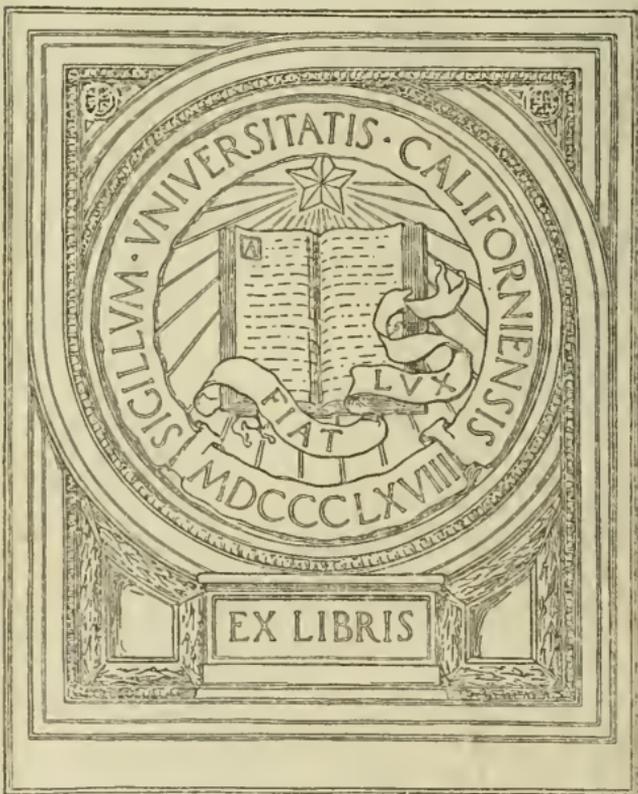


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SWEDENBORG AND THE NEW AGE;

OR,

“THE HOLY CITY NEW JERUSALEM.”

WHAT IT IS, AND WIEN AND HOW IT “COMES DOWN
FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN;”

AND

SWEDENBORG AND HIS MISSION IN RELATION TO IT.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION ON GOD AND MAN.

BY

EDMUND A. BEAMAN,

AUTHOR OF “THE RIVER OF LIFE,” “FROWARD TO THE FROWARD,”
“THE SCIENTIST’S THEOLOGY,” ETC.

“He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the SPIRIT of Truth.”—John xiv. 16, 17.

“And the Truth shall make you free.”—John viii. 32.

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INTRODUCTION.

GOD AND MAN.

1. *God the Same to All.*

IN order to understand Swedenborg and the real character of his Writings, as relating to the man of this New Age, we must first have true views of God, who He is, what He is, and what is His relation to man. With true views of God, the Writings, in many places, have a very different meaning from what they have with false ideas of God. Swedenborg has made it especially plain that God is absolutely unchangeable,—unchangeable both in what He is and in what He does,—and also that He is “no respecter of persons;” and thus that, so far as His *action* in relation to men is concerned, all men are alike. God is the Sun of the spiritual world, and His radiance is eternally and unchangeably going forth to all, as is the case with the radiance of His great representative, the sun of the natural world. And is it because of any change in what the natural sun does or gives, that one field is barren, another productive; that one plant or tree is noble, another ignoble? So, is it owing to anything different that the Lord gives or does for men, that they are different from each other, different in character and different in capacity? Is this the reason why Swedenborg was different from Nero, or different from Humboldt, or Shakespeare, or Napoleon? Search the Scriptures, and search the Writings, and, though you may find certain misunderstood expressions, you will find, when truly interpreted, no affirmative answer to any of these questions.

2. *All Difference in Recipient Conditions.*

On the contrary, Swedenborg plainly teaches that the cause of all the differences and of all the changes in men is in differences and changes in men as recipients of what the Lord gives. And this is in perfect accordance with reason and with what we see and learn of the operations of God in nature. A large recipient will receive more than a small one, not different in kind. And the action of what is received will be different in an obedient recipient from what it will be in a disobedient one; and there will be, accordingly, a corresponding difference in the results. All creatures below man are obedient recipients. All true men, so far as they are true, are obedient recipients. Selfish men, so far as they permit their selfishness to rule them, are disobedient recipients. That is to say, the former act according to the good impulses of the life that flows into them from the Lord; the latter obey their selfish, evil promptings instead. Swedenborg was an obedient recipient; his vessel was also a large one; and by obedience it constantly increased in capacity and improved in quality, so that he became, in many respects, a most extraordinary man,—extraordinary for his goodness, and extraordinary for his great and varied acquirements and talents. But it was all owing, let me repeat, not in the least degree to anything different that the Lord did for him from what He does equally for all men, but to what was in and constituted the man and to his use of what the Lord gave him.

But what did the Lord do for Swedenborg? Rather, what is it that the Lord does for all men? This is a question concerning which there need be no disagreement among those who read Swedenborg's writings in the light of their true spirit and philosophy.

3. *God as the Word.*

Nothing comes from God but what is called, in the Sacred Scriptures, the WORD [LOGOS, in Greek]. The Lord does

nothing but *as the Word*; just as nothing comes from the sun but radiance, and just as the sun does nothing but as such radiance. The Word is actually God Himself in His omnipresence; just as the radiance is the sun itself in its limited omnipresence. The Word is God in His goings out, as it were, of Himself and from Himself, in His processes of creation, or of evolving finite being from Himself; just as the radiance is the sun in its processes of action on the earth, or just as the nervous system, or the vascular system, is the brain, or is the heart, in its processes of creating or evolving animal tissue and fibre, and thus animal organism. The Word is God *at work*, if I may so speak; just as the radiance is the sun at work, or just as the nerves and the blood-vessels are the brain and the heart at work. "By Him [the Word] were all things made, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Thus the Word is the "Mighty Arm" of Jehovah; just as the radiance is the mighty arm of the sun, or just as the nerves and the arteries are the mighty arm of the brain and the heart. To conceive of God but as the Word, is to conceive of the sun without an effluence, or the heart and brain without arteries and nerves; and this is to think of God without action or manifestation: and there is no such God. We know nothing about God but as the Word; just as we know nothing about the sun but as it reveals itself in its effluence, and just as we practically know nothing about the heart and brain but as they manifest themselves in their effluence in arteries and nerves. Let me repeat, for it is a very important fact, the Word is God, not at rest, not with power stayed and in reserve,—there is no such God,—but is God AT WORK. When we have come to see this, and see it clearly, we have taken a most important step towards understanding God, and we never can have any really true ideas of Him until we have taken this step. And how significant the fact that all of the Lord's "comings" or "manifestations" to men have been as the Word! It was as the Word finited and verbalized in Sacred Scripture that

the Lord many times came to the Jews. It was as the Word "made flesh" that He afterwards came and "dwelt among us" as "God with us." It is as the Word, which is meant by the "Son of Man," that He is now coming again, but now coming, not as veiled or clothed in human language, or in a finite personal humanity, but, on the contrary, as the unveiled Spirit of Truth itself.

4. *What is the Word?*

Thus it is as the Word that God is related to man. What, then, specifically and practically is the Word, and how does it operate with or in man? "Thy Word is TRUTH." "In Him [the Word] was LIFE; and the Life was the LIGHT of men." The Word "made flesh" said: "I am the LIGHT of the World;" "I am come a Light into the world;" also, "I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE." Swedenborg says: "The Word is Divine Truth itself." "Truth"—"Life"—"Light." The Word is all these. As Life, the Word, or God as the Word, creates and sustains. As Truth—which is spiritual Light—the Word enlightens the mind and shows the "way of life." In its essence the Word is Love,—"God is Love." Life, Truth, Light, are only forms of operation and manifestation of Love, thus of God. All these, therefore, are one. They are all in and constitute what is called the Word. How are they related to man? This is the great question. And I answer, They are related to man by what Swedenborg calls "influx;" they are an influx into man, and into all men alike: "The Lord, with all His Divine Love, with all His Divine Wisdom, thus with all His Divine Life, flows in with every Man." T. C. R. 364.

5. *God as Influx.*

Such "*Influx*," then, is all that God gives; and to give this is all that He does for any man; all that He ever has done, or ever will, or even can do, for man. For, as we have seen, such Influx is the WORD *in* man, thus is God AT WORK *in* man, and thus at work always with all His Attributes in intensest

operation. This, I mean, so far as God is concerned. With all men, with all being, in fact, He simply and only gives, or is present as, such Influx. Of course, as we are all related, we receive influx also "*mediately*," or are affected indirectly by influx into others and through its effects upon them. Swedenborg was in no sense an exception to this universal and unchangeable principle. Like all other men, he never received anything from the Lord but such Influx, or such presence of the Lord as the Word. And its *operation* in him, so far as the Lord's agency had anything to do with its operation, was precisely the same in him as in all other men.

"The Life of God, *in all its fulness*, is not only with good and pious men, but also with bad and impious men; in like manner with the angels of heaven and with the spirits of hell; the difference is, that the bad stop up the way and shut the door, that God [that Influx] may not enter into the lower parts of their mind; but the good clear out the way and open the door, and also invite God to enter into the lower parts of their minds, as He dwells in the highest parts of it; and thus they form the state of the will for the influx of love and charity and the state of the understanding for the influx of wisdom and faith, consequently for the reception of God; but the bad obstruct that influx by various lusts of the flesh and spiritual defilements, which hinder and stop the passage; but still God resides in the highest parts of them with all His Divine essence, and gives them the faculty of willing good and of understanding truth, which faculty every man has, but which he would not have unless life from God were in his soul. That the bad also have this faculty has been given me to know by much experience. That every one receives life from God ACCORDING TO HIS FORM may be illustrated by comparisons with vegetables of every kind. Every tree, every shrub, every herb, and every blade of grass receives the influx of light and heat according to its form; thus not only those which are of good use, but also those which are of evil use, and the sun with its heat does

not change their forms, *but the forms change its effects in themselves.* It is similar with the subjects of the mineral kingdom ; each of them, as well the excellent as the mean, receives influx according to the form of the contexture of the parts among themselves ; and so one stone receives it differently from another stone, one mineral differently from another mineral, and one metal differently from another metal. Some of them variegate themselves with most beautiful colors, some transmit the light without variegation, and some confuse and suffocate the light in themselves. From these few cases it may be evident that, as the sun of the world, with its heat and with its light, is equally present in one object as in another, but that the *recipient forms vary its operations*, so the Lord from the sun of heaven, in the midst of which He is, is universally present with its heat, which in its essence is love, and with its light, which in its essence is wisdom ; but that the form of man, which is induced by the states of his life, *varies the operations* ; consequently that the Lord is not the cause why man is not regenerated and saved, but man himself." T. C. R. 366.

Can anything be plainer than this? Does Swedenborg anywhere contradict it? Does he anywhere say anything in the least qualifying these plain, practical, common-sense statements? Is what he says of his own experience at variance with them? Must not, on the contrary, all that he says of himself in his relation to the Lord be understood in the light of these universal and unchangeable principles? Is it possible that he could have been, in any sense, according to his own unmistakable principles, as a private pupil, receiving special attention or special manipulation, as it were, at the hands of the Lord to prepare him for his mission? "The life of God is, *in all its fulness*, with all men, with the evil equally as with the good, with devils equally as with angels ; all the difference is in the recipient vessels, the recipient forms." So far as the Lord was concerned, Swedenborg received nothing more from Him in preparation for his mission than the wickedest devils

of the wickedest hells receive. So far as such preparation was effected by anything *special* on the Lord's part, or in the Lord's agency in relation to it, it was nothing more than every man's preparation is for even the same mission; just as, so far as the preparation of the oak to bear acorns is effected by anything *special* that the sun does for it different from other trees, it might bear chestnuts or apples as well. So also, in regard to the spirits or angels and prophets through whom Sacred Scripture was written,—or the Word was veiled or clothed in human language,—according to the above principles or laws of the Lord's relation to man, as iterated and reiterated throughout the Writings, they received nothing from the Lord different from what all men receive,—nothing different in either quality, or measure, or degree; they received nothing, absolutely and unqualifiedly nothing, but that "Influx" which is equally given by the Lord to all men. The holiness of Sacred Scripture, as "the basis, continent, and firmament" of the Word, must be explained on an altogether different principle from that of any variation whatever in the Lord's agency or action in regard to men or the uses of men, and it can be, though this is not the place to do it.

This point, then, we must regard as eternally and unalterably settled,—namely, that the Lord gives nothing and does nothing for men but give them influx of Himself, of Himself as the Word, thus as Divine Life, Truth, Light, or Love, with all the Divine attributes, just as the sun does nothing for the earth or anything on the earth but give its radiance, or itself in its effluence.

6. *Nothing Finite in Influx.*

But what is in this Divine Influx? Are there ideas, thoughts, principles, doctrines in it? No more than there are acorns, apples, peaches, berries in the sunbeams. All these are finite things. The Divine Influx, and everything in it, is infinite. The Lord can no more give such finite things than the sun can give fruits. All these things are in potency in the Divine

Influx, and the Lord can bring them out into actuality, but only through the finiting organism of mind which has first, in its own order, been finited and developed; just as the sun can produce fruits only through the organism of shrubs and trees, which are first produced in their order. Finited and finiting mind is just as necessary in the process of evolving from the Divine Influx ideas, principles, and doctrines as trees are in evolving fruits from the elements of earth, air, water, and sunshine. The Lord is no mechanic. He is not outside of His work, as a mechanic is of his. He does nothing by manipulation, or by special design and act, as man does. He simply LIVES; He is nowhere büt inmosty the life of all being; He creates by simply living; therefore all that is is the result, and not by creation according to a certain plan, but by evolution of what is eternally repositied, in potency, in Himself. All possibilities, infinite possibilities, are in that influx which every man receives. All true ideas, principles, teachings, precepts of life are, in potency, in that Influx; but they can be evolved or brought out into actuality only by the conditions supplied by already finited mind. For all these are the fruits of finite *thought*. And God does not think as man thinks,—that is, does not think *finitely*, thus, does not ultimate ideas and words: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

When Swedenborg says, therefore, that “the Lord prepared him for his mission,” “opened the sight of his spirit,” “commanded him what to write,” “dictated to him,” and the like,—also that “he was only an humble instrument to do the Lord’s work,” that “he did not act of himself but from the Lord,” and that the revelations which he made were not his, but the Lord’s through him,—we are not to understand him as saying anything in contradiction of his own teachings, or of the spirit and philosophy of his own principles; we are not to understand him as

making his own case an exception to the immutable principles laid down in the paragraph above quoted from the "True Christian Religion;" we are not to understand him as receiving anything whatever, or in any sense or way, from the Lord, but that "Influx of Divine Truth" which is equally given to all men. God is in that Influx "preparing," "commanding," "dictating," "impelling," and the like, but with no difference as regards men as subjects of Influx. Swedenborg's language, as regards the Lord's relation to him, must be interpreted by the unchangeable principles so plainly laid down in his writings as regards the Lord's relation to all men alike. Swedenborg was, in no sense, an exceptional *expedient* in the hands of the Lord to meet an *emergency*. The Lord has no expedients and never resorts to any. Every emergency is met, and instantly, by the normal operation of the Divine Influx; for there is in every moment's operation of that Influx, Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Providence, Infinite Power, or, if I may so speak, infinite and constant expediency. To make Swedenborg, according to the views of some, an extraordinary or exceptional expedient would be to make God, so far, a finite being. On the contrary, Swedenborg was simply and only the noble, normal fruit of certain recipient conditions and of the same Divine Influx into those conditions that flows into all conditions. The difference is, he "cleared out the way and opened the door, and also invited God to enter into the lower parts of his mind as He dwelt in the highest parts of it; and thus he formed the state of his will for the influx of love and charity, and the state of his understanding for the influx of wisdom and faith, consequently for the reception of God,"—he did these things as others did not do. It was this and not anything different in the Divine Influx, or in what the Lord gave him or did for him, that made his case exceptional or different from that of other men.

7. *Mistakes and Expedients.*

But a few words more on "Divine expediency," as this is a point of such vital importance and is so generally misunderstood. There are really no mistakes, no deficiencies, no failures in God's operations, when we understand them truly; and hence no resort to expedients in, as it were, unexpected emergencies. Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Providence never require, and never resort to, expedients. We see this fact exemplified in everything, even in Nature. The acorn, with God in it,—that is, with Life in it, and God inmosty in that life,—is sure, in the required conditions, to create or evolve an oak, and everything that belongs to an oak; under proper conditions it cannot possibly fail to do so. So of every other germ of life. And this is because it is an offshoot from the Divine Life, and because the Divine is still operating in it as its vitalizing and evolving force or power. Hence,—and this is the point,—if an injury befalls the developing organism, as, for example, a wound in the flesh or the fracture of a bone, the remedy is instantly at hand and in operation, and simply as the normal result of life continued under the circumstances or in the *changed conditions*.

So wonderfully perfect is life in Nature, which is God—God as the Word—working, so to speak, in "ultimates." Such life cannot act imperfectly; it cannot fail, either in wisdom, providence, or power, on its plane or in its degree; for all these are always in its every moment's action as life. How much more perfect, if possible, must be life above Nature, the Infinite Life itself, as not subject to the limitations of Nature! How spontaneously and at once remedy must follow on the heels of injury, and this without anything like a resort to expedients, but simply from the fact that such is the normal operation of life, on every plane of life, in the changed conditions, thus simply from the fact, not that God devises and does something different as an expedient, but that He *lives*, or that He Him-

self is Life. Oh, what an infinite world there is in that one little word LIFE! It contains everything; everything is in it in potency or possibility; expediency even is one of the features of its normal operation as *Life*.

So, in what is called the "Fall," God did not take cognizance of it as a condition unexpected, and thus unprovided for, in any such sense as man takes cognizance of like things, and then devise and apply a remedy. Infinitely far from it. God was unaffected and unchanged in any sense or manner whatever, so far as He or what He did in His own absolute action was concerned. It was simply the result of the continued operation of His Life as Life, but as varied in its operation by the *changed conditions*, that was the remedy or the expedient. And this has always been so in every stage of man's "decline," in every changing phase of his relation to God. What God has absolutely done has never varied because of man's condition,—except in the sense in which its *operation* has been varied by that condition,—but has been unchangeably the same; just as is the case with the sun in its relation to earth. The sun sends out, as it were, the same beams—whatever happens to the recipient—day and night, summer and winter, and into the rose as into the nightshade, into the desert as into the green meadow, and in the calm as in the tempest; and just as the heart also sends its life equally into the diseased as into the healthy organ. The acting principle, or the influx *given*, is in each case the same. But the results are not the same; these depend upon the recipient. The condition of the recipient in all cases modifies the action, and thus the effects of the action of the influx. How strikingly this is the case as regards the blood, also the nerve-fluid, in their relation to diseased and healthy organism! They change not, because of the condition of the recipient organism, but the results of their action are very different because varied by the condition of the organism.

8. *God Unchangeable.*

So of that All-creating Life, the Word, God, with Whom "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" that Life has not changed, has not itself modified its own action, during all the successive stages of creation, during all the successive phases of developing humanity. God has always been giving the same and doing the same,—the same in quality and the same also in amount and energy,—and not at one time more and at another time less. The variety in evolved or ultimated form, is owing to the fact of the infinite potencies in Him as Life, and of the different degrees or distances, so to speak, of evolution from Him. As He continues to *be*, and from this cause alone, one thing after another comes out, as it were, from Him into ultimated or evolved form, and without anything like resorting to expedients under emergencies: perfect wisdom, I repeat, requires no expedients. His revealing Himself in Sacred Scripture even, was not an expedient, neither was His Incarnation an expedient; it was no more an expedient than the shooting out of a branch, or the coming of a leaf or a flower, or the development of the teeth or of the beard, in the order of growth, is an expedient; no more an expedient than is the modified action of the blood in a wounded muscle or fractured bone, or in no other sense than that in which such modified action is an expedient; in all which cases it is the normal action as modified by recipient conditions themselves. There is everything in the normal, unchanging action of life for every emergency. It is the nature of all life, from the purely Divine clear down to the lowest degree of the finitely evolved life, to ultimate itself in successively lower and lower forms, and then to act, with modified results, through these forms as recipient and modifying vessels.

The great fact which I am endeavoring to make plain is that God, the Word, the Absolute Life, is *in Himself*, is in the very operation of Himself as Life, such fulness and per-

fection in all-creative energy, wisdom, providence, and power that all that He does or needs to do is to *live*; and all that is, is the result; just as all that the finitely evolved principle of His life in the seed or egg does, or needs to do, is to live, and the plant or animal is the result.

9. *God is Love.*

God is *Love*, or Love, in its real *essential* nature, is God. There is, indeed, no God but God as Love. Life is simply Love *acting*, Love *living*. The Word is Love *creating*, or evolving and ultimating itself in lower forms; is Love *clothing* itself with a body; is Love *revealing* itself, and all this as a result of the fact of its *living*, or of its being Life; or is Love shining as *light*, and hence is called Divine *Truth*, which is Divine, spiritual light. The Love I speak of is infinitely more than an affection, and so much more that it is the entity or Divine substance from which all substance, whether spiritual or natural, is derived; it is, indeed, "*all* in all," so that if it were withdrawn from all, nothing would remain. Hence everything that is is only a phase or manifestation of Love, thus of God. Hence everything is *full* of Love, thus full of God, as the body is full of the soul.

10. *Not Outside.*

All that is, therefore, is God's dwelling-place, God's "tabernacle," but in different degrees, from Nature, as His "outer court," to regenerated angelic mind—rather to the "Divine Humanity"—as His "inmost sanctuary," His "Holy of Holies." God as Love, as the Word, as Divine Truth, as all-pervading, omnipresent Life, operates with infinite wisdom, providence, and power within us, always *within us*, never and nowhere outside of us, except through others in relation to us: "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Nothing but God's foot-stool, nothing but His materialized expression, or Love materialized, so to speak, nothing but the evolved effects of

the operation of the Divine Life, is outside of us. It is vain for us to look for Him or think of Him outside of us. We err most sadly when we think of God as being outside of any being. Everything outside is finite. There is no God outside, any more than there is heart, or brain, or soul outside the little world of the body. God would not be God outside, but a mere manifestation of God, as the body is of the heart, or brain, or soul. God lives in His kingdom—the soul of man—as a King lives in his kingdom; more truly, as the soul lives in its kingdom, the body. All that is outside, I repeat, is but a MANIFESTATION of God. The whole universe is but such manifestation of God. But the universe is no more, for that cause, God than the body is the man.

11. *Manifestations.*

But God's manifestations or appearances of Himself,—what, in reality, are they? How do they differ from Himself? How does the body, which is a manifestation of the man, differ from the man? Yet the cases are not quite parallel. The body exists, is evolved directly from what is within, as an effect directly representing a cause within. So is the universe and everything in it and of it, as an effect in relation to God as the cause. It came from God as an effect from its cause. But there are Divine manifestations or appearances of another kind which depend upon, and are characterized by, the *states* of those persons before whom they take place. The former manifestations are made to all men, though with a difference; the latter to comparatively few. This is the kind of which Swedenborg speaks as being made to him. What is the real nature of this kind of manifestation? Did God, in any sense, or in the least degree, absolutely *vary* in what He did from what He always does, as the cause of such manifestations? We see from the views we have given of God from Sacred Scripture and from the writings that such variation was simply impossible and absurd. We cannot yield a particle in our view of

God's absolute unchangeableness,—unchangeableness as well in what he absolutely does as in what he is. If He manifested Himself to Swedenborg,—as we doubt not He did, as He does also to the angels,—the cause of such manifestation and of everything in it as a manifestation, was entirely and exclusively in Swedenborg's own state. It was his state, and nothing else, that made such manifestation possible and that brought it about. Its peculiar quality and character were in him as the cause. God is really no more present in such peculiar manifestations than He is when the states of men are such that they do not take place. Can God be more than omnipresent?

How, then, does God manifest Himself to man? Swedenborg says: "I can sacredly and solemnly declare that the Lord Himself has been seen of me." Again: "The Lord, our Savior, has manifested Himself to me in a sensible personal appearance." In view of the real character of what we call God, and of what we are taught about him in Sacred Scripture and in the Writings,—for we rest upon His character as the Word and Swedenborg give it to us,—how could this be? and what does it mean? Mark, it was the Lord our *Savior* that was seen of him, or that manifested Himself to him. And Swedenborg adds, in close context with the first citation above, that "the Lord opened and enlightened the interior part of his soul."

Who is "the Lord our *Savior*"? We all agree that He is identically that same God, the Word, the Life, the Divine Truth "brought forth to view," of which I have been speaking. And are we not all agreed that God in Himself never changes, any more than the sun, or the radiance from the sun, changes? Like Sacred Scripture, "the Lord our Saviour" is God the Word *clothed*, God the Word *mediating*, or God the Word with His eternally unchanging and unchangeable action modified and varied by the recipient medium in and through which His action takes place. Sacred Scripture is the result of such modified action. The Word "made flesh" is the result of

such modified action. I mean that neither the Word made Sacred Scripture nor the Word made flesh is the result of specific design and purpose, and then of changed or modified action, on the part of God; but, on the contrary, that it is the result only and solely of the Divine Influx into MODIFYING CONDITIONS; hence that the changed conditions are the responsible cause of any appearance of change on the part of the Divine; just as any apparent change in the action or manifestations of the sunlight is owing entirely to changed recipient conditions, and just as light entering the eye is of one color or another, or is painful or pleasant, exactly according to the condition of the eye. So the Word, whether clothed in finite teachings and human language or in an external personal humanity, is not really the result of any difference in the Divine action or purpose any more than the light, as colored and shaded by clouds or by a smoky atmosphere, is the result of any different action of the sun. The common ideas of God, finite Him and make Him a being of resorts and expedients, when these are all mere appearances, when the fact is, that His unfailing, normal, unchangeable action is infinite perfection itself, under whatever changes, conditions, or circumstances; as it is the action of infinite love itself, it flows, in the infinite wisdom and providence and power and Love, in all conditions and under all circumstances—and spontaneously does so—for the ends of Love. That is to say, we have the Word made manifest in Sacred Scripture or in a fleshly personality, not because God saw the changed condition of man, and saw, therefore, that such was man's need, but because that was the spontaneous result of His absolutely and eternally unchanged normal action *as modified by changed conditions*. So infinitely full of every attribute of the Divine Nature, even of resorts and expedients as it were, is every moment's action of the Divine Life. It was the continued flowing of God as the Word into man's changed condition—in other words, it was the continued living of God as God—that resulted, under the

changed modifying conditions, in Sacred Scripture, and afterwards in the Incarnation. And how wonderful and how full of love and wisdom and providence the fact that these apparent—not real—changes in God were exactly what man needed, and without which he could not have continued to exist as man, but would have relapsed to a condition worse than that of the beasts!

Again, we ask, what does Swedenborg mean when he says that “the Lord manifested Himself before him in a sensible *personal* appearance”? Does he mean that the Lord was finited out into external shape and actually stood before him somewhat as He had stood before the disciples? No one can think this who has any true thought of the Lord as He is represented by Swedenborg. It was not such a finited presentation of the Lord. Swedenborg does not say this. Rather, it was a “MANIFESTATION,” or “sensible personal APPEARANCE.” And was this appearance really and purely the Lord? Was it only what was divine? or was it not, on the contrary, the Lord as the Word, as living Divine Truth, *clothed* and finited into external visible *appearance by what was in Swedenborg’s own mind*, in like manner as is the case with the angels, to whom things *appear* objectively or outside themselves, when, in reality, there are no such things outside, but they so *appear* from what is in the angels themselves? Swedenborg says that “in the other life, by virtue of the light communicated from a celestial and spiritual origin by the Lord, there are sensibly exhibited to the sight of spirits and angels most astonishing scenes,—as paradisiacal gardens, cities, palaces, habitations, besides other objects.” A. C. 1534. “The very celestial and spiritual of the Lord,” again, he says, “manifests itself by light before the external sight of the angels;” but the degree in which the light is received is in proportion to the degree of the celestial and spiritual with the angels, and the quality of the light is according to the quality of that celestial and spiritual.

