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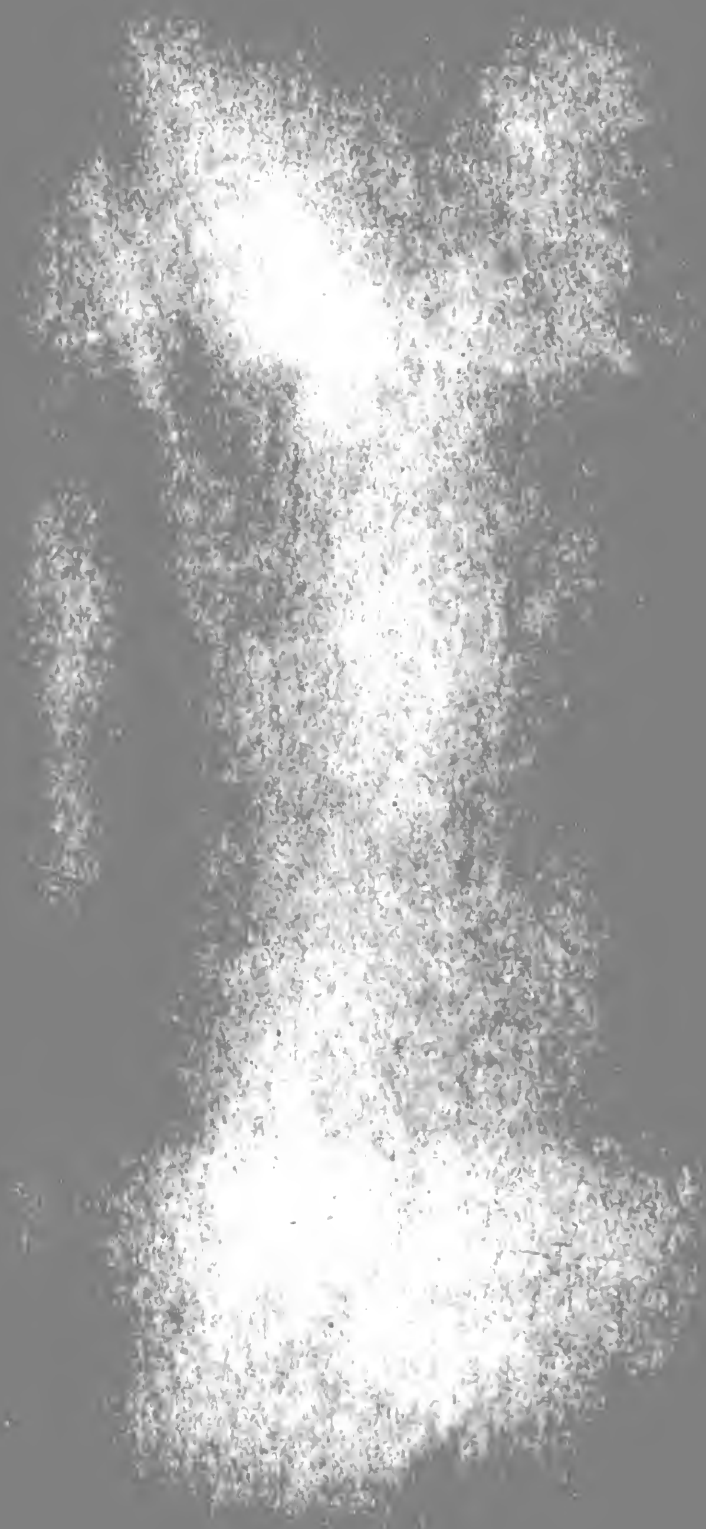
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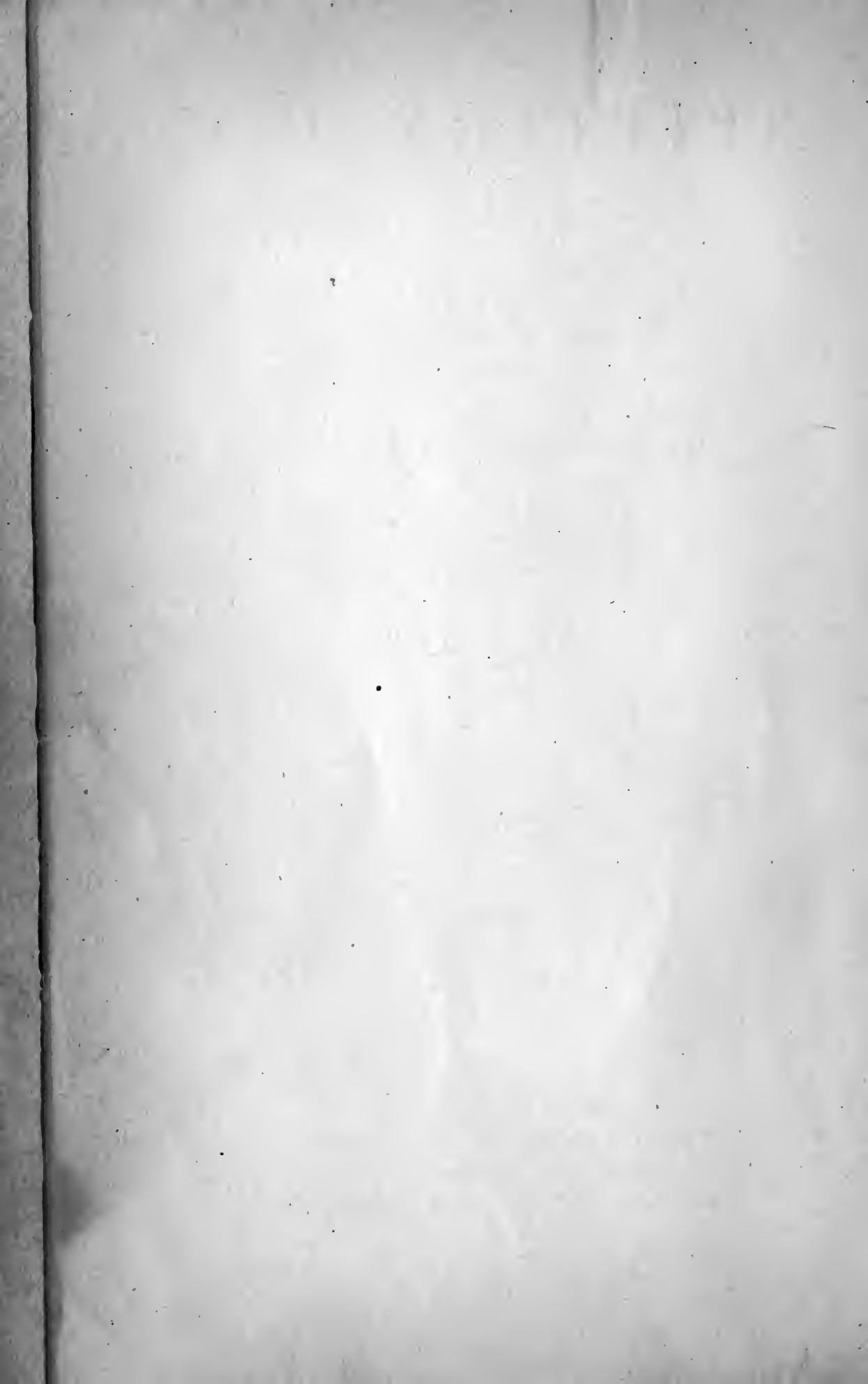




W. J. Cromar

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SPIRITUALISM







J. W. Edwards

SPIRITUALISM

BY

JOHN W. EDMONDS,

JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW YORK, U.S.A.

AND

DR. GEORGE T. DEXTER, M.D.



Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. But the manifestations of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom—to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit—to another, faith by the same Spirit—to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit—to another, the working of miracles—to another, prophecy—to another, discerning of spirits—to another, divers kinds of tongues—to another, the interpretation of tongues,—1 Cor. xii. 1, 4, 7-10.

AUSTRALIAN EDITION

VOL. I

MELBOURNE

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P R E F A C E.

THE first edition of this work was issued in New York in 1853, and between that time and 1866 no less than nine other editions were published. In 1859 a copy of it came by an apparent accident into the hands of the late Mr. J. C. Terry, who after reading and re-reading it became profoundly interested in its contents, and urged his sons to peruse it. One of them (the writer of this preface) was induced to do so, and having no religious or doctrinal bias to warp his judgment, came to the conclusion that the evidence therein if not conclusive of the fact of Spirit communion was at least sufficient to justify further investigation.

This investigation led to correction, and when at a later period the writer was privileged in being a member of a circle where some of the spirit writers whose teachings appear in this volume were the Directors, the value of it was enhanced by the harmony of these later teachings with those preceded at Judge Edmond's circle. A few years later the Judge (who had in the interim passed to the spirit world) was a not unfrequent visitor at a private circle held for many years at the residence of the late Dr. J. B. Motherwell of Collins Street, Melbourne, and we have evidence that he has since the dissolution of that circle continued to communicate with a small but harmonious circle in a neighbouring colony, to their great happiness and enlightenment.

For many years this book has been out of print, and the demand being greater for up-to-date productions than for the

foundation works of the modern spiritual reformation, the solidity and value of which is little known to the majority of the present generation, there seemed very little probability of a re-publication in America. Under these circumstances, myself and one or two others who are impressed with the value of Judge Edmonds' work as an educator in spiritualism whose usefulness is far from being exhausted, determined to issue an Australian edition at as reasonable a price as is consistent with the size and quality of the work, their object being the diffusion of spiritual truth, which is rarely consistent with commercial advantages.

The lengthy introductions by Judge EDMONDS and Dr. DEXTER, though interesting, are not deemed essential, and as the inclusion of them would add materially to the expense of the work the gist of them only has been given.

We believe that in the years to come this book with some others, such as "Spirit Teachings", by M. A. Oxon, etc., will be looked upon as the Scriptures of the New Revelation, which has been given to mankind through a variety of channels, during the last fifty years; and hence our anxiety that it shall be easier of access to enquirers than it is at present.

W. H. TERRY AND OTHERS.

INTRODUCTION.

CONDENSED FROM THE 10TH EDITION OF 1866.

IN the early part of the original introduction Judge Edmonds gives his reasons for entering into a serious investigation of spiritualism, which were, the apparent decadence of religion, and the evident fact shown by statistics, that the larger half of the community did not attend any place of worship. There was undoubtedly a want of something to lay hold of and attract these spiritually unfed millions, and the question pressed itself upon his mind: might there not be in this new phenomena something calculated to supply this great want?

“There was yet another consideration. The world of professing Christians was divided into numerous sects, and most of the sects were again divided into factions among themselves—thus causing discord among those to whom it was a primary lesson, ‘Love one another’—and I thought whether there might not be found in this new revelation some common platform on which all might congregate and unite in one common adoration of the God of all.

“And yet another. It did not seem to me to be ‘Christian philosophy’ that would have men shrink from the investigation of Nature, from fear of finding a contradiction between the works and the word of God. When rightly understood, they must harmonize. Nor can we assume that human knowledge has as yet arrived at its maximum in the comprehension of the word any more than it has of the works of God.”

He weighed the effect his public identification with so unpopular a subject would have upon his position as a supreme court judge and hesitated, but his sense of duty prevailed, and he entered boldly into the investigation. Proof followed proof, phenomena and tests of identity followed

quickly, until doubt was no longer possible. A succinct account of these leads on to an elucidation of some difficulties as follows:—

“The facts which I have detailed gave rise in my own mind to several questions which will readily suggest themselves to others.

“One of the first of those questions was this: What is this which I am witnessing? Is it a departure from nature’s laws or in conformity with them? Is it a miracle, or is it the operation of some hitherto unknown but pre-existing cause, now for the first manifesting itself?

“The answer I got was: It is the result of human progress, it is in execution, not a suspension, of nature’s laws, and it is not now for the first time manifesting itself, but in all ages of the world has at times been displayed.

“I reasoned then, If it is by a law of nature, it must be universal in its application, and it may be discovered and understood by man; and I asked that I might understand it. I was told, however, that my knowledge of nature was too imperfect to enable me to understand it as yet. I asked what I might read to assist me to the requisite knowledge, and I was referred by one present to Von Reichenbach’s ‘Dynamics of Magnetism,’ and there I found that he had discovered a hitherto unknown power in nature. He named it Od, or Odic force, and described it as an exceeding subtle fluid, existing with magnetism and electricity, found in fire and heat, and produced in the human body by the chemical action of respiration and digestion and decomposition, and issuing from the body in the shape of a pale flame, with sparks, and smoke, and material in its nature, though so much sublimated as to be visible only to persons of a peculiar vision. In my experiments I have myself once or twice seen it, but have met with those who could see it as readily as those through whom that German philosopher conducted his examinations.

“I was given to understand that this power was used in these manifestations, but how or in what manner I have not learned. I was also made to know that electricity and magnetism had something to do with them.

“Upon that subject it was said to me, ‘Man physically is composed of one element in three distinct grades of perfection, which grades serve to form a link between the spiritual and physical worlds.

“It is an electricity, but more perfected than that with which you are familiar, that which you term electricity.

“The first or lowest quality which pervades the human system has an essential promotion to its formation, and is what may be termed the *vegetable motive element*. This is a better term to use than electricity, because you would otherwise associate it with electricity, as you see it in its common form, and that would give you an erroneous idea. This is one grade above the common electricity. Its sphere or function is to give involuntary growth or action. It therefore is a most essential element of all the plant creation. It is to the vegetable creation what the soul is to the human creation. Nearly all nature has a greater or less degree of this element or quality.

“The next may be termed the *animal motive element*. This is still another grand grade or perfected form of electricity, and is that substance which is called magnetism. It is that which pervades the nervous system, and gives voluntary motion. It is that which gives life to the nerves, and which gives us sensation. This element is but one grade below the soul, and is that through which you receive instinct. Animals through this element show instinct which seemingly almost amounts to impressions. Still they are not impressions in reality, though nearly allied. The mind does not grasp the idea, but receives the instinct, and acts accordingly, but not from reason. As the vegetable element is the soul of plants, so this is the soul of animals. You will understand that I do not mean to convey the idea that plants or animals have organized, individualized souls, that will ever exist. Its organization is necessarily confined to organized bodies, and when the body becomes disunited, this element must be disorganized with it.

“Next is the *soul motive element*, which is the grand microcosm of all below the divinity. This is an element which baffles your efforts to analyze, as self can not investigate self. It is that element which forms man, and constitutes him an ever-existing, individualized being. It is superior to the animal element, and therefore exists independently of the physical body. It is the function of this element to individualize *natures*, and gives to each one those peculiarities which may distinguish him from all others.

“The soul of the plant is positive to the plant, and negative to animals.

“The soul of animals is positive to animals, and negative to man.

“The soul of man is positive to man, but negative to God.

“The three elements of the extended universe combine to form man.

“This is man physically. He is superior to the lower organization of nature, because their superior element is his inferior element. The animal's positive is man's negative.

“These three qualities are with, or a part of, the soul after leaving the body. As we spiritually are formed much as you are physically, and as the vegetable is necessary to the growth, and the animal to the motive power, it must exist in the spiritual world, though much more refined and elevated.”

Some encouragement came to him spontaneously, the first from his old Quaker friend Isaac T. Hopper, who had but recently left the body, and wrote:—

“Oh, my friends! how pleasant a thing it is to see brethren dwell together in unity! One week only have I spent in the holy society of just men made more perfect. Friends, bear with me a little longer. I came to tell you that a great and important development is about to be made to man. I have been blessed with the society of the poor depressed ones who met me on the shore of this blessed land and hailed me as their deliverer.

ISAAC T. HOPPER.’

“On 30th June, 1852, at Albany, it was written: ‘Brother Edmonds, you will do more good with spiritualism, than ever I did in politics. Go on.

HENRY CLAY.’

“There is joy in heaven at the opening of this intercourse with man. The spirits there never rest, they never tire. Be ye like them. Go on. Go on. Heaven shall crown your efforts,’ etc.

“I remarked, that I wished I knew whether he believed in spiritual intercourse while in the body? He answered:

“I wish I had only told what I did believe. Oh, the darkness! Oh, the darkness! Preach away, every time you get a chance.’

“The following purported to come from William Penn: ‘Purify thy physical system, and that will make thee more susceptible to spiritual influence. Thou art capable of doing much good to thy fellow-creatures, and relieving many sorrowing spirits in the body. Thy mission is an arduous one, and it is thy duty to fulfill it truthfully and faithfully.

“If the ignorant censure thee and believe thee not, heed it not.

Thou wilt yet triumph over all, for thine will be the cause of truth. Don't be afraid to let the world know what thy belief is. Truth must prevail."

The handwriting of the different controlling spirits was the same each time and differed from Dr. Dexter's (the Medium).

The following are specimens of communications received by Judge Edmonds and embodied in his introduction:

"No spirit gathers more vicious propensities after death. Like the sponge filled with water and shaken in the hand, it scatters its contents all around in all directions, but it gathers no more, and in time it will be dry. The time may indeed be long, but the end is sure to come.'

"And once it was said, purporting to be by Mrs. Hemans, 'It is a very glad, beautifully, heavenly-inspiring thought, the communion of spirits with mortals, and as I realize it I become strengthened with an influence that descends like a mantle of light upon my soul, enabling me to express thoughts that would gush forth overpoweringly. Ah! deeply do I feel the high, the holy privileges which ye enjoy, and I would say, though with a feeble voice, prize them highly. Let your hearts become pure as those of angels, that angels clothed in light may descend into your midst and scatter gems of thought and of joy on your waiting souls.'

"And still at another time, 'Purify thy heart that it may become the abode of spirits who live in an atmosphere of purity, and thou wilt feel how great the mercy, the goodness, the glory of thy God.'

"Once it was said to me through a medium in the trance state, 'Far away in the deep of space, within whose boundless vortex all human thought is lost, there extends a mighty, blazing, and eternal sun. That sun contains the forces, elements, and materials from which all this magnificent temple of nature has been formed, and around that sun, as an inconceivable center, roll worlds and systems of worlds in beautiful and unbroken harmony. From that sun all material existences have had their birth; from that material bosom these rolling orbs have sprung.

"This great creation has but just begun, and now orb after orb, world after world, sun after sun, are rolling out into the abyss of space, as burning gems from the throne of the Omnipotent.

"Thus this universe of beauty and order and harmony sprung from chaos, and now there are eyes looking down upon the chaos

of this earth, and they see here too, as well, is contained the germ of a majestic spiritual universe. From all this darkness shall proceed a spirit, holy, hallowed, and divine. From all this confusion shall spring forth a divine harmony, and from the wreck of this discord shall be erected a temple not made with hands, whose foundations shall rest on the everlasting depths of the universe, and whose dome shall rise to heaven's high throne, within whose hallowed walls angels shall rest, and beside whose holy altars mortals shall worship forever.'

"And yet again was it said, 'Men have sought for truth with eager and earnest minds, but sought for it where it does not exist.

"The senses of the body have been regarded as the medium through which the soul has looked out on the beauties of the visible universe. Hence men have regarded the material as the real. That which they could see with their eyes, hear with their ears, feel by their senses, they have thought the substantial reality.

"They have looked upon the universe as a glorious temple in which man was born to live and die, and when they have looked out upon its light-bathed surface and up to its starlit dome, they have regarded it as a great theater of light in which each must perform his part and pass to rest.

"But, oh, there is something deeper and more beautiful than this! There is something back of the glory of the stars, something back of the changeling forms of earth.

"The great divinity lives in this expanded temple, and all outward things and thoughts, all light, all beauty, all life, are but the feeble, external expression of the internal and ever-living reality.

"Oh, beautiful is this inward world which the senses may not perceive. Deep as the unfathomable depths of infinity is the realm of spiritual life. High as the majestic sphere of heaven leads the pathway of unending progress. And here in this great world of life and thought and being is the sphere of the soul's development.

"In this inward world dwells the divine reality for which men have sought in vain in the outward. Here is the truth which makes its appeal to the living soul. Here is the light which cheers and gladdens the inward vision. Here the life that flows in never-ending streams down into the depths of the human spirit."

The gist of the Judge's summary of spirit teachings is:
The existence of man after the life on earth is demon-

strated beyond all peradventure. We are not at death separated from those we loved on earth.

It has been demonstrated what Death is, and thus it has been robbed of the undefined and mysterious terrors which have been thrown around it.

It is demonstrated that our most secret thoughts can be known to, and be revealed by the intelligence which is thus surrounding us and communing with us.

So too, it is demonstrated that our conduct in this life in a great measure, elaborates our destiny hereafter, and that our happiness in the next stage of existence depends not on our adherence to this or that sectarian faith, but upon the purity of our life here, and our obedience, according to the lights we have, to the great law of loving God and one another.

We are taught the ground doctrine of progression whereby we learn that as the soul of man is an emanation from the germ of the great First Cause, so its destiny is to return towards the source whence it sprang.

A noble appeal to the good sense and justice of the public as against those who were endeavouring to oust him from the bench on account of his belief, concludes the Judge's introduction.

Dr. Dexter's introduction is a record of the circumstances that led to his conviction. Unlike the Judge, he was opposed to the spiritual hypothesis from the first, and endeavoured to explain every phenomenon that occurred by the action of mind over mind, or the form of magnetic motion and many other theories; but when his little daughter's hand was controlled and wrote in strange hand-writings answers to mental as well as oral questions, and her body was in full view of himself and others and placed upon a sofa, he was staggered and in a difficulty to find a theory to cover the facts; still he would not give in to the spiritual one until the tests of spirit identity became overwhelming. The following is a brief summary of some of his experiences taken from page 87:—

“I have witnessed the medium so completely under control of the spirit, that speech, motion, and even thought itself, was at the command of the spirit influencing her. I have listened to the most elevated thoughts couched in language far beyond her comprehension, describing facts in science, and circumstances in the daily life of the spirit after death, which were corroborated fact by fact, idea by idea, by other mediums with whom she was entirely unacquainted, uttered by a little girl scarce nine years old. The same medium I have heard repeat verse after verse, *impromptu*, of poetry, glowing with inspiration and sparkling with profound thought and sentiment, and yet this child never wrote a line of poetry before in her life. I have taken notes of certain circumstances revealed to me through one medium, and then at another circle, and through another medium who knew nothing of my intention, and who was unacquainted with the first medium, have had the same statements made, in every particular corresponding with those I first received.

“I have heard an illiterate mechanic repeat Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Chaldaic, and describe the customs and habits of men living on the earth thousands of years ago, which have been found correct by the researches and discoveries given to the world by those who are and have been engaged in the exploration of ancient nations, either by their architectural remains or through their hieroglyphics.

“I have been present when a medium answered many questions in the Italian language, of which she was ignorant, and also uttered several sentences in the same language, and then gave the name of an Italian gentleman of whom she had never heard, but who was when living the friend of one of the party at the circle.”

A few pages further on he describes the method of the communications and his condition at the time:—

“Let it also be understood that the spirit-manifestation by my arm is absolutely involuntary. I have no direction in the act. My muscles are the medium of spirit-communication, not my thought; and neither does my mind recognize the thoughts expressed until after they have been read to me when the communication is concluded.

“Neither my will nor my desire had any thing to do with my development, for they were both opposed; and the first time I was conscious that I was impressed with the same influence I had seen manifested through other mediums, I exerted all the power of mind and body I possessed to rid myself of it.

“I was sitting alone in my office, late at night, and was leaning back in a rocking-chair, my right hand resting on the arm of the chair. I was not, neither had I been thinking of spiritualism, for my thoughts were occupied in the subject I had been reading upon a few moments before. As my hand lay on the arm of the chair I felt a singular sensation in the whole limb, as if the arm were grasped by two hands at its upper part. I attempted to raise it, but was unable so to do, and as soon as I made the effort to move it, the fingers were bent down tightly on the arm of the chair and grasped it firmly. Immediately the hand began to tremble, and as I watched the movement the whole limb was shaken violently. At this moment I distinctly heard two loud raps on the upper part of the side wall of the room, and it then occurred to me that this unseen power, whose manifestation I had so often witnessed, was in some way operating on me. To satisfy myself, I asked in an audible voice, ‘Did the spirits just rap?’ there were three distinct raps in reply. I then asked, ‘Are the spirits trying to influence me?’ again there were three distinct raps. At this I arose from my chair, arranged my books, and then retired. The sensation in my arm left me while occupied at my table, and did not return. After I was in bed, however, there were raps on the head-board, and my arm slightly trembled, but I resisted the influence with all my will, and it passed off. I should like to understand to the effect of what natural law this singular manifestation can be ascribed? As far as I was concerned, I certainly had nothing to do with its production. I was not engaged even in thinking about spirits, and much less expecting any such influence on my own person. Why were the raps heard at the same time? and why did they take place in my bed-chamber also? The special effect produced on my own organization, I confess, troubled me not a little. If there had been before this period a lingering doubt in my mind that the phenomena of so-called spirit-action on the physical system of the mediums might have arisen from some power emanating from the minds or bodies of the circle, I could not deny that my mind had no influence in generating the sensation I had experienced in my own person, and as there was no one present with me in my office, I could not attribute the manifestation to the mental force of another person. Conscious the whole subject of spirit-obsession, as far as I individually was concerned, was obnoxious, and that I had resisted the sensation in my arm with the whole force and power

of my will, I could give no other solution to this singular affair than to ascribe it to some invisible, intelligent source which designed to place me under its control, and which positively succeeded in so doing.

* * * * *

“During the whole time, from their earliest endeavor to write, they have used my hand as the instrument to convey their own thoughts, without any appreciation on my part of either ideas or subject.

“I know nothing of what is written until after it is read to me, and frequently, when asked to read what has been communicated, I have found it utterly impossible to decipher it. Not only is the thought concealed, but after it has been read to me I lose all recollection of the subject, until again my memory is refreshed by the reading. This peculiar effect on my recollection occurred more frequently when the spirits commenced writing; and I have been told by them that it was produced by their efforts to separate the action of my own mind from their thoughts, when teaching on a subject which required several sittings to finish.”

The following were his conclusions:

“There could be but one decision to which my mind could arrive when its prejudices and educational biases were forced to succumb to the power of reason. And when at last the truth opened to my view, I beheld in this intercourse of the ‘spirit out of the form’ with ‘the spirit in the form’ the positive demonstration of the immortality of the soul. In the thoughts which they uttered, the glory and might, the wisdom, power, and love of our Creator were made manifest. And what have they taught us? They have taught that as the creeping thing, impelled by the very impulses of its being, prepares itself for perfection, and bursts from its silken tomb with new developed form, appetite, and nature, so the spirit, the germ of that form on which God has stamped the impress of his own image, springs into a new existence when it gives its body back to earth. They teach us that man aspires to immortality because it is the birthright of his soul; and because in the adaptation of spirit with matter in this world God has instituted certain laws for their regulation and government, and it is the very observance of these laws which will enable the spirit to develop those glorious attributes which its Creator has bestowed; that as spirit and matter were created and mingled together in this the first stage of existence,

it furnishes indubitable proof that there is some end worthy the immortal aspirations of the spirit in its advancing struggles after knowledge and goodness. That as the Spirit of God pervades matter everywhere, and he is manifest by the works of his hands, it is a rational inference that matter and spirit are individually developed; and as the spirit springs from earth in its search after the indefinable mysteries of its eternal home, it finds ready prepared for it the body which accompanies it forever. That this intimate association of matter and spirit is manifest in all the vital, chemical, and mechanical forces at work, from the first organized cell in which the body of man is designed, to its maturest development in all that characterizes it as a sentient, reasoning being. That this being endowed with attributes to comprehend its relation to the material objects surrounding it, is conscious that there is no degradation in this physical existence, for it is the first stage of progression in companionship with its spirit, that terminates only when man has become perfect, even as God is perfect.

“It teaches, that that philosophy which shuts up the inner life of the soul, and denies to it the knowledge of its high destiny, fails to prove that there is any absurdity in the doctrine of the progressive development of soul and body, and utterly fails to prove that there is any absurdity in believing that the spirit, after it has left this earth, can return to it and hold communion with the friends and loved ones it has left behind. They have taught us, that in the unutterable longing of the soul to know something about its eternal existence, it attracts toward it those spirits who, in obedience to natural laws, can commune with us, and impress on us a deeper knowledge of the laws of our nature and the designs of God, and reveal to us a brighter insight of his love to ourselves, and to every thing he has created. And in this reflex of their intelligence, continually advancing, continually progressing, they show us that the worlds above worlds, and spheres above spheres, filled with the sentient emanations from the great First Cause, are bound together in one harmonious connection of necessity and assistance. They have taught us that God is love, that the basis of all his laws, natural and divine, is predicated on this divine principle of his nature—that the soul which refuses to act in compliance with this law enjoys nothing, because it has voluntarily separated itself from that harmony which unites as one all intelligence and all matter, from the rudest manifestation to the most perfect

development—that happiness is only to be attained by fulfilling all those obligations that love requires—that every soul that is out of keeping with divine order must remain in the license of a perverse will, forever vile, until restored by the regenerating influences of progression, upward and onward forever.

“And they have taught us that beauty and happiness, the developed holiness of progressive advance, are the essential attributes of *perfected* intelligence, and that spirit everywhere shall feel His might within, effectuating its full deliverance from all the grossness of matter or sentiment, when the soul shall have *worked* out and perfected its own salvation with fear and trembling. And they have taught us, if we rightly receive and improve the opportunities now afforded us through spirit-intercourse, we shall learn the high purposes of our creation and the glorious destiny before us, we shall see the rays of light flowing from the center and lighting up the dark places of spiritual existence, we shall go to the Source of that light, and bear with us that illumination we have received from the truths the spirits have revealed, and we then shall understand what has been concealed for so many thousand years, *the identity of God's design* in developing and perfecting spirit, and we shall the more readily recognize the truth of this doctrine from the testimony offered us by ‘things seen and unseen.’

“I have thus given, as briefly as possible, a part of my spiritual experience for the past two years; and it may be allowed me to say, that it has opened to my view a glimpse of that world hitherto shrouded in impenetrable darkness, and sealed, as it were, from mortal comprehension. In the teachings of the spirits, and in their manifestations, I recognize the manner in which the Founder of the universe revealed himself and his laws to his children on this earth. I can now understand how it was that the spirits of the old patriarchs, purified and perfect, walked with God, and held familiar intercourse with the pure spirits from the higher spheres.

“I can now understand how he led them, step by step, and gave them line upon line, evermore brightening their desires as they advanced toward the fullness of time, and revealing to their spirits the grand destiny he had designed them. I see *progress* stamped on every aspiration of the human mind, as it is on every part of God's universe—progress from the animal to the intellectual—from the material to the spiritual, and bestowed on the spirit set free from the grossness of matter, as the highest boon of its Almighty Creator.

‘ Shall the proof of these statements be required, my answer is— I know them to be true by the satisfaction they afford to the demands of my spirit, and in the revelations through my own organism, that the progress of nations, the progress of society, the progress of the Christian world, and the progress of man are all contemplated in the evidences of Divine law, as vouchsafed to man through nature, by spirit-communication, and the eternal manifestations of our common Father.’



SECTION ONE.

Monday, April 4th, 1853.

Through Dr. Dexter, it was written, at his house:

IN the name of God, I am Sweedenborg.

Does a man know a star because he seeth the light thereof? Sayeth he, The moon burneth because she casteth a shadow? Does not the water bathe the shore of both worlds, and is not ocean's bosom broad enough for the ships of all nations? And yet a star is but one in a galaxy of glory in the heavens, and the moon's light is borrowed from a brighter orb than her own mountains. She reflects only the light that she borrows. Can you contemplate a whole creation, because you see the light of one star or one moon? And can you determine the extent of the ocean, because you behold one of its waves? Thus you can as little judge of Spirit Manifestations, as you can of the star, the moon, or the ocean. Wait and watch; for ere long, what is dark will be made light, and what is difficult made easy. Do you love your wife or child, and see in them attributes which confer happiness? Can you look on earth in her beauty, her hills and dales, trees and flowers, and not feel as if it was made for your enjoyment? Have you ever examined truly your own hearts? Do you really desire their purity? Are your thoughts the mirrors of your souls? Do you sincerely live that your death may be glorious? Let each one ask himself these questions to-night, and when I meet with you again, you shall hear the truths which it is my mission to teach.

SECTION TWO.

Tuesday, April 5th, 1853.

Through Dr. Dexter the following was written:

I COME from the land where there is brightness and beauty eternal. I have come in the spirit of peace, to greet you, my friends, this night.

SWEEDENBORG.

I asked you last night if you desired purity of heart, and if you really wished to live that your death might be glorious. I have a motive in asking these questions, for I desire to inform you of the nature of these Spirit Manifestations, and as far as you can understand, unfold to your minds the hidden mysteries of this new idea.

Beyond this life, in the bright regions where dwell the spirits made perfect, are manifest the glories and attributes of God. From that region come I, and my mission is of love. My body is bright, and my soul is visible to the spirits by which it is surrounded, by reason of its congeniality with them.

When God created man, he placed, in his material body, a soul. When the earth was in its infancy, the souls of men were visible to those around, by their affinity or congeniality with the souls of others. When, by the increase of sin, the soul of man was rendered incapable of manifesting its peculiar attributes, it lost the power of making itself felt or visible. But in the world from whence come I, the spirit is visible through its material surroundings; and thus, too, the spirit-thought is met by a congenial thought, and spirits know the truth of those with whom they associate.

I do not expect you will understand all my expressions,

for, to tell you the truth, I shall be obliged to use phrases to express my ideas that may appear ambiguous; but, as plainly and simply as I can, will I give my views and teachings. Profit by all you do understand, and leave the rest for after-consideration.

How beautiful the thought that when God created man he placed in his body a living soul, capable of appreciating its high destiny, and that this soul looked out from its surrounding materiality, and responded visibly to the same affinities in another body! On this, if you can but believe, rests the whole of Spirit Manifestation.

God has no locality. His presence fills the whole universe. Far off in the realms of space, where human eye has never fathomed, where even human thought fails to reach, beyond even the fabulous regions of Satan's resting-place, is the Divine Presence recognized in all the power and glory of the Creator's works, as it is in this little ball of yours.

Say what men may, teach what men may teach, still the soul of man is a part of God himself. It lives for ever, and has lived since ere the morning stars recognized the glory of the Godhead. Man's material creation was as perfect as all the rest of God's works; that is, according to the laws of materiality, perfect in the exhibition of all the powers, and resources, and capabilities which belong to his organism. Man was connected with the world around him by his material organization; that is, he was connected with the vegetables, animals, and the earth, by the affinities which belonged to his material nature. Thus, his material nature responded to the effects or influences of the natural world, as when he became influenced in the healthful indications of the functions of his body, by causes which emanated from the earth, or when his body became affected by the conjunction of certain minerals, as in galvanism, or by the effect of a change in the atmosphere, or by all those

natural causes which have had and still have so great an influence on his organism.

How distinct the influence which exists between man and the animal creation! I mean the influence which man exerts on this part of God's handiwork. This influence, emanating from man, is but the visible presence of his spirit, recognized and obeyed by the brute. And you will agree with me, that the spirit of a master mind is often felt when swaying a multitude by its eloquence, or controlling a turbulent spirit by the power of its own will. Man's relation spiritually with the spirit-world is no more wonderful than his connection materially with the natural world. The two parts of his nature respond to the same affinities in the natural and spiritual worlds.

While we admire the harmony and beauty which characterize his connection with your world and the next, we see that by his creation it was designed that he should understand what that connection was, and that he should be able to view it without fear.

It would, indeed, appear unnatural if God had created man without this special knowledge, and it would appear incompatible with his glory that he should have designed a portion of himself to exist for ever in a place of which it should know nothing. The very intention of this creation (a small one to be sure) was that man should understand both life and death, and instead of arriving at a knowledge of death, by the fall (if indeed this be true) he lost the knowledge of death. It is, indeed, true that a knowledge of death was necessary to an appreciation of life, always supposing that the man was pure as his nature could permit him to be. Man's body was made to die. He was not created to live on this earth for ever. It could not be. His whole organization would have been changed. His material part would have been constructed so as to have endured ages of time, and resisted the combined influences of

natural causes of decay. Therefore you will agree with me, that instead of being created ignorant of what was to be his destiny, he was created with the knowledge that he was to die, and that in his death he was to live again in that world which his spirit knew to be eternal; and that he must have had intercourse with spirits is proven by the fact recorded in the Bible, that his nature was pure, and that angels visited the earth hourly and daily, and conversed with man, and that his spirit could associate with them without fear.

SECTION THREE.

Thursday, April 7th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, and through him as the medium, the whole circle present, the Spirits wrote :

TRUTH is the sentiments of the heart, without alteration from the original germ of the idea. Do you feel, this evening, my friends, that you have both uttered and acted truthfully since we last met? Do you feel, have you felt any thing but love and good-will to all, and in your special acts have you truthfully made your thoughts and acts the mirrors of your soul? SWEEDENBORG.

Turn to the last page where we left off when we concluded.

We did so, and after reading it, it was written :

If man's organism were influenced by the various circumstances by which he was surrounded, so that even the thoughts of his mind were but impressions derived from objects around him, so that, for instance, the odor from a hay-field would call up a host of memories long buried in the caverns of his brain, eliciting by this simple contract of the volatile principle of the grass-flower with the nerve of his nostrils a lifetime of associations, some

overflowing with joy, and as fresh and gushing as when they first occurred, and others shrouded in gloom, and o'er the fair horizon of the present time shadowing forth clouds and darkness—even, I say, if influences like these control the action of him through his materiality, and even a blow would produce a loss of all consciousness on these very subjects which memory called from her storehouse, at the request of strong association, how true it is that man's spirit-nature is more closely connected with the spiritual germs existent in every form around him!*

It will perhaps be necessary that I express myself more clearly, though writing in English is not, for me, the most facile way of communicating; yet, as I may appear ambiguous, I will say, that I have endeavored to show that man in the beginning, possessing both a spirit and body, was connected by his body to the material part of creation, as the constituents of his own organization would conclusively show, and that the same agencies and causes which operated on the like constituent in a rock, would produce a corresponding effect on a similar part of man's body, modified of course by the principle of vitality.

Thus, causes operating on man's body operated on a tree or a horse, as a part of the material creation; and the truth of this proposition is manifest in the analogy existing in the vegetable world with that of the animal world. And here I would say, that the principle of capillary circulation, being the same both in animals and

*I asked for a more definite explanation of this language, and it was written in answer:

Why, Judge, how is it that the spirit feels the impress of some great calamity which is yet in the womb of time? How is it that the spirit recognizes place and person, though to the mind it was impossible that memory could recollect, for the eye never before rested on the spot or the man? How is it that in a dream, localities will be presented that are recognized in after years, etc.? By spirit-association calling up in his spirit-part like visions or memories connected with the affinities of his spirit-nature.

vegetables, is proof that the same causes control ever nature's mechanical manifestations, alike in man, vegetable, and mineral.

I have not entered into the mysteries of this material compact, as it would not interest you in the least; but all nature responds to my doctrine. In electricity, galvanism, in the tides, in the circulation of the atmosphere, in the return of the various seasons, and in all the economy of life, we witness the powerful influences exerted by the natural world on the organic body of man. But while we admit this as the first proposition, let us for a moment turn our thoughts back to the time when the Spirit of God moved upon the surface of the immense space which lay spread out in the illimitable distance, when out of its darkness he awakened life and light, and from the chaotic confusion elicited order and a thousand worlds. Imagine the Spirit of the Great First Cause moving in the glory and the power of his nature among the germs of suns and worlds, scattered through space, and wandering in orbits as eccentric as the very confusion of a beginning. Imagine at the mere breathing of his voice, world upon world in dumb obedience marshaling themselves in the very orbits which that voice commanded. And then from the elements around he calls up light and heat, and institutes the laws which since that period have governed all nature. Behold! from the farthest verge of this dark space comes gleaming through the thick mists a ray brighter than the sun! It flashes and illumines every thing around. It penetrates into every particle of matter, and out from the incongruous mass it generates that which God has destined should be the dwelling-place of a portion of himself—the body of man!

If this world were alone the abiding-place of immortal spirits, we could imagine how much more beauty God would have lavished upon its formation, and how much vaster would have been its proportions. But beyond

the vision of the most powerful telescope there are worlds filled with spirits whose birth is forever and ever. They know no death, and yet are organized with bodies suited to the worlds in which they live.

Surrounded by the very presence of the Creator, even in a more tangible form than any of which we have any conception, they inhabit worlds more beautiful than the poets have painted heaven. There is no necessity for labor, for the purity of their nature renders all effort for sustenance unnecessary. The temperature is alike in every portion, so adapted to the condition of their bodies that the atmosphere confers additional beauty on their complexion, and gives such a radiance to the glowing colors of the landscape, that were mortal to behold it, he would exclaim "This is indeed the gate of heaven!"

It may have been, that before this world, or the planets and bodies by which it is surrounded, were created, these worlds were created. I am not positive as to this, but I am impressed with the idea that our earth is one of the latest creations of God. And I am impressed, too, to say, that the inhabitants of these worlds are of a higher creation than are the inhabitants of your sphere. They are more beautiful in their proportions, more glorious in the manifestations of their souls, and have a closer affinity with God. It was from the creation of these worlds that the Creator determined to arrange out of the chaos around, a world or worlds which should do his justice credit, and his mercy and love receive the praise forever and ever.

It was thus that God created man with a body to conform to the natural system around him, and also with a spirit to appreciate that he was created by a Spirit with whom he was eternally to dwell.

The spirit which enters the body of the child on being born is the principle or germ. It has not existed previously in a sentient form, but has existed, as a principle, from

the beginning. So intimately blended, are the two, both body and soul, that the one was created to grow and expand with the other; and though a child may die, yet the spirit grows and expands, and assumes very much the character here, which the full-grown man would have occupied on earth.

I think I can not be mistaken, that the child which has never been impressed with external natural effects, does not receive the soul which was destined for that body, but the germ enters a new body. The principle or germ constituting the soul has no more to distinguish it than the human embryo has, and neither has the soul any particular body designed for it. The soul when it enters a body, does so the moment that body acquires natural mortal vitality or life. It grows with the body, and assumes its shape, form, appearance, and sex; and this it is which distinguishes, in my opinion, the sex of the spirit; which, if indeed emanating from one source could not be divided into sexes, but must exist as a principle in oneness of form and substance.

The development of the body, either as male or female, determines the sex of the soul; and as we pass through many transformations in our passage to heaven, that sex the body of the soul always maintains in whatever state it may exist, until it is united with the source from which it emanated.

The return of the soul to the source from which it emanated does not suppose it necessary that the Godhead should absorb it within itself. This would be incompatible with his nature; for while the infinite and numberless parts into which this principle may be resolved does not detract from the power of the Almighty, it adds to his majesty, his glory, and his praise. And as each germ possesses speciality, its separate existence is only in accordance with the nature of his laws, which may be termed PROGRESSION. Good-night.

After that was finished, we were talking among ourselves as to when we should meet again, and the Dr. wrote:

I should like to meet as often as two or three times a week, but as I can not expect your miserable weather will always permit you to visit when you make appointments, and as your business will not always allow you to spend two or three evenings a week, you may set your own time, and I will try and be with you more or less of the evening or day time.

Judge E., this is a great question, and the Dr., though a doubter, is really desirous of arriving at truth. Now, therefore, more may grow out of your meetings than you now may suppose. As the oak from the acorn, so perhaps heaven and eternal joy from the investigation of spirituality. So I want to go hand and hand with him and the rest of the circle.

Mrs. Dexter, your heart will indeed be gladdened with food which will satisfy your soul. Your thirsty spirit shall drink from gushing fountains of pure knowledge, and your whole nature shall rejoice in a freedom from the bondage of error or prejudice.

SECTION FOUR.

Friday, April 8th, 1853.

This evening Dr. Dexter called to see me on business. After we had got through with that, and were sitting alone in my library, we got into conversation as to the communication of last evening at his circle. We both soon felt the spiritual presence. He heard rappings, and his chair was moved. Directly his arm was affected in a different manner than was usual, and he sat down to write, as he was conscious, under an influence other than that he had before felt. And we had the following communication:

I DESIRE to say to you to-night a few words in regard to the same subject on which Sweedenborg has been teaching.

BACON.

The idea of spheres is but imperfectly understood, and the statements on that subject received and recognized as true, are so but in part, as spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Spirits, after leaving the body, are conducted to localities adapted to the capacities and the condition of their minds, in reference to education, society, and progress. Thus, a highly educated mind—one familiar with all the knowledge of the schools, of strong desires to understand the laws of nature, and of an affinity with the purity and attributes of the Creator—is conducted to a globe or planet adapted by its locality and formation to develop the properties of his mind to an approach nearer to the plane where the Spirit of God is most manifest in all its power and glory. For though God has no special abiding-place, yet he is more distinctly manifest in some localities than in others. Thus the planets mentioned last night as the abodes of those who never die, are selected as their residence by spirits whose lives on earth correspond with the nature of the inhabitants of those globes.

It is not unnatural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect; and it would be incompatible with his nature to conclude that he places a pure spirit in daily and hourly contact with other spirits, whose minds, in their operation and action, are opposed to his own. Thus to place a good and a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation—PROGRESSION. How can a pure mind derive any pleasure from communication with an impure mind? And after the death of the body, the spirit has a loftier aspiration for the good and true, a stronger desire to develop the germ of its nature. It is in compliance with this law that localities are selected in which the attributes, desires, and characteristics of the spirit may be more distinctly developed. All good and pure spirits, therefore, do not reside near this earth, if, indeed, anywhere near it. Some reside millions of

miles distant, others on planets near the earth, but all assume the characteristics of the inhabitants of the planet or globe in which they are to reside.

I inquired whether their locality was not governed by the affinity between their characteristics and those of the inhabitants of the planet where they went to reside?

It was answered:

Certainly. Spirits, or rather bodies, are born in other planets, and it is this influence, both natural and spiritual, which guides the designation of the residence of bodies born on earth or other globes, as well as the locality of spirits after death.

I inquired if those who thus died here, and went to other planets, were there born again into the bodies of those planets?

It was answered:

A man who has lived on earth until old age, who has cultivated his mind and desires, dies.

Now, in proportion to his spiritual development does his spirit seek that place in which he will meet with corresponding circumstances, which will assist him in accomplishing the more intense action of his mind, caused by the loss of his grosser part, or body.

When he arrives at the place of his residence, his body assumes the characteristics of the inhabitants of that place, whose organization is, of course, more ethereal and spiritual than if born on this earth. As spirits do not all possess the same degree of purity of nature, they, of course, must seek a like congeniality of organization, desires, and attributes.

Many globes, spheres, or planets contain inhabitants of far inferior organization to man.

But this affinity is a paramount law in every department of nature. The dog will exhibit his affinity for one person in preference to another; and substances exist in nature whose affinities are so strong that they unite or attract toward each other, even when mixed in the most minute quantities.

I have not time to write much, but I give you these ideas in order that your researches may be made more satisfactory under my friend Sweedenborg, at the Doctor's. Ponder on these thoughts, and examine well every raw material, natural or divine, and you will find I am correct.

BACON.

After this had been written, the Dr. and I read it over, and were conversing about it, when suddenly he wrote:

In regard to my identity, I have to say that you can judge whether or not it be Lord Bacon by the truth of my teachings. Now, in order to arrive at a solution of this, you have only to compare my statements with the laws of nature. I can not tell you any thing opposed to God's laws, which conflicts with your knowledge of their influence, that you would be willing to believe. And if, after just and due reflection and examination, you find that what I have said corresponds with your own knowledge of the truth of natural laws, then believe that I am

BACON.

We had not been saying any thing as to his identity, and I remarked that I had not doubted it, but the Dr. said he had, and so the teaching was to his unuttered and to me unknown thought.

I remarked that I supposed his meaning was, that if we found him to be truthful in other respects, we would of course regard him as such in reference to identity. And I said that reminded me of a law maxim with which he had once been familiar, and I wished him to write it, as greater evidence to the truth.

And it was written:

I don't know that I can read exactly your mind, but I think it is, that you are bound to believe every thing to be true until proved false.

I said, No, that is not it, but a law maxim which is the converse of your proposition. (I had in my mind, though I did not speak it, the maxim, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*).

He wrote:

Do you not know that when you try this test you set on the Doctor's mind itself to solve the question?

I replied, Yes, I see I do; but still I thought it might be satisfactory to the Dr. if he would write it.

It was answered:

That would be the *argumentum ad rem* truly. But I have not thought of earth's law for past a century. I am studying the higher law of God now in spheres where there is no other interpretation than that given by spirit.

After some further conversation between the Dr. and myself, this was written:

You will recollect some years ago, when you first commenced your duties as Judge, that in a case under your consideration how much trouble you had to satisfy your mind that you had arrived at a just conclusion, and how suddenly your mind at last arrived at what you thought was right?

I remarked, I did not remember the incident, and asked if he could recall the case to my recollection?

It was answered:

In a case, I think, of a will or property passing from one person to another. You will recollect. The nature of the evidence was very conflicting, and on retiring one night, your mind was suddenly enlightened as to the true bearing of the testimony.

I said I yet did not remember the case very distinctly. But supposing it to be so, what then?

It was answered:

I impressed your mind, as I am frequently with you, and have been for years.

I then inquired, Why have I never known that before?

It was answered:

For very good reasons, which I am not yet permitted to explain, but by my fruits ye shall know me.

Again, while the Dr. and I were talking, it was written:

Now, when you were in the prison, did you not, when you prevented that man from being whipped, feel a

sudden action of your mind unaccountable to yourself? Why can't you recognize my impression? Have you not lately had some ideas even on the nature of your own duties as Judge, such as you never had before?

I remarked that I did not know exactly to what he referred. And it was written:

I mean the laws by which you arrive at results, and that oftentimes the laws made by man were ineffectual in accomplishing what they were intended for?

I replied, Certainly. I had so much learned to disregard the old rules and precedents when they stood in the way of substantial justice, that it had perhaps established such a character for me.

I then asked the Dr. if I had ever related to him the incident in the prison alluded to? And I went on to tell him that when I was President of the Board of Inspectors of the State Prison, at Sing-Sing, whipping prisoners was the common mode of punishment. I was very averse to it, and never witnessed it, but felt that it was my duty, however painful, to see what it was which I thus tacitly, if not expressly, sanctioned. That accordingly, one day, seeing a man tied up to the whipping rings, and surrounded by the officers prepared to flog him, I had approached them to witness it, and while I was inquiring of the officers what was his offense—

I had proceeded thus far in my narrative, when the Doctor's hand was suddenly affected, and he wrote:

Pray tell me, if his exhibition of feeling is not evidence of the affinity of his nature with the bad feelings of the minds of those who were preparing to whip him? and if this is not proof of my teaching?

I resumed my narrative—that after I had learned what his offense was, I moved off a short distance, so as to witness the punishment. And the prisoner, who had evidently looked upon my approach with hope, gave up his hope, as he saw I did not interfere, and with a diabolical look, exclaimed, 'Whip away, it has never done me any good yet, and will not now.' I immediately said, 'Then don't whip him. He knows best whether it will do him good or not. Take him down, and we will think of something that will do him good, for we do not whip for any other purpose.' And I had afterward so dealt with the man, that without whipping him, a wonderful change was worked in him.

Monday May 23, 1853.

P.S.—This evening, in my library, the Dr. and I being present, with Mr. and Mrs. Sweet, we resumed our task of revising our notes of Lord Bacon's teachings.

We asked questions, and received answers as follows:

You say spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Does that mean below as well as above? Are some spirits carried straight through the lower ones, or what I. T. Hopper called the sphere of remorse, to their proper place?

Of course they know all about the sphere through which they have passed. It refers to the sphere beyond. As they are indeed pure, they are carried through the spheres, till they arrive at those bright ones, which are next door to the celestial spheres. But there are only a few, a very few, who are so happy.

Are there some who have no duties in respect to the spheres below them?

No.

Can a spirit know what is below if he pleases?

Certainly.

Are some so ignorant of what is above, as to suppose themselves in the highest heaven?

Yes. Why, there are spirits who imagine that heaven can only exist where they are. They are not wicked. They are good; but they suppose, from a kind of vanity, that the place where they are must be holy ground, from the ideas which they learned in life, and which it will take many, many years to eradicate.

Is our earth the abiding-place of spirits from planets, where beings inferior to us dwell, and also from planets superior, where some of the inhabitants sink below the level of their native world to that of ours?

In answer to the last part of your question, Yes. To the first part, No. Their own abode is bad enough.

But I mean the abiding-place of those who are on their way ascending from such inferior planet?

I understood you as sent to your earth as a sort of punishment. However, I think, if they stay here at all, it is but comparatively a short time.

Why is it natural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect?

Because in every department of nature there is no struggle to deviate from the ordained condition instituted, except in the action of mind. Nothing in life, organized or unorganized, evinces any disposition to rebel against the state in which its attributes can be exerted. But mind, which can reflect on the circumstances which control or influence it, is oftentimes disposed to question the condition, the result of those circumstances; but the equality of the effect is observable in the certainty of the action, and that no deviation takes place as a law.

Why is it incompatible with His nature to place a pure spirit in contact with others opposed to it? It is done on this earth all the while, and why not with you?

If God places all kind of good and bad spirits together on this earth, certainly the good do not seek the society of the bad, and *vice versa*. Therefore, to insure the happiness of the good, it would be incompatible.

You say, "to place a pure spirit where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation." Yet it is done here all the while, and why not elsewhere?

No. It can not be done here, or elsewhere, for a pure spirit can not be so situated that it will not progress; but to place a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would conflict with the nature it derived from God itself. If it could not progress, what would become of it? No spirit, even the vilest, can be placed in a situation where it is impossible to progress.

