and for this are wholesome impressions made and holy influences garnered up within the tender heart of infancy and youth, and the relations of home have their good work to do, and wise men have filled the world with powerful truth, and good men blessed it with their example, and by countless means which we may discern and designate, and far more which are removed from our sight, the ever-watchful providence of God operates to "save our souls."

In the literal sense of the Old Testament is the record of one chain of those providences which seek to save man from subjection to sense and sin. It is a history; and this history has for its subject the dealings of God with man. But it is also a prophecy: it speaks not of the past and present only; but of the future. Through the thick clouds of the literal sense, we discern the light which shines far onward upon things to come. It revealed and foretold a Saviour; it foretold Him who was to be Immanuel, God with us.

In the great fact of his coming, we have the universal means of salvation. Because it was to be, and because all events which preceded it were preparatory for it, and because all the means which ever were used for the salvation

of man, were of the same nature and derived their power from their relation to this event, therefore it was this which they all regarded. Hence, prophecy foretold it, and it was prefigured by many things, and the hope of it gave shape to many of the legends of the religions of remote ages and of various forms of paganism.

At length this great event took place. He who was in himself the centre of being, came forth in a new way to its circumference. He who was the source and summit of life, descended to its lowest ultimates. He who had created nature as the envelope, the instrument, and the object of his love, came down and assumed this very nature. He was born of a virgin. He took upon himself man's nature, and man's body. He took upon himself this nature, subject as it was to all the influences of sense. It was the fulness of time; for this nature had become so corrupt, and these influences so strong, by the accumulated inheritance of sin and sensuality, that all inferior means of salvation were now insufficient. And the last and highest, the central and universal means, that which was to be for ever sufficient, and from which all other aids and means were to ray forth perpetually, was now brought into action.

Jehovah assumed humanity, with all its tendency to falsity, and evil, and sin. We must remember that there is but one way in which these tendencies can be overcome by any human being, and this nature renewed and regenerated. *This way is, resistance to evil.* It was to this way that all the means of salvation hitherto given had pointed; it was by following this way only that salvation from sin had ever been attained. And it was in this way that the Lord in his human nature accomplished his great work, and became himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It was thus that he bore our iniquities, and was bruised for our sins, and bought us by his blood.

When man, with the divine assistance, takes up his cross and follows the Lord in this way of regeneration, he can make at best imperfect progress. He may begin the work, and he may make that progress therein which shall insure to him a future and eternal progress in the life to come. But with the Lord, in his assumed human nature, there was far more than this. He resisted all evil, all sin ; he alone remained, in the midst of temptation, sinless and undefiled. Those temptations which are permitted to assail us may come with desolating fury, or they may come with a seductive power, before which it would seem that all strength must melt away ; they may bear the aspect of an infuriated and unchained hell, and their voice may seem to be the gathered tones of the Devil and all his ministers of wrath. But still they are measured ; and never are they permitted to swell beyond man's capability of resistance. With the Lord it was infinitely otherwise than with man, as was his internal nature. For that nature was purely divine ; it was Jehovah. Against the Son of Man, the whole possible fury of all the hells raged. And all was resisted and overcome. His temptations began with his human life, and grew with his human growth. They are set forth with little particularity in the literal sense of the Gospels ; under the figure of the forty days in the wilderness, they are stated generally, and in the agony in the garden, in the bloody sweat, and the prayer that the cup might pass from him, they are presented with distincter power. But it is wholly beyond the capacity of the human understanding in any state of its progress, earthly or heavenly, to form any adequate idea of this great subject.

The way of resistance which man may follow will lead to his regeneration ; to the birth of a new heart and a new spirit within him. That same way our Lord followed ; but infinitely far and to its perfect end ; and it terminated with

making his assumed human nature absolutely divine ; absolutely one with the divinity within. The divine glory of that divine essence which is Jehovah reached and filled the assumed humanity. The prayer of that humanity was heard. " Father, the hour is come ; — and now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Thus was a way opened, for all men of all races and in all ages, to tend for ever towards the great end for which he came. This is, in his own words, that we may be one with him, as he is one with the Father. In the same way we may be one, but never to the same extent. For ever must this end be high above the possibility of human nature. But it may be for ever there, the unsetting star about which all the lights of heaven move ; the object of all desire, all effort, all tendency ; and continual progress in that direction may fill with joy the unending periods of eternity.

That divine humanity has thus passed through all that man, all that any man, can ever pass through when he takes up his cross and follows the Lord of Life. From His divine-human experience He looks upon the humblest and the feeblest of the sons of men. Here is the central mystery of all religion, of all truth. Vain is the effort to embrace it all with the mind ; for that would be to comprehend the universe of being and of life. Vain is the effort to speak of it worthily with our poor words. Let me only say, that the lifting up of the sensual nature of man was thus fully accomplished. It was borne upwards to an infinite elevation, and yet remains visible to man in His Word ; present to man in His influence ; before his thoughts as the guide to all goodness ; before his affections as at once the example of all love and the object of all love.

Here and thus was the serpent freed from all evil, com-

posed of all good, lifted from the ground, that it might draw all men unto Him ; that all whom the sensual serpent wounds, may look upon Him and live.

There are those who would be much offended if they were called unbelieving, although their whole belief consists in not denying ; and such persons are very numerous in many parts of the Christian world at this day. The cares of life oppress them ; ambition goads and fills their minds ; or a busy thrift occupies their time and thoughts ; and they go day after day along the trodden pathways of life, whilst a dull indifference to the distant things of religion and eternity grows and indurates upon them. To all such persons there is no difficulty in religious doctrine, no mystery in religious truth ; and they are very apt to wish the world were as wise as they, so that all religious disputes might terminate. They would then terminate ; because a universal toleration would be the offspring of a universal indifference. But all men are not so, and never have been and never will be so. Some portion of the true value of eternity is perceived by many ; and this value is imparted to religion by the fact that it is religion which proclaims an eternity and professes to determine its character.

As soon as the mind is roused by thoughts like these, it thirsts for truth ; and when it asks the momentous question, What is Truth ? the answer is neither so clear nor so prompt as is sometimes expected. We have much truth given us that is plain and unquestionable, and which offers itself at once to an inquiring mind, and guides far and well a willing heart. But behind this truth lie many questions, which, when they occur to a sincere and thoughtful mind,

are answered neither by the suggestion that they are unimportant and we need not care for them, nor by the assurance that they are wholly insoluble, and that an endeavor to find the true answer will but involve us more deeply in the darkness.

The most important and the most interesting of these questions are, as they always have been, those which relate to the person, functions, and nature of our Lord. None who call themselves Christians deny to him the name of Saviour. And Christians in all ages have asked anxiously, What is this work of Salvation? by what means and in what manner has it been wrought?

In all ages of Christianity has this question been asked; and when a new church declares that it has been almost always answered erroneously, it ought to assume the burden of accounting, generally at least, for this long and constant error.

The opposition between human nature and religion, which is implied by the universal necessity of religion, is the sufficient cause for much of this. Religious truth is given to man, that by its light and influence he may do that which he neither would nor could do otherwise. It does not conform to his inclinations, but resists them; and they of course resist it. Hence his whole nature, or, in other words, all his natural tendencies and inclinations, are opposed to religious truth, as they are opposed by it. Yet, when any question comes up as to the construction or significance of any religious doctrine, or truth, or principle, these tendencies and inclinations enter into the council. They demand to be heard. It is impossible to reduce them to total silence; it is difficult to prevent them from raising a loud and disturbing voice. Hence, when those questions came before the Church which are involved in the doctrine of the Lord, — we cannot be surprised that the natural ten-

dencies and inclinations which are the antagonists of religion should endeavor to neutralize this central truth, or bring it over to their side, when we remember that this doctrine is the central truth of the Christian religion, and that all religion requires well-doing as the basis of well-being. And how? By so construing this doctrine of the Lord as to make it support the falsehood that well-believing is a higher and greater thing than well-doing, or has any independent value of its own. Hence the doctrine of Salvation by Faith alone; and out of the necessities of this doctrine grew that dogma of a Trinity of Divine Persons, or of three Gods, which is its support, and without which Salvation by Faith alone falls instantly to the ground. We cannot be surprised that human nature should desire and endeavor to substitute this falsity for religious truth; however we may mourn that the endeavor was crowned with such success.

This success could not, however, have been so complete, but for another cause. And this cause is, the almost entire ignorance of the spiritual sense of the Gospels, and the consequent belief that they record, in their literal sense, the whole of the Lord's doings. No error can be greater than this. It is indeed infinitely great.

While our Lord was visible upon earth, he was constantly employed here in works of mercy and of instruction. His words pointed out the way of life, and his works illustrated his words. Some of these works and words the Gospels in their literal sense record; and thus also describe, generally but forcibly, the sufferings and temptations of our Lord. But while he was leading this life upon the earth, he was also living in the spiritual world. He did not leave the heavens when he bowed them and came down to earth. In the spheres of spiritual existence, among and upon the myriads who were there, he was all the while doing the great

work of the Redemption. It was there that he redeemed man from the controlling influences of hell, by bringing all the hells and all who are in them into order and subser-viency. Not into the order of heaven, but into their own order. Into such an order as prevented the enslavement of man. Henceforward man was redeemed, because no evil influences could evermore act upon him any farther than was compatible with his freedom. The encroachment of evil upon good had gone so far, that all equilibrium would have ceased, and with it the freedom and the life of man, had not this work of Redemption been accomplished in this way.

It would be wrong to attempt speaking in detail of such a subject as this, in the brief manner which alone would be possible now. In this connection, and at this time, it is enough to say, that the works of love and power wrought by our Lord in the natural world were not disconnected from those works which he was at the same time, and by a simi-lar exertion of his divine qualities, effecting in the spiritual world. These were, indeed, connected somewhat as the soul and the body; for what he said and did here, on this lower plane, was as the body, as the ultimate or basis of the divine operations he was then performing upon those lower planes of spiritual being which rest closely on our natural life. Our human life descends to us from God. He is the centre of being. But the life flowing forth from him, and flowing through the series and spheres of existence around, finally comes to us so tempered and modified by these liv-ing mediums, that it may be precisely accommodated to us, and qualified to enter into us and become our life. It is only by this full and unceasing influx that we live; but the lowest planes of spiritual being are nearest to us; there the last form and pressure are given to that life which is to become our life. Hence the condition of things upon that

plane is one among the most important elements which go to make up our character and destiny. This condition had become such, that these media of life exercised a most injurious influence; and of the work which our Lord there effected, I must content myself at present with saying that its full accomplishment absolutely required his incarnation, or his complete assumption of our external nature, and of the admission to that nature of all possible temptations from infernal influences. In this way he opposed himself to that sphere or those media of life, there, where their force is concentrated. By subduing them there, he reduced them permanently to their own proper order and use. And the effect of this is to redeem all men from the certainty of destruction, and offer to all the hope and the promise of salvation from sin, on condition only that they are willing to accept such salvation.

If the objection occurs to any reader, that this is an indirect and circuitous procedure, altogether unworthy that absolute Omnipotence which, with one word of power, could command all worlds, — he may find it well to remember that the same word of power might as well annihilate the hells, extirpate all evil, and convert earth into paradise and the human heart into an exhaustless wellspring of love and bliss. But nothing like this is done. The scheme of life is complicated. Its many threads are interwoven into that which is inextricable confusion to him who has not the clew which is given by a just idea of the order of Divine Providence. For Providence acts by means, and in accordance with the laws of its own order, and upon and in reference to every individual being of all worlds, in exact conformity with that being's individual nature, functions, and requirements. The constant observance of this law gives to the workings of Providence an appearance of indirectness and complexity. But he who forgets this law can see in

the system of being nothing but insoluble mystery, and the whole heaven above him is but one cloud.

While the great work of spiritual redemption was going on in the spiritual world, our Lord was, we have said, in this natural world, doing corresponding works and uttering corresponding words. From this correspondence two consequences flow. One, that our Lord's life on earth was, as has been said, the ultimate, the basis, *the body* of his contemporaneous spiritual operation in the spiritual world. The other, that while the Gospels in their natural or literal sense relate and describe his life and operations in this natural world, they also, in their correspondent spiritual or internal senses, relate and describe his spiritual operations in the spiritual world. In the Old Testament there are many passages which distinctly refer to the coming of our Lord in the literal sense, and many others which are often supposed to have this reference, although in the letter it is obscure and uncertain. But when the internal or spiritual sense is opened to us by the law of correspondence, we find throughout the Scriptures a fulness of meaning, and a directness of application to our Lord, which we had not suspected. So far as we comprehend this spiritual sense, we find ourselves in the condition of those disciples of whom it is said, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. . . . These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me. . . . Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." We see and we know, in some degree at least, that it indeed thus behooved Jesus Christ to suffer for the salvation of man. The reason of our Lord's coming and the manner of his operation are opened to us, because we have the Word of God and the

Gospel of Christ as it exists in the heavens, and as it records his doings in the spiritual world.

All this, of course and of necessity, is absolute nothingness to them who receive only the literal sense, and who reject the light of the living soul within. In the earliest ages of Christianity, the conviction that there was a spiritual sense to the word of God was very general, and an effort to discover it was common. This fact is usually spoken of now, by those who write of early Church history, as "a prevailing habit of or taste for allegorizing." Some belief of this kind continued to exist and exert a considerable influence through all the ages of Christianity. But the creeds and dogmas of the Church were formed with no reference to it. It is most true that all doctrine must be formed from, and founded upon, and proved by, the literal sense of the Word; but it is also true that this basis of doctrine must be the literal sense, illuminated and explained by the light within. And the literal sense taken alone, the literal sense so used that it becomes "the letter which killeth," afforded in many texts some apparent confirmation of that falsity of salvation by faith alone to which the natural disposition of man is ever so strongly inclined. These texts speak of our Lord as "bruised for our sins," as "bearing our iniquities," as "washing us from our sins in his own blood"; and it seems to be plain, from many passages, that He, the Lamb of the great sacrifice for the sins of the world, was prefigured by the whole Jewish ritual of sacrifice. All this is indeed most true. But it is not true in any sense which should lead us to think that the work of salvation was done for us and in our stead, leaving to us only the necessity of belief as the condition of gathering its fruits. It is true in a sense which, were it not tempered and obscured before it reaches us, would make our hearts faint with the feeling of the unutterable love which re-

deemed us from ourselves at such a price ; and we should see that an equal wisdom had provided that this should so be done, as to give to all the need and the power, and, to all who will accept it, the blessing, of co-operating in this work with the Lord himself.

In our brightest moments, when our minds are clearest, and the overarching sky of thought appears to glow and burn with unobstructed light from Heaven, then, even then, it is but a feeble ray which can pierce the exhalations that are ever rising from the earthliness of our habitual thoughts and cares. But the very truth we have above stated shines in the heavens, not in the light, but as the light itself. There, in the unclouded mind and in the constant thought of every angel it abides, the perpetual illustration of heavenly life, and the unfailing and abounding source of heavenly joy.

It was one of the purposes and one of the effects of our Lord's incarnation, to render possible, at a future period, the revelation to man of the Scriptures of the angels. The universal and perpetual end of Divine Providence is the conjunction of earth with heaven ; of men with angels, and, through the angels, with himself. But this end is approached gradually, because the preservation of human freedom requires this ; and it is approached in the directions and by the means which are compatible with this freedom. To the Jews, little of the light of Heaven was given in the literal sense of the Word ; not so much even as might testify of the existence of another world ; for all truth of this description would have been to them but the means of mischief. When our Lord walked among men,

he uttered words which carried their thoughts beyond the grave; and even then, in the world to which he was guiding their thoughts, he was so operating as to meliorate its influences upon men, and also to provide for the possibility of a further melioration. The judgment which he wrought when he said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the Prince of this world be cast out," — was effected by his operations in that world where lie the causes whose effects we see. And this judgment was itself a preparation for a further judgment which should place man in a condition to receive a more abundant influx of the light of heaven. This further judgment, also to be wrought in the spiritual world, and to become visible in the natural world only gradually, and through its effects, was to take place when, and in such wise, that it should not deprive man of his freedom and of the free exercise of his own rationality; nor, on the other hand, expose him to the danger of learning truths which would be beyond the possibility of his voluntary adoption. For such truths must needs be rejected and despised, and thus bring upon him deeper injury.

The manner in which this last judgment was to be accomplished, the means and the process of this spiritual work and the effects it would produce, were, in the beginning of the Christian Church, related prophetically in the Apocalypse of St. John. That judgment has taken place. The great work has been fully accomplished in the spiritual world. Its effects are already reaching into this world and manifesting themselves here; and among these effects is the explanation of the prophecy which predicted this judgment. This explanation is itself effected by a revelation of those laws of correspondence which establish between the worlds of nature and of spirit the relation of effect to cause. They show that all that exists here is at once the

effect and the manifestation of causes which operate there. They make the whole material creation *the letter* of the whole world of spirit; and they reveal, within the literal sense of the Bible, another Word of God, another Gospel, which is the life and soul of all that was given to us before.

Especially is it to be known, that all of these works of the Divine power and mercy are wrought, that He may be for ever more and more "lifted up" before the eyes of men, to the end that He may thereby "draw all men unto him." The reason of this, the reason why this should be the perpetual end of Divine Providence, grows out of the relation between God and man.

For, as we have repeated occasion to say, God creates man to give to him of the elements of his own divine nature. That is, to give to him of his own love and wisdom. Not merely that he may be the object of this love, but that it may itself enter into the heart or will of man, and become in a degree, however imperfect or qualified, the love of the man himself, and thus be to the man a source of happiness. This the Lord wills to do, because this love, in himself and as his divine love, is the source of his own divine and ineffable bliss. So of his wisdom, which he would impart to man's understanding similarly, and for similar reasons. But in all this the freedom of man must be respected and preserved, or there is no love; because to this, voluntary choice, liberty, and free agency are essential.

Hence it follows, that, while man, in the exercise of this freedom, cannot prevent this divine love from flowing into and animating his will, for this would be to destroy the life of his soul, he may nevertheless modify and qualify this love into accordance with himself, and may carry this perversion so far as to convert it into self-love, which is its opposite. If, then, it is the perpetual effort of Divine Provi-

dence to lead man to receive voluntarily His divine love into man's own will without perversion or corruption, so it is the perpetual effort of the nature of man, in the degree in which that nature is evil and unregenerate, to pervert and corrupt this influent love into its opposite, which is self-love. Hence we must regard self-love as the great enemy of our happiness; and we may then understand why the Divine Providence always acts with the purpose of opposing this deadly venom by its proper opposite and antidote, — the love of the Lord.

Whoever would construct any true theory of religion, must build it upon the fundamental truth, that the love of the Lord is the exact opposite and true antidote to the love of self. For these two loves are exact antagonists. Where the one is, and in the exact degree in which it is present, the other must needs be absent. And hence the constant endeavor of Providence to fill our hearts with the love of God, because it overcomes and excludes that love of self which is the mother of misery; and because it is itself the source of happiness, and gives birth to that love of the neighbor and all the kind and pure affections which in their complex constitute heaven, and fill the mind with heavenly influence and peace.

Very sad is the delusion which sets apart the love of God as a thing by itself; as opposed to the common pleasures and common interests of innocent life; as narrowing the circle of our affections, and weakening the hold of the social ties, and saddening the countenance and burying the living man in the cold grave of asceticism. The mind is incapable of conceiving a greater falsity. Pursue it into all its details and consequences, and the exact opposite of every one of them is the truth. It is easy to account for this falsity. It separates the love of God from all other affections, because God himself has been first separated from his

creation. If, in our minds, he stands apart, then we must go apart from the world to find him and to love him. Unspeakably false, unspeakably dreadful, is this common and prevailing delusion, which makes men fear to love God, as if this were loss and renunciation! First, give us the truth which restores God to his creation. First, fill the universe of being and of affection with his sunlike presence; and then our love of God embraces creation. In all that is good, it finds him. In all that constitutes true happiness, it feels his touch. It gives at once force and tenderness to every bond. It multiplies a thousand-fold all the interests of life. It invests these interests with a new charm and power and loveliness. It fills all the moments of every day with a cheerfulness responsive to the goodness of Him, to whom they are all devoted in joy and in hope. Hence the New Church, by means of which the Lord is now seeking to revive and establish among men that love of God which will bring heaven to earth, discloses those laws of being which make Him ever present, and which teach us that His own presence is the absolute and essential condition of all life and all existence.

Great difficulties in the consideration of this subject spring from the present state of the human mind, and the prevailing and habitual tone of thought. After so great a diversity of religious dispensations; after the possession by Christians of the Gospels and the truths they tell for many ages; after the preaching to mankind of these truths in countless forms by the countless sects of Christendom, we refuse to believe that almost nothing has been gained. But if a just doctrine and just thoughts concerning God are the essence and the substance of all religious truth, and if that doctrine and those thoughts alone are just which never leave us without the recognition of his presence; which tell us continually that it is He, He in the form of his own love, who

is always within all the substances and energies of nature, always giving to them all they have of form, activity, and operation ; which announce to us at every moment, that He is *there*, within us, really and actively, seeking to bring us into conformity with himself that we may receive more fully an unperverted life from him ; if this doctrine and these thoughts alone are just, how little has been gained !

The very philosophy of religion tells us as a simple truth, that our love to God measures our true life, and forms and determines our true happiness. It does not tell us that we should not care for our brethren, nor for our uses and employments, nor for the enjoyments which lie within our reach. For it takes a wider view of our relations and our destiny, and of the causes which determine our destiny. It bids us be active and earnest in the work we have to do ; and seek and love the manifold innocent pleasures which the world offers to the innocent ; and hold with a firm grasp upon the social and family relations which surround us with their sustaining atmosphere. But in all these things we should always recognize, not only that they are the present gifts of God, but that he gives them *because* they are the very instruments by which he can work within us and for us, at every moment, with most advantage to us. When we say that this recognition should be instant, constant, and earnest, we say that which would be read with astonishment were it not that the words seem to be meaningless, and to many persons must needs be so.

“ The poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind,”

is far wiser than they are who have been tutored by the prevailing influences of society and the dense and overshadowing darkness of religious belief, into seeing him nowhere. When one hears words uttered which remind him of the command, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," such words may seem to be words of course, which are not intended to have much significance; or to be enthusiastic and fanatic, and to savor of religious insanity; or to be anything else whatever, excepting a calm and deliberate enunciation of a truth which is in its own nature intensely practical. This truth is known in heaven, and there it is the actual law of life, and of all the moments and acts of life; and it comes down from heaven to build up in man a capacity for heavenly happiness.

Our love of God is no solitary nor unfruitful thing. It is his own love, received by us in our wills and returning to him by that reciprocal action on our part which conjoins us with him. If there were nothing for us to do, we might as well be stocks or stones or dead. But there is much for us to do. When God gives into our wills that love which is his own life, there is much for us to do, for we have, by our own free and voluntary action, to return this love *to* him, as the love *of* him. It is for us to make it, still with his aid, the love of Him who is the legitimate object of all love, because the source of all good. Where this love reigns, it gives rectitude to all the affections, for it is itself just; it gives light to the understanding, for it is itself in conformity with the strictest truth. Where it is wholly wanting, other affections savor of robbery and injustice, and other thoughts and truths want clearness and consistency, because the central truth of all is unknown or denied.

This love of God is not solitary nor unfruitful. For where it reigns, we love all other things because they all are his, and are all in a greater or a less degree exponents and instruments of his love and wisdom. And we love them in proportion as they are so, because we know that in that proportion they are good. Then is the whole earth trans-

figured before us. The realms of nature are but the jewelled dress of God. Calamity itself, even when its face is sad, speaks to us in soothing tones. The hours of day and night, the changing seasons of the solar year and of the year of life, the vicissitudes which color with alternating gloom and brightness the fortunes of men and nations, these are but a choral song of many harmonies in which a listening ear catches an echo of the hymns of heaven. Our love of God, as it makes us feel that we and all men are but recipients of one common life from one Father, gives us a sense of brotherhood, before which discord, anger, hatred, and oppression pass away and become impossible. Therefore it is said, the second great commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself, is *like unto the first*"; for it is but the first in a derivative form and in its closest application.

So far as we perceive, on the one hand, that this *ideal* might be *actual*,—not to-day nor to-morrow, but at some of the periods of time which may hereafter be born of the eternity,—that this might be the prevailing condition of the human mind; and so far as we perceive, on the other hand, how wofully distant from this ideal is now the actual state of man; the reason may become obvious to us why it is the constant tendency of the dispensations of Providence to "lift up" before the eyes of all men Him to whom their love and worship are due by every title and on every ground. And we may see also something perhaps of the manner in which his being "lifted up" may become the means by which he may "draw all men unto him." But when we would apply this principle to the comprehension of these various dispensations, we must not forget that essential and eternal condition which demands the constant preservation of human freedom. For this cause has there ever been such delay, such accommodation in the manner

of this manifestation, and such measure of illustration, as might lead man in the right direction, just as far as he could be led willingly and sincerely, but not one step farther. As this possibility increases, the light which is constantly striving to break forth from heaven is permitted to come down with less and less obstruction.

As an illustration of this, we might refer to the universal fact, that to all races in all ages something of the Divine nature and existence is disclosed, while this something varies almost indefinitely. Or, better perhaps, we may glance at the relations to each other in this respect of the three consecutive churches, — the Jewish, the first Christian, and the New Jerusalem.

That God was One, Omnipotent, Eternal, and Ever-present, was revealed to the Israelites. He stood before them as Almighty, as Power itself. But how far was this revelation transcended when God himself stood upon earth, and by his works and words taught that he was also Love; — impartial, universal, infinite Love. A greater truth than this could not be revealed. But in the church which is now being established it is illustrated with a larger portion of Heaven's own light. The revelations which have been made as the foundation of this church place him before us always, everywhere. Truths and principles are now given which are as wide and will be as permanent as creation. They have but begun to dawn upon an awaking earth. We cannot yet imagine whither they will bear the mind of man. But even in their imperfect twilight, which mingles the darkness of a passing night with the promise of a coming day, we see and know some things with certainty. There are some truths which rise like the mountain-tops above the region of clouds, and catch the earliest ray, and spread below like mountain-bases, vast and immovable. Thus, we are sure that the so-called laws of nature

are but the forms of his ever-flowing, ever-living wisdom; that it is his presence which animates all the forces of nature, and fills the dead mass of matter with the similitude of life; that it is his love which comes as vital warmth to the hearts of angels and of men, and goes with the glad current of the blood as it bears onward its affluence of life to all the corners of the frame. It comes to the earth in the warm sunshine, and breathes in the breath of spring; and kindles all the feelings and emotions of the animal world, and climbs the tree with the ascending sap, and paints the blossom, and ripens the wholesome and delicious fruit. Not that it does all this through laws which it has made and left, or agents who supply its place; but that it is *there*, itself present, formative, animating, active, and the only and the constant and continual cause of all causes, of all forms, all life, all action. The day cannot be very distant when Science will no longer be content to point to Him as the distant source of being, but will begin to proclaim with all her voices, that in all her realms and provinces the one thing that she looks for is his universal presence; and by the degree in which she discovers this, she will measure her approach to the consummation of her labors.

Nor let it be feared that Science will thus be drawn from her proper field, or become enthusiastic or fanatic; for this fear springs from the falsity which separates God from his works. It disappears as we learn that his presence not only gives and sustains being and form, but warms all the charities of life, and quickens all its manifold activities, and imparts to all its varied uses their fitting meed of happiness.

In all ages of the world there has existed among thinking men some disposition to recognize God in his creation, and to regard all things as manifestations of him. But this has too often been a mere deification of nature. Even this

may be better than the utter denial or forgetfulness of God. There may be within this error germs of truth, to be quickened when the mind is opened to better influences. But the great corrective of this error, one before whose refulgent light it cannot for a moment stand, is the doctrine of Immanuel, or God with us. Hence the church which is now by its truths making God manifest in his works, is operating with yet greater power and clearness to illustrate the doctrine of the Divine Humanity. It consents that Philosophy and Poetry should point to the wondrous exhibitions of his power, and say again, "These, these are but the varied God"; but only on condition that religion shall lead them both to the feet of Jesus Christ.

The love of self is the root and centre and animating spirit of all evil. But its form and aspect are indefinitely diversified. It exists and operates on many different planes of thought and life. Sensuality is, as it were, its lowest, most general, or universal expression. But it also takes sometimes the appearance of covetousness or of some other of the gross and vulgar forms of self-love. It is, however, compatible with all excellence of external behavior. For a man may shun all open sin, and give alms, and be very useful,—and do all this from the love of self. He may expect his reward in the applause of men, in the advancement of his position in the world, or in promoting his success in life. He may find full recompense for his self-restraint in the complacent belief that, of his own strength and by his own unaided efforts, he has become better than other men. He has done the work, and he gives himself the glory of it. He is a God unto himself, and his apparent virtues are the morning and evening sacrifice upon the altar of self. This is the last, and it is the worst form of self-love. It is idolatry of the most dangerous kind; it is a falsity which fastens itself upon the heart with terrible

force. But it is a falsity which shrinks and dies before the influence of the New Church. For this reveals to man the true connection between principles which must otherwise appear inconsistent and incompatible. It shows us, that while all is derived from God, and while all is of the present power of God, there is yet much for us to do. When the Apostle bids us "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, *because* * it is God who worketh within us, to will and to do, of his own good pleasure," he seems not only to bring together irreconcilable propositions, but to place them in the relation of cause and effect. How many have pondered over these words until the eye was dim and the heart sad, and the hope of so comprehending them as to lose no part of the truth they contain grew weak and died. But the connecting link is now given; and both parts of this system of salvation are seen to be true, and each is seen to be true *because* the other is so. And this connecting link is found in the truths which teach us, not only that God is ever operating within us, but *how* he is ever operating.

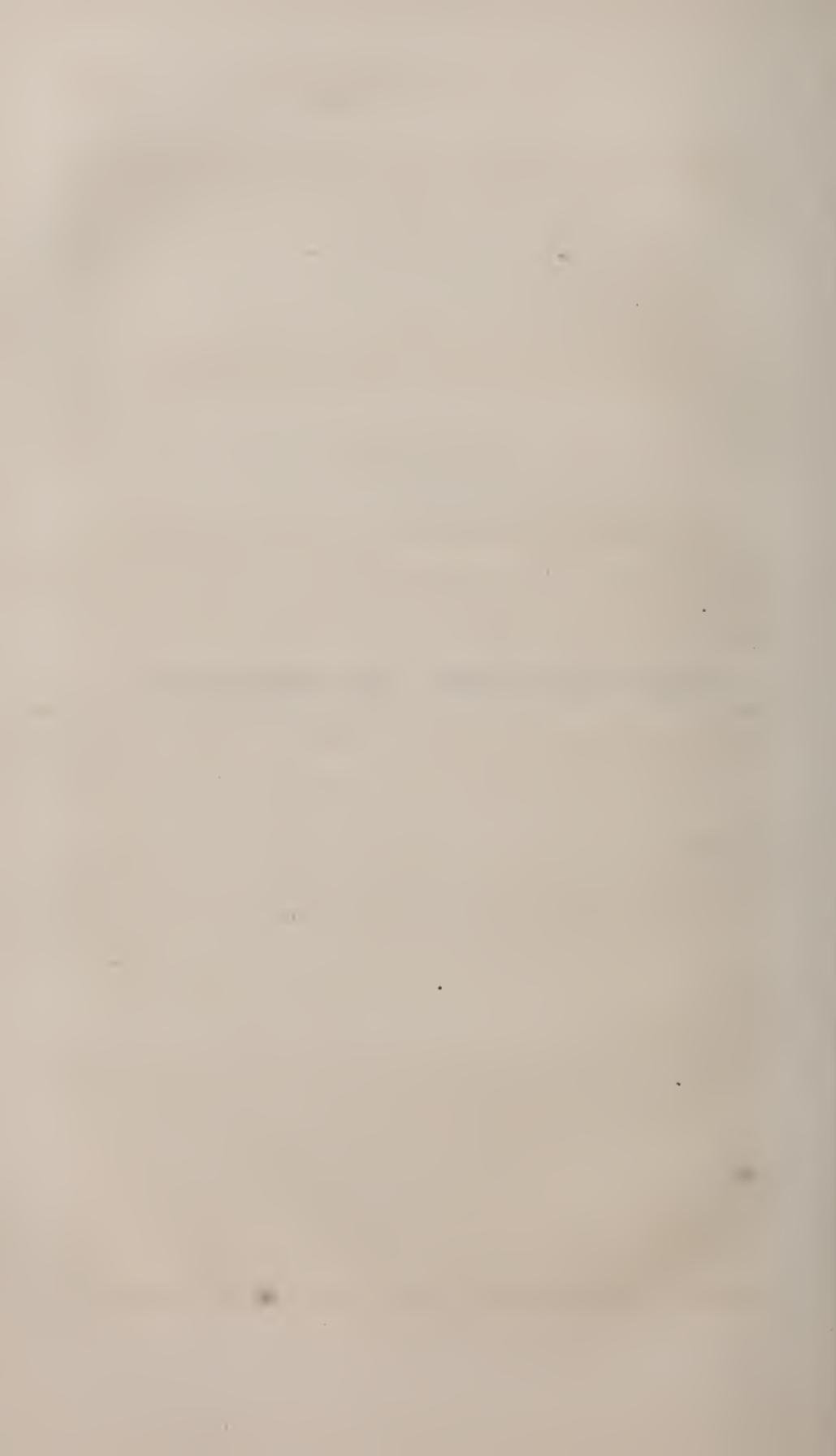
Thus it is that He is now "lifted up,"—that he may draw all men unto him. Neither self-love, nor its offspring, sensuality, is extirpated. The evil influences which breathe out this poison have not perished, nor do they slumber; for they are active and strong and earnest. At every ear are they whispering; and every heart are they endeavoring to corrode. But if we will look, not with the eye of thought only, but with the heart and with love, upon Him who is now lifted up before our view,—in despite of the thronging influences which from the mansions of death press around and upon us,—we shall live. And every individual in whom this state of mind is established, and

* The word translated "for" is used in the sense of "because."

every church and race when and where it is triumphant, will bear the name with which, as the consummating blessing, the Prophet Ezekiel closes the description of that city of God whereby is prefigured the reign of God on earth: "And the name of that city from that day shall be

THE LORD IS THERE."