This is brimful of significance in connection with our sub-

ject, as also in connection with the fact that the Lord appears to the celestial angels as a sun, but to the spiritual angels as a moon. A. C. 1529. Swedenborg says that, "In order that he might be confirmed in this, his interior vision was so far opened, and he saw plainly the moon shining." And this means, of course, not that there was actually a spiritual moon, or the Lord as such moon, *outside* of him, but that in the state in which he then was the Lord *manifested* Himself to him, and thus *appeared* outside of him, as a moon. We read in Sacred Scripture that the pure in heart shall *see God*, and that the Lord will *manifest Himself* to those who keep His commandments. It was because Swedenborg kept His commandments that, as a result of the consequent processes of regeneration, the "interior part of his soul was opened and enlightened." so that he saw the Lord, but saw Him, just as the angels do, "according to the degree and quality of the celestial and spiritual in himself." According to his own teachings, it would be impossible for him to see the Lord, or have the Lord appear or manifest Himself to him in any other way, or for any other cause than that depending on his own state as a recipient of the Divine Influx. In no case has the Lord ever appeared to man or angel *as He really is*; it has always been only a *manifestation*, and that even only as measured, limited, and qualified by the state of him before whom the manifestation took place. In no case has such manifestation been purely God, but always God clothed, or, which is the same, the Word, or God as Divine Truth clothed; just as is the case with the sun as it appears to the eye,—it is the sun *clothed* by the earth's atmosphere and by the things or state of the eye, though the cases are not exactly parallel, for the Lord is really within, while the sun is outside. We must not forget the fact that all of the Lord's comings have been simply manifestations of Himself *as the Word*, thus as Divine Truth. Thus Swedenborg says: "To the end that the Lord might be constantly present, He has disclosed to me the spiritual sense of His Word in which Divine

Truth is in its light, and *in this He is continually present.*" That is to say, the Lord is continually present only in the working, operating, or creating phase or aspect of His nature *as the Word*, and *manifestly* so only as the Word, *as living Light*, or as it really *shines* in the interiors of a mind opened by regeneration. And the Lord is present thus only "according to the degree and quality of the celestial and spiritual with man." And this shows that the manifestations or personal appearances of the Lord are, from the very nature of the case, never the same to two persons, nor to the same person twice alike, so much does qualifying state have to do with them. And this suggests the question of God's personality—what is it?

12. *God's Personality.*

Is there a "personal God"? We answer, yes. But, then, what is meant by person? Does it necessarily imply limited outline, figure, shape? We answer, no. God does not exist as person in any such finite, external sense, though He so *manifests* Himself, as we have seen above. God, in His absolute, unfinited, unrevealed, or unmanifested nature, is not person in any such gross sense of the word. It is true Swedenborg says that "God, being Man, has a body and everything belonging to it." D. L. and W. 18. But does he mean by this that God has such body, with all its organs and members, in actual, outwardly developed shape or form? Does he mean that God has eyes with which to look out upon external things, as we do, and ears to hear audible sounds, as we hear? Of course not. He only means that God has all these, everything, in fact, that belongs to the whole universe, *in potency*, or in first principles, or in the possibilities from which all things are; like as the seed or the egg contains all the possibilities of the future plant or bird. God consists of infinite possibilities; the universe consists of these possibilities developed and developing into actualities. What Swedenborg means by the above is evident from what he says in "Arcana Cœlestia," 3869, namely,

“That Jehovah has neither ears nor eyes as man has is known, but ear and eye signify an attribute predicable of the Divine, namely, infinite will and infinite intelligence. Infinite will is Providence, and infinite intelligence is foresight; this is what ear and eye mean, in the supreme sense, when attributed to Jehovah.” Of course the “body, and everything that belongs to it,” has each a corresponding supreme meaning as applied to the Lord. Thus it is in an infinitely higher sense than that which applies to us that God is person. And yet God is not simply *diffused* being, like air or light. On the contrary, there are in Him all the essentials in their beginnings or potencies which, when ultimated in their most perfect form, constitute personal man and angel,—constitute, in fact, the personal manifestations of the God-Man. Man is really man—finitely, personal man—only because God, of whom he is the image and likeness, is Divinely and Infinitely personal Man, Man in first principles or infinite possibilities. We must not think of man even as person, because he has limited figure or shape, and visible organs and members, though we cannot think of him without these, for these are not what make man man or constitute him personal being. It is because we do not think of God thus that we are bewildered about His personality. How can Omnipresence have such limited and defined personality? No wonder the sensible scientist denies a “personal God.” It is contrary to true manhood reason to suppose that Infinity and Omnipresence are in such externally visible and measurable shape. God’s manifestations of Himself, or His appearances to men, are a totally different matter. These are due, as I have shown, to what is in man as a finite and finiting recipient vessel. What flows in *takes the form of the vessel into which it flows*. Out of Christ, or Deity, as clothed and manifested in finite humanity, it is impossible to think of God but vaguely and absolutely. Out of Christ, we can think of God only as Love, Wisdom, Power, Providence.

But what is it that really constitutes personality? What is

it that makes man even a personal being? What is it that makes you a different person from me? Is it your figure, your length, the shape of your head, the form of your limbs and features? Is not man even, a person only in virtue of those inherent qualities and capacities of which the body, consisting of organs and members, is the ultimated form? Is it not these,—these qualities and capacities,—rather than anything relating to shape or figure, or anything manifested to external sense, that constitute man's personality, that give him identity and individuality, that make him different, personally, from every other being, from every other man, in fact? And this is the ground on which God is person; it is His quality, His potency, is that which constitutes His peculiar identity and individuality, as differing from those of all other beings. And thus for man to be in God's image and likeness is to be so, not in outward form, but in inward quality and character, is to be so in that which really makes him man. Outward, personal form cannot be predicated of the Divine Being, out of Christ, His finite, personal manifestation of Himself, any more than it can of Life, or Truth, or Love, or Light, and these, we have seen, are just what God is in His real nature.

The common views of God as a personal being belong to a darker age than that in which we are now living,—belong to a low, sensuous, Israelitish state of mind. When we have, by regeneration, risen above that merely natural, external view of God, we shall find Him risen,—risen in our truer conceptions of Him,—“we shall wonder how we could ever have been content with a mere finite, personal manifestation of Him, a being so much like ourselves, a being outside of us and listening and influenced by our selfish prayers, and pleased by our fulsome praises! We shall have no less a personal God than before; we shall not think of Him any the less in His personal *manifestation*; but we shall think more of Him as that of which such manifestation is comparatively only as the shadow. There will be all the difference between our *outgrown* personal

God—if I may so speak without being misunderstood—and our found or *risen* personal God, risen in our truer conceptions of Him, that there is between the mere child's personal man, as the child conceives of him, and the scientist's and Christian philosopher's personal man. The child takes cognizance of only external form, of only figure and shape. The scientific, Christian philosopher sees a world within and above what the eye sees. So you will see within and above the manifested personality of your risen God that which makes Him all that He is to you and all that He is to the universe, as the infinitely present, infinitely potent, infinitely wise, and infinitely active cause and source of all being. You will recognize a personality that perpetually fills the heavens, fills the universe of universes, in fact, but which manifests itself, or becomes manifest to each individual man or angel, only exactly according to his state."—*Author's sermon, "He is Risen."*

13. *Omnipresence.*

And with this view of God's personality His Omnipresence is divested of all its absurdity and mystery. With former views of personality we never could conceive of the Divine Omnipresence. We cannot conceive otherwise than of God's absolute presence everywhere, but present never and nowhere without, but always and everywhere within, present as life is present within the body. For this, as we have seen, is just what God is, and, with its attributes, all that God is,—He is Life. It is as Life, and only as Life, that He creates and sustains and governs; and it is only by actual presence that He does these things. He does nothing, He exercises no power, but by His actual, tangible, inmost presence in the subjects of His operations and power. We see it now, and see plainly, that it is only as God works in us as the soul in the body that He gives us life and being; and we see how necessarily it depends upon our state of recipiency whether the operations of His presence within us give us pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow,

For He as the Divine Life is always present within what we call our life, as the heart life and brain life are within the tissues of the body. If such Divine Life ever gives pain or sorrow, it is only when, from transgressing the laws of life, we have become diseased, and the cause of the pain or sorrow is simply owing to the persistent effort of the Divine Life to remove the disease, just as it is with the body in a diseased condition; its pain is owing to the presence of life from the heart and brain in the diseased organism, and in actual effort to remove the disease. It is not because God has left us that we suffer,—He cannot leave us. If He left us we should cease to be. On the contrary, it is because He, as Life, is trying to restore us, because He is so infinitely and absolutely present in us, and present in His operations as Life,—in His operations as Love, in fact, with all its attributes of Wisdom, Power, and Providence,—for this, as we have seen, is just what God as Life is. He is Love, but Love not as an affection, but Love itself, Love in its essence.

God, then, never *came* to Swedenborg, never came to any man; for He has always been present, absolutely present, with all men, rather *in* all men; but He *manifested* Himself to Swedenborg, as He has to other men and to angels. And we may see what is meant by this; we may see that God, from His absolute presence *within*, has, under certain conditions or states of mind, and because of such conditions as modifying the Divine Operations, become *manifest*, or appeared externally, and, therefore, in an external *personality*, to men; but that He did this without in the least degree changing or modifying His absolute presence within.

14. *True Basis of Thought.*

Now if we take false views of God,—that He is a sort of mysterious being outside of us; that He acts from arbitrary will and purpose and according to plan or pattern previously conceived; that He comes and goes; that He now does little and

now more; that He takes special cognizance of one man and his work, or in any other sense than that in which He takes special cognizance of each and of all men and their work,—take such a view of God as some men evidently do, and we shall become all bewildered and divided and in irreconcilable difference of opinion on all subjects in which God is a factor.

But if we have given a correct view of God—of God as the Word, thus as the Truth and the Life; of God as an “Influx of Divine Truth,” and as eternally and unchangeably the same to all men; of God within and not without; of what He is in His absolute nature, and what in His manifestations; of His personality and of His Omnipresence—let us take this view as our standing ground and our basis of thought and of inquiry on all questions relating to God, or in which the Divine is a factor. Let us keep this view, under all circumstances and conditions, as constantly and unfailingly in sight as the mariner does his compass, and we shall then be led to true views of Swedenborg and his writings, and of both in their relation to the Lord, and also in their relation to the man of this New Age.

SWEDENBORG AND THE NEW AGE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

1. *Swedenborg.*

WHO was Swedenborg? what was his mission? how was he prepared for his mission? in what did his qualifications for it consist? did the Lord do anything different for him from what he does for all men? was there anything special or extraordinary in the Lord's relation to him, in any other sense than that in which these terms apply to all men? what is the real nature of his writings? are they in any sense the Word or Sacred Scriptures? are they divine? are they Swedenborg's writings or the Lord's writings? are they the Lord's Second Advent? what is that advent? what is Swedenborg's relation to the Advent? what is the New Jerusalem?

2. *Why these Questions?*

These questions have become of unusual interest of late because of extraordinary views entertained by some in regard to the "Writings." It has been claimed that they are the "Lord's writings;" that they are the "Word without the external sense;" and that they are the "Lord's Second Advent." Thus it is claimed that the Writings are not an *explanation* merely of the internal or spiritual sense of the Word, but that they themselves are the spiritual sense. This is equivalent to

saying that they are the very "Spirit of Truth" itself, and it was indeed as the Spirit of Truth that the Lord promised to come again. But there is no ratio between Truth itself and verbalized truth, or a verbal statement or explanation of truth, any more than there is between the sunlight and a description of the sunlight. The Writings must be either truth itself, truth in its spirit, truth, that is to say, in its spiritual essence and form, or they must be a mere explanation or finited, verbal statement of truth. They must, therefore, be the spiritual sense of the Word, either in the sense of an explanation merely of the spiritual sense, or in the sense of the "Spirit of Truth." And such extraordinary views about the Writings have resulted in equally extraordinary views about Swedenborg, the instrument of them. We have thought, therefore, that this whole subject demanded a most thorough and careful examination, and in the very light itself of the spirit and philosophy of the Writings.

3. *What we Propose to Show.*

We propose to show, and from the Writings themselves, that they are in no sense whatever the Lord's writings, further than that He gave the influx of light and life to the mind that produced them; that they are no more the Lord's writings, *in any other sense*, than all men's writings are the Lord's; that they are no more the Lord's writings than the fruit produced on a tree is the sun's fruit, or the Lord's through the sun, which, we know, is His only in the sense in which His life evolved or created the organism of the tree that produced the fruit; and, moreover, that they are not the "Lord's Second Advent" in any other sense than that of a treatise on, or explanation or instruction about, the Advent; and that they are in no other sense the Word than that of an explanation of the Word. We propose to show, on the contrary, that, with the above qualification, the Writings are, in the fullest sense of the word, purely and exclusively Swedenborg's writings; and that

they are as much more completely his writings as he was more completely a faithful "servant of the Lord;" and that certain expressions which he uses in relation to himself and the Lord's relation to him no more belong to him—making all allowances for differences in men and differences in uses—than they belong to all men; in a word, that, so far as the Lord was concerned, in what He did for Swedenborg, Swedenborg was in no sense different from other men; just as, so far as the sun is concerned in what it does for the tree bearing noble fruit, such tree is in no sense different from the trees bearing ignoble fruit; that Swedenborg was no "prodigy;" that he was *remarkable* even, not for what the Lord did for him, but for the manner in which he received and used what the Lord equally gives to or does for all men; that his writings, therefore, have no other authority than that of the truth that is in them, and in them, not as real living truth, but as mere verbal statements of truth; and that they have such authority even only as they *meet* the *rational demands* of the mind that reads them; and, moreover, that the authority of truth thus *rationaly seen*, and by each one for himself, is the only authority that can be acknowledged in the true New Jerusalem.

4. *The New Departure.*

Let us at the start, and for the sake of clearness from the contrast, briefly consider the claims, enforced by no lack of knowledge of what Swedenborg literally SAYS, that his writings are the Lord's writings. It is plain that this claim makes the Writings virtually another Sacred Scripture, another word of God, though, it is confessed, "without the external sense," and yet "without an internal or spiritual sense," the Writings themselves being, it is claimed, the spiritual sense rather than a mere explanation of it. This makes the Writings another Divine revelation, like the Sacred Scriptures, but differing from any previous revelation in being addressed and accommodated to further developed and higher states of mind. In

such accommodated form the Writings are, therefore, to be to the more matured coming man essentially what the books of Moses were to the Israelites. According to this claim, the Writings, like the Sacred Scriptures, have come as verbally expressed Divine *authority*, as "thus saith the Lord." The difference is, the Israelite was, practically, scarcely more than a physical man, and his responsible acts were, therefore, only acts of the body; hence it was such acts that his Scriptures, as he understood them, recognized and rewarded or punished; whilst the "coming man," the true man of the New Jerusalem, is a rationally thinking, loving man, and is, therefore, responsible for his thoughts and motives of action as well as for his actions. Revelation to the latter, therefore, or his "thus saith the Lord," only addresses a higher plane of mind than did the Israelitish Scriptures. I mean that truth, according to this view of the Writings, must be, or rather has been, in just as imperative and divinely formulated statements, measured down to the man of this New Jerusalem Age, as it was to the less developed man of the Old Jerusalem Age. That is to say, the man of the New Jerusalem must, like the man of the Old Jerusalem, be governed by divinely exact, infallible, verbal statements of truth rather than by the Lord in His Advent as the Spirit of Truth actually shining in and enlightening the mind. According to this view, the New Church man must be just as punctilious in his observance of what the Writings literally and formally *say* as the Israelite was in his observance of what "Moses and the Prophets" said.

Thus the Word as the "*Spirit of Truth*," actually flowing into New Jerusalem mind, as it did not and could not with similar results flow into Old Jerusalem mind, seems to be either wholly ignored or to be given an altogether secondary place. And yet the Word, as such actually and consciously present influx as the Spirit of Truth, is really the great distinctive characteristic of this New Age; is, indeed, that which

constitutes the real "glory" of the "Second Advent." For all of the Lord's comings have been *as the Word*,—that is to say, have been as Truth in one form or another in its relation to mind. To the Israelite the Lord *as Truth* could come only in *words*, only in finite statements of truth; to the coming man, on the contrary, the Lord's real distinctive coming must be as light shining *in* and illuminating the mind; that is to say, as the Spirit of Truth. But according to the view of which I am speaking, Swedenborg seems to be regarded as a specially prepared instrument, not by whom the real character of Sacred Scripture—the lowest written, or verbalized form of the Word—was *explained*, but through whom a higher written or verbalized form of the same Word was given by the Lord.

Yes, according to this view, the "coming man," the man of the regenerated manhood of the race, the man capable of illustration by the influx of the "Spirit of truth" itself,—as is to be the case with all regenerated men, as was the case with Swedenborg,—is to have truth verbally measured down to him, it seems, in a divinely authoritative form, as the dark-minded Israelite had. Thus the man of the future, whose mind is destined to become more and more opened to the Word in its internal form of "*living light*," is to be forever kept in *verbal* "leading strings," like the man of the past. We can easily see why the child or the undeveloped man, as was the Israelite, must be *told*; why it must be "Thus saith the Lord;" why the great principles or laws of life must be verbally stated to him in a divinely authoritative form. But we cannot see why this should be necessary or even useful to the developed or developing man of the New Jerusalem phase of humanity, whose mind is opening to receive truth from influx, thus to receive the very Spirit of truth,—which is to receive truth as living light. Any *authoritative statement* of truth is, and it ought to be, most repulsive to the real man of this age. The true man of this age can acknowledge no truth but as it

appeals to his own rational thought and gives him light. He can receive the husk of truth only as he sees the corn in it, and then he will receive it for the sake of the corn, not the husk.

The Writings are not even the husk, for they are not as an outgrowth from the corn; they have not come by correspondence, as Sacred Scripture has; they are nothing but a treatise; yet they are, as such, of priceless value until you have come into a state to see the truth itself, and then their value is of a very different character. You then see truth as Swedenborg did, as all regenerated men do; you see it illuminating the very letter itself of the Word as you devoutly and lovingly read it. What do you then care, when you have arrived at this state, for any explanation, any verbal statement of truth or *about* truth?

5. *Illustrative Example.*

I once heard of a man, a good old man, who had read the "Heavenly Doctrines" with great delight and profit for about fifty years. His interest in them then gradually subsided, until they at length lost their attraction for him. He laid them aside and read the Bible only. Why was this? The Writings had done their work for him; they had explained to him the real nature of Sacred Scripture as a casket of jewels; they had given him the key to the casket; he had applied the key, and had at length come into that regenerate state in which he actually saw the jewels in the casket,—jewels which had only been described to him before. He no longer needed the key after he got sight of the jewels. The living truth itself—of which the Writings are only verbal treatises—flowed sensibly into his mind while he was reading the Scriptures, and exhilarated and illuminated it. He was in "revelation from perception."

A description of the landscape, or of the things seen in the sunlight, may be of priceless value to one by blindness de-

prived of the sunlight; but what does he care for such description after his sight has been restored? "In proportion as the love is kindled," says Swedenborg, "the truth shines; for the good of love is the very vital fire, . . . is comparatively as the flame of the sun which is heat and light." And it is regeneration, and that alone, that "kindles the love," thus that enables one to see the jewels in the casket. You may be intellectually informed about the jewels, you may learn how to use the key to open the casket, but by no possibility can you see the jewels but as your love is kindled as the result of regeneration. The old man in question was in a state to see measurably, as Swedenborg himself saw; but this by no means implies that he possessed the qualifications to do the work which Swedenborg did. Other similar cases might be mentioned, in which the Sacred Scriptures, from a similar cause, had become, to those devoutly reading them, luminous with the very "spirit of truth," and hence of infinitely greater value than any other book, not excepting even the Writings.

6. *The "Main Factor."*

Prior to the year 1860 there seemed to be no important difference of opinion in regard to Swedenborg's writings or the nature of his mission. But in that year the late Rev. Thomas Worcester, in his address before the Convention, at Chicago, spoke thus of Swedenborg:

"When Swedenborg became receptive of those two loves [love to God and love to man], he had within himself the most essential means of understanding the Scriptures; he had a genuine love for the truths contained in them, for he loved what they teach. And besides, the good loves which he had, opened his mind upward to heaven, to the Lord, so that he could receive heavenly light,—the spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit,—which exalts and illustrates the things contained in the literal sense. This is what enabled him to see and to draw forth true doctrine from the Word." (See "New Jerusalem

Magazine" for August, 1860, p. 80.) A very few took exception to this.

According to the view above stated by Mr. Worcester—and we were not aware that any differed from it at that time, and we presume that he was not—the “*main factor*” in Swedenborg’s qualifications for his mission, though by no means the only important or extraordinary one, was his *state of regeneration*. It was to this that exception was taken; and yet it has since been admitted, by a part, at least, if not by all who once opposed it, that the “gift of perception or illustration from the Lord, by which man sees the truth not from himself but from the Lord, presupposes a state in which man has reached not only the sixth, but even the seventh, stage of the regenerate life;” and that it is only when he is regenerated as to his celestial degree . . . that he is in the condition in which he may be “internally inspired,” or “receive revelation from perception.” And all admit that Swedenborg was “internally inspired,” or, which is the same, was in a state of revelation from perception.

This high state of regeneration, in its relation to Swedenborg’s other qualifications, is, comparatively, we may say, by way of illustration, as the *retina* to the other organs of the eye. The retina is an expansion of the optic nerve, thus is immediately connected with the brain, and, through the brain, with the soul itself. However perfect the eye in other respects, there could be no vision without the retina. The other organs of the eye are as Swedenborg’s other qualifications. But as these organs are impotent without the nerve connecting them with the soul, so Swedenborg’s other qualifications, however perfect they might be, would be of no avail, as regards his great mission, but for that state of regeneration which opened his mind upward to the reception of that influx from the Lord which filled him with light, which internally inspired him, or put him in a state of “revelation from perception.” It was this that gave significance and power to all his other

qualifications, and made them effective, as it were, as instruments; just as the retina makes all the other organs of the eye effective as instruments of sight.

Here, then, is one point, and a fundamental one, on which all must be agreed, namely, that Swedenborg's mind was, by his high state as to regeneration,—though perhaps not necessarily to the seventh degree,—opened upward to the Lord.

7. *Illumination.*

Let us now inquire what are the results of such a state of regeneration, as regards man's relation to the Lord. What new capacities are opened in him? First, he comes into a state of illumination, or illustration. All men do. The Writings are very full and unmistakable on this subject: "When man is in good, and, from good, in truth, he is raised into the Divine light, and, according to the quantity and quality of good, into such as is more or less interior." A. C. 9407. "The light of truth with a man is altogether according to the state of his love. In proportion as the love is kindled, the truth shines" (10,201), and, of course, the mind is illuminated. "All illustration is from good." "When there is illustration by truth, then there is an appearance as if the illustration was from truth, when yet it belongs to the good which thus shines through truth." 3094. This so accords with our rational intuitions I will not take up the space with further citations. We all see how this is; for Swedenborg teaches with unmistakable clearness that the Divine Influx is the same into all men,—the evil and the good, the regenerate and the unregenerate,—just as the influx from the sun is the same into fields of weeds and fields of eorn; just as the rains fall equally upon the cultivated and the uncultivated portions of the earth; just as life from the brain flows with equal fulness into the diseased as into the non-diseased organs of the body. Regeneration clears the mind of its darkening vapors, dispels the clouds, and brings the mind into a state recipient

of the light of heaven. To be in regenerated love and charity is to have the spiritual sky clear and transparent, is to be upon the spiritual mountain, in the very light of heaven itself, where the Lord—the Lord as the Word, as the very Spirit and Life of truth—is “in His glory.” Let it be remembered that this is not an exceptional state, but that *all* regenerated men are in a state of illustration, but each “altogether according to the state of his love; that is, according to the quantity and quality of good in him.” Of course the measure of the light received—not its intensity—and the results of its reception must depend upon the capacity of the mind, upon whether it is broad or narrow, large or small, if I may so speak. We do not suppose that a mind of small and limited experience, for example, can receive as much light as one of vast experience, like that of Swedenborg, nor that the results will be as great.

8. *Perception.*

A second result of such highly regenerated state—and thus of illustration—is an “internal perception of truth,” and “thus revelation from perception.” “He who loves truths for the sake of truths *sees them from the Lord*,” that is to say, from the Word, from the truth itself, which the Lord is. “All perception is from celestial love,” and all who arrive at the celestial state in their regeneration receive perception from the Lord. A. C. 1442, 1616. “Perception is the celestial itself given by the Lord to those who are in the faith of love.” 536. “They who are in the spiritual affection of truth are elevated into the light of heaven, even so as to perceive their illustration from the Lord.” A. C. 1183. And this perception of truth is internal revelation,—is a revelation to all men in a regenerated state and to angels, but, of course, with a difference. It is a revelation to them of all that God has to reveal, for it is a revelation of Himself, of Himself as the all-creating Word, as the all-illuminating Truth. What has God to reveal but Himself as Living Light? “The Divine Truth from

the Lord is the only thing from which is everything else." 9503. What else need He reveal? What more does the man in illustration, thus in the perception of truth from the Lord, want? Illuminating truth, thus truth glowing with Divine Love, is all that it is possible for any one to receive immediately or directly from the Lord.

9. *Understanding and Will.*

Let us not confound a state of perception with the state a man is in when his understanding is raised into light in advance of his will, for there is an infinite difference between them. A man is in perception, or that kind of perception which is from illustration, only as a result of regeneration. It is true, Swedenborg says, that the "understanding of every man may be elevated into the light of heaven and perceive spiritual truths when he hears them," but qualifiedly so, that is, "according to the *affection of knowing* and understanding them." A. C. 1323. He says that "even devils can understand the arcana of wisdom." A. C. 1343. "The understanding can be elevated above the lusts of the will." T. C. R. 574. Of course man could never see the "way of life" and become regenerated if this were not so. Man is mentally so organized that his understanding can go before and lead the way. But Swedenborg says that "there are no truths where there is no good," and thus no pure genuine light; and he proves it. For he adds, "The reason is, because the Lord never flows immediately into truths with man, but mediately by his good; for good is of the will, and the will is the man himself, the understanding being thence produced and formed; for the understanding is so adjoined to the will that what the will loves the understanding sees, and also brings forth into light; wherefore, if the will is not in good, but in evil, then the influx of truth from the Lord into the understanding avails nothing; for it is dissipated, because it is not loved; yea, it is perverted, and the truth is falsified; hence it is manifest why the Lord does

not immediately flow into the understanding of man, except so far as the will is in good. The Lord can illustrate the understanding of every man, and so flow in with divine truths, inasmuch as the faculty of understanding truth is given to every man, and this for the sake of his reformation; but still the Lord does *not* so flow in, because truths do not remain, but in proportion as the will is reformed: to illustrate the understanding in truths even to faith, except in proportion as the will acts as one with it, would also be dangerous; for man can then pervert, adulterate, and profane truths, which exposes him to the worst condemnation. Moreover, truths, howsoever they are known and understood, if they are not at the same time lived, are nothing but inanimate truths; and truths inanimate are as it were statues which are without life. From these considerations it may appear, whence it is, that there are no truths where there is no good, unless as to form and not as to essence." A. E. 730.

In regard to perception, it is of various degrees and kinds; but that with which Swedenborg was favored was evidently that which a man has when he is "in truth from good," and which is the result of his state of illustration. Swedenborg was in illustration, and therefore in perception as a consequence, and he was in revelation from perception.