You say, "it is the condition of the spirit, after death, which governs its selection of an abiding-place, and that it is the same influence which governs the birth of beings in that place." Now, is it true that some spirits, on entering the embryo, are more advanced than others?

This question is answered simply thus (though the text is somewhat obscure): The condition or state which characterized it, when born into the spirit-world, not the spirit born with the embryo. I would say, that to suppose the spirit, when first given off from God, was evil, would knock away the whole of the foundation of our teachings. No. I do not mean so. This I mean: It is this affinity which governs the selection of the spirits born in those good spheres. Where their material nature is less gross, they possess the ability in consequence, of rising faster than ourselves; but it is after their birth, not before.

You say "affinity is a paramount law of nature." In this life it does not have full swing, the circumstances which surround us prevent it. Now, may not, and do not, circumstances in the next stage of existence also prevent in a greater or less degree?

Yes, in proportion to the ethereality of organization.

You say you "can not tell us any thing opposed to God's laws which conflict with our knowledge of their influence which we would be willing to believe." I don't understand this.

Why, suppose I told you the sun rose out *south*, what would you say?

SECTION FIVE.

Thursday, April 14th, 1853.

At Dr. Dexter's this evening, all the circle present, and through his hand it was written:

I AM here. I salute you all in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I mentioned that the spirit emanated from one source, which was God, or the universal germ. This germ has neither sex nor speciality, but being implanted in the

embryo, there assumes the characteristics of the body which is to be developed. The exact time when the spirit is introduced into the embryo is not yet known, but the embryo must possess sufficient vitality to permit the development of both spirit and body. Life is distinct from spirit, and the union of the two is not understood, even by spirits of a higher development.

But the embryo must possess sufficient of life* to maintain the spirit connection; thus when the spirit enters the embryo there must be vitality enough to maintain an equilibrium of the two forces. The sex of the human or animal is not determined at first, but there is a stage when the stronger vital forces direct the development, and thus characterize the sex. Now, when a child dies free from sin or impurity, it is taken by spirits of some near relative and conducted to a sphere where the spirit will be developed according to the primary law regulating spirits.† It is placed under the teaching of individuals

* Here there was a break, during which was written as follows:

I feel a necessity to say that there is no need of doubt in any thing which takes place under the teaching of spirits. Every thing which is now taught, apparently irreconcilable, will in time be made entirely to correspond with apparent and manifest facts visible to all, and so contrived as to be perceptible in every respect to the comprehension of all who choose to investigate. Therefore, let not your minds be troubled. In good time the spirits will reconcile every incongruity, and make that which is dark, light.

I remarked he was speaking to the Dr. It was written:

No. I speak to all. Yet I do desire to convince the Dr., but I want also to assure you, my friends, that there is more of truth in every thing that is told you of spirit than your understandings would be willing to admit, from the seeming incompatibility.

† On another occasion, more than a year and a half prior to this, and through another medium, I received this teaching on this subject.

Those who die in infancy grow up to manhood, and are instructed in the spirit-world in those things which they ought to have learned here. It is a misfortune and a violation of a law of nature to die in infancy, because the object of their first stage of existence is thereby thwarted.

In the spirit-world infants are placed in a sort of intermediate condition between the lower and higher, and they are attended and taught by superior spirits. They are never without such attendance, and although they are carefully instructed, yet their condition is in some respects unfortunate; for, though by their early death they escape the physical

who are specially charged with the education of children, and thus they are taught all the primary knowledge necessary and suitable to their young minds. Spirit is, of all organized beings, more susceptible of impression than the most refined material organization; and thus it is that even in the strongest bodies, capable of resisting the effect of the most potent causes, there is often the greatest yielding. And when in a state of entire immunity from animal influences the child is taught by spirits pure and developed, how great must be its progress! They do not increase faster in size than children on the earth, but the proportionate development of mind, or, as we spirits term it, internal, is beyond comparison.

They soon are capable of appreciating and understanding some of the laws of God which affect nature; and, as their ideas are not mixed or amalgamated with the crudities of animal organization, they are more clear and comprehensive than even those of some spirits who have been in the spirit-land for years.

They have a just idea of God and his connection with all creation, animate and inanimate, and as they are necessarily pure, their affections are manifest in their attachment to the friends and relatives on earth. Little children have often special missions confided to them, and are often sent to earth to perform offices and duties of a high character—for spirits are not judged by age, but by purity. It is a law here, that pureness of mind is certain evidence of ability; for the spirit who can

sufferings of this sphere, yet that very ignorance of our sufferings takes away from them the capacity to enjoy the happy change which they would attain if they remained here till maturity. They know nothing of the contrast between that stage of existence and ours, which adds so keen a zest to the enjoyment of those who depart from this sphere after having experienced all its sorrows and sufferings.

Another disadvantage is, they never have many of the feelings and emotions which a longer continuance on earth would have taught them, and which enter much into the happiness or misery of the next state of existence.

love God without guile, can also understand all the laws which bind man to man, and those also which God has established for the government of the same. Little children are selected to accompany their parents during their stay on earth, and the mother is often surrounded by developed spirits even of those children whose birth she had not numbered with those living or dead. And when in some dark hour of trial, when the hopes and anticipations of life have been blasted, when the mother is struggling under an affliction worse than death—that of a drunken husband—or when left on earth without husband, with children surrounding her, and she striving to support and educate them, or when from some cause the bond which binds husband and wife is sundered, then it is that the spirits of their children are sent to earth, clothed in forms of dazzling beauty, and gifted with powers to soothe and calm the troubled spirit of that mother, gently and yet serenely instilling hope, where before was dark despair, and raising the drooping heart to look with confidence and trust to God, who is a husband to the widow and a father to the orphan.

And here let me remark, that when you say that time blunts the shaft of sorrow, you mean what I know to be true, that little spirits delegated for this especial office so impress the mind of the afflicted, so charge it with the properties of their own nature, that gradually the mourner loses the poignancy of his sorrow, that by-and-by it is like a troubled dream.

We were now desired to ask questions, and in the course of the writing on that subject, it was said:

There are in an inharmonious circle elements of the same character which exist in a volcano—that is, a strong disposition to explosion. Now I purpose to give you a history of these manifestations, but I find the subject so broad that I shall diverge; but it will all come out. It may take weeks. The teachings I give you will be interesting, on more accounts than the mere telling

you about the spirit-intercourse, and therefore I want you to ask questions to assist in getting at my meaning, etc.

Mr. Warren asked if he had rightly understood the other night that the soul did not enter the body until after it was born? And it was answered:

No. When there is sufficient life or vitality to maintain a balance between the spirit action and the material action, then the spirit enters the embryo; but even then it does not always occupy that germ. It sometimes, from the death of the embryo, returns and occupies some other body.

I made this inquiry: As you say man is connected to the material world by his body, and to the spirit world by his spirit, why is it that the former and its influences are so much more perceptible to the mind than the latter? Is it owing to what I may call the fall of man? That is, his descent from the original purity in which he was created, and his being tainted by the education and circumstances which surround him?

And it was answered:

That spirit-perception in the ancient days was clear and distinct, I believe, and think I know. Now, what you consider the fall of man is only the great change in his mental and material nature, produced by the increase of numbers, the wants and necessities which arose around him, the occupation of his thoughts with the circumstances of his material life, and the entire direction of his mind from spiritual things to subjects of earth. When there were few persons on earth, and the spirit-intercourse was frequent, of course the minds of men were directed to spiritual things; but when the world was more thickly peopled, then it was that the necessities of life compelled man to work, to develop, to invent, to construct, and these occupations prevented that freedom of spiritual communication which existed previously.

But man has never lost that inherent property. This is proven by the erection of temples among the earlier

Pagans, and churches among Christians; and even among savages scarcely elevated above the brute, there is always worship of some kind of spirit, which, they believe, is either good or bad.

Spirit seers existed in all ages; and were man now less engaged in things of life, he would, in his present state of progression, see spirits without trouble, and talk with them. As it is, the ascendancy of spirit over mere materiality is one reason for the spirit-intercourse of the day.

Mr. Warren then asked if spirits who left this earth at death visited other planets?

It was answered:

Certainly. If you can limit the space surrounding this earth, and measure the limits of spirit-world by circumscribed lines around this earth, then can you force spirits to remain attached to earth for ever; but the limit of spheres has no end, no side, no center. They are like God, fathomless and forever.

It was inquired, Have you been to other planets?

I have, but not to remain. My mission is on earth. God in his wisdom has placed me here to do what I have to do. I think you, Mr. Warren, misapprehend what I said, for I have written through the Doctor's hand many times before this.

Spheres or circles, as I understand them, mean locations in circles or orbits of globes where spirits go. In the earlier days of these manifestations, there were many forced interpretations given to statements made by spirits, which often assumed the color of the belief of the individual, not from design, but from impression, and consequently often a blending of truth with error was the result. Now, I know that spirits do go to other planets. The soul is a COSMOPOLITE AMID THE ETERNITY OF WORLDS. And is it strange that it should select an abiding-place where it can be most happy?

Mr. Warren here and elsewhere, during the teaching, remarked touching former teaching on this subject and the subject of the spheres.

It was written :

If you will affix a limit to the second sphere, it might seem that you were true. But, Mr. Warren, God's universe is not so contracted as to confine the millions and millions of spirits who die yearly, around this little inferior earth. The second sphere embraces not only this earth, but many worlds, and to each of the globes in this circle do spirits most adapted go. Some are confined to earth, many good spirits from missions of necessity; but the seventh sphere is among the orbs where the presence of God is most manifest. And the gradations or steps until this point is reached, are in circles of worlds, not miles.

During the evening I inquired, Can you at all times, when you thus direct your attention, read my thoughts?

It was answered:

I am here.

BACON.

Sweedeborg is not with you, and can not therefore read your mind, but I can—not every thought; but when I am with you, and your whole system is passive, I can read it, but not distinctly, I mean not every thought, but enough to understand their direction and the subject.

Mr. Warren remarked that it was necessary to articulate the thought, either externally or mentally, to enable them to read it. I thought that was not necessary.

Yes. There is no difficulty in reading the mind without articulating words. Thought is articulation; it exists before the words are formed. And it is this interior thought we get at, not mere words of thought.

I want to say, Judge, that I do not differ from Sweedeborg in his teachings, although he will explain my ideas in a different manner from myself. As he has said, though there may be apparent discrepancies, yet the

germ of truth will be made plain when you arrive at the end.

I shall like to see you at your house, and will inform you of the time. Good-night.

SECTION SIX.

Sunday, April 17th, 1853.

At Dr. Dexter's, the whole circle present, and through his hand was written:

It were best during our meetings to defer all matters of discussion until after the subject shall have been finished. There is nothing that retards the magnetic influence so much as any clashing upon the doctrines taught. Time will show you all, that many things supposed to be true will appear problematical at least. Let not your hearts be troubled. In truth and love come I, and I salute you all in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I mentioned, I think, in my last lecture, that the development, both spiritual and material, of the present generation was one of the causes of these phenomena which so confuse and perplex the wise.

Those of you who are investigating the subject, from a desire to arrive at truth, I trust will follow me through my reasoning, eschewing what you do not at present understand, and reflecting seriously on what appears plain and reasonable.

What the nature of all the concurrent causes was, which influenced this manifestation of spirit-communion with material organization, I can not pretend to say; but that they were by no special direction of the Creator, I

am satisfied. All of you must be convinced that the age and the race are far in advance of their antecedents; that the mental development of man has in fact placed him but little lower than the angels, in the adapting of all circumstances to the improvement of his condition, and in the exhibition of those properties which evince his genius, his power, and his will.

There are operating on all nature certain causes which produce a tendency to decay, a sort of connection with death (if I can so say), which is apparent both in the character of his mind, in the expression of his feelings, and in also the impression of his senses, as well as those developments which affect the constituents of which his body is composed.

The soul of man, shrouded as it is in this gross covering of clay, has its innate and peculiar yearnings for some definite idea of what shall be its condition after death.

Now this, in my opinion, is proof of what I have before said of its spiritual affinity with the other worlds. Can it be conceived, that as out of dust God formed our bodies, the connection with the whole, of which that dust was a part, was not as intimate as if he had constructed the same body from half a hemisphere? And if, indeed, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul, is not the relation as distinct too, as if he had molded a spirit specially of this purpose, or chosen one from the location where his attending spirits were inhabiting? But this is the mere illustration of a principle.

That there was a first man specially and particularly created to occupy the garden of Eden, is opposed to all my belief of what the character of God is, and ever has been. And here let it be understood, I do not teach any thing opposed to the action of God in all his dealings with man. No! To confine God to the formation of one man, ready made to his hand, can not exemplify the power of the Creator, for if that Creator had established

laws for the working of this globe, he must have adhered to their principles, as he himself could not have been their first violator. Now do you suppose there is any difference in the birth and growth of animals and of man? And is there any account of the creation of any animal as man was created? Now this man was created as were we all created, from the same causes, and their action has not been changed or altered since the world was fashioned. Therefore, as I must illustrate my teachings by material facts, was the material connection definitive and perpetual. And it will always remain so, until the development of man's interior shall have rendered this connection useless—when the understanding shall have become so perfected, and the relationship with spirit so common, that the material affinities will be absorbed in the overwhelming attributes of the soul. Now the effect of progression, both mental and otherwise, in this world, from the action of the spirit-affinity, is felt and reciprocated in the spirit-world; as no advancement in the design for which we were created can be accomplished without a distinct and particular participation in the condition of those spirits who have left this body for that locality. Thus, when any great advancement in this life is made, there is a corresponding advancement in the mental progress of spirits, that is, in the effect which was produced on the mental condition of man. For instance, when steam was applied to the purposes of life, it opened a channel for man's faculties to develop themselves, far more broad and interminable than had been presented to his mind for centuries before. This had a peculiar influence on the spirit-world. While it expanded the minds of men and elevated their condition, it removed many obstacles to the free action of spirit-connection, which had theretofore existed. As when two minds are simultaneously impressed by any subject, a congeniality is established, and the interior is mutually attracted on earth, so a step made in the advance of spirit-life on earth

attracts the same characteristics in the other world by the action of the principle of like attracting like. Thus was the communication, which the rust of thousands of years had blocked up, partially opened by this development of man's genius.

Not only does the prime cause facilitate this connection, but any thing which has a tendency to open the resources and faculties of man's mind serves to contribute to this object, as the sun's rays to the seed which is buried in the earth, warming, fostering, and germinating. When the earth was buried in the obscurity into which prejudice, superstition, and so-called religion had plunged it, there was but little spirit-connection with man; the telegraphic wires did not operate freely—there was no common sentiment on which a communion could be established. The mind was contracted, devoted to the caprice, the dictation, or the imperious will of another. Men either could not or would not think. They shut up within their gross covering the key which would have unlocked the mysteries of both worlds to the view.

But every age has had its epochs, and when there has been one step in advance on earth, we spirits have been compelled to try and make ourselves felt. We have often failed, and though an occasional spark has glimmered in the dark surroundings of thousands of years, not until this period was the way fairly opened for us to walk.

Every age has had its trial, but we have failed to institute any special connection with this earth. The advance made by man, while it removes prejudice, gives the spirits a chance of acting in accordance with the law of affinity with man's spirit.

When the first communication with man was made I can not say. Every age has had its epoch; every age has borne witness that the spirits have had connection with man. The law of affinity is the prime cause in this connection, but the process is this: I, for instance, visit

your family. You sit in a circle. Now the material constituents of which the body is composed are alike in the bodies of men. And when you sit in a circle, an equilibrium of the magnetic forces is established, for electricity or magnetism exists in every thing on earth, either in one condition or another. When by sitting, the equilibrium is established, then some one is selected whose nervous system is most easily controlled by the exercise of our will. I stand near him, and finding out what part of his nature is most harmonious with my own organization, I place myself in direct connection with that part. I have the power to find out or select what that is, and where it is. When I have found it, by placing myself contiguous, or in direct contact, I establish a concurrent simulation with his nervous system, and thus have control of the faculties of his body as well as the influencing and reading of his mind.

When the circle is fully organized, there is a condition established which is characteristic and peculiar. It is a condition in which the nervous system is opened to impressions material and mental independently. The affinities are elevated and more active, and the material condition is magnetically concurrent with our own.

Mr. Warren inquired if man was the product of the gradual progress and development of the creation below him, as is maintained in the work called "Vestiges of Creation?"

It was answered:

I can't tell. It is so far back, our oldest inhabitant here would probably not remember; but I can make some inquiries, if you wish, and let you know some time during these lectures.

It will be better to close to-night early, as some of you are indisposed. So, good-night, and our Father be with you.

SECTION SEVEN.

Wednesday, April 20th, 1853.

This evening, through Dr. Dexter, in my library, we had this communication:

I HAVE listened to your conversation this evening, my friends, with much pleasure, and it is a source of great gratification to me that I can enjoy so much real satisfaction while present with you, though I can not verbally participate in the subject myself. If you feel that the teachings of the spirits are beautiful, and if the views which they have presented to your mental eye elicit emotions of joy, how much more will you realize the ecstatic pleasure in store for you when death shall have opened the glorious realities of spirit-life! Eye hath not beheld, human heart hath not conceived, the truths that death will unfold. Oh! when the last pulse is fluttering, when the heart's throb is almost past, when gasping and struggling in the pangs of expiring mortality, then, then will your spirit-eye behold the gates of immortality opening before you, and your soul catch a glimpse of the gorgeous beauties of death. It is well for you that these lessons have made so profound an impression. They prepare your spirits to elicit from each manifestation the real object of its teachings, and hasten the time when you can behold, eye to eye and face to face, the loved ones who have gone on a little while before you.

BACON.

I read over the foregoing, and remarked, 'The Chancellor is becoming eloquent; hitherto he has been simple and plain.

It was written out:

Eloquent? Who would not be so when he is trying to illustrate the joy, the unspeakable emotions that fill

every sentiment of his spirit? Swedenborg tells you that any step taken in advance on earth produces a corresponding accordance in the spirit-world: and our congenialities are so intimate, that an elevated expression, an idea uttered in harmony with the realities of our existence here, meets with a response in our souls, and produces emotions simulating your own. Marvel not, then, that my spirit takes fire from the sparks emanating from your minds, but be careful that your thoughts in their utterance shall attract us near you, that in all things both heart and soul shall harmonize with the truths of God.

I remarked that that was confirmatory of the doctrine that every state of mind has its kindred spirit.

And it was written:

Yes, that is true: and it is an axiom, too, that like attracts like. The habit of indulgence in trifling conversation induces a distaste for the exercise of the higher properties of mind. The uneducated man selects a mind corresponding with his own, and aims not at higher ends. The lascivious man takes no delight in the society of the virtuous; the miser views with disgust the man of large and liberal understanding, and the spendthrift seeks no intimacy with the prudent or careful, but each mind seeks, on common ground, the like affinity with his own in some other mind. Therefore when you would attract those you love most, let your thoughts soar above the lesser details of life unmingled with the grosser feelings of your nature; let the electric bond which connects life with death vibrate with emotions of love, of truth, of good and noble aspirations, and the returning current shall bring back to your consciousness the certainty that you are surrounded by those whose thoughts accord with your thoughts, and whose delight will be to smooth every rough path in life, and to prepare your minds to enjoy on earth a taste of the pleasures of immortality. Thus it was while listening to your reading that my

internal was excited by the emotions of your minds, for know that when there is an accordance between two minds on earth it increases the electric affinities and makes easier the power to communicate. Thus, I say, it that was my internal was prompted by your minds, and I felt myself compelled to give utterance to the sentiments I have expressed. I beg you to understand that my nature has somewhat progressed since I have left the earth. I am not that dull matter-of-fact spirit as I was when a man on earth; but I feel that each day unfolds some new attribute of my soul, some higher power to feel, to comprehend, what I so much desire to know, and that I can realize more clearly the high and important duties I have to perform, and that my spirit learns the more willingly to yield in submission to the commands of our Father.

Here there was a sudden pause, and the Dr. remarked the influence had entirely left his arm; but in a few minutes he resumed his writing, thus:

I left you for a moment, but I return to say I can not tarry long to-night; but before I go I want to say some things important for both of you to know. And one topic is this, Though there is no special order for any spirit to perform any mission, yet in our world as in yours there is a conscious sense of duty, perhaps more vivid and distinct with us than with you. There have been, therefore, certain spirits chosen particularly to communicate with certain individuals on earth who have been selected to teach and disseminate the truths of our teachings.

In spite of your desires to conform to every thing which you believe to be right, there is much questioning if the policy of doing or acting as your mind is sometimes impressed is proper and imperative. This is right; for whenever you are advised to act contrary to the dictates of your judgment, you should hesitate to do the

bidding of such command. Were you to act without the full concurrence of your own mind, we should feel confident that your belief would soon resolve itself into unbelief, and your mind would become disgusted with the continual struggles to perform what would sometimes appear right, but more often turn out to be wrong. But then you must be willing to satisfy yourself, by patient investigation of what is offered, that there is not in any seeming incongruity a real object for the good of the cause to be subserved.

There is much to be done, and I feel confident, however indefinite our communications may at times seem to be, that you will submit for the present to what appears dark or uncertain, and wait patiently for the period to arrive when we can fully and unhesitatingly reveal the proper course of action. BACON.

Here we supposed the lesson for the evening ended, and as we were conversing about it, the Dr. said it was singular that when he was absent from our communications he could not bring his mind to bear upon them. He could only faintly recall them to memory, and he had only a misty conception of them. I remarked that I thought that that was because he was only partially developed as a medium, and had not yet learned, as he would in time, to distinguish between the operations of his own mind and the spirit-teachings.

Suddenly it was written:

One word before I go, and that will be soon, as I am called away on other duties.

Dr. Dexter, in spite of himself, will be compelled to yield the tenacious opinions of his own mind to the truths of our teachings; and for nearly two years we have been striving to induce him to yield to our influence over him as a medium.

What he has granted from his affection we shall accept for our own purposes, and through this opportunity satisfy every doubt of his mind. Important, momentous revelations are to be made through him to you, and both are

to act as we designate. Therefore we strive to divert his thoughts from any reflection upon the subjects which we communicate each time he is influenced, and thus to free our teachings from every element of his own thoughts. 'Tis hard work, but it must be done.

Now our teachings on the habits, life, condition, and circumstances of the spirit after death we consider of the most vital importance properly to be communicated, and after months of preparation we have brought you two together to go hand in hand in this labor of truth.

Carefully preserve every thought given you, and meet as often as possible. Ask questions, think, advise with one another; open your hearts and learn to understand each other; discuss the subjects which are written out, and submit your views to us. We will explain; but after all, your own judgment is to be your guide under all circumstances.

I remarked that if I was not unduly detaining him, I should like to ask whether by the words in the early part of the evening, "hasten the time when you can behold, eye to eye and face to face, the loved ones who have gone a little while before you," he meant to say we should shorten life?

It was answered:

Hastening the time when the spirit-intercourse will be so perfect that you can have such intimate converse with the loved who have gone before.

After some conversation between us, it was written:

I have been and returned, but on my way to watch a dying man. To-morrow night Swedenborg will complete one portion of his teaching. When you and the Dr. next meet I will give you some ideas on the attributes of God, and his connection with man. I am in a hurry, so good-night.

SECTION EIGHT.

Thursday, April 21st, 1853.

At the circle, at Dr. Dexter's house, it was written through him :

IN order that we may arrive at a proper understanding of our subject, I would suggest again that Judge Edmonds be selected to propose questions for the whole circle, that I may answer in this stage of my teachings such questions as you may propose.

SWEEDENBORG.

I inquired if he wanted us to ask now, or would he defer them to another evening, as I had left my questions at home, and should have to go for them?

It was answered:

I am about to conclude a certain portion of one part of my lectures, and therefore I certainly desire that you should ask questions.

I accordingly left the house, and went to my own to get my papers. While I was gone, it was written :

But while the Judge is absent, I would say that there is oftentimes an entire impossibility of communicating with circles. The necessity of having every thing harmonious is so great, that when there is an interruption of the full flow of the electrical current, and an entire absence of passiveness of the mind of the medium, it prevents communications, and at the same time develops another principle, which acts antagonistically to the spirit-influence. It becomes very important, too, that the minds of the circle should be directed to the subject discussed by the spirits, so that the nervous properties may readily be seized, to open a more free intercourse with the medium. It is said, that when the human voice is tuned to the key of any glass body, and the voice is continued at a loud tone for any length of time at the key tone of the

glass, the glass will break into a thousand pieces. Thus with spirit-intercourse. When the minds of both circle and spirit correspond, there is a power engendered which seems to break the bonds of materiality, and opens a new view to both the spirit and man. Yes, my friends, the key-note of the soul is touched, and nature responds through man in one glorious chord of harmony with immortality.

After my return to the room, I propounded this question:

On Thursday, you said children do not grow in size in the spirit-land faster than on earth. On Friday, I heard read a beautiful and otherwise instructive communication from the spirit-world, which says they do. Which is right, and why this discrepancy?

It was answered:

I teach you in accordance with God's laws, both on earth and in the spirit-world. Therefore, when I have said any thing seemingly incompatible with the operation of those laws, and which, to your minds, does not correspond with what you know of the effect of laws which is apparent, then you have good right to question the correctness of my teaching. But I have taught you that God has instituted laws, predicated upon principles coeval with himself, and therefore he can not depart from them. Now spirit possesses organization, and is subject to the laws of that organization as well as you on earth are subject to the laws of materiality. The effect of the laws operating on our organization is almost precisely the same as the laws operating on yours. We are divested, it is true, of the grosser particles of your nature, and we are spared all the evils which that organization induces, yet we do not live here by any special administration of the power of God, neither is the spirit-world conducted by miracle. We act and live, we work, we toil, we develop just as you do on earth, only the internal, which is the essence of the everlasting principle of God himself (as it emanated from him), expands in a greater ratio than does the body. Take no statements, therefore, that are not based on laws satisfactory to your judgment, and

depend upon it, that when any revelation is made, having the garment of marvelousness wrapped about it, that either it is a compound of the medium's imagination, or it emanates from some spirit whose veracity is to be doubted. I therefore say there is no discrepancy to your mind, Judge, neither has there been. You have asked this question to reconcile a discrepancy of statement, but the fact, nevertheless, was as apparent to your mind as the solution of any other question based on the laws which govern the *whole* of God's universe, of which we claim to be part.

I replied that was so, but in my questions I should often put myself in the place of the doubter, in order that I might obviate objections which it was evident would be made.

I then propounded this question:

The operation of the laws which develop sex is such, that about, if not exactly, an equal number of each are born. Why is this? Or rather, I mean to ask, Is it not because man—born whenever he may be—is created male and female, and each male must have its female for eternity?

It was answered:

Imagine now, God the eternal, the invisible, the self-existent, in his operations, as a being special in form, and possessing the attributes of person, and you are lost in the comprehension of how that being, great and omnipotent as he is, could exercise through all nature the power ascribed to him as a God and Creator. Were he to exist in form, he must have had a correspondence with some other mighty being preceding him, and we might reason thus forever without coming to any idea even of the nature and attributes of our Creator. But when we view Him as a principle, existing in every thing, still resolving itself into direct and pertinent manifestation of the incomprehensible specialities of his nature, we have a basis from which we can commence our reasoning. Now what is spirit? Can it ever exist unconnected with some sort of materiality? Can it ever divest itself of its covering, and stand in the presence

of that God from whence it emanated, special, distinct, and pertinent, in form and shape, a spirit? Have you ever seen the spirit of the Creator separated from the work which He has created? And yet the spirit of the First Cause is as distinctly manifest as if it were divested of its covering, and apparent to the gaze of all. In this world of ours, there is nothing indicating that God is nearer us than on earth. I mean in the localities with which I am conversant. But the self-same laws and the self-same principles in their effect and exhibition are manifest here as with you.

In short, then, God exists as a principle. He is one self and without any distinctive characteristic as to person or sex. Now if this is so—and who should doubt it?—why should the same principles emanating from this source possess properties distinct from the germ from whence they sprang? Why should the spirit of man possess sex, when the spirit of God is characterized by no gender?

No! It is the principle which vitalizes the organization, and it is the organization in some condition of ethereal refinement which is designated by sex, not the soul.

The answer seeming to cease here, I remarked that part of my question had not in terms—though perhaps in substance—been answered, namely, “Whether each male could have its female to eternity?”

It was answered:

Why, no. This fact exists in and through all nature, through even the vegetable world, that the male and female go together, and in some form or shape this division, I maintain, is known to be the case.

Now whether one male is formed for another female, and they twain go hand in hand through the various stages of eternity, I can not say, but reasoning from what I know, I should say, No. For in one stage of existence the affinities which attract male to female, and otherwise, might act as a repellant in another stage.

Besides, when the soul leaves the body, it might be attracted by its affinities to some part of the universe where the mate of this soul would not—could not follow.

Therefore, if I understand your question, I should say, No. I believe that division of sexes materially, takes place under a general law, and has no marked or special direction from the great God, except in the operation and effect of those laws, which in his wisdom he has established for the government of man.

Am I then to understand you to mean to say that, in your opinion, the division of the sexes is an attribute of our material organization, and not of our spiritual? I ask the question, because I have imbibed the idea, and think from some of your writings—though, as I have not time to look, I can not say—but from some *quasi* reliable source, that each human being has its mate with which it unites in your stage of existence, if not in ours, and they two progress on together until they finally unite and amalgamate into one being.

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This was not answered at this meeting, from some interruption in the circle.

SECTION NINE.

Saturday, April 23rd, 1853.

This evening I invited Mr. and Mrs. S. to meet Dr. Dexter at my house. Just before they came, Gov. Tallmadge, of Wisconsin, called in, and I detained him for the evening. We five remained together some four or five hours, and received communications through the Dr. and Mrs. S. of which I kept an account, but which were of too personal a nature to be generally interesting.

After some conversation it was written:

SPARE me a few minutes all, while I say to you what is now on my mind.

I mentioned to you the other evening that the feelings and affections of our friends governed our action here, that is, I mean to say, that according to the condition

of your feelings, so can we respond. Our affections are the life of our spirit-existence. Now the Governor is a man of strong prejudices, stern and uncompromising in what he considers to be right. He wills to do what his construction of that right is. He believes, yet he doubts, not at the fact, but at the material of thought which is sometimes exhibited in spirit-revelation. Nature to him has beauty, but the beauty consists in the proof of its tangibility. To you who have been led, step by step, through the many devious windings of this mysterious manifestation, there is much taken for granted.

Be assured all, that time is the great solver of this new ism (I will coin a word), and will open to the Governor, as well as to many others, the truth of spirit-intercourse.

Here Mr. and Mrs. S. left, and we thought the intercourse was at an end, and as it was late we proposed to go home and go to bed—

When it was written:

Now don't hurry. There is time enough for sleeping. Your spirit will not sleep, even if your body does. So sit still and learn a moment or two. You can, perhaps, glean from the passing moments of time a pearl of more price than you can find in your dreams.

Listen then. In your daily connection with the world there is much to annoy, to perplex, to worry; but to the man who sincerely looks beyond the boundaries of time, and earnestly desires for wisdom, there is much, very much to be learned even from things which can not be seen.

Time in its passage makes its impress on both man and matter. Learn there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress too on the remotest bounds of eternity. Now mark this expression, and weigh it well. View the great scope of this boundless influence. There is no act either, with the full consent of your mind, but has its direct influence on spirit for

good or evil. How intimate, therefore, the connection, how boundless the power that from your minds controls even spirit-action in this world!* It is so forever. God's spirit is in every thing. It pervades every thing, and fills with the evidences of his power every part of his creation. Our affinities for good or evil meet with their likes or dislikes here, and compel, if indeed good, the submission of earthy spirits to the grand, the noble influence of that principle which is the characteristic of our heavenly Father.

We read this over and commented on it, expressing our views of it and of the expansive and profound thought it awakened.

Then it was written :

I have ever been open and frank with you, Judge, and I mean you shall understand me. The properties of your mind partake of the characteristics of my own, even, I am inclined to believe, when I was on earth. It is this connection, this similarity which attracts me to you, binds me to your society, and leads me to identify my own thought with yours.

I know, too, you profit by this relation; and I trust you will permit me at all times to converse freely, and to give my advice and counsel when opportunity offers.

Now it is not always that profound thoughts answer the purpose for which they were designed, without some kind of explanation.

Thus, in the ideas which I have just written, I mean to be understood to say that evil thoughts, opposed as they are to the great principle as the foundation on which the whole universe was constructed, that is, Goodness or Truth, seek out from every part of creation a correspondence with their own identity. Evil is opposed to good. It can not mingle with it, but finds elements

* I inquired whether by "this world" he meant his world or ours? and he answered *his*.

of its own to which it assimilates, and a congenial mixture with which it corresponds.

But the good, the true, the beautiful—and they are all alike—find their constituents in that which is of God himself.

It is this which, when spirits are undeveloped, roaming through the boundaries near to earth, and finding no abiding-place, gleaning from no connection the least moiety of happiness, it is this principle of good, this germ of truth, which is breathed on them as it were by the Spirit of God, and impels them to seek for happiness in progression through the higher spheres.

They say, who are opposed to these revelations, we teach doctrines contrary to the Bible.

They believe in a hell, in a place of punishment where spirits are tortured either by other spirits more evil or by their own thoughts. But even were this so (I know I teach no doctrines untrue, no doctrine which the Great Spirit himself would not justify), can you imagine a portion of that germ, pure and self-existent, could be confined in a place where there is no hope, where the spirit could not progress? No; even were this so, were even the hell existing as it is said, no spirit could remain there; for the impelling force of that power which is of God would send it self-seeking the universe through, to seek that food which its nature so much craves.

Confine it as you may, bind it with bonds of error and evil, and the spirit will burst all shackles, and rise in the power of its inherent might and seek the source from which it sprang. To this source do we all tend, some in one position, some in another, but all arriving at last at that point at which his nature can be most developed.

BACON.

P. S.—I add to this communication, that when we were revising it for the press some questions were asked and answered as to its teaching, which we give here.

1. What do you mean by the remark, "the feelings and affections

of our friends govern our action here; and according to the condition of your feelings, so can we respond?"

Why, if your feelings are adverse to ours, if they are mixed with doubts, if they are not elevated by the desire of arriving at truth, if there is any thing but the true motive to receive from us the facts and developments of the spirit-world, they repel your friends, and draw around you a class of spirits whose manifestations correspond with the unworthy characteristics of thought and purpose governing your minds.

2. You say, "the spirit will not sleep if the body does." Does the spirit never sleep?

Certainly it does; but I referred to the subject of that night's communication, your wife's presence, etc.

3. You say, "there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress on the remotest bounds of eternity." This of course refers to the future? the future of us above, or of others? And in either case, how is this?

This will occupy too long now, to explain in detail. Suffice it, that all good thoughts influence mind everywhere, for the present as well as future. Evil develops evil, and its control over the mind of man has been witnessed by every age of the world. The principle is, that God is good, goodness is of God; therefore every thing, thought or act, partaking of that nature, has its relative effect on spirit everywhere as emanating from God.

4. You say, "there is no act with the full consent of our mind but has its influence on spirit for good or evil." What spirit do you mean, that of the actor or others?

Both. The fate of spirit is within its own control, but the influence of good is as general and specific in our world as in yours. Now if some mind develops a good thought in your country, do not the minds of individuals receive and profit by it in Europe? Spirits in affinity with you likewise receive the good you generate, or rather

the good generated through you, and they, responding, circulate it through the spheres where they dwell. So with evil.

SECTION TEN.

Sunday, April 24th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, Governor Tallmadge being present in addition to the circle, it was written:

IN our circle, where the spirits of those we love most do congregate, are gathered together once, weekly, this number, and we celebrate what to us is the Sabbath day. It is indeed a beautiful thought to you, dear friends, that we live and act almost as you do, that we cherish a thousand associations which on earth were most dear. With all my feelings alive to the affectionate remembrances of life with my friends, and eternity with my spirit-companions too, I this night greet you cordially, heartily, and truthfully, in the name of our heavenly Father.

SWEEDENBORG.

Then it was written:

Now propose your questions.

I first proposed that which is written at the end of the minutes of last Thursday, and it was answered thus:

Beyond the confines of our spheres, away far off in the illimitable distance of space, far beyond the comprehension even of spirit, we are told is the place where spirit is manifested tangibly. It is in this locality, surrounded by the evidences of that power which is capable of creating every thing which has life, or which is inanimate. Now we are told the glory, the beauty of this sphere, is beyond the comprehension of spirit; that the

full flow of spirit is curbed by no material barriers, but gushes forth in one spontaneous stream of love and wisdom; that the land is delightful, because here all the laws of God work together so harmoniously, that every spirit-thought is in unison; that all the affections, desires, will-power, and the action of the spirit are controlled by the earnest wish to do every thing according to the will and the law of the great source; that spirit, free from material bonds, is manifest as spirit, as an intelligence, seizing from every object around the very germ of thought before its utterance; that there, too, does the spirit-concentration emanate, and is sent throughout the earth to control the evil direction which material connection produces. We are told, too, that there is speciality in spirit, that each one retains the peculiar attributes of his nature, so changed by progression, so altered by its upward course, that it has become a god itself, gifted with an intelligence which is capable of exercising the influence just mentioned. Now that the spirit in its passage through the spheres retains intact the connections formed on earth, I believe does prove true in many, very many cases. As the magnet attracts some minerals to itself, and always points in one direction, so does the spirit attract those whose feelings and sentiments correspond when on earth, and, like the magnet, it always retains them; for the soul, when freed from the grosser parts of its worldly connection, is the more ready to retain and develop those ideas which first opened to its comprehension when in the form, and especially, too, the affections.

Now distinctly and directly to answer your question I can say, that when there are affections formed on earth, death itself does not change or alter them, but when separated, the soul in the spheres develops more extensively the love it first recognized on earth, and is drawn to meet the spirit for whom that love was formed, when it is ushered into the spheres.

If, then, all their affinities correspond—and they are likely to—if there is a basis formed on earth, they will go hand in hand through all the transitions of spirit-life, together loving and being loved, together aspiring, together progressing, until they shall have passed beyond these spheres, and enter the glorious mansions of what may be called heaven.

But they scarce lose their material organization, sublimated it is true, by every ascending step as they rise in the circle of their progress, till at last materiality is swallowed up in spirituality, and they either become incorporated in the whole of the First Cause, or exist as I have said.

The next question I asked was this. In the course of my investigations of this matter, I obtained the idea that man consisted of three things, which I called body, soul, and spirit. Is that the same as what you describe as body, life, and spirit? the life being the connection between the other two? And if so, whence did I derive the idea, and is it correct?

It was answered:

There is no peculiar force in saying 'body, life, and spirit' for the body is merely the constituents of the machine formed and fashioned to hold the spirit, and moved and impelled by the vital power or life.

You are right, and I imagine you gleaned the idea from one Swedenborg, who wrote many foolish things on earth, which he is willing to rectify in spirit.

I then asked,

These three being one, we know what becomes of one, the body. We are now instructed by you as to what becomes of another, the soul. Now pray what becomes of the third, the life or vital principle?

It was written in reply:

Can you tell what becomes of the light of the sun when darkness covers the earth? Can you tell me what becomes of the light of that star that wanders year after year through the fathomless pathway of space, and after

the lapse of thousands of years at last reaches this earth, and is recognized by your eye?

Learn this, that materiality is never lost, and never will be, and when the animal constituents lose the principle which sets them in motion, they again spring up new developed by the inherent properties of their own nature. They exist as the result of their own combination, and never die.

You say that the spirit has no existence in a sentient form before it enters the human embryo, yet has existed from all eternity. Now has it any knowledge (I do not mean the faculty of knowing, but rather information) before that time?

It was answered, No.

I then asked—

You say spirit is, of all organized beings, most susceptible of impression. Why is it that it is so difficult for us to recognize that impression, and distinguish it from the operation of our minds? In other words, why is it that it is so hard to distinguish between our own self-workings and impressions from others?

It was answered:

I should think, Judge, you could answer that question.

Why, if I incorporated myself as a part of your organization, I could readily make you feel that it was my influence, and not the action of your own brain. But the avenues of communication are opened alike to the impression of the spirit and the external world. We do not act contrary to nature, and we can not monopolize your senses. Therefore you can readily perceive that when the brain acts from the effect of nervous action, at the same time with the spirit-impression, the distinction to be made between the two causes must be very nice and difficult. Sometimes the external impression is strongest, and again the mind will be occupied with a train of thought which usurps all its faculties; and then again you are worried, or angry, or irritable, or impatient, or doubting, and the spirit can not act forcibly.

Could we separate your mind from all thought but our thoughts, we could readily make you sensible how

hard we try to identify our thoughts with your thoughts.

I next proposed this question:

What do you mean by the expression, "love God without guile," as applied to spirits out of the form?

It was answered:

Are spirits ever out of the form of materiality? But this is for the second part of my lectures. It is a long story, or, rather, it will take a long time to tell you all about spirit-life, that is, *daily* life, and the consequent influences of causes acting upon it. But while I am writing this, I am impressed with the thought of some one present, that the question proposed by you might refer to the earthy spirits near the earth, whose organization is so gross, because it is so mixed with the impelling animal properties of matter. Still I can only say that this will naturally come into the second part of my teaching, and I leave it here.

I then asked—

You say that the spirit sometimes leaves the embryo it once entered, returns (of course to its original elements?) and occupies some other body. Does that ever happen with an adult body?

I should not like to answer that question without more time for investigation. My present impressions are, that that is not possible. Still the laws of God are so multifarious, so peculiar, that I dare not reply to what I can not properly say I understand.

I then referred to a part of these communications, and asked why it was said, in answer to my question, 'Swedenborg is not with you,' when he had just been speaking to us, and spoke to us again immediately afterward?

It was answered:

Why, my dear Judge, you are very captious. Do you suppose we are always in one spot, and that it would be any thing unusual if I should leave your good company for a moment? Really, I don't recollect to what you refer; but my friend Bacon, who *is* present, says that there was an interim in the conversation, and

you asked a question referring to the action of your own mind, that I had been called away for an instant, and he being more familiar with its action than myself, took the liberty of answering it.

Then referring to a remark of the spirits, I asked why could not God be himself the first violator of his laws? If he made, could he not unmake? If he established general principles, could he not create exceptions?

It was answered:

I can only say that if he has made this world on established principles, to undo the very basis of those principles would be to admit he was wrong, and consequently take away the omniscience of his nature. If he could change, why has he not done it?

Here I finish the first part of my teachings. Good-night.

SECTION ELEVEN.

Wednesday, April 27th, 1853.

This evening at my library, while Dr. Dexter was there, Governor Tallmadge and a member of Congress from Wisconsin came in and spent the evening.

We asked the Dr. if he felt the influence upon him, and we alluded to the intimation given at our last meeting that Lord Bacon would say something on politics, some of us remarking that it mattered not to us what topic, as his remarks would be interesting and instructing.

The Doctor's hand was moved, and he wrote:

I AM exceedingly obliged, gentlemen, for your compliments; but as I said to the Judge some time ago, by my fruits shall you know me. BACON:

I hardly know what to write to you to-night. I

mentioned my desire to say something about politics ; but as that is a dry subject, perhaps I ought to say something which will elevate your spiritual condition, rather than direct your thoughts to subjects on which you are as much at home as myself. I can only say that the motives which should govern all your actions in whatever position you occupy, should be such as would ennoble your own spirit, as well as benefit your race. No man ever reflected on a political life with entire satisfaction. The incentives to political preferment are not often unmixed with selfish purposes. The strong desire to rise, the means often taken to accomplish certain ends, are many times so mixed with utter selfishness, that the truly noble spirit shrinks at the after-contemplation of what it may have done, and with what company it associated. Gentlemen, are you pure, unspotted in your political life?

The question is often asked, What is the true purpose or object of life? It may be said this differs in all persons; that the situation, position, the connections, and the associations change or alter the destiny of all men. True, this may be so: the action of life may differ in most men, but this does not touch the question proposed, What is the true object of life, or for what purpose were men created and placed on earth?

Before the new dispensation, most of you believed that what was told you by the priests or ministers, the chosen guides of your religious life, was really and positively true—that God created man for the especial purpose of placing him in a condition of utter misery if he did not act precisely and believe precisely as they directed. It has always seemed strange to me that so large a proportion of intelligent men could willingly submit to a dictation which a moment's reflection would have convinced them they had no more means of understanding than themselves. To submit to a sort of mental espionage, against which to rebel was rank

heresy, is, in my opinion, a kind of vassalage I should not be willing to submit to, even if I were on earth. To take the dictum of some one, gross and material in every part of his nature, and be obliged to yield an implicit obedience, is certainly unworthy of man. Do you, gentlemen, who have seen much of life, mingled with all classes of society and all kinds of men, you who have measured intellect with intellect, and have wandered through many a mazy path to arrive at your present positions, do you really feel that all your early understanding of religious teaching has in fact opened to your minds one truism in regard to your present or future state? Do you realize what the character and attributes of God may be from the sermon of a Presbyterian or a Dutch Reformer? Or do the teachings of either sect give you better assurance of the nature of the spirit that is within you? Perhaps one or the other of you has, in early life, embraced the doctrine of free salvation, and yet are you any better satisfied that your chance of safety beyond the grave is of more value than another man's, who may differ in belief from you? Can you place your finger on one statement, in all the teachings of priest or layman, which is truthfully explanatory of what the true object of life is?

Look at the little shrub growing by the wayside; it bears no resemblance to the tall branching tree at the foot of which it humbly bows its head to every blast which passeth: and who shall say for what purpose that insignificant shrub is placed in that precise locality? Who shall say that when year after year shall have rolled over its little branches, it may not bow, too, its giant-arm—sturdy body too, alike to the storm, as well as the towering oak near which now it so meekly vegetates?

The whole history of man must convince you that in spite of all oppression, despite all combinations, and against all tyranny too, religious, civil, or political, he

has manifested the true object of his existence, the sublimation of his material nature, is PROGRESSION.

Now I pretend to say that in every department of nature this statement can be corroborated; that even from the earliest period, when erst the incongruous masses of matter were fashioned into shape by the omniscience and omnipotence of the First Cause—even from this period has, step by step, the whole creation developed itself as from a simple germ.

Let the geologist explore the depths of the illimitable abyss, and he will bring up from the dark cavern of earth's interior the evidences of a step by step progression. Yes, and the astronomer too, as he wanders among the dark mysteries of space, tracing the comet's pathway through the orbits of surrounding worlds, sees in the flashing illuminations of that shadowy germ the nucleus of another world; and even man, from the little mass, unshapen, unsexed, and undeveloped, then springs up step by step, another and important evidence of the truth of this doctrine—a man in form, but a god in spirit.

After a short pause, it was written:

I find the Doctor's mind more engaged with his patients than passive to my subject; therefore, if you have any thing to propose that I can answer quickly, go on.

I remarked that it had just occurred to me that this was the manner in which Mahomet had written his Koran. Was that so?

It was answered:

No. He was impressed, and there are many truths in his writings. If they were divested of their admixture with materiality, or earth's materiality, they would shadow forth many scenes of the spheres here.

I asked mentally, Where is he now?

Where he is I know not; but perhaps he is in the beautiful gardens he has so graphically described. At

any rate, there is some truth in what he has taught.

Wednesday, May 25th, 1853.

P.S.—This evening, in my library, when we were revising the teachings of April 27th, I asked this question:

There is one profound mystery about this whole matter of spiritual intercourse, the philosophy of which I do not yet comprehend. Hitherto when I have asked about it, I have been told that I did not yet know enough of nature's laws to understand it. Perhaps it is so yet, but there is no harm in trying.

Thus you say, "the correspondence between two minds on earth increases the electric affinities, and makes it easier to communicate." Now how is this? And what is the *modus operandi*? How does harmony produce this effect, and discord its opposite? There must be some natural cause for this effect. I want to know what it is, and how it operates?

It was written in answer:

I must confess my inability properly to communicate the *modus operandi* of the organic connection. But it appears to me thus: When your spirit is passive, or rather in harmony with ours, the material part of your nature corresponds with the power we possess, like the gradations in music. When you strike a certain note, a third above (or below), a fifth, or a seventh, etc., it produces a chord. The system is in *rapport*, the nervous structure is open to the impression of the nervous correspondence of our improved or less gross organism. Recollect, we possess more nervous ability than you, as there is less of matter in our structures, and therefore we are bound by fewer impediments. Our magnetic power must be increased, and the spirit-communication is more direct and distinct. I don't know that you can understand, but I will try and explain more clearly tomorrow night.

BACON.

SECTION TWELVE.

Sunday, May 1st, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's, Governor Tallmadge also being present.

Through the Dr. it was written:

PLEASANT it is to meet you again, my friends, and I congratulate you that in this spot you may not again be disturbed for some time.* With feelings of affection and love to you all, and with my spirit gushing forth with joy for the opportunities I enjoy in communicating with you, I again most sincerely greet you in God's most holy name.

SWEEDENBORG.

To the spirit just wakening up to the realities of spirit-life, there are sensations and emotions as indescribable as they are new. The eye accustomed to look on scenes in which matter is arranged with due regard to law certainly, and yet crude and irregular, the habitations of man, and man and animals all existing as fashioned and formed for earth, were the daily and hourly objects which greeted his vision. And then his eye, or his spirit rather, looked through a medium formed of matter, itself perhaps as gross as the objects which it transmitted to his brain, and this nature assimilated both the object and the agent to the material condition of his system. His thoughts that were influenced by the same causes which acted on each separate sense partook of the character of the scenes in which he moved, and if his mind, improved by study and research, was enlarged and progressive, still there was manifest the profound influence which nature, in which he lived and moved, had upon his whole being. But when awakening from

* The Dr. had been moving his residence.

this sleep of death, and opening his eyes to the world into which his spirit was ushered, how strange his thoughts, how marvelous the sensations which rush through his brain with lightning rapidity! To you, who have some conception of spirit-life, the ideas I have suggested will not appear so passing strange. The spirit-bond which connected it to matter is severed, the link of life is broken, the spirit freed is disengaging itself from its earthly trammels. There lies the body stretched in death. How unlike the spirit which is floating over it, still unconscious, still unable to think, but just born into the life of the spheres. As it floats over the body which was so lately its abiding-place, there come to it, drawn by their affections or by their duties, spirits possessing form and shape, beautiful beyond thought. They support this spirit-child until it recovers its consciousness, and then with the impress of the last life-thought still vibrating on its brain, with the emotions of its heart still unsubdued by death, with its whole nature palpitating, and even suffering at the thought of the separation from loved, aye! fondly-loved friends, wife or children, this new spirit meets the new impressions and scenes which surround it. Its agonized mind writhing with death, and with all its nature struggling within its internal, it opens its eyes to the unspeakable glories of a new world. Then all the spirits whose lives are pure, whose mission being accomplished toward it, now take it by the hand, and bid it look around, and behold the things which are old have become new. Think you, with all these new objects, both of spirit-life and spirit matter coursing their way through the several senses of its brain, there is not awakened an impulse and desire far beyond the dull and confined sensations of life? Think, too, that it is divested of all the contrivances which in life so circumscribed its mental action, and that its freed spirit can now quaff deep of the intoxicating draughts of joy unspeakable that are presented to it on all sides.

Spirits when they awake to a sense of what they are' are not permitted to talk much, neither are their minds tasked with a succession of new impressions other than those which first meet the eye. After the friends have taken charge of them for a while, they remain under their teaching for a time, not sermons or doctrines, but a sort of history of what is before them, and then they are left to the true manifestations of their nature. Now, if good and pure, if their minds desire the high and holy, if, in simple language, they wish to ascend, their affinities are their guide. They can not mistake. They are irresistibly impelled to go forward to the place where they meet with all the circumstances and conditions which conform to their desires or the wants of their nature.

Now, be it understood, spirits cannot conceal their true feelings like man. The very fact of being a spirit opens the avenues of thought and motive to all. Thus, though their desires are as different and as varied as are their forms and countenances, yet they are fully cognizant of what spirit requires. It is this principle which, as I have explained before, impels them to locate where they will be most happy.

Now spirits possess a material nature, and this nature or form in some is so gross, that it is almost subject to laws as imperative as those on earth. I mean as material laws. Their material nature is under influences which require obedience, and though there is none of the physical suffering you have, yet there is as much material necessity and absolute want in proportion to the grossness of their natures as there possibly can be in your material world.

Under this statement you can plainly see what will follow.

Thus we have as much of life with us as with you under the wants of our nature, and it would be simple in the extreme to suppose for a moment that God made

a material solid earth, and placed in it spirits who were so impalpable that they could not adapt either their bodies or spirits to the necessities of climate, of soil, of food, etc. But we are sent to places (by our affinities always) where we can comply with all the circumstances, just as you do when you select a place to reside, though our population is divided more rationally, more justly, than are the divisions of classes with you. We eat and drink of the fruits and vegetables of the countries where we reside. This, however, we do always, as far as I can learn; for as long as matter exists, it can not maintain itself without support from some external source. And then if we eat, there must be some one to grow the food, for the climates do not always produce spontaneously food for all. But this is a matter of choice who shall labor, and we all, in our neighborhoods, take turns in so doing, and thus all do their duty to themselves and others. Most frequently spirits associate together in neighborhoods or communities, composed of members varying from fifty to five hundred, and while the absorbing topics of progression and purity, of development and affection, occupy our minds mostly, yet the usual duties of material life are just as incumbent on us as with you, always modified by our organization and the circumstances in which we are situated, and the place where our affinities direct us.