THE MINISTRY OF SORROW.



THE MINISTRY OF SORROW.

THE conditions of human life vary, and have ever varied, indefinitely ; for no two of woman born ever passed from the cradle to the grave through precisely the same path. When this path is shortest ; when but little of the air of earth is consumed, and that little spent in the wailings which connect death with birth, even these cases may be discriminated, each from its sad brother. But in one thing all are alike. The first breath is a painful breath ; and the being born is very painful. The providence of God, which never ends, begins with all who live, in permitting severe suffering. This suffering, and death, are the only universal states ; the only ones through which all must necessarily pass. As if the universal foundation for all the discipline, direction, and guiding influences of a never-ending life was, of necessity, pain.

And through all this infinite variety of life, there runs the same element of unity. Always, under some form of mental or bodily pain, sorrow has declared its presence and claimed its share ; for wherever there has been human life, there has been human sorrow. The very imagination revolts from the conception of one who has accomplished his whole journey with no accompaniment of grief. It is as if in proof of this universal necessity, that the first indication

of independent personal existence in the new-born babe, is that cry of anguish which declares that, whatever may be the duration or the circumstances of his future life, he has already begun to suffer.

Why is this? Or rather, before we begin to look for its cause, let us reflect upon the argument in favor of an overruling Providence, which might be drawn from the fact. For if the countless millions who live and have lived, were amenable to chance only, it would seem to be capable of demonstration, that some must needs wholly escape what in its accumulation and intensity would overwhelm others. That the waters which gird in this solid globe do not rebel against their appointed limits; that the resistless and devastating tide and wave acknowledge a bound and a control; that the moisture which in one measure or another touches every spot of earth,—in the form of the soft dew, of the gentle or the violent rain, the brook, the river, or the ocean,—never accumulates into limitless and all-destroying masses; this fact is admitted by science and reason as a sufficient ground for the certainty, that it is subjected to a positive, a potent, a sovereign Law. And so it is with the waters of affliction. Sometimes they overflow the soul until it seems for the moment that the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and can never again be sealed. But the waters retire; the bow of promise brightens the retreating clouds, and the dove of peace finds a spot whereon it may rest. The waters of affliction! The whole atmosphere of human life contains them; every place which man calls his home, and everything he gathers about it, acknowledge their presence; and yet they too, in their action and their diffusion, respond to the chorus of the dew, the rain, river, ocean, proclaiming that God reigns, and reigns over them.

Our first inference, then, the first law which we assert, is, that sorrow is God's servant.

Every man's sorrow is his own. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness." As no man is altogether like to any other, so no man's sorrow is altogether like that of another. With every one it is individualized. So, too, must the design and purpose of each man's affliction be peculiar and individual. Nevertheless, the fact of sorrow being universal implies that it has some universal aspect that all may contemplate; and that there must be for its measure and its government some universal law. Where shall we find the truth that will teach us this law?

Let us begin with seeking it in its simplest form; let us look at the subject in its simplest facts.

Sorrow comes quite often from disappointment. Wishes which recognize an impassable barrier are then its parents. And sometimes this is so, when it is not obvious. Let us take poverty, for instance. The dread of this calamity, or, if it seem far off, the wish to enlarge the chasm which separates us from it, stimulates the universal labor of mankind. Of most men's lives, the narrow circle consists of continued toil as the price of continued subsistence. There are those who are lifted above this necessity; but they do not constitute a large class of the human family; and of this portion, perhaps the larger part engage in or seek some pursuit by which their means may be made yet more abundant. Far or near, the spectre of want terrifies; and not always when it is far does it seem to be so, for the vision of avarice or fear is often morbid.

But in what consists the evil of poverty? Sometimes, no doubt, when it is extreme, it may be physical suffering; for starvation is a terrible reality, and makes its presence known by its pangs and by the relief which death brings, now in the crowded haunts of the great city, and now on the desert shore or waste. But this is rare. Food, shelter, raiment, enough to preserve life and to prevent actual suf-

fering, are common things, and are seldom wholly out of reach. Laws, and the charities which leave few wholly isolated, respond to the merciful purposes of Providence; and when any one succumbs to such a want as this, it is a case of remarkable exception.

But poverty has other pains; common enough; constituting a prominent feature of all social life; continually before most men as a danger; and always suggested when poverty, even from a distance, threatens its dreaded visitation. These pains consist of disappointments. They stand before our purposes or our wishes as an insuperable barrier. They cut off our means of doing what we would, for ourselves, for our children, or for others. Our desires may rest on habit, or upon an aspiration for that which we have not yet possessed. They may be ambitious, or sensual, or neither; kind or selfish; conformed to or forbidden by the laws of society; but so far as they are of the earth and earthly, poverty comes to crush them all remorselessly; and in this threat, or in this fact, we feel its sharpest sting. The inference is then irresistible; the great evil of poverty is its opposition to our wishes.

If we take sickness as another common cause of sorrow, it may be the common and first impression, that here the proportion of things is changed, and that physical suffering is now the great evil; but a further consideration may show that it is not altogether so. There were once those who denied that pain was an evil; and if it be viewed by an extent of vision which shall take in both its cause and its purpose and effect, there may be truth in this denial; and perhaps in *their* denial there was more of this truth than their bare words indicate. But these words, in their direct and simple meaning, express a great falsity and a great folly. Pain is an evil, and sometimes a dreadful evil. It is not always, however, the greatest evil of disease, and not

unfrequently constitutes its smallest part. For disease arrests all action. It substitutes the forced and unfruitful repose of the chamber of sickness for the energy which in the counting-room or the office, or in other pursuits, at home or abroad, was earnestly pursuing its objects, and perhaps gathering in the daily accumulation of those stores which we were heaping up for future enjoyment. We were getting more wealthy or more famous; at all events, we were busy; we had objects which we were pursuing with the ardor that hope gives under the stimulus of perpetual approach. And in mid-career, a strong hand grasps us, — and holds us. We stop, and we almost forget the pain of its pressure, in the more painful fact that it compels us to be still while the slow days pass by, creeping under the heavy burden of disappointment.

And if we look on Pain itself, on that species and degree of physical suffering which, at the first glance, seems to admit of no reference to desire or to disappointment, we read there no different lesson. Its great agonies suppress with crushing force whole classes of desires; so utterly, that, for the time at least, they are forgotten, unknown, and unsuspected. Lust, ambition, avarice, fade away, and pale their fires before its fiercer flames. There is great significance in the Oriental mythos, that appears so often in the fragments of that ancient literature which has reached us only in fragments, and which Beckford in the terrible tale of *Vathek*, and Southey in his poem of *Kehama* (to which we referred in an earlier Essay, to illustrate the Oriental idea of penance), use with so much effect. In this last, the Hindoo Prince, by his powerful enchantments and his fearful penances, had acquired far more than human power. From the vantage-ground of his vast sovereignty, he sought, and successfully, to snatch from the gods some portion of their might. Not earth only, but heaven and hell, were moved to

their depths. The last rite at length consummated, he goes, with befitting pomp, to seize the sceptre of the conquered god of the infernal world. He beats down all resistance. The ruler of the dismal realms he had invaded holds forth, at his bidding, the last and greatest treasure, which was to consummate his triumphant career, and make that triumph perpetual;—and this was the “Amreeta,” or cup of immortality. The strong, bad man takes it exultingly, and drinks. But there lies a mystery within it that his almost omniscience had not fathomed. The living liquid derives its quality *from himself*; and it becomes fire in his veins; and the man who thought himself a god is no longer a man, but a mass of fire that cannot die; and he stands stricken, powerless, helpless, and then goes to his place of eternal doom, unable to resist, able only to suffer, not punished only, but quelled and conquered by suffering.

Yes, suffering opposes, suppresses, and subdues desire. Sometimes we cannot refuse to see this in ourselves or in others. Oftener, perhaps, we might see it if we would; and perhaps yet oftener, latent germs of evil, tendencies to sensuality or to the love of self or the love of the world, known only to Him who knoweth all things, are thus checked beyond the power of future development. Who will say how many of the seeds of sin are burned in the fires of suffering? It is a fact forced upon the cognizance of all who observe and consider, that our tendencies to evil sometimes seem to await only the first possibility of activity, and, like some diseases, so come forth as to compel the belief that they were born with us and were a part of us at our beginning. To him who remembers this, and also the sometimes suppressive power of suffering over sin without any aid from moral or voluntary co-operation, the belief may come, that even the sorrows which hang over the cradle have their appointed use. And consoling indeed is the be-

lief, that the pain which utters itself in the cry of the babe, that inflicts upon the heart of the loving parent a greater pang than it expresses, may also do its work, and suppress some germ of what would be a wrongful desire, and make the path to heaven easier and surer, whether it is to be brief or long.

If we leave these special instances, and take a more general view of life, we reach a similar result. How very large a part of our common sorrows and anxieties, of those from which no day, no hour, is wholly free, spring from the same cause; from unsatisfied desire or threatened disappointment. Fear, in some one of its myriad forms, is, with most men, a frequent if not a constant guest. It is an apprehension of the loss of that which we desire to keep because we love it, or of a failure in some effort or some hope for that which we desire to have. True, fear is sometimes lost in the sense of present grief; we suffer so much, we have no fear of suffering more. But then — putting aside the case of physical agony — we shall often, if not always, find that this grief springs from disappointed desire.

What, then, is the general inference from these facts? It is, that sorrow opposes itself to desire. And as we have already affirmed that sorrow is the minister and instrument of God, we reach now another inference; — that he uses this instrument to disappoint, to suppress, to remove, or to prevent desire.

All desire? No; because there are desires which he would neither prevent nor disappoint; and it is precisely these desires from which no sorrow springs, and which sorrow does not destroy. They come to us from realms which sorrow has not invaded; and they invite, and guide, and urge us thither. Angels inspire them; for they have found in them their happiness, and would impart that happiness to us. Even these desires may be accompanied by grief or

fear. We may lament, and bitterly, that others whom we love turn away so resolutely from an offered blessing. We may mourn that we are ourselves so far, so very far, from the goal that we would reach. But in this sorrow there is nothing opposed to the wishes which seem to bring it upon us. Do not these very desires burn all the more ardently, are they not fed rather than extinguished, by this grief? If the sight of one we love, hastening on a downward path, inflicts a blow upon us, does it deaden our desire to hold him back? If the deep feeling of our own unworthiness inflicts upon us a pang, does a lesser desire to be cleansed from our impurities grow out of this pain? Not so. There are, indeed, very many desires against which sorrow does not operate; and between these, and all of those which it is the office of sorrow to kill, there is an abyss, an infinite abyss, wide as that which separates heaven from hell. And it is only those desires which are wrongful or harmful from which sorrow springs; and only against these is sorrow used by Him who permits it to exist.

If we have acknowledged that sorrow is the instrument of God, and that he uses it for the suppression of desire, and if we know that he is good and wise, then must we be certain that he uses this instrument for this purpose, because it is that which is best adapted to this purpose.

Most men's reflections and experience, if we let them speak the truth, confirm this conclusion. All of the desires which we may suppose that God would willingly suppress in us, may be referred to the love of self or the love of the world. And it is precisely these two loves which sorrow does attack, and, so far as we permit, extinguish. Poverty, with its plain attire, and simple food, and modest home, and humble position, strikes a terrible blow upon the strong devil of pride. We may save our pride, nevertheless. We may open to it the refuge of envy; and there it will sit and

brood upon the wrong and injustice which makes us less than others. Or we may let our pride feed itself fat upon our fancied pre-eminence in mental or moral excellence; and we may waste our lives in sullen grief that so much power and so much good have no power of manifestation. But then poverty is useless to us because we make it so. For if we would permit it to scourge away the fiends whom it attacks, as soon as its work was done, it would turn to us with a smile upon its face; and though it might abide with us to guard us from the return of our enemies, it would be no longer a sad and mournful guest. It is the love of the world which sharpens and envenoms the sting of poverty.

And sickness, when it exposes the weakness of our strength, when it lays us prostrate and dependent, when it asks for the tender care which softens pain's hard pillow, when it requires the self-sacrificing watchings of day and night and the perpetual kindnesses of the sick-room, — does it not read to us a lesson against self-love, which some do not hear, and many forget, but which, learnt, understood, and remembered, may well make us bless the visitation?

“They fear not God,” says the Psalmist, “because they have had no changes.” So is it always with the children of men. We grow hard, and proud, and selfish, in continued prosperity. The world ministers to our love of it. We lift up our heads and believe — although we may not whisper even to ourselves a folly so outrageous — that it is our world, and was made for us. And then we love our neighbor, because he is as our servant and feeds our luxury or our pride; and we are indignant when any one calls this self-love. And we rejoice in our success, because it is a proof of our strength, and pity the unfortunate as weak and silly people, who would have been as rich and great, and as much “at ease in their possessions,” as we are, if they had

been as sensible and judicious in their plans, or pursued them with as much vigor. Would it be merciful in the Divine Providence to permit and confirm this state of mind? Yes, even this might be, if it sprang from a disease of the heart so stubborn and inveterate that the very remedy *must* make it worse. There are such persons; and they are left to go on in their own way, with little check or hinderance. But there are not many such. For though the instances may not be infrequent where adversity is not permitted by them on whom it falls to do what it might do, those are not numerous in which it *cannot*. When sorrow *may* help us, it does not always help us, for that is as we in our freedom may determine. But when it *cannot* help us, then it does not come. Providence for ever respects that freedom of the will and act which it establishes in man as the basis and condition of all improvement; and whenever sorrow *may* do its work, there and there only is it permitted to exert its influence. If we *may* be checked in our mad and downward career, if the clinging love of the world may be made to unfold its destructive grasp, if the love of self may be stifled or even weakened, then comes the gift of fear, of sorrow, of disappointment. Each day enables us, if we will make use of the providence of God, to give up something of the false loves which were burning our life away, and offer it as a sacrifice of reconciliation. At first we may make our offering as to an offended and punishing God. But as the healing work goes on; as self ceases to be the idol of our worship; we go as the repentant son to the Father, who comes forth to meet us. Then we understand those words of mercy, "Whom he loveth, he chasteneth."

Death is the great grief of life. The fear of it is the most universal and the most powerful of all the common fears that haunt us. It is seldom that unhappiness which death will end deprives it of its terror. They who struggle through life, and look back with but little of pleasant remembrance and forward with but little hope, generally approach the termination of their wearied being with no diminished dread. And when they who stand by the dying or the dead, and are not lifted by the truth above the desolations of the scene, mourn and shrink away, how much of their anguish comes from the fearful thought, that what they look upon foretells their own inevitable doom. All must die ; and why has Providence armed this only one of all possible events which none can avoid, with such dreadful terrors ? He does this, not merely that this door of escape from life may not be rashly opened by impatient sorrow ; but because, when that event which must happen to all is made thus terrible, there may be before all men, between them and their vices, between fierce passion and utter self-abandonment to sin, one great Fear. Therefore has He permitted clouds blacker than the midnight to rest upon the grave. They rest not on every grave ; but on that which he sees before him whose thoughts stop with death, and reach not to the life beyond. In the full, clear light which revelation, which God's Word, now pours upon these clouds, they disappear, or, if they still hang there, the midnight hour has passed, and they are clouds of the morning, bright and glowing with promise.

But for the untaught or unbelieving, death has but one name : he is the King of Terrors. This is most wise, most merciful, in our Father. And they who still hold to the belief that for certain crimes the punishment of death should be inflicted, find their strongest argument to be that no other barrier so effectual could be built up against the terri-

ble depravity which commits these crimes. It has been said, and it may be true, that before a man can be urged to the offences which alone, in our modern codes, are punished capitally, he must pass under the influence of passions and of lusts, which could hear no reason nor stop to calculate, but might still shrink before this grim spectre. All such offences it has not prevented; many it has; and when we leave the institutions of man, and recur again to the providence of God, we must remember that, if man places this doom before the guilty, God places it before all; and who shall say how many evil propensities — some at their first birth, others at a later maturity — may have been encountered, suppressed, and extinguished, by this awful fear?

And yet views of this kind may lead one into an error. The more clearly we discern the divine instrumentality of sorrow, the more we may tend to the belief that God produces sorrow for the sake of its use. This would be a great error. We may best guard ourselves from it, by a comprehension of the Divine Providence as it acts through laws of permission.

It is impossible to pursue to any extent any inquiry into the ways of God with man, without encountering that principle of human free agency to which we have often alluded. Beginning from this point, the most general statement of the laws of permission may be this. Man — every man and always — may choose evil rather than good; may do evil rather than good; for otherwise he could not choose good rather than evil, and thereby freely co-operate with the Lord in his salvation. Because some men do choose evil, therefore moral evil, and a vast mass of it, exists in the world. Good, by its own order, and of irresistible necessity, leads to happiness. By the same absolute law, it is good *only* which leads to happiness; and evil, or sin, which

is the opposite of good, leads to that which is the opposite of happiness. The Lord desires neither moral evil nor the consequences thereof. He would have all men good and all men happy. And it is the constant effect of his ceaseless providence, that all men are as good as they can be made truly willing to be, and that the amount of happiness in the world is as great, and the amount of misery as small, as can be without the violation and destruction of those laws of order and of mercy which are the source, the foundation, and the eternal preservative of all happiness. Here the divine mercy stops; because it is wise, perfect, divine mercy. It does not sacrifice the freedom of man to prevent partial evil; because by this sacrifice all good would perish. Therefore He permits evil, and permits the sorrow and the misery which flow from it. His own divine order, his own nature, his own mercy, require the permission of sorrow; and then when evil exists and by its own necessity produces sorrow, He uses this sorrow in the cure and destruction of the evil from which it springs. He does not call sorrow into being; man makes it and all of it; and when he has made it, his Father receives it from his hand, and uses it, not in anger and as a punishment, but in mercy, and as a means of destroying that very thing from which it derives its origin.

The connection between moral evil and suffering is not always apparent. Sometimes it lies very deep, and very often, when it comes to the surface, the eye that would not see is turned away. Earthquakes and tempests bring ruin. Fire burns, the wave overwhelms, or the angry wind dashes the mariner and his fortunes, by no fault of his own, against the relentless rock. The air, without which we die, and which circles the earth that we may live, drops along its path the seeds of disease, and plague reaps the harvest. Or some little change takes place in seed or soil or atmosphere, and food fails, and famine leaps forth from its squalid

retreats and shows its ghastly face to nations, and at the sight they die. Where — when — whose — the sin which causes all this misery and all this destruction?

One answer to thoughts like these bids them turn from there obscurities, to that enormous proportion of human sorrow, which we may be certain comes from a violation of the laws which the Lord has revealed, or impressed upon nature. And then it bids us add to this mass that hardly less amount of suffering which comes from what are called accidents and inevitable calamity, but which might have been, nay, surely would have been, avoided or greatly mitigated, if neither sin nor folly nor imprudence prepared for them and helped them.

Nor let us forget the law of inheritance. The child inherits from his parents a portion of their good and of their evil; of their strength and of their weakness; or rather all of it, although but a small part may be excited into development and manifestation. This has always been so, and therefore the whole past is accumulated upon the present. And it often happens that traits of character, moral tendencies, or physical qualities of a distant ancestor return to live again in a remote offspring, while there is little resemblance to the immediate parent. And they bring with them their consequences of sorrow or of joy.

But the most general antidote to the error which would disconnect sin from suffering is supplied by the science of correspondence. For that tells us that the whole world without us is responsive to the world within. Hence its mingled order and disorder, good and evil; hence, too, its general ministry to the uses of life and health and comfort is so limited and restrained and interrupted; and hence, too, it often puts forth its forces in forms of hostility and destruction.

We are taught by the doctrines of the New Church, that

in the heavens this correspondence of the outward with the inward is special and perfect. There, in that perfect organization, they are together who are brought together by affinities of affection and of life. Hence the world about each society is common to all who look upon it and live upon it, and equally responsive to all. Formed of spiritual substance, it is the adequate home of spiritual beings, whose spiritual bodies are no longer clothed upon by natural bodies. It is abiding and permanent as are the essential elements of their character; and it is also changeful and progressive with the changes and the growth of their ever-advancing faculties and affections. But in this world all live together, during their appointed time. The good and the evil, of all kinds and all degrees, mingle together, and they meet mingled good and evil in their encounter with the world without them. For this outward world does not respond specifically to each man, but to the whole race, to man. Hence follows what would seem, in our imperfect view of it, utter confusion. And it is indeed full of confusion and disorder. But these are controlled by infinite wisdom, and love, and power. And therefore, while they are left responsive to man's general nature, they are made in all their particulars, in all their influences upon individuals, in all the aspects they present to each man at any and at every moment, exactly that which he most needs, and that which, if he uses it wisely, will be to him of the greatest use, and lead him forward in the path of his best happiness.

Perhaps we may express the one great end for which sorrow is permitted to exist, and is used, in the most general terms, by saying that the great work of sorrow is to make itself unnecessary and impossible; or, in other words, that sorrow is allowed to come into being and exert its power only that it may destroy its cause and itself, and so perish.

In the fulfilment of its mission, it labors constantly under the condition of respecting man's free agency ; his liberty of choice and life. Therefore it does not always accomplish that which it always seeks to accomplish ; and where it does this best, it does it slowly and imperfectly ; for it can do it only so far as man wills that it should. The probationations of life require, to make them effectual, that freedom of will and of act, the misuse of which often makes them ineffectual. But they do not desert us therefore. Along all the paths of life, sorrow attends us ; for by all of them and near to all lie pitfalls and abysses from which it would save us. If these abysses are openings from the lower deeps, if sorrow comes from them hot and fierce as a blast from the realms of woe, its very violence may stay the foot-step which was tending thither. Along all these paths sorrow attends us, goes with us, a clinging friend ; and because it goes with us, they may all lead to the gates of heaven ; and there Sorrow stops. To us, and not to her, are they opened ; nor does she strive to enter therein, for sin is not there, and she would have no work to do, no aliment on which to live. The remembrance may come ; the thought of the sad causes which gave sorrow being, and of the sad work it had to do, may visit the angel, and then the sky grows dark over his head as with the shadows of approaching night ; but soon this thought gives way to exulting gratitude, to humble and yet joyous adoration of Him whose love has led his children into his own peace ; and a day brighter than before chases the darkness away. In heaven there is little sorrow, for it is the appointed work of sorrow to make men repentant, pure, and good ; and only when that work is done is there any heaven.

In this view of the origin and effect of sorrow there is much, not only of consolation, but of practical instruction.

Let us repeat the conclusions to which we have come. Sorrow springs from evil. It is permitted to spring from this cause, because it may itself become the best remedy for the moral disease which makes it possible. It is so guided and governed as to exercise the strongest influence in this direction which man's free agency permits. And when sorrow has done its whole work, then the cause of its existence, and the divine permission of its existence, both cease. It follows, therefore, irresistibly, that we may do much to hasten this termination, this natural death of sorrow, by co-operating earnestly in the work which the sorrow came to do. But this is a task to which we are not naturally inclined. We find it much easier, when we are suffering, to exhale our anger or our grief in complaint or lamentation. We ask sympathy. We put forth the claim of the miserable, and insist upon the privileges of wretchedness. But to what purpose? Very little to the extinction of our sorrow, and often perhaps we so keep it alive, and deepen it into despair. But there is a better thing for us to do; it is to find out what that sorrow has come from, and what it has come for.

We shall pursue this inquiry in vain, if we do not look far behind the circumstances which appear to be its immediate parents. They are but its occasions and opportunities; its causes lie far deeper. These we shall seek with the greatest probability of success, if we examine carefully what evil this sorrow rebukes and puts to silence; what bad habit it breaks up; what cherished folly or iniquity of thought or act it assails; what change or reform it suggests; what error or falsity, what illusion of the heart, what want of truth or faith, gives its force. Then we are looking for the cause of sorrow in those regions of our be-

ing where its causes lie. We may or may not find it here ; but certainly we shall not find the true cause of sorrow in the outer realm of external agencies.

We may or we may not find it ; this is always uncertain. For so complete is our ignorance of the laws and influences which determine character, and indeed of the elements which constitute character, that we have little right to expect that we shall always succeed in any inquiries which we must pursue in so thick a darkness. But it is also true that we may often find the true cause of our sorrow. Every one who has endeavored to discover by the help of his sorrow that evil or that want which gives it origin or poignancy, to the end that he may put the evil away or supply that want, can bear testimony that very often he sees, plainly as in the light of noon, what work this visitant was commissioned to perform. And then comes the question, Will we co-operate in this work ?

It would seem to be as capable of demonstration as conclusions of this kind well can be, that if sorrow is permitted only that it may produce a certain effect, then, if we can discover what the desired effect is, and if we can by our co-operation accelerate this effect, or make it more complete, most certainly we may thus accelerate the termination of this sorrow ; we may render it less severe by lessening the need of its severity ; we may make its departure more perfect, and guard against its return, by enfeebling or suppressing the causes which produced it.

Such might be our reasoning ; and it would be painful to believe that there were not many who could testify to the truth of this reasoning with all the certainty of experience. For there are those who have formed the habit of encountering sorrow thus, whenever it assails them. They look at once towards its moral cause and origin, and its moral purpose. The very effort brings consolation and hope ; for

it strengthens in their minds and gives new life and vigor to their strong conviction, that He who bade the stormy sea be still, holds this sorrow in his hand. They cannot sorrow as without hope; despair dares not draw near to them. And they would tell, — yea, in despite of the unbelief and scorn of the very many to whom such words would express the very farthest reach of folly, — they would tell how often they thus find the cause of their sorrow, and by attacking the moral evil which it attacks, they thus mitigate that sorrow or remove it entirely, as surely as a skilful physician arrests or removes a disease, when he knows or applies its specific remedy.

Often may this be done by many; but by none always. For there are none who may safely be intrusted with so great a power over their afflictions. And then when sorrow comes, as from the bosom of a cloud, born of darkness and bringing darkness, and the deep midnight of its presence is itself a heavy pain, and we feel an utter inability to explain it, to comprehend it, to do anything but suffer, — does this great sorrow bring with it no airs from heaven? Yes; and they will breathe upon us with healing and refreshment, when we have used aright this opportunity to strengthen our Faith; when we have resisted the devils of doubt and of denial, and they have fled; for this good it has come, if for no other. It will help us to believe, more than before, and to know better than before, that, as the wind bloweth where it listeth and we know not the sound thereof nor whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so the Spirit does its work.

Such severe visitations do not come to all, nor perhaps to many; but their heavy hand is upon some. And well may it be, that in those sad moments when the sufferings of a lifetime seem compressed into one abiding pang, and all sense but that of grief and loss and fear is paralyzed, and hope

itself knows not how to hope, and we wait with an enforced silence until the desolation shall pass by, — it may well be, that even then the mercy of God is most triumphant, even then the Spirit of God is doing for us and within us his mightiest works.

It is impossible to consider sorrow under any of its religious aspects, without remembering those suffered by our Lord and Saviour. We refer to the temptations in the wilderness, the agony in the garden, the bloody sweat, the cross. Yet when we approach this subject, we pause before its holiness; we fear to tread within the precincts of its sanctity.

To the New Church Jesus Christ is Jehovah. We believe that the words "The Father and I are one" express a Truth, — a central, an absolute, an infinite Truth. The mind of man has been tasked, either to build upon these words great falsities, or to explain them away, to deprive them of meaning and of force, to clothe whatever meaning is left with an envelope of naturalism; for the natural mind is prone to treat this truth, when it fails to cast it wholly away, as the natural body treats a foreign and a hostile substance lodged within it, which it cannot cast off, and therefore invests with a covering woven from its own substance. And yet this Truth remains, and, thanks be to the infinite mercy of God! there it will live for ever.

In the endeavor to explain the sufferings of Christ, from the earliest ages of Christianity there have been those who, knowing no mode of escape, or perhaps not seeking any, have fallen into the error which is called, in the technical

language of theology, Patripassionism. This name defines itself; it means that the Father, Jehovah, suffered all that Jesus Christ suffered. Various opinions have been adopted by those who would avoid this error and yet retain the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. But the opposite extreme of this error, and by far the worst of the many methods by which it was resisted, and, in our opinion, the worst of the heresies which have desolated the Church, was held by many of those who were known as Gnostics, and especially by the Docetists. This falsity rapidly grew into a system; generally stated, it was the doctrine that the whole life of our Lord on earth was merely an appearance; a phenomenon without reality. Perhaps the history of human thought does not exhibit a more vivid example of an absolute denial, under the pretence of sincere acknowledgment. An absolute denial; for what denial of Christ can be stronger, than that which declares his whole life to have been not so much as the shadow of a substance, but only the picture of a false idea. For this doctrine maintained that the life of Christ on earth presented a series of appearances, which were only semblances intended to suggest useful truths, and produce a strong impression. And the pretence of belief was maintained by building with assiduous labor a whole fabric of theory, which was based upon the assertion that Jesus Christ was an appearance of Jehovah.

Neither Patripassionism nor Gnosticism does the New Church adopt; to neither of them does it incline.

We believe that our life is from God, and is his; that he is always within us, as the cause of our being, whatever be the form that we give to his influent life when it descends within the reach of our free agency. He is within us all, and always was, and ever will be; for our good, for our guidance, for our salvation. But when this was not enough,

or rather, when new means might be employed to make this more efficacious, than those means were used.

The fulness of time had come. The sins and vices of mankind had gone on accumulating, until the measure was full. And sinful men had passed into the other world, and there become the mediums of sin and evil influence, until there, too, the power of evil had fully ripened, and the freedom of man was ready to perish before the growing night of sin.

Then Jehovah assumed a human nature. Born of a human mother, this nature partook of human infirmity, of human liability to error, of human danger, to their full extent. Of the work done in, upon, and by means of this assumed human nature, we must speak, if we would speak of the greatest goodness of God, and of the highest means of salvation.

When, with faculties which fully comprehend *nothing* of the world our feet press and our fingers touch, we would look upon the chief work of the Infinite, what hope can we have of comprehending this? Of fully comprehending it, none; for it would be strange indeed if the greatest involved less than the least. But there are means by which we may begin to comprehend it, and may enter upon a path where progress will be infinite, because it leads towards the Infinite.

These means are given us by the analogy or correspondence between whatever is above, or causative, and whatever is below, or effect; between the means employed, or the glorification of the assumed human nature, and the effect to be produced, or the regeneration of our nature.

God is man; perfect and divine man. From him, as man, comes the possibility that we too may become truly human; not divine as he is, but human, as an image and likeness of the Divine. Hence a clear perception of the

laws and method of that work of regeneration which is the end of our being, and an unfailing conviction that we are the children of God, and created in the image of our Father, will help us to understand his greatest work, — the glorification of the personal humanity assumed by him.

We are born without actual sin, but with the possibility of and a tendency to all sin. Into these tendencies, or some of them, the life of evil spirits flows, and constitutes that part of our life. For all of our life comes to us through spirits. And these are such as exactly correspond to us : because it is this correspondence which opens the way from them to us, and so enables us to live. That life which does not suit us, and is not adapted to and appropriate for us, could not be received by us, and could not become our life. If no life flowed into us but that which we could not receive, we should have no life, and should not live. Therefore, that we may live, it is one of the laws of our being that affinity shall determine, always and exactly, who they are who shall be mediums of life to us. Such spirits are, by the fact of this affinity and the attraction which grows out of it, brought nearest to us, and come into spiritual contact with us, and impart to us a life which we can receive, and make our own ; and by which we can therefore live.

And then another law of our being comes into play ; and that is, the law of our freedom. By virtue of this, we may change our associates ; we may make ourselves capable of a better life than they can give, and then they will leave us, and others will come to us who can give us this better life. Or we may make ourselves incapable of so good a life as we receive, and then we sink down upon a lower plane, and receive from those who live there a lower life.

We speak of associates ; for there are more than one. All men have in them something that is good, and some-

thing that is evil. Good spirits come to us through whatever we have in us that is good, and evil spirits through whatever in us is evil; and thus our composite life is given to us and received by us.

If it were not so, no man could be saved; no man could become better than he is. For when, in the exercise of our freedom, we resist the influence of evil spirits and refuse to receive their life, we should die, were it not that the better life we have sustains us, and then a good life from good spirits, from new heavenly associates, flows in to take the place of the evil life we have wasted and rejected. And it is thus that we begin the work of improvement or regeneration, and may make a perpetual and indefinite progress in this work. It is our *internal* man which uses our freedom to this effect; which resists evil, and puts it away from our external man, and thus permits new and better life to flow down into our external, and make it one with the internal.