10. *Revelation from Perception.*

Revelation from perception is what the angels only and regenerated men have. This is the kind of revelation that was common in the Most Ancient Church, but comparatively rare in the degenerating Ancient Church. It is a totally different kind of revelation from that made by speech, like the Sacred Scriptures, or by visions; and it requires an entirely different state of mind to receive it. It could not possibly have been received by those to whom revelation was made in a verbal form, not even by Moses and the Prophets. Revelation from perception is the Word as living light actually shining in the

mind, as it shines in the minds of angels and good spirits, or regenerated men. Revelation from perception is from *influx*, not from *dictation*; Sacred Scripture, or verbal revelation, is from dictation, but dictation, let us remember, not by the Lord, but by angels and good spirits, as they were filled by influx from the Lord; for dictation is a finite act. It is divine truth finited down, as it were, into thought and measured out in words. Revelation from perception, it is plain, is of a more interior kind, for it is actual insight into spiritual principles and causes; it is a conception of such principles and causes in the very light itself of heaven. Revelation from verbal dictation is only a description, in words, of scarcely more than the gross, materialized effects, as it were, of such principles. Revelation from perception is as the restoration of the things of sight to the blind, in all their detail of beauty and glory, as they appear to perfect vision; while revelation from dictation is as the lame, verbal utterance and description of those things to the blind.

11. *Dictation.*

But we are told that Swedenborg positively affirms that the spiritual sense of the Word was *dictated* to him from heaven. So he does. But to dictate is to give the very words. And if he received the words he wrote from heaven, it must have been either from the Lord or from the angels. But the Lord never finites truth, which is Divine thought, into speech, except through finite agencies, such as men, spirits, or angels. But Swedenborg expressly declares that "he never received anything concerning the doctrines of the New Church from any angel or spirit, but from the Lord alone." What does he mean, then, by dictation? Let him define his own words, and he does this clearly and consistently. In speaking of Revelation from Perception, he says that *perception* "is a dictate through heaven from the Lord flowing into the interiors of the thought." A. C. 5121. Again, "Perception, in itself, is

nothing else than a sort of internal speech ;” “ every interior impression or dictate, and even conscience itself, is nothing but such internal speech.” 1822. When perception ceased in the Most Ancient Church, there succeeded a kind of dictate called conscience. Swedenborg speaks of several kinds of dictate, as that of perception, of conscience, of truth, of good. But they are each and all an *influx* from the Lord ; and whether they are of one kind or another depends, not at all upon the nature of the influx,—for that is unchangeably the same,—but upon the state of the recipient.

12. *Who have Revelation from Perception?*

But who have perception? Swedenborg’s teachings on this point are unmistakable ; they are often repeated. In fact, his whole philosophy of mind in its relation to the Lord makes the subject plain, even if he had said nothing specifically about it. As shown above from the Writings, they have revelation from perception “ who are in good, and from good in truth.” Revelation from perception is made when they who are in such a state read the Word. 5121. The Word reveals itself by Holy Influx to all who are in such a state of Good and Truth while they are devoutly reading it. 8971. And there is nothing else to be revealed but the Word, or the Lord as the Word. When the Word is revealed all is revealed ; God and heaven and all things in heaven are revealed. To such persons the Word reveals itself in its genuine sense,—that is, as living light. 10,323. Such influx of the Word as light, and consequent illustration, are actual elevation into heaven among the angels, and communication there from the Lord. 10,330. But communication from the Lord is nothing else than communication from Him as the Word, thus as an influx of living light. Communication from the Lord is never in audible speech, except to the merely natural man, and not to him even, except as the light is finited into speech through the finiting medium of angels or spirits. Though there is a

sense in which natural men may, as regards their intellectual part, be raised into the light of heaven, yet no one who is not "in truth from good" can have the kind of perception of which we are speaking, and thus revelation from perception. No one can understand the true spirit and philosophy of Swedenborg's writings without being undoubtingly convinced of this.

13. *Formulated Truth.*

Formulated Truth—that is to say, Truth finited into verbal statements, verbal precepts, principles, or doctrines—never did, never can, come immediately from the Lord; they come only through finiting agencies or instruments. And there are no such finiting mediums between the man in a state of "revelation from perception" and the Lord. A man in such a state sees truth, not in its finited and verbalized form, in its form as of a statement, precept, or doctrine, but sees it as *light* from the Divine,—perceives his own illustration from the Lord (as above). Swedenborg mentions his own case AS AN EXAMPLE, and NOT as exceptional: "It was given *me*," he says, "to see the illustration, and from it to perceive distinctly what comes from the Lord and what from the angels." 1183. What came from the Lord to Swedenborg was precisely, in kind, what comes to all men, namely, illuminating truth, or truth as light; just as what comes from the sun to one plant is precisely, in kind, what comes to all plants. What Swedenborg *wrote* was finitely *formulated* truth; he never wrote any other kind of truth. But where was such truth formulated but in his own mind? and how formulated but exactly according as his mind was impressed by the influx of truth *as living light*? And how is mind thus impressed but according to its *purity*, its *developed capacities*, its *stores of experiences*, etc.? It is not every mind that can formulate truth, especially in its highest verbal revelation. A mind must have peculiar gifts and be specially prepared for this office; and even then it is only "spiritual truth" that can be measured down into a verbal form: "celes-

tial truth" is ineffable. S. D. 4671, *et passim*. That nothing is received from the Lord—nothing whatever—but influx of living truth, influx of the very "spirit and life" of the Word, and not verbal truth, not finited or formulated ideas, principles, or doctrines, is confirmed by the following passage, among numerous others,—namely, "By revelation is meant *illustration* when the Word is read, and in such case *perception*; for they who are in good, and desire truth, are SO TAUGHT FROM THE WORD,"—that is, by the Lord. And this is the way, and the only way, in which Swedenborg was "taught by the Lord while reading the Word;" it was by *illustration* and *perception*, and not by the Lord's giving him already formulated ideas, principles, or doctrines, much less verbal statements of truth, as some seem to suppose. Neither Swedenborg, nor any other man or angel, ever received anything directly or immediately from the Lord but infinite or unfinited truth, truth as light shining in the mind; for this, as repeatedly stated before, is all that the Lord has, or ever had, or ever need to have, to give any one.

14. *The Writings.*

And did Swedenborg give what he so joyously and so abundantly received? Never. This was impossible. Truth, as light, could not even shine through him as natural light through a transparent medium. And this is an important fact to be noted. Truth became finite the moment the Divine Influx impinged upon the walls of his mind. He could not be the medium of truth as light; he could not transfer it as Divine Truth. He could give it, could speak it and write it, only as finited, formulated, verbal truth; he could communicate it only in the form of talks about or descriptions of truth; in other words, he could only convey to others the thoughts, ideas, principles suggested and formed in his own mind as illuminated by truth as light; just as, however purely you may receive the sunlight, you cannot communicate it; you can only talk about it and about things illuminated by it. Swedenborg's

writings are not genuine truth,—teachings are not genuine truth,—they cannot be, any more than bottles are wine, or than surfaces receiving and dividing or formulating light into distinct shades and colors are the light, or rather than such colors are the light. They are only verbal expressions of truth, or suggestive mediums or formularies of truth. And such formularies are not Divine any more than the purple clusters produced from the vine through the medium of the branches are the vine, or are the life of the vine. The Writings are rather as finger-points to show the way to the Divine, or how we may come into a state to receive more purely the Divine. They are not designed to give men truth, but to lead them in the way of truth, to tell them how to be regenerated, and thus how to have their minds cleansed and purified, so that they can receive the truth already flowing into them without perverting it, and thus receive it as truth. The Writings are the guides, as it were. Yet we regard Swedenborg's statements as true statements or doctrines of truth, and of priceless value as such. His writings are not even recipient vessels of truth, as mind is. We can receive no truth from them or through them, as we can from the Word. They are in no sense the Word, or like the Word. The Word, and that alone, is truth.

It was not because Swedenborg was a servant of the Lord,—we are all equally his servants,—nor because he had a special mission,—we each have equally a special mission,—that he made such true statements or teachings or doctrines of truth, but because he received truth so purely, thus because he wrote in such pure light of truth.

Swedenborg was not exceptional in his relation to truth, thus to the Lord, but in the measure which he received of it, rather in the purity, thus heavenly brightness, in which he received it; and this is the reason, and not because the Lord gave him more than other men, why his writings are so exceptionally truthful as verbal expressions of truth.

15. *Truth not Transferable.*

Swedenborg was simply a man, like other men, in his relation to truth; he was simply a recipient of it, just as we are; it flowed into him just as it flows into us, and for the same reason,—flowed into him as light into the eye or life into the body, but not to be *transferred* to other men. Can light be transferred from one eye to another, or life from one body to another? You cannot transcribe truth. There is an infinite difference between truth in Swedenborg—or as it flowed into him—and truth in his writings. Swedenborg is not a medium of truth to us; he is not between the Lord and us; neither are his writings. We do not look to him or go to his writings for truth, as we do to a well for water; they contain none. We might as well go to a treatise on light, or to verbal statements about light, for light. Truth cannot be bottled up like wine. It is truth as it flows into you, but not as it rests in you or after it has passed through you,—if such resting or such passage were conceivable. What is light, the natural symbol and representative of truth, when confined in a vessel or when it is brought to a state of rest? Is it anything? What is light when finited and formulated in words? Is it light? Is it anything like light, except that it gives the blind man some sort of an idea through the ear of what he cannot see with the eye?

Such is the relation of Swedenborg's writings to truth,—real truth. They are a needful substitute for truth to the spiritually blind. They are truth *speaking*, as it were, when it cannot *shine* by reason of our blindness. Rather they are an explanation of truth, or a verbal presentation of principles of truth, which, if not spiritually blind, we might see, and see in their fulness and glory. They are, in their relation to truth, what a description of a landscape to a blind man is to the light by which, if not blind, he might see things ineffable and full of beauty.

16. *The Writings.—How Useful.*

Thus these writings are of vast importance to us because we are *blind*. But let us not for that reason consider them an embodiment of all truth, or of all the Lord has to give men, and just as if the Lord could put His truth, any of His truth, into words at all. They are of very great use to us in aiding us, by explaining to us the way, to come into states in which we may receive truth, in its living brightness, from the Lord. But let us remember that we are living under the same spiritual sun that poured its light into Swedenborg's mind, and that we are all receiving, each according to his measure and state, just as he received. We are not dependent upon Swedenborg, or upon any verbal statement whatever, for Truth, but, just as Swedenborg was, upon the Lord alone. We may have read Swedenborg much or little or not at all; all the Truth we have received has come by influx from the Lord alone. What we get from Swedenborg aids in giving Truth from the Lord practical outline and form. Truth, without true doctrinal statement, would be indefinite and vague. Here we see the use, the very great importance, of Swedenborg's writings; here we see their true place and use in relation to Truth itself.

17. *Not all the Truth.*

But we very greatly err, so far as we imagine that Swedenborg has furnished all or the only formulated vessels of truth. On the contrary, every true life elaborates such vessels. The Sacred Scriptures furnish them; so does science or a knowledge of God,—that is, of Truth in nature. The thoughts of some men flow spontaneously, as it were, into true expressions, and to such men an external formula would be only an embarrassment. Other men, who have equally keen perceptions of what is true, cannot think but as aided by already formulated vessels of thought. The former do not care to read

Swedenborg or to know the ultimate expression of others' thoughts; the latter are persistent and loving students of all that Swedenborg has written. Both are admirers of Swedenborg and of his writings, but for different reasons.

There is every variety of mind in the reception of truth and in its operation and effects, just as there is every variety of plant in the reception and operation of the sunlight. We live in an age or at the time of that peculiar phase of developing humanity when universal mind is in a new receptive state, not when the Lord is doing anything different or anything more than in any former age.

There is, I say, an infinite difference between truth and a verbal statement of truth. True, men are in the habit of speaking of such statements as truths; thus, of calling true precepts, doctrines, or teachings, truths. Swedenborg's writings are truth or contain truths only in this sense.

18. *Truth.*

For what is *truth*, real *truth*? It is substantial, living *effluence* from the Lord. It is, indeed, the *Lord* in His goings forth of Himself, as it were, from Himself. It is the all-creating, spiritual radiance of God and from God as the Life and Source of all that is. It is the "*Word*,"—not as Sacred Scripture, but as that of which Sacred Scripture is only the basis and continent, the outer garment, the finited, verbal statement; it is that Word by which and out of which "all things were made," and without which "was not anything made that was made." Truth is *Life*: "In Him [the Word] was life." Truth is *Light*: "And the Life was the *light* of men." Truth *flows* into the mind as the brain-life or the heart-life into the body, and it gives life to the mind as such fluids give life to the body. Mind actually *lives* on truth—truth as the form and manifestation of love—as the body lives on its fluids of life. Truth *illuminates* the mind as the sunlight the world. It is by truth alone that mind is enabled to

think and perceive and produce results, just as it is by the sunlight alone that the earth is made productive. Such is truth: it is God; and all the God we know or need to know anything about. Christ was Truth [God the Word] *manifest*—brought forth to view—to human perception on a lower plane. Truth in the mind is God in the mind.

Can any of these things be said of the Writings, or of any other verbal teachings or doctrines, however true they may be? Are they *truth*, then? Do they ever contain truth? Are any of their doctrines or teachings truth? Are they anything more than finite statements or verbal expressions of truth? but statements or expressions made in the very light itself of truth,—which is to be “instructed,” “dictated to,” by the Lord Himself, the Lord as Truth itself,—thus they are true statements. They are a rich storehouse of such *statements*, thus of truths in this sense of the word. And this, it is plain, is all that they are. There is no real “life” in them, no real “light” in them. They only tell us how, by living according to them as true teachings, we may come into a state to receive real truth as life and light by influx from the Lord, which is the only way to receive real truth.

Such are the Writings and such their relation to Truth, thus to the Lord. What is their relation to men? Are they *true statements of truth to men?*

19. *Authority to the Man of this Age.*

Here is exactly the point: Are they *true statements*,—not absolutely, but relatively? This depends upon the reader’s state. Even though absolutely true, yet to some men they are false; and the man of this age, of this phase of developing humanity, is to be his own judge. No Grand Sanhedrim or ecclesiastical Council is going to decide the question for him. The Word, Christ, Truth,—Truth *as he sees it*,—is his only “*Rabbi*.” Matt. ii. 3, 8. And this is one of the great distinctive features of the man—the real man—of this age,

and a feature that seems to be entirely overlooked and ignored by some writers on the nature of Swedenborg's writings as "authority." It is not literal truth, not any verbal statement of truth whatever, but *truth itself*,—truth as a living influx into his own mind,—that the real man of this age is going to acknowledge as authority, and influx as qualified by his own, not another's, state of reception. It is the Jew and the Solifidian alone—those who are in a relatively undeveloped, childhood state—that need *verbal* authority, the "Thus-saith-the-Lord" form of truth. But such men do not really belong to this age; they are dwellers in the lingering shadow of the past. To such, Swedenborg's writings are true or untrue,—just as has been the case with the Jew and the Christian in regard to the Bible,—according to *external* evidence, according as they are persuaded that he was a true man, and therefore "told the truth," or wrote what the Lord told him to write. With such men, therefore, the question is not "What is truth?" but "What do the Writings *say*?" It is not *living* truth as it flows into the mind and produces rational conviction, but *verbal* truth as substantiated by adequate authority, that is their "Master,"—not truth as it comes directly from the Lord, or is the Lord, in their own minds, but as it comes externally formulated and clothed by other minds.

20. Evidence.

Thus it is plain that whether Swedenborg's writings are true statements of truth to men depends upon the character of the men, and that they will be regarded as true, or untrue, according to the state of mind. Formalists or literalists—such is the character of some minds—must have evidence about them that "thus *saith* the Lord." And they are constantly looking for such evidence, and they are delighted with it when they find it. There is every variety of this kind of mind, from the ancient Israelite down to the literalistic reader of the "Heavenly Doctrines." Mystery was all-sufficient evidence to

the Israelite; a miracle, to the "Christian;" to the man in a transition state for the new age, but who has not yet entirely outgrown the old, a kind of rational conviction of the Divine authority of the messenger is necessary; whereas, with the true man of the age, the *message itself is all that he will regard as of any account*, and this even will have weight only as witnessed to by the *internal* Rabbi of the mind itself,—Christ as the inflowing life or Spirit of truth. To such a man the Writings will be true, not because Swedenborg *says so*, not because of any supposed evidence that the Lord *says so* through him, but because he is in a state to receive, and is actually receiving, qualifiedly, the very Spirit of truth itself, of which the Writings are only a limited, verbal statement. No external say-so evidence will weigh a straw or excite a thought with such a man. He will not care to ask what was Swedenborg's authority, or whether his statements are worthy of belief. The man of this new age, the man of the real New Jerusalem, for whose use alone the Writings are designed, will measure them by the truth actually flowing into him, and not by what Swedenborg or anybody else says about them; and the only test to him of their fallibility or infallibility will be that of such inflowing truth,—if it should occur to him to ask even whether they are infallibly true or not. To every such man the Writings must be true or false according as he himself sees them, in the light of the real Spirit of truth in his own mind. If he does not thus see them as true, you cannot by any evidence whatever prove them to him to be true. Dreadful exhibitions of Divine wrath and power, as with the Israelite, or signs and wonders, as with the earliest Christians, or rational arguments, though never so logical and convincing, as with the scientist and philosopher, are not the kind of evidence demanded by the real man of this age, though they have had their mission, and an important one, in the past, and still have with a certain class of people. Of what avail is it for you, though possessed of all the gifts of the highest angel, of

what avail is it for councils, though consisting of men of such gifts, to tell a man who has the real manhood of this age developing within him, that this or that is true? He has a higher authority—Christ, Truth—as a witness and monitor in his own mind, whose testimony he can hold as subordinate to that of no man or body of men. Even though you were to satisfy him that Swedenborg was the infallible mouthpiece of the Lord, as some believe, it would be of no avail; his utterances *must* be judged and received or rejected according as witnessed to by the Rabbi within. You do him, therefore, no good service by proving, even if it were possible, that Swedenborg's writings are infallible. He is of an entirely different genius from either the Israelite or the Papist, and is capable of higher testimony, of being shown plainly of the Father,—“even the SPIRIT of Truth . . . that dwelleth with you and shall be IN you,” an inner counsellor, teacher, and enlightener. How is it that men professedly of this new age have so mistaken the genius and wants and prerogatives of its manhood? This is an *internal* phase of humanity. The truth that comes with “authority” comes in an internal way; it is not formulated truth. No man, in any sense, stands between another man and the real Master: “All ye are brethren.” The man of this age is going to drink from the living fountain, as Swedenborg, its precursor, herald, and great exemplar, did, and not, as in the past, from finited statements of truth.

21. *The Man of the Age and the Writings.*

The important question presents itself, then, What is the position of the real man of this age in his relation to Swedenborg's writings? I answer, Very similar to what it is in his relation to other writings. In fact, where is the difference, if he acknowledges no verbal statement of truth, however true in itself, as authoritative truth? For no one is going to acknowledge these writings as true except so far as they are true to *him*, true as *he* sees them. And this can be said of all

writings. And he can see them as true only according to his reception of corresponding living truth by influx. So different is the man of this age from the man of any preceding age. The witness of truth is, I say, within and not outside. Swedenborg's writings, in a wonderful degree, bear the impress of this witness. He evidently wrote them in its light, thus by its "dictation;" just as the true scientist writes in the light and by the dictation of scientific truth; just, indeed, as Swedenborg wrote as a scientist.

CHAPTER II.

SWEDENBORG'S RELATION TO THE LORD.

1. *Inspiration.*

MUCH has been said about Swedenborg's inspiration. But what is meant by his inspiration? how was he inspired? was he inspired in any different sense from that in which all regenerated men are inspired? Swedenborg gives a plenty of unmistakable instruction on this subject. And what he says of himself is clearly intended, in most cases, as illustrative of general principles as applicable to all men in similar states of regeneration; as, for example, where he says, "it was given me to know by experience," "I know from my own case," "this was granted me to know as a most certain thing by daily experience and reflection," and the like. Passages are often met with in the Writings which relate to Swedenborg's own experience and history in his qualifications for, and performance of, the duties of his office. And these, to a superficial reader, or to one insensible to the true spirit and philosophy of the Writings, would seem to indicate that Swedenborg was in a certain extraordinary, not to say miraculous, manner,—different from all other regenerated men,—an instrument, somewhat as Moses and the Prophets were, in the hands of the Lord—a "quill," as expressed by one—to write the doctrines of the New Church. But the extracts show no such thing, encourage no such view, except to the intense literalist who is blind to the true scope and philosophy of Swedenborg's teachings as a whole.

2. *Of Two Kinds.*

There are plainly two kinds of inspiration,—one external, the other internal. The Bible was written by men externally inspired, by unregenerated or merely natural men, thus by external men. Swedenborg was internally inspired; for he was, as is acknowledged, in illustration, and thus in “revelation from perception;” and this, as abundantly shown in the Writings, is what is meant by “internal inspiration.” No one will deny that Swedenborg was gifted with this kind of inspiration; but in this he was like all other men who are “in the good of love to the Lord,” or “in good and thence in truth,” which is an indispensable condition of such inspiration. In such inspiration, therefore, his case was not exceptional, except so far as his regeneration to such state of love was exceptional, for all men in such state of “good of love to the Lord” are internally inspired. Nothing is more clearly taught by Swedenborg. Thus it is plain that Swedenborg was internally inspired, not because of any *special gift* by the Lord, but because, and solely because, he was in a state of “good of love to the Lord.” And for the same reason, and for no other reason, was he in illustration, and thus “in revelation from perception,” while writing an explanation of the internal sense of the Word. He was inspired or was in revelation from perception, we insist, in the sense, and only in the sense, in which all men, in such good of love, are inspired, or are in revelation from perception; for influx of Divine Truth into such men is, in all cases, as we have shown, “revelation from perception,” or “internal inspiration,” but with a difference in measure and degree and results, of course, determined by the character as to capacity, condition, stores of knowledge, experiences, and the like, of the recipient vessels, no two of which are just alike.

3. *The Lord's Part in the Writings.*

Now what we want to know is specifically what constituted the Lord's part and what Swedenborg's part as regards the Writings. First, the Lord's part,—that is to say, we want to know what the Lord specifically gave Swedenborg or did for him as His "servant" while he was writing. Did He give him, or did He do for him, anything whatever different from what He gives to or does for other men, all men? We answer, No. For, as most clearly shown in the Writings, nothing, nothing whatever, no influence, no power, no operation, not even the form, the essence, or the shadow of anything, comes from the Lord but an effluence of Himself,—of Himself as the Word, of Himself as Love, Spirit, Life, Truth. He has nothing else to give, nothing whatever, but such effluence. And He does nothing, absolutely nothing, but give such effluence; just as the sun does nothing but give its radiance, its effluence of itself; just as the vine does nothing for the branches but give them an effluence of and from its life, or give itself in the form of such effluence. The Lord does nothing, absolutely nothing, in the creation or evolution of each and all His works,—and whether physical or spiritual,—but what He does as simply and exclusively the result of such effluence in its operation as influx or influence; and such *operation* must of necessity and invariably depend upon the *recipient* of such influx. God's power, His wisdom, His providence, all His attributes, are confined to the operation of such effluence and influx. He has no finitely purposive influence, no arbitrary power, as man has; no magic power. He has no hand, no "mighty arm," none but the Word,—that is, none but Truth, Truth as the form of His own life, by which to execute. He does nothing as man does, not even as the good man does. He has no such power as man has. The sun is the great exemplar of the operation of His power. And how does the sun operate? purely as an influx of itself or of its

own substance. It works in secret, entirely concealed from view; works silently, works organically, and little by little, and always exactly according to *conditions*, producing woody fibre, leaves, or flowers, producing sour or sweet, one color or another, a noble or ignoble plant or tree, exactly according to the recipient *conditions* modifying its operation. It is precisely so with the Lord in all that He does or ever did. He works as the sunbeam works, or as the living principle in the seed or in the egg, which is from Him, works to create a plant or a bird. And this is the way, and the only way, in which He works in men and for men. He works as life, and only as life works; for He is Life, Life itself; and all His attributes are attributes simply of Himself as Life. Swedenborg has explained this to axiomatic clearness. This is the way, and the only way, in which the Lord ever worked for or ever in any sense or manner taught or influenced Swedenborg in his writings; it was as inflowing Life, Life whose essence is love and whose form of operation and manifestation is truth. Hence the Lord's part, and His only part, in those Writings was in the one only normal, unchangeable operation of the influx of Divine Truth which he gave Swedenborg. Yet, strange to say, men often speak as if the Lord exercised some other influence over Swedenborg, or as if He influenced him in some other way, or in some additional way, than by the natural and spontaneous operation of influx of Himself; they speak as if the Lord made Swedenborg an exception to a universal and unchangeable law in this respect, which law is, as before stated, that the operation of influx must, by stern necessity, always and invariably be according to recipient state and conditions. They speak, for example, of truth being "instilled into Swedenborg by the Lord Himself"! And this peculiar, exceptional, instilling process seems to be what some understand by "internal inspiration;" and to substantiate this view they cite what Swedenborg says about the Lord's "*dictating* to him," "commanding him," "teaching him," "lead-

ing him," and the like, without regard to the necessary and only meaning of these phrases when considered in the light of the spirit and philosophy of Swedenborg's writings. Just as if the Lord could and did do for Swedenborg something outside or independent of, or in addition to, the natural operation of His influx according to state and conditions! and just as if it were not equally as necessary to consider what Swedenborg *means, according to his own philosophy*, as to hear what he is regarded as "authoritatively" and "infallibly" *saying*. And here, we think, lies the fatal mistake which has led to such strange views about Swedenborg, and about his writings as "the Lord's writings."

4. "*Instilled.*"

But if truth was instilled into Swedenborg's mind, it was truth in what form? Was it in the form of ideas, principles, words, doctrines? That would be external inspiration, and must come through a finiting medium, through the mind of some spirit or angel; for ideas, doctrines, etc., are finited things; even doctrines are only truth finited into verbal teachings; are truth finited, or limited and accommodated, in a certain conceivable form, by the processes of finite thought. Doctrines could not come from the Lord in such finite form. And yet Swedenborg says that he "was instructed by no spirit or angel"—that is, by no finite being—in his explanations of the Word. And, as we have seen, nothing comes from the Lord but Divine Truth, and to the regenerated man it comes only as an influx of Light. The finiting and formulating process into ideas, principles, and doctrines must have taken place in the finite faculties of Swedenborg's own mind. When he says, therefore, that "the internal sense was *dictated* to him by the Lord," that he "was taught by the Lord," that his books were "written from the Lord [*a Domino*] through him," and makes use of other like expressions, he certainly cannot mean what the rigid *literalist* would make him mean. Such expres-

sions must be interpreted by doctrine, and interpreted in such a manner as not to militate against the unity and harmony of acknowledged general principles. Swedenborg certainly does not contradict, in his own experience, universal and unchangeable principles. He never makes the laws of God's relation to men different, as applied to himself, from what they are as relating to other men. Swedenborg clearly shows the meaning of the above expressions by the way he uses them in other connections. For example, "dictate"—which literally means "to declare with authority," or to give verbal command, or to speak in words—does not mean, when predicated of the Lord, to give either words or finited thoughts, principles, or teachings; it is only a certain result of the operation of the influx of Divine Truth into finite vessels and under certain conditions. Thus Swedenborg says, "It was dictated in a wonderful manner in the thought, and the thought was led to an understanding of these words, and the idea was fixedly held in each expression as if detained by heavenly power: so this revelation took place to the conscious senses. By the permission of God Messiah, other revelations, which are many, will be spoken of elsewhere." Adv. 7167. Swedenborg had been speaking of a certain revelation to him. "They who are in good know from good what is in Divine Truth," "for it is to them a dictate, and guides them." A. C. 4715-88. "Inspiration is not dictation, but is *influx* from the Divine." 9094. Genuine perception is also called a *dictate* flowing through heaven from the Lord into the interiors of the thought. 5121. Conscience is a kind of dictate from the Lord that a thing is true. 895. And do *finited* thoughts, ideas, or principles flow down through heaven from the Lord? Rather, does not Divine Truth from the Lord take such finited forms in the finite and finiting mind itself into which it flows?