Well, now you have the life of spirits as far as regards their bodies; and what think you is the proper food for their minds? Every thing which can open the beauties of God's handiwork, which can penetrate the assumed mysteries of his creation, which can typify his works by a resemblance or correspondence, that is, as in painting or sculpture, or any thing which by intuition compares with any of his attributes, as music, melody, or that which opens the internal to a better appreciation of obligation or duty, as the action for others, whether out of the body or in the body, or that which gives us an

understanding of God as he is in a whole, as the investigation of the principles on which are based his laws—these are the proper food for mind, and it is eagerly sought for by spirits. We stand on a broad plane overlooking two worlds, with our organization so sublimated that we innately understand the true connection that exists between matter and matter, and spirit and spirit. We live in this world of spirits, but our duties are as much with you, and on your earth, as they are with spirits and spirit-land. I will explain all this by-and-by.

I expected to be done, but I have a word to say. When we visit your earth, we are not ordered to do so by any higher power than that we set up over ourselves. We can not act contrary to law, but this law, though predicated on God's law, is but the emanation from other minds. We choose our rulers, and our organization of government is alike under the direction of ourselves.

Thus we select those who are the most advanced, whose minds have been occupied in studying the necessities of man's (as we call ourselves) nature, and his connection with man. They understanding what is most necessary to promote the happiness and progress of all, are appointed by the expressed consent of a neighborhood to look after the well-being of the members of that neighborhood. But it is no forced administration of law, it is no tyrannical exhibition of authority, it is simply a recognition of the principles of right. This is enough. With the progressive spirits there are no quarrels.

SECTION THIRTEEN.

Wednesday, May 4th, 1853.

This evening Governor Tallmadge was in my library, accompanied by a friend, Judge Baker, of Wisconsin. Dr. Dexter came in and was soon influenced to write:

I AM glad to see you to-night, Governor, as I wish to say a word to you on a personal subject; but as well to all as to you, I wish to say, for the time I can spend with you, I cherish the opportunity as one of the green spots even of my spirit-life, and trust not only I, Bacon, may derive good, but to you it may be the open door of truth.

BACON.

When you return home, and after a few days shall have elapsed, you will meet with a trial which will disturb you somewhat, and may annoy you for a long time. What the nature of this trouble is I can not say; but this I can say, it is connected with your political life, and is also connected with a matter referring to your action with certain individuals, to which I alluded when the other evening I said, "Beware of false friends." The matter can not, however, permanently disturb you, or in any way injure you; but, as I am informed by one who takes great interest in your affairs, there has been some consultation among certain parties which will disturb your mind rather than affect you any other way. This, however, I only repeat from hearsay, and I do not vouch for the correctness of the statement, only being requested by one who loves you to mention it when you were present.

Your own reason must govern you in believing or disbelieving. You can judge best whether there is any thing which can affect you and annoy. The way to

act will be under all circumstances to act nobly, truly, rightly, and leave the end to God.

To many men the predicting of trouble is a source of great care and anxiety. It seems to unsettle their minds, excites the imagination, and they magnify little troubles that may occur to mountains which they can hardly compass.

I have chosen this opportunity to mention the matter referred to, to the Governor, because, if it did take place, he would view it as a circumstance of life, and would not be vexed with any premature anticipations of evil in the future.

How strange a compound is man! To-day strong in the conviction of what he considers right; to-morrow trembling and fearing in respect to the very principles he has avowed as the guide and motive of his life. It is not strange to us it should be so. Were man influenced by spiritual causes alone, were the avenues to his mind blocked up by no material barriers, there would be a constant succession of impressions emanating from a source which must be infallible, as they would come from those who would have tested the competency of earth-life and spirit-life, and could judge of the power of either to afford the true solution of all the mysteries of his nature.

But then man is not controlled by external impressions, be they what they may; his organization is material, his impressions are also material, and, of course, his conclusions and comparisons, predicated on material evidence, can have no reference to that which neither his mind nor his spirit recognizes as spiritual. Nature is ever varied; but with us her forms, though more elaborate, are yet more diversified than with you. With you every spirit is of the grossest kind (figuratively), and, of course, placed on earth as you are, surrounded by matter in every shape, with your own organization corresponding to the nature of the material of which the earth on

which you live is composed, there must be a succession of impressions, the nature of which simulates the objects by which you are enveloped.

But there is an evidence of the truth of spirit-revelation which I imagine has not yet been noticed, and that is material, as is the nature of man. There is, to him who believes, an entire change in the character of his mind. His spirit, forestalling time, leaps over its boundaries, and catching the shadowy outlines of spiritdom, drinks in the sublimating essence of that view; and the draught, like the fabled nectar of the gods, changes the gross nature of spirit and body, and renders the man susceptible to all those sensations of meekness, of tenderness, of charity and love, which mark him as the man whose heart is indeed vivified and renewed by spiritual intercourse. In the word spirit, in that connection, I do not mean spirit is gross, but the amalgamation is gross.

Here Governor Tallmadge remarked that he supposed he had not charity enough. He had charity for those who did not believe, but he had none for such persons as the writer in the *National Intelligencer*, who, without investigation, was willing to revive against those who had investigated, the fires of Smithfield and the hangings and drownings of Salem.

It was written in answer:

No, Governor, not that you have not charity enough, but perhaps that your charity is not properly directed. Let the dog bark, the cat mew, or the ass slavishly toil for mere animal existence, still nature will assert its just claims, whether in man or brute. And to him who, without evidence of either right or wrong, can denounce that as untrue which he has not investigated, you may justly attribute the true prerogatives of his nature. He will bark doglike to the compulsion of his brute-like organization; and he will toil like the ass, to perpetuate the slavery of opinions to which he is bound by error and prejudice.

It is not worth while to contest the truth of spirit-

revelation with those who do not believe. Truth is like the misty vapor encircling the mountain's top. The sun of error, of superstition, of priestly teachings may, in its full blaze, dissipate the cloud, but its cloudy substance is disseminated through the whole atmosphere, and descends in grateful showers to replenish and fructify the thirsty earth. So with man. Argue with him, and he battles with you. Prove he is wrong, and, Proteus-shaped, he attacks you again with arguments founded on that very error. But let the cloud rest on the mountain, and when disturbed by the sun or the wind in grateful sprinklings it returns to foster, to cherish, to develop the nature of its own godlike virtues.

The Governor here inquired whether it was to be understood that it was better not at all to notice such assaults as he had alluded to?

And it was answered:

Not notice in anger, or with the appearance of vexation, but with the calmness and simplicity of truth. You can not convince by denunciation. There should be a grand dignity in your answers, a moral personification of your communion with spirits, which will exert a more potent influence on the world than all the replies which you can make to attacks on our cause in vexation or a hasty zeal.

Dr. Dexter then asked Lord Bacon if he would not arrest his communication a few moments, while I should read to Judge Barber some of Swedenborg's communications. He answered:

Yes, I am always instructed by any thing from Swedenborg.

I then read for half an hour or so, and when I finished, it was written:

I *guess* we will all go home, and so good-night.

BACON.

Governor Tallmadge and Judge Barber then left, and the Dr. and I remained in conversation until after midnight. Suddenly the Doctor's hand became affected, and it seemed that they were going to write again.

I remarked, What! do they never sleep?

And it was written:

Sleep? certainly, Judge. How can our bodies support the wear and tear of life without sleep? But the nearer I approach those I love, the more I identify myself with their present feelings. Thus I feel inclined to-night to be cosy with you two, and to open my heart and tell you of its high and noble aspirations, to tell you with what joy I shall wend my way to those worlds spoken of by Sweedenborg, when I shall have accomplished the object for which I now labor.

Oh! could I take you with me, and with the velocity of thought wend our way through space, looking down on worlds moving in their orbits, filled with spirits whose only thought is onward and upward! To point out to your ken the source of those things, the manifestations of which only, you are permitted to behold. Together to learn from the observation of his works, the nature and attributes of the Creator. Together to develop the germs of our own characters, and together to strive onward toward that sphere where the full conception of our yearnings shall be gratified.

When we should have at last arrived at the place of eternal rest, can you conceive the sensation which would pervade our spirits, freed from materiality, when in daily and hourly communion with the millions on millions of souls liberated from every thing which partakes of earth, we enter forever into the real joys of our eternal existence?

No human heart can realize, no human mind grasp the thought which now fills my nature, and lifts my spirit even beyond the barriers of this world.

Oh! 'tis then I feel that there is in all the works and laws of God this one eternal principle of love. For what can exceed the love of that being who has prepared a heaven where mind can grasp the every thought of life and death! Yes, even you, toiling and laboring

to obtain that which will satisfy your minds on earth, can you realize what that joy must be when there is no obstacle to the fulfillment of that desire?

But I must close. If I am too prosy, learn that the spirit never tires of striving too, and that though we lay up no treasure of gold, we are more than repaid if our efforts enable you to treasure up one truth from our teaching, or to cast off one error from our doctrines. Good-night. BACON.

The Dr. then, in our conversation, alluded to an idea I had uttered, which, he said, had disturbed him with doubts, etc. After we had conversed some time on that subject, it was written:

It would be better that you do not go on, if you have a doubt of our truth. I point to the ever-living God, who is truth. I teach you humility, self-examination, and trust. I talk to you as spirits talk to one another, believing you feel our truthfulness, if you can not see us. Do you believe you have seen your wife? Believe, then, it is she who put the thoughts into my mind uttered to you, and that she it is who has read your heart better than you know it yourself. Doubt if you will, but believe you must. Learn, you are not perfect, but that your failings and faults will be just as freely told you as your capacity to aid our cause.

BACON.

SECTION FOURTEEN.

Thursday, May 5th, 1853.

The circle met at Dr. Dexter's present also Governor Tallmadge. Before any thing was written, I suggested whether it would not be better, the first thing after every teaching, to propound the questions springing from that teaching, as thus the subject would be kept compact in these papers.

After a while, the Doctor's hand was moved, and he wrote:

HAVE you ever thought, my friends, of the remark of

our Christ, that when two or three were gathered together, his spirit would be among them? When even in the privacy of your domestic relations you are retired within the charmed circle of your homes, then it is that the spirits of your dearest friends departed are with you, enjoying with you all the joy and comfort which the social connection affords. Then it is, that when the heart seems gushing forth with affection that your spirits are so nearly and intimately approached by your friends, and the fulness of your heart is the reflection of their impression.

To-night you are surrounded by many spirits of those who, when on earth, you dearly loved, and who to-night unite with me in the blessing—God cherish and guard you.

SWEEDENBORG.

I shall be glad if your questions are proposed, Judge, and in future the course you have mentioned may be adopted; but you will not expect me to answer in detail all you ask, as that might take up too much time; but I will do the best I can to satisfy you.

I then proposed this question.

You say, "there lies the body, and the spirit is floating over it." In what does it float? Has it, then, a new body? Does it take that body with it from its old body, or is it a new creation independent of the former body? In the vision which I saw of my brother-in-law's death, did I see accurately the process of dying in this respect?*

In answer to this he wrote:

* I can render this intelligible only by the following extract from my journal:

November, 24th, 1851.

My wife's brother-in-law, residing in Brooklyn, has been ill for some four or five weeks, and gradually falling away, so that it was evident he could not live long.

On Sunday, the 17th instant, I spent most of the day with him, and in the course of the day he revived enough to converse with me about his approaching departure. I took occasion to explain to him, as I had learned from these communications, what death was, and what the other state of existence was, on which he was entering. He was able to understand me. * * * *

Although I may pretend to some power of concentration and memory, yet, Judge, that is a long question, and involves many points, therefore, if you please, one point at a time.

Well, then, I will first ask, Has it a new body?

Yes, most certainly, a body composed of new materials, refined and sublimated, but still entirely material.

Next I ask, Does it take that body with it from its old body?

It does not take the materials from the old body, but it is a new creation, as instant of life as was the corporeal germ when it vitalized the embryo *in utero*.

I remained with him the whole of the following Saturday night, and returned to my lodgings early on Sunday morning. I lay down on my sofa in the course of the forenoon, and while there, I received a very vivid impression of the manner and circumstances of his death.

He had breathed his last, and I saw what I supposed was his spirit-body issue from his mortal body in the shape of a cloudy frame, and directly over it, and in the room where it lay, it assumed the human form, but it seemed to have no intelligence. Suddenly it lighted up, was alive and intelligent, and I was impressed that that was caused by the soul's leaving his fleshy body and entering his spiritual body. As soon as that intelligence appeared, he looked around as if somewhat in doubt where he was, but he immediately seemed to recollect that his present condition was not strange to him, and to know from previous instruction that he was in the spirit-world. He then turned his looks to his family and friends who were around his corpse, and bestowed upon them a look of great affection, and was then wafted away on a flood of light far into the distance, until he faded from my view.

While his spiritual body was thus forming, three spirits were in attendance. One, his son, who died twenty-seven years ago, at the age of three years; another, a grandson, who died a few weeks since, at the age of four years; and the third, one of mature age. His son's attention was directed solely to his father, and his grandson's principally to its mother, who was present. He seemed to wish he had some means of making her know that he was present, and that he could throw himself into her arms, so that she could feel it. He seemed to be full of hilarity and joy, and to desire to communicate his happiness to her. The attention of the third person was directed partly to him and partly to the friends around, whom she had loved so well.

When at length they began their upward journey, they all bent upon us looks of great affection and gladness. As they progressed, they were from time to time joined by other bright and happy spirits; and as they faded in the distance, they unitedly gave us a parting look of happiness and affection that has no parallel on earth.

I remarked that the other part of my question, referring to a vision I had had, was of moment only as illustrating the subject.

It was written:

Of that I can not judge, but the spirit when leaving the body leaves it for another probably ready for it. Even spirits do not see the process. If it has been vouchsafed to you, it has been for some special purpose.

Mr. Warren somewhat criticised the expression, "instant of life." And it was written:

Instant of life is the proper expression, as I maintain, and means just what *I* want to express.

I then propounded this question:

You describe what is the fate or course of one whose aspirations are upward. Please describe also the fate or course of an opposite one—one gross, material, and very sinful.

It was written in answer:

Let your minds be entirely directed to the answer of this question.

I am glad you proposed it, for it is a subject which I intended to incorporate in my lectures ere this; but the ideas have been so varied and numerous I could not do it before this moment. I now say, when the good man dies, or rather one who has done all he could to live properly and justly, he finds a new world opening to his view, and a new race of beings inhabiting it. The very air is redolent of peace and joy, and the whole landscape is filled with every thing so beautiful, that he is impelled to stop at every step and drink up, as it were, the rich draughts of pleasure which are everywhere proffered him. To his mind the opening of one object or view, whether of world or thought, is but the incentive to a greater effort to progress, and thus he is led from one point to another, culling by the wayside, and from hill and dale, from spirits of friends and spirits of strangers, the truths which his soul most desires to know, until he has arrived at the place which the true affinities

of his nature assure him is the locality where his probation is to be passed.

But to the spirits who have lived a life of selfishness, disregarding the claims of their race, who have toiled and struggled for no other motive than to accomplish their own ends, at no matter what cost, who have bowed their spirit to the rule of error, and who have delighted to circumvent their fellows, who have, while they professed to serve God, denied him by their acts—they die, and their spirits enter new bodies. Now I beg, in this connection, to say that, there must either in man's residence on earth be the development of his spirit and the corresponding progress, or there must be a retrogression and a consequent depreciation of the true desires of his nature. Thus it is, when the spirit by its acts retrogrades the true type of that condition is most distinctly manifest after death in the acquired tastes of that spirit for the scenes which on earth afforded him pleasure. And it turns from the contemplation of what is around, above, and beyond, to the constant yearning after that which is below, which is gross, which is circumscribed in the limits of your globe. It does not associate with those whose aspirations are for the good. Its affinities lead it toward those whose desires correspond with its own, and it chooses for its companions those whose habitations are near this earth, and whose tastes are of the same character. Its body is not as specifically light as are those of the progressed spirits, for with us as with you certain localities change the very particles of our organization, and develop characteristics really opposed to the intent of our creator. I cite in corroboration of this statement the tribes of Hottentots, whose organization is so gross that the very formation of certain organs of the body is so changed that they do not resemble that of a human body. By living near the earth, obtaining their sustenance from the bodies near to it (for we can transport ourselves miles without number in a moment

of time), they acquire an aspect differing widely from our external appearance. Their bodies are sublimated, it is true, but still, were you able to see them, you would scarcely distinguish the difference between them and men of your own earth. I now speak of spirits whose minds are not really evil, but not progressive.

There is another class to which I will direct your attention, as belonging to that division who are really bad, and who, by a long course of evil life, have denied their obligations to man, to God, and to the laws which he has established. After these spirits have passed into their new bodies, they are so heavy, so much more dense than are the other spirits mentioned, that they can not maintain themselves even near the earth, but sink far below it, and are really of so dark a hue that they are almost black.*

Now the place of their residence is far below that which I ever had a desire to visit, and I can not tell you from actual observation what it is, but it is said to be an extensive plain, with but one single mountain in the center. So attached are the inhabitants to this interminable level that they scarcely attempt for years to ascend this mountain. Now it is almost always night there, or rather a condition midway between night and day, and if they were to ascend this mountain, it is said they would catch a glimpse of the brighter lands beyond, and a desire would be created in their minds to leave this place for the world beyond. How true this is, I can not say; probably there is some condition or state resembling this, and it may be this is true. Sometimes, inspired by their own wicked feelings, they make a strong effort and force themselves to your earth, and then it is that some unfortunate one is impressed with wicked thoughts, and is persuaded to do wicked

* This teaching is so closely coincident with some of the manifestations which I have witnessed through other mediums, that I insert one in the Appendix as calculated to elucidate the subject. *See Appendix E.*

things; but God in his infinite wisdom does not leave the administration of his divine or material laws to beings of so corrupt a nature.

He prefers that man shall have no one to blame but himself and the circumstances around him for his sinful acts; and it would conflict with the laws he has instituted if he permitted man to be controlled by spirits inferior to himself. But you can imagine the darkness of ignorance into which these spirits are plunged, by comparing the benighted cannibals of your own earth with yourselves, only adding to the comparison the fact, that in one it is a developed spirit, advanced one step beyond, earth and in the other it is of earth.

The first class referred to are those who confuse these revelations most, particularly by misrepresentation and deceit. They are always on the alert to seize on impressible mediums, and through this channel to impart incorrect statements relative to "life in the spheres."

Now, allow me to say that the first idea embraced in the revelations made to your family, Dr., was the correct one; that is, that spirits (unprogressed ones) dare not assume the personality of any other spirit, so you demand of them the truth in the name of God. But they misdirect, bewilder, confuse, make false statements of the nature of these manifestations, and would willingly create doubt; for these spirits are allowed to mix with other spirits whose duties bring them to earth, and thus they are enabled to make false statements regarding them. In short, they delight in inculcating error, as they did in receiving and learning it when on earth.

The dark spirits do progress, but it is in a cycle of years. The mischievous spirits progress also in much less time, but both have laborers among them from the advanced spirits, whose duty and pleasure it is to instruct, to disabuse their minds of ignorance and prejudice, and to point them to God as the source of all things.

Have I answered your question?

Mr. Warren made the inquiry, as to spirits taking the form after death. Does not any portion of God clothe itself with his form, or an approximation to it in proportion to the spirit's progress, and would not this account for gross spirits taking an imperfect and less sublimated form than those who have become more godlike by their advancement?

In answer it was written:

Now I must close. I would say that that principle perhaps does exist in the development of the body, but as a principle pertaining to the development of all matter, clothing itself according to law, in some form, which is the consequence of the effect of that law. How it takes place I can not tell. When you and I, Mr. W., shall have reached the last stage of material life, then, indeed, we may turn and look at the operation of the principle of every law which governs nature. Good-night.

SECTION FIFTEEN.

Sunday, May 8th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, it was written:

THE night is dark and stormy, and the air should be chill and uncomfortable. You draw near your firesides, and sit conversing with one another, and opening your hearts to the genial influence of social connections. With us, we do not feel the effect of storm or cold when approaching your earth, and our spirits are not clothed with such garments as hide the true purposes of our hearts. We converse with one another, but our meaning is perceived without the expression of thought; and the farther we progress, the more is our spirit manifest through all the developments of its covering.

But to-night, in spite of rain or chill, I meet warm hearts and strong desires, to excel, and I give you a response founded on the very basis of our creation—a response of love and truth, and greet you in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I propose you ask your questions.

I did so, and asked first this:

You say they are impressed to go forward to the "place," etc. As you thus describe a material heaven, let us know where it is located, where is the food grown, and where are located those little communities? What is the soil in which the food grows? Is it earth or air?

It was written in answer:

I can answer that to-night, if you wish; but as it will take, perhaps, the whole evening, would it not be better to defer it? Still, I will be governed by the wishes of all present.

We expressed our wish to have the answer now, unless he had something particular which he wished to communicate.

He wrote in reply:

No, nothing but the continuation of my teachings; but I will answer this, and, as I may write for some time without stopping, you can amuse yourselves as well as you can, *without*, however, interfering with the magnetic connection of the circle.

My experience will, perhaps, be taken for a direct history of the subject proposed. My motives have been vilified and questioned; and even while on earth, I encountered much opposition from all classes of men styling themselves Christian, who denied the main features of my doctrines, and contended they were untrue, because I could not have had any association with spirits.

I was called crazy, and my writings were censured as blasphemous, because I had given the experience and lessons of a life, the object of which was to penetrate into the arcana of nature, and the design of which was

to live as pure as was possible for my material nature to permit. What I taught while on earth I was satisfied was correct. I was directed by spirits, whose lessons and explanations I thought I understood, and my earnest desire was reasonably and rationally to explain the wonders revealed to me, substantially as I viewed them, and to give to the world, in truth, the instructions I derived from them.

But after my death—or, rather, after I left the earth—I commenced a course of review on all the matters which I taught as true, and when my spirit, divested of its grosser covering, became itself a personal actor in many of the scenes which I had attempted to describe, I learned how easy it had been for me to give an incorrect coloring and shape to the great doctrines which I had supposed I had taught correctly.

I have made these remarks in order to explain what follows.

Living, as I said, with the sole and only motive, to elevate my nature, and to aid mankind in their race toward eternity, I had no fear of death. I had lived to impart to the world the realities which were unfolded to my mortal vision of the various conditions and states of the world I now inhabit. I had lived pure and unspotted, and when I left the world I was ushered into what has been stated as the sixth sphere.

But in the course of the great revolution which took place in my opinions on many subjects, it became necessary that I should visit many of the departments of spirit-life, and thus, and by conversation with and accounts given me by other spirits, I have become acquainted with many of the facts which I now inculcate.

Let it be understood, then, first, that this is a world occupied by spirits, or, rather, men, women, and children, mingling as their desires, tastes, inclinations or pleasures impel them, accomplishing and carrying out the great objects of their formation, the development of the spirit

itself to that exact state when and where it will manifest the properties and attributes so corresponding to those of the Great First Cause, that they can live and exist eternally in direct communication and connection with all that possibly can be known or realized as God; and, second, that the different spheres are localities assigned to the progressed spirits, and they represent a state of elevation, and are reached only by a still more sublimated and refined materiality and advance of knowledge and goodness of the soul than belonged to the bodies or spirits occupying the sphere below.

Now when I arrived at the sixth sphere, I found myself surrounded by spirits whom I had known on earth, and was immediately made a member of a community, composed, for the most part, of spirits of relatives or friends with whom I was connected in life. The newness of every thing impressed me with delight. The air was pure, and the whole heavens were bright and clear beyond all comparison. I saw no difference in the sky, except its brightness and purity; and on looking abroad on the earth, I could detect no difference in its appearance from our earth, except in the heavenly beauty and harmony in the arrangement of the landscape. The diversified character of the scenery, the mountains, not ragged and steep as on earth, but rounded with every regard to the harmony and beauty of all the other scenery. The trees, the rocks and mountains, the flowers and birds, the gushing torrents and the murmuring rivulets, the ocean and rivers, man, woman, and child, all passed before me, so far excelling every thing I had conceived or imagined in the beauty of form, in the glorious demonstrations of their nature, in the palpable and evident exhibition that they were beings who inhabited an earth near to the gates of heaven, that my spirit, lifted beyond itself, sprung forth in one spontaneous gush of love and praise, and I blessed God who had vouchsafed to me the privilege I then enjoyed.

We occupy earth—tangible, positive earth—as much as your earth; but the advanced state of both spirit and locality renders it unnecessary for us to labor much to obtain food for the support of our bodies. Then, again, the earth brings forth spontaneously most of the food required for our bodies. And I would say, the advanced spirits do not require as much food as those who are below them. Their bodies, in every sphere to which they are elevated, lose a portion of their grossness, and as they are more refined, they become more like the spirit itself. We have trees—real trees and flowers, and mountains and rivers, and rocks, and every thing material; but you, who have traveled into some unsettled and far-off lands, can realize the great difference there is in your own land in the various manifestations of nature. You can behold mountains on mountains piled to heaven, and at their feet vast plains spread out, where not one blade of grass, not one green twig gives evidence that it is fit for the habitation of man. You can go farther, and behold the rugged and barren places which have been conquered by man's indomitable efforts. The dark forest which for ages covered the land has fallen before the determined energy and labor of man; and the somber recesses, fit habitations for the bear, the tiger, or some poisonous reptile, have been made to yield to man a tribute of labor, of effort, of *mind*. Thus when comparing this condition of things, your mind can the more readily perceive what is the state of those worlds fashioned for the residence of spirits, whose minds, filled with knowledge, and incited only by the strong feelings of love and adoration to God, are placed there to live, to inhabit that earth, and to form just such connections and associations as the same spirit did on earth.

In reviewing what I have written, and taking the many statements I have made contradicting the revelations of other spirits, the whole object of man's creation must be considered. What is creation in its whole but the gradual

progress from the lowest form to the full development of man himself?

To suppose that this earth is, of all the works of God alone the place selected for the residence of spirit in the flesh, is to deny the evidence which daily passes before your own senses, as well as the truths elicited by actual research. Now, reasoning from what data you possess, you must be satisfied that in your earth there are many grades of creation, both in the animal and vegetable world, and that the whole work together just, probably, as it was designed by the Great Architect of the whole.

To suppose that creation or man had gone contrary to God's intention, when first fashioned by his hand into existence, would be an absurdity, and, in fact, would deny the ability and power of the Creator to form a world and establish laws for its government which would conform to the principles on which they were based. And, again, when you look abroad on the planets moving in their orbits with no deviation, and the sun and moon answering the specific object of their creation, the earth bringing forth its treasures of gold and silver, and trees and fruit, and food for man—in fine, all the natural laws of God working together, without one deviation or departure from the precise purpose for which he created and established them—would it not be strange that he should have so signally failed in accomplishing his purposes in regard to man? Is it not surpassing strange that when the maturity (or age) of creation can not be ascertained from any development of present effects, and that only an atom or speck of all his works can be understood from actual observation, and that, too, creation in all its vastness is as much beyond the research of man as is a visit to the sun, that man can decide as to the events and results of God's laws in relation to the whole?

When so little is understood of your earth, can it be

possible that that of which you know nothing—the soul of man—can be limited and confined, its destiny determined, and its condition and action circumscribed by your ignorance of laws of which you know as little as you do about God himself? No! the limitations assigned both to matter and spirit, by sect or denomination, are a perfect absurdity. What do you know of man, and who can limit the action of his mind? Who can control the innate promptings of the spirit, and circumscribe to given laws the impulse of that principle which is a part of that Great First Cause which fashioned from chaos the whole vast universe? Can it be done by a doctrine—a theory? But I can not dwell on this part of the subject longer.

I remarked that all my question had been answered, except as to the place or locality, and as to that I was conscious how difficult, if not impossible, it was to make a statement which I could comprehend. I would not, therefore, press that part, unless he wished to teach upon it.

He wrote:

No. I am glad your mind, Judge, recognizes the difficulty of understanding locality in this connection. I might say Mars, or Jupiter, or Venus; but your mind would tire were I to lead it where spirits of the sixth sphere dwell. I can not locate it. Suffice it to say, far beyond the confines or limits of any star or planet of which you have knowledge.

I then inquired, Those whom you describe as so material or gross, are they detained near the earth, and so nearer and nearer, in proportion to their grossness, so that they wander darkling around their old haunts?

And it was answered:

That is a comparative term—"near the earth." They visit the earth frequently, and their tasks and habits correspond with what they used to be when on earth. To compute the distance would be beyond my ability.

Is progression and purity the all-engrossing topic of thought with them?

No.

Your duties being so much on earth, and your connection with earth being so intimate, is not your happiness much impaired by our sufferings, or the thousand-and-one considerations which cause us unhappiness here?

Yes.

In your government, do your little communities band together and form larger ones, over which, also, there are governors, and so on, like system upon system of worlds? The answer was:

Circle within circle, winding spirally upward, until it centers in one ruler over all.

If the spirit-body is a new one entirely, and of new materials, in no respect emanating from the old, how is it a "sublimation" of the old? Just carry out the consequences of this idea.

When you reflect that matter is the same, existing through all time, your question is answered.

Are there spirits in a state of existence above yours, just as invisible and inaudible to you as you are to us?

Yes. How shall I find words to explain this seeming mystery? But I will ask my friend Bacon to answer that question when you two are together, and I wish you would propose it at the earliest opportunity.

SECTION SIXTEEN.

Monday, May 9th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, I read over to Dr. Dexter the minutes of last evening's interview, and it was written:

THERE is no state of existence, Judge, but has its better spirits above it. There is no mind so advanced and

enlightened but there is a mind more developed, more progressed, to which the other will look, with deference and respect. If this obtains on earth, how much more should this law exert its full influence among spirits! It is a singular fact, in the progress of all things on earth, that the most inferior plant can, by cultivation, be made to manifest properties entirely distinct from the original, yet retain all the characteristic features of the germ. Now you take a peach, and in its original form it is almost worthless, yet by cultivation you develop the fruit to that degree of perfection that of all fruits of the earth it is most sought for and admired. These simple facts are pertinent illustrations of the great law which had its beginning with God, and will end only when the Creator is unable to execute the laws he has established.

Thus all progressed spirits have above them other spirits, who have passed through the dead of the spheres, and therefore have become so much more ethereal and refined, that those in the sphere below necessarily can not see them. And though I pretend to a certain degree of advancement, yet there are conditions above my sphere where reside spirits whose bodies I can not behold, only when my mind, like your own, is in such a state that they act upon it, as certain spirits did on yours, by visions and imagery.

Your learned men ascribe the nucleus of all worlds to what they call gaseous bodies, or nuclei. Supposing this to be true, through what processes of growth and development they must have passed to have arrived at that stage or state where they have become fit habitations for men!

All species of the apple, it is said, are derived from the simple crab apple. And what variety, without number, you find in size, shape, coloring, taste, and flavor! Now, this is eminently true with regard to man; and though I can not say he was derived from one

source or one being, yet your knowledge of the various races, species, genera, and orders must satisfy you that in every age of the world some new property has been developed in him, and this in proportion to his situation and connection, until, at the present day, the race of men now moving and controlling the affairs of life have further advanced, and manifest more of the true characteristics of his proper nature, than all classes or nations who have preceded it.

There is a necessity for an advance toward perfection in every thing created by God. Of what purpose was it that he created worlds, and filled them with intelligent beings, capable of understanding and learning from every manifestation of his power around them the effects which certain laws he has established have produced? Of what purpose was it that he should have created them, if he had intended that they—man or men—should have remained in a state of abeyance? Of what use the mind? Of what use thought? Of what use that the sprig should have been lopped off from the oak itself?

God could just as well have created man without a soul as with an intelligent one; and certainly it appears to me reasonable that in planting within his body a spirit susceptible, comprehensive, and intelligent, he intended that spirit should not be satisfied with learning or understanding one fact only, and that it should not be satisfied till it had grasped every thing within the scope of its faculties. There is one idea which has often occurred to me since I left the earth, and that is, that if it were not intended that both spirit and matter should progress, God would probably have created man with all the powers and faculties of his nature, ready developed at his creation. For were it denied that the intention of his creation was his steady advancement, the mind, when it had mastered one position, would have still remained the same as before it recognized a new idea. There could not have been any appreciation of any thing before it, and instead of knowledge enlarging

its range of desire and thought, it would have left it in the same condition as it found it. What think you? On this great principle is based, as before stated, all the law and the spirits.

Now about ourselves. And though I talk to you, my friend, I want you to understand that I include the Doctor, in every thing I say. Writing through him as a medium, I sometimes do not realize that he is present; but enough of that, too.

I feel that your thoughts have been occupied in digesting the great truths taught last night by Sweedenborg. I am writing through the hand of Dr. Dexter; and to many persons, looking on and beholding the use of the same expressions as you adopt on earth, they would remark on its foolishness and absurdity as a spirit-manifestation. But look at the ideas we inculcate, regard the thoughts we express. And if in the whole history of written human thought there is any thing that can approach it, either in the magnitude of the ideas or the profundity of the thoughts, then I am heartily willing it should be said to be a farce.

But when man, as have you, my friend, shall have looked into nature with eyes that do not blink at the dazzling gems she holds up before them; when man, like you, has from his inmost heart yearned for some rational explanation of the longing desire to understand your own immortality; and when from the dark abyss beyond this life he shall have presented to his understanding the radiance, the glory, the unsurpassing loveliness of truth, and is willing to receive and adopt it, then shall old things indeed pass away, then shall shallow doubts give way to confirmation strong as the eternal principles of his own nature, and in the ecstatic joy of a developed mind he will find, as you have found, how great the joy of believing. BACON.

I remarked, that I was yesterday reading some of his essays written when in life, and I came across some which denounced the love between the sexes; which said that no man could be great who had such love, and that great things had been done only by

those men who had no wife or children. Now, I wanted to know if he entertained the same sentiments now?

He wrote in answer;

Oh! how little I understood the true character of the heart's affection! What a confined idea I had of the soul's capacity! But I am sure there is no man, no matter what his abilities—no matter how great the power of his mind—who can arrive at any eminence in the world you inhabit, excepting his heart is filled with love to all and every thing created by God, and who is not capable of appreciating affection's response in every human heart.

The law of God's creation in all its workings is love; and had it not been for your affection, your devoted love, you would have burrowed in the mire of your own natural desires, and never have arrived at the position you occupy.

Don't refer me to my earthly absurdities.

I remarked, that there was another question I wished to ask: It was evident that he was a progressed spirit, and from all the teachings it appeared that he could roam at pleasure amid scenes where all was joy and happiness. Yet it seemed that much of the time he was near me, and of course on this earth, and affected by its sorrows and sufferings. Now what I wanted to know was, what good it did him to be near this earth?

He answered in these words:

Judge Edmonds, that I am with you much, I have before told you. That I strive to impress your thoughts, I have before said. Why I am with you, I have partially stated. I am as much interested in the advancement of your race, both on earth and in the spirit-land, as you are and have been in ameliorating the condition of one class of your unfortunate fellow-creatures. I am not exclusively reading your mind all the time I am with you; and being with you, is a comparative expression. To wish to be with you, is to be there. To wish to be thousands of miles away, is to be there immediately the wish is formed. While with you, I sometimes converse with spirits who accompany me, and who have, under my direction, charge of certain duties. At times, even in your library, I teach the high

destinies of their nature to certain unprogressed spirits, whom I persuade to attend me there. At other times I read and reflect, at others witnessing the working of your mind.

Then, again, I listen to your conversation with your friends or visitors; but the advanced spirits never witness any act of man which is improper to be noticed by any other person, that is, any necessary or proper act of life. When you suffer, we try to assuage. When you are tired, we study to suggest a remedy; and when you are ill, we call around you those in whom you have confidence, and they endeavor to relieve you by controlling your nervous system.

The great object of progression is not confined to a locality or sphere, to a neighborhood or person. You are as much interested as we are; and when an idea is generated on earth which advances your material or spiritual condition in the least, we feel the influence of that progressive step, and are attracted to the source from whence it emanates, and endeavor to make you feel the full effect of that influence, as we know you ought to appreciate it. I think your question is answered.

I said, No, not entirely, and I was apprehensive that I had not worded it so as to convey the precise idea I intended. My object had been, not to inquire so much whether it afforded him pleasure, as it was to ascertain what good it did him, or what advantage it was to him thus to be near the earth. Thus, it had been said that my wife's progression had been advanced by her dealings with me, so what I wanted to know was, whether his progression was in like manner advanced by his connection with earth?

In brief, yes. Every act that man or spirit accomplishes for good, is just so far a step forward in the development of his nature. Your wife, in accomplishing what she has done, found her reward in the increased flow of all those affections which contribute to the elevation of her character.

Besides, in directing your mind to the anxious inquiry after the truth of spirit-intercourse, she developed traits in your mind which had slumbered there since first it was exercised by thought; and as this was generating an

idea for good, she, as the instrument, felt the revivifying effect of that act. No man does a good act but his nature is bettered; and it is the property of goodness that it never loses any thing by cultivation. It was a reciprocal effect. She has had her reward. I, too, shall have my reward; but my labors are not yet done. BACON.

SECTION SEVENTEEN.

Tuesday, May 10th, 1853.

This evening Dr. Dexter and Mr. Sterling, of Cleveland, Ohio, were in my library.

Mr. Sterling made some remarks about the difficulties he encountered in communing, and about the different languages used by the spirits in conversing with mortals, and about their conversing with each other without using spoken language.

I remarked, that I supposed that in proportion as they were developed and advanced, the less need they had of spoken language, and the nearer the earth they were, the more they had occasion to use it.

After some such conversation it was written:

THE opportunity presented to certain individuals to witness the more advanced revelations of spirits, is for the accomplishment of the object which we have so earnestly at heart, that of spreading and disseminating the doctrines taught by them. It is indeed a privilege, scarcely to be estimated rightly by those to whom these manifestations are given. One fact I ought to specify, that we do not always select the proper person to whom we have imparted the truths we desire to teach. Thus, when we have often thought we have found the person who would aid us in our efforts properly and wisely, we have learned, after a while,

that he was wanting in certain characteristics, which retarded our exertions and rendered our revelations so unsatisfactory, that they really seemed to be entirely different from what they were intended.

Then, again, the circles are not always harmonious, and the subjects proposed are so much below the teachings we wish to utter, that it interferes with our ability and power to manifest the true desires of our heart. In communicating to circles or individuals by words or written language, it must be understood that the ideas which are usually adopted as correct, are so only in part. Thus spirits who rarely visit the earth (progressed spirits) do not always converse with one another by words—their intercourse is by affinity. But those whose duties and inclinations lead them to earth, must of necessity possess the requisite qualifications which will afford an easy and certain manner of being understood. How could a spirit be understood if he had no medium of expressing thought? If he impresses mind, he must shape the thought he creates in a proper form, so that the idea can be communicated properly and be understood. Spirits, therefore, write the different languages of the various countries where they may be attracted, and can thus manifest their thoughts and the great truths of spirit-progression in a language understood by those whom they address. We use the same means you would avail yourselves of, if you were placed in a situation where it became important to learn a language of another country. The spirits of the higher spheres have scarcely need of language, and the idea of the Judge is quite correct, that the nearer the earth they are, the more they are obliged to express their thoughts orally or otherwise.

Now be quiet and silent, while I say a word or two to Mr. Sterling, as he is anxious to learn something of the manner in which he should proceed in regard to the subjects of investigation.

There should be no desultory matters introduced into a

circle which has not been organized for a long time, and in which the members are not so harmonious as to render it unnecessary that the connection should be constantly kept up. As I remarked to the Judge at the earlier part of these teachings, you can correctly ascertain the true character of the spirit purporting to teach, by the subject-matter of his teachings, as well as by the peculiar method by which he communicates his ideas. No spirit of the higher spheres can utter thoughts below the position he occupies. This is an important statement, and should be remembered, as from this evidence you can, sooner or later, detect any attempt at imposition by inferior or mischievous spirits.

I suggested to you the other evening, that the medium through whom the manifestations are made, should be selected with proper regard to his ability and power of mind, and also with reference to his organization of body, his education, habits, associations, and the society in which he lives. When, therefore, you have obtained such an one as I have described, select those persons to compose the circle who strongly desire to obtain knowledge as well as facts, and who are willing to wait and watch until the suitable moment shall have arrived to ask the proper questions on any part of the subject which they do not understand. Be not fickle, and let not too many minor questions be proposed on topics of no great consequence, and which, when answered, would not satisfy the ulterior demands of this great subject. But earnestly, and, above all, patiently, go on, vigorously prosecuting your inquiries on the one subject under teaching. Many circles fail of eliciting great thoughts, or even any truth, from the fact that there is a frivolity of conduct, a certain carelessness of manner, and want of that due consideration of the importance of the researches for which they are sitting and inquiring.

Of course, I know nothing about the peculiar circumstances of your failures or success in prosecuting your

researches, and neither do I know any thing of the true character of the person of whom you spoke, except from the impression of it I find in your mind. From that, I should judge that she had not yet appreciated the true nature of spirit-revelations, and she requires to be taught the primary lessons on this matter. Bring her mind to estimate rightly what the true intent of spirit-communion is, and lead her to seek from the beginning the gem which is hidden from her mind under such a mass of contradiction and seeming obscurity. Then she will go with you heart and soul, and, perhaps, as is woman's nature, leave you far behind in her rapid progress through the mysteries of spirituality.

As for yourself, I can only say, your own good judgment should be exercised on all subjects presented to your understanding. When you converse with spirits, do not take the statement of your friends as infallibly true. They may not intend to mislead you, but, perhaps, they are not so advanced that they can truly instruct you about subjects which you are anxious to understand. Learn, too, that except for special purposes connected with this subject, we rarely say any thing about your personal affairs. We can not judge more correctly of the consequences of your acts in life than can you. As our thoughts are almost entirely absorbed in matters above and beyond the things of earth, when a spirit directs you about personal affairs, doubt, and you will always be satisfied in the end that you doubted just at the proper time. But never cavil at a circle. Nothing detracts so much from the elevated mind as the constant apprehension that he is deceived. What may appear incredible to-night may be so clearly explained to-morrow, that you will wonder at yourself that a doubt entered your mind. Be willing to be advised by those who have received greater light than yourself; and when so advised, remember that the mind to which has been vouchsafed the higher teachings of the spirits can not if it would, press on you considerations which it has received for the mere purpose of gratifying vanity. Every revela-

tion of high character leads the mind one step toward its eternal progress. And when your notions and prejudices on many subjects shall have been submitted to the searching analysis of spirit-chemistry, you will be confounded at the causes which have rendered your investigations so perplexing, and you will regard most of your past experience as of but little consequence compared with the great truths which will be opened to your comprehension.

Your mind is so unsettled, that I am afraid I have scarcely made myself intelligible. . . . BACON.

Mr. Sterling then left, and I asked some inconsiderable question, and received this answer:

I wish you could know the engrossing topics of my heart. When I have imbued yours and the Doctor's minds with all I have to explain, then shall I wend my way back to those glorious spheres where my soul can rise step by step toward the eternal rest in store, where the chord touched in love on your earth will vibrate in such tones of harmony through *all* the spheres, that there will resound one grand response of celestial melody that shall fill the remotest bound of creation with the inspiring theme of love, love forever and ever.

SECTION EIGHTEEN.

Wednesday, May 11th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, it was written:

I FEAR I can not well talk with you to-night, as I find my amanuensis is in an unfit state of mind to write freely. I wish the Doctor were with *me*, as I could then give him the sympathy he so much needs. After a while,

perhaps, I could write more easily, but I want he should go home early, and rest both mind and body.

We then sat and conversed for one hour or more, when the Doctor's hand was moved, and the following questions were propounded, and answers given:

I said, Let us not forget that Luther and Calvin were once with us, desirous of conversing, and that we are willing and will be ready at any time to have them do so.

It was answered:

I have not seen Luther or Calvin since the night when they were here. When the proper time arrives, they will visit you, if you wish.

I then asked this question: Will spirits be instructed generally as to your arrangements and plans through us, and so be led to aid them? And how can inferior spirits be prevented from communing?

It was answered:

Spirits recognize the feelings of the mind in its reflex action. Thus, when your mind is engrossed with an important and grave subject, the effect of which would contribute to the benefit of man, they feel the influence of the thoughts; and the progressed spirits, acknowledging the principle from the affinity with their own desires, will aid you in accomplishing your purposes. Thus, then, there is no difficulty in attracting around you good spirits, if the motives of your heart partake of a divine character. And you may be assured that no unprogressed spirit will visit a circle or individual when there is a general or individual desire to seek information of an elevated character. The unprogressed spirits can have no congeniality with high and noble desires, and therefore they leave the way clear for those whose affinities correspond.

I then asked, What is it that makes it so much easier for us to learn what is wrong than what is right?

And it was answered.

Because the mind is a mirror from which is reflected not only objects from the external world, but also the ideas which that impression has produced. Now there

is a principle beyond the question you have asked which you have recognized, but do not choose to avow; and that is, that the mind must have first admitted the right, even if it elected to do the wrong. It is not easier, therefore, to do wrong; but the right conceded, the wrong may not be easier, but more convenient for the purposes of self-interest.

No educated mind exists but what must struggle with itself when it chooses wrong rather than right. Then often-times the image reflected is distorted, crooked, and the action is consequently irregular. But your mind has answered the question already. Circumstances control the acts of man far beyond the belief of a majority of philosophers.* Somewheres your said-to-be-inspired wri-

* When this had been said to us, I illustrated it to the Doctor by telling him an incident which had occurred while I was one of the Inspectors of the State Prison, and which had struck me with great force, and I thought it would not be amiss to insert it in our book as an exposition of the teachings.

Through the Doctor's hand it was written:

"I am overwhelmed with the question. Insert it by all means."

The incident was this:

I was endeavoring to introduce into our penitentiaries a reform in the mode of government. The system had been for many years one of force and fear only, and it had grown to be horribly cruel and harsh; so much so, that in the prison with which I was connected more than 3,000 blows with the whip had been inflicted a month. There was no appeal to kindness, none to the reason, but the prisoners were kept in subjection only by the whip.

My effort was to introduce, instead, the law of kindness, and appeal rather to the reason than the fear of the convicts.

This necessarily involved a great deal of personal intercourse with them, and I tried to set an example of that to the subordinate officers of the prison. Among the persons with whom I was thus brought into contact was a man about forty-five years of age, whose early history I inquired into.

When he was about five or six years old his widowed mother, who resided in one of our largest cities, had married a second husband, who was harsh and unfeeling toward her children, and had actually turned this little fellow out of doors. In the daytime he had wandered about the streets, begging his food, and at night, having no place to sleep in, he strayed back near his mother's residence, and slept in boxes and on the stoop of her house, etc. The watchmen had found him there several

ters say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Now this is a fair admission of the proposition stated above; the good is there, but the evil is consequent on the thousand contingencies which beset man on every side. Were man to believe that the spirits of his friends may witness his thoughts and acts for good or evil, he never would give loose to those feelings which, dependent on his selfish desires, control so much of his action.

I remarked, that I had some more questions, but did not know about asking them.

It was written:

nights, and taken him to the watch-house, until finally he was committed to the poor-house.

Here he had lived among pauper children, in an institution not very well regulated, according to his account, until he was old enough to be bound out as an apprentice. He had had a hard-hearted, unfeeling master, and in a few years run away from him. Then for some years he wandered about the wharves of a large sea-port, gaining a precarious livelihood by occasional labor, and herding with the depraved and the ignorant. He went to sea, and tiring of that, returned to his old life along the wharves, and thus spent a number of years between "ship and shore." He varied the scene at times by being sent to prison, and had spent a good deal of time in various prisons, as well in those designed for punishment as in those for detention, and finally brought up in the Sing-Sing Prison, where he had been several years when my attention was directed to him. I conversed a good deal with him, in order to find out the modes of government of the prisons where he had been, and the effect upon him, to ascertain what his early training had been, and how he had been led on to the state of degradation in which I found him. His natural powers of mind were considerable, and from our frequent intercourse he became quite familiar with me, and would speak to me almost every time I came near him. I found that his thoughts dwelt almost entirely upon his animal comforts. I endeavored to give them a different direction, and elevate them to something higher. But it was difficult, for he could not read, and the rules of the prison forbade his conversing with any one but his overseer and the superintendent of his work.

One day as I passed him, he accosted me, and entertained me with a long and animated account of his personal discomforts. Vexed at the little progress my teachings had made with him, I somewhat impatiently said to him, "Ever harping on your animal wants! Why can't you have better thoughts?" "Better thoughts!" was his answer, "where shall I get them?"

And when I reflected that, with all of us, our thoughts are more occupied with the past and the future than with the present, I was struck with the question as one teaching me a lesson of great wisdom.

Be brief. Yes, yes—ask, and it shall be given you.

I then asked this question, How came Luther and Calvin here on that occasion? What was it brought them here?

It was answered:

The general effect of the tone of your minds. I wish I could impress the fact on your comprehension, that when the feelings of your heart are of a lofty aspiration for good, for truth, it draws around you spirits whose mission is on earth, and yet the influence of your mind is felt in the spheres; for the principle of truth, of knowledge, of good, binds this whole creation in chains stronger than brass, and the great link of communication carries the current of your feelings to every mind which assimilates in the sentiment with your own, and your acts, your desires, are recognized and admitted by the spirits occupying them.

I then inquired, Can we ever be so advanced as to be able to see you. I mean ever while in the flesh? I make my question personal to the Doctor and myself, merely to give it point, but my inquiry is intended to relate to all mankind, for what is true of us must be true of others.

It was answered:

When I say I can read your mind, I mean just what I have intended to say in what was written a moment ago; therefore to pretend I can read your heart would be to assume powers I do not, can not, possess. But believing that you are a true man, earnestly seeking to unveil from the grave's dark abyss the glorious scenes which lie far beyond, I converse with you, teach you, feel with and of you, and am desirous to answer the questions you propose. Thus, then, I answer yes, when there shall be a desire existing in your mind, unmixed, unalloyed with self; when you can stretch your vision back over the acts of your life, and forward to the future, and, comparing that future with the past, shall have felt your whole nature moved with the uncontrollable wish to divest yourself of every selfish feeling; when you shall plan and execute how,

and when, and where to do good for the sake of the principle, then will your nature become so purified, so elevated, that the daily and hourly communion with spirits will take place at your simplest wish. But even with all your faults, there are means now being tried to manifest ourselves personally to you, that you may have assurance made doubly sure. I want to ask you if you act daily on the suggestions made in these teachings? Do you exert yourself to soothe any anxious heart? are you willing to work as well as wish? Not in reference to this cause alone, but for humanity in the effect; but as you understand me I will not write the rest.

I then asked this question: Pray tell me what it is that prompts me to make these inquiries? Is it my own mind or the action of some one else on it?

It was answered:

The strong desire to understand yourself, and all that pertains to this subject.

I here remarked, that I should have to defer our meetings for one or two evenings, as I was behind in my official business, and must devote more time to it.

It was written:

Certainly. Never neglect earthly duty, for there is time for me and you and the Doctor. Well, much as it will pain me to defer these teachings, now that the Doctor's mind is really zealous and earnest, still I will not, should not, tax your strength or interfere with your official duties. I am not always conscious of your work before you. This is my excuse.

SECTION NINETEEN.

Thursday, May 12th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle being present, it was written:

WITH us, as with you, there are certain inducements offered us gratuitously by other minds, and certain attractions of like feeling and sentiment, that unconsciously draw us to certain localities, where we derive a pleasure and satisfaction that it is almost impossible to describe.

Attracted here as I am, and have been for a long time, in the heart's expression corresponding to the same feeling in my own mind, I look forward to the time when I shall meet you with a sort of impatience, as I feel that the ideas taught by me and received by you will not be buried in your brains, but will be disseminated at the proper time, so that the good they are designed to accomplish will sooner or later take place.

Therefore do I to-night greet you, my friends, once again in the name of that Being whose principles I am to inculcate, and whose attributes it is my peculiar province to describe.

SWEEDENBORG.

The daily habits of spirits have been but little understood, and the attempts heretofore made to give you a correct idea of the every-day life in the spheres seem to me to fail entirely, as what has been taught you affords no consistent idea of their daily occupations, their mode of life, their form of government, in fine, the history of spirits in the several spheres.

I will now briefly tell you how they live, how they act, and how they pass from one sphere to another.

I want your undivided attention.

Learned men who have written about life and death,

have in vain labored to describe the act of dying. And those of you who have witnessed a death-bed have often observed the singular expressions made by the sick person, which faintly shadow, as it were, the indistinct glimpses of that land of which he is soon to become an inhabitant.

What the last sensations of the dying may be, perhaps it will ever be impossible to know; but that, when the spirit has half-way shuffled off its mortal covering, and the last sparkle of life-connection flickers and flashes fitfully amid the wreck of the body of which it is a proper part, the mind seems to acquire, even in death, a new property—that of observing the many circumstances which are taking place in the world to which the spirit goes—and I believe that this new property gives it the power of assisting the spirit to see the forms of friends, and the light which always surrounds a good spirit; and, I am confident, facts bear me out in this assertion. When, then, one is dying, his spirit passing out of the old body as out of a shell, often indistinctly beholds the forms of men and women around it. It sometimes, too, beholds the shadowy outline of some parts of the second sphere, and thus the expressions which we often hear may readily be accounted for. The last idea, or tangible sensation to the dying—I mean to the dying who retains his senses—is, perhaps, anguish at parting from friends, and a sort of strange expectancy at what he is to witness after death. I am inclined to agree with an idea often advanced by one of you, that, for the most part, the dying lose all fear of death. The near approach of the spirit to the borders of that sphere into which it is about entering, acts upon the mortal dread of death as a soother and quieter of its previous apprehensions. It is a sort of an amalgamation of feeling, a kind of mingling of spirit-land with earth, and it tranquilizes the soul in its last conflict with this state of its bodily organization.

With its feelings calmed, and its thoughts dwelling

on friends and kindred, this mingling together of the two influences attracts a portion of its last sensations of thought to the spirit-land, and while it is struggling with itself, and the anguish it feels, there comes the aid of spirit-friends, and the charmed influence of spirit-land, and the last sensations recognized by its brain may be the mingling or admixture spoken of.