In a similar manner, when our Lord was on earth, to the infirmities and evil tendencies of his human nature all evil spirits came, and strove to fill them with their own life and bring them forth into action. This is presented symbolically in the account of the temptations in the wilderness; for it was this which constituted our Lord's temptations; and it is this which is meant when it is said that he was "tempted in all things as we are." But by the strength of his internal man, which was Jehovah, all of these efforts of the evil were resisted and defeated. This was a gradual work; occupying the whole earthly lifetime of our Lord, as it should occupy our earthly lifetime. And the result was the regeneration of his assumed humanity, as the result of similar resistance and similar victory is our regeneration.

Thus far we have endeavored to exhibit the analogy between our Lord's life on earth, and our own. Let us now

look at the points of difference. And all of these may be said to arise from, and to be implied in, the one great difference, that this work is in us always and of necessity partial and incomplete. In him it was entire, perfect, absolute.

To us, no evil influences are admitted but those which we *may* overcome, although often it seems not to be so. A temptation comes with the might of a lion. Resistance seems as impossible as if the lightning smote us, or a rushing river bore us away in its fury. We say, and we think, we cannot resist. But it is the desire to yield which prompts this delusion, and makes us think this falsehood; for a falsehood it always is. There are those who habitually and complacently yield to their impulses, and content themselves with saying that they must do so now, but will do better when they can. How is it possible for them ever to know what they can do? There are others who rebuke these persons, and pity their mistake or despise them for it; because they themselves generally resist, — they have cultivated self-control, and have principles and govern themselves by principles, — and only now and then, when the temptation is very strong, do they yield to it, and say *they must* yield. And then they forget that they are uttering the same falsehood — the same in itself, however less in quantity and measure — that they rebuke in others. For it is always false that we are exposed to evil influence and solicitation which we cannot resist. We do not mean that the equilibrium is always exact. On the contrary, it is perhaps never so; for we are almost never in the condition of absolute indifference. Human freedom neither means this nor requires this. The scales vary, and sometimes one and sometimes the other ascends. Accordingly as the influences which affect us are disposed and determined by Divine Providence, we are sometimes more and sometimes less solicited to evil. If very

feebly, then is it easy for us to be good ; if more urgently, then is resistance more painful and difficult. But at the worst, this resistance is never impossible ; for that is a condition of being which does not now belong to this life, although it once did ; for then should we be *possessed* by the devils.

To our Lord also, in his humanity, all temptations were admitted ; for that humanity was strong with the might within ; and to that there were no limits : it was the Divine Omnipotence.

True it is, that it is the same strength which resists and overcomes in us as in him. Of ourselves we have no strength ; He it is who within us worketh to will and to do ; but always under the sovereign law, the immutable condition, which preserves unimpaired our personal individuality and freedom. Therefore is this strength within us restrained and limited by us. It is not ours ; but it is given us to use as our own. And it can be put forth only in such ways and in such measure as shall be determined by ourselves.

In Him there was no limitation, no restraint. The strength against evil was almighty, not only as it existed *in* his humanity, but as it was put forth *by* that humanity. Therefore, all the hells were admitted to assault, to *tempt*, that humanity.

“ Ill wast thou shrouded then, O patient Son of God.”

But the Father was within ; and the arm of his omnipotence was bared, and the whole might of evil was encountered and defeated and subdued.

When we yield to an evil influence, we strengthen and feed the life of that spirit from whom it comes to us. For it is thus he lives ; we thus give him an opportunity to do that which he loves best to do ; and we give to him

all the confirmation and force, which, as all know, we give by indulgence to any propensity. This spirit of evil can thenceforward assail us more vigorously; and not us only, *but all others*. On the other hand, every time we resist and disappoint him, we enfeeble him; we do something to make the evil in him weaker, and when he next assails us or others, he will do it with less force, and it will be easier for us or for others to resist and overcome him. From this it follows, that the very best thing we can do for others is to be good; and the worst thing we can do for them is to be evil. For when we are good, it is by efforts which will make it easier for others as well as for us to be good in the same way. And when we indulge ourselves in sin, we make it easier for others as well as for ourselves to fall under the same temptation, when next it threatens them or us.

But when we do our very best, we do comparatively little in this way. We have checked and weakened some of the myriad influences which, ascending from the kingdom of evil, seek to precipitate us thither. We have sent back to their dark abodes, stricken and debilitated, those who came from them to impart to us a portion of their own destruction. And it may be truly said, that the evil spirits whom we have thus overcome will never again be so strong as they would have been, had we gratified them by indulgence and strengthened them by exercise.

Precisely this was the result of our Lord's conflicts and victories; but this result was then infinite and universal. All evil influences attacked him. There were no tendencies to sin in human nature which they who had lived in the indulgence of those sins, and had so gone down into darkness, and then and there become the embodiment of those sins, did not find in the humanity he assumed, and endeavor to rouse into activity. They were all resisted, all

conquered. He remained pure, sinless, and undefiled. No spot or stain from hell could cleave to him. And all the enemies of good yielded to his perfect goodness, and found themselves, all and for ever, defeated and subdued.

Why did he not extirpate them? Why not, at least, remove them far from the possibility of tempting us? Why not, as he had conquered all of them, save for ever all of us, by one exertion of his divine omnipotence?

Because this was not within the purposes of his divine wisdom. Had he so done, the means would have been wanting for that equilibrium between good and evil, without which there could be no free choice of good rather than of evil; and without this there were no foundations on which the heavens could rest. It was not merely out of mercy to the infernals that he permitted them to live the only life they can live. But, in his infinite wisdom, he combined the most perfect mercy to them with the most perfect benevolence to man. He reduced them to order, and subjected them for ever to the force of those laws which permit them to excite in man so much only of their own evils, as shall leave man in full and perfect ability to resist them and reject what they would give to him.

Had it been otherwise, not they alone would have perished, but man also. For when we begin our being, it is as natural men, wholly unregenerate; and if life did not flow into us through the unregenerate, it could not reach us nor be received by us, because it would not be a life that we could live by. But because an influence which is accommodated and adapted to us in that state reaches us, we live; and because we live, better influences may also reach us, mingling with and tempering and disposing the evil, until its power of destruction is converted, *if we will*, into a means of salvation. Only through such instrumentality does the influent life from the Lord reach any; for

by this means is His life adapted to the receptivity of all, and thus are all bound together, however unconsciously or involuntarily, for good. By this means, Divine Providence secures to us life; and without that suppression of evil, which would be a suppression of life, not in the infernals only, but in us, he provides that even evil shall do his work. He overrules it, and brings forth good out of it, and compels it to promote the progressive improvement of the individual and the race. We live; we begin with living a merely natural life, which we have not chosen, but which springs from the qualities and tendencies we inherit. It may be that from some of these qualities and tendencies this life is outwardly good and kind before it is *spiritually* so; then we do not know ourselves; the evil is shut up, and not driven away. But no one is left in this ignorance but those who will not suffer it to be removed; and with growing self-knowledge, the power is also given us of gradually substituting for our earlier states of thought and feeling, a spiritual life, a free and voluntary life, freely and voluntarily chosen, and made our own by this choice, by this act of adoption. And thus this power becomes the power of ascending from earth to heaven.

In us, as we have often said, this work is always limited and imperfect. But just so far as we carry it forwards, just so far is our external man united with our internal. For just so far the vital influences which inspire good into our inmost being have triumphed; they have succeeded in overcoming the resistance of our external, where lie our lusts, our selfish, worldly, or vicious propensities. These are subdued and removed; and their place is now occupied by good affections, into which the internal and spiritual influences may flow without obstruction or restraint. Then the external is conformed to the internal. When reason, or conscience, or religion, tells us one thing, we neither do, nor

desire to do, nor think of doing, another thing. Conflict has given way to harmony. The internal and external are conjoined in unity. Our eternal destiny depends upon the question, Shall our external nature triumph, and our inner life be subdued to a conformity with it, or shall this internal life conquer, rule, and fill the external?

A similar effect was produced, by similar causes and similar means, in our Lord's assumed humanity; but perfectly and infinitely. His external was brought, by the absolute suppression of all its natural tendencies to sin, into a perfect conformity and perfect union with the internal. And because this internal was Divine, the external became also, by this perfect conjunction and unity, perfectly and for ever Divine. It became the divine external of Jehovah. Hence, by it and through it, all Wisdom is manifested, all Love operates; and therefore is it said, that to it "all power is given." And for ever and with all men is this almighty power exerted in bringing us to an exactly similar end, by exactly similar means, BUT in only that degree and measure which our own freedom and our own co-operation permit.

The whole doctrine of the *internal* and the *external* man, as held by the New Church, is like so many other of its doctrines, not so much new, as newly expanded, developed, and defined. Something of it, as has been often said, must always have been known to every thinking being who sought his own reformation, and by this seeking became conscious that he had, as it were, two natures; one lower and external, governed by sense, and in contact with the world; the other higher, internal, and striving to control and direct the other and make it better. So, too, must he have learnt from consciousness, that, exactly in proportion as these efforts of the internal were successful, and as the external became thereby conformed to and conjoined in harmony with the internal, he became good, peaceful, happy.

And something of this doctrine has belonged to all religion and all religious philosophy.

This doctrine is now a central doctrine of the New Church; and it is defined and illustrated by truths which explain to us our nature, the elements of character, the origin and the laws of life, and our relations with Him who is the perpetual Source of life. The same doctrine applies to and explains our Lord's life on earth, and the relation between his external nature; derived from Mary, and his internal, which was Jehovah. These two were distinct, not as two persons are distinct, but in the same way as our external is distinct from our internal, and yet in a far higher degree.

To one who has learnt nothing of the difference between his own external and his internal, it must needs be idle to speak of our Lord's life on earth, or of the glorification of his assumed human nature; for it is impossible that he should receive any idea on the subject. On the other hand, exactly in proportion as one advances in this knowledge of himself, and as he permits the work of regeneration to go on within him, he will become conscious of the distinction between his external and his internal, and of the natural opposition between them, and of that congruity, harmony, and conjunction of the two, which are the end, the effect, and the measure of regeneration. And exactly in that proportion will he have learnt experimentally the truths which explain the mystery of the Divine humanity. And then this mystery becomes indeed a truth, — the greatest of truths.

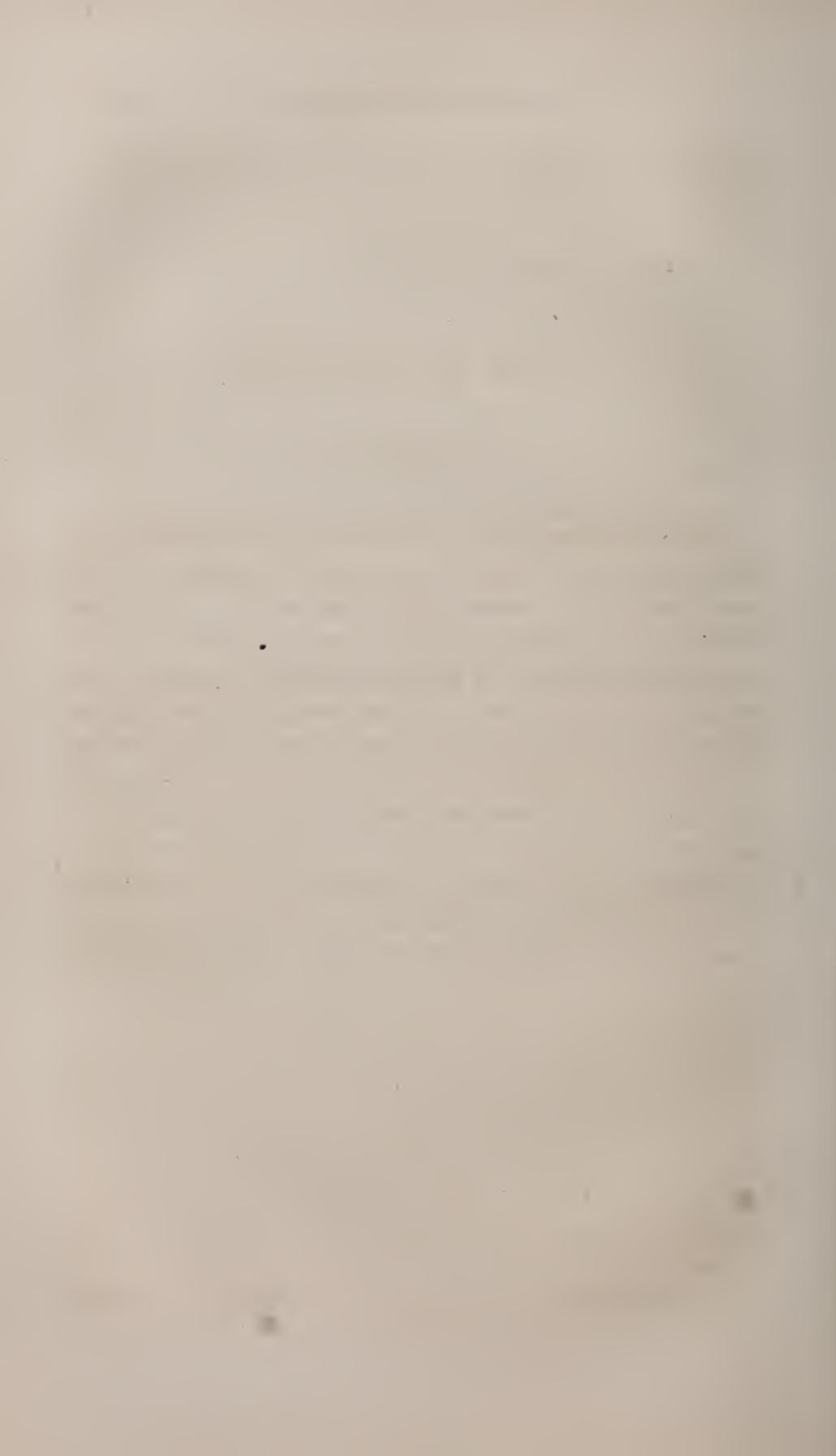
When clouds overspread our sky, the diffused light tells us of the sun that is beyond them. And if the clouds grow thin, we may discern, not yet him, but his place; and may see that thence cometh all that is not darkness. But in the heavens these clouds are swept away; and there, as the Sun

of heaven, for ever pouring forth its heat and light, its love and wisdom, for ever shines the infinite and eternal Divine Humanity.

If I have not wholly failed in exhibiting the analogy between our Lord's life on earth and that which should be our earthly life ; if I have at all succeeded in showing what is meant by the command which requires us "to take up the cross and follow Him," — then it will be apparent that the great result was attained by means of infinite temptation, infinite conflict, infinite sorrow, and, through this, infinite victory. It was thus that, by the path of sorrow, which we also must tread, He reached the goal towards which we also may go. And He will go with us through this weary road, as one who has travelled it before ; suffer as we may, He knows, not by his Divine omniscience only, but by his Divine-human experience, what that suffering is ; and it was thus that his humanity became Divine, and that this Divine Humanity became, and is, the sovereign Lord of Sorrow.

Always, everywhere, for ever, sorrow obeys him. Always it is his instrument and conforms to his laws, and does his work. And this work is salvation. It is the destruction of sorrow by destroying the causes of sorrow ; it is the giving to man the Peace of God.

THE SABBATH.



THE SABBATH.

BECAUSE things which are common are not noticed, and the mercy of God makes most common the things we most need, his best and constant gifts affect us least. There are blessings so universal, so unfailing, so sure to come at their appointed season, that all wonder at them died long ago ; and with wonder passed away attention, observation, and interest. Poets have imagined the glad astonishment of the first man, as the young world was unveiled before him ; but who has thought that every morning awakes us from the counterfeit of death, and brings to us a new creation, a new revelation of existence, which would always inspire us with awe and admiration but for our dulled sense ? And when the morning of the year smiles upon retreating Winter, and Earth awakes from her long sleep, how far we fall behind the due acknowledgment of the beauty and the joy of this re-birth of nature. How little we think of the daily sunshine, of the rain that comes to feed that vegetable world which gives us food ; how little of the air, of all the constant gifts of God that which is most instantly needful for life, and of all the most invisible. How very little of that one of these common and unthought-of blessings which forms our more immediate subject.

The Sabbath ! Can there be anything in that worthy

of earnest inquiry, of our profoundest thought? Every week is sure to bring it to us; and not to us only, but to many hundred millions; and not now only, but far back we see it, brightening the dark ages of Christianity, and, far again beyond them, it shines upon the hills of Palestine. In that dim East, where the first faint dawn of humanity arose, it was, and now, in nearly all the latitudes of the broad earth, — for to nearly all of them the cross has been borne, — it is. And this very commonness and antiquity of the Sabbath veils it from our regard. It is now one of the universal and established things; and has taken its place as a matter of course; and it occurs to very few indeed to ask anything about its origin, its authority, its meaning, or its purposes.

Nevertheless, this very universality and antiquity would seem to entitle it to respect, if only on the ground of prescription. That it was universal and constant in the Jewish Church, every one knows. That it did not originate in the law of Moses, but, like many other provisions, was but re-enacted and enforced by that law, is believed on good evidence. That it was transplanted quite early into Christianity, and has been always acknowledged in various ways by nearly all Christians, is as well known. And it is not reasonable to believe that a mere vanity could have had so much power and endurance.

Moreover, the collateral testimonies in favor of the Sabbath are not without some value. We cannot, it is true, refer to ancient heathen customs, or to passages in old writers alluding to these customs, for the purpose of finding there additional authority for the observance of the day. Yet investigations of this kind afford a certain measure of support to the belief that the Sabbath has, in itself, some intrinsic worth and importance.

Perhaps it may be admitted, that nothing looks so arbi-

trary as the Sabbath. There is not, among the institutions which have prevailed long and extensively, any one which, at the first aspect, seems to rest so absolutely on the will of its Founder. There is His command; and because of His command, there is the Sabbath; and for no other cause apparently does it exist among men. The seventh day! Why the seventh more than any other day? Does experience show that precisely this amount of rest is that which is best adapted to laboring man and beast? Or has physiology, or any other branch of science, discovered anything which comes in aid of experience, or makes us expect, *a priori*, that He who made man would require of him to abstain from labor every seventh day? No.

If the institution of the Sabbath be so arbitrary, it may seem strange that God should impose and reiterate this command with so much solemnity. And if we are satisfied with the answer, that "the ways of God are past finding out," the question then comes up in another form: in its relation to man, of whom, and of whose springs of action and manner of acting, we know more. For if the Jewish observance of the Sabbath be sufficiently accounted for by the distinctness of the command, and the positive law given to them with the dread sanctions of Sinai, how can we account for the general observance of the same institution by Christians of every age? If it be purely arbitrary, one would suppose that only a positive requirement could establish or preserve it; and where is that to be found in Christianity?

The residue of the ritual law of the Jews is abrogated. The Sabbath itself, so far as it rests upon that law, would seem to be an observance of the last day of the week. Where was the authority which changed it to the first day? Where any better authority, than that which every man has to change it again to the second, or third, or fourth, as

may suit him best? There is no certain evidence that it was generally observed by Christians of the earliest ages; and what evidence there is on this subject is mainly confined to the Jewish Christians. And the references to the Sabbath in the Gospels, if not opposed to the strict and literal Jewish observance of it, certainly contain nothing like a re-enactment or confirmation. Why, then, has this day been held as in some way sacred so long, and by so many varying sects and classes?

There is yet another circumstance of no great apparent magnitude, but adding to the singularity of the Sabbath, *if* it be only arbitrary; and this is, its place in the law of Moses. It is a ceremony, a rite; and upon its face it is nothing else. Now, there is a long and exceedingly minute ritual law delivered to the Jews; but the institution of the Sabbath is not there. Another more especial, more important code was revealed through Moses. This is very brief; it seems almost to be the concentrated essence of God's will; and twice was it written upon stone tables for man to read. Its precepts and requirements are very simple. It rebukes idolatry and profanation; requires honor to parents; forbids murder, adultery, theft, falsehood, and covetousness. These provisions the universal law of human life asserts as the primal and elementary principles of all good conduct. But connected with these is the command to keep holy the Sabbath-day; and thus strangely mingles this arbitrary, this inexplicable thing, with the simple requirements which have the sanction of common sense, of experience, and (with the exception of idolatry) of all the systems of law or of religion which God has given to man or permitted man to make for himself. For only when any religion has become corrupted, and is near its death, have the moral precepts comprised in the ten commandments been renounced or lost.

Considerations of this kind have always led some thinking minds to believe that the Sabbath had probably a force and a significance of its own, however difficult it may be to detect and unveil them. And to those whose inquiries are turned in that direction, the ancient heathen references, however indistinct, have some interest.

The division of time by weeks prevailed from the remotest antiquity, very extensively. Distinct traces of it are found among the Assyrians, Egyptians, Indians, Arabians, and Persians; and there are obscure intimations which are supposed to point to a consecrated Sabbath among many of these nations, and some others. In the early literature of Greece there are allusions to it which can hardly be considered indistinct. Thus Hesiod says:

“Again the seventh, the illustrious day.”

Elsewhere he speaks of

“The seventh, the sacred day.”

Homer says:

“It was the seventh day, and the whole was finished.”

And a line preserved among the fragments of the poet Linus says almost the same thing:

“On the seventh day were all things finished.”

These heathen references to the Sabbath, or to what may have been a Sabbath, have not been wholly unnoticed by Christian inquirers. Some have said that they arose merely from the convenience of dividing time by a lunar period, and that this division would fall naturally into halves and quarters. Others have supposed that the heathen observance was borrowed from the Jewish. There is no doubt that the ritual of Palestine, from its splendor, perhaps from its peculiarity, was widely known among surrounding nations. But although some traces of its influence

are discernible, there is nothing to explain or render credible the fact, that the Sabbath alone should have been selected and adopted into the practices or the poetry of other nations. Another hypothesis supposes, that, as the sacredness of the Sabbath is declared in the Scriptures to have existed from the beginning, so at the beginning some manifestation of its holiness was made, which was borne along the stream of time, and cast here and there upon its shores. And thence we find uncertain and disconnected traces of it, among the different branches of the human family. In this supposition there is, if not truth, at least an approach towards the truth.

Probably the prevailing opinion among the few who now ask the reason of the Sabbath is, that it was originally a good device, which has been perpetuated, accidentally as it were. The regular occurrence, after a brief interval, of a day of rest, is salutary to the body and to the mind; and, as it brings with it worship and religious acknowledgment and instruction, it is good for the soul. Therefore thoughtful people, seeing its utility, have defended and preserved it; and the many, following blindly, have accepted the day, and regarded themselves as bound in some manner to the observance of it by God's law.

There may be those, however, who think that a deeper significance is indicated by the recorded deeds and words of God concerning the Sabbath; and who demand a deeper reason for a fact of so much power, of so long endurance, of such wide dominion. And such persons may be interested in the explanation of the subject given by the science of correspondence and the religious doctrines of the New Jerusalem.

The Sabbath, as originally instituted by the law of Moses, is the seventh day.

They who have but little knowledge of the science of correspondence may be startled at hearing that this science extends even to numbers. For if there is anything *alone*, anything perfectly independent, isolated, abstract, and, in its state of abstraction, powerless, it would seem to be numbers. Yet there are some considerations which might serve to check this belief. Certainly it was not held always. In the beginning of philosophy, or in what we call its beginning, because the recollection of history goes not beyond it, such men as Pythagoras and Plato thought differently; not to mention a large class of philosophers, who, however widely they may have wandered in their speculations, are not to be lightly regarded, except by those who are very ignorant of the history of the human mind.

“Number,” said Pythagoras, “is the ruler of forms and ideas.”

“To the creating Deity, number was the most undeviating balance of the composition and generation of all things.”

Philolaus said, “Number was the judicial instrument (the means and standard of judgment and arrangement) of the Maker of the universe.”

I have not gone to the originals for these, but have taken them, almost at hazard, from among the many similar passages which may be found in the common books which treat of the history of philosophy. They only prove, what indeed every one admits, that there was a prevailing disposition to ascribe to numbers significance, power, and importance. But the system, if system there was, on which this was done, cannot be well explained by any remains of antiquity which have come down to us.

All of this has been usually thought a dream, a mere

phantasm. And in an age which knows so much as the present, and knows so little of the limits of its knowledge, it seems to be thought so more certainly than ever. The fruitless — if not foolish — endeavors made at different times in past ages to revive this study of numbers, and draw from it some definite results, have doubtless confirmed this belief. Just the same opinion is held, however, of many other elements of the Pythagorean or Platonic philosophy ; of some of them, with probable justice ; of all of them, perhaps, with some justice. But in that philosophy there was nevertheless too much of strong and penetrating thought, too many indications of a wide view, and of a just insight into the nature of things, to permit a reasonable man to say contentedly that Pythagoras and Plato were silly, or even to say the same thing in the less plain but equivalent language, which speaks of unchecked fancy, predominating imagination, dreams of the childhood of thought, and so on. Moreover, if one has looked much into the origin and history of science and the relations of the present to the past, he sees much that modern science is but rescuing and recovering from forgetfulness. Altogether, it requires some courage, or much ignorance, to say that everything of ancient belief, which is not clear *to us*, must in itself be absurd. Many sensible persons, possibly a majority of them, might be of opinion that our knowledge is not so universal, or so complete, as to justify this sweeping conclusion.

One who believed the doctrines of the New Church, and was accustomed to think with their help, would probably regard the Pythagorean doctrine of numbers as held somewhat indistinctly by the philosophers of that school ; and as certainly made much more indistinct by the lapse of time, and by the obstructing mediums through which it has reached our day. If it be difficult for the most skilful and careful to report accurately peculiar views of abstract sub-

jects, the difficulty is much greater, when, instead of skill, there is an ignorance, gradually, as time passes, deepening into midnight ; and instead of care, indifference or contempt. But he would probably believe that in this doctrine of numbers, mutilated, misinterpreted, and misrepresented as it is, we have the remains of one department of an earlier and completer science.

It is an exceedingly common remark, and it is growing more common every day, that modern science seems to be, in good measure, a revival of old knowledge ; not so much a creation, as an awakening from long slumber. There are many things found in Egypt, preserved in monumental paintings and sculptures, curiously connecting together the remotest antiquity and the immediate present.

The re-discovery by Copernicus of the Pythagorean system of astronomy is an instructive instance of old science becoming new again. We have no exact and entirely trustworthy statement of the system of the universe which Pythagoras taught. The traditions on which we must rely are somewhat inconsistent, and all contain some error. But they contained also sufficient evidence to cause the name of "Pythagorean" to be applied at first as freely as that of "Copernican" to the system of astronomy which is now universally adopted. And there is abundant reason for believing that Pythagoras understood and taught, with a good measure of accuracy, the constitution of the universe. There are indications that this work of re-discovery is extending itself in other directions ; and that something like it is impending over the scientific world in relation to numbers.

While writing these pages, I have fallen in with an article in the thirty-fifth number of the "British and Foreign Medical Review," which contains the following paragraph. It is also quoted with much approbation in "The Princi-

ples of Beauty in Coloring Systematized"; which is one of a series of works by D. R. Hay, on the mathematics of beauty in color, that have attracted much attention in England.

"There is harmony of numbers in all nature; in the force of gravity; in the planetary movements; in the laws of heat, light, electricity, and chemical affinity; in the forms of animals and plants; in the perceptions of the mind. The direction indeed of modern natural and physical science is toward a generalization which shall express the fundamental laws of all by one simple numerical ratio. We think modern science will soon show that the mysticism of Pythagoras was mystical only to the unlettered, and that it was a system of philosophy founded on the then existing mathematics, which latter seem to have comprised more of the philosophy of numbers than our present science."

The ascertained fact must not be forgotten, that the ancient philosophers taught a twofold doctrine. One private, and known only to the initiated and the trusted; the other public, and given to the whole world. All their reasons for this are not known to us. The death of Socrates may indicate that prudence suggested some of them. But the fact is certain; and another fact connected with this is probable. It is, that an air of mystery, of sacredness, was purposely thrown over much that came forth into the common ear; perhaps from the lingering influence of an early monopoly of knowledge by the priesthood; perhaps to protect it from a too rigid scrutiny, or to obtain for it more of respect or acceptance; perhaps from a strong feeling (if an obscure view) of the universal symbolism of nature and the profound relations between external truths and those which ought to reach the heart and govern the life. If we could eliminate the difficulties which, springing from these sources, attach to what Pythagoras says of the sacred quaternion, and to

other similar expressions about numbers, we might perhaps find there something which it would be well to know. There can be no doubt that he ascribed power and worth, not to numbers in the abstract, but rather to numerical relations and proportions. That he included form, and the science of geometry, is made probable, not only by sayings of his own which have reached us, but by the declaration of Plato, that "God geometrizes." In other words, we have reason to believe that one important portion of what he meant by his doctrine of numbers is included in the simpler propositions, that qualities and forces spring from Form — internal or external, — and that Form is determined, not so much by original difference in primal elements, as by the numerical and geometrical relations and arrangements of these elements.

Very rapidly is modern science tending to bring all force and all distinctive quality within the grasp of geometry and number. Perhaps there are no better instances of this than those afforded by chemistry; and these may be the more striking from the fact, that this is the last science in which we should have expected to find them, and the last in which, a few years ago, we could have found them.

To the reader who is at all acquainted with this science, it is enough to suggest the law of definite proportions and multiples, the newer doctrine of isomorphism, the yet incomplete analogies which connect the specific gravity of bodies with their specific heat, and the hints which are now pointing out the forms of the primitive crystals of bodies as affording a possible basis for their true classification. To one quite ignorant of chemistry, some illustrations of a part of our meaning may have some interest; and as the best that occurs to us, we would speak of the air, — the air we breathe.

This is compounded of two elements. Neither of these,

it is believed, has yet been reduced to its simplest form, and both, therefore, may perhaps be compound bodies. But, passing by this question, we look at them as simple elements. Their common names in modern books are oxygen and nitrogen; the nitrogen dilutes the oxygen, and what other part it plays we do not yet know. In the present state of the science, the air we breathe may be regarded as a mixture containing one fifth of oxygen and four fifths of nitrogen.

But these two elements of air may be made to combine chemically in five different proportions; not merely to mix in these five proportions, but to unite or combine closely together in precisely these proportions, and form five very different substances.

If there be, by volume, just one half as much of oxygen as of nitrogen, nitrous oxide is formed. This is the well-known *laughing gas*, recently used as one of the means of extinguishing sensibility during surgical operations or attacks of pain.

If there be just the same volume of each, then nitrous gas is formed. This is a very poisonous, suffocating air or gas.

If there be a volume and a half of oxygen to one volume of nitrogen, then hyponitrous acid will be formed. This, under certain circumstances, is a green liquid, excessively volatile, and poisonous.

If there are just two volumes of oxygen to one of nitrogen, then nitrous acid is formed. This also is a liquid; acid, pungent, powerfully corrosive, and extremely volatile; and its vapor is quite irrespirable, exciting great irritation and spasm of the windpipe, even when much diluted with air.

But let there be precisely two and a half volumes of oxygen to one of nitrogen, and then nitric acid, or, as it is popu-

larly called, *aquafortis*, (which is not only a deadly poison, but a corrosive acid that burns up the flesh at once, and whose power very few metals can resist,) is formed out of this new combination of the elements of the air we breathe. Air, then, is the same as *aquafortis*, — excepting in the proportions of its constituents.

The exact numerical proportion of these elements is also preserved in the five substances, if they are measured by weight instead of volume. Thus, if the nitrogen in all of them is a constant quantity, weighing in all 14.15, then the oxygen will weigh in the first precisely 8; in the second, twice 8, or 16; in the third, three times 8, or 24; in the fourth, four times 8, or 32; and in the fifth, five times 8, or 40. And these weights and multiples of weight are in each case perfectly exact.

Such facts as these are not isolated; there are many of them, or rather, as we should say, there is little else in chemistry but such facts. Hence a modern work on this science — one of Liebig's, for instance, now widely diffused — may be opened almost at random, and found to present an aspect hardly to be distinguished from that of a work on geometry. Formerly a book on chemistry related experiments, and drew inferences, and constructed theories by general reasoning. There is and will continue to be much of this; but connected with it is now an immense mass of rigorous calculation. The whole science, its analysis, its theories, its conjectures, and its hopes, all seem to rest upon numerical relations and proportions.

Other sciences offer their testimony to the same result; and we must be deaf or incredulous if we are not prepared to admit, that the knowledge of the intimate nature of things is giving every day new reasons for ascribing qualities, functions, and forces, — we do not say to numbers, for that might seem and might be too abstract, — but to the effect

and power of the relations, proportions, and products of which numbers are the exponents.

When, from views of this kind, we pass to the assertion that numbers have also a correspondence and analogy which invests them in the Word with a moral and spiritual significance, we seem to bring together things perfectly distinct;—to leap across a chasm. But when anything is known of the correspondence between the things within and above man, and the things without and below him, the chasm becomes, if not closed, at least bridged. For we then learn that the spirit-world is the cause of this lower world; or the medium through which the First Cause operates to produce this lower world; and this medium impresses itself upon, or, as it were, repeats itself in, that which is produced by it and through it.