So, also, such expressions as the following—upon which some seem to put an altogether too literal construction—must be interpreted in the light of Swedenborg's general teachings

on God's relation to man: "The Lord alone *taught* me;" "the man who is led by the Lord is *taught* by Him from day to day what he is to do and to speak, and also what he is to preach and to write." That is to say, *all* men so *led* are so *taught*, and not Swedenborg alone. Again he says, "I was instructed by no spirit and by no angel, but by the Lord alone." True, such expressions as the following, "A revelation from His mouth," "by command," as predicated of the Lord, and other like expressions used by Swedenborg, seem to imply the use of finite vocal organs by the Lord as the means of their utterance. He has such organs *in potency*, or in first principles, or we should not have them. But has He them in actual, finited form? "By the Divine speech," Swedenborg says, "is meant the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord's Divine Human." And "the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord cannot be heard nor perceived by any one except by mediations;" and "the ultimate mediation is by the spirit who is with man, who flows in either into his thought or by a living voice." A. C. 6996. But there was no such mediation in Swedenborg's case while explaining the internal sense of the Word; for he says that he "was instructed by no spirit or angel, but by the Lord alone while reading the Word." And this shows, again, that Swedenborg received nothing whatever from the Lord but an influx of Divine Truth, and this in no other form than of such Truth as Light in the mind, as is the case with all regenerated men. And yet Swedenborg not unfrequently speaks of such influx as "Divine speech;" but he also says that it infinitely transcends the tongues of angels, and of course it must the tongues of men.

5. *Swedenborg's Part.*

It would be a very easy matter to prove to the *literalist*, by Swedenborg's own words, that his writings are the "Lord's writings." In fact, some do actually claim that, "in those writings which contain the doctrines of the internal sense of

the Word of God there is not a single expression that has not been written by the Lord through Swedenborg!" And this claim is made even for the "Adversaria" and the "Spiritual Diary"! Swedenborg must, therefore, be proved to be either an infinitely pure medium,—such as the highest angels are not,—thus a part of God, as the branch is of the vine, or, in some sense, a perfectly *passive instrument*, like a pen, or like a completely controlled amanuensis. And the following from S. D. 2799 has been cited to substantiate this view: "To-day it was given me to know that . . . language follows from the thought according to the ideas of thought, and that language is a natural consequence which follows in order;" and then the inference is made, "If Swedenborg's language 'followed according to the ideas of his thought, being 'their natural consequence,' the inspiration of the Lord must have been continued even into the very words that Swedenborg wrote." Then the converse must be true: if the words of Swedenborg's writings are the Lord's, "the ideas of his thought" are the Lord's as a necessary inference. But ideas also, like words, are finite things. And such finite things cannot be predicated of the Lord. They are exclusively and finitely human. Inspiration on the Lord's part is simply *influx* of Divine Truth; on man's part, *perception*. The result is, first, "*revelation* from perception," and then "ideas of thought;" and these are formed by the action and according to the condition of human faculty as a recipient of such influx. Ideas of thought never flow in from the Lord, any more than plants and animals flow in from the sun to the earth. Finiting and formulating human faculty must always, of necessity, intervene between the Divine Influx and the words that follow "in order" as a "natural consequence" according to the "ideas of thought" which result from such influx. Such human faculty is just as absolutely necessary to the formation of inflowing *living* truth into *verbal* truth as the organism of the tree is to the formation of the sunlight, and the elements of earth, air, and water into flowers and

fruit; or as the mechanism of the hand is to the reduction of formless material into the form of a watch or a steam-engine. And such human faculty, however highly regenerated, must be relatively impure and imperfect; must, therefore, *so far*, be a limiting and qualifying measure and medium. Even the "angels are impure in the sight of God;" even "in heaven there is continual purification;" "it is impossible for any angel even, by any means, to arrive at absolute perfection to eternity." The angels even are, therefore, in relative obscurity in their perceptions; and even the regenerate man's perceptions are still more obscure so long as he lives in the body. This is confirmed by the following from A. C. 2367: "When the man who is in the good of love and charity passes into the other life, he comes from an obscure life into a clearer one, as from a kind of night into day, . . . till he comes at length to the light in which the angels are, whose light of intelligence and wisdom is ineffable; the very light [*lumen*] itself in which man is respectively, is, as it were, dark;" and by this, from D. L. W. 257, "Human wisdom, which is natural as long as man lives in the natural world, *cannot on any consideration* be raised into angelic wisdom, but *only into a certain image of it.*" And Swedenborg acknowledges that "there was a change of state in him into the celestial kingdom *in an image*;" thus that he was raised only into a certain image of angelic wisdom. "Internal inspiration," or "revelation from perception," is the gift only of one who is "*in truth from good.*" Yet it is sometimes claimed that Swedenborg's perception did not correspond to his state as to good, thus that it "did not depend upon his regeneration," but that truth was "instilled into him by the Lord Himself," and this because Swedenborg was, in a certain sense, "separated from his body" only "as to the intellectual part of his mind, and not as to his will part." And it is this instilling process that, strange to say, is called internal inspiration. Just as if the Lord actually manipulated the influx of Divine Truth into Swedenborg in some extraordinary way,

making his case thereby a peculiar and exceptional one! Just as if it were in the nature or power of the Divine influx—which is all that the Lord gives or does for man—to do this! You might just as sensibly speak of the Sun's resorting to the expediency of some such instilling process to produce a certain desired extraordinary kind of fruit. If Swedenborg anywhere speaks of any kind of inspiration as the result of any such extraordinary instilling on the part of the Lord, let us not make Swedenborg so inconsistent with himself as to believe that he means anything like what such language obviously implies.

6. *His Partial Separation from the Body.*

But let us inquire what is really meant by the following clause from the "Coronis," which is calculated to mislead the novitiate reader of Swedenborg in regard to his state of inspiration and the cause of such inspiration: "These revelations are not miracles, since every man is, as to his spirit, in the spiritual world without separation from his body in the natural world, but I with a certain (*quodam*) separation, but only as to the intellectual part of my mind, but not as to the voluntary part." S. D. Ap., p. 169.

All men while in the natural world are at the same time in the spiritual world, but not *consciously* so. Swedenborg's case was an exceptional one. What made it so? He was at the same time *consciously* in *both* worlds. How? Why, by a *certain separation* as to his intellectual part which was, at the same time that he was in the natural world, *consciously* in the spiritual world; he, unlike other men, had the gift of spiritual vision. This is all that we can make of the words, "a certain separation as to his intellectual part." This is all that the phrase, even in itself, justifies; and the philosophy of the Writings absolutely forbids any other meaning. "It has been granted me to be at the same time in natural light and in spiritual, . . . and thereby to see the wonderful things of heaven, to be among the angels like one of them, and at the same time to imbibe

truths in light" (*idem*, 157), which implies a "certain separation as to his intellectual part,"—that is, intromission by conscious spiritual vision into heaven, without which he could not have seen its wonderful things nor been among the angels as one of them.

This in no sense implies any separation of Swedenborg's intellectual part *from his voluntary part*. Good in the regenerated will was still the "very vital fire" by which the intellect was illustrated, for such regenerated will is the only possible recipient of all illuminating, *immediate* influx from the Divine. "The truth which proceeds immediately from the Divine enters into man's will, this is its way; but the truth which proceeds *mediately* from the Divine enters into man's understanding;" and "conjunction" of the two—namely, truth in the will and truth in the understanding—"cannot take place unless the will and the understanding act as one—*i.e.*, unless the will will the good and the understanding confirm it by the truth." A. C. 7056. And such conjunction, we are taught by the most unequivocal statements in the Writings, is an indispensable condition of "revelation from perception," or "internal inspiration." You might, therefore, as well think of light without heat, which is its very essence, or of form without substance, as think of such *perception* or *inspiration* without love in the will. "When there is illustration by truth there is an appearance as if it was from truth, but it belongs to the good which thus shines through the truth." "The Lord"—*i.e.*, the Divine Truth—"flows in and is present with a man in his good. . . . It is thought that the Lord is present in the truth of what is called faith; but He is not present in truth without good." "The light of truth with a man is altogether according to the state of his love." "Illustration and apperception cannot exist unless there is affection or love, which is spiritual heat, to impart life to those things which are illustrated by light." "In proportion as the love is kindled, the truth shines." What can be plainer? Will and understanding must not only be

most intimately and practically connected, but must be most active in their relation to each other. The intellect cannot be divorced from the will and still have either life or light, for the will is the very substance of the mind ("good constitutes the man himself," A. C. 10,153), and the understanding is not only impotent, but is nothing without it. Hence there is no perception or internal inspiration but through the will as the principal factor.

7. *His Inspiration.*

Illustration or inspiration must be "*in proportion* as the love is kindled;" for "the light of truth with a man is altogether according to the state of his love." "They must proceed at a like pace." How, then, can we understand that the truths which Swedenborg saw, "did not correspond to his state of good;" and that "the state of his illustration did not depend upon his regeneration," and that, therefore, the truth by which he was illustrated and inspired, was "*instilled into him by the Lord*," and, of course, instilled into him by some other process than that one only process which expresses God's relation to man—namely, *influx*? Influx, as the Writings conclusively show, is the Lord's one only and unchangeable relation to all being. And "the influx is always the same" as regards what comes from the Lord, but "is varied according to state and reception." In regard to man, "the influx of the Lord is into good and through good into truth, and not contrariwise; thus into the will and by the will into the understanding, and not contrariwise." Because, and solely because, of his state of regeneration, Swedenborg received immediate influx into his will and mediate influx into his understanding; and those influxes were conjoined, and he suffered himself to be led by the Lord. This is most plainly the reason, and the only reason, why Swedenborg, like all other men in a similar state of regeneration, was in "revelation from perception," or was "internally inspired." His spiritual *vision* or intromission into the spiritual world, which was only a "certain separa-

tion from the body as to his intellectual part," had nothing to do with his inspiration, either for or against. Such vision or intromission was, relatively to his perception or inspiration, a very external matter. Even natural men sometimes have such vision, and thus such separation, though with a difference in extent and degree. Such intromission was, with Swedenborg, simply *one* of the important agencies in his qualifications for his peculiar mission,—one of the qualifiers, one of the indispensable conditions, in fact, of his *state* and *reception*; one of the factors which enabled his inspiration, or the influx of Divine Truth into him, to *take effect in the way it did*. He might have done other work requiring illustration and internal inspiration or perception, but he could not, as effectually as he did, have done the work he had to do, without this factor; any more than the eye, or any other organ of the body, can perform as perfectly its function, with any part of its organism gone, however small, and even though receiving the same unimpaired and unchangeable influx from the heart and the brain.

8. *Conditions of Internal Inspiration.*

The cause and conditions of internal inspiration, as of revelation from perception, as stated throughout the Writings, are intelligible, rational, and practical, and, we may add, apply to all men; they are simple and easily understood,—are, indeed, just what, to be in accord with other teachings, we should expect them to be. We cannot reverse what Swedenborg so clearly teaches on this subject. A certain intellectual separation from the body cannot change the cause or the conditions of internal inspiration; for it cannot change man's relation to the Lord, the one only Source of such inspiration, for that relation is an internal one,—the heavens are external compared with it. No angel can get between the Lord's immediate influx and man, and this is the chief element in internal inspiration. Immediate influx is into the will, is into the regenerated love there; and perception, or internal inspiration, is the

result. And such a state of mind enables man, if gifted with spiritual vision,—which, as before stated, is relatively an external matter,—to be *consciously* “in consociation with angels as one of them.” No unregenerated man, even though in spiritual vision, could possibly have had the kind of intelligent and conscious association with the angels that Swedenborg enjoyed. And the reason is a perfectly obvious one. For the contrast between such a man and an angel is as great as between a wild man of the woods and a philosopher. Such wild man may be in the presence of a philosopher, thus in externally visible society with him; but to be in intimate consociation with him is another and very different matter,—is, indeed, an impossibility. The fish might as well attempt to consociate with the bird, or the grub with the butterfly. This may help us to see the real nature of Swedenborg's intromission into the spiritual world, and how entirely different it was from that of any one that ever preceded him. *Because* he was in *internal inspiration* like the angels he could be in consociation with them as “their equal.”

What does Swedenborg mean, therefore, when he says that “Inspiration is an insertion into angelic societies,” but that the inspiration was the *cause* rather than the effect of the insertion? And what does he mean in the following citations, made by another to show that Swedenborg came into a state of inspiration mainly as a *result* of being placed in the society of angels? 1. “Then by the Lord's command three angels descended out of heaven and were associated with me, in order that, from an interior perception, I might speak with those who were in the idea of three gods; . . . and then, from inspiration conferred [*illata*], I spoke with them.” T. C. R. 135. 2. “When I think of what I am to write, and while I am writing, I am gifted with a *perfect inspiration*; formerly this would have been my own, but now I know for certain that what I write is the living truth of God.” 3. “What was written above was inspired by an angel, who was with me,

which I could perceive from the light and other indications. The words flowed out spontaneously on the paper, but without dictation." Adv. 5394. 4. "While writing, to-day, I experienced an angel directing what I wrote, and, indeed, in such a manner that I thought thence that there is not the smallest particular but what takes place under the auspices and the direction of God Messiah." S. D. 446. Let this suffice. See also S. D. 2270.

What is there in either of these quotations to show that Swedenborg's inspiration was *caused*, in any way or manner, by his insertion among angels? In No. 1 the angels came evidently in some way to be an aid by their presence, but not to be the cause of either his perception or of his inspiration. We can see no reason whatever for the second citation. It is, then, most plainly a false conclusion that "the Lord endowed Swedenborg with inspiration by inserting him into the society of angels." In one place Swedenborg expressly says that certain things were "inspired by an angel." But what does this mean? Will you so interpret it as to make it contradict the great fundamental principles of inspiration as so clearly and abundantly taught in the Writings? and as to make it contradict other statements, viz., that "Swedenborg was instructed, while writing the doctrines of the New Church, by no spirit or angel, but by the Lord alone"? We do not believe that Swedenborg ever contradicts himself. But some make him do so by the use they make of various quotations they draw from the Writings. It is plain enough that anything inspired into one by an angel is a very different matter from *Divine Truth inspired* into one by the "conjunction of mediate and immediate influx from the Lord." The heading and the close of S. D. 446 show that Swedenborg speaks of his own experience, as he often does elsewhere, as illustrative of a general principle as applicable to angels and all regenerated men. That passage certainly does not mean that Swedenborg received internal perception or inspiration as a result of his insertion among

angels, or in an angelic society, any more than a man receives his native talent—what God has given him—as a physician or lawyer by his insertion among physicians or lawyers.

9. *Result of Regeneration.*

We see, therefore, and see plainly, that Swedenborg's inspiration was, unmistakably, the result of his regeneration, and not the result, as some suppose and teach, of "a certain separation from the body as to his intellectual part," and then the "*instillation*"—in a certain extraordinary way—"of truth into him by the Lord Himself;" nor the result of his "insertion among angels." Just as if the Lord ever really acted in an *extraordinary* way in any other sense than that in which all that is extraordinary is due entirely to the *condition, form, and action* of the *vessel* recipient of the Divine influx and action! Swedenborg makes nothing plainer than that all influx from the Divine is the *same* and its *inherent action* the same, but that all *variety* is owing entirely to the varied reciprocal action of the recipient vessel. This principle is as rigidly applicable to Swedenborg's case as to any other, and we wander into error just so sure as we fail in any case or in any sense to recognize it.

But we are speaking now, let it be remembered, not of Swedenborg's peculiar qualifications for his mission, or of what is peculiar in them, but of the cause and conditions of his *inspiration* or *perception*; and these we claim were the same in Swedenborg's case as in that of all other men, in all cases alike, the cause being, first, the Divine Influx, and, second, the conditions or the state of mind as to regeneration. (We will consider what was *peculiar* in his case farther on.) Thus there is no real cause whatever for saying, as some do, that no man in this world can come into a state of perception like that of Swedenborg, "even if he should be regenerated to the same high degree," unless he be separated from his body as to his intellectual part as Swedenborg was. For such separation

is nowhere mentioned by Swedenborg as one of the *conditions* of *perception* or *internal inspiration*; it is only a factor, like all others, and relatively an external one, as before stated, in qualifications for a *certain office* or use; just as, if I may use the illustration, the use of the telescope with its appliances is neither a cause nor a condition of natural vision, but is virtually an extension of it, and thus is a most important factor in the qualifications of an astronomer. And all can see how very important, how absolutely indispensable indeed, this factor was in Swedenborg's case. In its importance to his mission Swedenborg's intromission, as to his "intellectual part," into the spiritual world was, comparatively, as the astronomer's intromission, so to speak, by astronomical instruments into the sidereal heavens. But even with this intromission or spiritual vision Swedenborg could have done nothing as regards his special mission—namely, an explanation of the internal sense of the Word—without internal inspiration or perception, any more than the astronomer, even with all the external aids of his science, could do anything without his natural vision; or, rather, to make the illustration a better one, without a certain degree of developed intelligence in the use of the eye and such aids.

CHAPTER III.

SWEDENBORG'S RELATION TO THE LORD (Continued).

1. " *Varied a Little.*"

SWEDENBORG says (Adv. III. 6955, 6966): " With him who is inspired there is not the least thing in any expression, not even an iota, which is not inspired, although it is *varied a little* according to the gift and endowment of him who utters the inspiration."

This is an instructive and significant passage in regard to Swedenborg's part or the finite part in the Writings, or in regard to how or in what sense they were his writings. But this is what Swedenborg says in regard to the prophets, or those who, from *external* inspiration, wrote the Sacred Scriptures. How does it apply to Swedenborg's case?

2. *Swedenborg and the Prophets.*

Let us consider what the Prophets were inspired to do and what Swedenborg was inspired to do. We are all agreed that the Prophets were *externally* inspired, and to write the *letter* of the Word, to give the Word its lowest finite form, which is its "basis, continent, and firmament," which is, in other words, its "outer garment" or its "casket." We know that the letter is not in itself holy, but is holy in virtue of that of which it is the basis and continent. On the contrary, Swedenborg was *internally* inspired, and to write an *explanation* of the internal sense of the letter. His writings, strange to say, are claimed by some to *be* the internal or spiritual sense of the Word, not an explanation of it merely, as Swedenborg most plainly

teaches. Now the "internal sense is the soul of the Word," is the "very essential Word," the Word as "Spirit and Life," as the "Spirit of Truth," thus is "the Lord Himself." Now was Swedenborg inspired to write the Spirit of Truth, thus to write the Lord Himself?

No; that won't do. No one can believe that. Swedenborg only wrote an explanation of the Spiritual sense. We see what an immense difference there is, therefore, between what he wrote and what the Prophets wrote; it is as the difference between a mere description or explanation of the soul, on the one side, and the body itself, which is an organic outcome from the soul, on the other side. There is, as it were, an organic connection between the Spiritual sense *as the Spirit of truth* and the letter, as between the soul and the body; but none whatever between the Spiritual sense *as an explanation* and the letter.

Now, as is the difference between the Word itself and its letter or "continent," or between the soul and its body, or between the jewels and the casket containing them, such is the difference in any variation made by the writers of the different senses, the natural and the spiritual. And in this connection how pertinent are the Lord's words: "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots,"—garments denoting the external and vesture the internal sense of the Word. The vesture must be preserved entire. The internal sense, "the very essential Word itself," thus "the Lord Himself," cannot be divided, cannot be marred, or tarnished, or "varied," by the touch of any finite agent or medium. A little variation in the casket, the mere receptacle of the jewels, is a very different matter from a little variation in the jewels themselves. "When an angel inspires words into a prophet . . . he is only in spiritual things, and thus acts upon the mind of him who is inspired, thus excites that by which they [the spiritual things] fall into expressions in the usual way. The expressions are such as

belong to the prophet, thus such as occur to him according to his comprehension and form of mind. This is the reason why the style of the prophets is so varied, each one having a style according to the peculiar, previously-developed, analytical form of his own mind." Adv. 6965. Thus it is plain that the form of the literal expression was not important further than to have it a truly *corresponding ultimate* "basis," "continent," and "firmament" of the Divine spiritual principle. This form might be "varied a little," and without detriment, so long as the *correspondence* was preserved. It was of no importance, indeed, that the letter came from "filthy vessels,"—there were no other for it to come from,—it was what was *in* the letter, and what the letter was by *correspondence*, that sanctified it. The letter, in its mere natural meaning, must be accommodated to those *to whom* it was given; it was the *correspondence* that effected the conjunction between God and man, between the innermost and the outermost of being. The inspiration was really in the *angel*, and an internal one, and not in the prophet. It was only the *material* that was in the prophet, such as it was, that was used by the angel, the prophet himself being, in a certain sense, only as a passive instrument and medium. The case was very different with Swedenborg. The influx of Divine Truth into him was the same as that into the angel, and the inspiration the same in kind, though not in degree; for he, like the angel, was in "truth from good." But the influx did not take entire possession of *him* as it did of the angel, for "even *regenerated* men," "when they pass into the other life, go from an obscure life into a clearer one, as from a kind of night into day," etc. A. C. 2367. The influx into the angel who inspired words into the prophet took entire possession of him [the angel], so that he was not conscious of being other than the Lord,—that is, other than the Divine Truth which so completely filled him; and so filled him, not because the Lord did more for him than for other angels or for men, but because his peculiar form of mind and

developed and regenerated state could and did spontaneously so receive. The angel, having that office to perform and being thus filled, may have been in an immeasurably intenser degree of light than Swedenborg was in. Compared with the angel, "the light itself in which man is, respectively, is full of darkness." (Ibid.) And this is said of the regenerated man. And yet, considering his other qualifications, and his peculiar genius or form of mind, Swedenborg may have been immeasurably better prepared and qualified for the duties of his peculiar office than any angel was or could have been.

Let us look into this difference a little more deeply. No two angels are in precisely the same degree of light; but not because the Lord does more or less, or gives in different degrees; not because there is a different influx of Divine Truth into one from what there is into another, but wholly because of different *states of reception*,—that is, because of different forms of mind, different experiences, different degrees of progress in heavenly life, different intellectual qualifications, and thus different uses to perform; just as it is with all the infinitely varied members and organisms of the body in their relation to influx from the heart and the brain, no two of which receive and appropriate exactly alike.

3. *Exceptional.*

It may be thought by some that the Lord did something extra—something in addition to influx from and of Himself—for those angels who "inspired words into the prophets;" just as it is thought by some that the Lord did something extraordinary for Swedenborg to prepare him for his mission, something besides flowing into him. But cannot every one see, who is imbued with the true philosophy of the Heavenly Doctrines, that this implies that there are two Gods, namely, one in the influx of Divine Truth, God within you,—and another outside, devising and planning and considering expedients to meet emergencies? We know of no such God as the

latter,—of none who is not already and always, and with all His attributes, *in the Influx* of Himself as Divine Truth, who is not already and always in that influx with all that He is, and thus with all that He has to give. This idea, which is so prevalent, of two Gods,—namely, one outside as a sort of superintendent, and relatively at a distance doing the devising and planning, and the other inside, sent by the former as an influx to do the execution,—is perfectly bewildering and entirely destroys the idea of one God. Hence, the very common misunderstanding of Swedenborg, when he speaks of the “Lord’s appearing to him,” of the “Lord’s instructing him,” “leading him,” “preparing him for his mission,” and the like. It was no God outside of him that did these things, but God within him, God *in the influx* of Divine Truth that flowed into him; it was no God outside, instigating, instilling, and infusing something, in his case, in a certain *exceptional* way. What was exceptional in regard to Swedenborg?

There never is anything exceptional in the Divine or the Divine agency. All that was exceptional in Swedenborg’s case was in his recipiency, first, in the germinal or potential genius or form of his mind, thus in his capabilities; then in his developing tastes, capacities, dispositions, and the like. He was prepared for his work by the Lord,—that is, by influx from the Lord, thus by God *in* him,—but by means and processes which were entirely dependent for their peculiar mode of operation upon what was within and constituted his peculiar form of being. Just as an acorn develops into an oak not because of any difference in the influx from what flows into all seeds, but because of the difference of operation of such influx caused by the acorn’s own peculiar nature as a recipient of such influx; so of all men,—so of all angels. Thus Swedenborg was prepared for his work on identically the same principle that the oak is prepared to bear acorns,—namely, because that was the natural, orderly, and necessary result of the Divine Influx into *his* peculiar form of mind. If he followed the leadings

or promptings or impulses of such Influx,—God within him,—as he did, he could not help being thus prepared, any more than the acorn, under the required conditions, can help developing into a fruit-bearing tree. So that what was *special, exceptional, or extraordinary* in Swedenborg, did not depend at all upon anything special, exceptional, or extraordinary in what the *Lord did* for him, but upon what was *in* him, thus upon the way in which he *received* what the Lord does, and equally, for all men. So of all other extraordinary men, so of each and all extraordinary angels,—of those who inspired the Word into the prophets, and of those who were sent on any extraordinary mission. All that was special or extraordinary was not in what the Lord did, but in the *operation* of what was *received*; and the operation of what was received depended upon the state and character of the recipient vessel.

This is a great principle which is never violated by the Lord in His relation to the universe, whether natural or spiritual; it is a principle which cannot be violated by Him. All that is is an outcome from Him, and solely by the operation of influx; just as is the case with all organic being in its relation to life, which is the result of the operation of such life by influx. This is the way the plant is evolved and also the animal body. It is the great law of creation or of finitation. And does *finite* life—which, *in the law of its operation*, is an exemplification of the Infinite Life—ever vary in its operations in any manner or degree, except so far as its action is modified by recipient conditions? does finite life ever so vary that the results of its operations do not partake of its own peculiar individuality? Can the influx into the acorn, as thus modified, evolve anything but what is wholly and distinctively oak? Can the influx into the egg evolve anything but what is, in kind, distinctively of the parent bird? Can influx into the oak, as thus affected by its recipient vessel, evolve any other than what is distinctively the fruit of the oak? How can man or angel, then, be the instrument, by Divine influx, of anything that partakes

not of his own individuality, that has not his own image stamped upon it,—that is not, in other words, “varied a little”? This is the point.

4. *Individuality Sacredly Intact.*

But does this mar, in the least possible degree, the holiness of the Sacred Scriptures? Does it abate one iota from Swedenborg's writings as authority? Certainly not. How is this? How can the Sacred Scriptures, having come through the qualifying [the “varying a little”] individuality of a finite medium, be purely Divine? And the angel and the prophet were such mediums, and mediums *never, for a moment, in what they did, divested of their individuality.* Even the angel was *himself*, was himself even when so filled with the Divine Influx—with Divine Truth, with God—that he was unconscious for the time that he was other than such influx, than God. He still possessed his individuality intact, unmarred; and his freedom and rationality were a part of his individuality, and these were never more perfect; thus he was never more perfectly angel or man than when so completely filled with the influx of God, thus than when so completely a “*servant*” of God. Such freedom and rationality are, indeed, and at all times and in all conditions, indispensable attributes of angelhood as well as of manhood. They are most essential parts of angel as well as of man, and in action. Thus what passed through the angel to inspire the prophet must inevitably have partaken somewhat of the angel's individuality. It could not have been finited—could not have done its work and answered the Divine end—if this had not been the case. The angel was not, in himself, a Divine medium, thus Divinely pure; he never could become so, though perpetually born and reborn to eternity. The angel that was such medium to the prophet may have been in the heavens thousands or hundreds of thousands of years, and in a correspondingly developed, ineffable state of light above that of the regenerated man; and he may have been, if such a thing is conceivable, even more obedient

to the Divine influx than the organism of the plant is to its influx of life; yet his freedom and rationality were most essential parts in his character as such medium, and those, too, of his own peculiar individuality. And the individuality of every angel is different from that of every other angel. It required a peculiar one to perform such a function from the Divine, but peculiar only in the same sense that it requires a peculiar individuality to perform *any other* use in the Divine economy; only in the sense in which one peculiar individuality, so to speak, or mechanism or organism of vegetable fibre, is required as a medium to one kind of fruit, and another to another kind. But all that has been peculiar in the office or function of any man or angel has been owing to the development of what was peculiar in the potential germ of his being, and not at all to anything afterwards grafted on," "infused," or "instilled" by the Lord as a Divine expedient.