The heart has ceased to beat, the heaving breast has settled into an everlasting quiet, the soul has bounded one step forward in its immortal race, and stands on the confines of eternity.

Unconscious it remains, benumbed as it were by the terrible struggle it has accomplished—the first and last struggle where there is pain—until it wakes up from its dream, and recognizes the forms of friends long since dead, and a new land, the beauty of which dazzles its untried senses.

The spirit does not lay in its spirit-form; but as soon as the death is over, it passes into a new organization, into a new body created from matter, but so pure in comparison to its old body, that even its beauty and refinement occupy no small portion of its first examination.

And here it may be argued, that the body could not be made so matured and laid by, waiting for the occupancy of the spirit, when it leaves the earth. But it may be answered, that when every thing on your earth is measured by the standard of what exists on that earth, it is no criterion by which to judge of cause and effect in the spirit-land. And again, your ideas of creation are so circumscribed by the diminutive little earth you occupy, that there is no great wonder that your conclusions should be of no great magnitude either.

Well, the soul has waked up in a new body and on a new earth. It has recognized friends and kindred, and has learned, that it has passed from death to life. Now commences the history of the life of that spirit.

After the natural curiosity of the spirit has been

gratified—for under every form of organization the spirit develops its desire to learn—it is chosen, or, rather, it selects, by the force and direction of its affinities, the associates with whom it will daily mingle, and the neighborhood in which it will reside.

Now, in the second sphere, there are many places or planets occupied by spirits, and it goes to one or the other in obedience to this law, and there remains until it is ushered into the sphere above. It finds the land or earth which it inhabits organized like your own, requiring labor to develop its resources, and that it is incumbent on it to labor for its own good as well as others. And here let me say, that, in the spheres, labor is substantially the first fealty demanded in any community of any person who may claim to be a member. It is the great characteristic of the spirit-land, and is recognized as of God.

In the second sphere, the organization being less refined than in the spheres above, the new spirit often finds it necessary to shelter its body from the sun or storm; not because it gives it pain, or that it would induce sickness or disease to expose its body to all the variations of temperature, but that its pleasures are enhanced by its compliance with all the laws of nature; and to expose the body to cold or wet, with its organization not entirely freed from all admixture of earth, would diminish the real pleasure it would receive from shelter or protection. Consequently, it erects its habitations, and clothes its body, and looks out for the means of sustaining its strength, or, rather, of providing for its appetite. Learn, also, that the laws of nature, in their application to the material body of the spirit, are so properly appreciated by the spirit, that while a violation would not produce disease or pain, yet the spirit who neglects or refuses compliance is degraded, as a punishment for such infraction of what it knows to be right. And this is not inflicted by any tribunal, but

takes place as a natural consequent; the spirit sinks lower and lower, till its density bears it to the places below the earth.

I had better close for to-night, for reasons obvious to all. Good-night.

SECTION TWENTY.

Saturday, May 14th, 1853.

This evening, when Dr. Dexter called on me, I told him that in reading over the minutes of our last evening's meeting a question had occurred to me, and I read it to him in these words: You say, "spirit being of the same origin and of the same ultimate destiny," etc. Do you mean all spirits by this? Or is there a separate class of angels, or spirits, created as such, and not originally subject to the law of human progress? Or is the first sphere of human existence (meaning all human existence throughout the whole universe) the great storehouse from which alone the higher and highest conditions of spiritual existence are peopled?

After some half hour or more's conversation on this and other topics, his hand was moved, and this answer to that question was written:

How insignificant is man! How contracted the circle in which he moves! Surrounded on all sides by obstacles which his genius, not his strength, overcomes, he can not compare in his physical powers with the horse which he has tamed to his hand. He views the firmament spread out before him, studded with a thousand worlds, but, confined to earth, he stretches forth his hands in vain to reach them, and explores them only by and through his mind. He sends his ships to the farthest verge of his own globe, and yet he is scarcely able to move by his own strength the weight of his own body.

And yet, though man be so insignificant in the organization of his body, how powerful the workings of his won-

drous mind! He measures the distance of the remotest star, and marks the wanderings of the most eccentric comet, calculating its return with the prescience of a God. He plunges amid the profundity of worlds, and out of the confusion of their own order he arranges system after system, and makes them, as it were, obedient to the calculations he has established for their arrangement.

Confined to earth in his body, he penetrates its dark interior, and brings out to view the precious treasures hidden there. He approximates to the God who created him, for he commands all other created beings, and they obey the dictates of his will. In his care and foresight he provides against the contingencies of time, and lays up against the slow but sure passage of years, the support of the weak and the poor, as well as the rich and powerful. In his affections, he manifests a correspondence with the attributes of his Creator; for though in his artificial relations his selfishness is manifest and distinct, yet in the relation to the great whole of his kind, he has founded laws which protect the rights of every one claiming kindred with himself.

In his justice, he has reduced the biases of his own nature; and in the stern administration of the laws, he has made every one alike.

In his charities, he has provided for the poor and necessitous, and has made each one, according to his ability, contribute for the support of his brother.

In his tastes and fancies, he has made the dark and the hideous, the misshapen and distorted, yield to the godlike power of his innate sense of beauty, and avows his divine origin by his love for all the works of his God.

How wonderful is man, who has played with the lightning and the storm, and has toyed with them as a froward child!

Contemplating his works, we ask is this man, who, from

the rough and misshapen world around him, has created objects of so much strength and beauty? What was man when the earth was covered over all its surface either with dark forests, or barren plains, or inaccessible mountains, or arid and parched-up deserts? Who has fashioned out of the unfinished world such glorious harmony, such wonderful consequences? Man—the weak—the insignificant! And how is this? By what means has he leveled mountains, and filled up valleys, prostrated forests, and o'er the barren desert stretched forth his fruitful hand, and raised up such magical wonders by the mere force of his will? By the law of his nature, which has fashioned him as he is, and has made him the co-worker of his Creator.

Ask you, then, if there are angels created distinct from man? Ask yourself if an angel has transmitted, from age to age, the impress of his mind, and has made the hearts of man, thousands of years following him, burn with the eloquence of his mighty thoughts! Could God create two distinct classes of beings out of himself, and give to one the precedence over the other? If from his own nature he has created man, how, from that same nature, could he have fashioned another race of beings distinct from man?

Ask yourself these questions, and answer when you may.

BACON.

After we had read over, and reflected, and conversed on the foregoing for a while, it was further written:

What are considered by you as angels, are but the beatified spirits of men, in whom the progress of their nature has developed all that there is of beauty and perfection of form.

They are, as I am led to believe, the spirits of men whose organization has passed the seventh and last process of refinement, and are constantly in intercourse with all that can be known of God. No human mind, fertile in imagination as it is, can picture to its wildest fancy the

overpowering and transcendent beauty of the progressed and elevated soul. The world's images of thought fail to convey the faintest idea of my meaning, and I shall, therefore, leave the description to the evidence of your own senses.

In communicating so many thoughts and new ideas as I have done, I have thought if it would not be well if you were to penetrate the deep metaphysical nature of many of my observations and ask questions concerning the abstract meaning of my statements.

There is, after all, a deep and innate feeling in man's nature of what is called superstition, but what I consider the only evidence we have that man's spirit recognizes the source from whence it emanated, and recollected, perhaps, something which impressed its consciousness before it was sent into this world.

Therefore, when you give your book to the world, will it not elicit the right sort of inquiry, if the deeper meaning of the revelations is probed, and the true intent and purpose made manifest? I trust you will ask all questions which are suggested to your mind, without reference to the magnitude of the object comprehended in their statement.*

The Doctor asked me if I had ever entertained the thought that the soul brought into its connection with matter, in constituting man, any ideas which it had derived from its previous existence?

I answered, Yes. I had imbibed such a notion from some of the earlier spiritual teachings which I had received, and that the fact, of which all of us were at some time or other conscious, that things which we knew had never happened to us before, were yet as familiar as if they had, was the relic of some such prior existence. I had subsequently been taught that in this I had been in an error, but the general idea, that the soul did retain some consciousness derived from such prior existence, still existed in my mind.

Then it was written:

* This last remark was evidently called out by one which I had made in the course of the evening, in which I had expressed my unwillingness to ask any question that was not manifestly commensurate with the magnitude of the subject, and the elevated character of those who were teaching us.

I may, perhaps, give you a clearer idea of my meaning. When I say meaning, I intend to say what are my convictions from what I have witnessed, and from what I know.

After the separation of the spirit from the parent source, it, perhaps, receives no idea of any kind until it is incorporated with matter. But before this separation, it must have been impressed with thoughts far beyond any it receives while connected with man's body, or even after death, and in its progress through the spheres.

I am inclined to believe this, as from my own feelings even now, and from what I daily observe of man's mind. This feeling of superstition, or of spirit-recollection, is connected with an overweening one, in which the power, the might, and the omniscience of God is specially distinguished. It is as if the soul was conscious that at some time it had been impressed with thoughts too mighty to conceive; and the terror which so often assails the strongest mind is mixed with a seeming knowledge of what that power was, at the thought of which the soul shrank powerless, and that the spirit knew it from a sort of participation or connection with the origin of all power and might.

I shall close here, and hope that after a little conversation you will both retire, as I intend, next week, to push you as hard as you can well permit. Good-night.

BACON.

SECTION TWENTY - ONE.

Sunday, May 15th, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's, and before any communication began, I remarked to the Doctor that, as Lord Bacon had suggested, I had been preparing questions arising from his teachings, and among others I had asked: Why the change of heart which the religionists spoke of was not just as much evidence of the truth of their belief, as the change Lord Bacon had spoken of was evidence of the truth of these teachings?

And remarking, also, upon the extraordinary character of these revelations, I said, That not more than one out of a thousand, even of the believers in spiritualism, would credit them.

The Doctor asked me if I had my questions ready as to Swedenborg's last teachings?

I replied, No; only one or two inconsiderable ones, and I would postpone them until our next meeting.

It was then written:

It is well; but before I proceed to the proper subject of my lecture, it might be as well to remark on the topic of your conversation just now, the effect which this new revelation may have on the minds and faith of community; therefore while I greet you, my friends, in the spirit of true affection and love, I suggest if I had not better do as I have proposed. SWEEDENBORG.

We assented, and then it was written:

It is not strange that there should be believers and unbelievers on a matter the evidence of which is mostly appreciatory, and not tangible. But so it is in all the religious doctrines taught to man since the world was formed, and much of the faith exercised by mankind has been as much dependent on the will of the teacher as on the eternal truths of his teaching.

But while, on the one hand, you observe the various hues and complexions given to religious belief on

precisely one idea, you can not well understand why this should be so, or why, when it is admitted that there is a God and Christ is his son, that the identity of the one should be disputed, or the existence of the other denied. You can well believe, that as only from material evidence God can be approached (in his idea of existence), you do not comprehend why all that God has directed for the government and action of man should be so variously communicated, when the fact of its being of God is supposed to be beyond all doubt.

You have referred to the change which a belief in any of the doctrines inculcated produces in the mind of man, and you ask why is the comparison of the same effect by Bacon of spirit-faith of any difference with that of any believer in any faith or doctrine? Now it is well and proper that we notice all that is the result of your thought and expression when we are present with you, as it gives us opportunity of answering the objections of your judgment, ere the biases these objections might create should become a permanent conviction. Thus, if Christians teach you there is one God, and that he meant, in revealing his thoughts and intentions toward man, to differ in different circumstances, then you have not the mental ability to understand how God should be immutable and unchangeable, as he is represented. But, on the other hand, if you believe that the thousand opposite statements and doctrines represented as of God are but the vain or fanciful, the severe or stern emanations of man's brain, you can very well realize that a faith predicated on man's thought or understanding of what God might be, or what he might have intended to say, is of no vital consequence to man in reference to his life here on earth, or his life after death.

Now the meaning of Bacon's remark was this: that an effect produced by an arbitrary exercise of any power, whether over the body, and certainly over the mind, can not produce that change in life or action that a

belief can which is left to man's judgment, after the whole facts of the case are given.

Thus, on the one hand, while there will be fanaticism and enthusiasm, there will be life or death for the advance or result of any given doctrine; and while there will be persecutions and burnings, torturing and imprisonment, to overawe the thought of man's mind, there will absolutely be a corresponding progress in his whole life and nature in keeping with the manner in which the doctrines are inculcated, and the means taken to make those doctrines prevalent.

I am satisfied, that while the world was under religious government, the thought, the progressive energy and development of every class of society, were either retrograding or positively stationary. While, on the contrary, not until man's mind, freed from all restraints of priest or church, was permitted, or, rather, did of itself recognize in the God they adored a God of progress and intelligence, and saw the minute connection of this principle of his nature with every part of creation, did the faculties of man's mind fully appreciate their own power. I mean, not until this was absolutely granted man as a right, and he viewed it, too, as a law, could he advance one step in the race of mind. And I am glad that I have so pertinent and felicitous a comparison in the fact, that since the world has been called liberal, there have been more inventions, more contrivances, more science, more true knowledge, more positive advance and progression in one brief decade, than in hundreds of years before.

Thus, while this is so, we recur again to one part of this subject, and that is, that while the fruits of one belief are witnessed in the very fact of retrogression or stationary satisfaction, and the character of the mind assumed the complexion of the world around it, which again it has contributed to produce, the faith we teach, left to the undirected investigation of man's untrammelled

thought, and the determination or choice of his judgment, produces a condition or change exactly the reverse. While it satisfies the void which no belief in any system of revealed (so said) religion has ever done, it at the same time imparts to his mind the change of just apprehension of himself, a *Γνωσις Σεαυτου*, not by a comparison with any rules of any sect, but from the fact that he now comprehends that there is just as much required of him here as there is after death, and that a soul here bowed down by error, can not rise ascendingly toward the point of its ultimate and eternal home, until it shall have purged itself by its own efforts of the sin that besets it.

No marvelous dependence on the power or will of God can alter his conviction, that when he has of himself done wrong, it is by himself, and that self alone, that the wrong must be eradicated. And, therefore, that while a change of heart may be necessary, as a mere comparative term, yet no power, except the just action and operation of his own mind, can produce that change. *

Many men, who have not the courage to avow a desire to investigate even, will oppose you from a fear that the interests of their church will suffer, if this strange doctrine should circulate. Other men, while they really believe that they are safe for heaven, will oppose you for the reason, that if you can obtain happiness eternal by such means, it will interfere with a certain right they have in dictating how your ultimate position should be secured. Others will deny all that is taught, because they do not know any thing about what is taught, and never will know, were they to live till the mountains tottered with old age. Many, from a firm conviction that you are wrong and desire to set you right. There is a class, too, who, fearing you may be right, will strongly oppose you from the apprehension that if, indeed, you

* This is in full agreement with the "Spirit Teachings" through M. A. Oxon.

be right, they must be eternally miserable, and thus they oppose you for fear that some spark will light up their minds and expose the darkness of error which there exists. Many will battle for the honor of Christ. Others fight for the honor of a name. A great many, and oh! how I regret to say, that there numbers in this list, a great, very great many clergymen, will ignorantly oppose you, because they can not admit that any new idea is of any good, forsooth, as if the whole range and phases of God's creation was not ever new and varied, and that every idea, however old, is always elicited from a new cause; this class will oppose you from the motive mentioned above, as well as the fear that they alone shall lose by it. Some from one thing, some from another, some from reason, some from insanity, some purely and honestly, others wickedly and perversely. But the effect will be, after all, to establish, like a sun in mid heavens, truth eternal, unchangeable, immutable, that God is alone and needs no help, that our ultimate destiny, dependent on ourselves, can not be unhappy, if we work and labor to obtain that truth.

And lastly, that spirit and matter are co-existent through eternity, and that the first evidence given to man that spirit could communicate with him, was the evidence that God is of himself sufficient to the perfection of that which is of himself, and that he is the end and the beginning, and that man, accompanying him from the beginning, shall exist with him to the end.

SECTION TWENTY-TWO.

Monday, May 16th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, Dr. Dexter and I were discussing some of these teachings. Some one had remarked, that as soon as he became satisfied these teachings were from Sweedenborg he believed. The Doctor and I said that we did not assent to that proposition. We did not undervalue the source, or rather channel, through which the teachings came, but what had the most influence with us was, the teachings themselves, their clearness and precision, their candor, the profundity of thought, and the force of the reasoning. Come from what source these might, they would work conviction in our minds.

After we had closed this conversation, and I saw that the Doctor's hand was becoming affected, I asked if I should now propound the questions I had prepared?

It was written in answer:

As we have but little time to-night, I beg you will defer your questions until to-morrow night, as, too, I want to say a word on the subject you were discussing just now.

That I am pleased with the effect of our teachings it would be vanity to deny [as if spirits had any vanity!!], and as the subjects opens before you, there will be more of surprise and wonder that even your minds, accustomed as they are to examine carefully the whys and wherefores of every question, should have so many years remained ignorant of the eternal truths which pertain to your immortal nature.

If my wishes in regard to your questions meet your views, I will say a few words, and then bid you good-night.

BACON.

We said, Certainly; any course he might adopt would be acceptable to us.

Then it was written:

There is one aspect of our meetings which has not

been, before now, considered; as I have waited and watched to analyze your minds, and to test how far I might venture to avow opinions which I knew must conflict with all your preconceived notions, as well as to test the strength of your belief in what has already been written, and also to see how far you would permit your former belief to interfere with your judgment. I allude to the calm and philosophic manner in which you receive these teachings, as well as the candid yet rigid examination to which every subject is submitted.

If I could explain all the means that are used, and the various causes which retard or facilitate the flow of my thoughts, you would comprehend how much these manifestations are changed from their original form by the condition of the minds to whom they are communicated, and you would realize that it is not an implicit faith alone that is required to enable us to teach you understandingly, but that the minds of the circle should be elevated to a condition on a level with our own. The doctrine of affinity is the great law which governs spirit-revelation, in fact, spirit-communication, and thus under this law I am enabled to communicate freely to you the higher purposes of these teachings which imports you most to know. This much, and now for my remarks.

In all our teachings you will observe that we have omitted to say any thing regarding the Christ, or the views we have of the true intent and purpose of his mission on earth, as well as his connection with the great Being who it was said was not only his father, but the Godhead made manifest in the form of this very Christ Jesus. We have felt that the very idea of intercourse with spirits out of the form would be denied and scouted at, and that this idea alone was of itself sufficient for our purpose first to establish, and that the advance of any opinion, opposing the very basis of the faith of much of the Christian world, would, before the fact of spirit-

communion being recognized, destroy all that we intended to accomplish, and would raise up such a host of opposers that there could be no chance for the proper circulation of the truth of the facts which we labored to teach.

Thus on this subject, as well as other matters of great importance, the advanced spirits have refrained from imparting their knowledge of the true mission of Christ, and were it not that I feel I can say to you what is proper should be said at this time, I should decline even now from calling your attention to the true facts of the case.

But it is well you should understand that I can only reason. Your inferences are within the control of your own thoughts, and you have received so many ideas lately which you have reasoned rightly upon, that I am confident I can venture to give you my arguments without any apprehension of their being misunderstood.

One consideration should always be borne in mind, as it must be assumed as a fact, not only as regards your world, but our world too, in fact, the whole operation of God's laws, whether pertaining to himself, or whether in reference to any department of man or matter, that God never works by miracle.

This idea received and established will satisfy you, that all the vague and incongruous theories of the power of the Creator and his manifestations are but the confused impressions of what God might do, not that which he does exhibit.

Thus, at the bottom of all religious doctrines which recognize Christ as the son and incarnation of God, there is an incomprehensible idea that some wonderful act, out of the common way, was performed by the Creator when he impressed his own identity on a being of his own creation; that instead of a body or being, born into the world with the usual spirit-part also, God in a miraculous manner connected the whole of his universal being

with the embryo, and thus was born Christ as a man in body, but in spirit the very God himself. That also out of the common course he generated a living soul; that in a miraculous manner he created out of the life-principle in the woman a being partaking of all the properties and attributes common to man.

I can not comprehend why that Being to whom is ascribed a knowledge commensurate with his very nature and pretensions, and who is considered to be a Being without change, and who, it is believed and taught, has established laws which are sufficient to accomplish all that they were designed to fulfill, should so far deviate, in a matter so completely under the control of certain laws, the effect of which has obtained, and does obtain, in the propagation of every species of man and animals as well as in vegetables, in the most minute insect as well as the most powerful animals known to man, should, I say, in a matter so well understood and so completely established in the very impulses and sentiments of our nature, deviate from the ordinary operation of those laws, and create a man in such a singular way, when it would have answered his purpose just as well to have complied with the requisites of the laws he had instituted for the effect of this very purpose. But there never was a successful system of religion without its grave mysteries, mysteries not to be understood by any but those who were the high priests of its altars.

A popular religion without its indistinct mysteries would not stand a year. No, the moral influence which guides and controls the Christian, aye! the savage world, is the dark and profound ideas of the mysterious powers granted to those who teach their doctrines, the awful powers and the dark shadowings of that Being whom they represent as unchangeable, "without shadow of turning."

It is said that God created man from the dust of the earth. Now this is very well; but can it be conceived that when God had fashioned this world, and had

instituted laws for its government, had created animals under this law, that he should so far deviate in the very commencement from those laws and create man, who ever afterward came under the full influence and workings of those rules, in an out-of-the-way manner, as if he were afraid to trust himself or the laws he had founded?

What sort of being can he be who makes laws, and commands all his beings to respect and obey them, and who has made the very instincts of their nature conform to their proper influence, and then he, the framer, the Being of all others the most likely to regard them, should, to accomplish an object just as well effected under those laws, become the first infractor, the first violator? Human intellect can not reason on this subject. It would appear so contradictory, that the good sense of man would reject the idea, were it not surrounded by the incomprehensible mystery which has been attached to it; so that man fearing to investigate, yields a blind belief, and trusts the keeping of his own judgment to the control and custody of men who play with it to suit their own purposes and direct it as they wish or please.

Therefore I can not be mistaken in my views. You must comprehend me when I say the very *res in rem* is not tenable. It wants proof to satisfy the sterling common sense of man, and had he acted on the fair properties of his mind, and had not trusted his very judgment to the priests and churches of all sects, from a slavish fear, long, long ago this idea would have been exploded, rejected as unfit for the spirit which claims kindred with God himself.

But suppose all that has been written of the manner of Christ's birth and conception is true, suppose we admit that it was compatible with the nature of God, how shall we reconcile the object of his birth with what we know of the Creator and the very laws by which he governs man as well as all created beings?

To presume a necessity existing which made it expedient that the Creator should go round the effects of certain acts contravening the laws he had founded, and this, too, on the part of man, would, in spite of all willingness to admit the most absurd ideas, to my view, conflict with all the received notions of God as revealed in his works, or even taught by the high priests of any religion accepted by man.

How could he propose any method of evading a law? Why, the law must be presumed to be the very principle most fitted for man and his action under it, and that the proposition emanated from him to transcend the effect of this law would be virtually to say as from God himself, "If you find my laws too stringent, I will devise a way in which you can escape the true purpose for which I established them. I will set aside my own nature, and in contradiction to the universal command I have issued to you to obey them, will show you how you may violate them, and yet come under no punishment."

I ask you, is this not so? But I will write more to-morrow night. Good-night. BACON.

SECTION TWENTY-THREE.

Tuesday, May 17th, 1853.

This evening, in addition to the Doctor and myself, Mr. and Mrs. S. spent the evening in my library.

I began by asking some questions touching the last evening's lecture.

My first one was this: At one time you say you "can only reason," at another you speak of "the facts of the case." Now, has it not been possible for the advanced spirits to ascertain certainly about the existence, and birth, and actual history of Jesus?

It was answered:

ALTHOUGH I mentioned "facts," yet you will observe I cited no evidence except the principles on which I suppose the laws of God were predicated. I meant that you should accept my reasonings for what they were worth, as I could not give you the true history of the birth and life, and mission of Jesus Christ.

Yes, there are spirits who know every thing in relation to the circumstances which gave birth to Christ. They are far above my position. They occupy those glorious spheres where all that can be known of God is revealed to them. But those omnipotent truths we are not permitted to know for a certainty, till we are divested of all that is gross in our organization, and all that is of error in our minds. Certainly it is not to be told you again, that there is as much conflict of opinion on the true nature of Christ here as with you. But I am reasoning from causes which come under the full operation of the principles on which they are founded, and the effect of which is observed in every thing which emanates from God—every thing natural, every thing divine.

One great feature in all the operations of our Creator, in all his acts, in all the laws he has instituted, is, that he never acts or manifests himself unconnected with matter. Therefore for the human mind properly to comprehend any of his attributes separate from this union would be entirely impossible. You will understand, then, why I have written on this subject as I did last night.

I next asked this question: You say that in your state of existence obedience to the law is not enforced by any tribunal, but is, as it were, instinctive with you. Is that any thing more than carrying a step or two farther the same principle which makes us in this life obey certain laws, such as those of hunger, thirst, self-preservation, etc.?

It was answered: No.

I inquired further: Is it a consequence of our progression, that our instincts also thus progress too?

It was answered:

Yes. That is the true explanation, Judge. As the

mind progresses, there is a just appreciation of the laws controlling the organic part, as well as a proper idea of what are our moral obligations to ourselves and to one another. Thus when the mind perverts the one, it renders the perception of the other obtuse, and the effect is manifest in the density of the body becoming more distinct, and consequently the full and free operation of the spirit is retarded. Instead of progressing, the spirit retrogrades.

I said that I was now done with my questions, and it was written:

Well, then, if the effect of such acts on the part of God was obviously to have produced to the thinking mind such a view as I have mentioned, the idea could not have been disseminated, had it not been the policy of the leaders of the then new revelation to have awed the minds of believers, by investing the birth of Christ with a mystery so profound, that it would of itself have taken their credence by storm.

But how could Christ have taken on himself the burden of the sins of the world? When God created man (under the Mosaic account), and placed him in the garden of Eden, he fell by violating a law which the Creator had established. Pray, tell me now, was it possible for the spirit, not yet given off from the germ or source, to have been implicated in the sin of the first man? To become a participator in any criminal act, it is necessary one should be cognizant of the wrong done, and assent to its commission, or that one should unite with another in committing the act itself.

Now, I contend, that if God punished Adam for eating of the tree of which he had forbidden him to partake, he did so because he violated a command. This is acknowledged. Well, if it were a sin for Adam to violate a law, how much more impossible would it have been for God to have punished those who were not cognizant of the act, mentally or otherwise, or to have doomed the unborn spirit

to the same punishment as he inflicted on the man Adam! Certainly, therefore, the souls of men, born long after or immediately after Adam's fall, could not have been included in the curse pronounced on him. And you will apprehend my argument, that there was no necessity for such a mediator between those who could not have been implicated in the sin and their God.

That there was and is sin in the world no one denies, but that the old or present sin originated with the act of Adam in the garden of Eden I do deny, as incompatible with every thing we know characterizing God. Pray tell me, if an act of wrong committed on your earth includes the spirits here in the consequences, how could any spirit ever arrive at the highest spheres? Now the act of Adam, according to this doctrine, implicated, involved the spirits not yet developed as distinct identities. It was an act not only shrouding the earth in gloom, but leaped over time and penetrated eternity, and laid all spirits, whether disintegrated from the parent source or those who were developed, under tribute of the same sin.

It seems to me its influence went still farther, and as God himself was and is the source of all spirit, the very Creator, the God, came under the law of punishment which it was said he pronounced on the first man. But could it have been necessary that God should have made a savior?

When you cast your reflection back on the spiritual condition of the world at the time Christ was said to be born, you will understand all the necessity which existed. The laws, both natural and divine, were perverted, and though God was acknowledged by a few, yet almost the whole of what was called the civilized world denied his existence, and worshiped a thousand gods, of as many attributes.

The idea, as I understand it, was to establish the belief of God, not of Christ. Jesus was a reformer. By him the first true idea of what belonged to man as of

himself, and to God as the Creator, was given to the world. Christ taught nothing of himself. He called for no belief that of himself he could accomplish any thing. But he taught that man was a part of God, that in his spirit existed the elements of eternal progression, and that all that was required of him was to believe in God, to love one another, and to develop the powers and faculties with which that God had gifted him.

After a short interval he added:

One word I will say in final illustration of my views of the religion Christ taught. It is, that God is love. In every situation of life this evidence is conclusive, that God loves every thing he has created. Aye! every object of his handiwork proclaims this truth, that love eternal, undying, is the source of all his works. Every man, in every condition, assents to this doctrine, and go where you will, converse with savage or civilized, you find that every faith is founded on this axiom.

noble

BACON.

SECTION TWENTY-FOUR.

Thursday, May 19th, 1853.

This evening the circle met at Dr. Dexter's.

It was written:

THERE are to-night with me many spirits of your friends, who have met accidentally, but who delegate me to say that their affection surrounds you, and their love is a part of your existence, as through it you receive many impressions for good, and by it you are supported to endure many of the troubles and ills of life. Cordially, heartily, and affectionately, they with me greet you to-night. You are guarded bodily by your nearest relatives, and your

spirits are the special charge of those friends who, when on earth, loved you most, and whose feelings assimilated with your own.

SWEEDENBORG.

Now your questions.

I prefaced my questions by saying that some of them were propounded in a spirit of caviling, because I was desirous of seeing how far the teachings would bear a treatment to which I knew they would, by-and-by, be subjected.

My first question was this: What do you mean by saying that "death is the first and last struggle where there is pain?"

It was answered:

This expression refers to death alone; and as there is no other death in the passage through the spheres, this wording is correct, as well as the idea. Death of the body is probably accompanied with pain, and when the spirit passes through the death of the spheres, it is rather a state of unconsciousness than death. This is my meaning.

I next inquired, What do you mean by the expression, the "spirit does not lay in its spirit-form?"

It was answered:

Not in the form of the body, the material body, but it assumes the body prepared for it. I rather imagine my meaning must be misunderstood. The idea I intended to convey was this: The spirit, after leaving the material body, probably assumes the exact properties and shape of the new body which it is to inhabit. Be it understood that the body of the spheres, in any condition, is a higher development than the earthly body. It approximates to the perfect man in proportion to the step it has taken. Thus the spirit, passing from the body of earth, does not retain all the features which it possessed in connection with that body, but as it passes, it acquires the size, shape, and form of the body it is to enter.

My next inquiry was worded thus: I confess I am not satisfied with the reasoning on Sunday; for instance, the difference between our change of mind and theirs (the religionists of the day) you

say is, that ours is founded on judgment, and theirs on feeling. Still, is not ours sometimes founded on feeling, and theirs on judgment? If so, then what is the difference?

The answer was this:

My dear sir, the gist of your question is this: How do I know that feeling does not produce the same effect as the convictions of judgment? I can answer that, if time would permit, but I can only say that whereas feeling produces the temporary and evanescent identification with any idea, judgment or reason, convinced or satisfied, infuses into the whole action of a life the effects of that conviction. Thus, when you shall have compared the minds and conduct of the spiritualists with those of any other religionists, you will observe that the fear of death is lost, the hope of eternal progress is the very life of their existence, and that the change or impression manifest by their belief is evident in the fruits of their works. As this, too, is a matter of comparison and time, I can but ask you to wait, and then, *perhaps*, you will understand the whole force of my argument. Let your mind be firmly fixed on the subject as it is.

I proceeded to my next question, in these words: You say that burnings and persecutions, etc., will follow a belief founded only on feeling, thus implying that they will not follow a belief founded on judgment. Why will this be so? for in every thing religious, political, or scientific, man is ever prone to persecute the unbeliever.

It was answered:

I did not so express myself by implication or otherwise.

I then asked: What do you mean by the remark, "there is just as much required of him here as after death," used in that connection?

It was answered:

In his progressive development man begins here, and ends where? There is, therefore, just as much required of him in proportion to the light he has in your world as in the world of spirits.

In no situation in either is more required than the

light received demands. But in your world man knows God through his works, and were there no other idea of his existence, to my mind, the works are in themselves evidence enough of his attributes, to satisfy the mind of his truth, holiness, and love. Therefore it is required of him in your world that his life should conform to these principles of God's nature. No more is required of him here.

I next put this question: You say, "a certain class will never know the doctrines we teach, were they to live till the mountains totter with old age." Do you speak figuratively or literally?

It was answered:

I mean that circumstances will so operate, either by the will of man himself, or the will of others, that the conviction of the truth of spirituality to them will scarcely be possible. That man should never believe, I am not ready to say; but my expression referred only to the life on earth, not eternally.

I said I did not understand the remark, that the "first evidence that spirits could communicate, was the evidence that God was of himself sufficient to the perfection of that which was of himself." It seemed to me that this was reasoning in a circle.

It was answered:

It sometimes requires circular reasoning to convince angular minds. But as God is able to perfect his own works, is powerful enough to contrive the most stupendous labors, and achieve them too, it proves that he is able to accomplish any thing which is of himself. Spirit is of himself, and the evidence of spirit-communion is surely proof that the spirit being of himself, he is able to give it the ability to manifest its existence to spirit on earth.

I remarked that I was done with my questions.

And then it was written:

I am almost unable to continue to-night the teachings I designed, for the feelings of irritability in a circle, however evanescent, always retard the full flow of spirit-influence. There are, to many minds, circumstances of

such ecstatic pleasure, that they produce, in their reaction, great pain. Oh! how the eternal mind is governed and controlled by its connection with the body. How many associations, dearly remembered as of joy, are not alone of the mind, but partake of the body's participation! Thus we often feel, and sensibly too, those impressions which bring to the recollection the real affection of mind as well as the body. I mean, we miss those with whom we are associated, whether on terms of intimacy or as mere common acquaintance, but whom we are daily and hourly in the habit of seeing. When they are gone, we feel their loss. How much more must the mind feel the loss of those with whom we were associated by intellect, as well as by ties of blood! But enough.

When spirits are weighed down by their own density, they sink, as I mentioned, to the places lower than the earth.

They are attracted thither by their minds. They desire no progress, or if they do, the desire is so little that it is swallowed up in the stronger desires for error. The condition of these spirits may demand notice.

I think I mentioned that it was said that their place of residence was a large plain, and I here remark that the plain is almost entirely alike in every part, suggesting scarcely any feeling of beauty or love of it, and is relieved only by one mountain. It is here that the spirits toil and wrangle. They labor, of course, more than the advanced spirits, as their organization being more dense, requires more to support it. They can not rise without a great effort, and being always compelled to associate with spirits whose internal is of the same erroneous and dark character, it generates all kinds of contentions and disputes, and, perhaps, deceit and falsehood. At any rate their affinities for good are, as it were, suspended. They do not possess the power to see the thought before its utterance, but they act toward each other as man and man on earth, that is, not entirely so, but nearly in the same manner.

One great evil which attaches to these spirits, is the obscurity of their ideas concerning God. They realize that there is a God, but they can not comprehend why that God differs from themselves. Then, again, their ideas of beauty are buried in the accumulation of error which surrounds their minds. They have but little conception of the duties which belong to them. As they do not love God, they do not love their neighbor, but they are always ready to mislead and provoke, to disturb and annoy. They are, as it were, incapable of much information. Were the desire to learn to be raised in their souls, they would begin to progress. Still, they are not entirely beyond the reach of improvement; they have not entirely lost all appreciation of what is beautiful, in the works of God. For it is told me that when they are led to ascend the summit of the mountain, and behold the glorious brightness of the space beyond, their spirits yearn to leave their dark sphere, and they commence to make the effort.

Their habits of life correspond with the tone and character of their minds. They have no pleasures, no associates. They do not study. They do not sing, write, or enjoy life in any way, except the delight they may have in tormenting those around. They toil for sustenance, and as their land is sandy, and no sunlight, there must be great labor to enable the earth to bring forth enough to sustain them.

When one of these spirits has a desire to leave that sphere, and by that desire and its effects is awakened to come nearer the earth, he does not lose the disposition which placed him in that sphere all at once. It is by these spirits that the accounts, garbled and untrue, of the world beyond your earth are given, through some medium with whom they have come in contact.

They delight in error; and you can imagine what that condition must be, when the soul recognizes no God, but a being as themselves—what their unhappiness is,

who can not appreciate either love or truth—what their minds must be, when their whole enjoyment is the wickedness of evil and the production of error.

Do they suffer? Yes, when their minds receive the light of truth, when by its rays their whole nature is laid bare, when they can understand how much they have lost, how much they must regain.

Are they unhappy? Yes; after having left those dark spheres, they daily and hourly feel how much their affinity retards their upward progress, and draws them downward toward those spheres again, when they know how little they can appreciate what is before, when they know the nature of those with whom they associate.

Perhaps there is no greater unhappiness to the soul of man than the full conviction that his heart is evil, and that he is daily and hourly struggling to overcome its tendencies.

Thus it is with them, and I must leave to your minds to imagine what I confess I am unable to describe.

SECTION TWENTY-FIVE.

Friday, May 20th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, after some conversation, the Doctor's hand became affected, and it was written:

MY dear friends, I hardly know how to address you, and the endearing terms of affection with which my heart overflows will scarcely be satisfied with the formal word, friend. Brothers, then, companions, fellow-laborers in the cause of love, truth, and progress, I hear you and understand you; and especially you, dear Judge, do I

appreciate in reference to the subject of your wishes. Could I make you to know, by absolute evidence, how much I study the deeper workings and sentiments of your soul, there would not remain in your mind even the shadow of regret at any thing which takes place which you suppose may be misunderstood. Swedenborg knows every thing in relation to both circumstance and feeling, and he is ready to unite with me in saying that the sympathies of his spirit are tendered to your own, and that the struggle in your heart will prove more of a blessing than you can now possibly appreciate. Such conflicts with past agony are the agents which disengage all that is of alloy in your nature, and bring forth to the understanding of your own consciousness and the minds of your friends the pure gold of your nature, purified as in a furnace seven times heated. Let, then, your feelings be calm, for placidity is an attribute of God. Look forward and above all petty annoyances that interrupt your mental progress, and be assured you will soon be qualified to look down on every thing that irritates and vexes, as one who is on a high mountain on the scenery at the foot, and wonder why the distance makes every thing so diminutive. BACON.

I then told him that I had received an invitation which I proposed to accept, to address an assemblage in Connecticut next week; and said that I thought of adopting, as the subject of my discourse, the questions I had discussed last summer at Troy, namely, why spiritual intercourse had not come before, and why it had come now?

It was written:

Yes, but in addition teach them that the object of spirit-intercourse is to purify and elevate the nature of man, and that one great feature of these revelations is to disabuse the mind of errors, which have been engrafted on their hearts, as the results of an overweening faith in the doctrines erroneously inculcated as of God, and as found in the Bible.

Teach them that there is no such thing as understanding God separate from his works; that the human mind, the result of natural combinations and material organization, has not the ability to penetrate beyond the circle of organic connection; that, as every thing which would illustrate God is mixed with the creation of his hand, and as every thought has its source in the thousand impressions received from the direct influence of material combinations, it can not realize spirit distinct and separate, and therefore the thousand shapes in which God is presented, the various elaborate devices to picture him as a spirit, entirely fail to impress the mind with the idea of what he is and how he acts unconnected with the personation of his existence in the world which he has created. Then as man can not realize God without these aids, he can not realize the true intent and purpose of his laws in regard to spirit-intercourse without investigation and calm dispassionate examination.

Lead them to the higher doctrines taught, as far as they will be benefited, and tell them that the perfect man is a type of the being who fashioned him, as he is an emblem of the eternal principle of truth and love.

As the Christ says, I came not to destroy, etc., so we come not to destroy or subvert any doctrine which will afford to man a hope predicated on bases which are distinct from the fabrications of man.

We have as much earnest desire for man's happiness on earth as had the apostles of old or the ministers of the present day, and we labor to insure his soul after death happiness eternal.

We desire that his life on earth should be happy, and teach you that when man's whole conduct is just and pure he must be so. As the un sinful heart recognizes no congeniality in any thing which produces evil, so no man can be unhappy whose mind embraces the good of existence and rejects the evil.

We teach you that when man begins to learn what he

is capable of accomplishing, he will not remain satisfied until he has fully understood how much there is in the eternal connection of life with immortality; that the soul when conscious that it possesses inherent attributes, which have been confined, aye trammelled, by the stern emanations and dictation of ideas taught as true, and that these inherent powers when left to themselves, when granted the freedom of unbiased thought, will throw off all bonds of sect or denomination; then, then does it feel the first glow of honest exultation that its ultimate destiny is limited to no pulpit or the faith taught at its altars. But that a life of purity, of love, of earnest and sincere struggle here, gives it a claim on the world to which it of right belongs; that no being can be happy after death, no matter how much he believes or what he believes, who has not fulfilled the obligations of his nature.

Why has God placed man under the control and influence of laws which generate a thousand circumstances in which he participates *volens volens*? Why are the imperative demands of life made to attract around him other demands which apply alone to his feelings, his passions, or his desires? This is not orthodoxy, I admit, but it is divesting the present of its mysticism, and it is opening the future to the full gaze of man's mind. It is the dower of his descent, the prerogative of his birth. Do you cavil at the so-called truths of a priest of Rome or a clergyman of England's church, the truths which they profess to teach and which differ so widely in their application and in their foundation? If not satisfied with either of them, you seek for other sources where you may rest, and drink the water of life. Go you, then, to those who profess that in their heart's change they have found the Alpha and Omega of their researches. What then? Have they made God a man, that they should surround him with the petty sentiments of their own natures, and drag him down to earth and force him to revenge his wrongs or to punish man eter-

nally for violating laws which he has founded? How have they represented the God who is unapproachable by human thought? How have they described man, who is a part of that God himself? For what conceivable or inconceivable purpose could man have been created—to live under the effect of laws governing an organization which responds to the influences of the same laws in like materials around him? How hold him accountable for obeying the irresistible force of affinities which exist in matter as well as spirit? True, the spirit's affinities he can direct, but his material nature is bound by the iron band of laws over which he has no power. Thus, then, it is taught, God must be the creature of the same circumstances, and because he is a God, must manifest passions as the attributes of his spirit which emanate alone from material organization.

But when, after all, you compare the doctrines which to reject is heresy and to deny is infidelity with what the promptings of your soul tell you is the truth, you then separate the two existences which identify man—his material part and his spiritual nature; you then look with astonishment on the crude fashionings which ascribe to God the feelings and passions of man's material part, and yet deny to him what is essentially and alone the germ to which he belongs.

According to such teachings truth is a comparison: to-day it is truth to believe Methodism, to-morrow Romanism; but you will find that the answer to your question of last night is this (and it was answered by Swedenborg, who requests me to write it to-night), that the effect of these revelations as truth, is to direct the mind to the recognition of *one* God and his laws, and that the belief will be universal when the teachings shall have been given so explicitly as to enable man to comprehend what we mean. There will be no difference of sect or denomination, and there will be no division on the great fundamental principles which we hope to be able to give through you.

I called his attention to a portion of the next to last sentence, which seemed to me obscure.

He answered:

I think Sweedenborg did not understand your question; but at any rate I will consult him, and ascertain. I answer, yes; but the effect of our belief on the heart will be to establish a universal doctrine, which shall have no shades of difference, but be accepted as a unit. The time will come [and on hearing the teaching read, I saw what he meant] when the effect on the heart will be to bring all men to believe on God, on love, on progress, without any subdivision, without any shades, on distinctions, and thus this change will be evident, as it will differ so essentially from all religion which has before been given to man. You must recollect that Sweedenborg was teaching, or intended to teach, you its effects in the future, though he used the word *effect* in the present time. That, I am confident, was his idea.

A change which involves doubt or includes discussion can not be radical. The change I refer to is the soul's recognition of its ultimate destiny. There can be no doubt on this point, there can be no discussion, there is no difference in the belief of any true spiritualist, that the ultimate destiny of the soul is progression, that it commences on earth, and ends only when the body becomes so purified that it is fit to enter the celestial spheres.

Your idea is a comparison of present change in belief, but there are so many colorings and aspects to that belief, that there is no belief about it. When I spoke about a change, I referred to that which would be produced in the whole understanding, including not only the action presently, but that which extends beyond the grave, and divests death of all its terrors.*

* As early in my researches as October, 1851, the following teaching was given, which it seems to me will not be unillustrative of these remarks:

"Your attachment to your preconceived notions is very unfortunate,

SECTION TWENTY-SIX.

Sunday, May 22nd, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, in the presence of all the circle but myself, this was written out:

WHILE we are listening to thoughts from the spirit-land, and wonder at the developments made of what have been mysteries, have we, when our hearts have been filled with joy at the description of the beautiful abodes of the just, and the happiness diffused like air through all the higher spheres of the spirits' dwelling-place, have we ever asked ourselves the question—for what purpose are these teachings? Why have spirits left their homes, their pursuits, their affections, their upward flight toward the ultimate point of their existence? Why have they come to us, and why have they taught us the higher truths of spirit-revelation? Why have they selected us as the recipients of spirit-bounty?

Is it not that your own natures should be made to correspond with the pure and holy existences of those

and much retards your progress, because it does not leave your mind open to the reception of truth. When any new truth is unfolded to you, you do not calmly investigate it and ask your reason if it is right, but you apply to it the standard of your preconceived notions, and if it conflicts with them you are at once prepared to battle it, not because it is unfounded in reason, but because it does not agree with what you have previously thought. And this arises from the fact, that you have not in reality the belief you think you have. If you had a firm and unwavering belief, if you knew you were right, you would not care what was said in conflict with it. But you have not. You have persuaded yourself that you believe certain things. You think you ought to believe, and you resolve you will. But not being sure you are right, any thing which tends to show your faith to be unfounded annoys you, arouses your combativeness, and takes away from your mind that even balance, and that susceptibility to the reception of truth, which is so essential both to intellectual and spiritual progress."

good spirits whose habits, life, and progress we have described? Is it not that you should struggle to elevate your own internal natures, and divest yourselves of those characteristics which mark you as still bound in the fetters of error?

How hard have you struggled? How much have you succeeded? And how long will it be before you shall have cast off all that cloaks your true feelings, and manifest the true condition and action of your life? How long will you battle with causes which you suffer to influence you, and not purge yourselves of all unrighteousness?

These are grave and important inquiries, which should be put to every heart, and earnestly too, sincerely too, in the spirit of truth, of love, and of strong desire to answer truly the responses of our own hearts before our friends who know, and the God that made us.

In a spirit, to-night, of affection, that brings you near my soul, and with a love that brings me to you for the high object of doing you good, do I greet you in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I do not imagine the moral condition of the spirits of the lower spheres differs materially from the moral condition of the unprogressive man in your world. They may, it is true, have moments when their spirits yearn for the brighter spheres beyond their dark plane, when conscious of its birthright, the soul awakens to a sense of its own degradation, and realizes its true situation; but they live and act as unprogressive man does, daily performing their accustomed round of malicious action, and carrying out the designs of their blunted perceptions; and it is not till some event, out of the ordinary occurrences of life, arouses them completely, and opens their understanding to the reception of truth that they begin to progress. There is so little difference in the whole action of spirit-life from your life, except that one step

forward has been made (I do not refer to the higher spheres of course), that the correspondence is almost exact. Their remorse, when made sensible of their wickedness, must be more keenly felt than by man. Here they can have the tangible evidence of truth, of the beauty of holiness. With you, much of course must be appreciatory.

But when the spirit is awakened to a full view of all that is before him, with the bright spirits of friends and relations near him, with all that can assure him and support him, then it is that the full consciousness of his degradation crushes him like a weed; his agony is indeed over-powering. It is the terrible workings of repentance in spirit divested of the grossness of materiality.

As far as my knowledge goes, the just comparison is not to be found in the lives of the dark of lower spirits. I mean the just comparison of sufferings which the spirit endures when in the bonds of wickedness, or rather, when not fulfilling the object of his induction into the spheres. They live as if they did not realize any thing beyond their own misty dwelling-place, as if they were incapable of being impressed with the good and true. But the just comparison is to be found in those spirits who are occupied in their advancement, whose efforts are made to rise from sphere to sphere, where mind and thought are filled with the hope, the glorious hope, of ascending toward those bright abodes where there can be no sin, where there can be no retrogression. When they commit a fault, then it is that the true suffering for sin is witnessed. You behold them in an agony so sincere, so dignified, so elevated, so soaring, so self-sacrificing, that it seems as if the soul itself was in travail, and would give birth to a purity and love almost divine. And I apprehend it is always those who have made some progress in goodness and truth who suffer, for how can the heart which has become hardened by sin suddenly realize all the holiness of truth and all the

beauty of goodness? Simply when a man for a long course of years has lived in the exercise and under the directions of his perverted passions, and his heart, his mind, his spirit, and his thought have during that time declined any participation with what is good, and have cast off all association with either God, or those men or means which would have directed his mind to the contemplation of his attributes; and accustomed to think wickedly, he acted so, and thus his mind and tastes, his very nature in the whole, sought for present happiness in those things which were evil. Now, suppose he is suddenly impressed with the idea of sin, and the conviction is overpowering, so much that he determines to live henceforth a good life, do you think his appreciation of the good, the noble, the generous, of charity, of truth, of benevolence, of beauty, of error, of man—yes, and of God, can be an appreciation which unfolds to his soul the startling comparison of what sin must be and is, when, indeed, he has made the contrast with those virtues? No, this is impossible. Nature, or God, never develops any thing at once or immediately. Every thing has its beginning, its increase, its progress, and, may be, its decline. But to man, this sudden upturning of all that applies to his nature and to his habits is, in my opinion, equivalent to a new construction. But when the heart that has constantly contemplated the goodness of God, the emanations of his hands, and the gushing tenderness of his love, when it for years struggled to subvert all that is of error or wrong in its very imaginings, then when convicted of that wrong, it bows its soul in very misery before its own weakness, it looks only to God for help and assistance.

Thus, I say, the progressive spirit suffers more of what may be called Hell, than even the degraded spirit, and can only begin to suffer when it begins to rise.

Every spirit has some daily duty. They work for the benefit of themselves and the good of all. They

are divided by their own wishes and tastes into all those classes which emanate from the various necessities and conveniences of community. But their labor is comparatively light, and their time is occupied a good deal in the higher labors of thought, social intercourse, visiting, and study. In addition, they develop beauty whenever and wherever they can, and thus they bring themselves nearer to truth by impressing on their souls the idea of its nature. From the sparkling star which twinkles in the distance to the full blaze of the noonday sun; aye, from the little pebble to the lofty mountain, whose jagged rocks turn toward their Creator, from the vilest creeping evidence of life, through all and every part of creation, to the man who is at its head, God has made and fashioned every thing as beautiful, and taught us to consider the works of his hands as good.

Spirits visit much, and it seems as much a part of their lives to visit their friends, as it is faithfully to perform their other obligations. Thus they visit their friends in the sphere to which they belong, or the sphere below them. But their longest visits, and those considered most a duty, are those which they make to their friends on earth. That occupies no little portion of their time, and while with you they are accomplishing some one of the specific duties which are required of them in the sphere to which they belong.

When visiting a sick friend, they stay as long as it may be consistent with their feelings, or the state of the disease. And when a death occurs, they are ready to receive the spirit. When a friend is depressed in feeling, or has some great trouble to overcome, or when he or she has suffered from the wrong of other friends, or when about to do wrong, or when about to do good, then it is that they flock around, and by their impressions aid, or try to direct, as may be proper.

But the time is passed almost, and I must leave. Good-night.

SECTION TWENTY - SEVEN.

Monday, May 23d, 1853.

This evening, at my library. Dr. Dexter and Mr. and Mrs. S. were present. We had for two or three hours manifestations through Mrs. S., of which I give an account only so far as they were of general interest. She became influenced by what was evidently to us a new spirit. The influence seemed to be uncomfortable, and I approached and made passes over her, in order to relieve her. She pushed me from her, and retreated to a distant part of the room, and there stood gazing at me. I did not at all understand it, when it was written through the Doctor's hand:

Let your will be firm, yet *mild*, Judge, and will gently its true manifestation.

I then walked up to the spirit as manifested in her, and stood in front of it, looking steadily at it. It told me, with a good deal of vehemence, to go away. I replied, No; I can't do that. I must know who you are, and what you have come here for.

After looking for an instant steadily in my eye, it sank on the floor at my feet, and embraced my knees. It wept, crawled upon the floor, and finally lay prostrate. At this moment it was written through the Doctor:

Speak to the spirit, Judge, kindly, and ask who it is.

I did so, and it arose to a sitting posture, and looking at me, said:

I am not obliged to tell you my name.

It was then written:

In the name of God, Yes. Hand to the Judge.

This was handed to me by the Doctor, and when I read it, I said to the spirit, You must tell me your name and purpose. It is in the name of God I demand it.

It looked at me, and then, after something of a pause, said, in a gentle voice:

Yes, I must tell my name.

Well, what is it?

Tom Jones.

You are fooling me. I want your true name, no fictitious one.

My true name is Jones.

Are you, then, the spirit of one who was tried before me for murder, was condemned to death by me, and executed?

Yes, I am he, Judge. Oh, forgive me, forgive me!

Nay, I have nothing to forgive; but in the name of Heaven, with what purpose have you come to me?

Do you know why I embraced your knees just now? Well, Judge, I was so thankful that I was removed by your mandate from my former state of ignorance and blindness into the next sphere, where I have become a man, and I am now sent here by wise ones to speak to you.

Why, then, were you so reluctant to give me your name?

It is so hard for an ignorant man like me to make myself understood. In the first place, I was an unwelcome guest. In the next place, it was hard for me to manifest myself.

A very accurate account of what he said was not kept, and so I can only state the substance of it.

He said he was commanded by wise spirits to come and talk to me, to let me know of the great change in himself, and that he now exists where he can realize all that is good.