Whatever exists in the material universe, if shut off from all connection with the spiritual world, would cease at once to exist. For material things exist only as spiritual things extend their action down to and upon this lower plane of being, and there give birth to phenomena which are their representatives, and in which we may trace the lineaments of the originals; somewhat as we read upon this printed page, not only the forms of the types which impressed the words there, but within these the thoughts of which they are the exponents.

We hope no reader will do himself the wrong of believing us so weak as to suppose that an assertion of this kind can now be generally received. For this would be to believe us ignorant of the one great barrier to the reception of the fact and the law of correspondence. This barrier is

the prevailing total ignorance and disbelief of any spiritual world whatever. The time has gone by when many men were willing to proclaim this unbelief; and most persons now conceal it from their neighbors and from themselves. It is easy to do this; there are words enough which offer themselves to this work of deception. And, by the proper use of them, we may hide from our own minds the fact that there is not in our minds one clear thought, one atom of real belief, of any spiritual world whatever. If any one who supposes that he believes in spiritual existence asks himself, *How, in what form or manner*, do spirits live? in most cases but one honest answer returns from the recesses of their inmost thoughts; it is, *In no form or manner whatsoever*.

There is a kind of belief which does not imply nor require any conception of its object. We may believe that a book is true, without understanding a word of its contents. But then we believe the man or other testimony that tells us the book is true, and in no just sense can we be said to believe the book. But even this belief is something, and may be useful. So we may believe, on the authority of education, or of our instructors or our companions, that there is another world, without any conception whatever of any person or thing or mode of existence there. Then we believe that which so informs us; but we have hardly a belief *of* another world, for we form no idea of its contents. Yet this belief is something, and may be useful. And it often happens that sickness, misfortune, the death of those we love, or whatever else brings desolation to the mind, brings also light; it cleanses the eye of thought; and hope, and earnest wishes, help belief; and we forget the falsities which cause the darkness, and for a time believe that they who have passed away before us are there, living persons, and we image them in the life they have, as we knew them in the life they have left.

Again the light passes away ; it was but the brief and broken radiance of an Arctic morning when winter is very near, — a moment of imperfect day between long and dreary nights. Then darkness resumes its sway, and belief shrinks into its narrowest limits, and reason congratulates itself that the delusive imagination has passed away.

When a friend leaves us for England, we follow him in imagination and with belief. If accident casts him into the midst of China, or somewhere else where we have no distinct knowledge of the accessories of life, we do not lose our conception of his person, of the earth on which he treads, or of the heaven which still bends over him. Upon these conceptions rests a distinct belief of his existence. But let us hear of his death, and he has gone at once where few minds follow him. He has become nothing, and has passed into a world of nothingness.

This is not true, however, with all minds. There are those whose Faith has never heard the false logic of unbelief, or has heard and defied the fiend. They believe that he who was a man in this world is still a man in that world. And then they must believe, and are willing to believe, that he needs a world, or the means of being and of action, there. And they are willing at least to hear a system, which upon this world of nature builds a fabric of belief of which every stone is fitted to every other and to its own place.

It is to such minds that we would speak. We ask of them, whether, if this correspondence may be true in general, it may not also be true in all particulars ; and whether, if it be true of substances and forms, it must not be true of the laws which govern and define them, and especially of that science of numbers which measures, defines, and declares the relations, the functions, and the mutual action of all substances and all forces.

Upon this point, a New Church man would be apt to in-

quire of Swedenborg. He would find much said on this subject; not much, however, of detail, or rather not much of theory. And if the principles of his philosophy would enable us to push these results somewhat farther, it is better now, and in this connection, that we should confine ourselves to a very general view of the significance of some of the numbers most frequent in the Scriptures.

Let us select for this purpose three, twelve, forty, and seven.

It will be found that each of these numbers is used in a peculiar way, and apparently with a peculiar sense. This fact has often been noticed; and the prevailing uniformity of the application and use of these numbers in the Bible has been generally ascribed to a prevailing superstition on the subject in the minds of the authors; a supposition which is unwelcome in the exact degree in which God is supposed to be the author of His own Word.

These four numbers were selected because they have this in common, — that each of them represents a whole, or all; but in different ways or under different aspects.

Three denotes that whole which consists of the three essential elements of every unity; as, love, wisdom, power; affection, thought, act; cause, means, effect; beginning, middle, end; soul, body, action. Every whole which exists, or which can exist, has in it this Trinity; and the many different aspects under which it presents itself are closely related. For love, affection, cause, beginning, soul, the first terms of the series, are connected together by an obvious analogy; so are the second terms of the series, — wisdom, thought, means, middle, body; and so again are the third terms, — power, act, effect, end, action. And this Trinity, or Triunity, is, when applied in the highest sense to the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; or, to say the same thing in other words, Divine Love, Divine Wisdom, and

Divine Power or Operation; which three constitute one Divine Person, as human love and human wisdom and human power or operation constitute one human person. Thus, this number is first used in the second verse of the eighteenth chapter of Genesis, where the *three* men stood before Abraham, to announce to him the future birth of Isaac. In the conversation which ensued, Abraham addressed them as "My Lord"; and when they addressed him or Sarah, it is sometimes said "they" spake, but more often, "And the Lord said."

But it is obviously impossible to examine all the passages in which the four selected numbers are mentioned. Any person, with the help of a concordance, may verify for himself the manner in which they are used. We find that we must here speak of them very concisely.

Twelve denotes a whole, not as compounded of its essential and indivisible elements, but of its several parts or members. As the twelve tribes composing the Jewish nation, and afterwards the twelve Apostles,—both representing a church. This number is often so used; and sometimes, as in the Apocalypse, large multiples of it are employed to give force and emphasis to the meaning. As in the seventh chapter it is said that one hundred and forty and four thousand were sealed in their foreheads.

Forty denotes a completed preparation or purification by means of temptations, conflicts, sufferings. Thus, the forty days of the deluge; the forty years of the wanderings of the children of Israel in the desert; the forty days that Moses passed in the mount, eating and drinking nothing; the forty days of the temptations of our Lord,—all have this meaning. So, too, it was ordered, in the first three verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, that, "if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten," or in a condition to make punishment useful to him, "the judge shall cause

him to lie down," or the truth which judges him shall cause him to humble himself, and "forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed"; for the punishment, or painful consequences of evil, whether they occur within or without, should not exceed the completeness indicated by this number, because the punishments permitted by Divine Providence do not exceed that measure which is best fitted to produce — if it be possible — repentance and reformation.

Seven, the number more immediately connected with our present subject, denotes a completed, entire holiness. What holiness, and particularly the holiness of the Sabbath, is, we shall consider more fully hereafter. At present it is enough to say, that everything is holy just as far as it is from God alone, and unholy as far as it is from man without God. Hence the number is applied emphatically to the Sabbath. It would be inappropriate now to go over all the many instances in which the number is so used; but it may be well to remark, that, as all evil is perverted good, all falsehood perverted truth, and all hell is heaven, in the language of Scripture, "upside down," so all the words of Scripture denote not only their primary meanings, but sometimes, where evil is spoken of, their exact opposites. Thus in Luke, in the second verse of the eighth chapter, "seven devils" were said to be cast out from Mary Magdalene. So, when John in the Apocalyptic vision, which revealed to him the future state of the Christian Church and the coming of the New Jerusalem, saw a book written within and without, which no one in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, was able to open or to look upon, — this book denotes the Book of God, with its internal sense written within and its external sense written without, sealed, or wholly closed from view, by the unholinesses and impurities which have filled the Church with darkness and falsity, and which blind our eyes and disturb our vision. These

seals are said to be "seven"; for they are complete and entire, and do entirely veil the Scriptures, and their spiritual sense is wholly unknown and their external sense imperfectly understood. It is said that John wept much because the book could not be opened. This denotes the profound conviction of such as John, that the Bible is a sealed book, of which the treasures are at once inestimable and inaccessible; a conviction which has never failed in the Christian Church, and in its earlier ages produced earnest and not wholly ineffectual endeavors to penetrate the clouds. And when one of the elders who were near the throne said to John, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book and to loosen the seals thereof," — by this is indicated both the comfort which they who have so wept have found in the hope of a brighter future, and the promise that this future should come, and the prophecy of that which is now present with men; present, but how little known, how little regarded.

In 1620 a band of pilgrims were preparing to seek the wilderness which an ocean separated from their pleasant homes. They were under the pastoral care of the venerable John Robinson; and in his last address "to his people," says one of them in his Journal, "he charged us, before God and his holy angels, to follow him no farther than he followed Christ. And if God should reveal anything to us by any other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry. *For he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of his Holy Word.*" This was his parting gift; and the words went with them like a blessing. Did they not add somewhat to their strength and to their hope, as, amid suffering and danger, and in the constant sight of death, they toiled to lay the deep and strong foundations upon which we have builded? Well were these words

remembered ; often are they quoted ; and who shall say how much they have done to keep men's hearts from closing against the light ? how much to prepare a reception and a welcome, not wholly without its manifestation, for "the light and truth" now "breaking forth out of His holy Word" ?

Let us recur to the Sabbath, as a consecration of every seventh day, once commanded by the positive law of God.

It is quite important that we acquire, early in this investigation, a definite understanding of what the laws of God are, and must necessarily be. We lay a good foundation for this, when we establish in our minds the important principle, that every law of God may also be regarded as a truth and as a promise. It is a truth, which wears the aspect of a law and becomes a law, *when it is opposed* ; or when there is difficulty and conflict between it and something which does not conform to it. It is a truth, which comes from the source of all order, and comes to bring into order everything which it reaches. And where it finds any of these things in a state which is the opposite of that which the truth requires, then does it put on the appearance of compulsion ; it bears the face and name, assumes the dominion, and exerts the force, of law.

But it is truth primarily. Law is well defined to be a rule of conduct to which conformity is required on certain conditions and by certain sanctions. But a law of God, considered as a rule of conduct, must be necessarily a rule of good conduct ; of perfectly good conduct. It must be a truth describing perfectly good conduct. It must be a truth which is itself an expression of perfect order. It is His truth, it exists in himself as the form, the intellectual expression,

of something of his Divine life ; it comes forth to man to make the life of God more receivable by man ; and it produces this effect by bringing man's life into better conformity with the Divine life. It is the expression of something of Divine order ; and it is expressed or given forth, that the same order may become human ; may be established in the life of man. Thus it is said, that after the labors of God, He rests. What meaning should be given to these words will be more apparent presently ; but it is an eternal fact, belonging to his Divine nature, that after these labors, He rests ; and this fact is revealed, and it puts on the shape of a compulsory law, to the end that, after man has finished his labors, he too may rest.

Something is gained, for we are in an ascending path, when we rise above the contemplation of such a precept as mere law, and can see it as a truth ; can see that it is law only because it is truth in the first place ; and can see that it is therefore only the expression of order, inasmuch as *order is only truth actualized*, and truth is but the name, the form, the description, of order.

But we do much more, and we place ourselves upon a much higher ground, when we read the law of God only as his promise. Every law which comes forth from his wisdom is the promise of a good which his love will give. Yes, let the wearied one, worn with the toil of a painful progress, sick with the woe of those clinging hinderances, those strong and downward tendencies, which make the days of all his years days of labor and unrest,—let him be glad when the stern command smiles, and, with a voice as tender as the love that it proclaims, promises, that to him also a day of rest shall come ; that it will be the day of God, and holy and full of peace.

The law of the Sabbath, be it law, or truth, or promise, is not merely general, but most specific. In connection

with its collateral and illustrative texts, as those descriptive of the six preceding days, and other similar passages, it may tell us, at least it is intended to tell us, what that peace shall be which is represented by the Sabbath; and how it shall descend and abide with man; and when, by what means, and upon what conditions, it will thus bring down heaven to earth. Let us ascertain precisely what this statement is, in the literal sense. Happily, the words in which it is expressed present few difficulties and involve few questions. We learn from these passages, —

That God creates man and the earth upon which man dwells.

That he employs in this creation six days, each of which has its appropriate work; and they are progressive in a series.

That the works of these days are the works of God.

That after they are performed, he rests from his labors on the following day.

That this day of rest is a holy day, *because* he so rests therein.

And that, because of the intrinsic holiness of this day, he commands men to keep it holy, and to rest in it, abstaining from all labor during all the day.

Now the question we would consider, and answer if we can, is, *What does all this mean?*

But this question very obviously divides itself into many. They may perhaps be stated thus:—

What is the man and what is the world which God so creates?

What is meant by his creation of the man and of the world, and in what manner is this creation performed?

What are the labors of God, and why are these works of Him “who fainteth not, neither is weary,” represented as labors, requiring rest?

When, by what means, in what result, do these labors terminate, or cease to be labors?

What is meant by God's *resting* from his works?

What is it which makes the day of his rest holy?

Why is it commanded that man also should keep this day of rest holy; and what does this command signify and require?

Let us begin at the beginning, and consider the question what man and what world were thus created by God. Was it the first man who lived upon this planet? was it the world which enwrapt the infancy of humanity? If so, the Sabbath is indeed but the commemoration of a past fact. But not so can it be regarded by those who believe in the spiritual sense of Scripture. For this sense regards only the spirit and that which is of the spirit; and therefore it knows nothing of time, and all its past and all its future are included in one perpetual present. Then do we understand, that by the creation of man is meant his spiritual creation; or the creation of a new spirit within him; or his regeneration. What, then, is the world which is also created with man? This also is of the spirit.

For man is internal, and he is external. Or rather, he has an internal nature and an external nature. By his internal nature are meant the springs of his life and conduct; his interior and ruling love; those deeply seated thoughts which hypocrisy does not bring out and transform into the fit instruments of its miserable work, and which do not lie in the hand to be passed from one to another like current coin; affections, thoughts, opinions, belief, which form the foundation of the character, and are too firmly fixed to bend and change with the fluctuations of each day. This love, these thoughts, belong to the true spirit of man, and are meant by *man*; but the world about him signifies the

world of outer life, of outer feelings and thoughts, — the world which surrounds the spirit and sometimes disguises it, — and is always the medium by which it displays itself and acts and meets with other men, and always the earth upon which it rests and walks and lives and labors. This internal and external man are represented, not only by man and the earth, but by the heavens and the earth; and this not only in the first chapters of Genesis, but in other places, as we shall hereafter have occasion to show.

This creation *was* not, but *is*; it is constant and perpetual, not merely because of the perpetual succession of the generations of men, but because it is an ever-present work with every man. No matter how much, or how effectually, it is resisted, — there it stands, the centre of God's providence with every individual upon earth, and the end which the Infinite has ever in view. We may approach it, or recede from it; for we may work with God, or against him. If we will, he permits us to recede, for otherwise we should lose that freedom, which, being lost, we cease to be men. Therefore he permits his own work to fail, where it encounters our wilful and unyielding choice of evil. Yet there this creation of a new spirit stands within us, stands for ever. In a portion of mankind it is not fully accomplished; and yet the Divine endeavor to prevent their falling farther away from this end than they *must*, because they *will*, never ceases. And in those who permit this work to be done in them, it is always a morning which never passes into perfect day, only because through revolving eternities the work is ever being done, ever growing, ever advancing. Touched by the light of this truth, the story of creation comes forth from the slumber of the past, into the full glow of present life. It is no longer a dead fact, buried beneath the measureless ages which time has heaped above it; to be protected by a failing reverence from the assaults of

science ; to be listened to as its feeble voice penetrates the vast distance which separates between our present *now* and that old beginning. It stands at once before us and within us ; living with all the life we have ; radiant with the light of all the truth that we possess, and reflecting this light upon all the forward paths that open before us.

How is this spiritual creation effected ?

The answer to this question, as it is given in the letter of Scripture, is very specific. It extends through six days, and the work of each is particularized, and distinctly, almost minutely, described. But we are told by Swedenborg, that the first chapters of Genesis, as far as about the close of the eleventh chapter, are not historically true. They have only that truth which belongs to them by virtue of the law of correspondence ; for they are written in exact conformity with the principles of that science of correspondence which connects together the things of the world within us and those of the world without us. Little do we lose by this. It leaves us without a supposed knowledge of the manner in which the earth we tread, and the animals upon its surface, and the greater and the lesser lights of the sky, and our own fathers, were first made. It takes from us a relation of these facts upon which the advancing knowledge and the unsparing logic of these days were doing a fearful work. It takes away a feeble foundation upon which a trembling structure was reposing. For all this it substitutes a truth, which gathers to itself support from all other truth, and fears no progress, and asks no veil, and, instead of praying to be let alone, as if, half expiring, it would perish at a touch, it stands erect, asking to be seen, to be examined, to be handled, to be used.

It was said, that the first chapters of Genesis, to near the mention of Abraham, are not historically true. This Swedenborg said one hundred years ago. And recent learning

and criticism have perhaps established as a fact that is universally admitted, that the earliest parts of Genesis differ from the rest of the Pentateuch so much in dialect, as to indicate, in connection with other reasons, that they have not the same origin. They are supposed to consist of several independent parts brought together by Moses. We suppose that they were taken from earlier Scriptures, that related only moral and spiritual truths, which were written in conformity with the laws of correspondence; and that passages were selected which in this way described the creation of a new world *in* man, because they formed, in their literal sense, an appropriate preface to the history of the Jews and their ancestry. But it was also said, that they have whatever literal truth belongs to them by virtue of this correspondence. If the things within man and the things without him, if these two worlds, do in fact correspond, the history of the one must in some general way be the history of the other. Hence the effort to save that beginning of the Bible from the assaults of science has had a certain success. One of these theories supposes that there were six periods of creation, but that the days were geological periods of vast extent; and an imperfect reconciliation of these supposed enemies is in this way effected. Another view, which resembles the other, but on the whole is more successful, regards time less; but, beginning with a nebula or little cloud of light, such as the telescope shows us scattered over the sky, supposes one of them to have been the parent of our solar and planetary system, and that it came into its present condition through six states which are described in Genesis. A third, more recent, but which meets with much acceptance, looks neither at time nor space, but considers the historian simply as declaring God to be the Universal Father, and describing his work of creation as divided into the six classes which would naturally occur in this order to a mind seeking to express this truth.

All these theories have their interest, their value, and their truth. But none of them are completely true, and none of them give any worth or significance to the details of their creation. For this we must resort to the supposition, that it is written according to strict and scientific laws, which have caused it to waste no word, but to contain truth, and only truth, even to the most minute particulars. The Bible has remained until of late unassailable by natural science, and now new spiritual science is given to men, which will more than protect it; which will not only exhibit its exact truthfulness, but exalt its claims to respect and reverence.

There are six progressive stages of regeneration; and the seventh is the result and consummation. The idea will be unwelcome to some minds, that God works so by rule and measure. They think that this degrades him, and lessens the dignity of the work of salvation. Man, say they, is not a tree, which must have its roots, and then its stem and its branches, by successive efforts, and then its leaves and its fruit, all in their appointed order and their slow succession. The breath of life is in his nostrils; and when the Holy Spirit would heal and save him, at the *will* of God the work is done. So may some think; but there are considerations which may check this thought. Man is not more the work of God than is the tree, or the earth and stars, or the universe. Everywhere we find a settled succession as the law of order, of growth, and of progress. Experience teaches those who listen to it, that changes in the spirit and in the character are also gradual. Why may not these changes — with infinite variations in individuals — be subject to general laws, or rather, fall under a general classification. Did not the Lord mean to teach us something like this, when he compared the kingdom of God to the growth of “seed cast into the ground”; — “first the blade, then the ear, and after that, the full corn in the ear”?

There were six days of creation. Upon these, and upon their meaning, very much may be found in the writings of the New Church. In this brief Essay, we can attempt to give but a slight glimpse of that meaning.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light ; and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good ; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.”

The earth, previous to all regeneration, is without form and void, for the earth here, as often elsewhere, represents man ; because man stands in the same relation to God that the earth stands in to the sun, and is only made fertile and capable of life by receiving from Him the love and wisdom which correspond to the heat and light of the sun. And man is without form and void ; for he is not now in the divine image, which is his true form, nor has he within him anything of genuine and real good, before this first beginning of regeneration. His conduct may be all that men can ask ; for intelligent selfishness may possibly (though very seldom actually), do all that better motives should do for his outward life. But “darkness is on the face of the deep.” In his own heart ; at that centre of thought and feeling where we should find the concealed beginnings of character ; in that depth where inner motives are hidden out of sight, — there, no light has ever penetrated, no day has yet dawned. Now, however, the spirit of God moves upon the face of the dark waters and causeth light ; and the revelation to the soul of its own darkness will be the first effect of the new-born light and the work of the first day.

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters; and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.”

It is impossible to give the briefest explanation of these words, without again referring to the central doctrine of the New Church, which relates to the *natural man*. Wherever there has been piety, salutary affliction, self-examination, a portion of this truth has always been known, generally at least, and only where there is something of these can it be known at all.

There is in all men a twofoldedness of being, which almost amounts to a double consciousness. There is an inner nature and an outer nature. There is an inner nature which first receives influent life, and through which it reaches the outer nature. There is that part of the man which is most in contact with the influences that impart life and character; and that part of him which is most in contact with other men and with the world around us; and in this outer part the life and character come forth to view, and they are modified or disguised by various causes and motives. The internal man — while there is any hope — rebukes the sins of the external man, and its selfish indulgences, and retards as far as may be the downward progress.

Something of this has always been known. But it is often explained by saying that reason rebukes passion, and by similar statements, implying that understanding is always right, and affection the only thing in fault. On the contrary, there are passions, desires, feelings, and whatever else belongs to the will, which take part with the good and the true, and shrink from a staining contact with the ex-

ternal; and there are views and thoughts, and all forms of intellectual existence, which belong to a rationality that is wholly external, and therefore unfavorable to genuine improvement.

For there is an external of the will and of the understanding, and an internal of the will and of the understanding, because both will and understanding together make up the man. For the truth of this might I not appeal to the experience of all who have listened with earnest and repentant humility to the voice *within*, while it rebuked the life *without*. And indeed, where there is not this experience, to what purpose, or with what hope, can this subject be spoken of at all?

Without further delay, then, let me assume that there is an internal man, or an internal *of* man; and let me say that this internal is what is meant by the firmament, (or expanse, as it might better be translated,) and by Heaven, which this firmament is called.

Earth and Heaven, when either word is used separately, sometimes represent and signify man; but when they are used together, or where either alone is so used that the context limits the sense, then earth signifies the external of man, for this is nearest earth; and heaven signifies the internal of man, because this is nearest to heaven.

When the first day of regeneration has passed by, and the work of that day has been done, and "the light divided from the darkness" in our own minds,—we are then to take the next step of regeneration, if we continue to go forward. Then we recognize the internal man, and we listen to it; we recognize the firmament within us, the distinct and abiding line of division and separation; and then we know that never again, if we regard our soul's health, must we confound the waters which are above this firmament with those which are beneath. For those which are above

are from heaven, and we perceive them to be heavenly, and call them so, and we know that they offer to lift us upwards to their source. While those which are beneath are, as we now know full well, of the earth, and earthly.

To persons quite unacquainted with what is termed, in the New Church, the science of correspondence, we should state that waters signify things intellectual, — in a good sense truths, in a bad sense falsities, — because the functions of water upon earth, and in the nourishment and cleansing of the human body, are analogous to those which truth performs to the mind. A volume would not suffice to exhibit, much less to exhaust, this beautiful analogy. Now, I can only observe, in passing, that the various washings and purifications of the representative Jewish ritual were founded upon it; and also the Christian rite of baptism, which prefigures that work of washing impurities away by obedience to truth, which is to be the constant work of every faithful Christian. In such instances as these, this meaning is almost obvious; and it is equally obvious in many other texts; as where the Lord said unto the woman, that, if she had asked him, he would have given her “living waters”; and where he stood and cried, “If any one thirst, let him come and drink”; and where it is said, “In that day shall living waters go out from Jerusalem.” In other passages, this signification is less, or not at all, apparent; but it exists equally everywhere.

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth

grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind ; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day."

Before the work of regeneration teaches him something of himself, the external man supposes that he is quite good enough. He has many truths ; many knowledges of what is good and right, derived perhaps from Scripture, and the preaching of the Word, and from the common stock which belongs to all men in society. All of these he deems his own. He does not know that they are not his own. That because he has never adopted, obeyed, and loved them, he is as untouched and unaffected by them as if they were another's. But when the third day of regeneration has come, and obedience to the truths he possesses, which is its particular work, has become established in the mind, then the delusion passes away. The waters beneath the firmament are gathered together ; the truths which are *in* the external man, but not his by love and life, are gathered before his eyes into their own place. He sees that they are in the natural memory only ; and this it is which is called the Sea. The Sea ! What is this vast and ever-tossing waste but a collection of waters, which, fructifying nothing, leave whatever they are in contact with barren as the sands of their encircling shores. Still, it forms the great treasury whence must ever be derived the waters that are drawn up by the sun and raised to heaven, and thence descending fertilize the earth and fill it with life. And in the memory, the outermost of our faculties, all our truths and knowledges accumulate. And barren indeed they are, barren indeed they make whatever they reach, while merely natural and selfish ; that is, until they are drawn upwards by the sun, and ascend to the heaven of the mind, to the internal man, and thence descend to give life to the external, in what the Prophet calls "showers of blessings."

This obedience comes from and evinces a true repentance; and when obedience and repentance do their work, the external man perceives and acknowledges how small a part of him the truth possesses, excepting the memory. He regards these truths, when spiritualized and vitalized by religion, as bearing the fertilizing influences of heaven; and seems to himself without them as the parched desert. The dry land appears. But in this humiliating conviction there is *truth*; vital truth; living water; for even thus it begins to moisten the ground, and the first-fruits of repentance appear. Life begins. In its external manifestation, life divides itself, in correspondence with its internal essence, into three general forms; that of the vegetable world, — that of the air and waters, — that of the solid land. The first of these, which is the product of the third day, is the lowest. The next appears on the fifth day; the last, only on the sixth day.

Of this third day, or state, the characterizing work is repentance. And so far as it is done, the external man — our conduct, and all that part of our character which we exhibit to the world — becomes what it should be. This is not perfect, and there will be yet further improvement in it. But it is only in the internal man that progress of a new kind occurs; one separated from the former by distinct principles, one which shall constitute a new day, and begin a new series of days.

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: and the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the

earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness ; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”

There has been light, some light, from the beginning of all regeneration. But it has been a diffused light which did not disclose its origin. It was as the light of a sky perpetually shrouded with cloud. The rays of the sun, of the moon, even of the stars, confusedly penetrate the veil ; but if it were never withdrawn, we should never know that there was a sun, or a moon, or a star. But when the external man has conformed itself to the laws of God, the internal is opened to new influences, and receives a brighter illustration.

From the natural sun both heat and light radiate. Both reach the moon, but she reflects upon us only the light. From the stars they come mingled ; but in their long journey they are nearly lost ; of some, the sparkling light strikes upon the eye, but of none does the warmth reach us.

From the Sun of heaven both love and wisdom issue. But of these, love is the greater ; and it is this which the sun in the natural firmament represents and signifies. The moon, which gives us only light, represents and signifies Faith. Love from the spiritual sun enters into our will, which, of itself, is neither affection nor desire, but only a capacity of receiving the divine love and of modifying that love into our affections and desires. This love from God received by us, modified but not perverted, is the greater light which rules the day ; for it is day with us when love rules. Then is our sky unclouded ; and the unimpeded splendor falls upon an earth glowing with warm life and full of beauty.

But the night cometh ; to all it comes. Yet, when our sun seems to set beneath our sea, as its retiring radiance dwells and lingers upon the waters of memory, and is re-

luctant to leave them in gloom and in darkness, and we are cold and are sensible of our coldness, — even then, if we have Faith, a true, pure faith in God our father, it will rise over the troubled waves and touch them with tender light, and the earth will rejoice; rejoice in silence and in hope as the softened loveliness of night spreads over it, until the dayspring from on high revisits us again.

And there are also stars. For we have many — almost innumerable — knowledges of what is true and good, which are too far from our hearts to affect them with any warmth, too far for us to measure or appreciate their magnitude or worth, too dim to be remembered when we possess and enjoy the full life of active day. But these also come out to our thoughts and add something to the light, and much to the soothing loveliness of the dark hours when the glow of love and the excitement of action have passed away, and we can only wait, in Faith and in Hope.

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.”

If the repentance of the third day improved the external man, and if, in the light of the sun and the moon and the stars of the fourth day, the darkness which ascribed reform and goodness and truth unto ourselves was dissipated, as we looked upon and recognized the source of light, then are we ready for the fifth day. In this day the waters are filled with living fishes, and the air with birds.

The waters, or the sea, represent the natural memory. The truths and knowledges therein are as yet dead. For while we believe them to be our own, and to have originated in ourselves, they are tainted with a profound falsity. They are spiritually dead. From this death they are now commanded to come forth, to awake, arise, and live. We know them now to be not ours, but His; to be from Him and of Him. And then the waters teem with life. From the great whales, or universal truths, to the most minute and transient thoughts of truth, all live. We connect them all with the Source of life; and the voiceless creatures of the deep speak his praise.

An example may make this more intelligible. Let us consider the precept, "Do good unto others." This is one of the most universal of truths. Every person knows it. By it the fabric of society was constructed, and is filled and cemented. But at first its government is compulsory, and it has no support but in force. The most selfish of men is compelled to be performing uses continually. He buys, he sells, he digs the solid ground, he makes, he goes or sends to the uttermost parts of the earth, for that which his neighbor needs. In doing all this, he never thinks of his neighbor except as the instrument of his own gain. Nevertheless, he is most useful, most indispensable, to his neighbor. Such is he while he remains a merely natural and unregenerate man; and then this great truth is in him, but is dead. But if he comes out of this state; if he repents, reforms, and acquires and uses the means of spiritual improvement, his character changes. Not outwardly perhaps, but inwardly. He is now as useful as he was before, and perhaps not more useful, so far as the bodily welfare of his neighbor is concerned. But he no longer looks at the law "Do good unto others" as a thing of his own, which he may do for his own advantage, or omit doing at his own

pleasure. He sees it now to be the law of God ; the gift of God's benevolence ; given to men that they may receive from him the happiness of doing good. Now he delights and rejoices in his own success, because of his neighbor in the first place, and for himself only in the second place and in a subordinate degree. Then this truth lives. It was at first wholly dead ; then, as life began, it stood before him as a law ; now it is within him as a prompter and a guide. He knows now its origin. He feels that it is full of life, and that it gives him life.

It was said that water represents and signifies truth. As all things in man's mind may be referred to his will or to his understanding, so all things in the universe belong in their representation to the will or the understanding ; to that which he loves or that which he thinks ; to good or to truth. As the broadest division, it may be said that fluids refer to what is of truth, and solids to what is of good. We must pass by the enticing opportunity to exhibit the illustrations of this analogy presented by the constitution of the universe, and remark only that it brings within the same general correspondence and significance the ocean of waters, and

"The sky,
Spread like an ocean hung on high."

This, too, the air, in this fifth day of regeneration, becomes full of life. For there are truths and thoughts which love to leave the earth. They seek to rise above it ; to look down upon and understand this ultimate, external creation, and ascertain and comprehend its laws and its structure, and the true relation of its parts to each other, and of all to their source. How full of life are these winged thoughts, these birds of the mind ; how full of rejoicing and abounding life, when the sun of heaven rises and shines upon them. They no longer creep as in the dark ; but their course lies clear

before them; they pursue it with exulting flight, and the rational and truth-loving intellect feels that it is borne upwards as on eagles' wings. In the third chapter of the Revelations, our Lord says, "If any man will open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me." And in the nineteenth chapter it is said that John "saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all *the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven*, Come and gather yourselves together to *the supper* of the great God." Gladly do they hear; gladly do the fowls of heaven now gather to that supper, and fill themselves with heavenly food.

As the whole animal world represents the world of humanity, so the birds of heaven represent, not merely such thoughts and truths as these, but persons who possess and cherish, and are governed by, these thoughts and truths. To them is this invitation given. The angel (or messenger) of the Sun of righteousness is every influence proceeding from Him. His great supper is made ready; for the spiritual sense of the Word is opened, and all who hunger and thirst after righteousness can find there the truth, the instruction, the help, the food, which is adapted to every need.

They now hear this invitation, and hasten to the supper spread for them, in whom repentance has done its work, and in whose spiritual sky Love and Faith are fixed and burning lights. To all is the table of the Lord now open; and all may come to it who would eat of angels' food, and learn and lead the life of heaven.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his

kind ; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein is life, I have given every green herb for meat : and it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

The sixth is the last day of the labors of God in creating the universe ; and the particulars of this work are set forth with more minuteness than those of any former day. It will be well to consider them separately.

On this day the animals which walk the earth are created ; and now also man begins to live.

As the ocean and the air refer in their correspondence and significance to truth or the understanding, so the solid earth refers to the will ; and the things which walk upon it refer to the affections.

There are always an abundance of them ; but infinitely do they vary in their character. In very childhood we learn to love them who love us. This love we continue to

exercise and indulge through life ; and it need not be selfish ; for we may again become as little children, and learn a new lesson of disinterested affection. We begin with giving, that we may get as much again ; with loving our friends, and them only. But when all the days, or all the progressively advancing states, of regeneration, are finished ; when the light has shone, and we distinguish it from the darkness ; and repentance has produced thorough reformation ; and Love and Faith are established in our minds ; and the truths and knowledges we have acquired are elevated by a clear perception of their source, and vivified by that desire for good which would apply them to life, and make of them instruments of use and means of improvement and of happiness for others ; — then are we ready to take the last step. Then our affections will begin to have a pure and genuine life. We shall learn to love the Lord with all the heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourself. And we practically learn that, when we love the Lord our God with all our heart, his love becomes in us the love of our neighbor. The sixth day's work is done ; and man now begins to live.