We mean to say that the angels, in all they do, act as of themselves, and that the work they do is in all cases *their* work, and to the extent that their individuality is in it; and their individuality is *always* in it, just as really so as the individuality or quality of the apple-tree is in the apple, and each of its kind. But to be *led by the Lord*, let it be always remembered, is one and the first of the essential elements of angelic, as it is of true human, life. No act devoid of such element is, in the true sense of the word, either an angelic or a human act. But man's being led by the Lord is a very different thing from a beast's being led by a man, a soldier by a general, or a child even by a parent. The Lord leads angels and regenerated men "in *freedom according to reason*." This is the reason why their individuality is in all cases *in their work*. It is their rationality and freedom that enable them to be, in the highest sense and with the most perfect efficiency, the Lord's agents. The "tables" that were formed by the Lord were broken because there was nothing finite or human in them to accommodate them to the finite or human state of mind.

5. *Why the Word is Holy in the Letter.*

Thus we see why the letter of the Word must be "varied a little," why it must partake of the peculiar individuality of the agents—and angelic as well as human agents—through whom it came. It would have been worthless for its Divine end without such "variation." But this fact, let me repeat, does not mar in the least the holiness of the letter. For the word-inspiring angel was in such relation to the inflowing Divine, was in such perfect obedience, thus in such oneness with the Divine, that the Divine Truth, through the individual, finiting agency of the angel, ultimated itself in LANGUAGE OF CORRESPONDENCE. This is plainly all that was essential to its holiness, all that was necessary to make the words of the prophets virtually the Lord's words; they were WORDS OF CORRESPONDENCE. They were words, therefore, that the Divine Truth could flow into and rest in as its ultimate continent and basis. The words of the Bible were not, and they could not have been, the Lord's words in any other sense than that of their correspondence. There is nothing distinctively and Divinely His, from the highest clear down to the very lowest, but what is so in virtue of its correspondence. Nothing is His that does not correspond. This is a great principle which is exemplified in all things in nature even, and made plain in the Writings. The letter of the Word is as the bark of the tree or the skin of an animal. Does not the bark correspond to the organic life of the tree? Does it correspond to the life of any other tree even of the same kind? And is not the same true of the skin in its relation to the life of the body? Swedenborg speaks of the letter of the Word as its skin; and, because the letter is denoted by the skin, the skin of Moses' face, when he came down from the Mount, was said to shine.

6. *Instructed by Angels.*

Swedenborg was not instructed in the Doctrines of the New Church by any angel, but by the Lord alone while reading the Word. T. C. R. 779. This is brimful of significance. The angels could not, of course, instruct him about the *letter* of the Word. They were only in the internal sense, the natural meaning not being in the heavens or cognizable to the angels. How could they then "explain" the Sacred Scriptures? How could they instruct him in or about the different styles of the Scriptures? How could they give him the kind of information the thirsting, rational man needs about the science of correspondences? How could they teach him the signification of Biblical words and phrases and sentences? Such revelations, such openings or unveilings of Scripture, must come, if at all, through the instrumentality of a man *on earth*. An angel could not have inspired words, as he did into the prophets, or thoughts even, or ideas or principles, in explanations of natural words or ideas which he [the angel] knew nothing about. Besides, an angel is one who has come into the order of the Lord's Providence, into its current or "stream." He is, therefore, so far, *in correspondence*; he so far thinks, speaks, and acts from *correspondence*. If, therefore, he were filled by the Lord,—that is, by the influx of Divine Truth, as such angel would be,—and should inspire words, or ideas to be clothed with words, in Swedenborg's mind, such words would be words of *correspondence*, and Swedenborg's writings would, therefore, be holy writings or Sacred Scriptures; they would be the Lord's writings, indeed, and thus didactic instead of explanatory in their character. Thus we see why Swedenborg was not instructed by angels. It was not Sacred Scriptures, but an *explanation* of Sacred Scriptures, that was needed; and the angels could not give this.

7. *Writings not Correspondences.*

Yes, the fact that Swedenborg's writings are not in the language of correspondences, is an insurmountable objection to their being regarded as the Lord's writings. It is admitted that they are not in such language; but it is said that "the language of correspondence is not necessarily inspired;" that the book of Job and other ancient books were written in "correspondences, and yet were not Divinely inspired." Swedenborg says, in "Arcana Cœlestia" (No. 1756), that "the most ancient style of writing was *representative*;" that even "profane writers in those times composed their histories thus, and even the things of civil and moral life were thus treated; so that nothing that was written was altogether such as it appeared in the letter. . . . All books of the church in those times were therefore written in this style." It is, indeed, a question whether, considering the nature of the people and of their language in those times, they could have written in any other style.

But the language of "representatives" and "significatives" is not necessarily the language of correspondences. All correspondences are representatives, but the converse is not true. "Representatives are nothing but images of spiritual things in natural, and when the latter are rightly represented in the former they then correspond." A. C. 4044. "The things which flow in from the spiritual world, and are presented in the natural, are in general representations; and so far as they AGREE together they are correspondences." 2989, 2990. "Representatives are the external things which are put forth as effigies of internal things, and those which concord, or which are rightly represented, are correspondences," as expressed by Rich. This is all very plain. Correspondence is the relation existing between cause and effect, and between spiritual things and natural, when they *agree*; without agreement there is not correspondence, but only representation. The difference between

correspondence and representation is clearly and abundantly shown by Swedenborg. The Sacred Scriptures were written in the language of correspondences as well as of representatives; and this is so because there is *agreement*. Other ancient books were written only in the language of representatives.

But what if it were admitted that such books were written in the language of correspondences, would this be any evidence that the Lord could or would write in any other language? The argument would amount to nothing, even with this admission. What! human, even "profane," writings in the language of correspondences, and the Lord's writings not? Whereas human writings *cannot* be in that language, and the Lord's writings *cannot* be in any other, "the style of the Word [thus of the Lord, who is the Word in its 'spirit and life'] is the very Divine style, . . . is such that there is holiness in every sentence, in every word, yea, in some instances, in the very letters." T. C. R. 191. "The Word is written by mere correspondences, wherefore the Lord, *because He spoke from the Divine, spake from correspondences.*" And why? "Because," it is added, "what is from the Divine, this, in nature, falls into such things as correspond to Divine things." T. C. R. 201. The Lord spoke from correspondences because He spoke from the Divine. How full of significance! nothing less than that the language of correspondences is the language, and the only language, of the Lord. Nothing, nothing whatever, comes from Him but in correspondence; this is the one only law of its efflux and influx. All effects of the operation, then, of such efflux and influx must be—so far as He is in them, and they are, therefore, His—correspondences. It cannot be otherwise.

What is the inevitable conclusion, then, in regard to Swedenborg's writings, IF they are the Lord's writings, but that their language is the language of correspondences? This is just as surely the case as that effects follow causes, and that they are related to each other by correspondence. And those

Writings are effects of which, if the Lord is distinctively and peculiarly the author, He is the cause. And the correspondence could not possibly have been destroyed but by the operation of such cause through a self-conscious, rationally responsible, *modifying* medium, such as Swedenborg was. Wherever correspondence fails, it is because there the Divine fails as the *unqualified* or unmodified cause. Hence those Writings either have an internal sense and need themselves to be explained, or they are not the Lord's writings.

8. *Instructed by the Lord.*

But how was Swedenborg instructed by the Lord? This question has been substantially answered in what was said on the subject of illustration, revelation from perception, and inspiration. Swedenborg, like all other regenerated men, was instructed by the Lord *as the Word*, thus by the Lord *as an influx of Divine Truth*. Why is there instruction in such influx? because, in Swedenborg's own language, it "is illumination which gives the faculty of apperceiving and understanding truth. This illumination is from the light of heaven, which is from the Lord. This light is nothing else than Divine Truth." A. C. 5668. Such influx or such instruction takes place while man is reading the Word. "Heaven, which is in the internal sense of the Word, flows in with the man *whose internal man is open* when he reads the Word, enlightens him, gives him perception, and thus *teaches* him. Yea, . . . [such a] man's internal man is in the internal sense of its own accord, . . . although he is not aware of it." A. C. 10,400. "The Lord teaches *every one* by the Word," thus by influx. Therefore Swedenborg was no exception in this respect. But the *illuminating effects* of such influx from the Lord, as shown elsewhere, are according to the subject's peculiar character, condition, and form of mind. All men are different in these respects. "The Lord [also] teaches man according to the *knowledges* that are with him, and *does not immediately infuse new knowledges into him*" (T. C. R.

208); or, as expressed in A. C. 10,400, "man's illustration, when he reads the Word, is according to the light in which he may be by the *knowledges* that are with him." It is in this way that "the man who is led by the Lord is taught by Him from day to day what he is to do and to speak, and also what he is to preach and write; for when evils are removed, then he is continually under the Lord's auspices, and enjoys *illustration*. "But"—and this is directly to the point—"he is led and taught by the Lord, *not immediately* or by any *perceptible* inspiration, but by *influx into his spiritual delight, whence he has perception according to the truths of which his understanding is composed.*" A. E. 825. Again, such persons "have a certain interior perception in regard to those things which are to be done, especially during the act." S. D. 892. Swedenborg testifies abundantly to the fact that he was taught by the Lord precisely as other regenerated men are,—namely, by influx and illustration. "The Lord alone taught me, who revealed Himself to me, and afterwards appeared, and still appears, before my eyes *like the sun*, . . . as He appears to the angels, and *illustrated* me." D. P. 135. "There was a dictation *in the thought* . . . which was thereby *led* to an *understanding*," etc. Swedenborg "was gifted with a perfect inspiration." But "inspiration is *not dictation*, but is influx from the Divine." A. C. 9094.

How plainly all this shows how the Lord teaches the *regenerated* man, and how therefore He taught Swedenborg,—namely, by influx,—as the one only way so far as the Lord is concerned! All instruction by the Lord is *in the operation and result of influx*, which influx is the same with all men; it is a sort of "dictation in the thought," and thence "*understanding.*" The influx of Divine Truth stimulates thought, and that in the light of such truth is followed by understanding. But the nature of the understanding, of the illustration or revelation,—that is, of the instruction by the Lord, or of the Lord's "dictation," as it is sometimes called,—depends upon

the peculiar genius, development, learning, etc., of the recipient. It is what is peculiar, or special, or exceptional, or extraordinary *in the recipient* himself, and this alone, that is the cause, and the sole cause, of all that is peculiar, special, exceptional, or extraordinary in the Lord's relation to him. It was, first, Swedenborg's native genius—it was what was first in him in potency, and not what was afterwards put into him; it was therefore what he could be developed into, and was, in fact, developed into, and not what the Lord did for him more or different from what He does for all men—that was the cause of all that was special or extraordinary in him in his relation to the Lord, or in his relation to his use or mission. It was this that caused that the same influx into him which flows into other men, thus the same instruction from the Lord which is given to other men, resulted in such extraordinary and widely different manifestations in his case; just as it is the potential form of the eye as differing from that of the ear, and not any difference in the influx from the heart and brain into it, that is the cause of all that is peculiar and special in the development and use of the eye. The nature and results of mediate as well as of immediate influx into the mind are characterized solely by the recipient mind itself. The Lord taught Swedenborg precisely as He teaches all men,—that is, by influx of Himself as Divine Truth, as Living Light. And Swedenborg was affected by and acted from such influx precisely as is the case with other men in a like state of regeneration, only with a difference determined, as with other men, by what belonged to and was peculiar to his own mind.

9. *The Lord's Writings.*

What does Swedenborg mean, then, by such language as the following, which is sometimes quoted to prove that "Swedenborg's writings are the Lord's writings?" Namely, "What came from the Lord I wrote down, and what came from the angels I did not write down." A. C. 1183. "I was instructed

by no spirit and by no angel, but by the Lord alone." "The things which I have learned from representations, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels, are from the Lord alone." S. D. 1647. "A revelation of truths from His mouth or from His Word." "Dictated to me out of heaven." "Written by the Lord through me." "Whether I was willing or not, I had to think and speak" [in a certain manner]. "Do not believe that I took anything from myself or from any angel, but from the Lord alone."

These and like passages seem to indicate that, different from other men, Swedenborg was *compelled* by the Lord to write as he did; and yet (as is admitted), in some mysterious and unaccountable way, in the *full exercise of his understanding* and in *possession of his freedom*, though the latter only as regards his "external thought." But how, if Swedenborg's writings can properly be called "the Lord's writings," could Swedenborg possibly be other than practically a perfectly controlled, passive instrument, like a "quill," as expressed by one? For, so far as they were written by Swedenborg in the exercise of his own understanding and freedom, though in the smallest degree, he was responsible for them as his own writings. He "lifted up his tool upon them," and made them his instead of the Lord's,—that is, there was somewhat of his *peculium*, of his individuality, in them; so that they were just as much his as any act of a regenerated man is such regenerated man's act.

CHAPTER IV.

MAN'S RELATION TO THE LORD.

1. *The Regenerated Man.*

AND here is an important point,—namely, the difference between a regenerated man's acts and the acts of an unregenerated man. There is more of the Lord and less of the devil—*i.e.*, less of man's selfish *proprium*—in the former than in the latter. The regenerated man is in the image and likeness of the Lord, he is in accord with the Lord's life, he is in spontaneous and loving obedience to the impulses of the Divine Influx. He is lovingly led by the Lord, by the Lord as such Influx. What seems *compulsion* from a misinterpretation of some of Swedenborg's statements is really most essential freedom. There is really more of the man's *peculium*, or the *peculium* of his distinctive individuality, in what he does in his regenerated than in what he does in his unregenerated state. It must be so, for there is more of the real man in him. The more fully and obediently he is the Lord's, the more perfectly he is himself, for the more completely he is "created;" and this means the more strongly is every peculiar potential faculty in him brought out into its actuality. The Lord does not regenerate and develop man in the higher degrees of his nature in order to *bind* him, or make a passive tool of him, or to limit or circumscribe, in any sense, the *peculium* of his individuality. What Swedenborg says of himself in the above passages is simply illustrative of *general principles* as applied to *regenerated men*. And what he says, in such connection, helps us to understand what will be our own

condition should we ever arrive at such high states of regeneration. Whatever shall be our use, we shall be "*led by the Lord*;" and we shall so love to be led by Him that it will seem impossible to be otherwise led. We shall be in a state of freedom like that which the Lord is in. He loves to do the works of love, and He cannot do otherwise than do such works, for He has no love and thus no power to do otherwise, and freedom is to do as one loves to do. The whole sphere and influence of heaven are the sphere and influence of love. There is a universal flowing in the direction of the freedom of love. The stronger one is in love, then, the stronger he is in freedom, and at the same time that he is more the Lord's he is more himself. The following from Swedenborg is in point, but it has, we think, been misinterpreted: "The universal heaven and earth, both in general and in particular, are governed by a sphere proceeding from the Lord. . . . Whenever I speak in this sphere, or when I think in it, as I now do while I am writing, each and every thing is in conformity with the action of this sphere; and nothing can be said, thought, or written, not even the least iota, but what is in conformity with this sphere."

To live and think and act in "this sphere" is, of course, to do so from love, thus from the Lord alone, and not from self-love or evil spirits. It is the very nature of the angel and of the regenerated man, of him who has come into harmony with the sphere of the Divine Nature, to think and act from love, thus from the Lord. Swedenborg's case is not an exceptional one in this respect. What he did and what all do in that state of unity and oneness with the Lord are the Lord's doings, and this means that they are the doings of love. The regenerated man and angel cannot help acting from love, thus from the Lord, unless, for some cause, they are let down temporarily from this high state. They are in a sense compelled so to act, and are so just in proportion to the completeness of their marriage union with the Lord. And yet this is most essential

freedom. And man and angel are most completely themselves just in proportion as they are in the Lord and He in them, and they are led by Him and act from Him. And their acts are most distinctly and peculiarly their own the more distinctly and completely they are the Lord's. All this is abundantly confirmed by what Swedenborg says about others, and by what he says about himself or about his own experience as illustrative of general principles.

2. *How the Lord governs Men.*

It is said by another that "when man's regeneration is accomplished, then he no longer governs himself, but is governed by the Lord." This, of course, is true of all men. And how is he governed by the Lord? Does the Lord govern him in an arbitrary way, telling him in words or in any other finite form to do this or to do that, as a master does a servant? When a master so commands a servant, the deed is not the servant's, but the master's. If the Lord governs regenerated men and angels in this way, all their deeds would be, *responsibly*, not their deeds, but His deeds. On the contrary, it is wisely added to the above, "And then the Lord governs him not only by immediate influx into his will, but also by mediate influx into his understanding." Why by both? Because, it is further added, "Then also will and understanding, good and truth, mediate and immediate influx in him are conjoined." Because then the man is a perfect man, thus is completely himself, the two influxes hold him in perfect balance; they so act in relation to each other as to leave man in freedom and make him responsible for his deeds. Otherwise man's deeds would be either wholly and thus responsibly the Lord's deeds, or wholly and thus responsibly the deeds of the *mediums* of the influx to him. They certainly could not be responsibly man's deeds. Thus, to be governed by the Lord, by both mediate and immediate influx, is to be in most essential freedom. This is the state into which the Lord is constantly

striving to bring all men. And He never, in any case whatever, in any manner whatever, or in any sense or degree whatever, so far as He is concerned,—that is to say, so far as the inherent action of influx from Him is concerned,—does anything whatever to interfere with or mar in the least possible degree the perfection of this state of freedom, though there may be appearances to the contrary, and there are, we confess, many such appearances, and both in the language of Sacred Scripture and also of Swedenborg's writings. But they are only appearances. The Lord has not, and He never had, any ends to accomplish through any imperfection, or through suspension of any of the normal prerogatives, either temporary or continued, of any of His creatures. And a man not in responsible freedom, or in a state in which his deeds are not responsibly his own, is not a man. There is nothing in influx—and this is the Lord's only practical relation to man—to interfere with man's freedom, but everything to establish freedom; so that the stronger the influx from the Lord, so far as man has come into the order of life, the more perfect is his freedom, for the more perfect is his manhood. No angel was ever more perfectly or more responsibly himself than those who were the Lord's servants, in connection with the prophets, in writing the Sacred Scriptures, and no unregenerate men were ever in greater freedom than were the prophets in the performance of their part of the service. And, for the same reason, never was man more perfectly and more responsibly himself than was Swedenborg while writing the doctrines of the New Church. And hence never were any man's deeds more responsibly his own deeds than were Swedenborg's in every one of the duties of his mission. It was the *correspondence*, as shown elsewhere, that made the writings of the prophets the Lord's writings, or Sacred Scriptures; they were the Lord's *by their correspondence*. Swedenborg's writings, as universally admitted, are without such correspondence. They are principles or teachings or doctrines as conceived and formulated and

expressed in words by a mind in the very light of heaven, by a man who, at the same time that he was on earth among men, and thus in natural language, was also gifted with revelation from perception; by a man, therefore, who could explain to men such high and heavenly principles, teachings, or doctrines. Yes, Swedenborg was "led," "taught," "governed," by the Lord, and "by the Lord alone," but in no arbitrary way, by no arbitrary process of "insinuation," "dictation," or "instillation," as some suppose, and as some of Swedenborg's statements lead a mind blind to the spirit and philosophy of his writing to suppose; but he was led, taught, etc., by influx, thus by precisely that process by which the Lord leads, teaches, and governs all men and angels, and this means that he was led and taught and governed "in freedom according to reason," and thus as a full and perfect man.

3. *Certain Passages: What they Show.*

Many of the passages quoted from the Writings to prove that Swedenborg was only as an irresponsible scribe or a mere amanuensis of the Lord show, on the contrary, how much there is to learn about a man in his *regenerated* or angelic state in his relation to the Lord. The mode of operation of *influx from the Lord* in leading, teaching, and governing *all regenerated men and angels*, as taught and exemplified in Swedenborg's own individual case, is exceedingly instructive and interesting. Swedenborg's case, or what he says about himself, is a grand exemplification of a regenerated, or of a highly-advanced regenerating, man's relation to the Lord; for—we insist upon it—there is, and there can be, no exceptional cases in what the Lord *does for man*, any more than there is in what the sun does for flowers and trees. No one imbued with the real spirit and philosophy of the Writings can for a moment regard what Swedenborg says about himself as at all exceptional in what the Lord *did* for him, or exceptional in any other sense than as depending entirely upon his own recipi-

ency. And the passages so often quoted from the Writings to show that they are the Lord's writings, thus "Holy Writings," Sacred Scriptures, or "the Word without the external sense," no more show that they are the Lord's writings than they show that all the works of both regenerated men and angels are responsibly the Lord's works. That Swedenborg was—different from other men and angels—*consciously* in *both* worlds at the same time does not in the least degree affect the question of his freedom and thus of his own exclusive rational responsibility for what he wrote ; it only enabled him to do, as the Lord's servant, what he could not otherwise have done ; it only afforded different conditions of mind as modifiers of the operations of the same influx from the Lord that flows into all minds. Swedenborg's intromission into the other life—the real significance of which we think is often misunderstood—was, like his peculiar form of mind, his genius, his tastes, his remarkable learning,—in a word, like every other trait or disposition of his individual character,—only one of the many modifying conditions through which the Divine Influx operated, first to prepare him for, and then to enable him efficiently to perform, the important works of his mission.

4. *Strange Conclusions.*

Strange to say, it is claimed by some that even the "Spiritual Diary" is the Lord's writing, thus "equally the Word with Swedenborg's other writings," though, like the rest, the "Word without the literal sense." The following is quoted in proof:

"In general, it is to be borne in mind that everything written in this book [*i.e.*, in S. D.] has not been written by me otherwise than from living experience, from conversations with spirits and angels, from thought like tacit speech communicated to me while writing, from things insinuated by those who were present during such experiences, and under whose direction I was while thinking and writing, even as to my hand ; so that all things contained in these three books, and likewise in other

places, although they frequently do not cohere, are nevertheless experiences of facts derived in their own peculiar way from spirits and angels." S. D. 2894.

Again: "What I have learned from representatives, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels, is from the Lord alone." S. D. 1647.

Again, Swedenborg says, respecting the contents of the "Spiritual Diary:" "These are the things which I have now learned for several years by living experience, so that they are among the things with which I am acquainted by instruction better than with other things." S. D. 3788. And again, "these things have been written by influx from heaven, from the wisdom of the angels there."

Who, in the light of the spirit and philosophy of the Heavenly Doctrines, can see any evidence whatever in these quotations that they [the quotations] are the Lord speaking to Swedenborg?

The "Spiritual Diary" is a record of facts of Swedenborg's "living experiences" when in society with spirits and angels. Did he write them *in the free exercise of his own individual thought, and according to his own individual perception and understanding and end in view?* Did he write them as a man *fully responsible* for what he wrote, just as you and I and all men write? Or was his freedom, and thus his responsibility, modified by some Divine agency outside or independent of that Influx? We know of no such agency, we never heard of any; we know of no agency from the Lord but what is *contained in the influx from Him, and influx that is never in any way modified in its operation but by the recipient vessel.* There is nothing implied in the fact of his "conversations with spirits and angels," of "thought like tacit speech communicated to him," of "things insinuated by those present," of his being under "their direction while thinking and writing even as to his hand," thus in the "experiences of facts derived in their own peculiar way from spirits and angels,"—nothing

whatever in all this, implying that the Lord really had anything more to do with Swedenborg's diary than He has with the doings of all good men and angels whose sweetest delight is to be led by Him, or who so love to be led by Him that to be led otherwise would be to be led contrary to their strongest impulse, thus in subversion of their freedom. Such statements, therefore, from Swedenborg, contain no evidence whatever that the S. D. was "written by the Lord."

5. "*Led by the Lord.*"

But why does Swedenborg say, "What I have learned from representations, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels, *is from the Lord alone*"? He also says, in close connection, "Whenever there was any representation, vision, and discourse, I was kept interiorly and inmosty in reflection upon it, as to what thence was useful and good, thus what I might learn therefrom. . . . Thus have I been instructed; consequently by no spirit, nor by any angel, but by the Lord alone, from Whom is all truth and good; . . . 'when they wished to instruct' or to persuade me, I perceived an interior or intimate persuasion that the thing was so and so, and not as they wished." S. D. 1647. And this means substantially that he was in the love of truth for the sake of use or in the good of love from the Lord. Thus he was led by immediate influx into his will, conjoined with mediate influx into his understanding, thus by the Lord alone. He loved what the Lord loved. The Lord's love flowed into his love,—was, indeed, the very life of it. He saw and knew and experienced that this was so. How could it possibly be otherwise than that he should be led by the Love that filled his love when it was his regenerated nature, thus his greatest delight to be so led? and this it was to be led by the Lord. He did nothing without interiorly and inmosty considering whether it was useful, whether he was thereby doing the good which he so loved to do. His love of use held him in such interior reflection. And

this was being led by the Lord,—that is, by the influx of Divine Truth into his mind, which influx is the Lord in His practical relation to us,—but in freedom and according to his own thus enlightened judgment, and not by the suggestions or influence of any spirit or angel.

6. *Swedenborg as Servant of the Lord.*

And all this shows completely and peculiarly that all his actions, of whatever kind, were distinctively his own; and it also shows how lovingly and faithfully and unqualifiedly, and in all his wonderfully developed, manly faculties, he was the Lord's servant,—that is, the servant of all that is divinely good and true. He suffered himself to be led and influenced by no self-interest, thus by no evil spirit. He even permitted no good spirit or angel to instruct him without inmosty weighing and considering everything, whether it was *useful*. He had come to be in every sense *a man*; and he therefore could and did look to the Lord alone, the One only Source of all good and all truth, and acted from Him alone, and he as naturally and spontaneously did so as the flower opens its petals to the sun: how was it possible for him to do otherwise without doing violence to the great central element of his being,—namely, his indomitable love of use,—thus without annihilating all that constituted and ennobled his distinctive manhood? How preposterous, then, to talk about his acts as the Lord's acts, which you may with just as much propriety do as call any of his writings the Lord's writings! For it was the same man, and with the same "good of love from the Lord" in him, that wrote letters and did other good deeds, who wrote the "Spiritual Diary" and other books. Why call a part of his doings the Lord's, and not all? Was he not identically the same man, and did he not receive identically the same influx from the Lord, whether he was lovingly serving Him in one way or in another? Why the discrimination?