He said that he was sacrificed to laws which one class condemned as barbarous, and another regarded as necessary; that one class deemed they ought to render good for evil, and the other, that "eye for eye" ought to be rendered. That he was told, however, that the laws which required that such as him who had raised their hand to take what they could not give should be put out of existence would be unnecessary when the revolution of morals shall be accomplished, in which, he said, you, Judge, are taking so prominent a part.

He acknowledged the wisdom and justice of the sentence which sent him out of this life, and he came to give his experience, as one who had been relieved from the evils brought upon him by the present ill-organized state of society, and who, through an evil

deed, had been ushered into a better and happier state than that which he occupied while here.

I remarked, that I supposed it was the force of circumstances which had led him to commit the deed for which he had suffered?

He answered :

That is it, Judge. That is the evil of society. I knew it was wrong, but my mind had not been so educated as to teach me to control my passions. They ran wild, and forced me into every excess, and I finally became reckless.

He said that I must not suppose he was convicted of a bloody crime, and then sent direct to a state of happiness. Oh, no; far from that. But when his spirit was released from his vile body, made so by his evil passions, he was led to a spot, and told to choose his companions. On one side they were black and dark, blacker than himself, and distorted with evil passions. On the other, they had been vile, like himself, but they were not all dark, a little light shone upon them, and their faces were turned upward with hope. "My choice, Judge," he said, "was soon made, for I never loved evil for the sake of evil, but I was led into it by circumstances combined with my unregulated passions." Now, when on one side he saw that dark repulsiveness, he beheld himself in his real image, he recoiled from himself, and sought to fly far away to join those who looked so much in advance of him, and said to himself, polluted sinner that he was, there might yet be mercy for him who had despised it, who had turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of justice; and he saw clearly which path he was to tread to reach that happiness which he never sought on earth.

And, Judge [said he], I made my choice. I braced my heart against evil, I stood firm in the strength of my manhood to do right, and began my labor for eternity; that labor which should have been begun in my youth. I have so far been able to advance upward, that I have been permitted, have been commanded, to come and speak to you of my condition. It was a hard task, as you may imagine, to come to you.

I asked him, Why so?

Did I not know that my presence would be unexpected and repulsive? Did I not fear that you would not wish

to hear me? But I was commanded by wisdom that does not err, and which has guided me so far. The light that is around me is yet dim and obscure, but it is becoming stronger and brighter, and will continue to grow so.

Forgive me, Judge, my wicked thoughts toward you, forgive me! forgive me!

My friends above are patiently waiting when I shall be divested of my grossness and darkness. My mother, my gentle mother! I shall see her face again. My father! I have erred. They tell me I shall see you both again. God is merciful. His mercy endureth forever.

With these words he left us.

After he left, a female spoke to us through Mrs. S., who put on a good many airs. She fanned herself with her handkerchief, complained that the air was close and oppressive, walked to and fro with a stately air, said it was not often she visited such obscure places. She had occupied in her time stately palaces and marble halls, etc. When asked her name, she said it was so long since she had heard it that she had forgot it, etc.

Mrs. S. then went through the death-scene, and the same spirit spoke to us through her again. She said she had been a lunatic, and had died in an asylum. That when she died, for a few hours after her death she labored under the same insanity, but it soon passed away, for she had left the disease behind with the body which had caused it. And now she knew her real position, and she understood the necessity of progression.

After she left, another came, who first presented through the medium a fine lady in the form. She professed to be extravagantly fond of music and dancing; said she was altogether too ethereal for earth, but her mind was intent upon her pleasures. She had a dry, hacking cough, and complained of a pain in her breast. She asked the Doctor if she could not with safety attend a ball to-night.

In a little while she, too, went through the death-scene, and her spirit appeared just entering upon the next sphere.

She was first intent on examining herself. She looked at her limbs, and seemed surprised at herself, and somewhat disgusted. She often asked, "Where am I? where am I?" She said there were many persons around her, but she did not know them. She

said she was very unhappy, that that was not heaven, and in a sorrowful tone inquired, "What shall I do?" At length, among the people she recognized one whom she called "Anna, my old schoolfellow." She asked her how long she had been there, and what she did there? It seemed she got an answer that they labored and studied. "Labor!" she cried, "I never labored! and study! I can't study; I never studied. But she says I may do as I please. May I? Then I vow I won't study. But what do you do here? Have you no music and dancing? No? Then what shall I do? I shall be so unhappy among all these strange, dark people. But she says, if I will labor and study I may get away from this unhappy, dismal place. Then I vow I'll study and work hard, hard. So good-night, friends, I am going to my studies."

SECTION TWENTY - EIGHT.

Wednesday, May 25th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, Mr. and Mrs. S. being present a part of the time, the interview began by writing the following in the tremulous hand of a very old man.

WHAT is one moment of joy, the joy of the spirit, when it realizes the good it has done to years of this world's pleasure!
I. T. T.

Then this was written.

This is the spirit, and a bright one too, of an old man whom you knew slightly, years ago, but who desires not to-night to give his name.

Let us proceed with our work.

(Which was the revision of the previous teachings.)

After that had closed, it was written:

For a few moments listen to another kind of teaching. No gifted one can enter into our charmed circle without his or her proper share of work.

In a short time Mrs. S. was influenced, and spoke as follows:

MY EARTHLY FRIENDS:

I have been permitted to return to my old, my former place of abode for a few moments, that I may give you a few of the sentiments which now fill my soul with wonder and admiration.

I have not been long an inhabitant of these upper regions, of which I am about to speak; but short and blissful as my experience has been, I would not exchange it for all the honors and glories which a thousand years on earth, with all their changing scenes of times, and of action, and opinions might heap upon me.

My station on earth was considered an honorable one; by my fellow-countrymen I was looked up to as endowed with a degree of wisdom which enabled me to—

[Here his power over the medium, which had been evidently diminishing, seemed to be spent, and after several efforts to finish the sentence, it was written through the Doctor's hand:]

enabled me to exert a controlling influence over the minds of my fellow-men. The spirit wishes to say that.

There was then something of a pause, and at length the spirit seemed to recover his influence, and continued his teaching in these words:

And I have since discovered that many things which were said and done by me have left a lasting impression behind; and for all those true and earnest efforts which were made for the good of my fellow-men in the form, and which have left their impression on the race, I now thank God from my inmost soul. But for many others done by me in moments of thoughtlessness, or when acting under the impulses of impetuous feeling or aroused passions, my deepest regrets are awakened, and the more that I am daily witnessing their baleful effects.

It is very delightful, after leaving the earth, my friends, to return and look back on a life well spent in doing unto others as I would that they should do unto me.

It is a most pleasant reflection, and gives back a sweet perfume from earth even while dwelling in heaven.

My mind is gazing back on the hours spent while here, and I have thought, within the depths of my soul, that were it my mission to return again to the form I left, and live over again my short life, how differently would I employ it!

It is but a reflection, for well I know it is impossible. But how clearly does reflection cause every past action to stand forth before my eyes in bold relief at this moment! It is so impressed on my mind, and oh! how I would impress it upon others, how much of joy or sorrow, of heaven or hell, we create for ourselves!

I have been permitted to come here, night after night, and gaze upon the wise spirits who have been directing your minds to higher wisdom than mine has ever tasted of. My soul has expanded, and my soul swelled out, as I have gazed on the vast fields of living light and beauty that, spread before me, are yet to be explored.

My labor has but begun: I am but learning the first lessons of profound knowledge, which belongs not to earth, but to eternal and ever-living happiness. What a mere child of knowledge I realize myself to be when gazing around me!

Wise men of earth! could you but gaze up and see the wisdom that is around you, and ever impressing your minds, your wisdom would seem so foolish you would veil your faces in meekness and humility, and you would feel glad and thankful to see those majestic forms who surround you, who assist and uphold you by their wisdom, and whisper words of strength to your weakened spirits, when struggling for light, like the bird struggling in the net of the fowler.

I would again say, did the wise men of the earth know how much they depend on sources other than themselves, they would not be puffed up so much with their own self-love. The impression of their self-importance would

be dimmed, and they would be willing to come as little children to learn internal wisdom.

Here the influence seemed to wear away again, and after remarking that this was his first effort, and that, with our permission, he would come again at another time, he left.

Mrs. S. then asked what it was that prevented inferior or unprogressed spirits, if any thing, from thrusting aside superior ones, and communicating in their stead?

It was answered:

What hinders a loafer, as you call him, from seeking the society of a parson or a judge? Want of congeniality with the tone of your minds.

Mrs. S. asked whether spirits actually saw material objects through her eyes?

It was answered:

Does the Judge look through his spectacles?

She asked if the spirit present could read her mind?

It was answered:

I can't do that, unless I were with you constantly, and influenced you often.

She inquired why it was that while inferior spirits, whose influence was unpleasant, would at times thrust themselves upon her, superior spirits never did?

It was answered:

They ask permission. A good spirit *never* obtrudes himself. When an inferior one does, resist him in the name of God, and he will always go away.

She said something about retiring as it was late.

I said that it mattered not, as the spirits did not care about the time. They were often with us until after midnight.

It was written:

We take no note of time, but in the good we do. The minutes lengthen into hours, the hours to days, the days to years, the years merge always in eternity.

BACON.

SECTION TWENTY - NINE.

Thursday, May 26th, 1853.

The circle met at Dr. Dexter's; his hand was influenced, and the following was written:

FROM the farthest verge of my sphere, where the reflected brightness of the celestial land sheds its glorious sunshine over all, where the good and true, the ever-living, the ever progressing spirit sends up his shout of joy and gladness, where the untiring and never-ceasing action is forward and upward, come I to-night with my soul radiating the brightness of that sphere, and a spring of gushing love in my heart toward you, my friends, whom to meet is indeed a joy even to me. I give you my spirit-blessing, and greet you in God's name.

SWEEDENBORG.

The properties of our nature are so multifarious, that it is a matter of no little trouble justly to discriminate between what are the results of our organic condition and what the offspring of our spirit-consciousness. It is difficult for human nature to appreciate the capacities of its own organization, the almost omnipotent powers of mind, and the vast development corresponding to the spirit's intimacy with matter.

Why do you educate your sons and daughters? Why do you admire and revere the man who is learned and wise? Were you to take the material answer, you would imagine that to educate, was to store his brain and memory with an array of facts, or impress his mind with the Greek and Latin languages, or with mathematics, or with philosophy, or with astronomy, or, indeed, with any or all of the sciences, that he or she might become a man or woman capable of perfectly perform-

ing their part in life; or that the one or the other might, by their acquirements, have the chance of accumulating a fortune by their advantageous exercise; or that a wise man or a learned man was, indeed, to be revered and respected as one who knew more than you know; whose understanding had so far outstripped the common workings of that attribute of mind, that he must certainly be able to see farther into the misty night of the future, and to select from the shadowy outlines of the events in store those which will put the most money into his strong-box, or give him greater power and control over his fellow-man. Are not these the recognized ideas of learning, of wisdom among men? That the true end of wisdom is to enable one to amass either power or wealth by its exercise?

But the education of the spirit is not alone the filling the brain with the crude notions of other brains, or storing up in the capacious receivers of its vast magazines the facts or results of every known doctrine. No; neither is it the fashioning of its ideas according to the prescribed doctrines of Jew or Gentile, Romanist or Protestant; it is colouring it neither with the glaring red of bigotry, the somber hues of fanaticism, or the dull, dark, and ever black features of error. No, no; the mind, educated, is but bringing the spirit nearer the material world with which it is connected, by removing the impediments to its true manifestation. It is not the body or the brain that can retain the teachings of the schools, after they shall have perished in death and turned to the dust out of which they were created. The cornerstone of your churches shall last as a memento of the force of stern will long after the hands that laid them shall have moldered, and their very names be forgotten.

What then? The spirit it is, which receives and retains; the spirit it is, which can not erase the impressions that truth, knowledge, or love have made on its intelligence. The spirit it is, which, brought near your

earth by the removal of all the barriers of matter, speaks to you as your own spirits would speak to you, were they capable of presenting their true properties amid all the grossness which surround them. Bring the spirit near the world, then; you can not injure even its ethereal and sublimated organism, strong as are the forces which oppose its manifestation. By thus doing though, it may benefit the world, secure as it is in the propriety and soundness of the doctrines it professes, and the purity and loveliness of all its motives.

I have been led to make these remarks to-night, before proceeding to my regular subject, from a comparison between your world and the bright and glorious spheres from which I have just arrived.

It is not always that I am just returned from my sphere when I visit you at the circle; but, to-night, I had even that moment arrived from the sphere to which I belong, when I touched the Doctor's hand. By my own wishes, as well as by my mission, I am connected with your earth, and though, indeed, I have often the privilege of returning to my home, still I never leave it for earth without contrasting the almost incomprehensible difference between them.

But I will say a few words on my proper subject, and then I must leave you.

If the pure spirit suffers so much when conscious of wrong, how much must it rejoice when it feels the inspiring power of its own elevated desire lifting it, as it were, upward and onward toward heaven! How joyful, yes, ecstatic—how glorious must be the feelings of that spirit whose desires, whose aspirations, have directed him to those bright lands where the sun of truth, of love, of charity never declines!

Starting from the second sphere, which is the first point of its appreciable spirit-existence, it sends the eye of inquiry through all the spheres beyond, and revels in the unfoldings of that glance.

Think you that the spirit would be satisfied with green fields, or bright skies, or balmy breezes, or even the dazzling radiance of the sun itself as a dwelling-place, if its innate yearnings were not gratified, the hope of throwing off all that is possible of his material creation, and exercising as a spirit belonging to the Godhead itself those attributes which characterize it as an intelligence?

What is the soul's longing after knowledge, truth, love, charity—yes, all that is good, wise, great, and beautiful—but the desire to exercise in some condition these properties as a right of its nature, when it shall have increased in the magnitude of its activity, and, conscious of its divine origin, it can minister as a spirit to the great good of the whole of which it is a part? Good-night.

SECTION THIRTY.

Wednesday, June 1st, 1853.

This evening, in my library, the Doctor and I alone present.

There was a good deal said that was of a personal character, which it would not be worth while to insert here, except only so far as to show the nature and closeness of the intercourse which is going on between us and the unseen intelligence that speaks.

Thus, in reference to some personal trouble of mine, it was written:

THERE are seemingly certain tides in organic nature, as there are in the ocean, whose broad bosom covers two thirds of earth's surface, and sigh out the various emotions which stir up its mighty sentiment. This occasion is a tide in your affairs, dear Judge, and could you know how your friends have with anxious care watched your feelings, sympathized with all your emotions, but have

truthfully revealed the nature of feelings which were assumed to direct you away from the glorious destiny before you! Oh! there is a love surpassing the love of earth. It brings as its guerdon no blending of passion. It regards the object with no hope of benefit to itself, and it covers and protects each hope, each joy, each emotion of the soul, as in that joy and hope it realizes the bond which connects the present with the future!

There has been no thought of your mind, no purpose of your heart, no struggle with yourself, that has not been recognized and responded to by those who love you for yourself. God bless you! God strengthen you! And the earnest desires, the heartfelt aspirations of your spirit-brothers are and will be offered for your happiness and peace of mind. Could you see this night the holy joy, the calmness which an unbounded confidence has diffused over the whole being of your spirit-friends, you would exclaim, "It is good for me to be afflicted, for then, indeed, know I my own strength."

BACON.

I made some remark, that the trial, though severe, would be profitable to me.

And it was answered:

Yes; but it will open before you a prospect so bright, so beautiful, so full of hope, and radiant, lasting joy, so free from care, from all sensuality, so devoid of self and its clashing interests, that the soul will be like unto him who is taken into a high mountain, and standing on its lofty summit overlooks all the kingdoms of the earth, admires their strength, their capacity, their vastness, but when lifting his eyes upward, he beholds in one twinkling star more of harmony, more of the true, the glorious, the divine, and he turns from earth with disgust, and looks to heaven with joy. 'Tis so with you. Onward! upward! The star is shining brightly above you. The air is calm and balmy. The spirits of friends are standing

without, to cheer you in your strivings with self. They whisper to you, Courage. They murmur words of hope, of encouragement; and they will afford you tangible evidence that their love is not for a day, but for all time.

Thus endeth, for the present, our conference on this subject.

I remarked to the Doctor about some teachings I had had the previous night, but which I did not get distinct enough to write down.

And it was written:

In the efforts made by us last night, we could not succeed so perfectly as we designed, from the state of comparative agitation of your mind. * * * * *

The images we impressed on your mind, though, perhaps, distinct enough, did not comprehend the whole of the teaching we had intended. If possible, we shall to-night try again, and hope to succeed better. We would suggest that no other subject be thought of except the spirits, and that your mind remain as passive as possible. The length of time that has intervened* since your last visions, destroys partially your susceptibility of immediate impression. You can, therefore, help us much, by observing these directions. In connection with what has been written, the teachings we shall try to image on your mind will enable you to make a much more varied and interesting book than if you published only our dry though important communications through the Doctor. And again, we wish through you to teach him many things which it is necessary he should know, and we have declined doing so through himself, as even now he questions, sometimes, if all is right. Much, very much is expected of him, and tried though he is now by many vexations, enough to discourage any one but one of his iron will, we mean that he shall triumph over all, and come out right.

* It was more than a year.

Now, lie down on the sofa, and be calm and quiet for a while, and let us see what can be done. If you like, you can narrate what you see.

I then lay down on my sofa, merely covering my eyes with my handkerchief, to exclude external objects, and I saw the vision which I described in the accompanying paper. I narrated it to the Doctor as I went along, and was about two hours in doing so.

V I S I O N .

What I first saw was a range of mountains, beginning at my right hand, and running off diagonally across the scene, and ending far off in the distance, on my left. The outline of the hills was all I could at first see, but I observed that that was more regular than our mountains usually are. It had not those craggy, sharp points that we are accustomed to see—not those volcanic angles and earthquake-like breaks and fissures that characterize a country newly formed—but the summits were rounded off, as if Time in its progress had laid its softening hand on its rugged and rough features, and leveled them into lines of beauty. The light that shone upon them was faint and dim. It seemed as if the dawn was just breaking upon the earth.

The tops of the mountains were enveloped in a soft and grateful purple haze, and as they receded in the distance they seemed, as it were, almost to blend and melt away into the clear, soft sky which was over all. I was looking westward, and it was the dawn that was breaking behind me, which gave this beautiful tinge to the mountain top; but the base of the mountains, and the whole of the landscape between me and them were so far enshrouded in darkness that I could not distinguish their features.

Far in the distance, and beyond the mountains, a beautiful golden light* appeared, illumining the sky over-

* I take this occasion to remark that I have been taught that the different colors of the light which appears to me in these visions are

head, as if it came from a country where such a light prevailed so powerfully as to be reflected back from the firmament above. This light did not, however, tend to enlighten my side of the mountains. It merely showed what was the radiance of the country beyond; and it must have been very, very grateful, for it was a soft, mellow, golden light, occasionally tinged with streaks of crimson, and once a bright silver star shone amid it for a moment, and then vanished.

As the day gradually dawned upon the scene, it became more visible to me, and I perceived that dense woods skirted the base of the mountains, and that the plain before me was beautifully diversified with trees, and lawns, and running streams. It was not cut up artificially, by fences, into fields, but, as it were, naturally, by rows of trees and shrubbery. Here there was a smooth, level meadow, with its carpet of green; there an undulating lawn, variegated with water, and grass, and growing trees; here there was a cascade, throwing its hoarse murmur abroad upon the silent air, and there a gentle stream or calm and placid lake. Here there was a clump of trees, entwining their tangled arms together over the deep shade that rested below, and there a single tree or two, beneath whose shelter animals were seen, giving life at once and repose to the scene. And, in fine, as the light of the morning increased, it opened to my view a lovely landscape, gently undulating and diversified by land and water, and field and forest. Many animals were seen moving about, or reposing quietly, playing wildly, or grazing or slumbering. Birds in great numbers, and with every variety of song and plumage, were flying across the scene in all directions, some just skimming the surface of the water, and others

symbolical. Thus, a golden light represents affection; a silver light, wisdom; blue, truth; bronze, affection, tinged with an earthly taint; violet, a desire to progress, and crimson, a union of love and wisdom.

soaring aloft, up, up, until their melody seemed mingled with the distance.

As I stood gazing upon the scene, and its beauties thus gradually opening before me, I discovered faintly, in the distance, and near the base of the mountains, what seemed to be some ancient ruins of some work of man. I could not see them well so far off, and I approached to have a nearer view. I discovered they were two high and very massive walls, built at a distance from and parallel to each other, and at right angles with the line of the mountains. They were very high, one or two hundred feet at least, I should think, and were built into and against the side of the mountains, and ran off some distance. They were very ancient, for moss and creeping vines grew upon them, and they were discolored with age. As I approached near them, I looked back upon the part of the scene where I had stood, and there discovered a large ocean, whose waters were gently moving, and throwing the hoarse roar of its ever-breaking surf gratefully on the ear. I perceived, also, that those walls had been originally intended to run from the mountains to the ocean, and so fence in a portion of the country from all intrusion from all other parts; but the walls remained standing only about half the distance, and the ends of them were rough and jagged, and I was at a loss to tell whether it was because the walls had there been thrown down, or had been built no farther originally. If the former, then I knew I must find near the base some of the monstrous stones of which the walls had been built; but I found none, and I discovered they had never been built any farther, and that the original intention of their erection never had been carried out.

In the inclosure formed by these walls and the side of the mountain, I saw a great number of men at work, digging into the hill-side with great vehemence, and never looking up or beyond the dark soil in which they were delving. It was evident they thought they had discovered

a mine in the bowels of the mountain, and had partly inclosed themselves to prevent the intrusion of others. But they had been too impatient to complete their inclosure; one after another had abandoned that work, and gone to digging into the hill, until they had all rushed to the mines, and fell to penetrating its interior with furious haste. When I saw them, they had opened many caverns far in, and were just beginning others. Some were striking with pickaxes into the bank, some shoveling away the rubbish, and others engaged in carts, carrying the dirt away, and emptying it down behind them, near the end of the walls. They did not stop to spread it out or level it smooth, but threw it carelessly in rude heaps, and hurried back for more.

The beautiful light which shone beyond the mountains approached the inclosure, and tinged the sky over it very beautifully, forming overhead a gorgeous canopy of golden and crimson light. Just outside the walls, easy to be seen and easy of access, was the lovely country which I have described, while inside the inclosure all was bleak, and barren, and gloomy. The men themselves were of a dark hue—like a negro turning pale—of a dull, dingy, somber color; and over them rested a dark mist, which rose from them, and partly obscured the light of heaven. None of them, it seemed, ever sought to penetrate that mist, to obtain a view of the beautiful canopy above them. None ever looked abroad upon the beauties of nature, which lay so profusely scattered around them, but all were intent solely upon their insatiate pursuit of the promised treasure, which, methought, still fled from them, and from which none of them had ever yet realized a tithe of their expectations. The only water I saw inside the walls was a stagnant and impure pool, from which even the brutes recoiled in disgust.

I noticed these things while I was standing near the extremity of the walls, and I turned away pained at the gloomy picture. As I did so, my eye rested upon

the scene outside, and was inexpressibly relieved.

On the bosom of the ocean all was life and animation; on the land all was joy and gladness: and in the air all was light, resplendent, and balmy. Far off in the distance I saw marks of man's industry and skill, in beautifying the scene. Pyramids, and obelisks, and ornamental arches rose up amid the foliage in different places. And on the spot where I had stood at first was standing a gigantic human figure. It seemed to be stationary, yet was animated by intellect. The expression of its countenance was elevated and benevolent, and it raised its hand and pointed the dark denizens of that gloomy inclosure to the glorious light that was shining over them, trying thus to induce them to look up, and not ever be groveling in the earth.

As I thus stood drinking deep out of nature's pure inspiration, the sun arose from out the ocean. As its disk gradually came in sight, it lighted up the scene more and more, and opened its beauties to view. Its rays penetrated even the dark inclosure, but it only made its gloom more visible. I saw nothing there that was not revolting. No green thing grew there, but a few stunted parasitical plants, clinging with a sickly life to the barren rocks. The surface of the ground was rough and uneven; man had done nothing to smooth it or make it pleasant to him. I looked around in vain for any mansions, in vain for any cultivation of the ground, and I could not help asking myself, How do these people live? Whence is derived their food, but from the reptiles that, like themselves, grovel in the earth? Where do they repose their weary limbs, but on the dark soil they love so madly? And where, oh! where is their happiness?

I had in the mean time entered farther into the inclosure, and had approached so near the bank as to look into the dark caverns they had dug in their mad pursuit of those hidden and useless treasures. As I stood gazing in mute sorrow at the strange infatuation which had made

these people voluntarily embrace so sad a life, I heard far down, deep into the bowels of the hill, the noise of a maddened conflict. It was approaching me. I heard the sound of blows, the agonizing shrieks of the wounded, and the oaths and blasphemous execrations of the combatants. They rushed madly along toward the mouth of the cavern, furiously contending as they approached. As they came in view, I saw they were armed with the various implements of their employment, and they struck with them, with a deadly malignity, as if more intent on hurting others than defending themselves, as if malice had actually conquered selfishness. One man near the head of the crowd received a blow which felled him to the ground. The others paid no regard to him, but trampled him under foot, and passed on.

After they had all passed over him, he raised himself partly up, and seizing a stone that lay near him, hurled it, with a dying spasm, at the moving crowd. It struck one of them in the side, and wounded him. He turned, and seeing whence the blow came, he uplifted in both hands a huge stone, and approaching his fallen fellow, hurled it with crushing force upon his prostrate body, and then hurried away to join again the fighting throng. The blow, however, which he had given was harmless, for the poor wretch on whom it lighted had expired in the very effort he had made to hurt his fellow, and he was a dead man before his head touched the ground. Oh, man! man! is this thy high duty and destiny?

Meanwhile, the struggling crowd passed by me out toward the extremity, trampling under foot, in their furious career, as well the mangled bodies of the wounded among themselves, as the festering carcasses of those who had died ere this, and been left to rot. Their numbers were constantly diminished by the effects of the fight, so that when they arrived out so far as to be near the end of the walls, a few only were left to carry it on.

I observed that one of them, who had been foremost

in the contest, and whose furious energy had ever kept him near the head of the crowd, when they came out so far, was attracted by the scene which opened to his view, and particularly by the gigantic human figure which stood up so prominently in its midst. He ceased to fight, and stood still, wrapped in wonder at what he saw. The others, however, though reduced now in number to scarcely a dozen, continued the contest as furiously as ever. But while I gazed, an unearthly shriek rang clear and shrill through that dark atmosphere, the ground opened under their feet and swallowed them up; earth to earth! dust to dust! and then settled as calmly over them as if it had never been desecrated by the footsteps of man's evil passions. And he who had paused to gaze on the unwonted scene was alone amid the darkness and desolation of that unholy place.

He did not observe the awful fate of his companions, but stood intently gazing on that gigantic and impressive figure. The sun had now risen some distance above the horizon, and he was so placed that the figure was directly between him and the sun, so that he did not see its orb, but only observed how brilliantly that wonderful specimen of humanity was lighted up by its rays.

He wondered if he could not approach nearer to it. He examined hastily, yet carefully, the ground around him, and finally, with hesitating steps, moved toward it. He had taken but a few steps before he was accosted by a female, who was middle-aged, highly polished according to earth's fashion, fascinating in her manners, and of clear, acute, and vigorous intellect. She engaged in conversation with him, and evinced deep sympathy with his emotion. He paused in his onward progress, attracted by her blandishments. I could not hear their conversation, but it seemed from their gestures that he was urging her to go on with him, and she persuading him to remain behind with her. He became impatient and irritable, while she remained so bland, yet so firm. At length he

broke from her, and resumed his journey. He found it, at first, very rough, and he stumbled and tripped more than once over heaps of rubbish which had been thrown there in ages long past, and which were partially concealed from his view by the moss and weeds which time had thrown around them. At length he came to a pond, which seemed to be the receptacle, for long, long time, of all the refuse filth of the inclosure in which he had groveled so many years. Its waters were very offensive to sight and smell, yet he looked in vain for any means of going around it. It lay directly in his way, and on the opposite side of it he saw what seemed to him to be a comparatively smooth path, leading toward the colossal figure. He plunged in with a good deal of energy, and with a sort of vehement and unregulated impatience forced his way over its uneven bottom, and through its foul and slimy waters. When about midway through, the waters growing deeper, he became somewhat discouraged and paused. The female had not left her place, and she now spoke blandly to him, entreating him to return. He seemed to say with an oath that he would go through, and he pushed hastily on and through. He clambered on his hands and knees up the steep bank of the pond, seemingly regardless alike of the filth which covered him and of her endearments.

He had heard temptation sing, and yet he turned not
Aside. Saw sin bedeck her flowery bed,
And yet would not go up.

When he reached the summit of the bank, he saw before him a smooth and level path, meandering pleasantly amid the green pastures, skirted on both sides with trees and flowers, and fragrant shrubs. The path was open before him; there was no obstruction to his onward passage; yet he paused, for he could hardly believe that it was permitted for such as him, stained with his recent travel, and deformed by his past career, to pass along

so pleasant a path. Again the female, who had retained her place, and was ready to avail herself of every opportunity, entreated him to return. With a gesture of impatience he waved her off, and pushed hastily forward, as if to get beyond the reach of her voice.

As he moved forward, his fevered cheek, fanned by the cool breeze that played around him, and all his passions lulled to rest by the soft murmurs of the running brooks of clear water, he saw approaching him in the distance, as from the feet of the gigantic figure, several persons,

“In robes of linen, flowing, white and clean.”

They moved toward him slowly and gently, and as they approached I saw very many others, clothed in the same garb, coming from different directions, singly and in small parties, some over the hills, some from the valleys, some from shaded bowers, but all hastening toward that path to meet him. There was on all their faces an expression of calm joy and heartfelt welcome.

As he approached the little party who first went out to meet him, he was so struck with the brightness and holiness of their appearance that he fell prostrate at their feet. One of them, distinguished above the others by the dignity of his mien, and the wisdom and benignity that beamed in his countenance, raised him from the ground with one hand, while pointing to heaven with the other, said, “Worship not us, worship God alone.” As he said this, he gave one glance at the female, who still retained her place, hoping through all that she might yet win the wanderer back. She was now at a great distance, yet she saw and felt the glance, and she turned and, with piercing cries and frantic gestures, fled toward the mountain, and buried herself deep from sight in those dark caverns. Earthy she was, and to earth she fled.

The shining ones then clustered fondly around the dark

mortal, and led him on in that path. He moved with slow and trembling steps, for with all their encouragement he could hardly be assured he was right in travelling there.

I observed that the other bright ones, who were hastening from different points to meet him, now lined the sides of the path along which he was timidly moving, and cheered him on by smiling looks and gestures of welcome; yet no one spoke but the beneficent one who had first lifted him from the ground, and he was bidding him be of good cheer, for he was now but what they, too, had once been, and what they were, he yet might be. Thus moving slowly along, they approached the base of the colossal figure, and it was only by measuring it by their height, that I became able to appreciate its magnitude. It was several hundred feet high, of complete human form, and with just proportions as such. Though stationary, it was animated by intellect, and though not the Creator, was yet by means of that intellect the governor of all around.

As they approached it, I also drew near, and discovered in its base a doorway into its interior, and that it was inhabited inside by those shining ones.

The dark mortal was led by his kind and gentle conductors toward that doorway. He shrank back from it, appalled and trembling. It seemed dark to him. He saw nothing but the darkness which immediately enveloped the entrance. It was to him the door of death, and that had always been represented to him so terrible, so full of doubt and gloom, that he was fearfully agitated by its nearness. Several of his attendant guides, as if to reassure him, passed in and out before him, with smiling countenances, in order to persuade him how pleasant, at once, and safe the passage was.

But when at length he approached for the purpose of entering, he found there was spread across the doorway a very fine network, so fine as to be almost invisible,

yet firm as adamant and strong as iron. Through it the bright ones passed with ease, but the dark one found himself too gross to make the passage, and he turned away with the thorough conviction that it could not be until he had purified himself of the grossness of his material nature that he could hope to enter.

In the mean time, while this was going on outside this figure, I entered it, and was permitted a rapid glance at its interior. It had many platforms or stories, as they would be called if we were speaking of a house, one above the other, which were approached by winding stairs. On these platforms it seemed that those shining ones dwelt, according to their various degrees of refinement, and ascended from one to the other according as they progressed in refinement and purity. The light of the sun, which I had seen rising out of the ocean behind it, entered the figure through various apertures on the several platforms, and illuminated its interior in the most brilliant and glorious manner—the more brilliant and grateful the nearer to its head—and those who inhabited up there, I discovered, had additions to their garbs of gold and crimson and purple, that made their appearance very dazzling.

While I was wondering in what this upward progress terminated, and to what end it was that these inhabitants of the figure thus, as they became more refined and pure, ascended up and onward, I saw some of them enter within the tenement of its brain, and learned that when they became sufficiently perfected and developed, they became a part of the mighty intellect which thus ruled the world around and below them.

When the dark mortal turned away from the portal, I saw in him a feeling almost of despair at his ever becoming pure enough to enter, and of anxious inquiry as to what he should do to become worthy? Here, too, his kind and bright companions were ready to assist him. They led him to a little village or hamlet formed

on a sloping bank, just behind the colossal figure, lying beautifully exposed to the rising sun, the mighty ocean, and the pleasant landscape between; and at the same time, the landscape to the west, including the dark inclosure within those gloomy walls, was partially hidden from view by the eminence on which the figure stood. He was given to understand that this pleasant hamlet of cottages and workshops and grateful gardens had been established by those good spirits as a probationary residence for such of the inhabitants of the dark inclosure as had evinced a desire to abandon their gloom and revel in the light of that mighty intellect, and that here he must work out his own salvation; that it would not come to him as a gratuity, but must be earned by his own industry; that though his weakness might at times be strengthened by kind friends, and his despondency often be cheered from above, yet the great end of his redemption could be achieved only by himself.

With these instructions they conducted him to a cottage poorly furnished, and surrounded by a garden much neglected, thus showing him that there was something for him to do at once. But, more than that, he was soon called upon to discharge a duty, which he was told always devolved on the newest comer, and that was to take care of the sick. He entered upon the duty with alacrity, and at the farther end of the village he found a sick man, whom he attended kindly and faithfully, until he could find nothing more to do there. He was not very expert at the task, for it was evident, however kind might have been his feelings by nature, he had never given much attention to individual cases of suffering. He had rather generalized, and his active mind seemed never content unless it was in pursuit of some new object. As soon, therefore, as he had made his suffering fellow comfortable, instead of sitting down by his bedside and watching patiently as a more experienced nurse would have done, he went out into the village to

see if he could not find something to do more profitable to the happiness of its inhabitants, than wasting time, as he termed it, by a sick-bed.

As he passed through the hamlet, looking into the different houses, shops, and gardens, it was very evident that he was a man of great rapidity and clearness of perception, and of tremendous energy, for he formed many plans for improvement, that involved much labor, and thought, and patient industry. He began to feel proud of his power of rendering service to his new place of abode, and of signaling his entrance to it, to its inhabitants.

While pleasing himself with these thoughts, and wandering on, with more pride than humility, he came to a part of the village where a break in the sloping bank gave him a partial view of the country whence he had come. He saw a part of the dark inclosure in the distance, with the gloomy mist above it, resting like the shroud of the dead on its cold breast, and he recoiled in horror at the sight. A recollection of the life he had spent swelled up in his mind with fearful force, and overwhelmed him with a realizing sense of what he had been, and how unworthy he was to serve, much less to direct, even in that half-redeemed hamlet.

Shuddering at the thought of the past, and despairing of the future, he rushed to his lonely cot, and there, throwing himself upon a wooden pallet, gave vent to the strong yet silent agony of his mind, for inexpressibly bitter though it was, and shaking his manly form like an aspen leaf, yet his pride would not permit a groan to issue that could make his remorse known to others. But those shining ones were nearer to him than he imagined, their kind and watchful care was more than he knew of. To them his emotion was known, and they clustered around his cot to cheer and encourage him. One only of them entered, and it was she who had even in the evil past kept alive in him some of the saving

instincts of his nature, and who had been dearer to him than all else besides, ere impelled by the fate which conducted her to purer regions she had left him alone in his gloom. She gently seated herself by his side, and in an old accustomed tone of fondness and heartfelt sympathy wooed him from his dark despondency. The deep bitterness of his despair was soothed, he became more gentle in his struggle with himself, his tears flowed more tenderly, he raised himself up and attempted to throw himself into her arms. But, alas! he felt that he was all too gross to clasp her, whose presence he was yet so very, very conscious of; and instead of that indomitable pride, which but a little while before had shaken his frame to its inmost recesses, he felt stealing upon him a sense of deep humility, which bowed him to the earth while it pointed him to heaven. He suffered her to lead him to the door of his cot, where, affectionately leaning upon his shoulder, and surrounded, though unconsciously to himself, by many, very many, as bright and gentle as she was, she pointed out to him the beauties of the scene around him, which he might still enjoy, and how wide was the field in which he might yet be useful in serving his fellows, and in purifying his own grossness.

When, at length, her soft pleadings had calmed the turbulence of his soul, and shed abroad upon it a holy repose, she left him and ascended to her own bright mansions above, with a countenance beaming with affection, and pointing still higher up. And the picture closed upon my view, leaving him standing by that earthly cot, and surrounded only by earthly objects, but with all his aspirations centred upon that brightness which he hoped that yet even he might make himself worthy to enjoy.

SECTION THIRTY - ONE.

Thursday, June 2d, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, only two of the circle, the Doctor and Mr. Warren, were present. The others were absent from illness. The Doctor was influenced, and the following was written:

I REGRET that any of the members of the circle are absent to-night, as nothing so much retards the full harmony of spirit-intercourse (especially when the object is of grave import) as any difference in the magnetic current. I can not even myself imagine what keeps Mrs. D., as, expecting certainly to meet her, I have made no inquiries. But even without the absent ones, let us feel that where two or three are gathered together with pure desire for knowledge and truth, the doors shall be opened, and the light they seek shall be poured into their hearts in streaming floods. I therefore greet you, the present, and those absent, with heartfelt affection, and charge you that you be true, be firm, be consistent, be self-denying, bearing and forbearing, and loving all.

SWEEDENBORG.

If we reason from nature in reference to the soul, we find our researches embrace many apparently incongruous departments; and yet all so intimately connected, so admirably proportioned, that the direct conclusion must be that the soul is distinct, and manifests its individuality even when identified with the body.

Every part of the human body has its constituent, and although the whole organism is composed of a few leading substances, yet the various textures, membranes, etc., differ in their construction, in the relative proportions of these agents, and are unlike one another. But this

is of small moment when the inquiry is extended farther. Thus no particle of matter can be lost. The smallest grain or atom resolves itself into its proper connection, and is incorporated into some organic body, after having been perhaps decomposed, and to all appearance destroyed. This idea, though universally acknowledged, is not viewed with that interest its importance demands.

Now nature is the same in the spirit-world as on earth, and if we reasoned *ad rem* or *à priori*, as we can not conceive of spirit-manifestation separate from matter (for neither God, nor the spirits emanating from him, have ever exhibited their peculiar attributes unconnected with tangible substance), we are irresistibly led to ask, why should not the soul, after its separation from organic matter on earth, live or exist in connection with matter in some form in the world to which it goes? What more natural to the reason than this question? When the mind attempts to separate the spirit from matter, it has no just conception of spirit. Therefore we can not invest the Creator with form or personality. What sort of person would that God be if the form depended upon the idea of man? The form would resemble that of man, as he is supposed to be the image of the Being who created him. There is no point from which an idea can be formed; and if with all the various attributes with which the Creator is invested there is but one point from which any resemblance could be traced, how utterly does the mind fail in carrying out this connection other than through the whole of God's manifestations of himself through his works! But the condition of matter necessary for such an amalgamation must be unknown to us as well as to you, for if the identification of spirit with matter were unfolded to your minds, the whole mystery of the Great First Cause would be understood. Are we prepared for this revelation? The thought is limited by the objects from which impressions are received. It is this fact which has contributed so much

to create in some minds the idea of a material heaven, in which a God resides, who is so much like man, that he is subject to all the passions, feelings, and desires of his earthly nature; and it is this limited comprehension of what God is, and what the true destiny of the spirit is, that has filled the world with error, and has produced so many narrow prejudices among men, and built up a church on a foundation of opinion instead of fact and truth.

It is not strange, therefore, that with the descriptions of the material body after death, and of the spirit-world, too, your ideas should be confused as to what the nature of the spirit-body is after the decease of the form on earth. The account which has been given you of the passage of the spirit into the body prepared for it, just after it has passed from life to the spheres, must seem unnatural. I doubt not it is, for the reasons given above, that you can not reconcile any other action of Nature's laws than that to which you have been accustomed. And I am conscious that, until the time shall have arrived when the spirit-communion will be more tangible than at present, your views must be limited and your conclusions complex.

I have made these remarks for you, Mr. W., as your mind has been much interested in the consideration of this part of our teachings; and you have not been entirely satisfied with my explanations.

Neither do I wish to have you or our other friends receive as truth that which they can not understand. But if for a moment we consider this subject, we shall be surprised at the ease with which the mind can be relieved of its strongest objections, when the influences of natural laws are permitted their full operation, limited by no narrow prejudice, circumscribed by no sect or doctrine. Thus, why should vitality or life exist in every thing God has made? Why should the barren soil of the arid desert, when removed from its original

locality, be made to produce vegetation as well as that which has been cultivated for years? Take the soil from earth's center, and bring it to the surface, and it will germinate vegetation in some form as soon as it feels the light and heat. The hardest rock, when decomposed, will bring forth trees and flowers as abundantly as the most prolific soil. No matter what the substance, and no matter in what form or combination, it is teeming with life, and under some circumstance or other will manifest its ability to support or give birth to life.

Now, were the power of God exhibited only on this little ball, we might with reason say, after this earth there can be no other. All things but the soul cease here. But at the same time there is and must be a continual resurrection of matter. There is not, nor can there be, any cessation in the continual round of birth, life, decay, and resurrection, even on your earth.

But suppose it were so, does this alter the workings of God's laws in other spheres? And if, after all our struggles, the fact is proved that no matter is lost on earth, does it not prove that there is a necessity for the soul's combination with matter in some form, even after it has left the earth?

Here a pause in the writing having ensued, Mr. Warren remarked in reference to a matter previously agitated, that it would imply the performance of perpetual miracle, if, when the spirit left the material body, there must be created for it a new body or spiritual form properly corresponding to its nature; while if, by the same inherent power, the spirit clothed itself with a form, or had one already generated within the material body, there would be no miracle; whereupon Dr. Dexter's hand was influenced, and the following was written:

I believe I said "the soul entered the body prepared for it." The manner in which this took place I could not explain, for the spirits could not see the transformation. The body, however, is ready for the spirit,

and it is, or may be, that the soul after leaving the earth generates its own form. But until I have entered the higher spheres I can not give you a just explanation of this.

My remarks have been more in explanation than in continuation to-night, as the circle was small; and I thought it best to be rather desultory than to pursue our regular subject.

At our next meeting I will continue my description of life in the spheres.

With my best affections for the absent, both the Judge and Mrs. D., I bid you good-night. SWEEDENBORG.

SECTION THIRTY-TWO.

PART FIRST.

Saturday, June 4th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and I alone being present, it was written:

ONE of the hardest tasks in this our sphere of material action, is bringing up for trial and judgment all the motives, feelings, and incentives of the heart before the stern governor of the mind, Reason, and hearing all the arguments, both for and against, on the course of conduct we have pursued relative to ourselves and others.

The difficulty lies not so much in the analyzing of motive and feeling, or in the full display of thought or passion; but the task is indeed one of trouble, after we have heard all that can be said, in deciding justly, sincerely, and without deceiving ourselves. The man, the true man examines himself, and avows to himself the wrong he may have committed against his own nature;

and not only will he bring his secret thoughts to judgment, but he will, Roman-like, sacrifice his most cherished desires, his earnest and heartfelt wishes, his carefully-concerted plans, to the requirements of duty, of love, and to the absolute demands of that law which bids us live that we may confer some good on our fellow-beings, and that we maintain a character which may not be INJURED BY DEATH.

What more noble attribute of our nature than the courage to do right, the fearlessness of truth, crucifying to the obligations which it imposes, all selfishness, all hypocrisy, every principle which militates against the advance of the soul!

The mere recognition of wrong is as much the ability of a wise man as that of a fool, and *vice versa*; but he who is indeed wise shrinks not, when that recognition teaches him conviction. The fool stumbles at the threshold of light. He shuts his eyes to the picture that light affords of the true properties of his mind. By its low desires, its cunning devices, its unhallowed pleasures, he is ever incited to delay all self-examination, and to flatter himself that in his disguise there can be no detection.

Alas! that that nature which is bound to progress by its own origin, which claims connection with God, ever should pervert the bright properties which that origin has conferred, from its upward progression, to a consort with things of earth, to a union of matter without the spirit.

But joy, unspeakable joy, when true to its relationship with eternity, true to its truth and integrity, true to the innate promptings, the soul claims to be heard against even itself, and boldly chastises when wrong has been done; when, conscious that its errors have been of its own choice, it applies, without shrinking, the just deserts which reason demands.

How glorious that man's destiny! He leaves behind the errors of time, and boldly pushing forward through

the untried future, he plants his standard on the very outward wall of eternity, and here he makes his stand; here he calls around him all the aid that position furnishes, and he leaves the traces of his progress in his errors, the doings, the actions sacrificed to truth, which he scatters in the pathway which has led to this goal.

BACON.

The Doctor expressing his admiration of that teaching, I asked him to wait a minute, for I supposed there was some personal application of the lesson intended.

When it was written:

No. No personal application to you or the Doctor, for the heart that has applied the remedy to its own sufferings needs not to be told that the operation was painful.

In our intimacy with the world, the foregoing general aphorisms may pertinently apply; but it is when those feelings of our nature, the finer susceptibilities of the soul made manifest in the tender threads of affection, and in the emotions which attract the gushing response from other hearts; when the soul, assuming as its own its birthright of love, claims the prerogative of its bestowal on that heart which is congenial with its own; when casting from it all the trammels of conventionalism, it bids the spirit seek its affinity in the very spirit of another, that the trial surpasses the agony of all material pain.

The soul in agony! The soul crucified on its own affections! Oh! this indeed is the exquisite misery of the wounded spirit! Who hath power to heal?

Who hath power to heal? The very love which it subdued, the very affection which it has called back to its heart, like a tired dove, shall be to it like a well of living water springing up to an eternal life, refreshing, invigorating, restoring.

This lesson is finished.

Now, dear Judge, if you feel able for a few moments,

we will try to impress you with a vision relative to some teaching affecting the Doctor.

I then lay down on my sofa, and shutting out, as usual, external objects, by tying a handkerchief over my eyes, I received the vision which I have described in the paper of this date.

At a particular part of it, from the length of the pause, I supposed it was done, and arose from my recumbent posture, and asked if I had described it right?

It was written in answer:

Yes; but the vision is not yet ended. Your head is better [all the evening I had been suffering with a head-ache]; lie still a little longer. There is something personal to the Doctor.

I then lay down again, and the vision went on as far as I have recorded.

Then it was written:

We can not bring the matters concerning the Doctor before you, but we will try again some other time. Write out the vision as a general teaching, but when you feel better we will impress you again.

PART SECOND.

June 4th, 1853.

VISION.

THE scene which opened to me was an old man bent over with age, walking slowly, supported by his cane, along a pleasant path, lined on his right by green shrubbery. He came in view from the extreme right. The general scene was dark, but he was enveloped in a bright silver light, which seemed to come from above, behind him, and shot down upon and around him, like the shooting rays of the northern lights in their most playful mood.

As he advanced, the light followed him, illuminated the scene all around him, and left it still bright behind him, though all else was dark and gloomy.

I observed, as he advanced, he became more erect in his carriage, and more alert and active in his movements. He occasionally uplifted his cane with a joyous gesture, as if saying to himself, "Why! I'm a boy again."

He occasionally paused and looked intently upon the ground, stirring up something with his cane. It seemed to me that he was examining the mineral and vegetable productions that lay in his path.

The light accompanied him still, and a little preceded him, though not much. So that it was only when he had advanced nearly opposite to it, that I discovered standing close by the path in which he was moving what seemed to be a somewhat spacious Doric temple, not open, and with columns all around, as of old, but closed at the sides like a modern church, and with a Doric colonnade in front, with some fifteen or twenty steps ascending to its entrance, and extending the whole front of the building.

The old gentleman was so intent on examining what was in the path, that he did not discover this building until he had got directly up to it. He then stopped and looked up at it, and examined its exterior carefully. He finally concluded he would enter it, and as he began to ascend, he discovered, what I had already noticed, that the light which accompanied him had paled somewhat, and he began to doubt whether there was enough of it to enable him to explore satisfactorily the interior of that building. Just at this moment, a cloud of golden light came out of that part of the heavens whence the silver light had issued, and passed along the path which the old man had trod, marking its course very distinctly, like as we have often seen a summer shower fleeting amid the sunshine o'er the dusty fields. It moved along until it came opposite to where the old man had turned to ascend the steps, then it also turned, followed him,

and completely enveloped him, mingling and forming one with the silver light. As soon as he had ascended the steps till he had attained the last platform, a streak of pale-blue light, very clear and grateful to the eye, shot suddenly out from that part of the heavens whence the other light had come, and streamed with inconceivable rapidity upon his person, and mingled also with the other lights. Thus that old man was bathed in brilliant light, and as he entered that dark building, its interior was lighted up by the emanations from his person. I observed that it was divided into pews like a modern church, had its chancel, and its altar at one end, and its gallery, and splendid organ at the other. He advanced slowly up the middle aisle, until he approached the chancel, when he stopped and looked back, and took in a view of the whole interior. It had no light in it except what issued from him, and even then it was somber and gloomy. As he thus stood, I noticed, though he did not, that one of his feet was standing on the end of a monumental slab, inserted into the floor, just at the end of the middle aisle, in front of the chancel. Ere long I saw that end begin to sink under his foot, and I started, lest he might be precipitated into the vault; but he felt the motion, withdrew his foot, and looked intently down to see what was meant. The slab moved slowly down at one end and up at the other, as if turning on a pivot, until it stood upright, and exposed a full entrance below. As yet I could see nothing there, for all was dark, and the light from the old man did not penetrate its obscurity.

While I was wondering what all this meant, I heard a loud noise at the entrance to the church, and looked up to see the cause. I saw a crowd of ignorant, uneducated, but well-intentioned boors rushing in with a great cry. They had known that old man for a long time, as a physician residing in the neighborhood. He had a large family, and was believed to be very skillful, yet he had never seemed to care about accumulating

wealth. He had seemed to care more for others than for himself. This had seemed strange to them, as had a great deal of, to them, very mysterious and out-of-the-way learning, which he had gathered up ;

Times and tides he could presage,
And e'en, the story ran, that he could gauge.

When they saw him enter that church alone, and attended by that strange light, they fancied that he was intending to play some necromancy upon their dearly loved feudal lord, who had erected that church, and after a disease which had carried him off suddenly, had been buried beneath its floor and so they rushed furiously forward to prevent him. As they approached him with all their clamor, he withdrew his gaze from the vault, and calmly looked at them. It seemed as if there was something in his look, or in the light which issued from him, that overawed them, for they paused, and, huddling close together, stood looking on him in stupid wonder, as if incapable of either advancing or retreating. He spoke contemptuously to them: "Fools! think you that I come unlawfully to desecrate the grave, attended by a light that heralds my approach to all the world?" and then turned his gaze down into the vault again.

At this moment the light from him illumined the interior of the vault to him and to me, and I saw the corpse of a man lying there, enshrouded in his grave-clothes. He looked fresh, as if only recently buried there, yet the marble slab, I had observed, was much worn, as if it had been there some time.

The savant, as he looked upon the corpse, seemed to say to himself, "He surely is not dead. It is a pity so good a master and so kind a benefactor to all around him should be cut off in the prime of life, to make way for a hard and selfish and brutal tyrant, who sows misery and depression broadcast all around him. I can save him yet, and I will." He then stood steadily and calmly

looking at the corpse for a few moments, seeming to me to be strongly willing the apparent dead to awake. Soon the corpse began to show signs of life. It opened its eyes, looked around to see where it was, and catching a glimpse of the savant, whom it seemed to recognize, arose to a sitting posture, and gazed intently upon him. The old man reached down to it one end of his cane, which was seized by it, and then with ease raised it up through the entrance of the vault, until it stood erect on the floor of the church by his side. He was a tall, majestic-looking man, of about middle age, and he looked down upon the little old man by his side, with feelings of admiration at his skill, and gratitude for the benefit of his resurrection. The savant seemed to expect the door of the vault to close, but as it did not, he looked back to see why, and the light from him shone upon the corpse of a lovely child of about two years old, the son, it seemed, of the other, and which I had not before observed. He beckoned to it, and it floated up, as it were, through the entrance of the vault, into the arms of its father, and there nestled closely, looking on the good old man with childish wonder and much affection.

The marble slab then closed gently over the vault, and the old man turned to leave the church with his rescued companions. The crowd, which had stood there during the whole time in silent wonder, opened a passage for them. He turned from them with a look of compassion, and passed down one of the side aisles, and so out behind them. They had not perceived that for the light by which they saw they were indebted to him, until now they found themselves, by his withdrawal, in profound darkness. Their ignorant fears were aroused to a fearful pitch, and they shivered in very fright.

I remained in the church to note them, and I perceived that the good old man passed along the outside of the building, toward its rear, and as he passed, the light from him shot into one after the other of the

windows, as from a bright lantern carried by in the night-time, casting a fitful and startling radiance around those terrified rustics, whose superstitious alarm it most fearfully augmented.