He has now indeed dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. For all things of nature, of the nature spread abroad, above, beneath, and around him, and all things of the nature within him, yield obedience to him as to their Sovereign Lord, and gladly fulfil the functions for which they were created, in doing as he bids ; for he is now the servant of God, and therefore their master.

So too are all things meat, or food, for him, and for his thoughts and affections. Everything which exists bears uneffaceably impressed upon it the story of its birth and the name of its Heavenly Father. And how will Science exult when it becomes her office to read the lessons writ-

ten upon the opened pages of creation! Even now the good man finds that all true knowledge feeds his soul; gives him a clearer perception of the ways of God; illustrates His laws; makes more plain the path that leads to His throne, and gives strength to walk therein, and encounter and overcome its thronging obstacles.

It is said, "Male and female created He them." Previous to this time, no mention has been made of sex. It was as true of the fishes of the sea, of the birds of the air, and of the beasts of the earth, that they were created male and female, as of man; but of him it is first said.

If we would inquire into the significance of this fact, we must begin with remarking, that the distinction of sex is founded upon the distinction between the will and the understanding.

In saying this, as so often happens when one endeavors to present the doctrines of the New Church, we find ourselves announcing a principle which must startle, from its novelty, and repel, from its absolute opposition to prevailing notions, and be indeed unintelligible to readers who do not possess an elementary knowledge of the laws of creation and the inter-relations of all created things; for these alone can enable one to understand such a proposition, or even to look upon it in a favorable light. All that we shall now attempt is a suggestive sketch of the leading principles which bear upon this subject.

In God, Love and Wisdom are one. But they are not a one which is made by fusing together and confounding distinct elements; but a unity which springs from a perfect conjunction of two things which are perfectly distinct. We are speaking of God; of the Infinite and Unapproachable; and while, as we venture to lift our eyes towards his throne of light, we feel how infinitely below the dread re-

ality our highest thoughts must fall, and yet how difficult it is to give expression even to these low and bounded thoughts, we will nevertheless endeavor to present what must needs be a dim and shadowy outline of the manner in which He repeats himself in his creatures, to the end that his infinite blessedness may, in their measure, be also theirs.

In God, Love and Wisdom are both infinitely perfect, and are perfectly and infinitely distinct. Yet is their conjunction into unity also perfect; and from this conjunction springs the infinite blessedness of God.

Enough of the resemblance of this falls upon us to enable us, in some degree, to comprehend it. The Infinite Love of God desires ever and infinitely, that which his wisdom ever contemplates; and his Infinite Wisdom is ever engaged with infinite activity in the fulfilment of his desires and purposes. It is thus that they are perfectly one. From this perfect conjunction springs the Infinite Power of God. By it and through it are all things created; and there is nothing that exists, substance or force or law, which does not exist because the Love of God desired it, and the Wisdom of God saw how it might exist and be a means of blessing; and from this union of Love and Wisdom, Power was put forth, and the thing created.

Ever united and conjoined are these two elements of the Divine Nature; ever active and productive in their union; and therefore is creation a perpetual work, and therefore is He ever and infinitely Blessed.

His Love causes him to desire that this blessedness should be imparted, as far as may be, to man; and his Wisdom provides the way of doing this, by repeating upon all creation this distinction and this conjunction. Thus, He creates in man a will and an understanding. The will, as whoever writes upon this subject must often say, is not

affection or desire ; it is only a spiritual form, organism, or vessel, capable of receiving from God his own influent Love, and of giving this forth as affection or desire. Just so the understanding is neither thought nor knowledge, but a spiritual form, or organism, or vessel, capable of receiving the influent wisdom of God, and of giving this back as thought and knowledge.

Man being thus created, with vessels receptive of the two essential elements of divine life, and thus filled with life, Divine Providence for ever thereafter has for its end and purpose the union and conjunction of the will and understanding in man, so that a portion of the Divine blessedness may be his also.

This is affected when man desires that only which the truth he possesses tells him is good. Then is there no conflict between them ; then are they in harmony with each other, with the universe around them, with the universe within them ; with all the laws of being, and with Him who alone is Being in Himself.

But God also makes manifest this essential relation of Love and Wisdom, by the two sexes, which correspond at once to the essential elements of the Divine Life, and to those of the derived human life. Man represents Wisdom ; woman represents Love. Hence, that these two may be conjoined into unity, is marriage. Hence too is the worth and sanctity of marriage ; far transcending all thought, all conception, all language. It is in its own nature holy, heavenly, eternal. It completes man's nature, and fills his life with the best of all that in it is good, and consummates his creation into the image of God. There are some who know this upon earth ; and all in heaven know it as none can know it here. A true idea of marriage recognizes all the obligations of law, and is even thankful for this outer guardianship of the sanctuary ; but it rests on Love. It

rests upon a Love which makes the husband feel that in his wife he has the best gift of God, and that gift through which other high and holy gifts come to him ; a living soul that lives to soften, refine, elevate, and warm his heart, and to do this because it is for all this the appointed medium between God and him. And the wife too grows in love and in joy, as her chosen one guides and illustrates her thoughts, and opens her eyes to the ever-strengthening light of truth and of heaven. This perfect love casteth out fear ; for unfaithfulness, uncertainty, distrust, and jealousy are as impossible, as between the healthy heart that pours its living current into the lungs to be cleansed there from all impurity, and the lungs which gladly and trustingly receive that which fills them with warmth and life.

This union and conjunction of Love and Wisdom in the Divine Nature, is the cause of all effect and of all production. Of it, the Universe is born. And therefore in that Universe, which bears the impress of its Source and Author, the conjugal principle is everywhere the cause of all production and effect.

This is true, not of animals only ; for within a few years it has become known as the certain cause of all reproduction in the vegetable kingdom. Lower, in the mineral world, where reproduction is more obscure and causation operates in a darkness which science has not yet been able to illuminate, there are already intimations of an analogous result. They may be found in the nearly admitted principle, that all solidity implies crystallization, and all crystallization implies the meeting, conjunction, and repose in unity of two principles or elements drawn together and held together by affinity ; of which the combining alkali and acid may perhaps be taken as types.

Nor is it true only in the world without us. For which of our actions is there, what action or motion can there be,

which does not exist, because desire in some form or other wishes it, and thought or mind in some way sees how it may be, and both co-operate to produce the act itself? This act may be brief, spontaneous, and mechanical. But for every note of the rapidest piece of music, it is certain that there is a distinct exertion of the nervous influence sent from the brain through the proper threads to the motive muscles, however incredible this may seem to those who know nothing of anatomy. And as certainly is it proved by an analysis of the mental act that sets the brain in motion, that there was in it volition to desire, and thought to design, and that both united to cause the act, which was the child of the marriage union of the will and the understanding.

Everywhere we find this law. It hides its head in the clouds about the throne of God. Its feet rest upon the earth. Its hands have fashioned everything that is; and its breath is the breath of life for all existence.

Such is the foundation of the distinction between the sexes. This distinction is now first mentioned on the sixth day, in this last stage of creation, or of that internal creation which is regeneration, because now the internal distinction which the external one corresponds to and represents is first recognized. Now first do the will and understanding perceive and acknowledge their mutual functions and relations; now first know in each other that which is necessary to each other's fulness. Hitherto there has been conflict and opposition between them. What the heart desired, the understanding rebuked and prohibited; and the understanding insisted upon renunciation, and it prevailed. Now are they reconciled, conjoined, made one. The affections are all turned to the Lord and to the neighbor, for self serves only and is glad to serve; and the understanding has no thought which is not devoted to the

furtherance of these affections. Henceforth the love and the thought are one; they are married; and the offspring of this marriage is eternal happiness. God has joined them together; and man will not separate them; for he is now created into the image and likeness of God.

Hitherto has God looked upon his works and pronounced them good; but now it is said that God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was **VERY GOOD**.

And now is man ready for the dawning of the Sabbath.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”

“Verily my Sabbaths shall ye keep, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.”

“Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labor and do

all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day."

In this last passage a reason is given for the observance of the Sabbath, which seems to be totally distinct from that given before. In most of the places in which this day is mentioned, the reason assigned for its holiness is, that God rested from the work of creating heaven and earth upon that day. In this last-quoted passage another reason is stated. We are commanded to remember that the Lord brought us up out of Egypt, and *therefore* to keep the day holy. There is in this an apparent inconsistency. In the literal sense two separate reasons are given, which are perfectly distinct and bear no relation to each other. And this is one of the many instances in which a difficulty or darkness of the literal sense disappears at once in the light of the spiritual sense. There, these two reasons are one. The Sabbath is the creation of the spiritual man; the Sabbath is deliverance from Egypt; one as much as the other, because they are precisely the same thing. Egypt signifies the natural man; and the bondage of Egypt represents and signifies the bondage of sin, of evil, of falsehood. From these we are delivered when we have permitted the Lord to create us anew. And this is His work.

It is His work, and not man's. Every thought of man that he is doing it of himself alone; that by his own arm he getteth the victory over the fearful assailants whose success

would be his ruin ; that by his own strength he is building in his own heart an abiding-place for the Most High ;—every thought or feeling of this kind retards the work, makes it more difficult and less complete. If we regard the commandment of the Sabbath as binding in its literal sense, and so obey it, on that day *we do nothing*. And this was commanded as a sign of the state of mind which recognizes in God the only source of life, and by its assurance of his almighty aid gives us hope, energy, and earnest activity, but never forgets that, of ourselves, *we do nothing*. And yet man has much, very much to do. He has his part in all that can be done ; for his share of the work is indispensable to its accomplishment.

Thus we are brought to contemplate once more that most important doctrine of the New Church,—regeneration through freedom. This doctrine teaches that our Father in heaven, like a kind father upon earth who has received the divine love into his own heart, and suffered it to become his love, does all that may be done to lead, persuade, and so induce an erring child to renounce the wrong and choose the right ; he regards force and compulsion as sometimes necessary, as sometimes breaking the chain of habit, or otherwise producing a condition of mind in which the voluntary choice of right is possible ; but as, in themselves, having no power to reform, or regenerate. Hence, throughout man's life the question is constantly occurring, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." It is a choice that must be made every day, or in every state ; and which, being made, determines for that day, whether he will work with God or contend against Him.

Hence we may see why the efforts of Divine Providence to effect man's regeneration are represented as not only a gradual, but a laborious work ; and what it is which makes it so ; for it is man's resistance. Precisely so far as

he opposes these efforts, they are labors. They do not cease on this account, or we should be lost. They do not cease, for the love which prompts them and fills them is infinite. But because they encounter opposition and hinderance, and opposition which this very love will not crush and annihilate, but tenderly regards and seeks to win over into co-operation, therefore these efforts are represented as labors. They are the labors of God in renewing a right spirit within us, in constructing the spiritual man, and in building around him an external life and conduct in exact correspondence with the truth and the good implanted in the understanding and the will. They are the days of the labors of God in creating man and building for him a world.

And man too labors while this work is going on. "Six days shalt thou labor." This doom is fixed upon us by our weakness, our blindness, and our sins. It is they which make it so difficult and so painful to be good; and it is they which cover up evil with inexhaustible disguises, and call it good. But the pain, the difficulty, the disguise and deception, now have passed away; and in the Sabbath, we too rest from our labors. Of this rest which is true, internal, and permanent, in the true and internal Sabbath, the outward rest of the outward Sabbath is a symbol and remembrancer.

This work of the Divine mercy never ceases; it is continually more active; always the love which animates it grows into a more perfect fulness; always it is a greater putting forth of the power of the Omnipotent; and always it is less and less a labor on the part of man and on the part of God. For the improvement of the human character does not terminate with regeneration; for this itself, throughout eternity, is never ending, still beginning. But it is no longer a labor when man begins to co-operate freely and

willingly with the Divine Providence; then "God rests and is refreshed." Then the love of God is not withstood and hindered. It goes forth from his own unclouded blessedness to impart blessing to man; it meets with welcome and not resistance, and is no longer dimmed and marred by a reluctant reception.

Surely we need no longer ask why this day of rest is Holy. It bears in Christendom the beautiful name of the Lord's day; and it is called his, because it is his day. In heaven as on earth there are days and nights; not caused by the periodical presence or absence of the sun of the angels, for they never suffer from its absolute withdrawal. But there are states of mind in which the angels are brought to a more vivid remembrance, to an intenser consciousness of their inherent weakness and sinfulness; the shadow of the past falls upon them, and it is night. Then they learn a new lesson of self-humiliation; they acquire a new ability to give themselves unreservedly into the hand of Providence; to receive, to cherish, to love the life of love which flows from Him, and to rejoice in the consciousness that it is His life given to them. As we, in the dark silence of our nights, acquire new vigor for the work of another day, so do they, by the lesson of their night, acquire a new and greater capacity for the reception of blessing. And their night also leads to day, and an evening and a morning belong to all their days.

We may therefore see that the days and nights of the spirit are brighter and darker states of mind; that it is day with the soul when its sun shines upon it; and therefore the Lord's day signifies a state or condition which is His; one in which He governs; one in which His own love is received by man unresistingly, and permitted to bring with it some measure of His own peace; one in which the inner and the outer life of man conform to His law, and therefore His

unclouded Presence shines and fills the soul with the light and the warmth of heaven.

During the six days of labor and preparation, the understanding reigns. In all of them, there is a desire to be and to do that which we should not be and should not do. The truth tells us that we should not, and thus opposes the desire; and it is this opposition and this conflict which produce the labors of the week. We begin with obeying the truth. We renounce the evil thing which we desire, and should greatly enjoy. And after a sufficient course of renunciation and denial, the desire for that evil thing dies for want of sustenance, and passes away. But we cannot be without desire and affection, for then should we be without life; and as the desire and affection for evil faint and die, in their stead grow up a desire and affection for the opposite good. But this new affection the truth does not rebuke nor oppose. With this it is in perfect harmony. And in every succeeding day of life, here or in heaven, the truth by its encouragement and approval makes the affection stronger, and the affection itself, as it is indulged and we perceive its effect, and see that it is good in all its relations and consequences, illustrates and enforces the truth. Thus, in the Sabbath, truth no longer rules. Love reigns now; and one definition of this day might be, the reign of Love. The sovereignty of truth was hard and harsh. It commanded, it threatened, it punished. Now that Love is sovereign, it does not retaliate; it is full of joy, and liberal in its gifts of joy. And it rules only as the prevailing and characterizing tone rules in a strain of perfect harmony.

We see from this why the work of purification and reformation must be slow and gradual. We may instantly renounce a sin; nor can we renounce it too soon or too perfectly; but we cannot in a moment overcome the love

of it; for that dies slowly. Only when good affections — which cannot grow up in a single night — are ready to take the place of the departing evils, are we safe. In this direction should we look; there seek the assurance that we are in the right path; otherwise our very reform may be doubtful and impure. We may be only driving out devils by the prince of the devils; for this we do when we abstain from sin only by the overmastering power of pride and self-approbation. In the twentieth chapter of Exodus, the Lord said to the children of Israel: "I will not drive the nations out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the *beast of the field* multiply against thee. By little and little will I drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land."

Most holy is the Sabbath day; and from the love of God comes down the law that we should keep it holy, because it is good for our souls to recognize the holiness of this faint shadow of the peace of God. It is indeed a faint shadow; a dim and broken outline. But it comes very far, even to us at the beginning of our long journey, and is then the promise of the blessing towards which our weary steps are tending. It comes, because the recognition of it even thus is a good beginning; it is one step forward; it works in unison with whatever else is a good work; and it is a fitting preparation for that progress of which it accompanies every step, changing as we change, and resuming more of its original brightness as it draws near and draws us near to its Sun.

The command, in the literal sense, is simply to rest from labor; it is rest, and nothing else. But even there it is good. The reason goes with the command, and makes it good; we rest because we are so bidden; and a literal observance of the Sabbath, *because it is so commanded*, will not fail to do some good to the soul.

This literal observance of the literal command was all that was known to the Jews. But to them their church was given, with its minute ritual and its law penetrating into all the corners of life, because they embodied and represented that purely natural mind, which belongs to all men and is the basis of all character. With the Jews, nothing above this was developed, and therefore they had only the truth which speaks to this plane of the mind. And now there are many in whom nothing higher is developed; and wisely and mercifully is it provided that the same words may be heard by them; and well is it for them when they obey these words even as they hear them. And woe is it, deep, bitter, and eternal woe, to those who would rise above this lower plane, with all its law and prohibition, only to be free to do their own pleasure; only to liberate self; only to escape from a restraint which is to them a bondage, because they love the sin which it rebukes. They do not rise above it, for they sink below it. Let us rise in our understanding of the Sabbath; in our estimation of its value; in our observance of the law; but not so let us rise, or we shall fall to rise no more.

As the literal command is the basis of all higher meaning, and as this is addressed to those elements of the human character upon which all others are built, we will first seek for the good which the law effects, in the observance of it on this lower plane.

The man whose whole life is bound up with the active interests of this world, rests from his labors one day in the week, because it is God's will that he should so rest. Why is this His will? First, because there is much in these labors which must not be permitted to lie upon the mind like an unbroken chain; much that must not become an indurated habit; much of which this interruption weakens the hold, so that it may be shaken off when the better in-

fluences which are at work upon the mind find themselves able to do their work better. There is much in the business life of nearly all men that is intensely worldly. It is self-seeking from morn till night. It is through the whole week an earnest, unresting desire and effort to gain, — to gain from one's neighbor, to gain over one's neighbor. And if the Sabbath comes to bid this hunger cease its everlasting moan, to charm this greed, if not to sleep, at least to inactivity, it comes with a blessing.

Moreover, if there is any conscience there, and this the observance of the day would seem to indicate, there will come with the repose of the day somewhat of meditation, of study, of worship; a few thoughts glide in on angels' wings, and bring a little strength against the devil of the ensuing week. If the day is observed in any way because it is thought to be God's will, then is there recognition of him, and obedience to him. These may open the inner gates of the soul. Good influences enter; they inspire some reflection upon the last week, some consciousness of wrong, some purpose of amendment; something which shall come up once or twice next week in the thought, that while we are in this world we have to prepare for another. This good may be very slight; very faint and feeble, and ready to perish; but it may not perish.

As one advances from that condition of mind in which truth seems to him despotic law, his Sabbath feels the liberating touch of this growing sense of freedom. We do not now ask, Is it indeed an authentic law, which I must obey? We begin to see the truth of the precept as it is founded upon the nature of man, and the good of it as it responds to the exigencies of that nature. The day is no longer one of inactive rest. It is not merely or principally cessation from employment. It becomes much more than mere negation. We gladly recognize the opportunity it

gives for that social worship in which brother strengthens brother, and the light from the Altar and the Book around which they gather is reflected from heart to heart, and grows and brightens on its way. We find some appropriate works of charity to which a part of this unimpeded day may be given. Nor, when we feel that our minds cannot be borne upwards with untiring wings, do we fear to resort to innocent and not inappropriate recreations. These may be found in family or social intercourse, in literature or in art, or in the enjoyment of the exuberant beauty with which our Father has, for us, clothed his creation. Even over this intercourse there may be a Sabbath charm. And while we wander abroad, inhaling the blessings which float like perfume on the sweet air, there may be religion, worship, progress, in the still and solemn gladness with which our hearts answer

“The Sabbath silence of the hills.”

As the moral state improves, the need and use of the Sabbath do not disappear, nor lessen. It is always a day when the mind may turn from its daily cares, its necessary worldly occupations, and may look, fixedly and distinctly, upon the goal which it seeks to approach. We labor under an error, when the thoughts of another life diminish our interest in this. Such thoughts are wrong thoughts. They sever two conditions of being which are inseparably connected. Then only is a thought of another life a just thought, when it imparts immeasurable and infinite value to this; when it moulds all its moments into beginnings of eternities; when it reminds us that every day, and every hour, we are sowing seed that will not die, — seed that will hereafter find, above or below, a kindly soil, — seed that may grow in heaven into a tree of life. Such thoughts as these do not send us to our week-day's work crippled

and clogged and dull. They urge us, perhaps, as earnestly, if not as feverishly, as avarice or ambition might. For those therefore who fill the week with labor, although that labor be itself directed by right motives and to just purposes, it is well that the Sabbath should bring its calm and its silence. We may then look with steadier gaze upon Him who "maketh us to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth us by the still waters, and restoreth our souls." From these waters of peace, gushing from the fountain of His Word, we drink as the thirsty drink. We examine the past week, and learn from our errors and faults how to make them less, and how to make each week as it passes bear us one step forward. Nor can this need or this use of the Sabbath ever cease or ever diminish.

If we have succeeded in giving anything approaching to a just idea of the true significance and worth of the Sabbath, neither will its power over men's minds, nor its universality, nor its long endurance, be regarded as wholly unexplained, nor will it be thought surprising that references to the Sabbath should be so numerous, both in the Old Testament and the Gospels. Frequently is it mentioned by name; sometimes alluded to in such a manner that the allusion is obvious or easily discovered; and sometimes referred to more obscurely, and in a way not to be discerned without the aid of the spiritual sense of the Word.

In the second chapter of Mark, our Lord "said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man"; and in the next verse, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." He has for ever endeavored, and while His eternal love shall last will endeavor, to lead man to a Sabbath of rest. That he might do this more effectually and perfectly, he came to earth and put on our nature, with all the hinderances which make of the six days of preparation days of labor

and of conflict. And as this preparation in us consists in the overcoming and removal of those obstacles, so was it also with him. But in him was this work perfectly accomplished. In him only was the Sabbath of rest made perfect.

If we have not wholly failed in presenting an intelligible idea of the state of mind which is meant by the Sabbath, it will be understood that it comes from a harmony between the internal man and the external. For from this harmony it results, that what the internal receives from the Divine influx, that it transmits without impediment, finding in the external a prompt and pure reception and a manifestation of the truth and good in life. Hence all is Peace. In the outer life there is obedience to God, and purity, and active usefulness ; and this is the effect of, as it is the answer to, an inner life which is vivified by Divine influx.

In our Lord this external was born of Mary, and was like our own. His inmost was not from Jehovah, but it was Jehovah. And when this external, perfectly cleansed from evil by successful resistance to all evil propensity, was united to his inmost, it was necessarily made divine.

When, in his Humanity, he says that we should be one with him as he is one with the Father, he utters the great truth which explains his coming and his work. He spake in his Humanity, and in that as it had become absolutely one with the Divine within. One with him, perfectly, we can never be ; but let this unity begin by conscientious resistance of evil, and it will for ever increase and grow, and we shall for ever draw nearer to him, and nearer to a unity with him. In him, when his human, or external, was made Divine, there was no longer any conflict, no longer those temptations and sorrows and unutterable desolation which found expression only in the bloody sweat and in the prayer that the cup might pass from him,

and in the words of anguish, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" In proportion to the intensity of this conflict, of which no created intellect will ever form an adequate conception, was the peace, the calm, of the Sabbath which followed. As he went forward, so must we go. Because he went through this dark and painful path, it is open for us; and its darkness is the less, because the light of His glory is shining upon it; and its pain is the less, because the Comforter comes from him to be our companion through its efforts and its perils.

This is the Sabbath; this Divine-Human state is a perfect Sabbath. And it was made for man; it was made by Him, by and through that work of toil and sorrow; made by him for man; made to be given to man; and when it is given and received, and established within us, then is He himself within us, the Lord of the Sabbath of our souls.

Perhaps an interesting instance of a reference to the Sabbath, not apparent in the letter of Scripture, may be found in the Lord's Prayer.

Prayer cannot teach God, the omniscient. It cannot make infinite Love more willing to assist us. But it may make us more willing and more able to receive assistance. This it may do, and always does, when we distinctly express a sincere wish for genuine good, together with a belief that it can come from God alone, and that he is ready to give it. For these feelings open the heart, and they are stronger, clearer, and more effectual, for expression. Prayer, or the expression of this wish, is therefore good, in proportion as that which we pray for is genuine good. But the Lord's Prayer is necessarily perfect; necessarily univer-

sal; not that it supersedes or rebukes or prevents other prayer; but that it is itself good for all men, always.

There is but one universal good; and that is regeneration. This therefore must be the object of a perfect and universal prayer. And we thus establish an analogy between the subject-matter of the Lord's Prayer, and that of the first chapters of Genesis; and this would lead us to expect some resemblance between them. In the letter and upon the outside, there is none. Let us see if there be any within.

The beginning of the Book of Genesis describes six days of spiritual creation, because there are six distinct states into which the process of regeneration is divisible; and the Sabbath of rest comes at their close. Are there these seven days also in the Lord's Prayer?

If we begin with the supposition of a merely natural man, upon whom a ray of religion shines at length, then, when the spirit of God moves upon the face of the waters, and light breaks upon his darkness, the first effect is the acknowledgment of a God; of a God who created him, and is far, infinitely far, above him; and this expresses itself in the words,

“Our Father, who art in the heavens.”

If this acknowledgment be sincere, it cannot but be followed by worship. The things which belong to heaven are divided in his mind from those which belong to self. The former only are holy in his eyes, and they belong to God; they are the things by which he knows God; they are the name of God; and he utters the words of worship,

“Hallowed be Thy name.”

Sincere acknowledgment, followed by sincere worship,

produces necessarily sincere obedience; or an effort after obedience. The man sees his external as it is, and it begins to be clothed with life, because he now endeavors to make it conform to the will of God. He wishes to obey; he says,

“Thy kingdom come.”

Acknowledgment, worship, obedience, would seem to complete the external man; they are the first three days of spiritual life. Further improvement, or rather a new and distinct kind of improvement, making a new day in the life of the soul, must be made *within* the external. For that, nothing more is needed than that what has been done should be completed. But a new day, and of a new kind, comes, when the great lights of heaven are established in our minds. We see what love is, and we would have it become our life. We are no longer satisfied with mere obedience; we strive to *obey* through *love*. It is no longer enough if His will be done, for the question now presents itself, how it is done. We now endeavor to obey, as the angels who are near Him obey. And this desire we express by the words,

“Thy will be done, *as in heaven, so also upon earth.*”

It remains for us to see clearly, that He is All in All; to listen to the voices within and around us, while they proclaim his greatness and our nothingness without him. This is the central truth of all truth. Then are all our truths and knowledges filled with life, when they bear witness to this, the greatest truth of all truth. Then we gladly look to Him. We wish to live from Him, and not to live from ourselves; our very dependence is our highest pleasure; we seek to make it more and more perfect, and to feel it more and more; and all the wish and all the hope of every day is expressed in the prayer,

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

And now what more remains? Only that our heart should be made wholly alive; that all our affections should be vivified with genuine life. So far as they turn to the Lord and to the neighbor, they live. So far as they are tainted with self-love, they are dead. Nor are they wholly delivered from the bondage of this death, and filled to the brim with the life of heaven, until we can, with the whole heart, ask of Omnipotence to deal with us even as we deal with our neighbor. For self has learned its hard lesson well: it is no longer an enemy, but a friend; no longer a ruler, but a servant; when, in the full comprehension of those awful words, we can say to God,

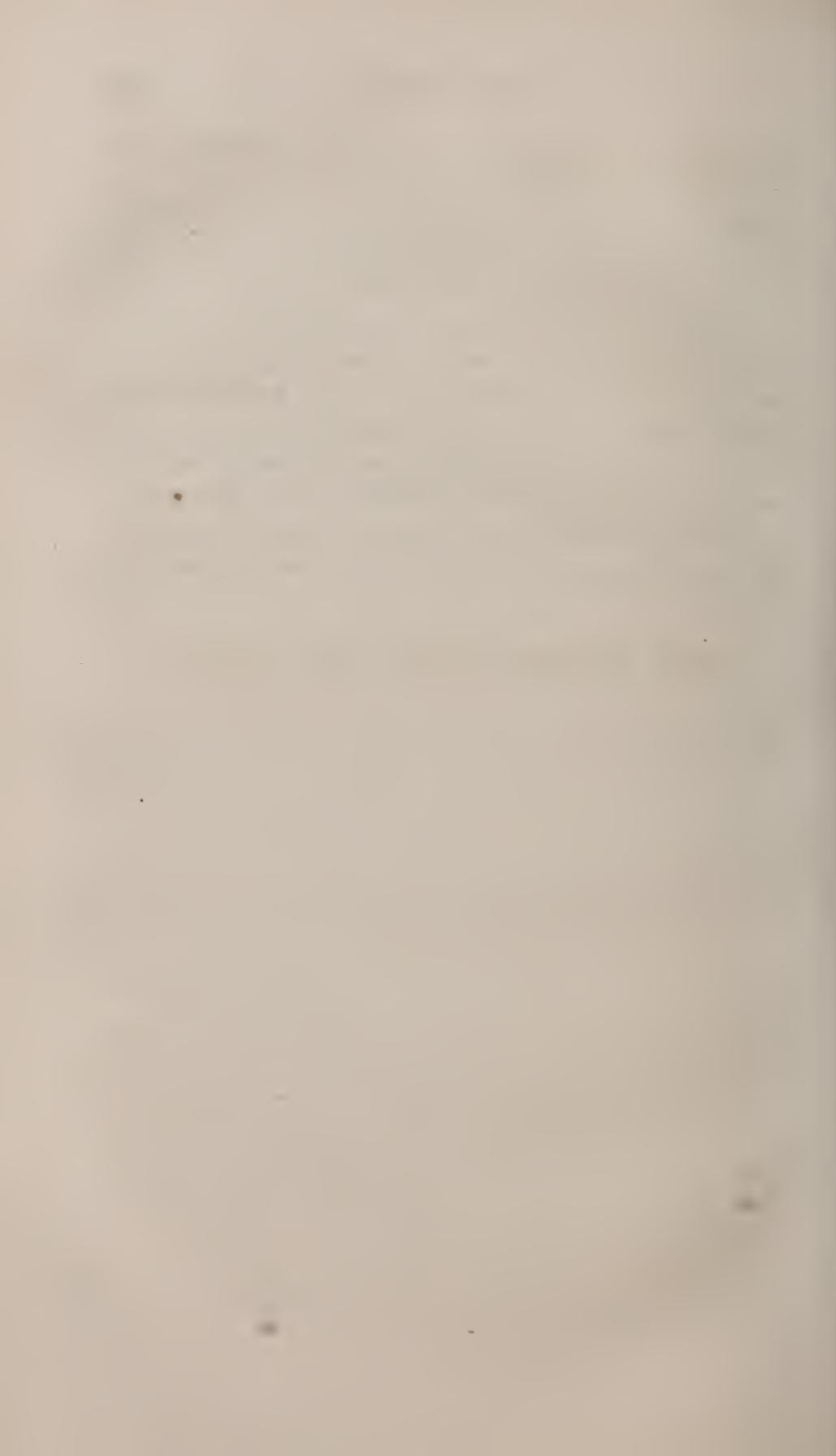
“Forgive us our debts, even as we forgive our debtors.”

And now we have reached the consummation to which our Father has been laboring to lead us. The Sabbath of the soul has come. And how have we been brought hither? Always, through temptations; at every step, through temptations. Only by meeting and resisting them; only by learning through them what the evil within us was; only by overcoming them, and so putting that evil away, have we been delivered by the Lord from evil. Hereafter that deliverance will go on, perfecting itself by an unending approach to the perfection of the Infinite; but while the end is the same, the work is henceforward very different; it will not go on hereafter through temptations, for they have done all they could do. They are no longer necessary, for our obedience is complete and the kingdom is the Lord's. All the strength of our souls is from him, and his is the Power; we know it, we praise him and bless him for it, and we give to him the glory. Henceforth — in the closing words of this prayer — we are delivered from *evil* with-

out being led into *temptation*, because the kingdom, the power, and the glory are the Lord's.

They who have come thus far, have come through labor and through sorrow; through painful conflict and deep grief; through resistance where resistance seemed impossible; through victory in temptations which allied themselves, with all things base and bad in them, and put on all their strength; through a straight and narrow path have they come to the gate of heaven. It opens before them; and they find within one unbroken, one unclouded Sabbath; and all the active usefulness which fills their life for evermore, and all their perfect peace, are but an eternal expression of the prayer which describes at once the only wish and all the happiness of heaven, —

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever. Amen.”



THE FOUNDATION OF DUTY.

THE FOUNDATION OF DUTY.

ALL men have some sense of right and wrong. It may be clear or clouded ; accurate or erroneous ; feeble and disregarded, or powerful and speaking with authority ; but in every mind not altogether imbecile and fatuous, there is some perception of a distinction between things which should be done, and other things which should not be done.

This fact presents itself to every one who investigates human nature. And in the earliest fragments of philosophy which have come to us from the distant past, we see traces of an inquiry into the origin of this distinction, and the authority of duty. Aristotle — the first philosopher after Alexander had conquered Asia, and the limited, defining, and scientific mind of the West had begun to prevail over the boundless, undefining, and unscientific mind of the East — devotes a very powerful and influential work to this and to collateral topics. Since then, it has ever held its place among the most important subjects for philosophical investigation. No school, no sect, no philosophy, and no religion has deemed itself complete, until it has propounded its theory of morals. Nor can it be denied that moral philosophy, which seeks as its central, if not its single purpose, to offer a solution of this problem, has ever

occupied among intellectual pursuits or labors a position, equal in its dignity and conceded worth to its intrinsic value.