Strange that perhaps the most perfect, the most Godlike

man that ever lived, one who had become so perfectly, and with such splendid qualifications for one of the greatest of uses, the servant of the Lord, should be thus divested of his real manhood in his capacity as such servant, and become in any sense or manner or degree as a passive instrument! and especially in a service in which, when truly understood, his peculiar and distinctive manhood was a most essential and indispensable element! We find nothing whatever in the Writings against the statement, but everything supporting it,—namely, that every regenerated, manhood faculty of Swedenborg's nature, and even everything of his own peculiar, individual character, thus of his whole man, was in the most unrestrained, the freest possible action, in all and every part of his service, when acting from and as servant of the Lord. And this is true of every man; just in proportion as he is in a state to *be led by* and to *act from the Lord*, is he most free, is he most truly and really and livingly himself, and are his actions most distinctively, peculiarly, and responsibly his own; and he is most emphatically a Godlike man. Swedenborg never could have been more livingly himself, and more a man, and more responsible for what he did, than while he was meditating upon the Word and writing the doctrines of the New Church; and his whole history and experience, as described by himself, shows this. It is this fact,—namely, that Swedenborg was so perfectly, in every sense of the word, a man, and that he was so intensely a rational and a free man, and that everything that came from him came through such a Godlike and such a free rationality,—it is this fact, I say, that gives his writings such inestimable value, and such unrivalled authority with the Age,—with the peculiar kind of manhood humanity now developing and for which they are designed. It is the *stamp of finite humanity upon them* that brings them within the reach, and accommodates them to the wants, of a less advanced, and yet a progressive, regenerating state of humanity. God's influx into and through nature, becomes adapted to the condi-

tions and wants of nature ; His influx into and through perfect, free, rational mind, becomes adapted to the wants of such mind. The "Thus-saith-the-Lord" mode of revelation was adapted to man, or to an Age of man, *incapable of rational freedom* ; and, by a wonderful providence, in the very nature of the influx itself, the influx of Divine Truth from the Lord spontaneously took, through the mediums of it, the form of *prescribed laws and principles to be literally and blindly obeyed*. There was no medium through which the Word, or such Influx, could take any other form, nor was it necessary ; there was no use for it as *rational truth* in the age in which it was given as "*Thus saith the Lord*." But authority in any such form is certainly not adapted to men who are not only *capable of rational freedom*, but are actually advancing into it ; and it is for *such* men, it was for an age of MEN,—be it remembered,—of men in a different and in a higher sense than ever existed before, that Swedenborg wrote ; and such men will have their rationality and their freedom cultivated, developed, and enlarged by a devout study of his writings and a life according to the beautiful and wonderful truths revealed in them.

Yes, we confess that Swedenborg was led by the Lord ; that he loved, thought, wrote from the Lord. We have no doubt about it,—for, such is the very nature of the regenerated man, it could not be otherwise,—and yet he acted in freedom, acted according to his regenerated nature. He consciously lived and was led by the Lord in all that he did,—he would not have been the perfect man he was if it had not been so ; but by the Lord, it should always be remembered, is meant the Lord as that Influx of Divine Truth which has in it, in an infinite degree, every element of that manhood which it is in unfailling effort to beget and produce in man in a finite degree. Among these elements, freedom and rationality—and loving, thinking, and acting according to them—are pre-eminently and distinctively human. On these two elements rests man's

peculiar responsibility as a man. They are in him from the Lord, or because corresponding elements are in the Lord. They flow into man in the influx from the Lord. They are, therefore, as certain in their existence and operation in man, when he is in the order of the Divine Life, as is such influx. They cannot, for an instant, be suspended or interrupted in their action, by the Lord even, any more than such *influx* can be suspended. Man may lose his freedom by suffering himself to be led by self, thus by evil spirits, but never when led by the Lord. "The Lord leads man in freedom, and, so far as man permits it, by freedom leads to good." This is the case with all men and angels, without exception and at all times. The Divine influx must fail, before it can be possible for man to fail to receive all that is necessary from the Lord to make him a perfect man, thus a free man. Swedenborg teaches in the following passages—yet cited by others for a different purpose—how completely every regenerated man and angel is one with the Lord, as the branch with the vine, and is dependent upon Him, at the same time that he is most perfectly and distinctively himself, and without the loss or interrupted action even of a single element of true humanity :

"All things, yea, the smallest things of all, to the smallest of the smallest things, are directed by the Providence of the Lord, even as to the very steps." A. C. 6493. "Both men and spirits are compelled to think and speak as the Lord permits or grants; for, whether I was willing or not, I was obliged to think and to speak. Spirits are also compelled to speak contrary to what they think, nor is it possible for them to resist,"—and why?—"for," it is added, "they are admitted into the society of others, and thus are carried away, as it were, by a stream of thinking and speaking." S. D. 2099.

Now mark this fact: this is an experience mentioned by Swedenborg not, by any means, to show that there was anything peculiar to him in this respect, not to show that his was an exceptional case, much less to show that he was, in any

sense or manner whatever, a passive instrument of the Lord,—as his language sometimes, to those ignorant of the spirit and philosophy of his writings, seems to imply, and as some seem to think,—but to show, on the contrary, that neither men, spirits, nor angels think or speak “*of themselves.*” So of other passages seized upon so eagerly by some to show that Swedenborg’s freedom was, in some mysterious way, so interfered with by the Lord as to make his writings in no sense distinctively his own, as is the case with other men’s writings, but exclusively and divinely the Lord’s writings.

“All men, the evil as well as the good; derive the *power* to think by *influx* from the Lord” (A. C. 1707, 2004), and thought flows from the Love of a man’s life, and so absolutely so that, if there were no love, there would be no thought. 33. But there is *interior* thought and *exterior* thought; men cannot think interiorly unless the natural be in order, as with the regenerate. 5168. A man who is in good is elevated above sensuality, or the externals of the natural, to interior thought. 6844. Angels think from the interior. They who are in love to the Lord think from perception. Perception is not the same as thought, but thought flows from it. 2515, 2552.

“They who have interior thought have also exterior thought.” S. D. 2900. This whole paragraph, sometimes cited to show that Swedenborg’s case was an *exceptional* example of the “*double plane of thought,*” is headed *De cognitione interiore* [concerning interior thought], and treats of what is equally as applicable to all men as to Swedenborg. Swedenborg in this instance, as in a great many others, simply describes his own experience as an illustrative example. Yet this, like other passages, has sometimes been cited as if it was Swedenborg’s own exclusive experience. “In this interior thought,” says one, “the Lord was constantly present with Swedenborg, and He thence *dictated* to him what to write, what to speak, and what to do,” thus reiterating, as has been often

done, the great fallacious idea that the Lord, by special motive or effort on His own part, did something for Swedenborg that He does not do for other men!

Here is another passage which has been quoted for the same purpose, but unfairly, because without the qualifying context. Swedenborg says (S. D. 484): "I am gifted with a double thought, one interior, the other exterior." The appearance is, without the context and without a knowledge of the heading of this section, that Swedenborg's case was an exceptional one in this respect. But read the whole section, and you will see that Swedenborg meant to teach no such thing; that he speaks of his own case here as different, not from that of regenerated men and angels, but from that of spirits.

"They who are in the spiritual affection of truth are elevated into the light of heaven, even so as to perceive the illustration. [A general truth.] It was given me to see this illustration and to perceive distinctly what comes from the Lord, and what from the angels." [Swedenborg's case plainly an illustrative example of the above.] A. E. 1183.

"Those to whom the Lord has granted perception are able to know who in a society and who outside of it flow into their thoughts and into their speech, and indeed in a most exquisite manner, by the good pleasure of the Lord." S. D. 2100. This and the following are statements only of a general principle:

"Those who are led by the Lord have a certain interior perception or intuition in respect to those things which are to be done, especially during the act of doing," etc., etc. S. D. 892.

"As those who are led by the Lord perceive what they ought to do, and indeed in a manner not intelligible by others, so also they are persuaded what they ought to know, likewise in a spiritual manner, not intelligible to others." S. D. 1405.

"During an hour's experience it was shown me how *all thoughts* are ruled by the Lord. There was an influx like that

of the softest and almost imperceptible stream whose vein does not appear, yet it leads and draws. That which flowed in from the Lord led every series of my thoughts in succession, and although softly, yet strongly, so that I could by no means stray away into other thoughts, which it was permitted me to try to do, but in vain." A. C. 6474. His own experience, again, only an illustrative example of how "all thoughts are ruled by the Lord."

"Man is ruled by the Lord by means of angels and spirits." "The thoughts of a man who is in faith are not his; when they are evil, they are of evil spirits; . . . when good, they are the Lord's only." S. D. 1910. A general statement, again.

"Only they who have suffered themselves to be regenerated by the Lord, act from freedom itself, according to reason itself." D. P. 98.

All these are general principles, and Swedenborg gives a great many illustrations of them in his own experience. The fact of his being led by the Lord, ruled by the Lord, controlled in his thoughts by the Lord, impelled, instigated, dictated to, and the like, by the Lord, is common to him and all other regenerated men. All things relating to his own peculiar experience, though often having the appearance of being due to something peculiar done for him by the Lord not done for other men, yet were owing entirely to his own peculiar state and quality as a *recipient vessel*; just as it is with the garden which differs from all other gardens. Is the difference in this case owing to any difference in what is received from the sun? on the contrary, is it not due entirely to the nature of the soil, to what is planted in it, to its cultivation, and the like?

7. *How all Man's Works are the Lord's.*

All of man's works are the Lord's works when man is in the order of life, or just in proportion as he is in such order. If man were perfect, his works, his thoughts, his words, his

writings, his actions or deeds, of whatever kind, would be perfectly the Lord's, and yet they would be most completely and most distinctively his own. Yet this is a great principle which, as applicable to probably the noblest, the most perfect specimen of finite, terrestrial humanity of which we have any knowledge, is, by some devoted readers of the Writings, apparently ignored. Let us consider this subject, then, a little further, and even at the risk of some repetition, for much hangs upon it. All of God's works, and even many of man's, are full of illustrative exemplifications of this great principle. The fruit of the pear-tree is God's work, God's fruit; He made it; it was produced by and from Him,—entirely by and from Him. The same is true of the fruit of the apple-tree, and, in fact, of every other kind of fruit. Why, then, are these fruits so different? is the question. We answer, Because of the difference of the mediums—the Lord's instruments, the Lord's servants—through which they were produced or evolved; because the pear-tree is different as a *recipient vessel*, thus as an *agent* of the Lord, from the apple-tree; because the distinctive organisms of the two trees are different. Now it is that in the fruit which is derived from the distinctive organism of the tree, that makes it the fruit of that tree rather than of some other tree; and it is exactly this, nothing else, that makes such fruit distinctively THAT TREE'S work at the same time that it is the Lord's work. And we should never say that one tree's work was either its own work or the Lord's work in any other sense than that in which we should say the same of the fruits of all trees. Each and all have what is distinctively their own in them as well as what belongs to the Lord. The *influx* is the Lord's, but its peculiar *mode of operation*, which is different in all recipient vessels, is distinctively their own; for this, in all cases, depends upon their quality. The same is true also of all animal organisms and their fruits or works; there is that which is their own and that which is the Lord's in them all. The same is true also of

men as instruments or servants of other men, as the tree or animal, or man himself, is of the Lord. A man builds a house; yes, *he* builds it, even though he lift not up a single tool upon it; and yet just as truly the architect, the mason, the carpenter, and the joiner build it. Each and all put themselves into it and leave their mark upon it, the employees as well as the employer; just as is the case with the tree in relation to its fruit. Each says, This and this and that are my work; the master says, and he who devises the plans and gives the directions says, It is all my work. Such are men, all men, in their relation to the Lord. There is that which is their own, and there is that which is the Lord's, in all that they do. Swedenborg was in no instance, in nothing whatever that he did, an exception. There never was, never can be, an exception. All that he ever wrote, all that he ever did, was the Lord's and was also his own. Different from other men, HE *saw* and *acknowledged what was from the Lord*. And he did this, and he could do it, because he was in a state to live and act so completely from the Lord, which is a state of internal perception. His writings were as much his own at the same time that they were the Lord's, as mine are mine, and there was as much of himself in them, and even more, the difference being, not in what the Lord did,—for this was the same to him as to me,—but in the difference between his self and my self, his self being a more pure and more perfect servant of the Lord than mine; just as the faithful and obedient mechanic who has no selfish fancies or plans or projects of his own to interfere with his employer's wishes, is a more perfect servant of the builder than the one who "lifts up his own tool" upon the work. The great difference between Swedenborg's writings and those of other men, is that there is no antagonism, no incongruity or want of unity, between what is his own and what is the Lord's in them; which cannot be said of the works of unregenerate men.

Thus our conclusion is an inevitable one,—that all that the

Lord had to do with Swedenborg's writings, as with other men's writings, was to give him, precisely as to other men, the Divine Influx; and that, therefore, all that is in any sense special or remarkable about them is owing alone to recipient conditions furnished by his own mind. As *writings*, therefore, they are wholly and purely and exclusively his own, not the Lord's; his own writings just as much as your writings, your speech, or your works of whatever kind, are your own; just as much as the fruit borne by any tree is its own, and in a similar sense. The fruit of a tree is from the Lord, but not *as fruit*, except indirectly through the organism of the tree; it is the tree's fruit in so far as the tree has put its impress upon it, or has put the results of its operations as a tree into it and made it fruit. Just so Swedenborg's writings are his in so far as he has put the impress of his mind upon them, or has put the results of the operations of his mind into them, by the processes of formulating from living truth verbal statements of truth, which is purely a process of finite faculty. His writings are noble fruit; but they are not divine, any more than any other fruit, coming through the modifying conditions of finite mediums or instruments, is divine. It was Divine Truth that Swedenborg *received*; but that was the "*Spirit of Truth*," not cogitated, idealized, and thus finited, verbalized, truth. Divine truth ceases to be Divine after passing through finiting conditions, however pure and perfect those conditions might be.

CHAPTER V.

HIS CALL AND PREPARATION.

1. *The Lord Appeared to Him.*

BUT the Lord “appeared” or “manifested Himself” to Swedenborg. Much is made of this fact to show that the Lord had given him a “particular influx,” “special inspiration,” and had him in a most extraordinary manner under His direction, using the words “particular,” “special,” and “extraordinary” in a sense akin to that of miraculous, as the latter term is commonly understood. And to one ignorant of the philosophy of the New Church, Swedenborg’s language encourages such a view. The appearance, from what Swedenborg says, is that the Lord is a *finite personage* in the heavens, and that He actually came and presented Himself before Swedenborg, especially from the following, viz.: “The Lord manifested Himself in person before me, and sent me to fill this office, in 1743.” Some readers of Swedenborg seem to entertain this view of the Lord and of His relation to Swedenborg. On this view, mainly, seems to be founded the extraordinary claim for Swedenborg’s writings as “the Lord’s writings.” We grant this is Swedenborg’s mode of speaking; the appearance sometimes is that the Lord and Swedenborg had personal interviews, and that they really talked with each other as man with man. But we must not give such expressions of Swedenborg an interpretation inconsistent with his philosophy; for, according to his philosophy, the Lord’s relation to Swedenborg was precisely like His relation to other men,—namely, as so often repeated, by influx, and only by influx. There is great danger of mis-

taking appearances, or what Swedenborg calls "real appearances," for realities. Such appearances depend not at all upon anything different that the Lord does at the time of such manifestations from what He does at other times,—for He, in what He does, is as invariable and unchangeable as the sun,—but they depend alone and entirely upon the operation of His influx, and this operation again depends exclusively upon the nature of the recipient mind to whom the manifestation is made. It is just as it is with the sun of the material heavens, His great exemplar in the physical world. All variety in the sun's appearances or manifestations of himself is owing entirely to the variety in the reciprocity of his radiance, of his influx. A regenerated state of mind is indispensable to the kind of manifestation of the Lord made to Swedenborg, and "a conjunction of mediate and immediate influx" is one of the essential conditions. And such conjunction "cannot be given but in good, for good is the very ground." When the conjunction of mediate and immediate influx takes place in man, "then the Lord *appears* as though He were present, and His presence is also perceived." A. C. 7056. "The Lord is present only in the celestial things of charity, and in these He appears to man." 1442. The Lord appears to the celestial angels as a sun, and to the spiritual angels as a moon. He so appeared to Swedenborg, he being consciously associated with the angels as their equal (in certain respects). Swedenborg says that, in reading the Lord's prayer, he always apperceived that there was an influx from the Lord into each of the things of the prayer, thus into each of the ideas of his thought, which were from the meaning of the things contained in the prayer. . . . It was made manifest how infinite things were in the expressions of the prayer, and that the *Lord was present in each.* 6476.

Thus Swedenborg's case—in regard to the Lord's appearing to him—was exceptional only in the sense in which every man's case is exceptional; what was exceptional was owing entirely

to his exceptional state of recipiency, just as it is with all men and angels.

But a word more in regard to such *appearances* or *manifestations* of the Lord. We must always bear in mind that they *are* what Swedenborg calls them,—namely, “*appearances*,” or “*manifestations*,”—and that they depend entirely upon the states of those who seem to themselves to see what is *only* an appearance or manifestation, but a *real* one. Swedenborg says, “there are real appearances and those not real;” the “*real*” in them is owing to that, *in the states* of those who see them, on which the appearances depend as real appearances. The real *cause*, for example, of the beautiful things appearing outwardly to the angels is in the angels themselves. The Lord *appears* outside the angels; but *is* He outside of them? “The kingdom God is within you,” and He is within, most inmost within, His kingdom. He *appears* as a sun or moon, or as a “black, dark thing;” but *is* He such, with rounded and limited outline? He *appears* at a middle altitude; but is it because He *is* there more than elsewhere? He so appears “*in whatever direction the angels turn themselves!*” Does Swedenborg mean to say that the Lord ever actually stood before him and talked to him, told him what to do, what to write, etc.? Does not his philosophy say rather that this was an appearance owing to his state, owing to the peculiar *operation of influx* from the Lord in him, *as affected or modified by his state*? If we take all his statements as literally true,—which he never meant we should do,—without regard to their meaning in the light of his philosophy, we shall be led into the most bewildering confusion.

2. “*Specially Qualified.*”

All uses are special, and therefore require that which is special in preparation for them. Swedenborg was not an exception to the universal law in this respect. His case was exceptional only in the *degree* of the special, just as has been

the case with other men. He had a use to perform unlike that of any other man, and a use which was special in an extraordinary degree. But all that was special in his preparation for his office or use was owing to what was special in the potential germ of his being, or in his capacity for such preparation. There was nothing added to him. His preparation was simply a development of capabilities already potentially in him. In this his case was precisely like that of every other man. If a tree bears acorns instead of walnuts, it is not because of any difference in the sunshine that falls upon it, in the air which it breathes, in the rains that give it drink, or in the soil from which it grows, but because of the undeveloped possibilities of acorns, instead of walnuts, *in its germinal state*. If an organ of the body is an eye instead of an ear, it is because it was first an eye, instead of an ear, *in possibility*. And so also if the germ was the germ of an oak, instead of the germ of a walnut-tree, *in possibility*, it was not because of any difference in its primal origin in the great First Cause, but because of the *conditions* under which it became a germ. An acorn is an acorn instead of a walnut because an oak furnishes different conditions from those of a walnut-tree for the operation of life from the One only Source of Life. So of the fruits of all other trees or plants; so of the eggs, or seeds, or germs of all animals; so also of the finited beginnings of all human beings. All cause of anything special or extraordinary is in the recipient conditions.

Here we have exemplified a universal principle, and, however strong may be appearances to the contrary, there are no exceptions to it, none whatever. It is the ignoring of this principle—which is as unchangeable in its operation as God Himself—that has led to such absurd conclusions in regard both to Swedenborg's preparation for his mission and also to his performance of the duties of his office. According to the representations of some, Swedenborg seems to have been a private pupil of the Lord, who took special pains with him,

and gave him a different kind of training from what He ever gave any other man,—somewhat as a parent or teacher sometimes does a child,—or just as if the sun of the natural heaven should take under its most particular charge some little germ of a tree,—like that of the California giant cedar, for example,—and should, in addition to giving it the fulness of its radiance, as to other trees, do for it, in some mysterious and extraordinary way, and with a certain end in view, something different from what it does for other trees; or just as if something special and extraordinary were added to the influx from the brain and heart, to prepare an eye or ear or hand for some extraordinary office or function. Such a thing is impossible. To suppose that God can do anything extraordinary, or outside the natural and uniform operation of influx from Him, farther than what is extraordinary is due entirely to recipient state and conditions, is to show a culpable ignorance of God in His relation to the universe.

According to our understanding of the revelations of the Lord in the Writings, influx from the Lord flowed into certain existing conditions to produce Swedenborg's germinal or potential being, precisely as it always has done to produce the germinal or potential being of all other men; and then it flowed into his germ of being, and ever after continued to flow into it, during all its stages of development and of preparation for his mission, precisely as it flows into all men. Swedenborg became the extraordinary man he was, and performed the extraordinary use he did, because, and solely because, of the extraordinary conditions furnished by his nature for the operation of that influx from the Lord which is the same to all.

Thus there was really nothing special in Swedenborg's case, except so far as it was made so by special conditions furnished by his own being for the operations of the Divine Influx, just as is the case with all men. There is never any change or deviation in the Divine Influx, except in its operations as af-

fectured by recipient conditions. God never changes, either in what He is or in what He does. Infinite love and infinite wisdom can never change. Is it because the sunbeam changes, or because of a special form or mode of action of the sun, that the rose is red and the lily white? Is it because of change in the stream, or in the channel, that the water now calmly moves, and as if it did not move, and now foams and boils, and now dashes and leaps and carries destruction before it? There is nothing special, in any case, in what flows in from the Lord; all that is special, in all cases, is in the state of the recipient. If there is ever a special action of Providence, it is always because of special recipient conditions which cause the deviation of such action. Any special action of life in the body is not in the life, but in the body. Swedenborg was prepared for his mission, and every other man for his mission, by the same Divine action, so far as God was concerned. It was only the same Influx into different recipient conditions. The same Divine Influx into men of different constitutional tastes, genius, and capacities results in qualifications for different uses in life, just as the same influx from heart and brain into different germinal forms results in the development of different organs and members and offices of the body. It sometimes seems as if God purposely caused the Divine Influx to deviate from its normal action; but this is only an appearance. When any part of the body is wounded, it seems as if heart and brain went immediately to work, by a special action of their own organism, to repair the injury; but this is only an appearance, for nothing different, in any sense, flows out from the heart and brain. True, there is special action, remedial action, but caused by the condition of the organism, for only the same influx enters it that entered it before the injury, or that enters healthy organism.

There is a grand and beautiful principle here, if we can see it, illustrative of the operation of the Divine Influx in wicked men, or in diseased or disordered spiritual organism. The

same influx, in all cases and always, carries with it, carries in it, inherent in its own nature, every remedial resource ; so that it instantly and spontaneously becomes remedial on entering disordered organism. It is the very nature of the disorder to make the action of the influx remedial, thus special, and apparently so by special design or purpose. How can it be otherwise when we understand the real nature of the influx,—that every attribute is intensely present in every instant's action of the influx ; that the influx carries all its resources with it and in it ; that it keeps and needs keep nothing in reserve. And how comforting the fact that our God,—our Life and our Light,—and with every attribute in intensest operation, is always *in us*, and instantly and spontaneously applying the remedy, and the divinely best remedy, for every disordered condition,—that it is, indeed, impossible for Him to fail to do this ; thus, that, wherever we are, in heaven or in hell, and whatever we are, angel or devil, He is unchangeably the same, the same in what He is and in what He does ; and that it is impossible for what He does, as varied in its action by our state, to be otherwise than what is best for us,—that such varied action is, in fact, most specially adapted to our condition. And what follows ? And this may make my meaning plainer, if there is, as yet, any obscurity. The *action*, for example, of the Divine Influx, as varied by *angelic* state or conditions, would be most terrible torture, if not actual destruction, to infernal organism. What would be the effect of influx from heart and brain, as varied in its action by *healthy* conditions, upon diseased organism ? Is not this, then, what is meant by “special Providence” : that it is Providence, or the Divine Influx, as varied in its action by special states or conditions, and always with Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom, and in its results, for that which, in the conditions and under the circumstances, is best ?

It seems to me to be a want of recognition of this grand and unchangeable principle of the Divine Nature,—namely, that God, so far as His own inherent action is concerned, is the

same, in all conditions and under all circumstances,—that has led men to set up such strange and irrational claims in regard to Swedenborg and his writings; and that has led to such a misunderstanding of what Swedenborg says about himself, as to make his own experience contradict his own philosophy; as to make the Lord, for example, do something for him, with a view to his preparation for his mission, that He does not do for other men. This, so far, finites and degrades God down to the level of a mechanic or tutor acting from expediency. And the whole spirit and philosophy of the Writings contradict any and every such view of God's action or relation to man.

3. *His Call.*

Swedenborg was "called by the Lord," we admit, "to a holy office." But how was he called? Precisely as other men, all men, are called. What did the call consist in? It consisted, with him, as with other men, in a constitutional "*bent*" or inclination of his mind to certain pursuits; it was an inborn, natural taste for certain studies and certain uses in life. All men are called by the Lord, each to some specific use, profession, or business, and one no more than another. And there is no difference in the calls, none whatever, so far as the Lord's agency in them is concerned: He is "no respecter of persons," or of professions or businesses. It is the peculiar form, quality, or disposition of the mind itself as a *recipient* of the Divine Influx, that makes the call. Some have a more marked or decided bent, thus a more decided, more appreciable, or louder call, than others. Some manifest this bent earlier in life than others. Mozart had a very early call to be a great musical composer; Franklin, to be a philosopher; Colburn, to be a mathematician; Napoleon, to be a warrior. To some who are peculiarly constituted and sensitive to spiritistic influences the call may *seem* to come through such influences, in *audible* tones even. But this is owing entirely to the peculiar character of the subject. The Lord has no

more to do, really, with such calls than with all others. Swedenborg manifested a love for certain intellectual pursuits early in life; but these were not limited to one channel, as mathematics alone, natural history alone, or ethics alone. His mind indicated great breadth and very great versatility, even in his childhood. There was a clear prophecy of the man in the child. His was a very remarkable mind,—it was *sui generis*. None like it had ever existed. Such breadth, such depth, such perspicacity,—there was a significance that none could interpret, a future that none could read; for it was to be most unlike the developed future of any previously existing youth, that of Shakspeare, for example, or Milton, or Bacon, or Humboldt. The world was not in a state to foresee or expect anything like such a future. It was to be an entirely new problem, and one upon which, even now, after that future has come and gone, men—“great men,” “wise men”—look with amazement and bewilderment; they are not even now prepared for even the announcement of the problem of the revelation made to human thought by Swedenborg’s life and works, and much less are they prepared for the solution of the problem, for the understanding of the vast significance of his life and mission.