I left the building and hastily followed him, and saw him and his companions enter the porter's lodge of some nobleman's extensive grounds. Its inmates were the aged porter, his wife and daughter, who were startled at the strange sight that was before them. The old man quieted their alarm, by assuring them that it was their good master and his son restored to them, and they must get them some clothes. How that was done I did not observe, for I was then learning that the man who had thus been rescued, had once been the lord of that mansion and those grounds, a man of great power and wealth, with very many persons under and dependent upon him, and that he had been one of very enlarged benevolence, devoting all his energies to the benefit of his fellow-creatures. That he had lost his wife, and had only one son, in whom was centred the hope that the beneficence of the father would descend down the stream of time. That he had an unworthy relative, who anxious to succeed to his wealth and power, had administered poison to both father and son, and that so secretly as to escape all suspicion, and then had entered upon the estate, where he had played the brutal tyrant, heedful only of gratifying his own passions, and regardless of his duty alike to God and to man. So that the restoration of the former lord was indeed a wide-spread blessing.

In the mean time, the dresses of the dead-alive had been changed. I did not notice the garb of the father. Of the child I did. He wore a little purple-colored velvet cap, embroidered with golden cord, and with a feather in it. He had jacket and trowsers of like material and similarly ornamented. And with his golden-colored hair, bright blue eyes, clear complexion, and soft and

pensive countenance, he was a lovely object to look upon.

They passed out of the porter's lodge by a side door into the lawn. They had scarcely arrived there, before the crowd in the church, having awakened from their paralyzed stupor, rushed out of the building, and tore madly along toward the park gates, bellowing in their rage. They forced an entrance, and observing no other object, they seized upon the good old man, and in an instant tore him to pieces, staining with his life-blood the soil that was that moment bearing testimony to the great good he had done.

So rapid had been the atrocious deed, that that noble lord had not had time to interfere, nor if he had had, would it have availed with them in their insensate blindness. But when the fearful deed was done, then came reflection, though, alas! too late to save—and they stood appalled at their own action. Sternly then did that noble lord reprove them. "See," he cried, "how in your madness you have destroyed your benefactor and mine, who had no purpose in what he did but the welfare of others. And now what atonement can you make for the innocent blood you have shed, and which cries to Heaven from the ground on which you stand?"

They fell on their knees before him, and implored his forgiveness. They proffered to gather together the dismembered limbs, and give them honorable burial; but he forbade their touching them, and he even bade them cast off their shoes that were stained by his blood, as being too holy to be defiled by their contamination.

While these things were going on near the entrance, the tyrannical usurper, from his distant mansion, had discovered the disturbance near his park gates. He knew not the cause; but, being as cowardly as he was cruel, he imagined that it was his oppressed tenants who had at length, as had often been threatened, risen against his harsh domination, and were approaching to

wreak their vengeance on him. He instantly called together his whole household of attendants, and sent them down, to the number of some fifty, to resist the invaders. Most of them had been servants of the former lord, though the usurper had introduced a few of his own creatures among them. As they ran toward the crowd, their former master turned to them, so that they saw him, and they instantly recognized that he lived again. They paused, and with almost one voice tendered him a welcome back. He directed them to drive that crowd of now repentant homicides off from the grounds. They did so. He then set a few of them to watch the remains of the good old man, and, accompanied by the others, turned to go toward his mansion. In the mean time the creatures of the usurper had rushed back to him with the startling news, that the former lord was restored, and he and they instantly fled for safety. He entered again his former habitation, his mind solely intent on what he should do in reference to the sad event which had marked his restoration. He debated in his mind whether he should inclose and render sacred the spot where the homicide was committed. and there erect a monument, or gather the remains together, and directly in front of his mansion, on his lawn, erect it.

He, however, dispatched messengers for the old man's family, now by his death reduced to want, and brought them to his own residence, and there to his widowed wife he said, "You are my mother;" to his children, "You are my brothers and sisters. Henceforth be this your home, and share with me all that Providence has bestowed." The eldest daughter, who had been exquisitely educated by her highly intellectual father, and who shared with him his attainments and his benevolence, he entreated to be his companion and the mother of his child.

Thus though a few years of a life nearly spent were cruelly cut off, yet by his self-sacrifice that old man had restored goodness and happiness where cruelty and misery

had reigned, had indeed secured their continuance from generation to generation, and caused them to flow far, far down the current of time, perpetuating his own memory in the good he had done long after the other actors in the scene had passed away and been forgotten.

SECTION THIRTY - THREE.

Sunday, June 5th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle all being present, a manifestation was first made by a new spirit, and then it was written:

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

The little exhibition just now, was made by the Judge's particular friend, I. T. Hopper, who is here, and desired to say some things, but failed, and as I could not wait, has retired, leaving his regards to all. I do not wish the Doctor to permit the promiscuous use of his arm by all and any spirits who choose, and would suggest that he be particular in throwing off the influence when he can not determine the spirit.

I am glad to meet you all, my friends, to-night. When you are older than you now are, or when even a year or two shall pass, you will look back on these re-unions for spirit-instruction with pleasure, and yet pain. Cherish them while they last. The opportunity afforded you has not before been vouchsafed to mortal man. Love one another, and be true, be holy; tame your earthly feelings toward one another, and look forward to the time when together in the world of spirits you will wander, hand in hand, through its bright regions, seeking love and truth in every exploration. I greet you to-night in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

Spirits, as I have before remarked, differ but little from man, except in the sublimation of their organism and in the stronger exercise of the attributes of their minds. Thus their judgment, on matters connected with their life, is more matured, and the grand characteristics of their minds are more developed. Their feelings and desires are more intense than man's, and they aspire higher than man, for they are not satisfied with the pleasures and joys of one sphere, but are continually striving to enter the sphere above. After the spirit has arrived at the spot where his affinities have directed him, he comes under the law pertaining to the whole, although he enters a community or neighborhood. He is provided with a place of residence, and all things necessary to make that residence comfortable. But he is required to render such services, common to all, as will make the labor of the whole more equally divided; but only a very small portion of his time is devoted to this purpose.

The usual necessities of organic nature are always attended to, and then the whole time is devoted to the acquisition of knowledge in some form, or in developing some fact pertinent to their existence, or in fulfilling some command or rather demand from some other, or in learning some truth, or in subduing some unlicensed desire, or in contributing, by absolute effort and self-denial, to the happiness of some one of the spirits of their neighborhood or sphere.

The manner of instruction differs in different spheres; but the most usual manner is, to select some person properly qualified and every way worthy, both in mind, desire, and education, belonging to the neighborhood, to lecture on some topic or subject which he selects for that object.

Thus, while imparting instruction, he blends reproof or advice, or teaches duty, or inculcates lessons of morality and truth.

The early part of the day is usually passed in studying

or hearing instruction, and in the performance of the ordinary duties incident to condition or circumstance; but the after-part of the day is occupied in visiting friends in the spheres, or friends on earth.

It is not always, however, that all the spirits composing a neighborhood leave at the same time; but those whose duties are well done for the day, leave and visit according to their pleasure. Now, we eat, and drink, and sleep, but these absolute necessities of organic life are not performed in the same way as on earth; that is, the fact of eating is merely to support matter, and when there is but little matter, or matter refined, it requires but very little food to support it. When the spirit has ascended to the higher spheres, it casts off, as a garment, the grosser part of its body, and, consequently, the spirit distinct is the governing principle of its existence. I should say that the spirit is the greater proportion of the two: thus the spirit-necessities are paramount, and sometimes such spirits scarcely eat once a week, and only when the demands of the material part of their combination require support from food. If the spirit has pain, it arises from some violation of the organic part of its body; and as there is less of matter, there is less of pain.

Sleep is necessary only so far as the material portion requires it, and as the spirit develops, there is less and less required. Do you suppose God sleeps? Then if you can imagine mind almost entirely divested of matter, you can comprehend what I mean. When I say that spirit-connection with matter is under the laws regulating matter, you must also understand me to say that the matter is divested of a portion of its grossness; and the nearer to earth spirits reside, the more are they influenced by causes affecting matter belonging to earth. This does not apply to progressed spirits residing on or near the earth.

I never saw a spirit sick in body, but I have seen

spirits suffering from a kind of pain. They hunger, they thirst, but only as they are mixed up with matter in a greater or less proportion. And the farther they advance, the more refined they become.

Their obligations and dealings are also governed by this law, and they lose selfishness as they progress, until at last they manifest only that principle of their spirit-nature which compels them to love one another.

Mr. Warren asked a question, to which it was answered:

They have fire, I am told, in the dark spheres; but even those spirits residing near the earth require no fire, as the climate they live in is exactly adapted to the condition of their organization, and having but comparatively little of matter to protect, they feel none of the changes of climate, which are very rare. There is no money, and the land is subdivided into communities or neighborhoods, and in them the land is also again laid out in parcels for each to till for the benefit of all. The government is patriarchal, and the head of a sphere is a spirit invisible, who communicates his wishes to those higher spirits by absolute oral statements, or by impression.

At this moment the Doctor was called to see a sick woman in the neighborhood, who was indeed dead from apoplexy before his arrival.

On his return, it was further written, as follows:

Dear Doctor, I went with you to visit that female who is dead, and I will give you an account of her spirit, which left her body just as you and I entered the room. Not a spirit belonging to her, except some of her grandchildren attending their mother, was there; and they were surprised at the sudden ushering in of their grandmother to their sphere. The spirit when it left the body was, to my eye, clothed in its material garb, peculiar to this sphere, and seemed to float by its own specific weight in the air, directly over the corpse.

While you were in the room, it still remained directly over the body, occasionally opening its eyes, and gazing vacantly around, as if it were in a dream, and could not realize where it was. I saw no preparation, and even the spirits who were in the room appeared surprised at the abrupt entrance of her spirit and could not, therefore, have had time to have prepared any other body than the one it possessed when I first saw it, which it had assumed, or generated, independent of them. When you left the house it had not recovered its consciousness, and probably, even now, it remains precisely as we left it, just above its mortal body.

The children are much affected, as their grandmother was the whole reliance of their mother, and on her she depended for every thing; this gave the children pain, as they knew their mother's weakness of mind, that she is away from home, and that she must and will suffer from her loss; but they have not yet spoken to their grandmother, neither will they, until she arouses to a perfect consciousness of her situation, and then they will approach her.

I have mentioned these things that you might have, as it were, an example directly under observation, and that the preliminary acts being under your eye, you might be able to follow the spirit to this world. And also, as from the suddenness of death, the uniting or passage of the spirit from a body of entire matter to one of refined matter, might be distinctly made known.

The spheres are scattered through all space, and under an imperative law, too. I will give you a teaching on this subject soon, But it is too late to-night, and Mrs. D. must retire.

They never die; but as they progress they leave their gross part from sphere to sphere, and are never entirely divested of matter, even when they arrive at those spheres where the spirit of God is made manifest.

The change is progression, and progressive, and they

never die but once, though the last change from the spheres to the bright abodes is more of a change than the passage from sphere to sphere. But the change is as they go along. If they have not changed, how could they enter heaven, or the bright abodes?

SECTION THIRTY-FOUR.

Tuesday, June 7th, 1853.

In my library, when Dr. Dexter and I alone were present, it was written :

WHEN the Doctor first came in, you read him some extracts from a work purporting to be a life of Lord Chancellor Bacon. There were some traits true and others not so, evidencing a want of just appreciation of the true character of the man as he was, in the full exercise of his mind, and in the pride of that mind and strength.

I believe I had ever, from my earliest youth, a strong desire to understand not only the laws of nature, but the application of those laws to every condition of life, matter, and man.

This feeling was a leading feature of my mind; and I think you will find, on examination of my decisions, or charges, or essays, or my writings of any kind, that the conclusions or processes of reasoning, or the points of argument, were all predicated on the idea, that man, possessing a mind capable of comparing and investigating, should be permitted the full and free exercise of the tendencies (proper and just) of his intellect, without any impediment by enactment, or prejudice, or zeal.

That I erred as a man, I can not deny; that I was tainted with the habits and customs of time and society,

I honestly admit; but that I had not at heart the advancement of my race, that I did not labor for its good, and that I did not forestall both age, education, and public opinion, I proclaim to be a libel on my true character and motives, as also a base attempt to shield the wrong others conceived and executed, by ascribing to me that of which I was not and could not have been guilty. That I was ardent, enthusiastic, and persistent, is true; that I contributed much to the enlightenment of my country, and advanced her in the estimation of the learned and good of all nations, is likewise true.

That I had a proper idea of what belonged to my position, and out of that position, as well as in it, gathered round me the highest intellects of the age, and reduced the unsettled vagaries of speculation and false practice to a system of pertinent sense, I think no one will deny. But I was beset by trials, and temptations, and seducements, to which I may at times have listened and yielded. But, too, the tendencies of my soul, even when plunged into all the intricacies of legal perplexity and all the false mysteries and pseudo-profundity of diplomacy, were upward, forward, and for good. The good I have done speaks for itself—it will live forever; the evil to which I was accessory is, perhaps, repented of, and may ere this have been swallowed up in my advance and progression. At least, this hope has comforted me, and I may not be permitted to doubt.

BACON.

I then remarked: How closely it must be that I had been watched by them; for it seemed as if every thought, however secret I might have deemed it to be, was known to them, and I desired to know if others had been watched as close?

It was answered:

Perhaps few need watching as much; for errant tendencies require reasonable stringencies to keep them within limits. Oh, Judge, if you are watched, it is the vigils of love that are seeking your welfare, and striving to

guide you straight to the high goal to which life, truth, and love impel you! Yes, here is the Doctor, he is kept and guided by a curbed bit.

Yes, it has been a special, direct, and constant watching of your mind, in its thought, and in the thought's action.

I assure you that the object before you is a high and glorious, and a purely good and holy one. If the redemption of man from error, if the teaching of truth and knowledge is not a purpose worthy to live for, yes, and to die for, then you can well understand that watching would be of no account; but if it be so, then to watch you both is to make you like ourselves and of ourselves. When I say that you feel our care and influence; I do no more than justice to your intellect; and when you can stand on the very verge of time and look back on your path through the world, you will then see how your footsteps have been led, how your way has been directed, and more fully appreciate what we have done for you together.

SECTION THIRTY-FIVE.

Monday, June 6th, 1853.

This evening, at my supper table, I read to Dr. Dexter the annexed letter from Gov. Tallmadge, which I had received this morning, and after we had retired to my library we had a desultory communication, of which I record some parts.

The first part that was written was entirely personal, and I do not record it, though the original MS. is preserved.

I now remarked that I thought a good stopping-place for the first volume might soon be obtained. It was written:

IN regard to the book, enough has been written for the

first volume, and we shall leave to you and the Doctor the arrangement of every thing, with our corrections only. You will leave out what you wish, and arrange all matter as in your judgment will produce the greatest effect. The volume had better close here, and we had better, as soon as your health will permit, correct the whole (or what remains), and then proceed to the publication.

Then, without further preface, this letter to Gov. Tallmadge was written out:

DEAR GOVERNOR:

One great satisfaction to a spiritually interested mind is the ascertaining of statements made of future events, to be true. It not only strengthens faith and elicits interest, but it opens to your mind the knowledge that there are spirits specially interested in your affairs, who look at all the circumstances surrounding you, and maturely investigate and decide for your benefit or otherwise. Now, we do not pretend to prescience, but we do avow our power to combine all the workings of mind and matter which we behold under different and more favorable circumstances than yourself, and bring the influences to bear on the present or future condition of the one for whom the observations were made. We are no fortune-tellers, but we read events only by comparison. Thus those of your friends who love you, and who, when on earth, were active and prominent in the busy scenes of life, have specially collated opinions and feelings of your professed friends, and reading their very hearts, understood therefore what would be their probable action. We are, under this state of things, obliged to speak oracularly, and it may appear strange to some that we do so; but to instance men and fact might do injury, while to caution in the way we have done, would put you at once on the observation, and would also affect neither yourself nor the other parties.

I frequently see your friends, your son, Mr. C., and

others whom you regard with respect and affection, and they desire me to say that they are watching you with interest and care, and will soon direct me to communicate through the Doctor some things which they wish you to know.

They ask me to say to you, that time is but an atom compared with the eternity of eternal truth, eternal trust, eternal progress, and however much your success here may gratify, your happiness hereafter will be in the ratio of your earnest desire to penetrate into the seeming mysteries of the spirit-world, for in our teachings ye think ye have eternal life, and we know. BACON.

FOND DU LAC, WIS., *May 28th.*

My dear Sir—I received the "Spiritual Telegraph" containing my letters; they will be published next week in one of our papers here.

The work of reform is making rapid progress here. Mediums are being developed in all directions. Men of the highest intelligence are becoming convinced. *Chief-Justice Larrabee*, on his northern circuit, lately came across two mediums, investigated the subject, became an entire convert, and proclaims his belief openly.

I have not yet seen that Mrs. Whitman has published my letter; I suggested the "Tribune;" but if Greeley will not publish, I think I can get it published in the "Intelligencer."

I see, by a late number of the "Intelligencer," that the editors have determined to publish nothing more about spiritualism, except under the proper signature of the writer. I am glad of this; such a contest should no longer be carried on from "masked batteries."

How comes on the subject of the communications from Swedenborg and Lord Bacon? * * * * *

You will recollect the Chancellor's premonition to me about "false friends," and political treachery, etc., soon after I got home. Well, a man has just returned from

Washington, who * * * He was the friend of D. Since his return he has come out against him, and also against me as being M.'s friend, although I take no particular part in politics. I have already seen enough to make true the Chancellor's prediction. I will communicate further, if there are further developments. Tell Dr. Dexter of this verification.

I shall be glad to hear from you, even if it be but a line. * * * Very truly, yours, N. P. TALLMADGE.

Hon. J. W. EDMONDS.

SECTION THIRTY-SIX.

PART FIRST.

Thursday, June 9th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle being present, it was written:

It has been intimated by Lord Bacon that you might arrange our teachings as in your opinion would produce the greatest effect on the minds of the world. It is therefore proper for me to say here, that our direct teachings have ended until the publication of the first volume of our work, and that our meetings for the present will assume more of a personal character until the arranging of the work shall have been finished. Our meetings must be imperatively continued, and occasionally I shall bring with me a spirit from the highest sphere with which it is possible for man to have communication, and this and other spirits will aid us in the second volume of our work. Your duties, Judge, are now to commence, in short visions illustrating particular subjects before you,

and an attempt will be made to make clairvoyant some of the circle, all this during the interim. Now I would suggest that our meetings be occupied with subjects interesting to all, and all bearing on the subjects before treated of, as also including personal feeling, teaching, etc. God bless you, and all good spirits attend you.

SWEEDENBORG.

I inquired where he would have the criticism of his teachings, at this circle or in my library, as we did with Lord Bacon's?

He answered:

At your library alone, as you will perceive it will be best, etc. Let the time be occupied, and if there is any question prepared touching the teachings, let it occupy only a certain portion of the time, as we have an object to accomplish.

It was inquired whether he meant questioning this evening only, or during the critique?

It was answered:

It was arranged between Lord Bacon and myself that all questions pertaining to the work should be proposed at the critique, and therefore the remark. Only an evening or two should be occupied in this, as we wish to introduce new spirits and carry out our plan of influencing the circle, to show through visions absolute illustrations of what has been taught.

I remarked, You say "only an evening or two should be occupied in this." This what? Questioning or criticism?

It was answered:

Questioning. Your questions would be more properly on the correction of the text, as the revision would naturally suggest explanations and queries about the facts stated and opinions, in fact every thing belonging to the subject taught; therefore if any one has questions to propound, let him write them out and hand them in, and the answer can be read at the next meeting.

I am willing to answer any questions individually, but only briefly; the full answers are for publication.

Do you mean now?

Yes, and at other times also. It was not the intention to-night to answer questions, the desire of the spirits was to impress the Judge; there is a spirit here who wishes to impress his mind, and both Bacon and myself, and also Mrs. E., would be gratified if he would permit. The impression will be brief, but instructive, and afterward the spirit's name will be given.

I then began to receive the vision which is recorded in the accompanying paper. There was so much moving about in the room and in the house, that it was at times comparatively weak and faint, and once in describing it—for I did so as it went along—I remarked I did not know that I had it right?

It was written:

That is the design; go on; you will see.

The vision went on, and coming, as I supposed, to a close, I said so.

It was written:

For to-night; but it is not yet ended.

Then it was added:

It may be as well in our meetings that each person present suggests the leading feelings of his mind in reference to the influence of spirit-intercourse. It is often that erroneous ideas are imbibed from an incorrect reasoning; and impressions, frequently considered as the result of your own thoughts, are in truth the ideas of spirits, but being imperfectly mirrored on the mind, produce an incorrect result.

Any idea during the day, or any thought, or any advice, or indeed, any thing of life, of the spheres, of truth, of love, we wish you to talk about and ask about, and we will try to answer and explain. BACON.

We have nothing more to say to-night particularly, but we wish to meet at the next evening, and therefore

want you to follow the suggestion made by Bacon. Good-night.

We want you to write the visions, and we will tell you what we want done with them all.

Then, after a pause, it was written :

Our Father, God, teach us thy law, teach us to know ourselves and thee; teach us that our nature begun here, will exist and progress through eternity; teach us that thy law, based on love, requires but the exercise of that love for its fulfillment.

Aid us in our efforts to feel, to know what is our strength, and teach us to love one another, as we are all from one source and thee.

PART SECOND.

VISION.

It was the same scene which I had witnessed the other evening, when the dark inclosure within those high walls was so prominent a part of the picture. Now, I perceived those walls had been demolished, but that was all the change there was in the scene, except an addition to it, which at once attracted my attention. It was this. On the summit of the hill, into the base of which those dark mortals had dug their deep caverns, and directly over them, so situated as to overlook the scene, a man was standing dressed in the garb of mortals. He was tall and dignified in his deportment. His countenance evinced much intellect, but had a stern, rather than a beneficent expression, a look rather of deep thought and anxiety, than of affection and joy. He was leaning with his right

elbow on a white marble pedestal, which seemed prepared for a column which was yet to be placed upon it. His attitude was very easy and graceful. He was standing on one foot, the other leg bent across, resting on its toes, as if it was a position with which he was familiar. He was facing the east. At his feet was the dark inclosure, and before him was the landscape, which included the gigantic figure, the half-redeemed hamlet, and the ocean in the distance. The dark mist still hung over the inclosure, but did not reach to his feet, and he, therefore, stood above and unaffected by it. He was engaged intently looking through it, and occasionally an expression of sorrow would flit across his face, and then he would look abroad upon the ocean, as if he was expecting something.

My attention was by his proceedings pointed in the same direction, and at length I observed far in the distance the sails of some vessels. They approached rapidly. The surface of the water was moving gently, not turbulently, and a fine "fresh breeze" was filling every sail. A greater number of vessels were constantly coming in sight, and there seemed to be a long and apparently endless line of them extending away down below the horizon. The foremost vessel made for the bay lying directly in front of the hamlet, followed by the others, as if they steered direct for that gigantic human figure. On the deck of that vessel was standing one who seemed to be the admiral of that fleet. His whole appearance was that of calm command. One would be glad to serve under him, so much confidence would at once be placed in his capacity and self-possession. He gave directions for his fleet to come to anchor, and one after another, as they entered the bay, furled their sails, until they crowded it full. The dark mortals under the gloomy mist did not notice the approach of this fleet. The man standing by the pedestal did, and his countenance lighted up with a lofty joy. The spirits

inhabiting the gigantic figure did also, and they came out in great numbers, floating in the air, and walking on the earth around it, regarding it with great interest. The tenants of the little hamlet also were aware of its approach, and they huddled together in one corner of their village, wondering what it all portended. I wondered also, and was given to understand that it came at the instigation and by the procurement of the mortal who stood by the pedestal, laden with materials abundant and appropriate for ameliorating in every regard the condition of those dark mortals.

It seemed that I hovered for a moment over the fleet, so as to give me a full opportunity to see how it was laden and manned. They were people I saw of different and far distant nations, who had united in the one object of attempting to redeem those dark mortals, and I observed, too, that they were all of a lighter complexion, and with a joyful, cheerful expression of countenance.

Thus I had in my sight at the same moment, people of four different hues—the bright and shining inhabitants of the gigantic figure, the light-complexioned crews of the fleet, the dark denizens of the inclosure, and the partially enlightened tenants of the little hamlet. It was progression exemplified.

I soon saw a boat put off from the admiral's ship, and land a single man on the beach. He made directly for the dark inclosure, merely exchanging a friendly nod with the spirits and men congregated near the figure. His way was rough. The rubbish which past ages had scattered there, made rugged and difficult even the approach of a messenger of peace and redemption. He at length entered amid the dark mortals and began to make his mission known. Those whom he first addressed suspended their work for a moment, and scowled upon him. The attention of others was soon attracted toward him, and they in turn suspended their employments looking doubtingly and angrily at him. He endeavored to

make them understand what efforts had been made to ameliorate their condition, but they seemed to care nothing for it, and began rather to entertain the idea that these new-comers had really in view to share with, or perhaps entirely rob them of, their expected treasures.

In the mean time, news of his arrival had passed down into the caverns, and the workmen there began to pour out and surround him with the same feelings of hostility and distrust, so that I began to fear they might assail him and tear him to pieces. But a new and quite an unexpected direction was given to their feelings. It seemed that wherever this messenger was among them, he lighted up and partially dispelled the dark mist which enveloped them. They discovered this, and were uneasy about it. Some of them looked up to see what it meant and the mist had so far thinned away that they caught a glimpse of the man by the pedestal just above them. Those who first saw him called the attention of the others to him. They knew him well, for he had once been one of themselves; and his appearance, thus above them, excited in them the most fearful passions. The whole crowd became furiously agitated, they abandoned at once all thought of the messenger, the fleet, or its purposes. They even forgot for a moment their own insatiate pursuit of their cherished treasures, and with one accord united in the cry, Down with him! down with him! Some of the more energetic among them threw themselves into the crowd, fanned their rage to a higher flame, and began to organize and direct the efforts to overthrow that single man. I observed now many females in the crowd, equally somber in look, and, if possible, more furious in passion. But it was not so easy for them to effect their purpose. They had first to ascend to his level, in order to reach him, and that could be done only by a desperate effort to climb the steep and ragged precipice between them, and which he had already surmounted.

In the mean time the messenger became alarmed, not for himself, but for that solitary mortal, who, he knew, had been instrumental in bringing to his fellow-mortals all these means of their amelioration, and he determined to hurry back to the ships to bring him aid.

But that calm and considerate admiral had not been, from his lofty deck, an inattentive observer of what was before him. He had already given orders for prompt aid, and with right good-will did his companions rush to the rescue. Boats were pushing off from every ship, laden with men. Other ships were still coming, in the far distance, and the bay was alive with boats plying with the shore and landing men. The rowers stretched to their oars, and many, in their zeal, leaped from the boats and waded to land through the surf, impatient of a moment's delay, and fearing they might be too late to rescue him who had thus periled all, that he might aid his fellow-mortals. I observed that by taking a path a little to the left, they avoided the inequalities of the surface over which their messenger had traveled, and by going a little round the inclosure [for I call it thus still for convenience, although the walls had been thrown down], they found a path which enabled them to ascend the hill on which the pedestal was with comparative ease and rapidity. They hurried along that path singly and in groups, standing not upon the order of going, but going at once.

Meanwhile, the dark mortals in the inclosure had not been idle, but led on by some of the most energetic and determined among them, they had begun to clamber up the precipice with hot and furious haste, and some of the most active and daring among them had attained the summit, on the right hand, at the same time that some of the people from the boats had attained it on the left.

All this time the mortal by the pedestal had retained his position.

In strong integrity of soul
Uplifted, calmly stood and heard the waves
Of stormy folly breaking at his feet.

He had observed all that had taken place around and below him, and though all-uncertain whether relief would arrive in time to save him from the furious hate that was rapidly approaching him, he shrank not, he moved not, but with a stern composure gave way to the feelings of sorrow which their condition awakened in his heart.

The numbers who attained the summit on both sides of him momentarily increased, and I observed that those who came to sustain him began rapidly to outnumber the others; and I saw, too, that the tide of rescuers, reaching from the summit to the ocean's beach, was constantly augmented by others hurrying from ships already moored, and could be still farther increased, and apparently without limit, from the vessels that were still coming, while the number of the dark mortals was limited, and had no source whence to recruit any increase.

There was a moment's pause, while the rear of the assailants were struggling up the bank to join their leaders, and during it, the mortal who stood by the pedestal, and all immediately around him, were lighted up in a marvelous manner. The light from behind the mountains illuminated him most brilliantly, by a mingled radiance of gold-and-silver hue; at the same time the gigantic image, surrounded by innumerable hosts of shining ones, who took no part in the transactions, except as spectators, raised his arm and pointed toward that mortal, while from his outstretched hand there poured upon him a stream of the clear, blue light of truth, which elevated his heart, at the same time that it rendered his aspect awful and sublime.

As the foremost of the assailants reached the summit, they paused for their companions to join them, and when at length a number had clambered up to warrant them, as they thought, to advance, they saw that they were far

outnumbered, and they hesitated and looked about them, to see what they should do. Being above the mist which had before enshrouded them, some of them looked with awe and awakening interest upon the scene around and below them, others gazed with stupid wonder on all they saw, while there were some whose mad passions were lashed into still greater fury by the sight of the purity and beauty with which they had no affinity, and which they felt no wish to enjoy. Some fell prostrate to the ground, as if they prayed the hills to cover them. Some knelt and extended their hands to the mortal, who was leaning on the pedestal, as if they were asking at once his forgiveness and his aid, while a few gnashed their teeth, and raved in their insensate fury. Among those I noticed one in particular. A man he was, of large intellect and great determination of character, who had once been connected with ties of intimate affection with that mortal. He was distinguished above all others by the fury of his ravings, and he attracted around him, as if looking to him as their leader, all who had kindred feelings. Their number was very small, and it was apparent to them that they could do no harm to him whom they had so thirsted to destroy. Uttering curses loud and deep against the craven hearts which had deserted their common purpose, they turned to descend again, but found their passage blocked by the ascending crowd. Their retreat was cut off by the very aid they had invoked, and in their desperate madness they hurled themselves headlong from the precipice. I expected to see them dashed to pieces on the dark rocks 'mid which they had groveled so long. But to my astonishment the earth opened to receive them—a dreary vault from whose deep recesses dismal groans were heard and whence ascended a smoke still blacker and more gloomy than aught yet witnessed. Down, far down, beyond mortal ken, they descended, and the earth again closed over them, yet not entirely, for some fissures were left, whence would

occasionally issue - some puff of that black and noxious smoke. At this moment I cast my eyes upon that mortal who was still leaning on the pedestal; and though he retained the same immovable posture, and the same calm exterior, I saw that his soul was shaken to its inmost depths by the horror and compassion which the incident had awakened. He now, for the first, removed from his position, and approached the dark mortals who were then on the summit. As he moved away from the pedestal, I saw that on three of its sides there were inscriptions, the fourth was yet a blank. I read a part of only one of them, on that side against which he had leaned, and I could not make out all that, for I was at too great a distance to read the smaller letters. All I could read was, near the top of it, "Jesus of Nazareth," and near the bottom, "Love one another."

He approached first those dark mortals that were prostrate. He took each by the hand, lifted them up, and spoke words of comfort to them. Then beckoning to him some of the people from the ships, he committed each one to their care. Thus also he next dealt with those who had kneeled. And I observed that those ships' people clustered kindly around each, and conducted them down the path toward the little hamlet at the foot of the gigantic figure, speaking to them kind words of cheering on the way.

He then approached the other dark mortals who had neither fallen down nor knelt. They did not seem to take much interest in the matter. They said they had no feelings of ill-will toward him. They had come up because the others had. They were willing to go back again. It was nothing to them what he believed or what he did. He asked them to look abroad upon the scene now first disclosed to their view. To oblige him they were willing to do so, but they turned back to him and seemed to say, "Well! what of that?"

He left them with a feeling that but little, yet awhile

at least, was to be hoped from those who were indifferent alike to good and evil, and he prepared to descend the precipice by the route by which they had ascended.

Numbers of those who had attempted to ascend were clinging in the path, but as he approached, they turned to flee from him, and hurried down the bank, in such affright and inconsiderate haste, that they tumbled over each other, and many of them fell down. He descended with ease, and found himself standing alone among those who but a short time before had, with such fiery haste, sought to destroy him. They looked upon him with various emotions, fear being predominant, for how could they have supposed that he would be so strongly supported, or could wield so great a power? In a little while, however, he was joined by the people from the ships. The admiral had landed, and now approached with a strong party. He advanced to that mortal with great respect, and received from him directions what to do. A general plan of amelioration which had been previously formed by him was now explained to the admiral, who caused the materials with which his ships were laden to be landed, and set his men to work in various places. The ground was leveled and fitted for cultivation. The fissures, through which the smoke from the dark pit occasionally issued, were closed up. Houses were erected, streets marked out, gardens inclosed, and that which had been a dreary waste bid fair soon to bloom and flourish, a fit habitation for intelligent and immortal man. Even the dark mist which had so long brooded over that unhappy place began gradually to vanish away, and open a view of the brightness and glory of the firmament.

The dark mortals wondered, and some of them began to rejoice at the advent of comforts of which they had been hitherto totally ignorant. But there were some who had chosen to bury themselves deep in those caverns, and for their redemption also that mortal seemed anxious,

and after giving instructions in respect to that, he turned and wended his way back alone to his humble cot in the hamlet near the gigantic figure. As he passed along I saw that his mind was engrossed, not with the recollection of what he had done, but with the thought how he could yet save those who had plunged into that dark and smoldering pit.

He approached the hamlet apparently unnoticed, and entered his own lowly habitation. It was the same place, unchanged in appearance from what it was, when formerly in his agony he had entered there, except that I now saw written on the walls—

Would'st teach new truths and save a sinking land?
 All fear, none aid, few understand.
 Painful præminence! yourself to view
 Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

He seated himself on the same pallet, but with feelings much, much more gentle and subdued. He soon perceived the same kind spirit to be sitting by his side, and he suffered her again to lead him to the door of his cot. It was no longer necessary for her to point out to him the beauties of the scene. He comprehended them at a glance, and felt a holy calm reflected from them into his inmost soul. She led him to the same spot where he had before caught a glimpse of the dark inclosure, his own former abiding-place, and bade him look again. The dark mist had vanished. The resplendent light from beyond the mountains was now reflected from the "firmament on high" down into that place once so gloomy, and lighted it up with the glorious splendor of wisdom and love. In place of that bleak and dreary waste which once had obtained there, there was now seen a cheerful and pleasant village, and instead of people ever shrouded in gloom and goaded by evil passions, a cheerful, industrious, and comparatively happy population were evidently progressing onward and upward.

She bid him observe that these people in their happiness were not thinking of him, who had at so much risk to himself obtained it for them; and, while a momentary pang at this apparent ingratitude shot through his heart, she taught him to remember that his reward was to be found only in the consciousness of having done well.

SECTION THIRTY-SEVEN.

PART FIRST.

Sunday, June 1st, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle were present, with the addition of Mr. and Mrs. S.

It was first written:

THE spirits are all assembled here, and desire that the elevated spirit who is here from the higher circles or spheres may have the opportunity of manifesting himself through the mediums present. Therefore, my friends, let your minds be very sincerely disposed. It is not often that an opportunity like this is afforded you. The attempt will be made to impress Judge Edmonds, and if they fail, they will try some other medium present. It is proposed that the Judge give his impressions as they come, and in the order of their coming, so that their character may be determined. With love so great that it is unspeakable, I greet you to-night, and give you as my earnest wish this simple advice, Go on, go ever onward.

SWEEDENBORG.

While that was going on, I had a brief vision, which I record in another paper.

After relating that, I was again impressed, and for at least an hour I seemed to be in the higher spheres, and related to the circle what I saw. That, also, is recorded in another paper.

When that was over, I discovered that Dr. Dexter was in a magnetic sleep, and had been for some time. I remarked that the spirits were evidently attempting to impress him.

It was written :

Yes. Spirits are impressing him, but the whole attempt has been to impress others. The time will come when the one impressed will speak audibly the truths revealed. So let your thoughts be directed to this subject against your next meeting. Nothing more can be done to-night.

When the Doctor came out of his sleep, we asked him if he could remember his impression. He could remember only being on a high hill, and said that more was prevented by an over-anxious desire as to what was coming.

It was written :

There have been no distinct images imprinted on the Doctor's mind for the reason he has given, nor can there be, unless there is an entire passiveness of mind, and an attempt to bring the thought to one point. This is, indeed, a serious moment, for there are spirits here who have never yet communicated with man. They have left their high spheres to come to you, and they desire to find you all alike, your minds like wax, ready to receive impressions. Oh! my friends, strive to be able to receive all that is intended for you, that you may be able to tell the world the truths of God made manifest indeed.

Bacon called you the Sacred Circle, but your name will be still more glorious, so indeed you are worthy. Never yet have I cautioned you, never have I chided, but I am impressed to say, that if you would advance still farther, there must be a sincere desire rightly to understand all that is presented, a proper examination and appreciation of what is taught, an anxious wish to have others profit by the truths you have investigated and found to correspond with God's laws in every department of nature of which you have knowledge, and the distinct earnest hope and desire to see the revelations vouchsafed from those spirits who are able to open the very doors of the spheres.

I refer to the spirits from the higher circles. Mrs. S. can be influenced, if she will give her mind to it for a moment.

She did so, and was influenced to say a few words to us, which were not recorded.

PART SECOND.

FIRST VISION.

THE first vision I had this evening was of this sphere. It was of quite an extensive landscape, pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, field and forest, and land and water. There was a placid quiet stream meandering among the fields just at the foot of some hills. It was dammed up at one place, so that it made a small lake, and then found its way in the same quiet manner off in the distance. The time was a little before sundown, and I was looking south. Along the west bank of that lake I saw a couple strolling along, arm in arm, very moderately, and apparently enjoying the scene. They were going from me, and I saw only their backs. As I gazed on them, I heard the sound of martial music off at their right. I looked in the direction of the sound, and saw a company of cavalry coming out of the woods and over the hills. Their armor glistened in the sun as they came along the road, and it seemed to me they were of the class of Sewartz reiters, or Flayers, as they were called some two hundred years ago—mere mercenary soldiers who hired themselves out to the trade of slaughter, and who, when not thus employed, robbed and murdered on their own account. They were now on one of their predatory expeditions, and at such times all who came in their way were in danger.

As their long files extended over the hills, and their front rank came in sight, I thought that that couple who were thus quietly strolling along the lake stood a chance of being disagreeably interrupted in their walk. But, contrary to my expectation, the attention of the soldiers seemed most strongly drawn to the pleasant repose of the scene. They took no notice of those persons, but hurried to the bank of the lake, and, dismounting from their horses, threw themselves on the greensward to enjoy the beauties of the whole scene.

In the mean time that couple walked around the south end of the lake, crossed its outlet, and entered a pleasant cottage, which was embowered amid the dark foliage of the trees, and surrounded by flowers and fragrant shrubbery.

While the soldiers were thus reposing in the soft light of the setting sun, I saw moving around among them a person dressed in white, who was invisible to them. He passed from one to another, unconsciously to them, whispering words of peace and quiet to each. On some it produced the effect to desire to abandon their lawless life of violence altogether; on others, to wish, for a while at least, to remain there and rest; while some became indignant at the craven spirit, as they called it, which their companions manifested. They had a vehement discussion among themselves, which ended in some four or five of them mounting their horses, and riding furiously back the way they came, while the others began to prepare habitations for themselves and to cultivate the ground. And the scene closed upon my view while they were thus engaged in preparing to enter upon a life more congenial to their true nature, and more consonant to the laws of God.

PART THIRD.

SECOND VISION.

The second vision which I had this evening, was as follows:

I WAS standing, as it were, outside the entrance to a very pleasant scene. It seemed as if I was behind a high wall, which terminated just in front of me. All that I saw at first was the beginning of a roadway, on the farther side of which was a low stone wall, surmounted by an iron railing, and behind that, very dense and beautiful shrubbery. It seemed as if there was an elegant garden within that inclosure. So much of the roadway as I saw, was as if it was paved with the brightest gold.

When I said this, as I related the vision, the spirits wrote through Dr. Dexter, "That is but the reflection of the light." I soon saw that it was so, for the light faded, and the road assumed the usual dull appearance of earth.

Soon, I moved out from behind that high wall, and entered upon that roadway. On my right, the low wall, with its iron railing, and its dense shrubbery behind it, extended far ahead of me. On my left there was a stream of water, a rod or two wide, running along calmly, quietly, and on its opposite bank the ground ascended gradually for a short distance, and all along the summit and sides of the bank were pleasant cottages, surrounded by trees and flowering shrubs, with pleasant gardens in front, extending down the slope to the water's edge.

I walked along admiring and enjoying the scene as inexpressibly beautiful and grateful. I observed that the cottages were all occupied by a very cheerful, happy population, who were living in great harmony with each other. The waters of the stream were of a clear, deep blue, and very transparent. I learned they were the

waters of Truth, of which the residents on the bank were permitted to partake freely, and which were ever flowing calmly at their feet.

After strolling along that path for some distance, I came to a gateway or entrance on my right hand. It was wide and massive, and very beautiful in its architectural proportions. I paused here for some time, and contemplated the prospect before me. I feared that I was not worthy to enter, and that it was permitted to me merely to have a view of the beauties which were there scattered with such profusion.

The path that led from the entrance was broad and smooth. At a short distance it turned to the left, and was hidden from sight by the foliage. On the right hand, the ground was laid out in flower-beds, where every variety of perfume and color were abundant. On the left there were trees, whose foliage was very green and dense. And over the whole scene was the most beautiful purple-hued pink light that can be imagined. It was very clear and soft. The temperature of the air was mild, and a cool and gentle breeze just stirred the leaves, giving a quiet life to the scene.

After gazing some time, and seeing no one to molest or hinder me, I was emboldened to enter, but not without some remains of my apprehensions. Hence it was, that instead of taking the wide path, I struck off into a narrow one on my left, which led me amid the deep, tangled wildwood, where the shade was as cool and refreshing as it was dense. It soon led me up to what I discovered was the porter's lodge, completely buried and hidden from view by the trees, yet in a pleasant sunny glade, where flowers and shrubbery and running water added to the calm enjoyment of the scene. Here I found the porter, who bid me enter at pleasure and wander where I would, and who told me that the path in which I was, soon terminated in the main avenue, and that I could enter it either by going on or returning.

I preferred the former, for I wished to see all I could of so lovely a country, and now felt myself not to be an intruder, but a welcome visitor.

So I strolled along a great distance, amid a landscape varying in its appearance at every step, and presenting to my vision beauties of nature of which I had never before had any conception, and which I have seen only on such occasions as this. The loveliness of the light particularly struck me. I saw no sun, yet there was the splendor of mid-day. A few clouds were seen in the sky, reposing quietly, like every thing else I saw, and they were tinged from time to time with ever-changing colors, now pure white, like huge banks of snow, now of a golden hue, imparting a pleasant sense of warmth, anon streaked with crimson and bronze, and all set off by the purest blue as their background.

It was not long before I observed signs of human habitations. Houses of different sizes and forms began to appear on my right hand and on my left; some on grassy eminences, whence could be had a view of the vast country around; some in deep shady glens, where a glowing light could not penetrate, and where the reigning stillness was broken only by the murmur of a waterfall; some surrounded by gardens, where fruit and flowers grew in every variety and great abundance, and some under the shade of immense trees, at whose feet rolled away in the distance a soft and velvet-like lawn.

The inhabitants were in different parts of the grounds, reposing in the shade, or working in the gardens, or gathered in social intercourse in little groups, presenting on all hands a scene of most surpassing loveliness and happiness, which it is far beyond my power to describe. My eyes filled, and my heart swelled at the sight of felicity which I had not deemed it possible for man to enjoy.

As I passed one of the buildings, I was attracted toward it in a singular manner. It stood back some distance

from the road along which I was walking. It was completely covered with the shade of large trees, yet from its piazza an extensive prospect was in view. Flowering vines clustered around its entrance. On one side was a little garden full of flowers and perfume. On the other, a small brook came tumbling down from the hills behind it, and in front was a smooth, close-shaven lawn of the softest green. But I saw no inhabitants about it, as I did about every other dwelling; yet it was manifest that it was occupied, and it seemed as if its tenants had retired from view. Why, I knew not, nor could I account for the singular feeling I had as I passed it. I wanted to enter it, yet was impressed with the sense of an obligation not to do so. I turned my eyes away and continued my journey: yet during the whole of my sojourn there, the feeling excited by that mansion would ever and anon intrude itself upon my mind and recall it to my memory.

As I proceeded, I passed many dwellings, where also I saw the inhabitants. They also saw me, but took no further notice of me than to smile welcomes on me as I passed.

The path in which I moved now wound its way along a side-hill, whence, on my left, I had a most magnificent view. Far as the eye could reach was spread out before me a country variegated by hills and dales, field and forest, land and water, and over all rested that beautiful light, and those ever-changing clouds which I have mentioned. Occasionally, in the distance, I saw single hills or mountains towering up, of different heights, upon some of whose summits clouds rested. In some places I saw deep valleys, over which hovered fog-like mists, more or less dense. And I could not help reflecting that though those clouds and mists added to the variety and beauty of the scene from the point whence I viewed it, yet they must, in some degree at least, obscure the view of the inhabitants in the immediate vicinity.

At length, in my journey, I came across a magnificent temple, erected in a commanding situation, and capable of containing great numbers. I entered it. It was very beautiful in its proportions, but it was not yet finished nor fitted for use. Its floors were not laid, and under its timbers were deep and fearful-looking vaults.

I remained there but a short time, when I felt an admonition that it was time for me to return. As I came out, I lingered a moment on its porch, and looked abroad upon the vast and beautiful scene that lay before me. And here came upon me, with more force than ever, a feeling that had accompanied my whole progress, namely, that amid all this life and beauty I was alone, there was none to whom I could say, "Enjoy with me the happiness of the picture," none whom I could ask to sympathize with emotions of joy and holy calm that filled my heart to overflowing. But I checked the swelling emotion, and hastily brushing away the rising tear, turned again to my task of studying what was before me.

I wondered whence came the light that rested so inexpressibly grateful upon all around me, and instantly the question was answered. My vision was opened, and I discovered that the air was filled with bright and shining spirits, from each of whom emanated light of different hues, which mingled together and made the *tout ensemble* that had so struck me. Some of them were passing rapidly across the heavens, as if going from point to point with a speed that scarcely lagged behind the celerity of thought; others were stationary, while some were reposing on banks of clouds; and throughout them all there was a joyousness that almost made the hills clap their hands. Such of them as noticed me gave me the same smile of welcome, and as I resumed my journey out of this happy land, I could not but say to myself, "If this is heaven, oh may I be worthy of it!"

I returned by the same path by which I had entered, and again, as I passed that mansion, I felt the attraction

more strongly than ever. I hurried by it, lest I might be tempted to disregard the obligation which I felt not to enter it. But after I had passed it, I could not resist the temptation to look at it once again, and then I discovered what it was indeed that so powerfully drew me toward it. It was the residence of my wife and children. They had retired from view as I passed, lest the sight of them might have interfered with the duty before me. After I had passed, they came out; and when I turned to look back, she was standing on the piazza, at the end nearest to me, leaning toward me, her hands clasped with a gesture expressive of the deepest affection. I then saw at a glance that it was the same mansion in which I had once before been with her. There was the same bow window, closed up yet, and conveying the same admonition, but she and her children had added that pleasant stream of water that ran murmuring its gentle music through the grounds. For me that had been done, for well she knew the pleasure it would give me. I paused but a moment, however, and hurried on, in obedience to the obligation I had already felt not to stop.

Then, as I passed out, I discovered on my left, and some distance from me, a very high mountain, whose sides seemed inhabited, and whose summit was buried in the clouds. I gave it, however, but a single glance, and passed out, wondering how it was that I had not earlier discovered that there was a place yet higher even than that which had seemed to me to be far lovelier than poets have ever painted heaven.

SECTION THIRTY-EIGHT.

PART FIRST.

Thursday, June 16th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle were present except Mr. and Mrs. S.

It was written:

I AM sorry our other friends are not with us to-night. They assist us much in the efforts we design to make. Have them with you when you meet. But I am pleased to find so much harmony of feeling.

The Judge is better; and though the Doctor is quite unwell, yet we can vividly impress the Judge to-night, and, for the first time, he will be impressed by one of the spirits mentioned, personally. I am directed to say that this spirit will also try to make him feel the hand which he will lay on his brow in token of love.

My friends, could you but know the great joy there is among us, could you see the unspeakable happiness which animates every countenance at the spread of the glorious truths which are being revealed to man, and could you know the deep, earnest faith we have in those selected to give to the world the first revelations of the higher spirits to man, you would then realize the emotions of spirit in the spheres, the emotion of unmixed love at the dawning of truth. Our blessings with each and all.

SWEEDENBORG.

Now the circle will keep silence, and be as still as possible. The teaching will be of much importance. Therefore let each one be seated most comfortably, so as not to disturb the vision. Glorious things will be revealed of the God, and truth, and true liberty.

The vision then began, and lasted more than two hours. Some things were written in explanation as it went along. They will be found incorporated in the vision. After it was over, it was further written:

This general description is the first in this series. In the next vision we shall attempt to describe persons and scenes. The words uttered are worthy to be printed in letters of gold and set in tablets of silver. I desire to say, that before you meet you should examine yourselves, and divest your minds of all earthly ideas as far as possible. Let your hearts feel what was written on the gallery, "Love one another."

In the name of God, I declare to you, that in your purity, in your love of God and your race, is the whole end and aim of your existence. What will be the end of all these truths, so you yourselves are not the first to feel and act upon the revelations made? Hear, feel, and act. Good-night.

PART SECOND.

VISION.

The vision I had this evening was a continuation of that of last Sunday.

I PASSED along by the same pleasant path, by the side of that stream of deep, clear, blue water, and entered through the same gateway, and traveled on even farther than I had on the former occasion. My object now was to ascend that mountain, which I had observed just as I was leaving before. To do that, I had to penetrate far into the country which lay at its base, in order to find the beginning of a road which wound its way spirally around the mountain to its summit.

It seemed to me that it was not generally known in the country which I had already visited, that there was any road by which it could be ascended. Now and then one would find the path and ascend it, but he returned not again to tell to others how they, too, might go up. But I had reflected upon it, and had made up my mind that there must be some mode of ascending it, and I would try it. I saw from where I was at its base, what seemed to me to be signs of a path up along and around the mountain; and following its direction I went far into the interior, until I found it. It was a wide, smooth, beautiful path, gently rising all the way, but not difficult to climb, yet I saw no one traveling it. Here, too, I must pursue my journey alone. I entered upon the task with alacrity, and as I ascended I had even a more extended and beautiful view of the vast country below me than I had had before. As I went along, I found the journey truly delightful. Every once in a while I came across running streams of pure water, or cool springs bubbling out from the rocks, and here and there shaded bowers, in which the weary traveler might rest himself, lulled by the murmur of running brooks and elevated by the sublime and extended prospect before him.

It seemed that my first entrance into that country had at the time been known only to a few; but the knowledge that a mortal had penetrated where only disembodied spirits dwelt, had spread abroad among them, so that when I entered thus a second time, news of the event spread with great rapidity in all directions, awakening great curiosity to know what it foreboded. As I ascended I became visible to them, and they hastened toward the spot to get a nearer view. They came in all directions, from as far off as the eye could see: some from those deep valleys over which those mists hung, some from the hills which towered among the clouds. Some came with ease and some with difficulty, clambering up on

their hands and knees, and asking aid from each other. They came in vast numbers, aiming to get on to the level, where was the unfinished temple. I saw the vast numbers moving, yet I knew not what it meant. So I paused in my upward journey, and leaning with my arms upon a parapet erected along the outside of the path for the protection of travelers, I looked abroad to discover what this general movement meant. As they severally attained the level at which they were aiming, and which was plainly enough accessible to them, I observed that their attention was directed solely to me, and they were wondering how I had attained that position. I resolved to tell them, for I felt that I could make myself heard by them, vast as the assemblage was getting to be. But for that purpose I must wait for those in the distance to come up.

While thus waiting, I discovered a number of incidents of much interest.

I observed that those who were inhabiting the isolated hills, which I saw in that extended country, could not reach the level at which all were aiming without first descending from their elevation to a position far below that level, and then climbing to the new elevation. They had been very well content with their former position, and thought they had got as high as they could go; but when they saw me, a mere mortal, ascending even higher, a desire to go and do likewise was awakened; they found, not only that there was a higher elevation than their own, but that in order to reach it they must descend from their false eminence, and begin again the task of upward progression.

I observed, also, that the spirits who floated in the air, and gave light to that country, were not visible to its inhabitants, as they had been for a moment to me on the former occasion. They were now again visible to me, and I noticed how singularly and yet how beautifully each one's sphere of light mingled in and blended

with the others, and that there was a universal power of attraction of one sphere to another. They were ever attracted toward each other, until they blended in one harmonious whole, which lighted up that world with a splendor not of earth, but heavenly. And thus I was allowed to see a practical illustration of that great principle of attraction which pervades and governs the whole created universe, and is its eternal law emanating from the Great Mind which fashioned all things.

I observed, also, from one of the spirits thus floating in the air, a stream of soft, violet-colored light passing directly to some part below. I followed its direction, and saw that it passed to and enveloped the person of my wife. I saw that she was standing on the front piazza of her dwelling, with her back turned toward me. It had become known to her, as well as to all the others around, that I was intending to speak to them, and I saw that she was overcome by the same emotion which early in life had always prevented her being present at any effort of mine at public speaking.