That so many have endeavored to answer this question, proves, perhaps, that no answer has been generally accepted. And a further proof that no principles leading directly to one distinct and positive answer have been discovered by thinking men generally, may be found in the number and the diversity, as well as variety, of the theories of duty.

But many, various, and diverse as these answers are, all of them may be resolved into three, or compounds or derivatives of these three. One of them answers the inquiry, What is duty, and why should duty be done? by saying that it is the will of God. A second declares that the moral sense suggests and demands the doing of duty. A third asserts that reason and experience tell men that the discharge of duty is the most expedient thing, and the most useful to one's self, that any man can do.

All of these answers are true; or rather, all of them contain truth; but no one of them contains the whole truth, or offers a key to the whole truth. Nor can we acquire this by accepting all, and putting them together in such wise as to constitute one answer. For this also has been done. There is a theory which declares that the will of God originates right and wrong, and commands that what is right should be done, and what is wrong forborne; and then implants in human nature a moral sense which reveals this distinction, and disposes us to obey this command; and lastly, so provides all the accessories, circumstances, and results of life and conduct, as to make the discharge of duty and the avoidance of wrong the most profitable and expedient thing which a self-seeking person can do.

By bringing all these answers thus into one, we accom-

plish much ; we go nearer to the truth ; we get more of the truth. But we can hardly be said to be as yet even upon the track of the whole truth ; we are not yet in the way to find the central truth which underlies all of these, and gives to them whatever value they have, and harmonizes them all into an actual unity, and not into a merely composite and logical combination.

There is, however, such a truth. There is an answer to this question, distinctly different from those which have been given ; deeper than they, and of more value and significance. This final solution of a vexed and difficult problem I shall endeavor to give as well as I can at this time and in this way ; and it is an answer and solution which I derive from a new system of universal truth now given to the world.

Although this answer, or solution, or theory, is distinctly new, and different from all that have been given, it has been, in some measure, implied in all of them, so far as they contained any truth. And in all the consequences derived from them, and all the structures of thought built upon them, there it was ; for it has always been the veiled and hidden origin, the concealed fountain, of all the truth and all the truths which have ever been uttered on this subject. At times the veil has been almost lifted, the fountain almost risen in beauty and glory to the upper air, when wise and good men have sought with pious and earnest endeavor to discover the foundations of duty. But this truth could not be seen with any clearness, until the laws of creation and existence were disclosed, and God could be seen in his true relation to man, and man in his true relation to God ; therefore, not until the present age.

Even now, the clouds which have gathered in a long night pass so slowly away, and cumber so sadly with their lingering gloom the slowly rising sun, that the truth, even

if it could be wholly told, would shine into a darkness that would comprehend it most imperfectly, if at all. The endeavor, however, will be made, to see and to exhibit some portion of this truth.

Duty is that conduct which is due to God. In other words, duty is the debt which man owes to his Maker. And if we would inquire into the origin, the extent, or the obligation of this debt, we must, at the outset, make some inquiry into the relations between God and man. If we have any idea whatever of God, that idea must include his omnipotence. He is then the king and ruler of man *de facto*, and this gives him some right to impose his laws on us. If we go on and say that infinite love and infinite wisdom are, in him, united with infinite power, this would at once complete his right, and lay us under all the obligation to obedience which could grow out of reason and prudence. For from the love and wisdom and power of God conjoined must flow precisely those rules which are best adapted to promote our happiness.

Farther than this we cannot go, unless we can do more than acknowledge the fact of the creation of the world by an Infinite Being who has been its lawgiver since its creation. In other words, not unless we can learn something of the form and manner of creation ; something of the laws by which the putting forth of infinite power was and is regulated in the creation and preservation of the universe ; something of the end which God had in view in originally making, and now has in governing mankind, and of the means which he employs to attain this end.

Even an inquiry into these dark questions may seem presumptuous ; and if made with the purpose or the hope of bringing all this truth within the grasp of science, or of exhausting these infinite questions, it would be but a renewal — and with an equal presumption — of the old Titan strife

to scale the heavens. But if in simple and honest humility we seek only to know so much of the truth as shall put us in the right way, so that, if with further endeavor we make a further progress, it shall be upward ; and if, as one of the results and influences from the truth we may thus learn, we would know more clearly the *cause* of duty, that its guidance might be plainer and its obligations stronger, so that we might better pay our debt to God and to man, — assuredly this were not presumptuous, nor an effort from which reason should banish all hope of success.

Let us begin with asking whether, as all creation must have been made by God, it is rational to believe that he called the universe into being from mere nothingness ; or that this universe could thereafter have an existence without his further action. The mind revolts somewhat at both branches of this proposition. It is a maxim, not merely of philosophy, but of instinctive common sense, that out of nothing nothing comes ; or that, if there be no material or no substance ready for the operator, there can be no operation and no creation. We may then say, that it is more probable that God created, first, by an emanation from himself, that (be it mere force, as one theory would make it, or something more than force) which might by successive changes and derivations supply material for the proposed forms into which life should flow. Afterwards would these forms be constructed ; by what creative or plastic power acting upon this primal substance of creation, we do not now pause to say. But in some way these forms were constructed, and filled with life from Him, and all so arranged and provided that there might live beings made in the image and likeness of God, and that around them there might be a universe, which, in its adaptation to their organization and to their qualities and faculties, should possess the power of affecting their senses, of supplying their wants, and de-

veloping their activities of body and of soul, in the manner in which this world performs those functions.

This idea of creation, although very indefinite, may still help us when we come, in the next place, to consider the preservation of a universe thus created. For it may lead us towards the conclusion, that the act of creation and the act of preservation may be one and the same thing; or, in other words, that the preservation of the universe is a perpetual creation of it, because the continuance in existence of all things depends upon the continual putting forth of creative power.

It is true that the mind is necessarily oppressed by the endeavor to conceive of the act of creation. Only by patient and practised effort can we acquire the power of holding such a subject in that distinct and steady contemplation from which alone can result ideas having any, even the least, clearness or definiteness. Nor would this topic have been now presented at all, but from the necessity of showing the unity of God's laws, from their first and most universal operation to the last and lowest details. For, if the theory of morals which we shall endeavor to present has any reality, it places the obligation of duty upon the same foundation on which rest creation, the universe, and providence.

Let us, then, go from the creation and sustenance of the world to that of man. For this, as was long ago said, is but going from the creation of one world to that of another.

We shall assume here, and for the purposes of this inquiry, some truths which, as separate topics of thought, might be well worth all the study that could be given to them. Thus we say that man lives after death; not by a resurrection at the last day, but by his own resurrection at his own last day, or immediately after death; all who have ever died being now alive. We also say, as a neces-

sary implication from the truth just asserted, that there is a spiritual world, in which those who have left this world live; and that they live there in a spiritual body. We say also, that this spiritual body is not put on at or after death, as a substitute for the natural body which is put off. But that while one lives in this world, he lives in a spiritual body, within the natural body; and the effect of death is limited to the natural body, which it casts off from the spiritual body; for this is what we call death.

Man, therefore, is threefold. He has a soul, a spiritual body, and a natural body; and each of these lives; and these lives constitute one life, and are but one life, which is the life of the man. Because nothing can exist but in some form or method of being, the soul has its spiritual body which like itself is immortal; and it is formed from those spiritual elements which belong to the spiritual world. This soul, or spiritual body, is further clothed upon by a natural body, at the beginning of man's existence; and this is formed of the elements which belong to the natural world. As long as the soul lives, the spiritual body lives; and as long as the spiritual body lives within the natural body, this natural body lives, and no longer. Each of these two is a body, one as much as the other, and no more. They differ only because each one is formed of the elements of the world to which it is appropriate, and in which it is at home. Man, at death, does not pass into the spiritual world, for he is in that world now; but he passes out of the natural world, to return to it no more; because he loses that instrument or organ which is made from this world and is adapted to it, and which enables the man while he has it to make use of this world.

These two bodies and these two worlds are consonant and adapted to each other. This is not, however, the result of any such arbitrary or accidental law as the "pre-

established harmony" of Leibnitz. That great man knew not how to explain the fact that mind operates upon matter whenever a man moves his arm, (although mind and matter seem to be so essentially different that they cannot be supposed to come into contact or mutuality of action,) otherwise than by the theory that God, whose infinite wisdom foresaw every possible movement of every being who should ever live on earth, therefore preordained, by his infinite power, that, at any moment of the least exertion of the will of any living being, the appropriate muscle should move in an appropriate way; but with no connection as of cause and effect, and no other relation between them than this mere consent and concurrence of time.

Between these two worlds, and between these two bodies, there is indeed harmony, and a vast deal more than harmony. There is an absolute correspondence. And if this were not perfect and perpetual, the outer world would perish, the outer body die. The Creator of the visible universe is also the Creator of that other universe, to us, at present, not visible. This inner universe is, as it were, the soul of the outer, forming it and preserving it, because it is the instrument by which the Creator forms and preserves it and fills it with life; and that this may be so, these two worlds perfectly and always harmonize and correspond one with the other. Therefore, in one sense, this inner world is not even now invisible. For the outer world in which we now live is, first, the effect, then the embodiment, and, lastly, the mirror of the world within.

And therefore it is that this outer world is beautiful; and how inexhaustible, exuberant, and infinite is its beauty, and how living, suggestive, and significant! A rose-bud, just opening to meet the morning, and offer to the coming sun the gem it has made of the dew and filled with its sweetest breath, is more than a mass of softly tinted leaves

gracefully convoluted and exhaling a pleasant fragrance. The motions of nature, or rather the one all-embracing, never-wearying, never-resting movement, to which every atom of the universe adds its contributory mite, — has this no significance, no voice ?

Yesterday, while I was writing the preceding pages, was one of the fairest and finest days of our Autumn ; a season which is always so rich in delightful weather. And what an exhibition, what an excess of beauty, there was, from beginning to end. The morning, lovely as light, seemed to present to a spotless sky an earth as pure as itself, wrapped in a robe of the soft and tender but glowing light-mist of our Indian summer. Everything was living, and yet still. The tinted foliage moved softly, but ever moved ; the birds were busy, but quiet ; they were not wholly silent, but every one has noticed that their autumn song is, not melancholy, but softer than their spring music, and without its jubilant exultation. To the retired spot where I wrote, and from which I looked out upon all this surpassing beauty, the sounds even of human activity, — the last to lose their tone of effort and conflict, — even they came subdued into sweetness and harmony. And so the gentle, mighty movement went on, as the earth rolled forwards through its day's path ; and as the hour of universal rest came on, and the great shadow of the earth rose distinctly outlined on the eastern sky, the very earth itself seemed to lie down to slumber in the pale light of the watching moon, that it might be strong and fresh when morning came, to live another day under the eye of its Lord and Master. The day came and went, rose and sank away, over rocks and animals and men. And the men to whom it was only so many hours more for comfortable labor, or, yet worse, for pleasant idleness, — were they, in this respect, much above the lower animals, or even the rocks, upon whom this overflow-

ing beauty was poured out? It will not always be so. The mind of man will grow and brighten, and his life be vivid and productive of all good, and Nature will present a cup of pure enjoyment to every lip, at every hour, when it is known that all her movements, and all her beauty and fragrance, and all her laws and forces, are but the forms and expressions of an inner life, of an inner world, of spiritual movement and beauty and force and law. Then, the principles by which whatever is without may be interpreted, and what is within recognized, shall be the lessons of all childhood, and the common thought of the world's understanding. Far, very far in a remote future, this day may lie ; but there it must be, now only possible, but hereafter to be actual, or that Providence must fail which cannot fail. Then will nature be as it is now, the exponent and the instrument of the spirit-world ; but then it will not be what it is now, — an impenetrable veil between that world and this its embodiment.

The natural body is, by itself, just as much alive as the soul ; and the soul, by itself, just as much dead as the body. Nothing could be more opposed than this to the common opinions of mankind, and indeed to what is now its common sense ; for this, in its present condition, judges only by *sense*. Every one says the body is dead of itself ; but the breath of life, or the soul, is breathed into it, and it lives ; and presently this living soul is withdrawn, and goes on its way to live for ever, and the body is as dead as any other portion of the matter of this dead earth. All this is true, and perfectly true ; but it is not the whole truth. For it omits the great fact, that, precisely as the body lives only from the living soul within it, so the soul lives only so long as life

flows into it. We have said that there are two bodies, one spiritual and the other natural; both are created; and nothing that is created has life in it of its own. Life belongs only and essentially to God; but it can be imparted by him to whatever forms he creates to receive it. Both human bodies are such forms. The natural body is made for a temporary duration, and for purposes which are soon exhausted. The spiritual body for eternal duration, and for the clothing and instrument of a living soul, and for purposes which will be developed in an eternal series. Therefore life is breathed into the natural body during a time only, and then is withdrawn, and the body dies: and it continues to be breathed for ever into the soul, and through that soul into the inner body, and therefore that soul, in its spiritual body, never dies. But the manner of the living, and the law of the living, of both these bodies, or of the soul and the body, are absolutely the same. Indeed, the manner of their living may be stated thus. Life is breathed into or imparted to the soul, and this lives; and through the soul it flows into the spiritual body, and this lives; and through the soul and through the spiritual body, it flows into the natural body, and this lives. But when the living spiritual body leaves this outer body, the outer body dies; and if the imparted life should cease to flow into the soul, or through the soul into the spiritual body, that soul, or that body, would die in the same way.

Upon two truths rests the whole science of pneumatology, or rather of life. One of these has just been stated. It is, that there is no life but the life of God, either in him or derived from him. And therefore nothing lives but God, and that which God has made a form or vessel receptive of life, and to which he has then imparted life from himself. The other truth is, that this was not a gift of life at the beginning, to continue until the appointed end in the case of the

natural body, and to continue without end in the spiritual body. This is no more possible, than that we should cut off a portion of the light flowing from the sun, and have it still with us as light. Life is not given only at the beginning, but is always given. There was never a creation, either of the whole universe or of anything in it, or of any living being which it contains, or of any material thing in it, which creation was a completed and accomplished work, that was done and finished, and might thereafter be subject to supervision, assistance, or punishment, but which continues to live or to exist because it was so made. It is a universal truth, equally and perfectly applicable to every stone or straw, to every sun or planet, to every spirit, angel, or archangel, that it or he exists or lives at this moment by reason of the exertion of creative power at this moment. And there is absolutely no difference between the creative power and the preserving power, because preservation is nothing else than continued creation.

It must needs be difficult for us to understand that God works in this way, because we work so differently. Whatever we make will continue to exist, and perhaps to work, for a longer or a shorter time, after we leave it. But this is because we surrender our fabric to the known and unknown powers of nature. Gravitation, elasticity, cohesion, friction, heat, light, all that is now comprehended within electricity, and innumerable other imponderable forces, — or the one Force that takes all these forms, — are constantly maintained in full vigor by a power which we are almost as unable to measure or to conceive, as we are to put it forth.

It may be also very difficult to comprehend and accept this principle, because it is very difficult to disencumber our thoughts from the influence of time. We suppose that Kant, following in the footsteps of Plato, has demonstrated that

space and time are only laws of thought or modes of apprehension. Indeed, if they are more than these, they are entities, or independent realities; and it requires but little power of analysis to perceive that this is impossible. We certainly shall not attempt to exhibit here the rationale of this profound problem of metaphysics. But we would suggest, what may be sufficiently obvious, that neither space nor time can affect the infinite and eternal; and therefore, when we endeavor to investigate and comprehend the works of the infinite and eternal, we should not carry with us either of these limitations. In other words, we should endeavor, in good faith, to apprehend the eternal Present, and the universal Presence of the Godhead, and make them so far as we may the basis of our reasonings concerning His operations. One very simple and obvious result of this principle, needing no metaphysics and presenting little difficulty, is the truth that every man who is not self-created or chance-created, that is, every one who lives by the will and by the work of God, lives at each moment by the life and from the life which at that moment flows into him from God. The life of every man is therefore a portion of the life of God, not severed from him, but always His life, flowing from him into the man; and this man is in the first place so formed within and without, and this life flowing into him is in the next place so adjusted and prepared, that it becomes in the man his own personal life.

It follows that all this life is God's life; and that every man who lives, receives (not *has* received) of His life from Him, and *therefore* lives. But how can we maintain this doctrine, and nevertheless be sure that personal and independent individuality is preserved? If we are penetrated with the conviction that there can be but one life, and that this life is God's, must we not sacrifice to it all belief in the man's independent personality? One erroneous system of

thought has accepted this necessity, and abandoned this individuality. Led by various arguments of weight to conclude that there cannot be a God and also another being who lives independently of him, although created by him, it asserts that God is all, and then, as a necessary inference from its premises, that all is God; and finally, that only this all is God. All things of the universe are, in this view, parts of God; without any one of them he would be less, and without any of them he would not exist. But while, by this doctrine, human individuality is, if not sacrificed, very imperfectly preserved, nothing is gained for the personality of God, for that certainly is wholly lost. Hence pantheism is usually considered a form of infidelity. For the common reason of mankind assures them, that, if God is not a person possessing his own existence in distinct individuality, he is nothing but a metaphysical dream, or a mere possibility of the imagination. But what we maintain is, not only that God possesses distinct personality, but that he alone possesses *original* personality; and that it is the perpetual communication of his own life which keeps in existence each and every man. But do we not now invert the former error, and sacrifice the personality of man to the personality of God?

The answer to this it may be difficult to state, or to apprehend; for it is perfectly new. So far as we have any knowledge of the past or present thought of the world, it does not contain the truth upon which the solution of this problem rests. And yet it constitutes a prominent text in the Bible, and in its oldest part; and has thus stood among men longer probably than any other truth or principle or theory which has any relation to the constitution of man. We refer to the declaration of God in the first chapter of Genesis, — “Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.”

God is a Person. He is one Person, one God, possessing his own infinitely distinct personality. He has infinitely, or he is, Love, Wisdom, and Power. He has also, or he is, perfect and infinite blessedness ; and this latter attribute springs from the former ; that is, his blessedness springs from the activity of the elements of the Divine Nature ; or from the putting forth of his Power in doing the work of his Love, according to the direction of his Wisdom. And as the essence of all of this is Love, so we may say that his blessedness springs from the infinite gratification of his Love, by the perpetual exertion of his wisdom and his power, in creating them who may also be blessed. Our next proposition is this : Because his infinite and perfect blessedness includes all that is possible or conceivable of happiness, if his Love seeks to make them who may be happy, it must seek to make them to whom he may impart of his own blessedness ; for outside of this there is no happiness whatever. He does not seek to impart to men all of this, for that would require that he should impart to them all the infinite causes of his own blessedness ; and this is impossible, because it would make them Gods ; but *of* it ; more or less of it ; and that measure or portion of it which, however small it may be in its beginning, shall yet have within it the power of development and improvement, so that it may grow through eternity *towards* its infinite fulness and perfection in Him.

If, then, he would impart his own blessedness, or any portion of it, he must impart some portion of those elements or causes from which his blessedness springs ; and these are His love, his wisdom, and his power ; and they must be given all from himself, or from his own, because no others are existent. Therefore He creates man with a will, which of itself neither loves nor hates, but into which His divine love may flow, and therein become man's affection and feel-

ing; and with an understanding which has not of itself the power of thought, but into which His divine wisdom may flow, and become man's thought and intelligence. But this is not all. As the blessedness of God springs not from the possession of love and wisdom, but from their exertion and exercise, so the gifts of a love like his own and a wisdom like his own, would be wholly ineffectual, if a power, also like his own, were not also given.

In other words, God is infinitely happy, because that which he perpetually desires, his wisdom informs him how to do, and his power enables him to do. Therefore the gifts of love and wisdom to man are accompanied by a portion of this same power, in order that they may have the same effect. This power is the power which a perfectly distinct, independent, and individual person possesses, of acting of himself and at his own will and pleasure. This power is the only foundation of the Divine blessedness; and the only possible foundation of all happiness; and this is precisely the power that is given to men, to become in them the foundation of their happiness, which is necessarily God's own happiness imparted to man as far as that may be, whether this be much or little. As this implies and requires in God an infinite divine personality, so it implies and requires in man a finite but most real personality. Therefore every man, although living only by perpetual influx from the Lord, has the power of living absolutely *as of himself*, because this is a part of the very influent life which gives him life; and it is a necessary part, because without this the residue would be useless and inoperative. All that flows into him is from God; all of it is from and of the Divine life; all the elements of the Divine life are in it; and among them this great and most essential element, personality, and the power of independent personal activity. This great element, which is the basis of the rest in God, does not stay behind the rest, but flows in

with them, and becomes in man the basis and foundation of his thought, action, affection, and happiness.

We have said that this personality, or power of acting as of one's self, is absolutely essential to all happiness. But a profound conviction that all our life and power are of God, is equally essential to a just understanding of our relation to God, and a rightful use of the gift of life. And how shall we reconcile two things apparently so antagonistic? Most men, in their intense assertion of their own freedom, cast off altogether—in fact, although it may not be in words, or in consciousness—all reference to God's power. While some, seeing only that power, recognize no other, and become fatalists. They know not how to acknowledge God's omnipotence and perpetual oversight, and yet assert man's freedom. The solution of the problem lies in the reconciling truth, that, as God himself is perfectly free, this freedom also must be imparted to us, if we are made in his image and likeness. It is therefore *one* of the commands of God's almightiness, that man should be free. And this great truth, which has been given to a church that shall not perish, will itself never die out from among men. In times to come it will receive new illustration, and grow in clearness and in strength, and in acceptance among men, until at length faith in God will no longer be thought to require the sacrifice of human freedom, nor the assertion of that freedom lead a single step towards the denial of God. The belief and acknowledgment that we live only from God, and the consciousness that we live as of ourselves, will grow beside each other, and be one among men, as they have grown together as one from eternity in heaven. He that has ascended highest there, and drawn nearest to the Infinitely High, knows best, and sees with a clearness inexpressible and inconceivable by us, that at every minutest moment his life is the imparted life of God; and yet feels with an

intensity beyond our imagination, personality, freedom, and self-hood, all of which are the gifts of God. And thus, as he was created originally, so is he continually created and builded up more and more into the image and after the likeness of God.

Let us now pause, and remember that our general purpose is to find the foundation of duty; and that for this purpose, we have seen that man lives only from God, but that this life is imparted in such a way as to enable man to live as if it were his own, or, in other words, as of himself. And that the end for which man is in this way endowed with life is that he may receive and partake of the Divine happiness, in a measure which may expand and increase for ever. And our next inquiry must be, how this life of God in man may become promotive of the purpose for which it is given.

We must remember, that when the Infinite and Almighty bows the heavens and comes down to us, — to us who could not live an instant after one single sight or thought of Him as he is in his own infinity, — he clothes himself for our apprehension in truths and forms of thought, not false to his own, but, however immeasurably beneath him, yet corresponding to his own, and presenting him to us truly, although modified so as to be apprehensible by us. This we must remember, that we may not be startled when we are told that we can partake of the happiness of God, only on condition that we live as God lives. Yes, even as God lives; for from his life of infinite action and infinite use springs his infinite blessedness. And from our action and our usefulness, whatever they may be, must spring our happiness, if any we are to have.

Again, let us remember, that, as there is but one life, and that is God's own life, whatever be the form it puts on in those to whom it is given ; and but one power, and that is God's power, whether it becomes in recipient forms the strength of man or of angel, the moving and heaving forces of physical nature, or the living energy in the weed by which it ripens its seed that the little bird who feeds upon it may not perish ; so there is but one happiness, the happiness of God, which, coming from him, fills his grateful creation. This let us remember, and then we shall be ready to hear, that, in giving us rules for our conduct, whether they be his commandments, or in whatever other form the laws of duty, he gives us the greatest blessing which infinite wisdom can conceive or infinite power impart ; for he gives to us instruction as to the manner and method of his own life ; and therefore he gives us the way and the means of living as he lives, and thereby becoming happy with his happiness.

This is true, because all the genuine laws of duty, in whatever revelation or whatever form they come or have existed, in whatever guise they may be suggested by a true conscience to him who loves the right, and most of all, in the ten commandments, in which they are summed up, all these laws of duty are laws of divine order. I do not mean by this laws which God impresses upon his universe to preserve its order, or laws by obedience to which man may live in an order, which God requires and loves ; but laws, or truths, by which the divine order of God's own life is regulated. They constitute a description of God's own life. Let me, by way of illustration, speak thus ; if a man were very happy, and an erring and suffering brother came to him and said, "How is it that you are so happy, when I am so miserable?" we can understand what the happy man means when he replies, "It is because I live in this way or

that way, and you live so differently ; now listen to me, and I will tell you how I live, that you may live in the same way, and be happy also." *God is doing to man this very thing.* He comes, as a man might come to a suffering and erring son, and tells him, for his guidance and relief, the story of his own life. It takes the shape of the commandments, or of the laws of God, or of the laws of duty ; for these are one. Therefore are they full of infinite meaning. They are gifts from the infinitely blessed, to us the infinitely low. They are brought down and put within our reach, and as it were laid at our feet, as lamps for the path we should tread. They are thus brought down, that they may lift up the lowest ; and therefore they are brought down where the lowest may find them, and take them to himself. But they do not cease for this to be divine ; nor are they for this the less divine ; nor is there in them a little part of the divine life cut off from the rest for man's use ; but the whole of that divine life in all its infinite fulness. Let the humblest and most self-abased sufferer begin, and obey in its simplest form one of the laws of God, and at that moment he begins to rise ; and as he obeys more, and all, and this habitually and lovingly, he rises always more and more, and these laws rise with him. Always they will tell him his duty, for always they will be the laws of God's own life. We may imagine an archangel, highest among the blessed, loving these laws as we cannot love anything, seeing in them a wisdom which would blind us with excess of light, and guarding in his heart of hearts the certainty that these laws came forth from the bosom of God, bearing his life with them ; and that in their re-ascent they bear upwards with them all who live by them.

Some of the steps of this ascending meaning, this growing into heavenly wisdom, of God's commandments, are now made visible to us. Swedenborg has told us some of

them very plainly ; and the principles of the science of correspondence revealed by him enabled us to go still farther. Presently, I will endeavor to illustrate this meaning by examples. Now I would only say, that there is and must be a kindred capacity of growth and elevation in every law of duty, whatsoever its origin or form or requirement. Obey it until it becomes a part of your life, and it will present itself to you anew with a higher meaning. Obey that also, and again it will rise and bear you upwards ; and this again and again, with a never-ending ascent, because it came from and returns to the Highest.

We have now reached a point where I may state, in the most general form, what I propose to illustrate as the Foundation of Duty. It is the fact, that all laws of order are revelations of the order of God's own life ; given to us that we may live in like manner as far as possible, and, in a degree which shall equal that in which we so live, partake of the happiness which is God's own happiness, and the effect and fruit of the life so revealed and described to us.

It may seem familiar and irreverent to speak of God's own life, and of the manner of it, as if it were a thing which we could possibly understand, or even imitate. Certainly we cannot understand it fully as it is in him. "No man has seen his face and lived." But as we say all truths are his thoughts, not meaning that he thinks just in the way in which we think, but only that, if he be a person who has built up our personality in his own image and likeness, there must be that in him which is thought in us ; and these his thoughts, when they come down to us, are truths. So, in a like manner, we say he is a person who creates, and preserves and governs, and therefore lives, and therefore must have a manner of living. And then we say that the description of this manner of living, when it is brought down to us, takes the shape of the moral and religious laws

of life which he gives. However difficult it may be to illustrate this by example, within a brief space, I can hardly hope to be intelligible otherwise, and will take one or two of the plainest and most general instances.

Thus, one of these laws is, "Thou shalt not kill." This is addressed to the lowest possible degree or condition of humanity; it is addressed to those who desire and intend to kill; and to meet and help this wretched state of man, it comes down to it, and appears as nothing more than a prohibition against murder. But let this law be believed and obeyed, in almost any degree, and it soon rises. From a prohibition of the act of slaying, it becomes a command against all thoughts and feelings which lead to slaying; and so it ascends and enlarges, until it brings within its scope all malignity, all hatred, all jealousy, all envy. And if these also are resisted and overcome, and removed from the life and the heart by the higher obedience which this law now claims, soon will its negative character disappear. As a command *not* to do, it has done its work; and now it becomes a command to *do*; for it requires of us to cultivate that charity, and all those affections which are the opposites of the malignant passions it has subdued and expelled. And this for a twofold reason. One is, that if we do not fill the "empty house" from which the devils have departed with better occupants, they will be sure to return; another is, that unless we exercise and strengthen and cultivate into full fruitfulness these good affections, we shall suffer the good things in our neighbor, which we might in this way keep alive, to die. Then heavenly and angelic life begins, whether the man be here or higher; and as this life advances and grows, so advances and rises this law; always leading to a purer and warmer love of the neighbor, as obedience to it continually animates the will and enlightens the understanding, until this law is seen to contain and to

express infinite love ; the very divine love of God himself ; and his infinite and eternal communication of his own life. It is a ladder of which the foot rests upon the lowest plane on which sinful and suffering humanity can stand. It rests there, that the unhappy who dwell there may find it, and climb, if they will, for ever upward ; for its summit is lost in the brightest glories of heaven, and is still ascending.

In like manner, if we analyze the command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," we shall find it addressed in form to him who had so far defaced in himself the image of his Maker, as to have no love for truth. But we should also find that there was within it a fulness of meaning, capable of progressive development, until it would be seen to lead to the denial of all falsehood, to a hatred of it, to a love of all truth, and to an endeavor to receive into our minds all that we can receive of infinite wisdom, and live in conformity with it. And what we have said of these two laws is true, in some form and in some measure, of every truth which leads to good, or, in other words, of every law of duty.

We cannot do the very same things which God does, nor any one of them. He has not described specifically what he does, that we may do it. But our conduct may be governed by motives and principles which are similar to those which govern his ; and we may do, under any circumstances, precisely the same thing that the motives and principles of the divine conduct would lead to if they came down to those circumstances ; for by and through us they may come down to those circumstances. The laws of duty are given in order to bring our conduct at all times under those motives and principles ; and by obeying them, we may live as God lives, with that difference only which springs from the difference between the finite and the infinite, and

between the circumstances under which we act, and those under which He acts.

It may occur as a difficulty, that as the laws of duty are given to us, that by obedience to them we may lead the life of God in our degree and on our plane of being, so, if we do not obey them, we must either lead God's life in doing evil, or else there is a life within us which is not God's life. And it has already been asserted, that all the life in every man is God's own life derived from him, because there is no other life and no other source of life.

But it was also said, that the constantly influent life from the Lord is constantly accompanied by, or rather always contains within it, that freedom which is one element of divine life, and is absolutely necessary to a distinct and real personality, either in God or in man. This freedom is not an appearance only, and is not given only in appearance; for then man's personality would be an appearance only, and this is as real as heaven. We may reason about this freedom indefinitely. And at the end, as at the beginning, one thing remains certain; it is, that we know we are free. One may deny this in words, and be only foolish; for he may suppose himself to believe that there is no human freedom, and only deceive himself. But if he really believes this, and acts accordingly, he is insane, and all men call him so, and must in common charity treat him and care for him as one insane; for if they do not, he will perish.

If our freedom is a reality, it must consist in one of two things. Either in the power of rejecting this influent life, or in the power of determining its form, effect, and operation at our own pleasure. It cannot be the first, for that

would only be death. It must, then, be the second. Such is the fact; for every man has this power; and nature is full of emblems and analogies which show us what it is. Thus the sun, which is the representative of God in nature, pours out its animating influence and heat and light, the same at all times and to all things. But the earth receives it, now in winter, now in summer, now in day, and now in night, accordingly as she turns herself towards the sun. And while the tree which receives this influent life into appropriate vessels ripens delicious fruit, and the rose acknowledges and seeks to repay the gift by its beauty and its fragrance, the plant by its side receives the same gifts, and uses them to ripen a deadly poison. And why and how is this? The true answer tells us that this influent life is received into different vessels. There is a universal law embracing all creation, whether of mind or matter, which causes all things to receive whatever is given them into their own forms, and to give this life forth only as it is shaped and qualified by those forms. A fragment of the earliest philosophy tells us that "everything is received according to the form of the recipient." How well all know, that if we try to do good to any one, whether we do him any good, or what, or how much, depends on *him*. It is precisely so that the ivy ripens its poison and the vine its grape under the same law which causes the evil and the good, on whom the sun shines equally, — whether we mean the sun of the body or the sun of the spirit, — to ripen and give forth according to their own quality the fruits of sin or those of righteousness.

There is, however, this difference. Dead forms have no freedom, and no power of choice or self-direction; and merely animal forms have none which is guided by reason, or by a will which consults reason. Not so is it with men. They have the power, and cannot lose it, the responsibility,

and cannot escape it, of giving to this influent life, when it flows forth in action, form, effect, quality, and operation, at their own pleasure and by their own determination.