4. *His Preparation.*

Such was Swedenborg’s call: it was as the acorn’s call to become an oak, or the egg’s call to become a bird, which are equally by the Lord. Everything in his primal being pointed to his mission, just as much as everything in the seed points to the future tree, or everything in the egg to the future bird. But this was no more true of him than of all men. What was remarkable and exceptional in his case was his *development* and *preparation* for his work. And in what was he different from other men in this respect? He was different in this,—namely, in that he followed, and sought most diligently to follow, the leadings of Providence; in that he listened so heed-

fully to the voice of the Lord in the dictates of conscience ; in that he so unceasingly studied and meditated upon the Word, and did so for the sake of learning the true way of life ; and thus in that he suffered himself to be so completely led and governed by the Lord, but by the Lord, it should always be remembered, as that influx of Divine Truth which filled, and whose very nature it was to give free, rational, and thus true, responsible manhood to, every faculty of his being. He was, indeed, in this sense, the Lord's most faithful and obedient pupil or disciple during his whole course of preparation. He was, every moment of his pupilage or preparation for his use, most completely himself, and in the highest sense of the word his own master ; but only so far as, at the same time, he was wholly and completely the Lord's, and followed undeviatingly His leadings. For so far, and only so far, as one is the Lord's he is his own ; and just so far, and only so far, as he serves the Lord does he, in the highest and best and truest sense of the word, serve himself ; for by such service, and only by such service, he makes all that the Lord gives him his own, but his own as a steward,—makes himself, indeed, one with the Lord, as the branch is one with the vine. To serve the Lord is not to worship Him, not idolatrously to adore and praise Him, as most people suppose. Worship and praise are incidental, are simply the result of a spontaneous overflow of love and thanksgiving, are only the expression of a heart made warm and full by real, loving service. We serve the Lord *by serving others*,—that is, by being His instruments in doing the work which He is in the constant effort to do. The case is as it is with the service of men : we do not serve men by worshipping and praising them, but by aiding them in their work ; and just as the branch serves the vine by bearing its fruit, or as any organ or member of the body serves the brain by obeying its impulses. Such was Swedenborg's service of the Lord all along the pathway of his preparation for his final work,—for his education for that work consisted mainly

in performing uses for the sake of his fellow-men,—and he was, all along, day by day, seeking knowledge for the sake of such uses; day by day he consulted the Lord, by reading and meditating upon the Word, to learn what He would have him do, to find out how he could best serve Him. And the Lord instructed him by giving him light, thus by giving him intuitive perception of what He would have him do. In this was the secret of Swedenborg's great power: it was the *power of the Lord in him*. He earnestly desired to be led by the Lord,—by the Lord as the very Spirit of Truth,—and this enabled the Lord, by His influx as such Spirit of Truth, to lead him and guide him and give him the required strength. It was in this that he differed so widely from other men; it was not in what the Lord sought to do for him, but in what his state *enabled* the Lord to do for him. Yet some men are—mistakenly, we think—constantly inculcating the idea that the Lord did something for Swedenborg, and sought to do something for him that He does not do, and does not seek to do, for other men, and because of Swedenborg's intended peculiar mission, just as if all the difference was in what the Lord did, and not in what Swedenborg was, as differing from other men. Thus it is claimed that the Lord, in a peculiar, exceptional way, directed Swedenborg, both by mediate and by immediate influx, in regard to everything pertaining to his special mission, and the following has been quoted in proof:

“From my past life, I was able to see that everything therein was governed by the Lord by means of those things that had been produced or done by me.” S. D. 3177.

Now this applies no more to Swedenborg than to every human being. The whole paragraph whence this sentence is taken is under the caption, “That the Lord rules the human race in the very smallest particulars.” And what Swedenborg says of his own case he mentions as an illustration of this fact; and, what is remarkable, considering the use that has been made of this citation, Swedenborg speaks in the same

short paragraph of another, a *very wicked man*, who was in like manner governed by the Lord “in the most singular things!”

The following passage, which has been cited also in immediate connection with the above, and therefore for the same purpose, is very interesting as teaching the same *general truth* of the particularity of the Lord’s providence in relation to men,—to *all* men,—and not to Swedenborg alone, or as an exceptional case. Adv. I. vol. iii. 839 :

“What the acts of my life involved I could not distinguish at the time when they happened, but, by the Divine mercy of God-Messiah, I was informed with regard to some, and even with respect to many, particulars. From these I was at last able to see that the Divine Providence had governed the acts of my life uninterruptedly from my very youth, and directed them in such a manner that, by means of the knowledge of natural things, I was enabled to reach a state of intelligence, and thus, by the Divine mercy of God-Messiah, to serve as an instrument for opening those things which are hidden interiorly in the Word of God-Messiah. Those things, therefore, are now made manifest which hitherto were not manifest.”

Yes, we all acknowledge it. Providence “governed” and “directed” Swedenborg in regard to all the acts of his life, even from his “very youth”; but we deny that Swedenborg was in any sense or manner exceptional in this, and he nowhere claims to have been exceptional *as regards what the Lord did for him*. The Lord simply flowed into him *as he was*, precisely as He flows into all other men; and the operation of such influx in its government and direction was, in Swedenborg’s case, as in all other cases, qualified or made exceptional by his peculiar state of recipiency. But the above passage is interesting and instructive as showing how uninterruptedly and how thoroughly every human being is under the Lord’s Providence. And the end of such Providence is—equally with all, as with

Swedenborg—their best possible qualification for fulfilling their mission; for every human being has a mission as much as Swedenborg had.

Swedenborg says that he was prepared for his office from his infancy. How full of meaning! What was his office? He had, we may say, a succession of offices, but all looking to the one great office of explaining the Bible. This was a revelation from God in speech. What qualifications were required for such explanation? I answer: a perception of the Word in its real nature as the Spirit of Truth, and a mind well stored with a knowledge of the revelation of the same Word *in nature*. His mind was prepared for such perception in the one only way by which it could be prepared,—namely, by regeneration, as before shown. This opened his mind to the light of heaven, which is nothing else than the light of the Word as the Spirit of Truth, which is the light of its spiritual sense. He says that “the Lord opened the interiors of his spirit.” Of course the Lord did it, but the Lord *as the Word* did it. Neither Swedenborg nor any other man ever knew any other Lord than the Lord *as the Word*. But the Lord opened the interiors of Swedenborg’s spirit in no other sense and in no other way than that in which He opens the interiors of every man’s spirit, when he comes into a state to have them thus opened,—that is, by his regeneration. There was no mechanical or artificial process of opening; there was no special operation on the part of the Divine, except so far as normal operation was made special by recipient conditions. The sun opens the interiors—if I may so speak, for the sake of illustration—of the flower-bud, but of all flower-buds alike, so far as the sun is concerned; but it does this only after it has, little by little, brought the bud into a condition to be opened, when it, as it were, spontaneously opens as the sunbeams fall upon it. The sun does not artificially force the bud open, as it were, by a certain process of manipulation, as the child would do, and as it would seem as if the Lord *did*, according to the

views of some, when He opened the interiors of Swedenborg's spirit. The Lord really did nothing for Swedenborg in this case that He does not equally for all, and just as He does for all. The only thing exceptional was in Swedenborg's state as to recipiency.

But when one is regenerated up into a state of spiritual perception, his degree or kind or extent of illustration, when he reads the Word, depends upon his intellectual development, and also upon his stores of knowledge of the Word as revealed in Nature. When a man's interiors are open he has illustration, and thus revelation from perception, when he reads the Word, but in measure, or extent and variety, according to the light which he is capable of having by means of the knowledges belonging to him. A. C. 10,400. That is to say, the intellectually learned man, if in a state of perception, has, while reading the Word, larger or intenser illustrations, so to speak, than the unlearned man. It was in this respect that Swedenborg was so much in advance of other men who may have been in a similar state of perception or illustration. His learning was vast, though, perhaps, not greater than that of some others. His excellence—excellence as regards the use he had to perform—was not so much in the extent as in the kind of his knowledge. His knowledge was peculiarly that of the Word, of the Word in its revelations of itself in Sacred Scripture, and also in its revelations of itself in nature. His great study through life was the Word, and the Word as revealed in Nature as well as in Sacred Scripture. This was a most important part of his "preparation by the Lord" for his great mission. In this he faithfully followed the leadings of Providence; and this is the reason why he was so successful in it. Swedenborg was prepared for his office, like all men each for his own work, on the same principle that the heart or any other organ of the body is prepared for its function, which is by influx into its own peculiar form and conditions, and by its own action. That is to say, the difference is not in what the

Lord does, is not in the influx, but is in recipient state and conditions.

5. *Not a Prodigy.*

Swedenborg was no prodigy, as some seem to teach; and to teach for the purpose of showing that the Lord at length made something out of him, by a particular and exceptional process of manipulation, as it were, by whom, as a sort of intensely active, yet mysteriously passive, instrument, He could accomplish a certain object. In proof of which they cite the following:

“I know, from my own case, that in the parts of my office I am instructed by experience only, without the memory of particulars.” S. D. 888.

“By which Swedenborg means,” it is said, “that in everything that concerns his office—*i.e.*, ‘his teaching of the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from the Lord’—he was not directed by his own thought on the things contained in his natural memory, which in the ‘Spiritual Diary’ he calls the ‘memory of particulars,’ but was governed by the Lord by an influx into his will, of which he remained unconscious until it manifested itself by ‘experience,’ or by the acts of his life. And by this influx,” it is added, “the Lord governed the particulars of Swedenborg’s thought, and also the *particular influx* which he received from spirits.”

Now read the whole paragraph from which the above citation from the “Spiritual Diary” was made. Here it is (Swedenborg had been speaking of the “*interior memory*”):

“In regard to this interior memory, and the manner in which knowledges are insinuated into spirits, it cannot be otherwise known than from those things which occur in the life of the body, as that a man from infancy learns to speak, learns to think, and this more and more, still without knowing in what manner these things are insinuated, still less how the faculties of understanding, thinking, judging, and concluding have been insinuated. Just as when an adult is learning lan-

gnages, so I have known, from my own case, that in the parts of my office I have in like manner been instructed by experience only, without the memory of particulars." And here Swedenborg adds, parenthetically ("these things are said solely that it may be understood what is the nature of that memory, and not that they may be inserted concerning myself").

It is impossible to see any indication whatever in this paragraph, or in any dis severed part of it even, that the Lord's treatment of Swedenborg was in any sense or manner exceptional or peculiar. The lesson of the paragraph is a general one, and no more applies to Swedenborg than to all men. If he "was governed by the Lord by an influx into his will, of which he remained unconscious until it manifested itself by 'experience,' or by the acts of his life," so are all men and angels so governed; if this made, so far, a tool of Swedenborg,—and this seems to be the conclusion of some,—it does so of all men and angels. So, also, if Swedenborg learned by his own experience "that the thoughts of a man who is in faith are not his, that when evil they are of evil spirits, . . . that when good they are the Lord's only," he learned it, and he teaches it, as a *general principle*, and as equally applicable to all.

6. *A Student of the Natural Sciences.*

Swedenborg was most completely his own man, a perfectly free, responsible, moral agent, during his whole course of preparation for his work, though "led," "governed," "directed" by the Lord, just as other men are, so far as they permit themselves to be. It was his *tastes* that led him in pursuit of the peculiar kinds of knowledge needed to fit him for his mission, and it was his capacity and diligence that made him proficient in the acquisition of such knowledge. The Lord flowed into and acted through his tastes and capacities. Indeed, it was his peculiar combination of tastes and capacities and qualities of heart and of intellect that virtually elected him to his pecu-

liar office or use, or rather it was the Divine influx, acting through that combination, that so elected him. A boy's tastes, as his mind opens, indicate, and frequently with unerring certainty, what is to be his future; they indicate whether, if he can follow his tastes or his *bent*, he is going to be an artist, a naturalist, a mechanic, or something else. It was so with Swedenborg, though there was vastly more in his future than any interpretation of his beginnings could possibly indicate to men, as men then were. We know not how to prophesy of the developed tree of an unknown germ or shoot. Swedenborg was an extraordinary child, and this is why he became an extraordinary man,—the man was simply the well-developed child.

Swedenborg says, "I was first introduced by the Lord into the *natural sciences*, and thus prepared." How introduced? Why, just as every man fond of the natural sciences is introduced to them,—namely, by following his tastes, or the indications of influx from the Lord operating in his tastes. Here was indicated a future which no one, not even himself, could foresee. A knowledge of the natural sciences—that is, of God in nature—was an indispensable prerequisite to a knowledge of "*correspondences*," of which the whole Bible is composed; yet he had no idea or intimation of this,—it was not necessary for him to have. He loved the pursuit and saw a use in it, and this was enough for him at the time. His works on science are wonderful stores of knowledge, and such as the works of no other author contain, ancient or modern. They are too profound, go too far into the secrets of nature, for even modern scientists to understand. It was not until he had foretokenings of his final mission that *he* even grasped their full significance. There was a meaning in his intellectual stores which even *he* did not see while he was acquiring them. He was not exceptional in this; this is often the case with men of great missions. Thus Swedenborg says, expressing a general principle: "What the acts of my life involved I could not dis-

tinguish at the time when they happened; . . . but those things are now made manifest which hitherto were not manifest." Cannot some of the oldest of us bear some testimony to this from our own experience? Can we not "see, with him, that the Divine Providence has governed the acts of our lives uninterruptedly from our very youth," and that the Lord has had a specific end in view in our case, as really in his case? He could look back and read the lessons of Providence in his experiences after they were past, though he could not see their meaning at the time. We can do the same, and it is useful to do so.

7. *Swedenborg as a Scientist.*

Swedenborg had published his works on a wide range of scientific and philosophical subjects, among which are his treatises on metallurgy, "The Principia," "The Outlines of the Infinite," and "The Final Cause of Creation," "Principles of Chemistry," etc. He had, indeed, gone down into the depths and ascended into the heights on all the subjects that occupied his thoughts and pen, and, what is more, he turned them to *practical use*. In addition to being the profoundest and most versatile scientist and philosopher of his or any other age of the world, he was, in the fullest sense of the word, a practical man. Use was the great end and law of his life. It was because of this trait in his character, and because of his wonderful intelligence and practical energy, that he was a great favorite of his king, Charles XII. of Sweden, who ennobled him, and who made practical use of him in the service of his country. He had ranged over—rather had revelled in the depths of—a vast field of thought and investigation, from the lowest ultimates up to the beginning of things. His works on metallurgy and the like show what he had done on the former, as his "Principia" and like works on the latter. All these works show what a world of thought was evolved from his brain. He never went back, but was always going forward to greater

heights, to the investigation of profounder principles. It was not necessary for him always to tarry in one field. It was the very nature of his experience to be constantly lifting him up, and to unexplored heights. This was his genius, the peculiar character of his mind, and because he was a regenerating man. Thus all nature had successively opened her treasures of knowledge to him. He was already standing on the Alps of human learning, and with his vision still reaching upward. Not in one department alone, but in most,—in science, in philosophy, in ethics, in devotion to his Maker, in the service of his country, and as a loving and useful citizen—he had risen high above his fellow-men. Take him all in all, he was such a man as the world had never seen. The angels were said to have spoken through his mouth while he lay in the cradle; his manhood had, seemingly, already become the fulfilment of his childhood.

Truth for Truth's Sake.

But Swedenborg was no prodigy. He had not been *lifted* up to that high vantage-ground, nor let down from heaven, as “some bird of heavenly plumage fair,” but had “*toiled up*,” had “made himself,” just like other men. The Lord had led him, and had led him because he could be led, because he submitted to the Divine dictates or promptings; but He had led him precisely as He leads all men, so far as they permit themselves to be led. He was already the Lord's servant, just as all good men are, but each according to his ability and the peculiar form of his mind. He was rising to an unknown destiny as regards the future use of his capacities and his vast knowledge. What had been, perhaps, the most remarkable feature in his most remarkable character, and especially in that supremely selfish and wicked age of humanity, was his search for “*truth for truth's sake*,” or “for the common good.” This had now become the bright polar star of his voyage of life, this was the precious jewel of his character. In this

he was, perhaps, more unlike other men than in anything else. It was this that was now, by little and little, opening his mind to the light of heaven. It was this that *enabled* the Lord to lead him, and as few other men, if any, had then permitted themselves to be led. It was this that was the secret of his then dawning *illumination*. This was the sun of his soul, for it was the tabernacle of God with him. It was this that was setting his mind in order for a higher work, but of which he even yet had no definite premonition, though his whole being was, if its real significance could have been read, full of the clearest prophecy of it. It could not be read because it was hitherto an unknown fruit that he was to bear.

8. *The Next Step.*

Now look at him, as he then was, filled with the noblest impulses, every faculty yearning for the noblest action, with energies irrepressible for good work. What will he do with himself, as moved by that influx from the Lord which flows into all men? What should we expect that a mind so developed, so endowed, and so yearning for higher knowledge and greater use would do? Go back, go down from that lofty eminence, and make a reinvestigation of nature? As well might the plant, after being matured for bearing noblest fruit, go back into the ground whence it sprung; as well might the astronomer have contented himself with a reinvestigation of our own planet after he had got glimpses of the wonderful significance and power of the telescope; as well might the intelligent anatomist be satisfied with his knowledge of bones and muscles and tissues after he had got glimpses of a world within and above them to explore. Swedenborg had all the knowledge he need have, or could have, of the gross ultimates of being until the world of causes was opened to him. He was already master, we may say, of nature. But how to go farther, this was the question. It was a comparatively simple matter to investigate effects; but how to rise to invisible, intan-

gible causes, this was the question. Swedenborg had satisfied himself that there was a cause above nature, though down in it. What would be the spontaneous impulse of a mind endowed like his but to make an effort, at least, to reach that cause? He believed that the body had a spiritual counterpart, or soul: could he do less than try to learn its whereabouts and relation to the body?

This had been a subject of earnest inquiry by learned men. But it was all speculation; their modes did not suit him. His form of reasoning was that of *analysis*,—that is, from effects to causes, or from the known to the unknown. It was a “Jacob’s ladder” that he was climbing,—a ladder resting on solid ground and its top lost in the skies. He had planted his foot on the lowest rundle, and then ascended, step by step, as he got sight of higher ones. He was now standing on the topmost one visible *from earth* or accessible by any appliances of natural science. He was gazing still upward, and searching, but in vain, for some clue that could guide him still higher. But his intellectual vision, as yet, could not penetrate the darkness. What should he do? What could he do? Did he fall upon his knees and pray God by an arbitrary *fiat* to remove the darkness? He knew that there was no efficacy in a prayer of mere words or thoughts, or feelings even. Did the Lord come to him in an extraordinary manner and, because he was so nearly prepared for his mission, take him more especially under His charge and lead him to the light he so much desired? Nothing like it; the Lord never acts in this way. The Lord did nothing for him that He had not always been doing. The Lord gave him light, as He had always done, gave him all he could bear, filled his vessel full, and encouraged him, as before, to journey onward and upward, to follow the clue which the light of heaven and of his own experience would give him. And this was enough. All that he needed was to *work on*, as before, making the most, day by day, of his new experiences, which were constantly increasing

in their prophetic, but as yet hidden, significance. He was, indeed, nearly ripe for revelations of a more interior kind than he had ever experienced before.

9. *His Search for the Soul.*

But his mind needed yet the discipline of another kind of investigation. The soul now, and her relation to the body, became the object of his pursuit. How and where should he find her? This was a new inquiry, and required the exercise of new capacities, but which had all along been developing, and which were now ready for service. If he would find the soul, he said, he must "seek her in her own palace." And to find her there he must explore the palace. So he commenced, with untiring zeal and earnestness, the study of the human body. And how did he do this? Let him answer.

10. *His Principles of Investigation.*

"Whereas the soul has her residence in a place so sublime and eminent that we cannot ascend to her and attain to the knowledge of her, except by a particular and general investigation of the lower and accessible things of her kingdom, or whereas she lives withdrawn so far within, that she cannot be exposed to view until the coverings under which she is hidden are unfolded and removed in order, it hence becomes necessary that we ascend to her by the same steps or degrees, and the same ladder, by which her nature, in the formation of the things of her kingdom, descends into her body. By way, therefore, of an Introduction to Rational Psychology, I will premise the DOCTRINE OF SERIES AND DEGREES, the design of which is to teach the nature of Order and its rules, as observed and prescribed in the succession of things; for the rational mind, in its analytical inquiry into causes from effects, nowhere discovers them, except in the *Subordination* of things and the *Co-ordination* of subordinates; wherefore, if we would advance from the sphere of effects to that of causes, we must

proceed by ORDERS AND DEGREES, agreeably to what rational analysis itself both approves and advises." E. A. K. I. 579. "By the Doctrine of series and degrees, when taken in conjunction with experience, we are led into the inmost knowledge of natural things." 628.

Such were his principles of investigation. We see that they were worthy of his antecedent character, were, indeed, a natural and necessary outgrowth from it. No one familiar with his previous works could help coming to this conclusion. The discovery and announcement of these principles were the culminating point of his growth thus far, and were as necessary a rundle in the ladder by which he was climbing up to high spiritual things as any other step in his progress had been. And it was so till the last. There was perfect unity in his progress from first to last. The posterior was the outgrowth of the prior, just as is the case with the plant or the animal,—that is to say, there was no capacity, no quality of mind, no discovery grafted *on to* what he had already become by development, as you graft the scion of one tree upon another. There was nothing in his whole character but what was congruous, nothing successively developed but what was related to everything going before, as an effect to its cause. This grand doctrine of series and degrees, which, in a somewhat modified form, plays so important a part in all his future spiritual, as it had in his scientific, writings, was no super-added, arbitrary gift from the Divine, but was as much his discovery, or the result of a revelation to him because of the natural and continued action of his peculiar faculties, as is the apple-blossom the result of the opening bud of the apple-tree.

Being now earnestly in pursuit of a knowledge of the soul, Swedenborg naturally took what he supposed to be the nearest and most direct course to her. The blood, in its several degrees, including the animal spirits, or spirituous fluid, with its vessels and the heart, became the first object of his investigations; then followed his "Introduction to Rational Psy-

chology," in which he emphasizes the importance of his great Doctrine of Series and Degrees; and after this a wonderful treatise on the brain, the soul's highest natural tabernacle. After this, having entered, as he supposed, the very vestibule of the object of his search, he had nothing to do but to open the door to her inmost recess; but she still eluded his grasp. But his hopes were only deferred, not destroyed; he only discovered that there must be some modification in his modes of search. Providence was leading him, not arbitrarily directing him, but leading him in the only way in which it was possible to lead him,—namely, through his own experiences.

11. *Changes his Plan.*

He has now arrived at another important stage of his investigations. He finds it necessary to change his course somewhat in his search for the soul. What he says, both in retrospect and in prospect, is exceedingly interesting. He had published the "Economy of the Animal Kingdom," treating of the vital fluids of the body, the heart, and its appendages of arteries and veins, and the brain. But "before traversing the whole field in detail," he says, "I made a rapid passage to the soul, and put forth a prodromus respecting it. But, on considering the matter more deeply, I found that I had directed my course thither both too hastily and too fast. . . . But as the soul acts in the supreme or innermost things, and does not come forth until all her swathings have been successively unfolded, I am, therefore, determined to allow myself no respite until I have run through the whole field to the very goal,—until I have traversed the universal animal kingdom to the soul. Thus I hope that, by bending my course inwards continually, I shall open all the doors leading to her, and at length contemplate the soul itself, by the Divine permission.

"To accomplish this grand end I enter the circus, designing to consider and examine thoroughly the whole world or microcosm which the soul inhabits; for I think it is in vain to seek

her anywhere but in her own kingdom. . . . The body is her image, resemblance, and type ; she is the mode, the idea, the head,—that is, the soul of the body,—thus she is represented in the body as in a mirror. I am, therefore, resolved to examine carefully the whole anatomy of her body, from the heel to the head, and from part to part. . . . But, since it is impossible to climb or leap from the organic, physical, and material world—I mean the body—immediately to the soul, . . . it has been necessary to lay down new ways by which I might be led to her, and thus gain access to her palace,—namely, to discover, disengage, and bring forth, by the most intense application and study, certain new doctrines for my guidance, which are (as my plan shows) the doctrines of *forms*, of *order* and *degrees*, of *series* and *society*, of *communication* and *influx*, of *correspondence* and *representation*, and of *modification*.

“Let us then,” he says in the closing paragraph of the Prologue to the “Animal Kingdom,” from which the above extracts are made, “gird up our loins for the work. Experience is at our side with a full horn of plenty. The nine virgins are present also, adorned with the riches of nearly two thousand years,—I mean all the sciences,—by whose abundance, powers, and patronage the work is constructed. . . . All things at the present day stand provided and prepared, and await the light. The ship is in the harbor ; the sails are swelling ; the east wind blows : let us weigh anchor and put forth to sea.”

A knowledge of the soul, he says, will constitute the crown of his studies. Of the indispensable qualifications for a clear perception of truth, he reiterates, among others, “the love of truth for truth’s sake, or for the sake of the common good.” This was indeed the real illuminator,—or the occasion of it—of his pathway to the goal which he so earnestly sought.

To understand Swedenborg’s present state of progress towards a final preparation for his great crowning mission,—as yet unknown even to himself,—we need to be familiar with those grand treatises, the “Economy of the Animal Kingdom”

and the "Animal Kingdom." No one can read and understand a single paragraph from either of these wonderfully original and profound works, especially the latter,—his last great work before the opening of his spiritual vision,—without being astonished as well at the novelty as at the depth and breadth of his thoughts. One of the results of his investigations is most especially interesting in this connection, as showing that his next transition phase of life, or of use, was not a sudden leap, as from darkness into light, or from ignorance on a certain subject to glowing intelligence upon it, but that all his knowledge, all his progress—every step of it—in intelligence and wisdom and heavenly light, was the result of *experience*, of earnest, devoted, plodding industry, and just as much so in the latter part as in the earlier part of his life. No one who will study his life, as revealed in his works from beginning to end, in the order in which they came from his hand, can fail to be convinced of this. In the main, one was the spontaneous outgrowth of another all along till his death. It was one continuous growth, one continuous succession of buildings up, the higher upon the lower, to the cap-stone, in perfect and undeviating symmetry. There was no break, no gap, no "fault" (as the geologists say) in Swedenborg's progress, or in his character. He was all along, and from step to step, a complete, whole man, a sound man.

12. *Correspondence and Representation.*

We all acknowledge that Swedenborg's great, peculiar mission was to open the Word, to explain Sacred Scripture, and to do so by a knowledge of the great law according to which it was written,—namely, the Science of Correspondences. How did he gain this knowledge? Was it an arbitrary revelation to him? Or did he receive it in the order of logical thought, inquiry, and investigation, as he had received all his knowledge? That is, did it come to him little by little, as a revelation from the Divine to honest, loving, persevering thought, just as all of what is called original knowledge comes? Pre-

cisely so, as is abundantly proved by his writings. Like all other revelations from the Lord, this peculiar kind had its seed-time, its germinating state, and then its progressive development till the consummation of its full and effective fruit-bearing maturity.

It will be remembered that the Doctrine of Correspondence and Representation was one of his "*new doctrines*," announced in the Prologue to the "*Animal Kingdom*" as one of the subjects of investigation in his new chase after the soul. It is very plain, from what he says of correspondence and representation in various places in the "*Animal Kingdom*," that a knowledge of this subject did not drop down, already acquired, from God, out of heaven, into his mind, any more than any other kind of knowledge did. In the first volume of the "*Animal Kingdom*" he speaks of "a perpetual symbolical representation of spiritual life in corporeal life, and likewise of a perpetual typical representation of the soul in the body," and adds the following very significant note, significant as foretoking that use of such knowledge, of which, though so near at hand, he had as yet had scarcely a premonition :

"In our Doctrine of Representations and Correspondences we shall treat of both these symbolical and typical representations, and of the astonishing things which occur, I will not say of the living body only, but throughout nature, and which correspond so entirely to supreme and spiritual things that one would swear that the physical world was purely symbolical of the spiritual world, insomuch that, if we choose to express any natural truth in physical and definite vocal terms, and to convert these terms only into the corresponding spiritual terms, we shall by this means elicit a spiritual truth or theological dogma, in place of the physical truth or precept, although no mortal would have predicted that anything of the kind could possibly arise by bare literal transposition, inasmuch as the one precept, considered separately from the other, appears to have absolutely no relation to it." He further adds: "I

intend hereafter to communicate a number of examples of such correspondence, together with a vocabulary containing the terms of spiritual things, as well as of the physical things for which they are to be substituted. This symbolism pervades the living body, and I have chosen simply to indicate it here for the purpose of pointing out the spiritual meaning of *searching the reins*." He was still only a scientist and philosopher.