I paused here in relating the vision, to inquire of the attending spirits what that singular colored light denoted? and it was answered: "A desire to progress."

At length that vast multitude had all assembled, and in plain and simple language I related to them my spiritual experience, and detailed the various steps which I had taken in my upward progress. I showed them how it was as easy for them as it had been for me. I described the pleasantness of the path I was now treading, and pointed out to them where it begun and how they might enter it.

When I had finished, I resumed my journey, but occasionally looked back to see what effect had been produced. I saw many hurry off to find the entrance to the path. Many found it, and began to ascend it: some with furious haste, which soon put them out of breath; some timidly, as if not exactly sure where it might lead

them; some tottering with old age, supporting their trembling steps by leaning on some younger one—and to them every step became more vigorous and youthful; some females, leading young children, who occasionally broke away to chase some little bird or pick some flower by the wayside; husbands and wives walking fondly arm in arm, sustaining each other, and some calmly, deliberately investigating every step, and increasing in speed as they ascended. In fine, from the level on which the multitude had stood, all the way round to the entrance to the path, and some distance up, they were scattered, hastening to ascend. I paused, and asked myself whether I ought not to wait for them. I immediately became sensible of the presence around me of several of those bright spirits whom I had seen. They answered my query: "No; that will continue forever. Pass thou on to thy task."

I accordingly resumed my journey; and as I passed around the mountain, turning my back on the scenes thus far familiar to me, I came in sight of one which I had much admired in Central America. There lay before me the beautiful lake of Managua, with its densely wooded promontories jutting out into it, the rugged mountains on its opposite bank, with their immense craters, rude and rough at their summits, and their sides a desert waste of lava or volcanic ashes. But here the rough edges had been smoothed by the hand of time, and the sides were covered with a verdant foliage and the habitations of man.

The earth, as well as man, had progressed.

At length I passed above the clouds which surrounded the mountain, and attained its summit. The clouds shut out from my view the country which I had left, and I stood alone on that mountain top, looking abroad upon a new scene. Immediately around and above me, floating in the air, were many bright and shining spirits, some of whom had been constantly with me from the time I had addressed the multitude. They were wel-

2
New idea
Count of marks

coming me to my new eminence. As I stood gazing upon the spirits around me, I wondered to myself what they found to do, and thought that a life of idleness must be sad and wearisome even there. My question was soon answered. I was told they were ever engaged in contributing to each other's happiness; and I saw that each of them was more regardful of others than he was of himself, and each one found his happiness in increasing that of others. I learned, too, that many of them were engaged in duties in the spheres below them, in teaching and elevating the beings there—that this was to them a labor of love, and was as vast as it was endless. And I learned that many of them were occupied in studying nature in all its operations, following planetary systems in their movements through the universe, searching out the laws which govern them, and seeking to learn the attributes of God from the works of his hand. I saw them pursuing the planets in their orbits, and learning at once the infinite variety as well as the infinite wisdom of the eternal laws which govern them. I saw them careering through space in the rapid comet's train, watching with wisdom's eye the process by which those vast masses of disjointed matter were gradually progressing to the formation of a world, from whence, also, in time should spring immortal minds to people eternity.

And I was bid to look abroad on the universe that was rolling before me in the illimitable regions of space, and behold how immense was the field in which the immortal mind might roam in search of that knowledge which is from on high, and will make it wiser and better unto salvation.

Far off in the distance, with lofty and dignified mien, seated on a throne, and facing toward me, I saw a bright spirit. On each side of him was an assemblage of spirits, who were attending upon him.

In a little while the whole of that scene moved toward

me, and the spirit who was seated on the throne approached so near that I could see the expression of his countenance. It was that of calm benevolence and wisdom. He caused me to be taken from the mountain—how I know not—and then he and his attendants, bearing me with them, returned to his former position.

When we arrived there, I saw on my left, high above me in the heavens, a very massive and magnificent temple, and a path that led up to it from behind his throne.

As I was describing this, it was written, through Dr. Dexter, "It is for you to ascend."

I did ascend—how, I can hardly tell. It seemed as if I was borne along by some power not my own. I arrived at the entrance to the temple. I want language to describe its beauties. The order of architecture was unlike any thing I had ever seen, but it was so perfect in its construction, that it was indeed pleasurable to look upon, and so just in its proportions, that I was unaware of its vastness until I measured it by a comparison with my own dimensions. It was built around four sides of a parallelogram, leaving an area inside, uncovered overhead, and capable of containing many thousand persons.

On three sides of the building were rooms devoted to the residence of spirits. There were three stories of these rooms and galleries running around those three sides on each level. At the other end was a platform, ascended by a flight of steps, interspersed with smaller platforms or landing-places. I counted the steps in the several flights. They were 3, 5, 7, 9, 7, 5. I ascended them, and stood upon the main platform. It was vast, and capable of containing many hundred people. From it were entrances to different departments devoted to the use of its inhabitants, and several openings or windows from which I looked, and had a view of the surrounding scenery. I beheld at one place a beautiful garden, over which rested a light more beautiful than any thing I had

yet seen. The foliage was of a beautiful green, but was transparent. At another place I looked abroad upon the universe, and down before me I saw many planetary systems, rolling in their orbits as various as the imagination can conceive: some in a horizontal plane, some rectangular, and others in various directions, seeming one vast discord, yet easily seen to be the wisest harmony when once understood.

When I had gazed for some time upon this scene, I heard gentle music from a numerous band, and vast numbers entered the temple.

The area and the galleries were filled by many thousands. On the platform entered the presiding spirit, with several hundred attendants. He took his seat facing the multitude, and bade me look upon them and read their thoughts. I did so, and in every heart there was this thought alone, GOD IS LOVE. Along the front of the galleries, on three sides of the area, were written in words of a bright silver flame, the words, LOVE ONE ANOTHER, in Arabic and Roman characters and German text. The space above the area was filled with hosts of shining spirits floating in the air. Some of them drew out a scroll and spread it before me. On it was written PROGRESSION, ONWARD, UPWARD, FOREVER. When I had read the words, they fell back and opened to me a view above and far distant; and there, as far as the eye could reach, I saw new scenes, new countries, new stages of progress, one above another without end.

When I had seen these things, the presiding spirit then spake to me these words (they were not uttered with vocal sounds, but I read the thoughts in his mind as he formed them, and so, it seemed to me, did all that vast assemblage):

“Go back,” he said, “to earth, and teach its darkened inhabitants how glorious is the country which they may inhabit, how bright the happiness they may earn for themselves!

“Beseech them no longer to grovel in the earth, seeking their enjoyment in earthly objects, but to look up, up, and from on high shall come to them the knowledge which shall indeed make them free. Teach them that happiness and heaven do not come to them as a gratuity, but are to be earned by their labor, to be merited by their toil. Teach them that God does not work by miracles, but by eternal, immutable laws, which are all-powerful to save, all-mighty to condemn, and which are not found in the glosses of men, but are written by his own Almighty hand, in all of nature that is spread out around them.

“Bid them look out upon the universe of worlds, which from your high place you can behold marshaled in their orbits through the boundless regions of space, and reflect upon the countless numbers of living souls inhabiting them and destined for eternity, and ask themselves if it can be that for this earth, which is but a grain of sand on the shore of eternity’s ocean, His eternal laws can have been suspended?”

When he had finished, I was led rapidly back to earth by the way I had trod in ascending, filled with the thought, How vast, how boundless must be that love which can thus open to man’s attainment such illimitable fields of happiness!

SECTION THIRTY - NINE.

Friday, June 17th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Mr. and Mrs. S. were present, besides the Doctor and myself.

The Doctor had been saying something about his connection with

me, in regard to these very extraordinary revelations, etc. As soon as he felt the spirit-influence, it was written:

I WANT to say a few words to you both to-night, in our old style of plain talking.

I have heard your remarks, Doctor, and I think I appreciate the feeling which gave rise to them. A mind like yours, tenacious of its own thoughts, hard to convince, and earnest in its efforts, is likely, when it gives its belief, to give it with the whole force of its power. The condition in which you are placed with the Judge is one which draws out the secret feelings of your nature. You venerate intellect and you appreciate sincerity. While you are convinced of the truth of spirit-intercourse, you look with respect and deference at that mind which has yielded up its own strong opinions to the same evidence of its truth. It is not strange, therefore, that while your whole soul is deeply imbued with the glorious visions portrayed to the Judge's mind, that your soul's reverence accompanies that feeling for the man also. You imagine your inferiority of intellect, and perhaps of purity, too; and while there are few minds in the whole world to which visions of like character could be given without either degrading them by vanity or perverting them by an unjust application, yet your mind is and must be on a level with his, or how could you act together? Fear not, then, to open your thoughts freely; fear not to say what you think to him, for he will properly advise you. Has he not passed through the same difficulties and been tried by the same circumstances? It is his mind, which from its experience, from his true regard for you, from his recognition of your own mind, and his appreciation of the feelings of your heart, that will exercise a healthful influence on your own in all its perplexities and conditions.

Dr. Dexter, Judge Edmonds in his nature is above the world in many particulars. That he loves you I am bound to declare, and that he feels for you I know.

Trust him, therefore, in every thing, and regard him as you do, and you will find when he reaches the mountain's height you will not be left lagging behind.

I rejoice at the feeling of childlike desires which actuate you both. I deeply participate in the common sentiment which I feel governs many of the acts of your life; and let me say to you, Judge, that the half has not been shown you, and your soul shall drink such draughts of pleasure in the contemplation of the scenes which shall be opened to you, that even on earth it will be a foretaste of heaven's joys.

BACON.

I then said, I wished to inquire whether, in receiving these visions, I made my mind passive enough, and placed it sufficiently under the control of the spirits? For I aimed at keeping full possession of my senses through it all, and at preserving the full exercise of my reason as to every thing that occurred, and I doubted some, whether by this preservation of my selfhood I did not interfere with this part of the teaching?

It was answered:

This is a lawyer-like inquiry. If your mind was incapable of reasoning when the vision was passing before it, how would you be able to decide on its authenticity? or how be able to receive the moral which it contains? No; we appeal to nothing but the simple power of discrimination. We do not ask, even in a vision, that your mind should be incapable of deciding upon the evidences presented. Your senses should all be alive, and thus you are the better able to decide on the nature of the vision, and whether it be from your own mind or from the spirits. This question, however, is proper; and while it rarely happens that a vision is presented to any mind without entirely abstracting from every surrounding object, in your case it is presented as it is for a special purpose, and it is best as it is.

We then proceeded with our criticism, and near the close of one of the papers Mrs. S. proposed to go home, saying she was too tired for the spirits to influence her to-night.

It was written:

I do not think you are the best judge, Mrs. S. They will affect you if you are willing, and I want you to be impressed after the correction of this teaching.

Then, after finishing that paper, it was added:

She will be impressed if she will be passive. Good spirits are around her, and are striving to elevate her mind and thought. She assists you much, and needs your help, too. So let her mind be yielding and quiet.

She was soon influenced, and said:

I come on an errand here this evening, or at least was sent to give that which might be a lesson when taken in connection with some of your teachings.

While a dweller on earth, my occupation was that of a humble artisan, and I earned my daily bread by following a humble occupation, and was only prevented from becoming an enthusiastic laborer in the higher branches of my profession by the force of circumstances, which made me what the world called a poor man. But there was ever within my heart a deep yearning, an earnest longing to excel in that in which I was only a lower-class workman. And having lived out the number of years which my body could sustain my soul on this earth, I departed to another sphere, and now I wish to show you in what I have been engaged since my entrance there. I was not what the world called a religionist, nor was I an immoral man, but my principles were based on the considerations which I could bring to bear in favor of natural reasoning, or, as you may call it, common sense.

Therefore, when entering upon my next state, I naturally shrunk back, being afraid to enter boldly a place of which I knew so little beforehand. I was very soon, however, met by some dear relatives, who received me with exceeding joy and thankfulness. And having explained to me the position which I should have to occupy, they told me I should be amply supplied with

instructors who would patiently and mildly teach me all I might desire to know; that whether it was much or little was wholly depending on myself, for knowledge is never forced on any one in the spirit-world. So after becoming initiated into the ways and customs of that place, or community as I may call it, I soon became deeply interested in the work which my hands found to do, and that was the very same occupation which I had so earnestly desired to excel in while on earth. It may seem strange, but it is true, that I was really engaged in the same occupation, and the same pursuits attracted me which had engrossed me while in the body, but my materials were of a more refined nature.

I resided in that place until I became too old a scholar to learn any more in that school. I was then impressed to go to another, and so I have been studying and laboring for years in this pursuit. Not in this alone, but it was the predominant topic which has engaged my mind, having the greatest attraction for me, and calling out my energies more powerfully than any thing else. My soul is alive to all the beauties which surround it; and looking about through the land where I dwell, I see many beautiful structures that man would call a vast conception of brain, and that, my friends, is the conception of my brain. That which is beautiful to the eyes of others is an emanation or a labor which has been brought into its present state by the energies which have been expanded and developed in my individual case.

Thus you may see that all spirits have an occupation or employment, but mine is not performed solely by me. There are many others assisting me, and learning of me that which has made me so happy and useful to those around me, while others are quite as useful to me, thus all depending on one another in our sphere of existence.

I can't speak more of my experience at present, but others will who will speak better. This lesson is only given as having a connection with your late teachings—a

filling up of shades, another tint in the coloring of the picture.

After a few minutes' interval another spake, through Mrs. S. He began by saying:

For the wicked shall be cast into hell, and all the nations that forget God. This is a solemn thought, my hearers, and one on which we should prayerfully and candidly exercise our minds. Yea, verily. It is a solemn thought. The wicked shall be cast into hell, where the worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched. Oh! my friends, flee from the wrath to come. Put away your sins, lest the son of man come in the night-time, and oh! ye sinners! beware how ye tempt an angry God!

This was the doctrine I preached on earth, this the way in which I filled the poor human heart with fear and trembling, with shrinking from a kind and beneficent God whose only manifestation is smiling on his creatures, by calling him angry! by crying up hell-fire, the horrors of those who disobey, and distorting every thing to suit my own peculiar views. I thought I was doing right and God a service by upholding these gloomy dogmas which I gave forth with such a zeal, with such bitter denunciations against the erring mortals who should have been encouraged and dealt kindly with, and not horrified and frightened with the contemplation of death.

I thus departed from earth, feeling happy that I had done my duty and borne my cross, and might enter into the joys of my Father's house. I entered the spirit-world, but was not met by the rejoicing and bright angels I expected; by some friends, to be sure, but their countenances were sad and gloomy; there was evidently some thing on their minds. Instead of rejoicing and songs of praise, it was rather a gloomy and mournful greeting on my first entrance, and a sadness came over my soul. I asked how is this? Why should heaven seem so gloomy a place? I said, Friends, can you tell me the reason? There is no rejoicing, no gladness in your looks. You

have some inward sorrow. Pray, convey me to Him whose cause I have served. Let me see the Saviour who died on the cross to redeem sinners. Give me something to repay me for all my labor.

One venerable-looking brother, whom I had known on earth, approached me solemnly, and, taking my hand, said, Our life-teachings have been wrong. They have caused more mourning and shrinking from the approach of death than happiness, driving hundreds away by their asperity who would have been glad to gaze beyond the veil of eternity. I asked, Can it be possible that my whole life has been spent wrongly, that I lived an inharmonious life, that instead of doing God service, I have done evil toward my fellow-men?

My soul was so troubled and cast down, that after pausing awhile, I said to that brother, "What shall I do to be saved?" He said, When you shall see your errors, and be willing to go down and redeem the wrong you have done in the hearts which are there, then, and not till then, will you begin your path of ascension, and by your labor blot out your own sins by assisting others to blot out theirs.

And, my friends, as soon as I was made conscious of my error, I began my work. I gave up my narrow conceptions of the Deity. Groveling worm that I was, how little did I know of the majesty of God! I began earnestly and trustfully to cast away the chains that bound my soul. I began my labors. And, oh yes, it was a labor, indeed, sufficient to wash away my many sins, when I shall have washed away the errors from those minds whose ignorance was made darker by my errors, and who might now have been farther advanced but for my teachings.

I am now ascending. I begin to see the beauties of the spirit-world, and the tears fill my eyes when I think what I might have been.

Friends! thank your God that you are free, and that

you are on the road ahead, far in advance of many of the dwellers in the spirit-land.

SECTION FORTY.

Sunday, June 19th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, he and his wife alone of the circle being present, it was written:

It will hardly correspond with your notions of spirit-feeling that we should feel disappointment. Perhaps this is not true in reference to any circumstance connected with earth, except when we know that those in whom we have more than a mere interest have not fulfilled our expectations in their aspirations for truth and goodness; but when our feelings are deeply concerned for the successful result of any duty which has been assigned us, and when we have labored for its accomplishment, and have drawn around us all the harmonies of action and sentiment, then it is that we feel disappointment. I feel this particularly to-night, as many spirits are here, and we contemplated to attempt the plans which I mentioned at a previous meeting. Any breaking in the harmony of a full circle always retards the character of the manifestation, and the subsequent circles are shorn of some of their proportions. Nothing should prevent the members of a circle being present at its meetings but sickness, or unavoidable occurrences which detain them. The addition which we proposed to the circle, we inferred would contribute to the freer display of a certain character of revelation, both from the individuals themselves and their magnetic power. But if there is any objection on their part to attend, or on the part of

any other of the circle, they had better not become members. What we suggested was for the good of all, but we can not control human feeling, therefore the harmony, the spiritual harmony must not be disturbed. While I regret the absence of so many of the members, I sincerely condole with the Judge for his continued illness, and can only say, that if he will strictly follow the Doctor's directions he will certainly recover.

From where the mellow light is constantly shedding its mild rays over the whole landscape; where, too, the brilliant tints of that gorgeous brightness which emanates from the spheres beyond illumines the blue space above with the sparkling radiance of a brightness greater than the sun; where the gentle breeze wafts the fragrance of a perfume, richer far than the odors or spices of Eastern fable; where the balmy atmosphere clothes each object with a purity surpassing man's comprehension; where each hill and valley is so beautifully laid out and fashioned in exact correspondence, that the whole landscape seems redolent in beauty of proportion and comparison; where spirits dwell and build their houses amid clustering bowers of roses, and under the shade of the spreading tree, near the bank of some murmuring waterfall, or deep secluded in the bosom of some lovely vale; where the carol of a thousand birds wakes up each echo to the clear tones of nature's music, or fills the air with the glad notes of joyous incense; where grand and magnificent structures are erected, and temples fashioned in all the chaste proportions of true beauty; where, when the duties or labor of the time are over, thousands, aye, thousands upon thousands of glad and happy spirits float in this gorgeous and yet mellow light, or walk in these shady bowers, or mingle in happy intercourse by the side of some gurgling fountain, whose sparkling waters bathe a bank of flowers, or glide peacefully through a grassy plain; where every heart is earnest in its desires to know more and more of the true properties of that wondrous

mind with which they are gifted; where every emotion is one of love, and every aspiration to make that love felt; where there are none of the strifes and cares of mortality, and none of the sacrifices of future happiness for present pleasure or profit; where the soul stands out in its proper guise, and meets the response of thought for thought; where the God who made this vast creation, whose immensity man has not the power even to imagine, is worshiped by the works of his hands; and where the spirit communes with its Creator through its own manifestations, come I, and I need not say how great must be the motive, how earnest the desire, how heartfelt the wish, that the truths I teach may be felt and appreciated, and that the feeling which brings me to you may be met by a correspondence which shall insure your constant attendance, and an ever-increasing and never-ending good; and with emotions of love toward you, and hope, oh! how strong! that indeed I may have been the instrument of directing your minds from the errors of time to the everlasting truths of eternity, I greet you in God's name, and cordially, with the spirits attending, bless you and all our friends who are absent.

SWEEDENBORG.

There is no more marked and natural impulse of the human heart than the earnest longing, the strong desire for some representation of the Power which it is taught to worship. And it is a singular confirmation of the remark that I am about to make, that this desire is manifest in every race of man known to exist on the surface of your globe. Go where you will, among savage or civilized, this corresponding sympathy binds them together, as emanating from the same source. The savage has his idol, or sees in some stupendous mountain the dwelling-place of that Great Spirit whose authority he recognizes, and whose power he worships. The Christian or the civilized erects temples and fills them with images,

or suspends in the niches or over its altars the pictures of the Christ, or the mother who bore him, or some of the many good men and women whom he has presumed to be God's representative on earth. What, therefore, is this sentiment but the soul's affinity with the source from which it sprang—its innate claim of kindred with the God who breathed it into the body he fashioned from earth?

It appears a plain demonstration, that were the soul a mere accident of creation, or if it had no intimate connection with the Creator, this feeling would not be found a universal sentiment, exerting so great an influence on the minds, hearts, and acts of man. On the contrary, we should find no desire to penetrate into futurity, to gaze into the profound darkness which shuts out every thing beyond the grave. We should observe man without any distinct desires above the earth on which he lives, and a being devoid of any religious sentiment, whether from revelation or education.

But God has no less wonderfully made man than he has naturally implanted the true desire of nature in that soul, which by right claims kindred with himself. And while this soul's desire has been wrongly directed by the admixture of creature worship with Creator adoration, God has placed all around us the evidences of himself, as the Power whom we should worship, the Being from whom wisdom, goodness, and love have emanated to both man and every other part of creation.

Thus while this desire is a paramount feeling in every heart, and while it actuates all men alike, the very images of himself which have been placed before the searching eye of man, have been neglected for some mysterious representation of God, surrounded by attributes with which the natural mind has clothed him.

Nature every where is God's acknowledgment of himself, and is enough to satisfy the most earnest longing of all men, if it had not been perverted by the arts of man

and the concerted plans to form a church on earth which should shadow to the world God as a spirit, but in reality personating God as a man.

I have made these remarks in a desultory way, merely to show you that God's works on earth are no less a response to the spirit's desire than are his works in the spheres. Nature claims that affinity as well as man, for God himself can only be seen through his works; and as we study ourselves and nature, we shall better appreciate what that nature is, and understand the high destiny to which it may attain by a life corresponding to the lessons which the most insignificant object of God's handiwork teaches.

Destiny of man! What can that destiny be, when the soul realizes it is free of itself to advance, untrammelled by the dark abstractions of man's dicta, or unretarded by the fables which he has devised to keep the mind in ignorance of truth, of love, and the universal application of nature's laws to nature everywhere existing! Good-night. SWEEDENBORG.

SECTION FORTY - ONE.

Wednesday, June 22d, 1853.

This afternoon, while sitting in my parlor with Dr. Dexter, I had a call from a friend. The subject of conversation for more than an hour was spiritual intercourse, and it seemed to be his object to impress on my mind the necessity of regarding with great disfavor, if not with absolute discredit, any communication that went to convey the idea that any one was singled out for any particular mission, or that I was receiving any truths that everybody else did not receive.

After he left, Dexter and I remained conversing on the subject.

When the spirits began to commune with us, it was evident they had heard our conversation, for thus they wrote:

IF all minds were alike, and all men gifted with the same faculties and properties of intellect, there would be no difficulty in propagating truth as it is, unshorn of all characteristics—plain, simple truth. Man is as susceptible of error as of truth, and it is only those minds which seem intuitively to comprehend its nature that are ready to receive truth under whatever form it may assume. There are men who contest truth, even when convinced of its reality or necessity. It is to such minds that we are to teach, not the higher manifestations, but the simpler forms; that if indeed they reject, the influence it may have shall not comprehend all that is important for man to know. Then what is to be done when all demonstration may be perverted by one, rejected by another, and denied and reviled by many? Is there not in the truth itself a power sufficient to overcome all opposition, all perversion, and accomplish its design and purpose of itself? Can that which so essentially concerns man, as the knowledge of what is right, be diverted, be made to produce evil instead of good? Shall those laws which indeed are from God, and when properly and wisely understood answer the intent for which they were instituted, be forced by man to the injury of his race? Alas! it is so. Alas! that this should be the great obstacle to man's progress on earth, and, in fact, is an all-powerful cause of his lingering by the wayside even in these spheres. What do I say, that truth itself is made a means of evil? Yes, and the history of man from the earliest period until the present time corroborates this statement. Look at every nation of which we have any knowledge, that has made its mark on the passage of time, and you will agree with me that my remark is just. That there has been no settled belief on what has been revealed as true does not in the least alter the truth itself. From the begin-

ning until the present time the eternal manifestation has been the same yesterday, now, and forever! What has been truth to the Egyptians is no less truth to the Romans; and the divine emanation has lost none of its purity, its godlike attributes, even though that truth is altered or denied by the mass of men at the present day. In your earth, light is from one source, and your philosophers have invented means by which they have divided it into what they call its several properties or colors. So with truth. Man's ingenuity has succeeded in giving it so many forms, that it has lost its distinguishing quality, and under the aspect they exhibit it in, it has little or no correspondence with the original idea. What, then, shall be done? How convince your minds that what we teach is true? How show you that you are not perverting the form of truth, and are not in your designs giving to the world that which bears no resemblance to the original, and which may generate evil instead of good? How know you that we have not pandered to those latent passions of your heart, that in their free exercise you may conserve the injury of your race, instead of the good which you believe to be your desire? Let us see. On retroviewing the history of man, we are struck with one prominent feature which that history presents. Though it may be masked by the peculiarities or eccentricities of his tribe or nation, we still find this characteristic to obtain, whether to the individual or to the race itself. Thus, the Romans forced all men to become Romans, or at least to feel the omnipotency of their power as a nation; and neither were they satisfied until they had incorporated into their government even the most distant countries, or forced them to pay tribute to their treasury, or to acknowledge the supremacy of their laws. It was so with the earlier nations; and from thence until the present day it has been a struggle with the powers of earth to embrace under their own rule as many of the weaker nations as it was possible,

in order to exercise an authority which should distinguish their possessions as belonging to or incorporated with their home government.

This feeling is not more a feature of general national concern than it is of sect or denomination, whether it regards administration of laws or the dissemination of faith, the advancement of good or the exercise of ambition, of cupidity, or evil of any kind. There has not existed on this earth a sect, a persuasion, an association, or a church but has exhibited this marked, this ALMIGHTY desire to persuade all men that they were right—to show by indubitable authority that to them, as a sect, the truth was given, and that no one could be saved unless he conformed to the requirements of their faith.

And the desire to make proselytes has not been limited to a fair and impartial exhibition of their claims, but they have forced their belief by the sword, the cannon, the torture, and the faggot. Can it be that the truth needs support from the unlicensed bigotry and passions of men! From the teachings of Aristotle to the protestations of Luther, aye, from the church of St. Peter to the log meeting-house of some Methodist preacher—in all ages, by all men, by saint, by savage, or divine—the whole history of man teems with evidences of the correctness of my sayings. And how is this? I have already answered, that man believing from the evidences he recognizes, insist that he alone is in possession of truth, and that others must believe as he dictates.

My friends, has this been the method I have pursued in my instructions? Have I, or has Swedenborg, insisted that you should believe what we have taught to be alone the truth? Have we raised your view heavenward, that the light thereof should fill you with pride or excite your vanity? Does, indeed, what we profess to have taught you as truth develop in you a desire to build up a name and fame as individuals? Have we taught you that the God you love regards you as progressing toward his

purity when actuated by the passions which retard your progress, such as pride, vanity, or ambition? To what end have we desired that any should be forward in the cause of truth? By any peculiar doctrines they were to inculcate, other than that man, influenced by circumstances surrounding him, was to work out his own salvation by denial, by self-sacrifice, by endurance, by persistent perseverance? Were they to be thus forward from the vain title of leader? Could it satisfy them that man should recognize them as such, when, indeed, their hearts were filled with all the passions of the man, instead of the attributes of a progressive spirit?

It is not to be told you at this time that there is as yet no common ground for spiritualists to meet upon. And why? Because all desire to impress the mind that they are the favored recipients of spirit-truth. And what will time say to this?

What will time say to this? What will it say to you who are borne along by its resistless tide?

It will say to you, Man, the truths you avow are the seeds of discord to thousands of your fellow-men. The assurances you have given to the world are firebrands which have burned up the faith of a nation. A nation! verily the world! And yet, though your names will be in every man's mouth, how know you that the revilings, the epithets, the curses that will be uttered, will not make your souls tremble and your courage falter? Have you vanity? Let it run riot now, for the time will come when even that vanity will not afford you consolation. Have you ambition? Let it soar in its wildest graspings, for the time is not far distant when the truth alone will hardly afford light to the dark way before you.

Be sure that in the integrity of your own single-heartedness, in your sole interest for the good of man, will rest your hope when there shall be clouds and darkness.

Now let vanity exert her sway and ambition her power; let the mind build up visions of glory and of

renown; but before you both there is but one object—the progressive development of your own souls; for without that you will be but stumbling-blocks in the way of truth—an eyesore in the path of holiness.

BACON.

Then it was added:

To-morrow afternoon or evening I will give you an idea of what I mean in what I have written to-night. I have long wished to say to you what is before you, and while the subject naturally drew out of me the dark side of the picture, justice requires that we should also truthfully picture the happiness, pleasure, and profit that will also result from your action.

Some inquiries were made as to our book, and how we should publish it, and it was said:

At the circle to-morrow night, when all are present, we will give you our wishes, and we hope they will be considered and acquiesced in without the least ill-feeling possible—all in love, and for the cause you advocate.

SECTION FORTY - TWO.

Thursday, June 23d, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's. All were present. When the Doctor's hand became affected, he wrote as follows:

By permission I am allowed to continue my remarks for a short time from last night, in order that I may finish the subject which I then commenced. It is suggested that the circle should, while the Doctor is writing, place themselves in such positions as will afford them most ease. The circle may talk, and other exhibitions may

be made, and no disturbance to the Doctor will take place. As this is my first formal appearance before all our circle, may I say that with no common feeling do I meet you, with no ordinary emotions of love, of joy, and of hope do I come before you, and I trust that your own hearts will respond to mine, and the many, very many spirits who are present, till all our souls, like one spirit, shall unite in the harmonies of truth, love, and the earnest desire to progress. BACON.

During the greater part of the residue of the communication from Lord Bacon, Mrs. S. was influenced by the spirits, and spoke to different ones in the circle. It was not material to record any thing said. In the mean time the communication went on as follows through Dr. Dexter:

When to the world has been given any idea predicated on the notion of God's connection with man, it has always been that it has assumed the form which certain minds have clothed it in. All religion which recognizes God as the author of all things, has also had grafted upon it the characteristics of man's own identity. And in view of this fact, it has been that some great mind has given the forms and ceremonies of the new faith, and has directed and contrived all that were said to be necessary, and elicited from the world a belief corresponding to the greatness of the idea avowed. I do not think I have made myself plain. But this is my meaning: In proportion to the power and ability of the leaders of any new idea has man been led to believe. For this purpose it has not alone been necessary that learned men should first receive, and then teach, but that the properties of earnest desire, firmness, courage, love, and an undying faith should be the characteristics of the mind, whether it be learned or ignorant.

There is in man's moral organization an ability to believe, whether it be truth or whether it be error. And this propensity has been so often incited that it has now become proverbial, that the greater the error the more

earnest the faith. You will now understand why I have made these remarks. In giving to the world a systematic statement of the truths of spirit-intercourse, it becomes a matter to us of much concern that the means through which our teachings are given shall possess all those qualities which will impress the world with the truth of those teachings, and at the same time in themselves manifest the ability to endure, to persist, to forbear, and also to love, to desire, that all men might come and see, judge for themselves, and examine and believe.

While man is ready to believe the most monstrous absurdity simulating truth, he is also ready to deny, to combat, anathematize any doctrine which conflicts with his own notions of God, and his manifestations. Singular as it is, it is no less true, that while man is ever ready to receive any thing new, he is also just as ready to reject any new idea, especially on religious subjects, that subverts the faith of his fathers, even if he himself doubts the evidence on which that faith is founded.

How remarkable a feature is this in his mental construction! And while it lays him open to all kinds of deception, and subjects him to influences which degrade him spiritually and mentally, it at the same time gives him a fierceness which degenerates into persecution, and renders him a fanatic instead of a reasoner. Important, therefore, it is, that men selected for the high purpose of becoming our agents in this work of moral regeneration, should be without guile in their own hearts—like little children—and yet firm as a rock, unflinching at the revilings, the reproaches, and the censures they may meet with in prosecuting the work in which they are engaged.

The moral effect of a good name is indeed great, but the moral effect of proper action is incalculable. The world will not look upon the avowed teachers in this cause with the same feeling with which they regard any individual who teaches them a new version of what they already know, or gives them a new reading of some

texts of the Bible. While it will examine all he might say or discuss, the possibility or probability of its truth, they will meet you as men who are digging up the very foundations of their early faith, they will not consent to discuss—their first action will be to deny, from denial proceed to censure, from censure to reproach, from reproach to denunciation, and from denunciation to a concerted attempt to destroy both yourselves and the doctrines you teach.

But there is one sublime thought connected with this subject, and that is, that truth will live under all circumstances, and it will also impart the life-principle to all conditions and exigencies, to every man that lives, and may live, on this earth—and even will its effects be appreciable in this sphere by every spirit whose aim is progression.

It is this grand thought which will afford you a pleasure unspeakable when you shall have positive and actual proof that it is true.

To know that a simple word of truth uttered with the purpose of benefiting man shall not only absolutely benefit him presently, but that benefit shall extend from earth even to the spheres, vibrating in the hearts of good spirits there existing—a connecting link, indeed, between earth and heaven—is fraught with a pleasure so ecstatic, that in its comprehension we have a foretaste of the joys of all good and progressing spirits. This, while it gives you a basis of happiness which the world can not take away, opens the door to many others which will strengthen you and nerve you to greater efforts and more determined action.

You will gather around you all the inquiring minds of the age, a phalanx of thought, seeking, from the evidence which nature everywhere advances, the pathway to heaven. You will associate with these good men, men of purity, spiritual minds, who have eschewed the grossness of their material natures, and live on earth the first probation of the spheres.

You will with them bring around you men whose minds, rejecting all the ambiguous doctrines taught as of God, are desirous of learning what the truth is. Unsettled on any point, they will ardently embrace spirit-truths as the very faith their spirits yearn after—the very food which will satisfy their spirit-longings.

And there will cluster around you men of all classes and denominations, whose minds, agitated by the conflicting sophistries of church and priest, are wandering about, led by the denunciations from the pulpit or forced by the fear of eternal perdition. Above all, you will gather into your circle men who deny God, men whose hearts, hardened by the many doctrines taught by ministers professing to be the humble followers of Christ, have found no light to heaven from their vessels of truth; infidels, whose souls, shut up in their gross coverings, see no escape from an eternal grave. To these you will come like sleep to the tired man—like the gentle murmur of music to the troubled heart—like health to the sick—like reason to the insane. You will return a soul to God.

You will feel in the elevation of your own souls that your birthright is eternity, and that your strength is the power of the truth you teach. Men will seek you, will bring their tribute to your feet; the wise and good, the rich and great, the noble and the clown, the sick and the needy, all will come to you, bringing their offerings of love, of affection, of reverence, of abiding confidence. The earth will send forth her thousand beauties to charm and to perpetuate the desire for still more; the heavens will send its coruscations of glorious light to illumine every feeling of your minds. Man shall, with one consent, bow to your teachings, as the truth indeed of God, and to you, as the chosen instruments of disseminating that truth. And when at last, worn out with service, you shall yield up life, your memories will be the star which shall guide the world to the portals of

that heaven in which your spirits are crowned with eternal glory. Will that recompense you for earthly trials? BACON.

After he had concluded, Mr. Warren expressed a wish that we might hear something from Sweedenborg.

When it was written:

My friends, in the teachings of Bacon you will have food for many days' thought. Will you, while my spirit, and the many, many spirits who are with you, are responding to the questions, aspirations of your own desires, permit me to defer what I have to say till our next meeting, and allow us to impress, for a few minutes, the Judge and Mrs. S? In love,

SWEEDENBORG.

I then became impressed with the following vision, which I related as I went along and it was taken down by the Doctor as I spoke:

VISION.

I am now taken to the same scene in which I was on two former occasions, and I ascend rapidly the path which winds around and up the mountain. I am now detained a moment at the spot where I beheld the scenery which I witnessed in Central America, and evidently for the purpose of showing me how rapidly its rough and volcanic features are smoothing down into lines of beauty, and its light is assuming that soft and grateful pink-like purple hue which I saw over the rest of the scene, and which is stealing fast over this part too, though as yet it is more dim and misty. I pass on to the top of the mountain, above the clouds which surround its summit, and I observe that though those clouds hide from my view the earthly scene which I have left, yet, I am able, whenever I desire to behold it, to penetrate them at a glance, and see it quite distinctly.

Now standing on the very summit of this mountain, I pause and look around. Before and below me in the deep-blue expanse, I see the countless worlds which I

saw before, revolving in their orbits, presenting the same clear, silver-like balls of light which I saw before. Now having more leisure and composure, I observe the scene more distinctly, and my attention is drawn to the far distance, that I may observe that there are countless worlds rolling in the immensity of space, far beyond what my eye can see or even my imagination conceive. Immediately above me, floating on the pure air, are many radiant spirits, who welcome me with smiles of joy. I look for the throne I saw before, its occupant and attendants, but I see them not. The spirits around me bid me pause awhile, they will soon come for me. At length I see in the distance a confused mass of spirits, but nothing distinctly. At length they approach me. It is the same throne I saw before, and the same bright spirit sitting on it. But before him, at his feet, is a closed box, shaped like the Ark of the Covenant in the Jewish ritual, but without its cherubim. At a signal from him it is opened, and from it is taken a spirit-garment like those which clothe the spirits around me. They tell me it is for me. They approach me as I yet stand on the mountain, and envelop me in it. The instant they do so I am lifted from the ground, and mingle with the spirits who are floating around me. Now I notice more particularly the singular light which surrounds the throne. It is a golden and silver light, each quite distinct, yet blended and mingled together. It is inexpressibly soft and beautiful. Behind the throne, a background, as it were, to the picture, is a screen of blue, like that of a clear, cold winter morning in our latitude. Now the throne and its attendants recede back to its former position. I go with it. It arrives at the foot of the path which leads to that temple above, which I observe that many are ascending. They pause on their way and notice my approach. They seem to be expecting me, as if they were going up there to meet me; and whereas I was only a spectator before, now I learn I

am to be an actor there. Now I am at the entrance to the temple. I know not how I have ascended. I only know that I am there. It is filled in all its parts, its galleries, and in the air overhead. As I approach, attended by a small number of spirits, my advent causes a bustle, and a passage is opened for me amid the crowd, and I pass in, and stand among those in the area. I see the same spirit presiding on the platform before me, and I now notice, what I did not before, on the cornice over the recess on which the platform is, an inscription on a white ground, in letters of blue and gold, these words, LOVE, WISDOM, TRUTH. The letters seem to have life in them. There is a flickering, tremulous motion to them, as if formed of numerous diminutive spirits.

Now the presiding spirit speaks, not, indeed, in audible words, but in thoughts which I and all that vast assemblage readily perceive. These are his words :

“I am that I am. Pervading all space, in every particle of matter, from its merest atom to the soul that lives forever, in the universe of worlds that roll far beyond where the human imagination can reach, the spirit of God exists. He has spoken into being this immensity of worlds. At His command laws were instituted that govern them, and through His ministering spirits those laws are executed. Vast as eternity, limitless as space, omnipotent over all created things, all-wise to design, all-powerful to achieve, God was, and is, and ever shall be. How miserable the conception that limits Him to place! How awful the error that clothes Him with the attributes of weak and unprogressing man! Oh! how wild the thought that He can delight in vengeance! Love is His very existence, and it is as vast, as eternal, and immutable as is His very nature.”

While he was saying this, the sides of the temple opened and exposed to my view the inconceivable vastness of creation, as if to impress me fully with the thoughts connected with the teaching.

Then he added:

“God is the very spirit of life in every thing; and it is eternally at work sublimating and progressing every particle of matter, from the rudest form to its ultimate end, the immortal spirit of man.”

Thus far my attention seemed to be directed to the right side of the temple. Now it is turned to the left. And there, in one part of it, I see that it is colored with light of a claret hue. From where I stand I see it is a room in the second story of the temple, in which are a number of persons all of the same hue, apparently at work. It is approached from the level on which I stand by winding stairs, up and down which people are constantly passing. I enter the room, and there find many persons of both sexes engaged apparently in making garments. There are tables and work-benches around the room. On some of them people are seated at work. At others, they are standing at work. Some are cutting out garments, some making them, some folding them; and there are shelves on which are piled the cloth and the finished garments. The room is presided over by a tall man of middle age, who recognizes me as one whom I had known on earth. I can not remember who he was, and there seems to be in him a feeling of mortification at my having found him at this employment. All the people in the room are clothed in the garb of earth, and the clothes they are making are of the dark hues of earth. The whole scene is unpleasant to me, and a number of persons whom I had known and disliked on earth are recalled to my recollection. One of them seems to stand close by my side, with a revengeful feeling in him. A somber feeling seems to pervade them all, and it reminds me of a work-shop in the State Prison. I turn to leave it, and discover that there is a whole range of work-shops similarly occupied, extending far down in the distance, each two or three steps below the other, but all visible

from where I stand. The whole is so like an earthly scene, that I can hardly tell whether it is a spiritual impression, or my own memory recalling the past. Pray let me inquire of the spirits, through the Doctor, how this is, and if I am right?

It was answered: "The spirits find it hard to impress you. It is late, and the circle is rather tired. Yet a few moments."

I then resumed my observation, and said:

I see now what this is. These are apartments appropriated to the spirits of the sphere below, who have begun to progress, but are not yet in a condition to blend with those of the higher spheres. The shops represent the toil in which they are engaged for the common good, and there does not seem to be much difference from an earthly scene.

Now as I am leaving the shops, and passing out on to the gallery, what an interesting sight is before me! It is the body of an old man, with long, white beard and hair, and a benevolent countenance, lying on the floor of the gallery. He seems to be partly asleep, or, rather, only partly conscious. He is enshrouded in his grave-clothes, and is attended by two bright and loving spirits. One of them is kneeling on one knee, supporting his head in his lap. The other is kneeling at his other side, clasping one of his hands, and waiting for him to arouse to a state of consciousness. They are his grandchildren; and, as he opens his eyes with increasing consciousness, one of them, who died when he was a child, reduces himself from his full-grown stature to that of a child, that he may be recognized. He was a good man, and they have brought him directly through the lower spheres here to be clad in his spiritual garments. As he recognizes them, they welcome him with countenances full of love and affection, and his response is very marked.

Thus I leave them, and pass rapidly out of the temple,

and down to the spirit sitting on the throne, where I am divested of my spiritual garments, with the admonition, "These are not yet yours, but ready for you when next you come;" and so I pass down the mountain, and back to earth again.

SECTION FORTY - THREE.

Sunday, June 26th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle met, and it was written :

As it may be some time before the whole circle will meet together again, will it not be profitable for us to reflect upon our own motives and action, and especially apply the admonitions uttered by the spirits' teaching to our own hearts? Self-examination is one of the most important duties connected with the spiritual life of man. We desire to know ourselves, and we make ourselves acquainted with the feelings, passions, and inclinations of our minds, and the use which we have made of all our abilities and opportunities. Thus we are led to question whether indeed we love one another, whether we love that God to whom we are to look as the origin of our own souls and the source of all good; and reflect upon our conduct toward man generally, and the friends by whom we are surrounded, and determine if indeed our hearts soar upward beyond the earth, and if the desire to progress in life is strong enough to enable us to overcome evil with good; whether we deceive ourselves, and if indeed we deceive others.

Candidly, therefore, let us ask ourselves what good we have accomplished, what evil have we rooted up, what happiness have we conferred on others? Have we

caused pain, have we knowingly violated friendship, and have we obeyed those moral and physical laws of God which we profess to admire, and by which we avow we are governed?

No life answers its intents that fails sternly to battle with itself, and daringly seeks, by the force of its own elevated desire, to lay up treasures in heaven. Come, then, let your hearts mingle together, and let the union be love and the desire to perpetuate that love till its power shall be felt and its influence recognized by the world as the effect of spirit-communion with spirit—till, in the conscious strength of love without guile, you are ready to lay down the body when its duties are over, and yield up your souls to God who gave them to you. Let us pray in spirit that virtue and grace—the true virtue of an enlightened soul, the grace which shall enable us to withstand our besetting temptations—may be our portion here and our characteristic in the spheres.

Our friends are with us, and they sincerely greet you, and with one desire point you upward and bless you.

SWEEDENBORG.

During the absence of some of the circle the meetings should not be interrupted. The necessity of this injunction will be easily understood. Neither am I willing that the time should be altered, as all arrangements are made to meet with you on these evenings. And I again suggest that your feelings, your views, and your desires (without discussion) should be interchanged during the sitting; thus you will understand each other, and may be the means of doing much good.

It may not be fully appreciated by you what is the effect of a pure desire to progress in goodness. A few words will not be lost if uttered now. The mind is developed by the causes which impress it. A child surrounded by evil impulses is impressed with that evil, and acts in accordance with the ideas the cause generates.

It is not alone that the effect is perceptible on earth, and of that you can judge, but the idea is so connected with his relationship in our world, that even here the effect is manifest in its perceptible influence on the lives and character of spirits themselves.

Could you understand the omnipotency of thought, the thousand ramifications by which it is associated with spiritual and material action, the many links by which it is bound to mind, penetrating even the immense number of worlds scattered through space, and laying under tribute to its demands spirits existing in those bright worlds—whose existence you believe but can not conceive—you would shudder at expressing a thought that was based upon any impression but that which would conduce to the demonstration of virtue or good. Thought, uttered thought, is the tangible evidence of spirit—it is spirit speaking—and though it is derived from the influence of objects scattered through the world, it is no less the expression of the spirit-understanding. All spirits are from one source; they are therefore but emanations of the same principle of which God is the whole; to think, then, wrongly, is to reflect back through the spheres the baleful influence of that thought, and to implicate perhaps the whole spirit-world in its effects. Can you, then, realize the reciprocal connection between the spheres and earth, and the earth and the spheres; that to us the thoughts of man, and the acts which are the result, may retard or assist our progress; that you may thrust upon us the influence of error and evil, or you may impart to us an impetus which will aid us to rise? or that we, by the force of that reciprocal action, may darken your hearts and cloud your spirits with mistrust and absolute wickedness?

Thus, then, it is not alone that in your strife to overcome evil you shed the bright light of your earthly progress on our pathway too, but in your strong aspirations to cast off evil, to purify your souls, to indeed overcome

evil with good, you extend by your spirit-bond the good you have derived to us your spirit-brothers here.

Judge, then, how a noble, a good, a truly elevated thought travels through earth and sphere! Like the almighty essence, of which it is a consociate particle, it pervades mind wherever mind exists, and being good, it develops good in every mind that thinks. Starting either from earth or spheres it vibrates in the extremest bound of creation, and elicits a response which sheds its benign influence on spirit, be it good or be it evil; and wandering from sphere to sphere, trembling in one soul as a light dimly burning, or in another flashing as a glorious star, or beaming as the sun, or mildly as the moon, it leaves its trace a path of goodness, and is received at last by that Spirit whose thought is universal love forever.

SWEEDENBORG.

Now let us retire; but remember, wherever you are we shall be with you; and oh! do not forget what has been said—do not forget each other; and when we meet again may your reflections be a source of joy, which shall generate joy in every heart. Good-night.

SECTION FORTY - FOUR.

Monday, June 27th, 1853.

At my library, the Doctor and I alone present, it was written: How many of the emotions of the mind do we find it impossible to analyze! The various properties characterizing certain feelings are often attributed to other than the right sentiments, and thus impress us with conclusions sometimes unjust, and more often erroneous. While the

mind delights in those associations which afford pleasure within itself, it derives no small satisfaction in imparting that property of conferring happiness on those whose sympathies correspond with our own. This condition of life is, indeed, one of true elevation. To possess the power of drafting from our own thoughts those which can be appreciated by others, and which, too, raise other minds far above the ordinary plane of common action, to a correspondence with thoughts approximating to a spiritual life divested of material combination; to aid by our own efforts the developing mind—take, as under our own wing, the incipient thought, give it shape, and form, and carry it with ourselves far away into regions where the mind has never traversed; to unfold to sense the beauties of spirit, and to identify all mental action with the thought of spirit in its search after truth, is indeed pleasure.

To develop mind, to generate thoughts where no thought existed before, and to give a freshness and vigor to the mind's requirements which add to its strength, while at the same time they shape it into beauty—can you not, then, realize that you have done good? Do you not feel that you are, although unconsciously, commencing the work of your mission?

Yes, my friend, when tired and weary, when your body shall flag, and your mind stagger under the labor before it; then, then shall the fact that you have given to mind one new aspiration after truth, one desire to progress, give you rest both to body and mind; and this will be the test of your success, for in this will you know that you have conquered ignorance. BACON.

Early in the evening, I had been telling the Doctor of an interview I had had with——, and that I had found her mind so changed, so many new thoughts awakened, and, I now asked, if these remarks alluded to that?

It was answered:

It matters not, whether from affection to you, or from

a desire to arrive at truth, that the mind is excited to act. If you have created this desire in your friend, will the good that has been done be lost? Have you not opened the gates of the spheres for her entrance, and will they be shut against her claim? No—good is truth, and truth is goodness; therefore the spark that has emanated from your mind will light up a desire in hers, which will never go out until it has burnt up all the errors that a life of the world has created.

Thus have you the application, and it is true; for if I can understand your mind—and I am told by one who watches you that I am correct, that your feelings have been pure, and your pleasure has been pure—your reward will be the satisfaction of leading a mind bound to earth to seek for its happiness in heaven.

SECTION FORTY-FIVE.

Thursday, June 30th, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's. Except a brief vision to me, which, being personal, I do not record, the communications were all through Mrs. S. All of them also were personal except one, which was in the following words:

I SEE a great city in the distance; a great, busy place. I see one man coming from that city. He looks old, yet is tall and erect, and his hair is gray. Under his arm he has a roll of paper. He is coming on some important business connected with this place. Some have gone out to meet him. To them he is unrolling his papers, and spreading them out before them. They have found something new there, and look incredulous. They shake their heads and turn away, yet their attention is arrested. They crowd up and look at the papers. They

read them, pass an opinion upon them, and turn away. He has shown them what they are, and now his part is done. He therefore turns back to that city, but he leaves the papers behind him. With his back toward me he walks slowly along, in deep meditation, and with his arms folded. He is alone, and no one notices him. They are too earnestly engaged looking at his papers. Now a great crowd has assembled around them, and it is very much excited by something wonderful they have found in them.

Now they are passing them over their heads to their leaders, and spreading them before them, and asking their opinion. If they receive them favorably, the crowd are willing to, but they want their sentiments first. I see some old men, with spectacles on, who are examining them. They go together in the corner of a large room, and pore over them. Some gather in groups and discuss them: some turn away impatiently, and walk up and down, gravely considering them.

Now I see some of the priests come up to examine them. One of them has found something objectionable. He declaims against it as unlawful. He says it will ruin the people; it will not do to let the people get hold of such doctrines. He is very much excited.

But another one of them is examining them all over very quietly. He has found something beautiful, and points it out to those standing near him. He says, That is a beautiful idea. It has never occurred to him before, and it is worth examining more closely.

Now one of the priests is approaching, so puffed up with pride and self-conceit he won't look at the papers, but turns away with a sneer.

Now some learned men are examining them. They say, Show us the philosophy of this thing, give us the laws which govern it, let us know the science of it.

Now they have all got into a wrangle about it; they dispute, and all talk together.

The crowd who first received it seem to have dropped it, and it is among the educated classes. They disagree about it; some of them want to keep it among themselves, while the crowd are waiting their opinion, and as soon as it is given they will consent, with some exceptions.

Now the papers begin to look large. How they are spread out, and carried round, and commented on. Almost every one has a leaf or a copy. And spirits are standing by their side while they are reading them, though they can not see them.

There is very great excitement among the intellectual classes. They have all got hold of them.

And now approaches again the man who brought the papers. Crowds of people are going to him. They think he must know all about it. Some are inquiring of him, some are abusing him, calling him all sorts of names. Some shake hands with him, and yet are afraid people shall see them do so. But they seem to think so much of him. Yet he wears the same calm expression of countenance to all. He tells them there are the papers, just as they were given to him, and it is not his fault if they differ from their opinions. They must judge for themselves.

I see one man approaching him, who is very dark and repelling. He threatens him. He would annihilate him if he could, he talks so bitterly. Yet he sits calmly midst it all. Close by him stands a majestic spirit, who sustains and strengthens him. That causes him to look so firm. He loses none of his dignity or self-respect by any thing that dark one has said. He is neither awed nor overcome, but is sorrowful. I see the tear glisten in his eye, as he turns hopeless away.

That dark man is surrounded by a gloomy cloud. He has two or three others with him. He stands up higher than they; but they all feel the chilling influence of that dark cloud, but not with such force and fury as it works on him.

What a storm is raging around him who brought the papers! There is such a dust and confusion around him that I can hardly see him. But he is not forsaken. There is something bright and shining right over him. The storm will not hurt him. He has six or seven people near him. How bad they feel! They are crying, and I see him no more, while the storm rages with more violence than ever.

But ah! now I see him again. There he is, right in the light! The storm has passed away, and he looks happy and pleased. He seems strong and young. Just see how beautiful every thing is since the storm has gone! how many green and beautiful things spring up all around him! The air is clear and balmy. A great many old things have tumbled into ruins, and every thing has a renewed and youthful look. Those who were near him now look so rejoiced. The storm has damaged them some, too, but it has done them good. Their countenances look clearer and better. He has gone through a great deal, but he has become purer, and looks like an infant. He is so spiritual. He is the image of a good man: serene, joyful, and happy. He was suffering in a good cause, and see what good has come of it.