At first this depends upon the individual nature of each man. And as we have all inherited the evils of a long ancestry, — that is, have inherited tendencies to those evils which they confirmed in themselves by indulgence and exercise, — the influent life often comes forth in forms of evil. As soon as we do an evil thing, or yet earlier, as soon as we are conscious of a desire to do evil, there falls upon us the power and the necessity of choice. We may confirm all these dispositions to evil by act and indulgence; and then this influent life becomes in its effects and manifestations more and more perverted. Nor would it be possible for us to know or to suspect the quality of those tendencies, and use this knowledge to prevent the consummation of our ruin, if means for this end were not provided for us by the revelation of the laws of duty. They tell us what would otherwise be hidden in the darkness of an eternal midnight. They tell us what that life is, and what it does in its pure and perfect source, in order that by endeavoring to do so also this life may remain in us, and may do in us and through us what it does in the divine operation. We may confirm and multiply the tendencies to evil already existing within us; and in so doing we shall live from ourselves, in the sense that we shall voluntarily indulge and strengthen those inclinations which spring from our own character and lead us to pervert the influent divine life. Or we may resist our own evils; and as we resist and subdue them and put them away, the opposite good as it is received from the Lord becomes implanted and enrooted within us, and gradually the inner forms of our wills and understandings are changed, and their tendency to pervert the influent love and wisdom passes away, and we can, as

spontaneously as the vine ripens its grapes, lead a life which is correspondent to the divine life. Then are we like unto the angels of God ; or rather, then have we become his angels.

The true foundation of duty is, therefore, we repeat, the great truth that man lives by receiving influent life from God ; that the laws of this life as it exists in Him are revealed to man, and adapted to his apprehension as the laws of duty ; that these are disclosed to his reason and to his conscience by the written word and otherwise ; that obedience to these laws brings his life into conformity with the divine life in the way and degree that belong to the plane on which the man lives, whether this be high or low, or the highest ; and that this conformity opens him to the reception of happiness from God in a corresponding degree.

We have called this truth one ; and it is a one, although composed of many elements. And it has always been, to some extent, implied or dimly shadowed forth by all considerations of the obligations of duty which approached the true relation of man and God.

Thus, the principle that we live by the influent divine life has been among men from the beginning. In the older time, many were the theories and systems which were founded upon it. But because this truth was seen but imperfectly and without its concomitants, it led to results which were not true, but in some minds became very false, and in some instances did the work of falsehood. Beginning, indeed, at the very earliest known philosophies or religions, and coming down to this day, the principle that human life is not self-originated, but is the influent life of a creator, has quite too often led to one of two bad results, and sometimes to both. One of these is fatalism ; the other is asceticism.

The doctrine that human life is in its origin divine life

which is perpetually given, bears the mind very strongly towards the conclusion, that every moment and every act of the body or the soul are controlled by an omniscient almightiness, and are therefore predetermined and unchangeable, unless this doctrine is accompanied by that other truth which tells us that personal freedom and individuality are given constantly with that life, or, to speak more accurately, are themselves essential and inseparable elements of that life. Nor could this reconciling truth be seen or understood, until it was known what was meant by man's being created in the image and likeness of God. For, as we have endeavored to explain that statement, all the elements of the divine nature, however lowered and accommodated to the plane of human nature, must be imparted to human nature, that it may image forth the divine. And one of these elements is the perfect freedom and absolute personality of God. But if both of these truths are accepted, the doctrine that man lives from God, not only does *not* imply or suggest fatalism, but it involves, and it establishes, human freedom.

The other error we have spoken of is asceticism. This doctrine sometimes wears a very lovely and attractive aspect; it has resisted the corruptions of sensuality and worldliness with majestic might, and has indeed been as the salt of a church to preserve it from utter decay; and we have no wish to speak of it or to think of it as mere error. Perhaps we should rather regard it as a kind of accommodated truth, permitted to exist where purer and higher truth would be powerless and useless. Asceticism sacrifices self and sense and the world. It seeks the kingdom of God, not *first*, but *only*. It seeks this by suppressing and suffocating all self-life, and waiting in stillness and quietude to receive what God shall give instead; whence those who have held these doctrines are sometimes called Quietists,

and sometimes Pietists, or by other names, which, if they have any significance, bear substantially the same meaning.

There are perhaps things in the statements and doctrinals of all true religions which, taken by themselves, and separated from all their accompaniments, might appear to favor asceticism. This may be true even of the New Jerusalem, but very far is the doctrine of this church, when viewed in its whole breadth, from any such tendency. Nothing is more certain, than that all its doctrines command us, not to slay and sacrifice, but to keep alive and cherish, the love of self and the love of the world and all our sensuous nature, and — *to regenerate them*; and to do this as of ourselves, but with the knowledge and acknowledgment that the will and the power to do so are from the Lord alone. Then, what becomes of asceticism? It passes away, and its place is filled with the most intense activity. For we know that the life of God, in himself, is one with the love of doing good; that this love prompts him to build and sustain a universe of which the suns are more numerous than the atoms of earth-dust, and a heaven which is infinitely more than all the suns and earths below it. And then this love, as the divine life, visits and fills all of these, and yet seeks the little creature which our unaided eye cannot see, whose wide world is a spoonful of water, and gives it at every moment of its brief life all its proper activity and enjoyment. If we would co-operate with His influence in building ourselves truly into the image and likeness of His life, every duty — although so humble that we must stoop to see it, and so little that it will escape us then if we do not look for it earnestly — takes at once the aspect of a work which God has given us to do, and a blessing, however it be now disguised, which he has given us to receive. Where, then, is the worthlessness of human life, or the littleness of human concerns? Where, then, is he who will venture to sorrow

because all surrounding opportunities are low and trivial? Where, then, the mind and heart which do not fail in the endeavor to conceive or measure the value of even one moment, because each one may be given to duty, and through duty to God?

I would speak no ill of asceticism, for I have no dislike of it and no fear of it, and certainly no contempt for it. Let it come if it be needed, for there is a danger which it may help to avert, and an evil which it may rebuke. There are some indications of its approach, and if it will aid in resisting the growing worldliness of the times, if it will incite to a deeper and more vital piety, let it be welcome. It cannot make us too earnest or too devout as Christian men and women, nor can it make our piety too warm and fervent, if it does not disturb or cloud the higher truth which tells us that the appointed evidence and the best effect of a true piety is the active, cheerful, and religious performance of all those duties to all around us, be they never so humble, which belong to the way of life in which our Father bids us walk.

If we regard our life as the life of God within us, formed indeed and brought out into results by virtue of that personal individuality and freedom which is one element of that life; if we believe that it retains in its inmost essence its original divinity, and is to be so shaped and operated by us in our freedom, that the external thus given to it may be correspondent to its internal; not equal, because that was possible only for Christ; but conformed and unopposed, for that is possible for all; — then we must see that every moment of our daily life, supposing it all to be under God's providence, may be the means of bringing these two — this internal divine and this natural ultimate and external — into, or at least towards, conformity and correspondence. And, indeed, that it must be the means of doing either this

or its opposite. Hence, a new value and worth are given to our commonest hourly duties. And from this point of view we may better comprehend a principle, or a doctrine which I suppose distinguishes this dispensation of the New Jerusalem from all former religions, and indeed from the whole natural and habitual tendency of mankind. For all religions have taught, or have been supposed to teach, that while we should do our ordinary and home duties faithfully, yet when opportunities offer for great things, that is for great endeavors, great sacrifices, and remarkable self-devotion to some extraordinary good, these opportunities should be laid hold of, or indeed sought with enthusiasm; and should be regarded as the means of great advancement in goodness, of large and sudden leaps upon a forward and an upward path. Not merely asceticism or pietism, but the common consent of mankind in all ages and among all races, has declared that they who separate themselves from common humanity, and with extreme abnegation and oblivion of self devote themselves to the strenuous and perpetual performance of those painful or repulsive charities or uses which nearly all neglect, — these are the saints on earth, angels in disguise, who climb with great and rapid strides the steep ascent of the mountain of holiness. All this is changed, I may almost say, reversed, in the New Church. Here also it is taught that these uses should be performed, that these and all good works should be done; and that those persons who feel themselves called upon by character, taste, peculiar fitness of powers and qualities, or by adaptedness of position, or by any command of circumstances, — all these persons should go on and engage in this way of life, and continue in it as long as it seems best that they should. But that they are no better and no greater for doing their duty in this form than in any other. On the contrary, the New Church teaches, that the chief duty,

the highest charity, the greatest opportunities for goodness, offer themselves to every man and every woman, everywhere. We must remember that, if the end which God desires from our whole conduct be that this may conform to the inmost and essential tendencies of the life he imparts to us, and if all the circumstances of our daily condition are controlled by him to this end, then each little work of every minute, however common and dull or mean and trivial it may appear to us or others, is in very fact a mould which he has given, into which we may cast our outward life, that it may come forth a vessel perfectly fashioned into correspondence with the life which flows into it from him. And there is no need for zeal to fold its hands and say, I will wait until a work fit for me shall offer. Let the most zealous try perseveringly and in good faith to do these little hourly, daily duties as they should be done ; let him try to dethrone, as the ruling motive of industry, the wages which pay for it, whether they be money or honor or influence, or the pleasure of self-complacency. Let him try to forget himself, and how his work is to look and affect his reputation, and see in what he does only its utility to his neighbor ; or let him try to lose his sense of its apparent meanness, and resist the weariness which comes from the dull routine of labor ; let him try to fill each moment with the cheerful alacrity and earnestness that will abide with us when we indeed know that every moment may take us one step nearer to our Father in heaven. Let him try this, to-day and to-morrow, and for many morrows, and he will not be likely to ask for anything which it is harder to do. No ; thankful indeed would all that is yet unregenerate within him be for the relief it would find in the opportunity to do some great thing, which would console and sustain him with the sense of its greatness, and the greatness it would give him before God and man, and in

his own self-appreciation. To oppose some general evil; to be a reformer, and a zealot, and a leader of reform;—gladly would he do this. But to wash seven times in Jordan; every day in the week, in the common boundary, in the ever-flowing waters which bathe the holy land so that none who come from the rising sun can enter that land but through them, — no, he would rather return to his home and carry his uncleanness with him.

However mean and small these duties may seem to us, each one of them that is well performed becomes the basis of an ever-rising and ever-growing structure. The life which is made our own in this world, is no other than the life which will become our own hereafter. One always in its origin and source, it retains there the form and quality impressed upon it here; or rather we retain there all that determines its form and quality here. Whatever, by the power of discipline or habit or development, brings any part of our external nature into true correspondence and conformity with the life within, in this way and so far unites that part of our external life to the life within, and does this for perpetuity. Thereafter, as we advance in the unending career of improvement which constitutes heaven, we shall find an external already provided on that point which inflowing divine life may fill and animate. Whatever plane of being we may reach, that external will have risen also, and will still be the ultimate but living and productive form of the same principle of life which filled it here. However vast, and now inconceivable, the good which that principle of life may accomplish in our highest ascent, it will still be in exact correspondence with the minute and humble duty performed here, and will be possible only because that duty was well performed.

There is an anecdote in the biography of a celebrated singer of the last century, which may illustrate this. In his

youth, after much instruction, he went to pass a year or more with one who was deemed the best master in Europe. His teacher gave him a sheet or two of exercises. The pupil sang them at sight; but was directed to sing them again and practise them until he could sing them better. And this he did, again and again, and always with the same answer, and with instructions pointing out defects, until he grew very impatient, and asked, When shall I begin to sing the music I must sing as the business of my life? And the answer ever was, Practise these exercises a little longer. When the pupil could bear it no more, the teacher said, After one month, you shall have something else. But persevere so long. And when the month was ended, and the young artist demanded a change in his instruction as the reward of his obedience, the answer was, You have learned all that any school can teach you; go forth, equal to whatever shall be required of you, and take your place as the first singer in Europe. So will the harmonies of heaven present themselves to him who has qualified himself for them by faithful diligence in the exercises which earth has offered. None but his Master may see the connection between these exercises and the glorious work which they have prepared the pupil for. But He saw it. And by His wisdom and His love they were fitted to discipline the mind and heart into a fitness for uses, before whose transcendent majesty and beauty the poor enthusiasms of this world would faint and die.

We have traced the laws of duty to their origin, and found in that origin the foundation of their obligation. More might be added; more which would present this subject under yet another aspect, and offer yet stronger reasons why these laws should be obeyed. But it would lead us to consider a topic which in its elevation is too far above us, and in its extent too far beyond our powers, to permit even the

endeavor to present it in a scientific form. And we allude to it only because it must not be left untouched.

In several places in the Word, and particularly in the seventeenth chapter of John, are texts which indicate the desire of the Lord, that we may be one with him, even as he is one with the Father.

Declarations of this kind have always been regarded with reverence. But they have seemed to involve only an emphatic and most solemn admonition to imitate him in his life and conduct. Figurative in their form, and impressive from their appeal to the imagination, they were not considered as presenting a proposition which could be supposed to express an exact truth. This is a mistake. There is no proposition in the science of religion more definite or more certain than that which these words are intended to imply; none approaching it in importance, and certainly no one which has so much right to be considered as comprehending all the rest.

The Lord Jesus Christ was born in this world, a son of the Virgin Mary. From her he inherited a humanity like our own. But within him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead. The difference between him and us consists, not in the fact that Jehovah was his Father, for he is our Father also; but in this fact, that He is the Father of each one of us, by and through some individual man, who by the plastic powers of his own nature gives form and quality to that life which being imparted through him becomes our life; and consequently causes each one of us to have, at the outset, all those modifications, tendencies, and peculiarities which qualify this influent life; and these may be modified, restrained, or in a measure suppressed, but never extirpated or wholly removed.

From this difference it arises, that the Lord Jesus Christ, by victories over all the evil influences which found it pos-

sible to assault him through that inherited humanity, was able gradually to destroy all opposition, and all want of perfect conformity and concord between it and the divine within, until they became at length perfectly harmonious, perfectly conjoined, perfectly one, and this one perfectly, infinitely, and eternally divine.

This result he proposes to us as the end which we should seek for ever to approach. Attain it we cannot. This was possible only for him. And it was possible for him, because there was nothing ineffaceably impressed upon his nature by the nature of an earthly father. It is otherwise with us. What we can do is to follow in the path in which he walked. We cannot go so far, but we can go in the same direction; and we cannot go in any other and approach our Father and his Father. We may live somewhat as he lived; and the effort to do this will assimilate us to him, and our life to his life, and the result of our life to the result of his life, more and more for ever.

This result in him was the making of his external nature equally divine with the indwelling Godhead, because the divinity within flowed into and perfectly filled the whole of his external nature and life. And this is what is meant by his glorification.

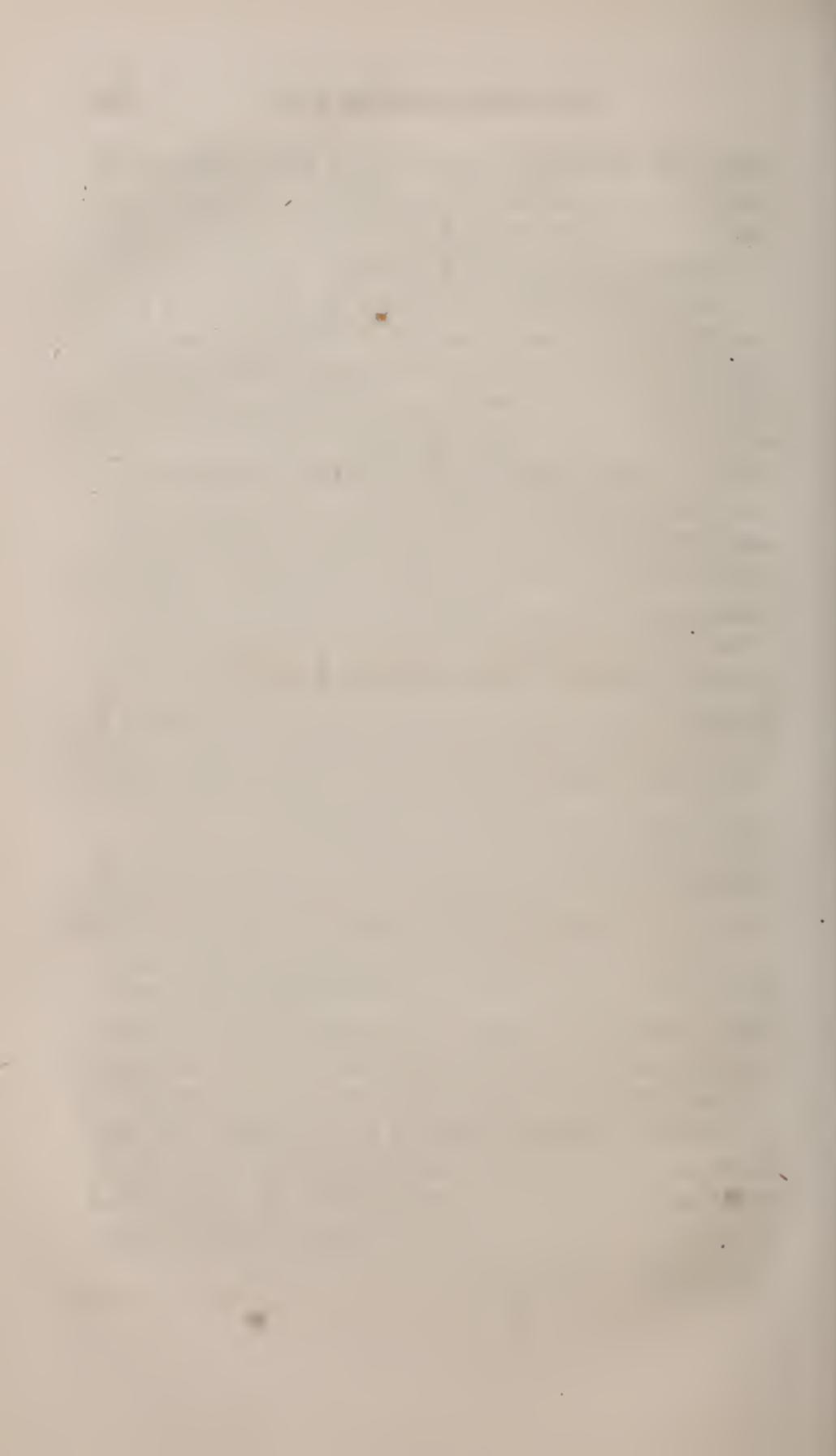
The result in us may be perpetual improvement; a constantly growing submission of the life which is shaped by our inherited tendencies to that which flows into us from the Lord. When this has gone so far that this inflowing life distinctly prevails, and comes forth in our life only moderated and limited by what belongs to us, but not perverted, then are we, in the language of Scripture, born again. A new heart and a new life are ours. And this is what is meant by our regeneration.

Then we shall be able to comprehend as we cannot now, what is meant by the texts above referred to. We shall

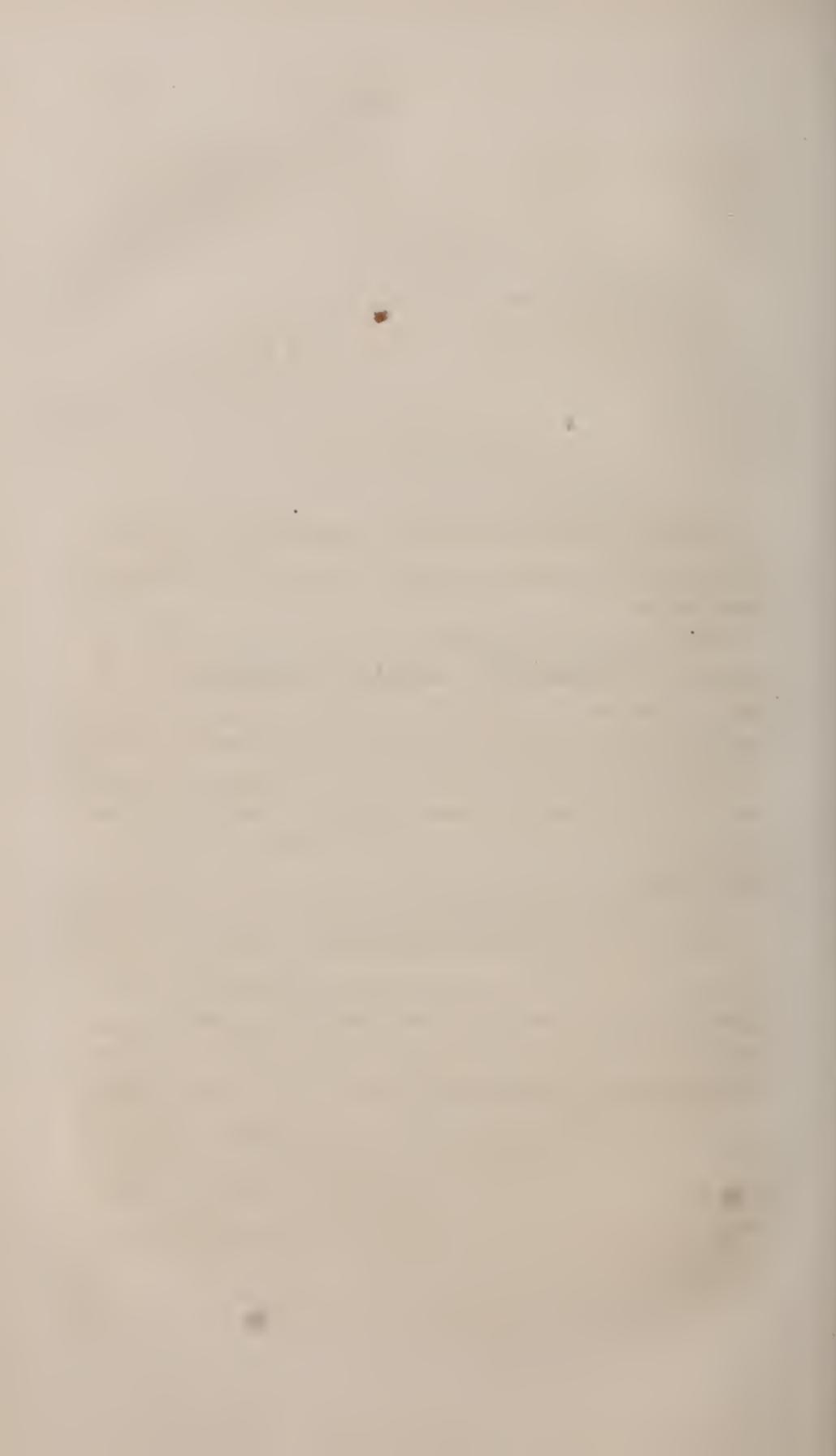
then know that we are approaching a Unity with our Father ; even with the infinite Almightyness of heaven. And that this is wrought through a true conjunction with him. A conjunction which is not a confusion. For by this conjunction the life received by us, and the life lived by us, or the life of God within us and our own life, may become as much one, as are the life of the soul and the life of the body in any most spontaneous act, which the hands perform with all their strength because the whole heart is in it. And this conjunction, while it thus harmonizes and combines into unbroken unity two elements once so antagonistic, preserves for ever, as its own indispensable foundation, and sustains in always growing strength and completeness, our own personal individuality and our own personal free agency.

We are so far from this result ; it is so high and we so low, that it seems a vain word to speak of it ; a vain hope to aspire towards it ; a vain effort even to try to imagine it. But let us remember, that if the counsels of Infinite Wisdom were conceived from eternity, there lies eternity before them wherein to accomplish all their work.

If we would solve the problem, why the laws of duty are revealed, we can do it only as with reverent and earnest thought we ascend the stream towards the fountain. As we go upwards, we shall find that these laws flow forth from the love of God, because they are the expression of the life of God. And then we shall see that the best and the whole of earth, and all that the imagination can see in the bright expanse above it, or lying along the distant horizon of a far-reaching possibility, — all of these, though they may be truths and rational probabilities, are but as the minute seeds and imperceptible germs, in which lie gathered and concealed the great certainties of that unending future which begins with Duty.



DEATH AND LIFE.



DEATH AND LIFE.

By death is usually meant the termination of life, and therefore death cannot exist until there is a life which may cease to be.

Why, then, do we say Death and Life? Why give this priority to that which is necessarily the second, not the first? Because, if, under one aspect, it is the end, under another it is the beginning. If in one sense, and under one relation, it is true that there can be no death until there has been life, in another sense, and under another relation, it is equally true that there can be no life until there has been death.

As a religious truth, this has always been known and asserted with greater or less distinctness. Every profound system of religion has counted this truth among its bases. Many of the ancient myths endeavored to express it; and our Lord, in the Gospel of John, emphatically declares it to be indicated and symbolized by that uprising of vegetable growth, upon which, as a necessary foundation, all animal being, directly or indirectly, depends for the possibility of being. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

There are not many things in which all the sects of Christianity agree, however otherwise divergent and discordant. But there is certainly one. It is that Jesus Christ is the great exemplar for man. They may differ, and do so irreconcilably, as to the reason, the method, or the benefit of this example; but the fact all admit. Indeed, it would be impossible even to profess Christianity, without acknowledging that which our Lord himself expressly and repeatedly asserts as the beginning and the end of his command and instruction; that which shines through it all, giving to it order, coherence, and illustration; that which is expressed in the words, "Follow me." A very frequent form in which this sentiment is uttered is in the requirement that we should love our brethren even as he loves us. In John he says, "Abide in me and I in you. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . . He that abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit. . . . If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love. . . . This is my commandment, that ye love one another even as I have loved you." And, in the verse immediately following, he adds, "Greater love hath no man than this; that he lay down his life for his friends."

It is then one of the commands of Christianity, that we should be ready to lay down our life for our friends; and probably all would agree, that, among the elements of the perfect Christian character to which we should look and aspire, even if we can never completely attain to it, must be a willingness to lay down one's life for another, when there is a sufficient cause for the sacrifice.

But how seldom is there such cause. In the first centuries, and occasionally since, when spasms of persecution have shaken the Christian Church and betrayed a deadly disease within it, there have been martyrs. Some, at least, of them, and we may hope many, were good men, who died

as Christian men, and because they were Christian men. And the pains of death were softened, and in some instances authentic history justifies the belief that they were taken away, by the conviction that they were giving the last and highest testimony of being followers of Him who died for all.

The age of martyrdom — of martyrdom of this kind — has gone by; there is now little or no external persecution; nor is this phase of erring and sinful humanity likely to reappear. We may still imagine cases in which we must peril, or even cast away life, for our friends; but they seldom occur in fact. Does this text therefore belong only to the past? Obviously this is not altogether so. For all may, now and always, look up to this as to a moral standard; may ask of themselves, if they have become ready to obey this command, if the need of obedience should recur. And thus, as a test and measure of character, to be applied by introspection, it remains, and always will remain. But is this all?

The answer to this question we have some hesitation in stating, because it may seem to stand in absolute antagonism to the whole course of the world's thought and life. For the answer must needs be, that this text, this command, this instruction, is at this moment given to all men; that it will be so given to the end of the world and the end of eternity; and that it therefore forms a part of the eternal Word of God; that it is given to angels as well as to men; and that it is obeyed and carried out into actual effect by every man, in every hour and every moment in which he is making any genuine improvement in his moral condition; and that a simple and unreserved obedience to this law is an absolute and an inevitable condition for all true progress in regeneration.

In the literal and obvious sense of the verses we have

quoted above, our Lord refers to himself as exhibiting that proof of perfect love ; as laying down his life for his friends ; and it is plain that the command to us to do the like, which is nowhere expressed in these very words, is implied only in the general requirement that we should " follow him " ; that we should take up our cross and follow him ; that we should love one another, even as he has loved us.

The Christian Church in all ages, and with all sects, has acknowledged that Jesus Christ died for mankind. It is impossible to be a Christian in any sense of the word, and deny this. But this universal admission is importantly qualified by its interpretation. Here we find no uniformity. There are those who hold that his death satisfied eternal justice as an infinite punishment for sin, and so averted that punishment from those for whose benefit and pardon it was permitted to operate. There are those who hold that it is profitable to us only as an example how a good man can love others, and consent to suffer if it will help them. Between these erroneous extremes there are very many grades and forms of belief. But if the death of Christ for mankind is, in any form or any sense, held up to us as an example, the first thing for us to do is to understand that example ; for this is an indispensable prerequisite for following it. That is, we must learn what his death really was, that we may next learn what imitation of his death lies within our duty.

It would seem to have been a death of extreme suffering. In the garden of Gethsemane, a short time before it took place, and when the plans were laid and even then beginning to mature which were to lead to his condemnation and death, he exhibits an intensity of sorrow that is perhaps without a parallel. He prayed to his Father ; and his prayer was, " Remove this cup from me." And the narrative tells that an angel appeared, strengthening him ; and

then it adds, after this strengthening from heaven, "Being in agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

It may be hoped that no one ever read these lines without feeling that they depicted the last extremity of suffering; nor without remembering that it was suffering voluntarily endured for the good of others. The Christian Church has always said this; and has always called upon eloquence and poetry and art to commemorate this agony, and sanctify themselves by doing what they could to impress this solemn scene upon the minds and hearts of men.

Assuredly this was well. Possibly the suggestion may be appropriate, and may be pardoned, that if in these days, and in this neighborhood, this great event is seldom the theme either of words or of art, and far more seldom than once the topic of religious exhortation or remembrance, a part of this change may have arisen from a diminution in religious zeal, and a weaker sense of the worth of that great act, and of the love by which it was wrought.

But it is also true, that there has always been, and is now everywhere in Christendom, a very great error concerning this event. The universal apprehension was and is, that the prayer and the suffering of our Lord in Gethsemane referred to his approaching death upon the cross. This is an absolute, almost an infinite error. And there are obvious considerations which lead so directly to this conclusion, that it seems strange the error should not have been distinctly pointed out.

What was there in the near approach of that death, which could cause or explain that intensity of agony? It was to be an ignominious and a painful death; and both in a high degree. But what was the ignominy to him, who knew the truth, and must have been lifted by it far above the plane of thought of those who inflicted and witnessed

his death? Even then crowds around him were filled with the deepest sympathy and admiration; for there followed him to Calvary "a great company of people and of women which also bewailed and lamented him." What was, to him, the robe thrown over him in mockery? what the crown of thorns, when he knew that he was ascending to sit for ever on the right hand of God, and to possess all power in heaven and in earth? Did it ever occur to any Christian to think of our Lord as disgraced by the manner of his death? And yet all that we know, and infinitely more, he knew also. For if he foresaw his approaching death with a distinctness that made him suffer thus, he must have foreseen its accompaniments and its consequences.

Nor was the pain of that death so excessive. Crucifixion was doubtless among the most torturing forms of capital punishment; but this was mainly because it involved a long and always deepening suffering. But Jesus Christ died comparatively soon, and escaped that extremity of pain which fell upon those who were crucified with him. How many of his followers suffered afterwards for their faith in him; and some of them, the very death which he died, with added circumstances of torment. And yet, when we read the authentic statements of their death, in some instances at least, we do not mourn with them, but we exult with them. We see that the mind conquered grief and pain; and that they were borne upward on the wings of peace. But every support and relief which they had, he must have had, and a thousand-fold more.

Is it then true that the Christian Church has been mistaken to this hour in supposing that Christ suffered in Gethsemane as severely as that description indicates? Far from it; so far, that the agony of our Lord was alike beyond human endurance and human imagination. It was all that suffering could be. It was infinite. And it was

borne only because a divine almightiness within sustained the humanity without.

The mistake of the Christian Church has not been here. But they have not known what suffering could cause his agony, except that anticipation of death upon the cross; and in their ignorance, they have referred this suffering to that cause. This was their error.

The suffering of that hour was not one of anticipation and fear, but a very present and terrible reality. The cup which our Lord prayed to his Father to remove from him, was one of which at that moment he was drinking. The agony which prompted him to pray "yet more earnestly," was at that moment rending his heart in twain. The bloody drops of sweat which fell to the ground were the signs of a toil, a struggle, a combat, he was at that moment passing through. And the death of Christ, which wrought for us infinite blessing, and was to him infinite pain, was the death he was enduring from the first moment of rational and conscious life, and of which the death upon the cross was but the end. And this perpetual death is that which must be ours also.

All that was external in our Lord, was the same in him that it is in us. By our external and by his is meant, all that is seen and heard and known by the senses; by this word is also meant the external mind, or the external of the mind; and in the broadest sense it includes all that we live in outwardly and apparently, and also all that this outward and apparent life springs immediately from. That is, it includes all feelings, motives, or emotions, and all thoughts, opinions, and sentiments, which move, and govern, and give form and color to our outward life. It includes therefore, first, all that we do; and next, all that we spontaneously feel that prompts us to action, and all that we usually mean when we speak of our Life. Within all

this is our inner or internal nature ; and so far within this internal that it is beyond our reach and our consciousness, and therefore beyond injury from us, is an inmost, which we may call the inmost of the mind, or the inmost mind. Here a divine influence dwells, and works. It dwells there as the beginning and foundation of all our life ; and it works to bring the external man into conformity with itself, that as it flows forth, and through the internal fills the external, it may do this without perversion and degradation. In, by, and through this inmost our Father in Heaven operates upon us to lead us to himself.

So it was with our Lord, but with this difference. His inmost was the Father himself. He was there with all his infinities. Our Lord was born of a human mother, and took from her an external humanity, which, by accumulated inheritance, had become full of possibilities of evil and tendencies to evil. But he did not live through the instrumentality of a human father. Through that instrumentality we all live ; and by it the life which is within our external is qualified and modified. But the power of the highest, directly, and without any medium, overshadowed Mary ; and the Almighty was the only father of the child she bore ; and therefore was he called Emmanuel, or God with us.

With the first beginning of rational consciousness, or of self-directing action, our Lord began to do his work. His was the same work in kind which we have to do ; but it differed infinitely in degree. The work was, to permit the divine within to control the external human, and bring it into harmony with itself. We can do this in our degree, because free-will, free-agency, and personal liberty of choice are a part and a first effect of the life which flows into our inmost from our Father in heaven. So it was with Jesus Christ ; excepting that these were infinite and perfect with

him. Divine Providence watches over us always to see that we are not tempted beyond our strength, to provide that evils shall not be aroused and inflamed within us which are stronger than we can successfully combat with the degree of liberty and power which can flow into us, if we will but use them. The same measure was applied to Jesus Christ. To him no evils, or no assaults from the hells, were admitted more than he could combat and conquer. But his liberty was perfect, for the life within him was Almighty; and therefore he could conquer all; and therefore all were admitted to assault him. All did assault him, and all were subdued.

We mean by this, that from early childhood he was tempted by the uprisal of evil after evil; the milder first, and, as he grew stronger, the more severe. At length, when he was about thirty years old, and his humanity had reached its full maturity, he entered upon his public ministry. There appears to have been an immediate preparation, in a combat with influences which came from nearly the bottom of the abyss. They are symbolically described as the temptations in the wilderness. Probably he did pass those forty days in solitude. Possibly the temptations which beset him assumed to his humanity the forms set forth. But this is not material. What we know is, that the natural propensity of man to rule over others, to love himself, and to worship himself and trust in himself and in his own strength, instead of God and his might, all were stirred from their profoundest depths. And when that combat was over, and the devils were subdued by whom those evils were animated, he was ready to enter upon the three years of ministration which ended in his death. During these three years, these and similar temptations continually arose, and were continually baffled; and they grew in intensity until the close; grew until the intolerable anguish

found utterance in those words of despair, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." And continued perhaps until that last word was uttered, "It is finished."

How painful these combats were, he may perhaps begin — faintly and far off — to apprehend, who knows what it is to struggle with an evil of which it is felt that indulgence is death, while resistance to the burning desire seems more painful than death. All who have made any real advance in goodness know something of this. But no one, nor all together, know it as he knew it. He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," for he sounded its depths. All that all humanity can be called upon to do, he did. All that all humanity can be called upon to bear, he bore.

The propensities to evil, which Jesus Christ thus resisted and overcame, did not enter into and compose a part of his human nature. They composed *it*; it consisted of them; for the fulness of time had come; and by this was meant, that the accumulated succession of evils had filled full the human nature of Mary; so that all were there, and therefore when all of them were subdued, none would be left to come anew with unconquered force.

And now we may begin to see how he laid down his life. With every propensity to sin which he rebuked and overcame, so much of his natural inherited life departed, and so much of the opposite divine life descended and took its place. And in so far his life was regenerated or born again; and in so far the external was united with the divine. And this went on; and still and always onward, with every new temptation and every new victory; until all was accomplished, and all his natural and assumed life was voluntarily laid down, and in the stead a new life put on, which was divine. When this work was all accomplished, he was wholly regenerate or born again; for he had laid down the whole of his natural life for others. The Son of

Man had become the Son of God; the external was one with the internal; and our Lord became the Father clothed with a divine humanity.

Thus he laid down his life for his friends; for us, for all who are willing to become his friends. Thus he manifested his infinite love. Thus with his own hand he wrought salvation for us, by making it for ever possible that we might do so also, in our way and measure.

How the conquest of the spirits of evil by our Lord facilitates our conquest of them; or rather, how the condition of the human race, and the laws which by the necessity of order govern progress, made this conquest of them at that time and in that way essential to the salvation of the human race, we do not propose to consider now. This topic has been alluded to elsewhere. But the remark may not be inappropriate to repeat in this connection, that only when the natural darkness of the mind is beginning to break away, do we look upon salvation as a reality, or as needed. And then, at first, we are startled at the idea of a scheme, or a system, for God to work by. It seems to question his power or his wisdom, and to impart to him somewhat of human limitation and infirmity. But we ought, very soon, to be able to see that God works always by means, in order to give to his instruments the happiness of making happy; and that he works always according to the laws of order, because perfect wisdom cannot but know and preserve order. For proof of the fact, we may look through the universe, physical, intellectual, or moral, we may look into ourselves and abroad upon society, and we shall find everywhere that the power which governs the world, whatever it may be, works by means, and according to laws, or an order or system or plan, or, if we like the word, a scheme. Mere logic, then, should tell us that it is not rational to suppose that God works out man's salvation with-

out any system, and by the mere effort of irresistible will. There is indeed but one rational question, and it is, what are the means and what the method which he uses. But let us return to our more immediate subject, which is the duty that the perpetual death of our Lord, as our exemplar, lays upon us.

Our external life; all that we feel to be our life and have power over; all that belongs to us individually and specifically as our own; all this life is composed of similar tendencies to evil with those which composed the Lord's natural life, and were overcome by him. With this there is mingled in all men more or less of natural good, that may become genuine and abiding good by being made spiritual good. But the great purpose for which we live, is to put away, step by step, to-day as we can, to-morrow as we can, the evil elements of natural and inherited life, and receive in their stead corresponding but opposite elements of spiritual life. These elements of a good life are in their origin divine; and they are only modified into adaptation to us, by the spiritual beings through whom they flow. They seek for ever to flow into us from God out of heaven, and do so flow in when the hindering antagonism of evil is removed. If, for example, we resist and overcome a selfish love of the world, or the love and worship of self in any form, we are not left lifeless and loveless, for the love of the neighbor and the love of the Lord flow in and fill and animate the heart.

What we have to do, therefore, is to lay down our life. To lay it down each day and hour; to know, when we feel an evil element of life striving within us, that it has come forth within our reach, not to be indulged, and by indulgence vivified and strengthened, but to be resisted, and slain, and buried.

Our Lord said in reference to his own death: "This life

I lay down of myself. No man taketh it from me. But I have power to lay it down and to take it again." This also is true of us. No man can take from us this first life of our souls ; this natural and unregenerate life ; nor can time, nor chance, nor anything in heaven, earth, or hell, take it from us ; nor can death itself take it from us ; for if we go into the other world before this life has died within us, we carry it thither, and it lives on there. But we have power over it ourselves. We have power to lay it down if we will. And then we shall take it again. We shall not take what we laid down and be again what we were before, but something very different. "He that loveth his own life shall lose it ; but he that hateth his life in this world, the same shall keep it unto life eternal." So He laid down his life, the life in this world which he hated, and against which he was combating until the end ; and as he laid it down, he took it again, glorified and made divine by perfect conjunction with the life within him.

This view, or theory, may seem to be enthusiastic, or fanciful, fit for recluse and meditative persons only, if for any, but incapable of being applied to actual life ; but it is in fact nothing more than a systematic exposition and development of truths which belong to the *religious common sense* of the world. Does not that acknowledge that there is much of evil and suffering and degradation which would disappear if self-restraint and purity, and the love of the neighbor and the love of God were stronger and more operative in daily life ? Does not that say continually that sin must be checked, and the ordinary habits and tastes and motives and purposes of men be more conformed to the laws of God ? And that then there will be more order, and good conduct, and happiness ? Does not that tell us that the thing for each one to do in the furtherance of this general end is to deny to himself the indulgence of sinful and selfish

propensities, and thus gradually subdue and suppress them? And does it not assure us that this may be done with the help of God, and that as we profit by this help, and cease to do evil and learn to do well, we draw nearer and nearer to Him? All these are simple and very practical things; and no one with any desire to become religious would say that any of them could be denied, or thought to be new or strange. But if these things are indeed truths, or laws, they must, with others like themselves, constitute the *system* of God's providence and man's duty. Nor is it enthusiasm, or mere fantasy, which asserts that they are all most real and vital truths; and that they spring from God's own order, and are therefore capable of a positive statement, of an examination into their origin, and of an arrangement and annunciation as laws of a system which has its own unity and completeness.

The end of it all is, that our natural life is full of proclivities to evil. That we may lay them down, and lay *it* down so far as it is composed of them, and then shall receive the opposite life, which consists of tendencies to the opposite good things.

As this is the command of God to all, so it is that which he is always seeking to help men to do. For this purpose he permits all the sorrows which seem to lie in ambush by the pathways of life, and spring out upon the wayfarer at every step. For this he permits them. We call them "the sorrows of life," and it is an excellent name. They are precisely the sorrows, the cares, the disappointments and losses, the weariness, the depression, the despair, of *life*; of this natural life, which bears them as a tree its fruits. And however reluctantly and therefore imperfectly we may do it, we can hardly prevent the mere law of association from presenting this natural life to us as productive of sorrow, and full of that which should be regretted and dis-

liked. If only this is done, it is not much ; but even this loosens the iron grasp of sin and selfishness, and will prevent our falling to the lowest depth, if it cannot make us consent to rise out of the abyss. But it may be and is meant to be the beginning of much more ; of an insight into the possibility of exchanging this life, which is so prolific of sorrow, for another which shall make us better and happier. And with this insight our eyes will be opened, and turned towards the light ; and as we approach it, it will grow upon us ; and in sorrow itself we shall find comfort and hope.

But let us return to the words of our Lord, and observe that we should be ready not merely to lay down our lives, but to do this for our friends. One immediate, obvious, and most important application of the precept requires us to abstain from any indulgence of an evil which could be injurious to those who stand near us in any relation of life. This word, friend, has a wide meaning. It will include many more specific relations. Embraced within its scope are father or mother, and brother or sister or child, and husband or wife, as well as all those whom any business or social connection brings near to us. And in its widest sense it includes all who are our brethren because they are the children of our Father in heaven. And who is there that will not find opportunity, in every hour of every day, to lay down somewhat of his life for some one of these ? Is it anger, or injustice, which threatens to cloud the sunlight of home, and cast asunder and build a barrier between those who should be in kind conjunction, or weaken or pervert the parents' influence over the child, and nourish wrath where love should be ? Is it hatred, that cannot forgive, and enjoys the sullen indulgence of malignant purpose, until that purpose can ripen into action ? Is it discontent, which sees in Providence only neglect or indifference or

partiality, and turns the very daylight into darkness for all within its reach, by unavailing complaint and resistance? Is it envy, that refuses to be glad only because another is, and would rend another's good away, or pull him down from his elevation, only because it is not ours also? Is it the kindred sin of covetousness, that desires whatever is another's with unhealthy wish that would steal it if it could; for to steal is only to carry coveting into act, and to covet is only to steal with the heart instead of the hands? Or is it that dishonesty which is born of envy and coveting and greed, the foul child of foul parents, that prompts us to cheat another, and in so doing to cheat ourselves far more? Is it that cold and hard self-enjoyment, that neither takes from others nor gives to them, but lives in the midst of its own, a life of barren selfishness? Or which of the other myriad forms of self-love or of sin stands this hour between us and justice or kindness to others. Whichever we can see it to be, so much of our natural life has come forth into prominence; it has revealed itself to us, if we will see the thing as it is. It has come forth now, that we may pluck it out and cast it away, as a member which it is far more profitable for us to lose than to carry with us into hell. There it is, our life. And we must put it away, must lay it down, that the barrier between us and our friends may separate us no longer; that we may go to them in truth, in justice, in kindness, usefulness, and love; that we may do for them that very thing which this sin urges us not to do for them; that we may lay down our life for our friends.

It is for this very reason that we have friends. All the relations of life, all its incidents and circumstances, nay, all things whatsoever, are for this very end. We are, while here, as is often said, and can hardly be said too often, at school. All our surroundings, from our earliest to our latest breath, are exercises assigned to us. Most of us are as

ignorant, or, if not ignorant, as thoughtless of this, as children are, who go wearily to school to learn the task of which the purpose and the need are drawn from a distant future. So it is with us in all the doings of life. We cannot stay out of this school; it has no recesses nor vacations; for every moment offers its exercise, and the manner in which we do it is recorded for ever, upon our own hearts. Therefore we have friends of various kinds, standing in a vast multiplicity of relations; and these all so formed and directed by Providence, that they are to us, all of them, instruments of orderly, continuous, and well-adjusted discipline; and when they cease to be this, they cease to exist. Quality after quality is brought up by these relations to be tested by the truth, and if good confirmed by exercise, and if bad suppressed by denial. Faculty after faculty comes up to be employed because we shall want it through eternity, or paralyzed by resistance that it may not through eternity be, with its demand for exercise, an abiding curse. In the manner in which all this is interwoven with the web of life, there is infinite wisdom. We recognize the wisdom of God, somewhat, in the creation and procedure of the great nature which spreads as a universe around us. But there is also a wisdom which only itself could measure, in the exact care for the culture of the nature within us, in the patient and unresting and all-embracing foresight which orders all the minutest events and least details of daily experience, so that they may all converge towards one purpose. Moses was placed in the cleft of a rock as the Lord went by, and saw Him after he had passed. From the rocky clefts in which we dwell, we too sometimes see, and might often see, the providence and love that guided the past. But if we could discern it as it is, while tending us with inexpressible love and watching every footstep and every circumstance of life, we should be blinded with intolerable light.

For this purpose we have friends ; and for a double purpose. They afford us opportunities to lay down a life which is death and take up a life which cannot die. And we give them, in turn, the opportunities and means of exercising all the good qualities which they possess. We let them love us ; we help them to be just, and benevolent, and grateful, and useful ; and this is the greatest good we can do them. We make it easier for them to do the very thing for us which we do for them ; and so the blessing comes back to us ; and so our Father connects his children into one family, and seeks to enfold them all into oneness with himself.

All this is to help us to ascend towards the love and wisdom which are ever coming down to meet us. We have friends, and all these exercises of the soul are wrought through our relations to them, because we could not perform them if we were not aided by personal relations and feelings and inducements ; for we could not, at first, see or love what is true, or what is good, excepting as it clothes itself in this or that particular instance of justice or benefit to our neighbor. But when we have seen this and dealt with it as it was intended that we should, a new evidence and a new effect of the uplifting of our souls comes to us, and it comes in our power to recognize goodness and truth, in themselves, as our friends. We have learnt that nothing else *in* our friends was truly friendly to us ; that these in them made them our friends ; and the step is not then difficult which puts us on the height whence we can see goodness and truth themselves as our friends, and more our friends than any persons can be.

Then we lay down our life for these new friends in a new way. We do not ask to whom it will do good, that we should cease to do evil ; still less do we ask whose hand will return to us the good we give to him. We have no fear of these

questions. If they come to us, and with evil intent, they are disarmed, for an answer is ready for them. We cannot deny ourselves in what is evil, without making ourselves a medium of good to others. They may become better because we are better. We may never know who they are to whom we shall be useful, or precisely how we help them; nor do we curiously ask; for we are none the less certain that we shall help them, and that all the good we do will return to us a thousand-fold. We know this, because we have begun to know something of the true origin, and nature, and efficacy of the true and the good. We know that in their primal forms of wisdom and love, both infinite, both together one, they constitute God. That, proceeding from him, they constitute and form and fill the universe. That in them and by them he forms and fills, not only the universe around us, but that he forms us and fills us with life, which is his life in its origin, and remains his life after it becomes our life, so far as it is unperverted. And when we have this knowledge, what is there for us to desire, but that we may lay down for truth and goodness, these friends of our souls, all of our life that opposes them? This death we desire to die.

Death is of three kinds; or, rather, the word death has three meanings. One is the death of evil within our souls, that we may become good; another is the death of our souls under the influence of confirmed evil; either of these is actual death, or the loss of a life. But the third meaning, the common meaning, the death of the body, is only metaphorical, and, so far as the soul is concerned, wholly unreal, and only a thing of form and appearance; for this death neither is nor causes any loss of any life whatever. It cannot be too much insisted on, that natural death does not even discontinue or suspend bodily life, but only changes the form and scene of it. Who

ever thought an insect died, because it made of the outer parts of its body a shroud, and a cradle, and rose from this in a new body, which had always lain concealed within the old one? The error which deems death an extinction of life is inevitable, if a natural view only is taken of the subject. For, according to this view, the act or moment of departure is a vast and sudden and total change. We cease to be what we have been, and become nothing; or if anything, something totally different; and therefore all the accumulated changes which can occur in the course of the longest life are, if added together, nothing in comparison with the final change, when we bid farewell to the world itself, and to everything we recognized as body and as substance.

The truth is the precise opposite of this. The change at death is no doubt important in itself; and very important as it closes one scene and one mode of discipline. But merely as change, or merely for the difference which it produces at once in our state and feelings, it is comparatively slight. Whereas the other change, the change in the spirit, the change which takes place when we die to sin, and begin to live to good, this is one of which we cannot measure or imagine the importance. We are indeed born again; and born into a new world; born into new views, feelings, opinions, purposes, desires, and relations, in respect to every person and thing which life presents to us. The material world, and the persons whom we encounter, are the same. But the difference in us makes their relation to us, and the aspect they bear to us, perfectly new. When we die naturally, we wake just what we were when we slept; for the act of death has no more effect upon us of this kind than a night's sleep. After the labor of every day which we pass in this world, we go to our beds for rest, and there body and soul slumber. If we die that night, the body never wakens

again ; but the soul does, and in the same state in which it went to sleep. And it wakes in the same spiritual body which once gave life to the natural, material body, and is now delivered from that body ; and this spiritual body, formed of most real spiritual substance, finds itself in a spiritual world formed of similar substance, which is adapted to the spiritual body through its organs of sense in exactly the same way in which the former world was adapted to the former body and its organs of sense. At first, therefore, scarcely any change is apparent. Afterwards changes come, perhaps in a long series ; and end in putting the man in his true place for eternity. In the end, the change is wholly inconceivable ; but at first, it is little more than nothing.

Our whole view of natural death is exactly wrong ; exactly the opposite of the truth ; and the reason is, that the natural state of man is exactly the opposite of that for which he was created. The natural man has many resources and faculties which the mere animal has not. He has these that they may be employed in purposes and uses which would be impossible to the animal ; that he may by their help recognize, understand, and believe spiritual truth, and be spiritually-minded. But when these faculties are not so employed, — however otherwise cultivated and expanded, — the natural man is none the better for merely possessing them or for this misuse of them. He is no better than an animal in his belief, his state, or his hope. This world is all to him ; and all belief in another, and all regard for another, seem to him mere illusion and folly, whether he says so to himself and to others, or uses different language. He may indeed, and generally does, under various influences and by the utterance of words expressive of different sentiments ; persuade others, and often himself, that he has faith which an animal has not. But it is a mere mistake. And the proof of it is, that he looks upon death just as

an animal would look upon his own death, if he had intelligence enough to comprehend that event.

This is now probably, and has been for ages, the prevailing, although most certainly not the only existing, view of death. And hence the blackness, and mourning, and funereal wail, and the distress and woe, which generally accompany — what? A transfer from a temporary and preparatory stage of existence into that other for which we have been preparing; a going home from school.

There can be no greater error than this; because it is exactly total. But Divine Providence permits this falsity to result from the natural causes of it, and overrules it for good purposes. It is as well as it is inevitable that they who are in a merely natural state of mind should remain under the influence of this falsity. All the terrors with which it invests the passing from one world to another are, for such persons, wholesome terrors. They keep them, on the whole, in a teachable state as far as may be. And when one begins to arise out of this state, the fearfulness of death begins to transfer itself to its true object; to that death which is another name for confirmed sinfulness. The early terrors, which alone could once restrain from unrebuked sin by the fear of punishment, now cling about sin itself, and oppose the wish and the thought as well as the act of sin. The fear of death is gradually transformed into the fear of sin. At the end of the process, the original state of mind in relation to death is exactly reversed. It is seen that what we at first call death is only an appearance, a symbol, a metaphor; that it wears that aspect of horror merely to cultivate in the mind feelings which should be transferred to another death. We know that, as all true life is divine in its origin and character, all life opposed to this must be death; and from that moment our strongest desire is, that this death may itself die.

As we pass through the series of changes which constitutes progress, we constantly find old meanings and old views cast off, and new ones developed from within. This is true of almost all our mental possessions; and of none is it more true than of our idea of death. Beginning with understanding this as the painful extinction of life, about which all unimaginable distress dimly gathers, we gradually advance until we forget this meaning in the new view that presents to us our natural and evil life as a living death. Then we learn that we may lay down this life, or this death, if we will, and that genuine life will take its place. Then we desire to die; to die the death of the righteous. The wish is the common attendant of our daily life, to lay down all of that life which is hostile to goodness and to God. The sense that nothing else is so desirable as this, that nothing else will make us so happy, grows upon us; and we seek nothing more than to die daily. But we seek thus to die, because thus to die is to live; and as the Divine Providence permits us to gratify this wish, permits us to see, with humble confidence and hope, the death of our souls die out and life gradually take its place, there is formed within us the habit of looking even upon the death of the body, not as the end, but as the beginning of life.

It is said in the Bible that hell is "upside down." These words indicate and illustrate a universal law. Evil has no independent origin of its own; it is only good perverted; "upside down." For example, self-love is good, if it be subordinate to the love of the neighbor, for then it prompts us to take care of ourselves for the sake of others. The love for others is the directing or controlling love, while self-love is the subservient hand or foot. But when self-love directs and controls, it is selfishness. Then the love of others is subordinate and subservient, for we love others only for the sake of ourselves. Then the love of self is the

head, and the love of others is the hand or foot ; and the moral man, which is the real man, is " upside down."

All this would follow from the fact that evil has no independent origin, and this again follows from the fact that there is but one God, one source of life and being, one controlling power, and that infinitely good. Hence, in the Bible, which is the word of God, almost everything mentioned has two distinct and antagonistic senses ; because almost everything may be " upside down." One sense the word bears when it presents to the mind a good thing, or, in other words, the thing unperverted from that state in which it flows forth or is created ; the other sense it bears when falsified or perverted or bad. This is emphatically true of death. Sometimes this word means the " second death," or eternal evil, or the extinction of true spiritual life. But as frequently it is used in a good sense, and means either the suppression of sin within us, or the end of this life and the beginning of a better. Hence, in their spiritual sense, very many of the passages which speak of death and the grave relate to the resurrection and to life eternal. This is the sense which the science of correspondence will teach us to give to these passages, and the sense in which angels read them.

Nor is this distinction and opposition between these meanings, or this correspondence, arbitrary or accidental. They are founded upon the essential and eternal nature of things. The death of anything, by itself considered, is the end of that thing, and nothing more. The quality of the death must then depend upon the quality of the thing that ceases to be, and of the new thing that takes its place. That which dies at the death of the sinful and unregenerate is not his life, for that goes with him, untouched and unaffected. But there dies that hope of reform and amendment and of radical change which belongs to this world ; and

therefore to the natural man death is indeed the horrid thing it seems, but for other reasons than those which make it seem so dreadful to him. But when one who has done his work here passes by death from temptation and struggle into peace, death is precisely the opposite of the thing that it is and seems to be to the natural man.

Hence, if the process of repentance, reform, and regeneration is permitted to go forward with us, we reach at last that view of death which is the precise opposite of the view with which we began. And we have reached it by the gradual death of that life of evil which we have laid down. Then this habit of regarding death as the only gate of life, attaches itself, as has been said, to our view of natural death. We have no wish to hasten its coming before the best and fitting hour; we have no wish to terminate either the duties or the joys, or to escape prematurely from the pains of our earthly life. We would have all of them go on and do their proper work, until that work is done. But the portals of the other world are no longer shrouded in midnight blackness. The truth has made them translucent, and they are radiant with the light within. And at those doors stand beautiful and living beings, servants of their Lord and ours, who keep them closed as yet while we are drawing near, but look upon us peacefully and lovingly, and are ready to open them the moment that they may. And we also are ready and willing.

Then do we know that what we once regarded as the greatest of evils, is in fact the greatest good. And we esteem it a proof and illustration of the total aberration of our natural conceptions from all truth, that, while they prevailed, death was the great terror which seemed to include all others, and to surpass all others. For now we are prepared to learn that the death which we are commanded and enabled to die of ourselves, this death of a false life, is the

only preparation for an abiding happiness ; and that the death of the body will introduce us to this happiness. Then, as that happiness is the highest, so the physical death that bears us into that world where it can exist, is gilded by it as clouds are by the sun beyond them, and is beautiful.

What is this highest happiness ? Let us ask this question even of those words of our Lord upon which we have been commenting. It has been said that we have friends, who were made so by being instruments and mediums of truth and good, and that we had them, that we might begin with loving our friends for the truth and good that is in them, and so learn to love the truth and the good for their own sakes. It remains to be said, that truth and good, wisdom and love, lead us back to their first cause, to Him from whom they are, and who gives them to us, and bring HIM before us as the object of all our love, as our best friend, and therefore as Him for whom we should each day and hour lay down our life.

Our earliest view of the relation between God and man tells us that he creates, and we live thereby ; that he commands, and we obey ; he gives, and we receive. This is true ; and it is an excellent foundation to build upon ; but as we build, and as we build, ascend, we find that one of the things he gives us is the power of giving back to him. He creates us, in the first place, as has been often said, forms of life, and then he imparts life to us ; and the life he gives is his own life, and consists, as that does, of love and wisdom. His love and wisdom become in us, ours. The one becomes in us everything of will, or emotion, or choice, or feeling, or affection, or desire. The other becomes in us everything of opinion, or thought, or belief, or understanding. He thus creates and thus preserves us, that we may be happy by receiving from him also the happiness of

love and wisdom. He does this because he loves to do it; because doing it gratifies his love; because doing it constitutes his active life and his happiness. Being infinite in all things, into a boundless universe of infinite diversity he is always pouring fresh life, activity, and joy; present through its whole extent, watching its whole movements, governing all its events. And his infinite blessedness consists in the infinite happiness which it gives him to do this. To state our proposition very simply, he loves us, and therefore it makes him happy to make us happy. And therefore we may give to God some return for what he gives to us. For he cannot make us love good unless we consent, and co-operate with him; and if he does not make us love good, he cannot make us happy; and if he cannot make us happy, so much of what might be present in his own happiness is not there. But if he can make us good, and therefore happy, by so much more is his own happiness filled out and perfected. And we may help him to do this. Every parent and every child may understand this. For every parent knows, from the inmost depths of his own nature, that all creation has no gift for him like that his own child offers, when that child grows in goodness and in happiness every day under the love and fostering care of his parent. And every child feels, although he may not rationally comprehend the feeling, that the happiness he gives his parent returns to his own heart in joy and gladness. And this is but the effect and image of the relation between the Universal Father and his Universe.

The joy that is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, was His joy before it descended from him and became the joy of heaven. That repentant sinner, when he cast away the evil that had bound him, gave to himself happiness; and he gave it to the angels by whose accepted aid he had conquered their enemies and his, and made their life

of goodness more active and effectual by allowing them to do what they always desire to do. He also gave happiness to all good men, on earth or in heaven, who saw or knew of this victory over evil. But all this happiness and joy, — his own, his neighbors', and that of the angels, — all of it first existed in transcendent and immeasurable fulness in God himself, and from him falling drop by drop, filled the finite hearts that opened to receive it.

When that sinner repented of his sin and put it by repentance far from him, he laid down so much of his natural and evil life. If he repented of it as a sin against God, — and there is no other true repentance, — he laid down so much of his life for God. It may have been but a beginning, and but a feeble beginning; but up through the heavens went the gladness and the hope, and they stopped not until they reached the source whence they and all gladness and all hope came down. If it was only true repentance, it was done from a spirit of obedience, of worship, and of love; and this spirit returned to God who gave it, and bore with it a contribution to His infinite and perfect bliss.

As it is the end of God's whole providence and the perfect gratification of his infinite love to make men happy, so there is but one obstruction to this purpose; it is sin and sinfulness. That is the life of all the hells; if life it may be called which is much more death. The voice of conflict, of wailing, or of fear, which wakes and fills the echoes of the abyss, is the utterance of sin; of sin and sorrow; of sin which cannot but cause sorrow; of sorrow which can have no cause but sin. The effect of sin is not always direct, immediate, and visible; through a long chain, sin must sometimes operate, and wait long seasons, for the unholy thing that cannot but be born of it. So, on the other hand, when it is born, men may be unable to point to the parent of the sorrow that they feel. And yet certain it

is, that sin, somewhere, of some person, at some time, was the remote, but the efficient and the only cause of the sorrow that was not felt until now.

If happiness be the great good which God seeks to give and the great good which it is his happiness to give, it follows that sin, which is the one hinderance and opponent to the good which God can do, is also the equal opponent to the blessedness he may enjoy. And if sin springs from the fountain of our sinfulness, of our evil life, of our natural and unregenerate life, it follows that this evil life is the one antagonism to the life and love and blessedness of God. Not for his own sake, but for ours, he gives us the power to lay down this life. We shall lay it down at every step of our advance towards heaven ; constantly in heaven, and most constantly in the highest ; for it is the life of heaven for ever and for ever to complete the work of laying down that earlier and opposing life ; and they who are there do this, not for their own sakes, but for His ; for Him whom all in heaven have learnt to recognize as their friend, and their best friend ; and to recognize His influence in all the innumerable friendships which make all heaven harmony and peace. Then at last, created beings learn, that the crowning gift of their infinite Lord and Father permits them to do for Him that very thing which He did for them ; to lay down their life for Him, and take up His life in them ; and thus to enlarge His happiness by accepting their happiness from Him.

THE END.

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

455 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

1911

LIBRARY OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

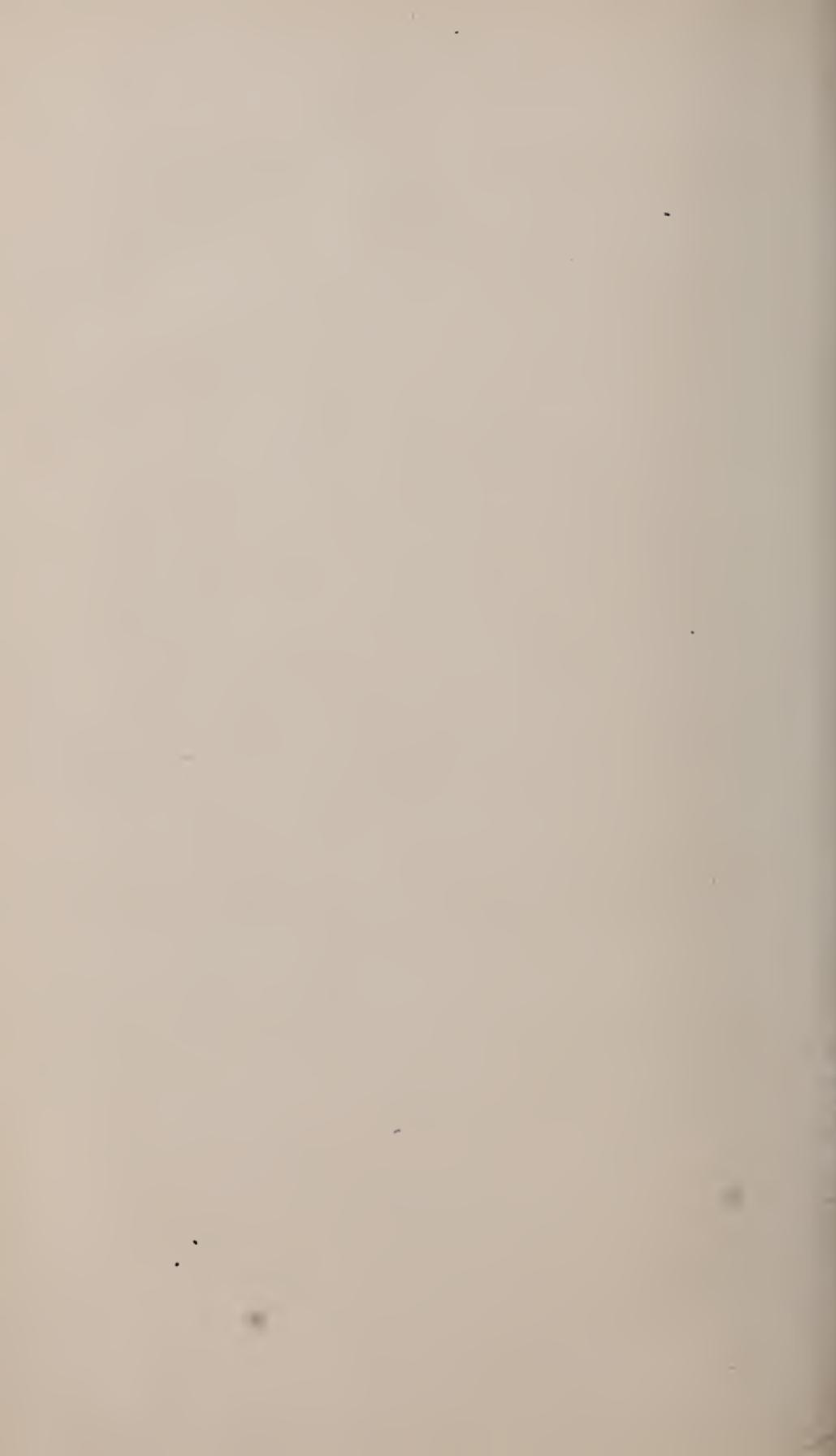
455 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

1911

LIBRARY OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

455 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 212 966 5