Now all that excited crowd trouble him no more. He looks so beautiful, fresh, and new. The sun shines so brightly over him, and the birds sing so cheerfully around him.

And now he passes from my sight, in a cloud of glowing light. And so, dear friends, good-night.

SECTION FORTY-SIX.

Sunday, July 3d, 1853.

Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren present.

Dr. Dexter was influenced to write as follows:

I AM glad to meet you again, my friends, for many reasons. I am happy to see all my original circle together; for with spirits, as with men, we form friendships which are indeed based on the true affections of the soul. And when we have striven for a long time to open to the mind the beauties and truths of our connection, without success the intimacy begets a deep feeling of interest, especially where we finally accomplish the design of our labor. Thus with you; for a long time I toiled with the Doctor, and I have felt what that yearning of the heart was that actuates his wife; and when, indeed, my labors were triumphant, I was drawn to him and all his family by ties stronger than those of life. I have watched him and his family sometimes hourly, and have endeavored to direct his thoughts toward those subjects on which his spirit yearned to be satisfied. And I have toiled to diffuse that spirit of harmony among all, which is so important for progression and improvement.

I have never, during my intercourse with you, in any sense, flattered the selfish propensities of your nature. They of themselves are all-powerful, and they usurp the mind when least expected. They maintain possession sometimes under the garb of an earnest desire for independence of thought and action. But when to the soul the true character of these feelings is laid open, it learns how fearfully it has been deceived. For indeed, then, what has been viewed as the spirit's right is found to

be the exercise of feelings arising from the predominance of selfishness in thought, word, and action.

My friends, the life given you on earth is one filled with all manner of temptations besetting you on every side, and so varied and multifarious that you are deceived ere you are aware that you have been tempted. What would be the benefit conferred on man by opening to his comprehension all the mysteries of spirit-life and all the beauties of the spheres—revealing the truths belonging to his material and spiritual nature, if we were not able to teach him how that life on earth should be directed; how to govern his passions, how to progress, how to live that his death may be productive of life everlasting in happiness? Could we meet you face to face, and impress on your senses the undoubted evidence of our identity, you might recognize then that you were, indeed, destined to live with *us* forever, or to dwell in those dark spheres below us, where the light of truth is scarcely manifest. But we come to you, and though believing in our presence, you may yet doubt, and fear that you are deceived. There is the doubt that you may not understand our teachings; and there is the doubt that our teachings may not refer to yourselves personally. Hear me to-night, and let not only your minds understand what I say, but let your hearts open and receive the words of your spirit-friend. Heart must respond to heart, spirit to spirit. The thoughts that agitate your souls and excite the action of your selfish propensities must be laid under the stern control of your pure desire to love nothing, to know nothing but the truth as it is from God; that your hearts, pure and undefiled, may meet the response of those of your friends, that you may indeed bear each other's burdens, and assist each other in your pilgrimage toward and through the spheres.

I greet you in the fullness of love undying; and I charge you to open your thoughts to one another, and to mingle your affections together; that together you

may wander toward the mark of your high calling, which is the development of the perfection of your natures.

SWEEDENBORG.

Here a pause having ensued, the occasion was taken to ask some questions relative to spirits requiring sustenance, when the following was written :

Mr. Warren, when I said that the sublimation of matter rendered it, as it were, independent of the various influences which govern matter in the gross, I thought I had comprehended all such questions. But these things come under the heads of subjects treated of in the next volume of our teachings, respecting which I have some directions to give, which must be followed.

I have not manifested myself for several days, the reasons for which I will give to Dr. and Mrs. Dexter privately. But to-night I wish to say a few words to you, and wish you to reflect seriously on what I say.

It is not for the purpose of showing to the world that spirits can confer with man, or that God's law obtains in spirit-connection as well as physical, but it is for the purpose of showing you the truths of your spirit-life, after the spirit has left the body, that we leave our high estate and the blissful life of the spheres, and come to earth to teach you.

What do you desire? Can one say, Oh! how my soul is refreshed with the bright visions of progression opened to us by your communications, when he gives way to all the influences of evil thoughts, and renders our teachings of no avail? It is well that your own hearts are brought up before the bar of strict examination, and all the passions and feelings which have governed them are exposed to the searching investigation of truth. You desire that you may, step by step, ascend from one condition to another, leaving behind you the evils and errors of your material nature, till at last you may stand in the presence of those bright spirits whose minds are

pure and undefiled before God. Your spirits long for the time when you may wander among the beautiful scenes of the spirit-world, when you may drink up from every object around the truths of nature and of God; when filled with joy inexpressible you may give utterance to thoughts which reach the intense desire for perfection; when divested of every thing impure, the spirit sees in spirit the eternal essence freed from all admixture with earth; when not a thought, not a desire, shall bring back its earthly connection; but filled with love and inspired with wisdom, it lays its grasp even on the footstool of the throne of God, and claims possession as its birthright! Is this so? Verily, and I believe it. But even if it be so, how does your life on earth correspond? Are you patient? Do you forbear? Are you willing to sacrifice your own feelings and give way to the feelings of others? Do you love purely, justly, and unselfishly?

Can you lay your hands on your hearts and say, I have given no one pain, I have controlled my own nature, and in my desire to progress, in my love for the truth of God I have done to others as I would they should have done unto me? How is it? Is there no lurking desire in your hearts that has led you astray? Have you studied the necessities of another nature, and made just allowance for all its manifestations? Have you loved as God loves—willing to trust, willing to suffer, willing to yield for the sake of love? Oh! have you brought up the deep motives of your soul and laid them bare to the examination of your own consciousness? I ask in the name of God, have you felt that you have advanced one step toward purity?

These questions behoove us to come at once to the investigation of our propensities. How, then, have you governed what you know to be the controlling influences of your nature? Can you say, In the life I have led I have shown to the world my faith in spirits by following

the directions they have given us? Can it be possible that the world will believe that spirits can communicate with man, and that communication is for good, when the great and glorious truths which we reveal are hidden by your own lives and denied by your own conduct? You will say, I have tried; yes—and I believe you; but have you shut your ears to the demands of self, and alone opened your understandings to the truths of God? Reflect for a moment.

Here ensued a pause, in which some remarks were made and some desultory conversation held, when the writing was resumed.

Life is forever—and forever must that life struggle. Forever must the desire for good be paramount to the demands of evil. Were it not so, there would be no progression. Why it is so, we shall learn when we stand in the celestial spheres, gods in wisdom and in perfection. But as the spheres are above, so must be our spirit-flight, soaring on the wings of divine love, and wafted by the breezes of earnest and truthful desires. Thus, when we have triumphed over the influences of matter, we become the causes which govern and control it; or, indeed, the instrument by which the divine laws are executed.

All nature is not alike, but in all nature is the principle of good, instead of the principle of evil. The cares of life are the evils which beset us; and there are others with which we have to battle. But as I have asked in love, for your self-examination, I tell you in love to go on, for the day is not far distant when, eye to eye and face to face, you shall have the tangible demonstration of what I have told you; and your souls shall feel that one triumph over self is a victory which enhances not alone *your* happiness, but gives speed to the footsteps of those who precede you here, and will give to your spirit-life a joy I can not explain.

But, above all, let your hearts open to one another. In the interchange of thought for thought you shall find how

much you are bound one to another, how much you can assist one another, and how much love there is in the human heart.

Some remarks were made, when it was added:

I am glad you have contested my remarks. I will explain. Do you not, when you are charged with doing or saying any thing which conflicts with the opinions of others, or when your own opinions are opposed, feel that after all you are right, and have the *consciousness* of feeling that you are right? Do you not in this forget that others may feel just as you feel?

If you will analyze your hearts, you will find my words true.

I have nothing more to say, but that you all should examine yourselves. What I have written is for thought, for earnest, deep reflection; and I trust, when next we meet, you will give me an expression of your feelings on what I have written.

SECTION FORTY - SEVEN.

Sunday Evening, July 10th, 1853.

Present, Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren. Dr. Dexter was influenced, and the following was written through his hand:

WHEN in some moment of life when the soul asserts its supremacy and controls the natural tendencies of our material nature; when catching in its aspirations a glimpse of its glorious destiny it pours forth gushing from itself the finer feelings of its spirit-origin we yield to the claims it asserts, then the heavens, studded with its bright stars, offer a lesson at once divine and full of

wisdom. We watch some star whose twinkling rays penetrate to our hearts, and we feel the soul springing forth from its body and, rising upward, speed its way toward that star, as if it were its home. We people it with our friends, and we clothe its mountains and valleys with woods and grass and herbs and flowers and murmuring streams, and birds that flit from tree to tree and sing their songs of love. In some fair spot, sheltered by a lofty mountain, surrounded by shady trees and bathed by a gurgling brook, we locate our home. There, where the air is filled with the fragrance of flowers, and echoing the songs of birds; there, where the sun ever shines, and the landscape eternally presents new beauties to attract; there, where the soul feels that it is free to act itself, bound by no observance of form or custom, do we meet with those friends whom on earth we loved most, and in whose hearts we found our own identity. Yes, we look at that star and watch its sparkling, as if every twinkle was a sign of love, and bid our spirit revel in the scene its own yearnings have called up. We watch, but it is the vigil of the weary spirit tired of the hard realities of life, knowing its prerogatives, and making tangible its sympathies. To us the vigils we keep on earth elicit feelings assimilating with the spirit's watch. Oh! when we have left our homes, and the bright, the inconceivable glories which there exist, drawn by the irresistible desire to instruct, to teach the truths, to us made certain; when weary with effort and tired with the vain complainings, the severe reproaches, the unjust charges, and the foolish bickerings of our dearest friends, we look upward and behold our star shining amid the works of God, then our hearts feel what the instinctive action of the soul must be. The soul! its birthright is the whole of nature. Yes, beyond the spirit's range, above its conceptions, far, far away to the east and the west—to the north and the south—with worlds on worlds, and spheres on spheres—where the light of suns unnum-

bered develop the mighty manifestations of its Father and its God—where reign worlds bright and dazzling, and exceeding even the wildest dreams of spirit-enthusiasm; filled with beings more brightly beautiful than beauty's impress on the image of its Creator; yes, again yes, where the thought stretched beyond itself tries in the vain attempt to calculate, is the soul's heritage—its eternal birthright. It claims it all. It owns no confinement, it recognizes no barrier, but in its progress lays its hand on all as its own! Can *we*, then, who have just stepped over the threshold of this inconceivable heritage, and have witnessed its relationship with nature, soul, and God, can we hesitate, then, in face of our difficulties, our trials, our disappointments, still to go on? No, with us the beginning is the end; for its commencement is the never-ceasing effort till the mission is past.

Thus, then, come I to-night, looking to my work on earth as the star which I people with souls emancipated from error and clothed with truth; ushered into a liberty of eternity, and filled with a desire that leads to God.

I salute you and I bless you. There are sympathies connecting spirit on earth with spirit in the spheres. This sympathy binds us together. In it are love, truth, and eternity.

SWEEDENBORG.

A pause occurred here, when the conversation turned on *progress*, and it was observed, that we often see but little improvement in an individual in a lifetime. The writing was then resumed.

I imagine that what is termed progress is but imperfectly understood. The remark you made, Mr. Warren, is comparatively true. Man, on earth, manifests but little of the progress he has made, even in a lifetime exceeding the age of man. The reason is obvious. The soul's progress is in itself. How far the material surroundings may be cultivated I do not pretend to say, but that his organs alone obscure the positive advance that the soul

has made, I verily believe. One obstacle to the direct observation of what may be the progress of spirits is fear of the ridicule of the world. The finest, the tenderest feelings of the heart are those most commended in man, but they are those most satirized. Few men have the boldness to avow that the older they grow the more they appreciate what belongs to themselves and their race. Thus, confined in bondage worse than slavery, they suffer the soul to develop itself, unknown, unacknowledged, and unconfessed. But miserly though this may be, the gems thus hoarded up in life pass current in eternity.

Progress is the inception of truth and love, and the consequent development of the desires and affinities which correspond to these two principles. A soul progressing obtains one idea by which it is placed in position and location to associate with others who have also learned the same; and they develop together an idea still more in advance. Thus they progress on the minds inception alone. But freed from all restraining influences here, the spirits act as well as conceive, and thus, step by step, they traverse the spheres, till at last they reach the eternal idea, the divine embodiment, and are perfect even as God is perfect.

A conversation here ensued, arising out of the last remarks. Allusion was made to the idea advanced by some spirits that we should all progress until a certain point, where, becoming Godlike, we should lose our identity by absorption into the Godhead, whereupon it was written as follows:

And you will never lose your identity. If God designed to absorb all souls into himself, there would have been no necessity at first to give off from himself distinct identical germs, possessing all the characteristics of independence. Therefore, as every spirit is independent in his mind and its exercise, how could God contravene his own institutes? That is impossible, and from this I reason.

I shall not keep you up much longer. The excessive

heat under which you are all laboring retards free manifestation; but if you wish to ask questions, I will answer.

A pause having occurred, a discussion arose as to how spirits could pass through solid substances; and it was asked how it was possible for a spirit, clothed in garments, to pass through solid matter, unless the garments possessed the same aptitude with the spirit's body, of uniting when severed, by their own inherent power. In answer to this and the conversation generally, it was written:

In the first place your ideas of spirit-body—of the advanced spirit, are as crude as matter. Spirit-body or spirit-matter is intangible; and it is so sublimated that it is like electricity almost. We do not pass grossly through matter, but we *will*, and like a current of electricity, we pervade matter. Our clothing is adapted to our conditions, and thus we are able to take with us what is on us. Spirit passing through matter is like the life which is in all things, or like the influence of God's power on all material things.

Of course [I refer alone to the higher spirits. There are such who can exist in matter, and pervade its every part with their own organization.

This is my explanation. Good-night.

SECTION FORTY-EIGHT.

Thursday, July 14th, 1853.

Present, Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren.

Dr. Dexter was, after a long delay, influenced (he being somewhat indisposed), and the following was written:

How difficult it is to control the working of the human breast, and how fruitless are all our attempts to reduce

thought to the arbitrary restraints of sect or society! There is a feeling paramount in every mind, that the sentiments which govern our own characters are either misunderstood by others or intentionally misrepresented, that our feelings are pure, that we ourselves are willing to yield to the peculiarities of others, and that we try to add to the comfort and happiness of others by whom we are surrounded. Perhaps this may be so, and I doubt not there are those who strive to subdue their own inclinations, and whose earnest wish is to make others happy. This labor with our own passions must be productive of good, must root out the lurking evils of our own nature. But, alas! that even in this effort to subdue the mind's propensities there should be at times as much of evil as of good. It is not enough, that we strive to regenerate the tendencies of our own natures; it is not enough that we toil for our own perfection, if we disregard the feelings of others, if engrossed in ourselves we do not recognize the trials, the troubles, the perplexities, the cares, and anxieties of others, the struggles and desires to do right, and the irresistible force of compelling circumstances that direct the action into other channels than the one intended; if we do not penetrate beneath the surface, and unfold the ceaseless efforts in another mind to accomplish the same results as we ourselves design.

O! how the heart, earnest and sincere, striving to advance, and yet bound by circumstances which it can not control—how this heart, alive, yes, sensitively alive to every thing good, seeing beyond the limits of its own action the bright and beautiful home for which it yearns—how, I say, does it shrink within itself, frozen with the cold reply or the repelling look, when even that word or look is from one to whom that spirit wished to minister for good.

Friends, man is the veriest creature of circumstance, controlled by causes and influences which almost in spite

to himself direct his actions on earth. Deal tenderly, then, with that spirit who, bowed down by the weight of care unknown, hideth his bitterest troubles in his own breast, that he alone may suffer. Gently regard all his doings. Credit him for the deep susceptibilities of heart, and learn that to him no sacrifice is too great, could he make you to know how hard the struggle with self, that he may endure troubles in silence, that there may be no cloud between others and happiness. It is the warm sunshine and the gentle rain that vivify the seed, and bring forth the fruit and the flower. God's goodness is gentle, it is tender. In his merciful provision, in the due execution of his laws, he has arranged every thing for the good of man. He has with the practical given us the beautiful. Can you look on the earth when first the morning sun greets the mountain and the dale, the ocean and the lake, and witness its bright beams stealing over tree and shrub, gilding their branches with golden light, and infusing into every dew-drop that kisses leaf or flower the brilliancy and dazzling beauty of the diamond, and behold the mighty influence of its gentle beams, as from the sky it chases the darkness of night, and comes in glorious pomp with red and gold, and pink and purple, throwing its radiant mantle on its pathway through the heavens, and giving to every plant, and tree, and flower, and the humble grass, new beauties and deeper tints to herald its coming?

Hear the joyous birds—their gushings notes fill the air and merrily bid it welcome. The cold chills of night give place to the warm breath of morning, and then from rose, from violet, from hawthorn, and from mignonnette there ascends the perfume of celestial day. Earth hums its grateful greetings, all creeping things murmur thanks, and the sparkling brooklet as it leaps from stone to stone laughs out glad thanks, and dashes on in joy; the cattle on a thousand hills bellow forth their notes of praise. Man looks up, the sky is beaming in its radiant glory—he

looks on earth in its deep robe of green, and it reflects back its tints. He looks again, and again he looks—earth, heaven, birds, flowers, and all created things, are stamped with the impress of its glorious light, so gentle, so calm, scarce breathing life, and yet so strong in their several powers, all yield to its influence and all respond to its might. What would be the effect if it came scorching and drying up the earth, burning and destroying and blighting every thing in its course?

My friends, seek in other hearts the image of your own, and so shall you soothe the weary, tired spirit, so shall you comfort and restore. I bless you.

SWEEDENBORG.

SECTION FORTY-NINE.

Sunday, July 24th, 1853.

Last evening, after an absence of about three weeks in the country, I returned home, and met the circle at Dr. Dexter's; he, Dr. Warren, and I alone being present.

The Doctor was soon influenced, and wrote:

I FEEL at home once again. I confess I do not like traveling and the Western scenery. But I have interfered to say one word of greeting to those present, and to assure them that I am glad to meet with them once more. Swedenborg suggests that some subject should be proposed in which your minds have been engaged for the evening's business. With this I am agreed; and now, as time is precious, let us all go to work with a will, and accomplish what is before us. In love,

BACON.

He added

Swedenborg wants the last communication read.

And it was so done. It was then written in another handwriting.

When we are daily meeting with our friends, their society becomes a matter of common habit; but when we are for a time separated we feel their absence, and regret the loss of their society. But when again we are united, our affection seems to be renewed, and a new pleasure occupies our hearts, and we rejoice with them and with ourselves. Judge, I welcome you back, and I am filled with pleasure that your journey has been so satisfactory. I can not believe that you will encounter more of the revilings of the world than you have received when your back was turned to the faces of the foes of truth. Truth fears no foe. It seeks no covert place from whence to sound forth its claims. It is ignorance and prejudice that, lurking in secret haunts and dark places, hurl their envenomed shafts at those who advocate the freedom, right, and justice of truth. I grasp your hand, and I feel in so doing I meet the returning pressure of an honest man.

Friends, I bless you, and bid you God-speed in all your acts.

SWEEDENBORG.

Mr. Warren here alluded to some teachings which he had lately seen, and which purported to be from Sweedenborg, and he desired to know if they were from him?

It was answered :

Let it be understood, once for all, that since I have been permitted the use of the Doctor's hand, I have not written any thing through any person's hand, except, perhaps, an answer to some question, or a greeting to some individual for whom I have a particular friendship. I have felt it important that I should refrain from promiscuous writing, that it might give more authority to our work, and that the Doctor might be satisfied that what I said to him two years since was true.

After a pause, it was added:

Judge, are you able to be impressed for a few moments? I will try and explain why there are so many communications purporting to be from me, by showing to your mind the reasons.

I replied, Yes, I felt very well. And I withdrew my thoughts from external objects in order to aid them. In a short time a train of thought was thrust upon my mind, which I followed for a while, when I asked, Am I right in my conception of your ideas? and it was answered through the Doctor:

Go on; we will tell you as you proceed.

I then gave utterance to the following:

It is now about one hundred years since Sweedenborg proclaimed to the world that he had personal intercourse with the spirit-land. It was the first instance since the days of Jesus that spirit-communication to such an extent had been known among men. There had been occasional instances during the previous fifteen or sixteen centuries, in which there had been spirit-intercourse, in which the spirit had made repeated attempts to open communion with man. But the intercourse through him, proclaimed to the world by him, was of a more extended and marked character, and had attracted the attention of mankind to a greater degree than any thing since the Crucifixion. When he died, unlike most men, when he entered the spirit-world, he knew all about the existence on which he entered, in consequence of his previous experience. He at once discovered how much of what he had taught was true, and how much erroneous; and how much it would benefit mankind if the knowledge he had acquired when in the body could be diffused abroad among them generally. In this respect he was far ahead of many who had long preceded him in their entrance in the spirit-land. He felt it to be at once his mission to endeavor to extend that knowledge, in order that he might elevate man from the depression with which ages of ignorance,

bigotry, and superstition had afflicted him. He therefore devoted himself exclusively to that object, and sought for aid throughout the whole spirit-world; reasoning with some, importuning others, demonstrating to inquiring minds the reality of which they had no conception; calling on philosophers for their assistance, and upon affection for its aid; in fine, invoking throughout by considerations not only affecting man's elevation upon earth, but his elevation and happiness in the next sphere, their coöperation in this great work. This labor of his was conducted with the earnestness that could flow only from the most settled and thorough conviction of the reality and practicability of spiritual intercourse.

That conviction which attended him in his passage from this world to the spirit-land was increased a thousand-fold by what he witnessed there.

It is important to notice here, that these untiring and strenuous efforts of his, causing him to range far and near, high and low through the regions of space, necessarily caused him to be known to vast numbers of spirits, as being engaged in that work, and as having had experience in his earthly life. But when he had succeeded in attracting the attention of spirits to the subject to an extent sufficient to insure adequate coöperation, it became primarily a subject of inquiry, *How it was to be done.*

The mere proclamation through one or a few persons, it had already been discovered in his own case, amounted to little or nothing. To a few only could a knowledge of it be brought home, and with fewer still could any belief be produced. The very slight progress of the Sweedenborgians for a hundred years is evidence of that. Hence the importance of the inquiry, How was it to be done? Man was so sensuous, so material, so mere animal in his nature, that the mere address of mind to mind could not effect the great purpose in ages.

Even the teachings of Jesus, if they had been, like Sweedenborg's, unaccompanied by any thing addressing

itself to man's animal nature, would have been almost as ineffectual as his. The miracles, as they were called, which attended the mission of Jesus, were powerful if not essential elements in the propagation of his doctrines. Hence it was apparent that some mode of reaching man's physical perceptions must be devised, and that not through one person only, as in the case of Jesus or through a few—a score or two, as in the case of his immediate disciples—but, if possible, through great numbers; thus not only diffusing the knowledge abroad among men, but affording the most satisfactory evidence against the charge of collusion. And it was reasoned that, as in the case of Jesus and his disciples, in the case of Swedenborg himself, and in the case of others through which spiritual communications had been made in past times, a peculiar condition of their physical nature had allowed it, so that same condition existing in many others, as it necessarily must, might be availed of to effect the great end in view. Therefore the first direction of the minds engaged in this work was to affect the greatest number of those whose physical condition would permit them to be affected. Clairvoyance and psychometry were something toward it, paving the way, as it were, like John in the wilderness; but still there was wanting the evidence addressed to the senses, which man's physical condition so imperatively required. At length, through the combined efforts of those engaged in the work, and chiefly through the practical philosophy of FRANKLIN, the mode of communication by *raps* was discovered. When at length it was learned on earth that a communication could be had with spirits by rappings (and it was a considerable time after the discovery had been made in the spheres), then the spirits sought out others whose physical condition permitted the raps to be heard through them also, and thus rapping mediums were noticed in other sections of the country. At first, as you will all remember, this spirit-intercourse was held almost entirely

by rappings. Various other phases of it, now known, have gradually grown up since then, and are the result of the progress thus far made.

When the mode of communication by raps was discovered, it was manifested in this country in preference to any other, for two reasons. First, it was the country of *Franklin*. Second, this country was in the enjoyment of greater mental freedom than existed in any other part of the world, or had ever been known in it; for here man was free to investigate whatever he pleased, because truth was left free to combat it. As the intercourse through *physical* manifestations extended and progressed, and men became believers in spiritual intercourse, they became (by virtue of a law whose existence and operation the wiser spirits know full well) more and more capable of being approached by spirits, until moral and mental manifestations (call them which you will) have extended and are extending to a still wider range than physical manifestations have ever obtained. Thus vast numbers have been found in this sphere of existence, through whom, either by mental or physical manifestations, disembodied spirits have been able to communicate with man in the form. Now this has not been by a miracle, a prodigy, a special providence, or the suspension of God's immutable laws, but it has been in accordance with, and in execution of those laws. Hence the power of spirits out of the body to commune with spirits in the body is not confined to a few, but belongs to all, as a part of their nature.

There may, it is true, be exceptions of spirits too material and gross to approach up to the level of your stage of existence; but, with that exception, all in the spirit-world, whether wise or foolish, progressed or undeveloped, vicious and evil-disposed, or virtuous and holy, can alike exercise the prerogative of communing.

As the knowledge of this new discovery was diffused abroad among the inhabitants of the spirit-world, it was

received by them with an interest far more intense than any of which you can conceive; and is strongly in contrast with the obstinate blindness with which mankind in this sphere receive it.

Many spirits, bound to the earth by the strong ties of attachment for those whom they have recently left, are anxious to commune with them. Many who have too long ago passed from earth to have any such personal ties, are still drawn to earth by the propensities which have marked their life here, and which still linger around them. Some wish to commune from an unselfish desire to alleviate the condition of mankind. Others, alas! feeling still the passions which tainted their mortal career, desire to commune in gratification of their fear, their hatred, their envy, or their jealousy. And, I repeat, that as the reality of spiritual intercourse was the natural result of man's progression, all these various classes of spirits could commune, the one as well as the other.

But many found this difficulty. Mankind had so long been in the habit of bowing to the authority of names, that neither mediums, nor persons in the flesh communicating through them, were willing to receive communications unless they bore the sanction of some great or distinguished name, or some name which would of itself have influence upon medium or interrogator. For instance, how often have you yourselves seen when a spirit has attempted to communicate, that the first question was, "Who are you?" Not what do you teach? but who are you? And how often have you seen, when an unknown name has been given, that the spirit has been repelled and not permitted to commune at all! Now this has been observed in the spirit-world over and over again, and the knowledge of it extends all through and among those who have attempted to have communion. And those who have either had a name that was odious among men, or one obscure and unknown, have found that by this besetting propensity of man to worship the authority

of name, they were to be entirely excluded from the privilege of intercourse if they attempted to do so in their own name. And this privilege, so much more highly prized by them than you, they were to be deprived of by your perverseness, if they truly told you who they were.

It is not strange, therefore, that very many, either from an over-anxiety to commune, or from a careless disregard of what they deemed a trivial falsehood, assumed false names; and among all those who have been falsely personated, there has been no one more frequently so than Sweedenborg; for the simple reason, that there is no one in the spirit-world so generally known as him as identified with this new discovery. And many of those who assume his name do not know but that on earth, among you, he is regarded in the same light in connection with this matter. Hence they so often take his name, and because they suppose it will be the most acceptable to you.

Let it be not supposed, however, that all those who thus falsely assume his name intend to teach falsehood, or to make a statement in any other respect untrue. They perceive that the price they must pay for communing is this false personation, apparently harmless to them, for they can not help asking themselves, Why do men care so much more for name than for substance? But they intend in all else to teach truthfully as far as they know. Some, indeed, having learned what Sweedenborg did teach, suppose they are teaching exactly his doctrine now. But there are some who, for mischievous purposes, assume a false character, and teach false doctrine to deceive and mislead.

Out of this general statement the danger of spiritual intercourse may be discovered. Out of these crudities and false teachings the truth must be sifted, as must often be done in mere mundane matters. We have but one guide, but one protector against the errors which

may thus mislead. That guide is the free, unbiased, candid exercise of our reason; that protector is purity of intention, holiness of thought, and a firm reliance upon the providence of God.

After the communication had been given, we got into conversation about our forthcoming publication, and it was written:

Friends, there needed some policy in arranging the matter for the first volume of our work. At first it was intended only that I should teach the general ideas connected with the spirit-world, but as we found the Doctor willing and susceptible, Bacon and others concluded to connect other thoughts with my teachings, and thus we have written what we have. If we had particularized every thing in relation to the spheres, it would have made a volume too large, and perhaps would have been monotonous. We have written enough to excite the popular appetite for more; and when we commence our second volume, we will then answer all your minute questions, and specially devote a certain time to the explanation of all your queries. I hope this will satisfy, and thus good-night.

SWEEDENBORG.

SECTION FIFTY.

Monday, July 25th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and I alone present, it was written:

WERE I to greet you to-night with the ordinary salutation of meeting, it would not express the feelings which move me to-night toward yourself, Judge, or the Doctor. But more especially toward yourself are my feelings running

over with affection, and I am forced by the strange circumstances surrounding you, to show more than usual sentiment in addressing you, as much for the purpose of assuring you that the spirits of just men made perfect are aware of the charges made against you by vicious wicked men, as to manifest an intention to give you that kind of support and assistance the present occasion demands.

Judge, it is not always, as you have experienced in a career somewhat checkered, that a sincere desire to do good is rewarded with the approbation of those from whom you would most expect to receive approval. There is too much suspicion in the minds of even great men of the motives to award praise for a sound and successful virtuous effort, let that effort be directed toward whatever object it will most conduce to perfect. Man in his general characteristics looks on the mind which has launched out into unknown waters, and proudly and determinedly sought from the deep profundity some new continent on which to plant the standard of truth, as if it were an adventure entirely selfish. He can not reconcile the apparent motive to those which govern his own actions. Thus there is, even in the most intelligent, a desire to invest with attributes of perverse selfishness all attempts to subdue error. But this is a story you already have learned. It only remains for me to say, that the cause is strong enough to support its most obscure believer. There is always in the human heart the responsive certainty of doing right, and always a like certainty when wrong is committed. In your heart, to-night, the jewels most prized are glittering in the light of a virtuous intent, and the refraction on the world will exhibit how much is the value thereof to yourself and the world.

BACON.

I here remarked, how strong, during the whole day, and now my affection for him was glowing.

It was answered :

Well, Judge, in your own heart you realize the feelings of mine. Minds disciplined alike are sure, when brought in contact, to adhere closely by the force of innate affinity.

The same subjects which would have interested me when on earth, would, and do interest you, and in the whole of your life you exhibit in some respects the same sort of characteristics which gave form and personality to my own. And permit me to say that the longer we converse, and the more our thoughts are brought out and compared together, the deeper will be our affection, and the more endearing our friendship. But to you both, and I am not accustomed to express much feeling, I say, that if love uninfluenced by a worldly or selfish motive is worthy your acceptance, you have mine in truth, and for God eternally.

SECTION FIFTY - ONE.

Wednesday, August 3d, 1853.

This evening, Judge Fowler (for twelve years one of the Circuit Judges of the State of Kentucky) was sitting in my library with me. Dr. Dexter came in, and after conversing for two hours on the subject of spiritual intercourse, to which the Judge said his attention had been originally drawn by my first publication on the subject, I asked if we might not hear from our spirit-friends, who were doubtless present.

In a few moments the Doctor was influenced, and wrote as follows:

I CAN NOT have any thing special to say to your friend from Kentucky, but I feel gratified that men occupying exalted positions like himself are investigating and believing the truth of spirit-intercourse. It is not sufficient

that men believe, that they acknowledge there is no deception in the phenomena they witness; truth admits of no half-way interest; it requires, when once a man is satisfied, that he shall seek to disseminate that truth, and afford to others the same benefit he receives from the adoption.

The question asked in your letter, Judge E., is of great importance, *Cui bono?* What, indeed, is the object of this new revelation? It is certain that a mere belief in the upside-down tipping of a table can be of no vital benefit to any individual or to his race. Tables may be moved and raps may be heard, but these evidences of a power not materially existing in this world can satisfy no thinking man if there were not something beyond all this worthy of being understood. Now, what is this? It is that man has not been taught his true relation even to the life he now enjoys, or his connection with that other state of existence beyond the grave. Educated after the fashion of some one sect, men imbibe certain notions characterizing that sect, which are not absolute revelations from God, or even predicated on his laws, but are the positive creations of mind materially influenced, and thus do not in the least exemplify the design of our existence or the purpose of death. If the laws of God had not been instituted for a purpose as important as his character is omnipotent, there probably would have been some different manifestation of life than that which now gives significancy to the whole material creation. But death was just as much of an object following life, as was the gift or establishment of life itself. Therefore death was to be understood, or, at least, should be, for one great idea belonging to death has scarcely been apprehended, or, in fact, appreciated. Death is the continuance-life; it is life without the restraints imposed upon it by the limits of a single planet. Now, though it is important that the designs of life should be investigated and understood, it certainly is of as much importance

that that life in its continuance should be perfectly appreciated, for the one is of short duration, and the other is for eternity. This, then, is the object of spirit-communion, and it behooves all believers to understand what they believe, that when satisfied themselves they may be able to satisfy others.

BACON.

SECTION FIFTY - TWO.

Tuesday, August 23d, 1853.

This evening, in my library, among other things it was written: Now we will try and give you our views of the true mission of Christ on the earth. And in reminding you of what was before said of our reasons, we again say to you that we are giving our opinions—opinions formed from the circumstances existing in the spheres where we dwell, the facts which come under our observation, and the ideas gleaned from those spirits in advance of us, who occasionally have intercourse with us.

Turn your mind back to the moral condition of the world at the time Christ was said to be born. You find the whole Jewish nation agitated upon the present fulfillment of certain prophecies made by men called prophets, who taught that at or about this time there would be born into the world a man who would restore the glory of the Jewish kingdom, and establish a dynasty which would exist forever. They ascribed to this personage attributes at once both earthly and divine—a being who would subdue all the nations who had oppressed their race, and found again their kingdom on a basis which would be supported by God. Mingled with this belief was the idea that this man would partake of a nature

so pure that he would change the whole moral aspect of the times, and would emphatically be called the Son of God. Their wise men had predicted his coming, and had iterated his birth at a certain time, and had in a manner (mysterious it is true) calculated the precise period of its advent hundreds of years before his coming.

I doubt not that this person, foreshadowed by the prophets, had, from the accepted belief of the whole Jewish people that he was indeed to come at a certain period, come to be also recognized as the future king of the Jews, by the nations surrounding them, and with whom they had commercial or other intercourse.

Thus the impression was kept up by this outside belief of the truth of the prediction of the Jewish prophets; and when the time had arrived prophesied by their wise men as the period of his birth, the Gentiles, as they were called, likewise looked for some glorious appearance of a being, part man and part God, who would restore the glory of the Jewish monarchy to far more than its original power and grandeur.

We often reason from hearsay evidence, and bring our minds to admit as fact what is derived from the notions and belief of others. Thus, I doubt not, the idea of this twofold nature of Christ was admitted by all nations to whom the peculiar religion of the Jews was known. At that time the communication between different nations was limited, and the ideas of government, religion, and the habits and customs of this people were but partially understood. It requires frequent and constant intercourse of man with man properly to understand his peculiarities and all his characteristics. Does not this hold true in reference to national communication?

But the Jewish priesthood were a jealous race, tenacious of their power, and exercising an unlimited control over the minds of the people. They, from the first, apprehended that their authority would be circumscribed, and that their influence also would be contracted. They

could not submit to a limitation of a power which had been for ages universal, and it became a matter of serious import to them that the very nature of Christ's mission should be misunderstood. Thus when we are told that Christ was to be born, we are also told that he was to elevate the people, he was to institute laws which would restore the might and power of the nation, and he was to rule as king, possessing powers derived from and almost equal to God. It was the policy of the priests to inculcate the material mission of Christ, the establishment of a material kingdom, and the institution of laws which should affect the material condition of the nation alone.

They perverted the prophecies; and instead of avowing his mission to be that of the reformation of his race morally, they made Christ a mere ruler, whose power and might was to be directed to the upbuilding of their nation, and the regathering of its people. It is not strange, therefore, that when Christ was born in the lowly manger, that he was not recognized by priest or noble, that he was insulted, reviled, and at last crucified. It is not strange, either, that his true mission was by the masses misunderstood, and that when he stood in the highways and byways, discoursing on the true nature of man, his duties to himself, to others, and to the world, he could not be comprehended by those who expected him in pomp, in glory, and with all the power and magnificence of a sovereign. It was not singular that when he taught the common people in the groves by the side of Jordan, or on the mountains overlooking Jerusalem, that when he traced life from the little child to the developed man on your earth, and pointed out all that belonged to him as a man, and then from life to death, indicating in words and terms which the world has not yet understood, though two thousand years have passed since their utterance, that from life to death man progressed, and from death through eternity it was still

progression alone that was to develop his nature, that he was then as now misunderstood. To ascertain what was the true mission of Christ, we should attentively consider the character of the man as given in sacred history, and also in profane, and view his daily life and action in reference to the great work he was called to perform. The earliest indication of any positive ministration was his teachings in the temple when yet a child, and when he confounded the priest and the Pharisee. At this time he reasoned of life, death, and eternity, and the groundwork of all his teachings was, that the moral purity of man's life on earth was the guarantee of his happiness after death. From this period until the time of his death he sought out every opportunity to utter those sentiments; and were we to take the sermon on the Mount as the solitary evidence in support of our argument, we should triumphantly claim that Christ's mission was the reformation of the moral condition of the world; that he taught all that we teach; that love, purity, truth on earth, are the incipient steps of progression; that eternity develops no sentiments more consonant with the nature of God than progression from these principles. The simple parable of the Pharisee and the Sinner is pertinent proof of the truth of what I teach. The Pharisee, satisfied with himself, desired no advance, but thanked God he was not like other men; but the Sinner, conscious of his short-comings, convicted of sin, and of righteousness, and of a judgment to come, besought God to be merciful, to open to his mind the truths it behoved him to know, and to assist him in his earnest endeavors to progress in all goodness from life through death, onward through the spheres. What other interpretation can be given of this simple story related by Christ? The sinner lifting up his eyes afar off cried, God, be merciful! Merciful for what? That he might understand how to live, that his death might usher him into the liberty of life everlasting.

But what was the effect of Christ's teaching on earth? He says, I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. Let us ask what this fulfilling means? Does it not mean the fulfillment of the great design for which man was created? Before his advent, the world's conscience was pinned on the sleeve of the priesthood; their faith was the faith of all, and what they chose to inculcate as religion or truth was implicitly recognized and accepted by the people. What did Christ teach? He taught men to examine their own hearts, that by the fruits of a man's life was his moral condition to be tested. He says, Can a good tree bring forth evil fruit? Can the association with evil develop good? No; he charges his disciples to be humble, and merciful, and truthful, to regard others in all the relations of life as they would be regarded when similarly circumstanced. He presents the spirit as a part of God, and says it was from God in the beginning and he requires that spirit to be pure even as God is pure, that it might dwell with the Father forever.

The apostle, recognizing this principle, avows that man must work out his own *salvation* with fear and trembling. What can be the meaning of these words, "Work out our own salvation?" Yes; and it is a work of no little moment; it is the struggle with that which is impure in our natures, the eradication of error, the progress in good.

Christ taught the doctrine of forgiveness, and when asked when man should pray, and for what he should pray, he refers him to God. He does not associate himself in any way with the adoration of the Father, but says, Our Father which art in heaven.

In every act of Christ, in every reference made to his power, or to the power of God, he distinctly refuses to be regarded as any other than a man and the son of man.

True, he says, I and the Father are one, but he conclusively refers to the accomplishment of the object for which he came on earth; that in spirit they assimilated,

he in the holy and intense desire to elevate his race, and God in the boundless benevolence by which he had permitted man this opportunity for progression.

Even when arrested in the garden he says, I could pray to my Father, and he would send legions of angels to my aid; emphatically here he admits no power belonging to himself—he refers every thing to God.

It would be useless to cite more evidence on this part of the question. What, then, is the conclusion? Christ, foretold by the prophets, was born of woman, a man designed, for the elevation of his race in the promulgation of the truths which the darkness, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness of the world had obscured from man's understanding. Teaching him that, sprung from God, he was placed on earth to develop here the properties which were to assist him in his progress through eternity; to open to man the high destiny of his soul; to reform the moral abuses of the world; to inculcate those divine principles that progress here, entails progress hereafter; to reveal to the blunted understanding of his race that the virtuous, the good, the pure, the benevolent, the charitable, and the merciful were of God, and of course laid claim to the kingdom of heaven. He taught the faith we teach, and in every particular Christ was a spiritualist, for he inculcated the stern lesson, that unless the spirit was pure, no act would be accepted for good. He said that the spirit defiled was like a whited sepulcher, fair without, but within filled with dead men's bones.

The application of this statement I leave for others. Christ opened the portals of the dark grave, and exposed the life beyond as one of progress. He brought man near to God, and bid him understand his connection with the Father. His conditions were, Repent, and in this he sums up all of spiritual doctrines. Repentance is progress, and progress the eternal happiness of the spirit.

You have thus my opinion on the mission of Christ.

It should be recollected that the dark mysteries which shrouded the very God from the just idea which should have been disseminated of his attributes to the people, were in exact accordance with the same principles through all time, which have exerted so baleful an influence on man's progress since and before the advent of our Saviour. Let us understand the true nature of his mission, let us divest ourselves of all blind adherence to sect, and seek out from nature the true design of our creation. Christ found a world buried in ignorance. No true idea had been given of their destiny; and not until he dispelled the darkness which shrouded his whole moral nature did man make the effort to understand his true relationship to himself, the world, or to God. Looking back to Christ, we see the light which has been poured through the vista of years till it has now illuminated the whole civilized world, flickering as a spark, and scarcely affording a ray to guide the benighted footsteps of man. Now we feel its genial influence; now we walk in the glorious beams which lighten up life and death, and send its rays even into eternity. Shall we close our eyes to the truths it develops? No; coincident with the birth of Christ was the sun of righteousness vouchsafed to all. It shines for all, and its mild light will dispel all error, all doubt, till the time when the soul shall enter on one glorious day, which shall sparkle in the beams reflected from the Godhead forever and ever. On, then! The morn is breaking, and the glad sounds of joy are already wafted to our ears. Earth recognizes the refrain, nature responds in her own harmony, and the spirit feels how much there is of eternity in its own aspirations, even while progressing from earth toward heaven.

BACON.

SECTION FIFTY - THREE.

Sunday, August 28th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, it was written:

THERE is one circumstance in connection with Christ's mission on earth which distinctly shows what the object of his birth and sufferings was, and what the design of his labor among men was too, and that is, his intimate association with the masses whom he taught. To me, in the consideration of this whole subject, there is a most beautiful thought in this mingling of his own elevated nature with the grossness and ignorance and perverseness of the common people. Teaching them by trite and simple parables, he descended to their comprehension, and came to the very door of the hearts which were not closed against him.

He ministered to the very principles of their nature, as he has done to the millions of our race who have come after him, in appealing to those very sentiments which have moved the human heart in all ages. Accustomed from his birth to all the deprivations and inconveniences which poverty generated, he associated with masses on common ground, and thus, being one of them, he partially removed the dark vail which shrouded the future from their natural view. Disregarding all the claims of the rich and powerful, he essayed to develop in the people a love of themselves, a better appreciation of their own nature, and an anxious desire to assist one another. He cast his bread among the waters, and after the lapse of two thousand years he has found it in the tenfold increase of those aspirations which now so signally mark this age and time. How profoundly he understood the human heart! and in the picture which he drew of man's disposition he leaped over centuries of time,

and identified the man of his own day and generation with man of the present age in all his attributes and properties.

But there is one feature of his mission which has not been apprehended, or even noticed, by all the divines of every sect who have pretended to explain his teachings since his death, and that is, he spoke, when on earth, to the very feelings and thoughts which could and would improve by the knowledge which he taught. He kindled a fire in the hearts of all men, slumbering though it has. While ages have passed and nations have been born, and have been buried, too, with the past; while laws have been established and temples have been built; while those laws have passed away, and those solid temples have crumbled into dust, still this fire has slumbered, but it has been the slumbering of the fires in the mighty volcano of time.

Now the heavens are darkened, dark volumes of smoke issue from its vast crater, the lurid flame darts upward toward heaven, the clouds, the darkness, the storm, the whirlwind have passed away, the light illumines the whole earth, and in the efforts of man for the amelioration of his race, in his struggles for freedom of thought, of speech, of act, in the mighty achievements of his hands, in the recognition of his rights, and in the establishment of his liberty as a man, we have the effects of Christ's appeal to man two thousand years ago, distinct, marked, and visible at the present day. In the teaching of Christ we have the fundamental principles of every revolution which has succeeded in establishing the rights of man on earth. In this we have an illustration of the mission of the Saviour as a Reformer, and the effect to the progress of man.

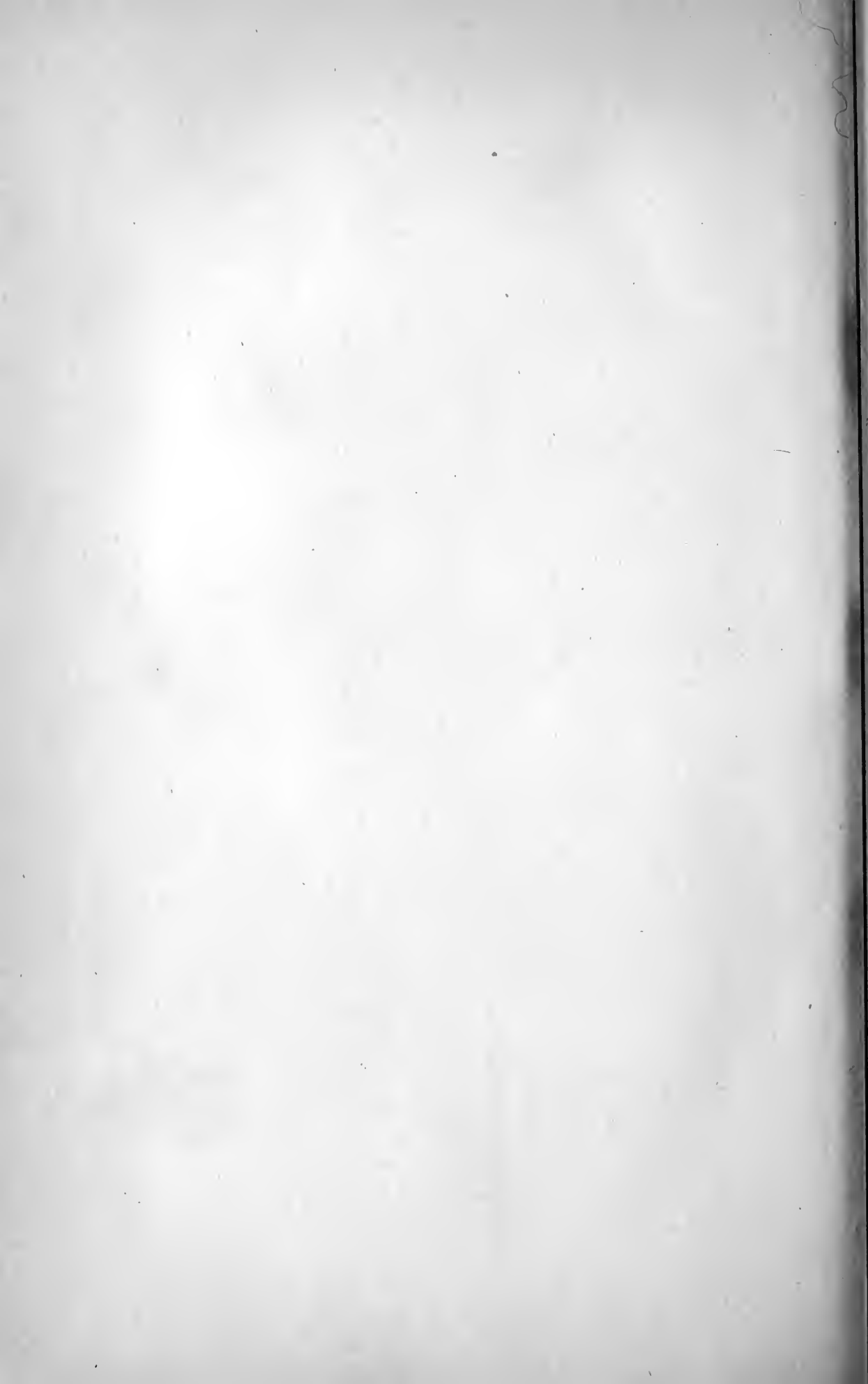
And we have, too, the first point of earnest inquiry which his teachings elicited, What is man's destiny after death, and for what was he created? BACON.

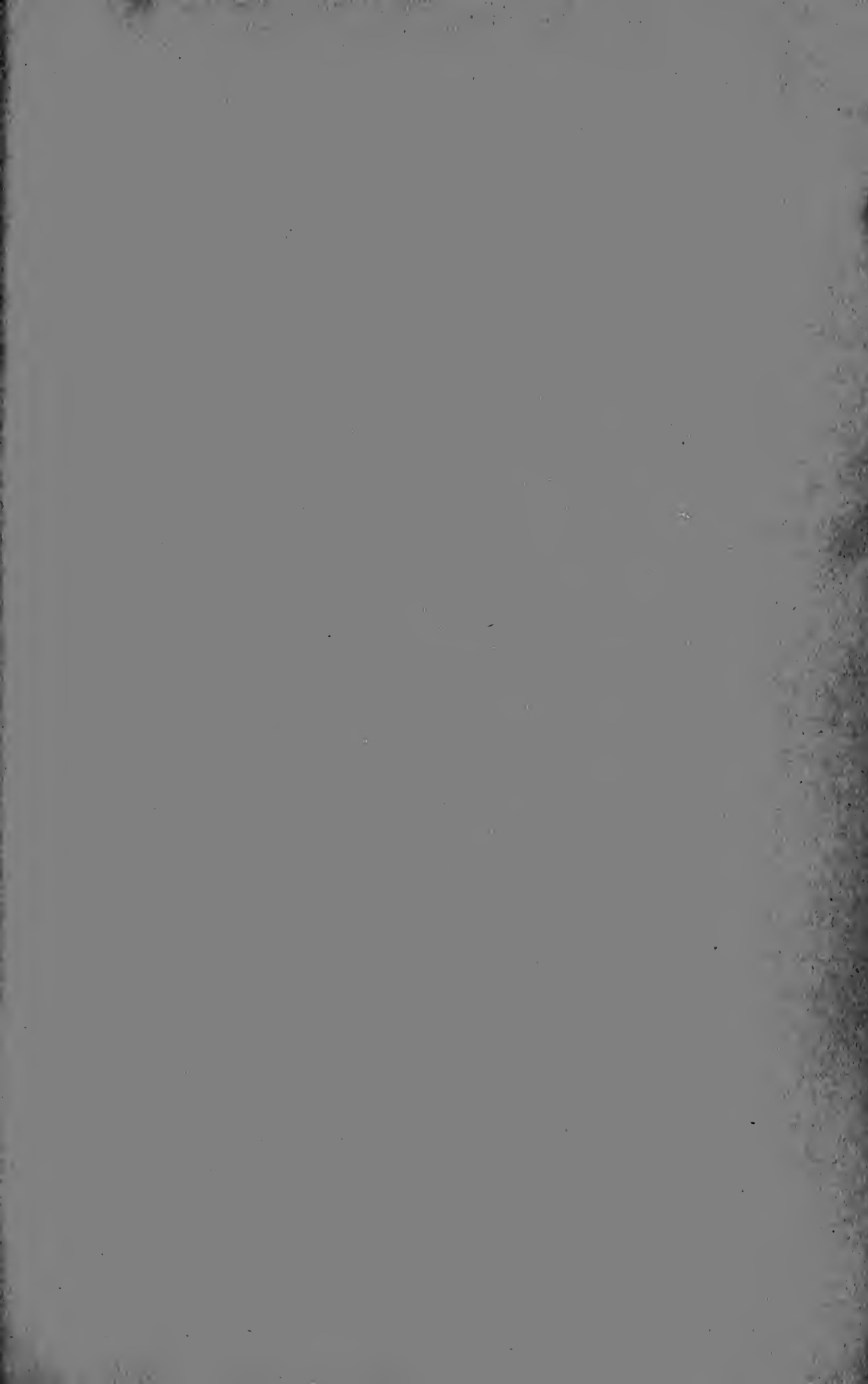
I inquired if Christ was in his sphere?

It was answered :

Christ I never saw. The very faculties of his nature, which enabled him to progress so much while on earth, have so materially advanced his passage through the spheres that he has far outstripped the rest of his race. Christ, in the development of all the high, noble, and good characteristics of his nature, became perfect even as God is perfect, and he now dwells in those happy spheres where God is made manifest in all the mighty effects to his being. We doubt if he has descended to these spheres since his advent to this world. A nature so pure would seek its happiness where there was no grossness to pain it, and no material barriers to interrupt its progress. Thus, I believe Christ is with God, where *I* shall see him, and so shall you, when thousands and tens of thousands of years shall have passed away; when divested of sin, when pure as the morning star, your spirit shall wend its way through the eternal glories of the celestial spheres; when in the immortal splendor and brilliance of your own purity you shall be able to stand in the presence of the spirits who are in themselves God; when not a thought shall animate you, not a feeling influence you, but such as shall distinguish you as a spirit given off from the First Cause, holy, immaculate, and regenerated forever.

Then shall you, and I, and all of us, see Christ, for then shall we be like him, then shall we possess the courage to seek him, and then shall he say. Ye are my brothers and ye are my sisters.









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