13. *His State Ripening.*

We may now have glimpses of the vast significance of Swedenborg's whole previous life. We see, as we draw near to the grand consummation, how he has been preparing, in the order of his nature as a man, according to his peculiar tastes and capabilities, as a tree to bear fruit, and as a tree to bear fruit of its *own peculiar form, size, color, and flavor*. If we could examine the tree in its germinal beginning, and in all the successive phases of its development, we should see every quality of the fruit foretold in every fibre and in every particle of fluid belonging to every phase of development of the tree. So of Swedenborg. His present state of knowledge and experience, and developed capacities and intuition, is simply a *fulfilment* of his whole life, and everything in it, as a prophecy, is simply the ripening fruit, of which every thought, and every phase of every thought, was a prediction. And just so sure as the tree is the bearer of its own fruit, is he the author, and the only responsible author, of his own work, and of every part of it. But he can see—as the tree cannot, and as the unregenerate man cannot—that he, like everybody, in fact, everything, else, is but the servant or instrument of the Lord; and *he loves to acknowledge this*.

It is plain that what Swedenborg has thus far learned of correspondence (remember this was before his illumination) has come as the result of his study of nature, and of his peculiar modes of search after the soul. By this study and these modes he was, as it were, spontaneously led to a knowledge of

the relation of natural things as effects, to spiritual principles as causes, which relation is what is meant by correspondence. And such knowledge, so far as knowledge is concerned, is the consummation of the last, and the foundation and beginning of his next, phase of life,—it is the fruit of the tree not yet ripe, but beautiful in promise; it needs a yet warmer, brighter radiance from heaven to bring it to maturity.

14. *Another Transition.*

Up to this next transition state—namely, that from the completion of his course as a scientist and philosopher to that of his “call to a more holy office”—all are agreed that he was, in the true sense of the word, his own master, though always, like all other men, a servant of the Lord, and that his works were the legitimate fruits of his own free thought, and unaided but by that influx from the Lord which is equally a gift to all men. But it is impossible for any one who has not followed him in his wonderful development of rational and illuminated thought, by a systematic study of his works, to form any adequate conception of the huge proportions of the man as he at this stage of his life stands before us. He is immeasurable, by any known standard, in almost every attribute of his nature. His regeneration, which has been gradually ripening into “love of truth from good,” has spread a halo of light around every faculty. Because of his highly regenerated state, his mind is already basking in the very light itself of heaven,—he is high up on the acclivity of the mountain, above the clouds of earth, and with his eyes still turned upward. Already is he advancing into a state of “revelation from perception,” or of “internal inspiration,” which is equally the gift of all regenerated men and angels.

Now here are two things whose significance we want to understand: the first is the fact that the sunshine of heaven is actually streaming down into his mind, and evidently from a high altitude. It is more than day-dawn,—that took place in

the early part of his manhood, all his works bear witness to it. But it was now evidently more than the light of earliest day in which he was directly searching for the soul. His last great work—the “Animal Kingdom”—shows an advanced state of even spiritual illumination; every paragraph of his “*analysis*” is radiant with light.

The other thing is the fact of his wonderfully developed capacities and his vast learning. His capacities are as a rich soil, and his stores of knowledge as the seeds of every variety of good food planted in it.

What do we expect on earth from such a relation of things,—namely, the summer sunshine flowing down into the planted and cultivated field of fertile soil? And that such a mind as Swedenborg’s was as such a field is plain from his own words :

“Man can form and retain no idea, notion, or conception of interior truths except from scientifics; but scientific truths are founded upon sensual truths, for without sensual truths scientific truths cannot be comprehended. These different kinds of truths succeed each other in order. Man cannot be confirmed in interior truths or doctrinals except by ideas derived from things sensual and scientific; for nothing is ever given with man in his thought—even as to the deepest arcanum of faith—which has not with it a natural and sensual idea.” A. C. 3310.

Again: “Scientifics must be arranged into order in the natural before the arrangement of the truths of the church, because the latter are to be apprehended by the former; for nothing can enter the understanding of man without ideas acquired from such scientifics as man has procured to himself from infancy. Man is altogether ignorant that every truth of the church which is called a truth of faith is founded upon his scientifics, and that he apprehends it and keeps it in the memory, and calls it forth from the memory, by ideas wrought from the scientifics with him.” 5510.

This is most remarkable, and is full of suggestion. It shows the importance of the high cultivation of the external mind and the acquisition of scientifics, by which are meant all kinds of knowledge acquired by all kinds of experiences of the external mind. But how full of significance when we apply all this to Swedenborg's case! What a harvest is in him in prophecy! But the *kind* of harvest, so unlike anything hitherto of earth, who can tell? Its peculiar promise is in the peculiar soil, the ground, stored with such varied and wonderful experiences and potencies. And it is of such a nature that it cannot remain fallow, it must bring forth; for the fact that Swedenborg was "in good, and in truth from good," opened his mind, as a field, upward to the very light of heaven. The Lord was in that light, was, indeed, the light itself. Can too much be expected from such a relation of things?

15. *Ripened for Nobler Work.*

Thus far all agree that Swedenborg became what he was by following the leadings of Providence, and by thus cultivating and developing his native capacities. Nothing was added to, engrafted upon, or "instilled" into him. There was nothing in him but what was of him and belonged to him, and by his own acquisition and appropriation, as much as the fruit belongs to the tree on which it grows. Thus far he has been growing and ripening in the order of life. And who can read his later philosophical works, especially his "Animal Kingdom," without being convinced that he was, in the highest and truest sense of the word, *a man*, an exceptional man; that he was as a fully-developed tree prepared for the production of some unknown and extraordinary fruit? Who can read the full significance, who can interpret, indeed, the wonderful prophecies, of such a combination of human virtues and capacities without looking for results such as had never been the fruit of human intellect before? A mind so vast, so cultivated, so filled, and filled with such varied and exalted stores, and so regenerated into

the very light of heaven, and thus so completely one with the Lord, so perfectly obedient to every impulse of inflowing life and light from Him: who can think of such a mind, of such a full man, and then conceive of any necessity for any change of his relation to the Lord, for the sake of the work which he had to do, any change other than as that of the continued perfection of the blade for the sake of the corn? And this is precisely the relation of all Swedenborg's works to himself, theological as well as scientific: they are as the corn to the blade, or the fruit to the tree. They must be so, or he has taught us a false philosophy. What was now the inevitable and unmistakable prophecy of Swedenborg's whole being, and his relation to the Lord, but, if we could read it truly, exactly what his theological writings fulfilled. We can conceive of the sun's having greater *power* over the fruit as it ripens, thus of its making it sweeter or more like itself; but we cannot conceive of its *changing*, in any sense, or manner, or degree, its relation to the fruit, or of its making the fruit depend less upon the producing-tree for whatever is peculiar in its form and quality. Swedenborg was now advanced to a highly mature state, and therefore was prepared to bear riper and sweeter fruit. As a branch he had become more perfectly recipient of what flowed into him from the Vine. And this did not make him less himself, or his works less his own, but more in unison with the Divine, from which all regenerated men and angels delight to act.

This was precisely the manhood that was now needed to be the medium of instruction from the Lord for the *coming* manhood of the New Jerusalem,—it was an exemplar and a precursor, a John the Baptist,—for the coming manhood of the New Jerusalem is to be distinctively, like his, a free and rational one, and in this respect differing from any preceding manhood. This was the grandest and noblest finite manhood that has ever existed, and it was the medium of the grandest and noblest mission to mankind. And every attribute of

Swedenborg's manhood entered into his mission; not one of his faculties was suppressed; and every one was filled with light and life from the Lord; every one was a *tabernacle* of the Lord, as the branch is of life from the vine. The coming man is to feed on *rational* truth such as had never been revealed before; its verbal statement must come from the Lord, therefore, *through an intensely rational mind*, for no other mind could adequately measure it down to the wants of such rational mind. And Swedenborg was now to do a work, not which would detract from, or in any sense or manner limit, his responsible manhood, or make him less a man, but which would help to carry him on to still higher and nobler manhood, and thus continue to make him a still more and more perfect servant of the Lord.

16. *His Intromission.*

But Swedenborg's new work, on account of its peculiar nature, required new and extraordinary qualifications, which could be acquired only by extraordinary means. I refer to his intromission into the spiritual world. This was extraordinary because of his extraordinary state of reception. By his faithful obedience to the laws of human life, Swedenborg had as naturally and as spontaneously grown up into the light of heaven as a plant grows up into its flowering state. His illustration, or internal inspiration, was as naturally and inevitably the result of such growth as the opening of the flower is of such state of the plant. So also was his spiritual vision, or open and conscious presence with spirits and angels in the other life. Not that all men in a corresponding state of regeneration have this gift, though they have that of internal inspiration or illustration, yet this even with a difference, according to mental genius and endowment. Swedenborg's spiritual vision was as much the necessary and spontaneous result of his peculiar character of mind as was all that was peculiar or exceptional in his scientific attainments or in his illumination.

Open intercourse with angels was an extraordinary gift, but no more so, perhaps, than some of his other gifts. He belonged to a peculiar province of the *Grand Man*, so does every man. He simply had the endowments characteristic of the province to which he belonged, just as the eye, the ear, the hand, or the foot has its peculiar function because of its form and its relation to other parts of the body. Some people are spontaneously clairvoyant, and do not understand why all are not so; whilst others cannot possibly conceive of anything above nature, and are, therefore, inevitably skeptical about another or spiritual state of existence. All are more really in the spiritual world than in the natural world, for all are, in their real nature, spiritual beings, the body being only a temporary tenement and instrument to give us conscious and effective being in this world. When men were in the order of life, visions were frequent. They are not contrary to true human nature, but one of its birthrights, but now lost because of abuse. It required no interference with the laws of life for Swedenborg to receive this gift. It only required that he should be of a certain genius, and in a certain state, just as for one of the many organs of the body to see, rather than hear or taste or touch, it must have a certain form and structure, and then it sees as naturally and spontaneously as another organ hears,—it cannot help doing so. And such was Swedenborg's case as to spiritual vision: it as much belonged to the man, *as he then was*, as any other gift did.

17. *His Intromission Progressive.*

Swedenborg's intromission was gradual, just as his illumination was, just as the development of every one of his faculties was, thus was not an arbitrary gift by the Lord, instantaneously conferred upon him by simply *opening* his spiritual eyes. His spiritual sight was opened when he was ripe for it, like the flower from the bud, and as the result of development of what was inherent in his very nature, and thus because that

was, in his case, the next orderly and inevitable step in the process of growth. There had not been, and there was not then, any sudden transition in his state, as to *illustration* (which is an entirely different thing from spiritual vision), as if by some extraordinary bestowment by Divine Providence. He first had "illustration of the *natural mind*," as is evident from the wonderful character of his later philosophical works. And such illustration, he says, "does not ascend by discrete degrees, but it increases in a continuous degree; and in proportion as it increases there is illustration from the interior by the light of the two superior degrees. The natural mind may, therefore, be elevated into the light of heaven, in which the angels are, and may perceive *naturally*, and thus not so fully, what the angels perceive *spiritually*; but, nevertheless, the *natural mind of man cannot be elevated into the very light of the angels.*" (Note this.) "When man's natural mind is raised into the light of heaven he can think, and even speak, with the angels; but then the thought and speech of the angels flow into the natural thought and speech of the man, and not *the reverse*; on which account the angels speak with man in natural language, thus in his mother-tongue. This takes place by a spiritual influx into the natural, and not by any natural influx into the spiritual. Human wisdom, therefore, which is natural as long as a man lives in the natural world, *cannot, on any consideration, be raised into angelic wisdom, but only into a certain image of it.*" D. L. W. 256, 257.

And this is the difference between Swedenborg's state and that of the men of the Golden Age, who also conversed with angels. They were not "in any other than *natural light*," or the light of the natural mind. *He was also* in spiritual light, he was "among the angels *like one of them*," and consequently imbibed truths in the very light itself of heaven, and thus immediately from the Lord, who is that light. There was with him a certain kind of separation from his body, as to his intellectual part, which *enabled* him to be with the angels as

one of them, and to partake of their wisdom ; and this was the combined result of his state, as to regeneration, and of his spiritual visions. This enabled *him*,—different from other regenerated men,—even while in the body, to be “illuminated by the light of the Word MORE PROXIMATELY.” It was this that enabled him first to perceive the internal sense of the Word, and then to formulate it in his own understanding and explain it to others. In fact, being then regenerated up into the higher degrees of his nature, and also having “spiritual sight,” he was in the very light itself, the very “spirit of life itself,” of the Word, which is the spiritual sense in its own substantial form ; for he says, “if you are willing to believe it, man’s internal man is in the internal sense of its own accord, for it is a heaven in the least form, and it is with the angels of heaven when it is open.” A. C. 10,400. This does not, of course, mean that the “internal man” is in the “internal sense,” in the *verbalized* form of the internal sense, as contained in Swedenborg’s writings, but in its form as “*living light* ;” for, as we intend to show, there is an infinite difference between the internal sense, as finited, formulated, and expressed in human language, and the internal sense, as the very spirit and life of the Word.

In view of this fact—namely, such complete, conscious life of a man, while on earth, with the angels of heaven, as was the case with Swedenborg—we are overwhelmed in wonder and amazement. But let us not lose our senses. There never was an effect without a cause, and that cause, however extraordinary and seemingly miraculous the effect, something else than God’s deviation, in any sense or manner whatever, from His own eternally unchangeable laws or mode of operation. True, Swedenborg says that, “since the creation” it had not been granted to any one, as it was to him, “to be at the same time in natural light and in spiritual light, . . . and thereby to see the wonderful things of heaven, to be among the angels like one of them, and at the same time to imbibe truths in light,

and thus to perceive and teach them, and consequently to be led by the Lord." But Swedenborg does not say that no one in the future "will ever come into a like state, even as no one before him had ever been in such a state," as is sometimes illogically inferred. This would be saying that the Lord had deviated from His one only law of influx, or had added something to its operation, in order to make a prodigy of Swedenborg, which all partakers of the true philosophy of developing humanity, as taught in Swedenborg's writings, will most emphatically deny; for all must see and acknowledge that the Divine Influx, *so far as God is concerned, is the same to all and at all times*, and that any difference in results, therefore, must be owing to difference in recipient conditions. The fact is, Swedenborg was the inauguration, or an exemplification of the inauguration, of a new and extraordinary phase of developing humanity, a phase as different from every preceding one as youthhood is from childhood, or manhood from youthhood. Humanity had never before been capable of what Swedenborg was, or of what humanity is to be, capable. Swedenborg lived in the transition age from the old to the new, but was of the new. There are recipient conditions in youthhood that do not exist in childhood, and in manhood that do not exist in youthhood, also in spiritual manhood that do not exist in natural manhood. What if Swedenborg lived in the dawning spiritual manhood of the race: how different would be the recipient conditions furnished by his mind for the operation of the Divine Influx from any existing before! Swedenborg was most plainly a grand exemplar of a new kind or new degree of manhood. There existed in him the new conditions, and therefore he had the new gifts, and gifts that were extraordinary only because they were new. Not that all are going to have the same gifts that he had, or do the same work. There will be all the difference in the individuals of the new manhood that there had been in those of the old. Some will be high and some low, some internal and some external, in the differ-

ent provinces of the Grand Man of the coming humanity, as in the past. The Lord will make out of all, precisely as He did out of Swedenborg, all that the *recipient conditions* of their mind will admit of. And the coming man, as he becomes regenerate, will, like Swedenborg, delight to be led by the Lord, and to acknowledge that all good is from Him, and that he is only the Lord's servant.

18. *Importance of his Intromission.*

But, to return to the fact of Swedenborg's intromission, we may see what an important factor it was in his preparation for his work from the following, as quoted by another from one of his letters to Dr. Beyer. He says,—

“When heaven was opened to me it was necessary for me first to learn the Hebrew language, as well as the *correspondences*, of which the whole Bible is composed, which led me to read the Word of God over many times; and as the Word of God is the source whence all theology must be derived, I was thereby enabled to receive instruction from the Lord, who is the Word.”

It was at this time that Swedenborg became aware of the nature of his real mission, and that he, therefore, commenced specific preparation for it by the study of Hebrew, and of the Word in Hebrew, and of the “science of correspondences,” of which, as we have seen, he had had glimpses years before. He had acquired certain knowledges on the plane of Nature, knowledges of the relations of natural things as effects to spiritual principles as causes; these served as vessels—“vessels of gold and vessels of silver”—into which he could receive, or which rendered him capable of receiving, such indispensable spiritual knowledges as were the result of his open intercourse with spirits and angels. His intromission enabled him to complete his knowledge of correspondences, for this enabled him to see plainly the causes towards which he had so long been climbing up from effects. He was now enabled to see the

spiritual sense of the Word, and to learn things about the Word which he could not have learned, even though in a state of spiritual illumination, from the mere letter. He was now enabled also to see the mysteries of the spiritual world, and thus the state of man after death. Even this kind of knowledge was indispensable to a complete, rational understanding of the Word in its practical relation to humanity,—that is, to men and angels,—and most especially indispensable to a *rational explanation* of the Word; and this was what was now specifically needed,—namely, a *rational explanation* of the Word.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WRITINGS AND THE SPIRITUAL SENSE.

1. *The Writings.*

AND now we come to the question, What is the real nature of Swedenborg's writings? What do they do? or what does Swedenborg profess to do? In the very significant words of another:

"We must allow the Writings of the Church to explain themselves, and then we shall never find any contradictions therein."

Now, the Writings seem to teach some of their readers that they are "the Lord's writings;" that they are the "spiritual sense of the Word;" that they are the "Word without the external sense;" and that they are the "Lord's Advent," and are the "Holy City, New Jerusalem."

We grant that there are expressions in Swedenborg's writings that seem to justify these conclusions. But the spirit and philosophy of his teachings, or the obvious import of his teachings *as a whole*, lead to no such conclusions.

Let us now consider these four propositions, namely, that the Writings are the "Lord's writings;" that they are the "spiritual sense of the Word;" that they are the "Advent of the Lord;" and that they are the "Holy City, New Jerusalem."

First, "the Lord's writings." Much has been made of the following, found in a photo-lithographic edition of Swedenborg's MSS., vol. viii. p. 1: "Those books are to be enumerated which were written *by the Lord through me (a Domino per me)* from the beginning to the present day."

Every student of Swedenborg's Latin knows that *a Domino per me* does not necessarily mean *by the Lord through me*, but more likely *from the Lord by me*. The latter meaning is certainly more in accord with other expressions which he uses in regard to his and the Lord's relation to his Writings. He nowhere says that he writes from himself or from "the devil," but always from the Lord. How could a regenerating man express himself differently? But even admitting that the above translation of the phrase is the correct one, we must interpret its meaning in the light of Swedenborg's teachings about man and God and man's relation to God. True, Swedenborg had "internal inspiration;" but his Writings say that "inspiration is not dictation, but influx." And we all know that the Divine Influx is not influx of words or of ideas, or of principles even, but of truth, and of truth as "living light." Nothing but truth *as the "spirit of truth"* comes by influx. Swedenborg's writings, therefore, are the Lord's writings so far, and only so far, as finite mind was capable of receiving the spirit of truth and Divinely, or by correspondence, formulating it into statements of truth. The formulation was a finiting process; it must, therefore, necessarily take place in a finite recipient vessel; and unless the vessel were in a perfectly passive state, it must partake more or less of the quality of the vessel. Swedenborg's writings can be the Lord's writings, therefore, only in the sense in which the works of an agent acting according to as perfect an understanding of his principal's wishes as he is capable of are the principal's works. All that we are and all that we have, and all our ability to do, come from the Divine Influx. A regenerating man is livingly sensible of this, and he is constantly acknowledging it. If he does good, it is not he that does it, but the Lord through him. Thus Swedenborg nowhere takes any credit to himself for the wonderful revelations he is making to mankind. It is the Lord's doings. It was the Lord that "instructed" him, and "taught" him, and "dictated to" him. He was like the

angels in this respect. They never do any good of themselves; it is always the Lord acting in them and through them as humble instruments. This is plainly all that Swedenborg means in what he says about the Lord's relation to his works. How frail a basis—the perfectly natural and spontaneous expressions of loyalty of a regenerated man to the Source of all good—on which to found the perfectly astounding claim that all of Swedenborg's theological writings, including even the "Spiritual Diary," are the Lord's writings!

2. *The Spiritual Sense.*

Some say "That the Writings are the spiritual sense of the Word," and thus the "Word itself without the literal sense;" and this is just what they necessarily must be if they are the "Lord's writings."

What is meant, then, by the spiritual or internal sense of the Word? All are agreed that it is indeed the essential Word of God; yea, is the Lord Himself. In this we are supported by the following passages:

"The internal sense is the *most essential Word.*" "The internal sense is the *Word Itself.*" "In single things there is an internal *holy*, which is its internal sense, or celestial and divine sense; this sense is the *soul* of the *Word*, and is *Truth Divine Itself* proceeding from the Lord, thus the *Lord Himself.*" "The spiritual sense *lives* in the literal sense, as man's spirit in his body." A. C. 3432, 9349, 5457, 1540.

Thus we are left in no doubt in regard to what the internal sense of the Word is in its real or absolute nature.

Again, in its relative nature, or as it relates to man, the internal sense is *doctrine*, or doctrine is the internal sense. "The internal sense is *doctrine itself.*" "The *doctrine* of charity and faith is the internal sense of the Word. . . . The internal sense of the Word is the *very doctrine* of love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor." "The *doctrine* which ought to serve man as a *lamp* is that which is taught by the

internal sense, and thus it is the internal sense." A. C. 10,400, 9380, 9409.

But we are told that "the doctrines taught by Swedenborg are the internal sense of the Word." In what *sense* are they? This is the question. "In the sense of the *genuine doctrines of the Church*," as understood by some, who seem to regard the "spiritual sense" and such doctrine as identically one and the same.

"We see, therefore," says one, "that the genuine doctrines of the Church, and hence the doctrines taught by Emanuel Swedenborg, . . . are the *internal sense of the Word*." This is equivalent to saying that the Writings of Swedenborg are the internal sense of the Word, especially as "they are the Lord's works," "the Lord's writings," and hence it is claimed that they are "the Word without the external sense." Thus, "the genuine doctrines of the Church," Swedenborg's writings, and the internal sense of the Word are identically the same.

3. *Absurd Conclusions.*

Now let us see to what absurd conclusions this leads. First, it follows that Swedenborg's writings—including the "Spiritual Diary"—are the "*most essential Word Itself*;" are the "*internal holy*" of the Word; are the "*soul of the Word*;" are "*Truth Divine Itself* proceeding from the Lord;" are the "*Lord Himself*;" that they "*live in the literal sense, as the soul in the body.*"

Second, Swedenborg's writings, if they are the internal sense, are "*doctrine itself*;" are "*the very doctrine of love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor*;" are "*the doctrine that ought to serve man as a lamp.*" And are they such doctrine? Perhaps doctrine has a deeper meaning than we had fathomed. It certainly has, if we had not regarded it as the very Word itself in "*its spirit and life.*" Genuine doctrine, in its real essence as the *internal sense* of the Word, is that which actually shines in heaven as light; is that which actually

illuminates the mind ; is that, therefore, which instructs man, which instructed Swedenborg, but by its *illuminating*, not by its verbal power. "By genuine doctrine of the Church, as to faith and as to life, the internal sense is inscribed both on man's understanding and on his will, on his understanding by faith and on his will by life." A. C. 9430. Do Swedenborg's writings shine? Can they illuminate the mind? Do they by any process become "inscribed on the understanding and on the will"?

4. *Only Explanations.*

No, most conclusively. Swedenborg's writings are not the Word; are not the Lord; are not the internal sense of the Word; are not genuine doctrine,—*i.e.*, are not "truths continuous from the Lord." No, infinitely far from it. What are they, then? They are just what he claims them to be, and just what all must, sooner or later, acknowledge them to be,—namely, They are simply an "*explanation* of the internal sense," or, rather, an explanation of the real nature of the literal sense of the Word, so as to show, so far as human language can show, somewhat of the real character of its "*soul*," of its "*spirit* and life" within. Swedenborg's writings are not to the spiritual sense even, as the body to the soul within the body; not even as the cup to the wine contained in the cup, or as the casket to the jewels. This is the relation of Sacred Scripture to the spiritual sense. Swedenborg's writings are nothing more than as verbal expressions about the soul in the body, the wine in the cup, or the jewels in the casket; but verbal expressions of such a character as to give most precious insight into the real nature of Sacred Scripture and its internal sense. Swedenborg's writings in no sense or manner measure out for us the internal sense, or a single ray of it. They do not, and they could not describe even the smallest portion of what is contained in a single sentence of Sacred Scripture. "In the internal sense are singulars, myriads of which make one particular in the literal sense." A. C. 3438.

There are a great many passages in Swedenborg of similar import. The internal sense of the Word can, indeed, no more be put into human language than the sunlight can, or than the life of the soul can. The spiritual sense is utterly ineffable. It can flow into the mind, and it actually illuminates the *regenerated* mind, but it cannot flow into words. Hence there is an infinite difference between that sense and any possible verbal statement of it.

How, then, is it possible for any one to claim that Swedenborg's words are the Lord's words, and thus that his Writings are the Lord's writings, thus Holy Writings, or Sacred Scriptures? And such they certainly would be if they were the Lord's writings; they would be Sacred Scriptures, and, as such, would themselves have an internal sense, thus would themselves be God, as the Sacred Scriptures are, in their "Spirit and Life." God is Life; and Life cannot act or operate otherwise than by correspondence; for all life—finite life even—operates by correspondence; that is to say, operates in such a way that, whatever is produced from it, is produced in successively evolved degrees, so that every lower degree corresponds, as an effect to a cause, to the higher, and, at length, to the highest degree whence it originated. God never does anything by external, arbitrary act, as man does. Nothing can come from God but by correspondence; no effect comes from the normal operation of any degree of life but by correspondence. Life in the germ of the egg, or of the seed even, operates by correspondence in every phase and degree of its operations. Everything in the tree and everything in the flower, and then in the fruit, corresponds to and is filled with the life that produced it. Such producing life fills, has entire possession of, and thus perfectly controls and characterizes, everything of the mechanism of the tree, and also of the flower and the fruit. This is the reason why everything in and of these, corresponds. Now if the Lord—the Lord as Life, for He operates in no other way—thus filled, had entire possession of, and thus perfectly

controlled and characterized everything of the mechanism of Swedenborg's mind, then his fruits, as of a tree, his works, his Writings are the Lord's Writings, and hence correspond to the Lord; but not otherwise. The idea of his Writings being the Lord's writings, and not correspondences, is, when we understand the nature of God in His operations as Life, a perfectly absurd idea, and is unworthy of the real man of the New Jerusalem.

5. *What Swedenborg calls his Writings.*

Now let us see what Swedenborg himself says about his Writings. He nowhere calls them the Word, the Lord, the soul of the Word, or doctrines in the sense of "truths continuous from the Lord;" and this is just what the doctrines—the "*genuine doctrines* of the Church" are; they are truths continuous from the Lord; and this is just what he says that genuine doctrines are. They are the internal sense of the Word, are Truth Divine, are the very living Light itself, flowing down from, thus "continuous from, the Lord;" just as genuine light is light continuous from the sun; just as genuine life is life continuous from the soul. The genuine doctrine of the New Church—that is, the doctrine of man arrived at a state of rational freedom—is not verbal doctrine, is not an external, authoritative *statement* of truth,—as it was to the Israelite and the man of the first Christian Church,—but is doctrine that shines in and illuminates the mind. It was not formulated, verbal instruction, but such doctrine, or the Lord as such doctrine, flowing "continuously" into the mind—flowing in as Divine spiritual light—that taught Swedenborg, and that is, in like manner, to teach the real man of the New Church, as soon as he comes into a state to be so taught. Swedenborg's writings are only "verbal statements," only "verbal explanations," of doctrine,—of the internal sense of the Word. This is all they are, and all that he claims that they are. Swedenborg's writings are a revelation of Truth, of the doctrine of the New

Church, for *unregenerated* men, for men, therefore, who could not receive genuine doctrine, or Divine Truth “*continuously*” flowing into the mind from the Lord; Truth must be finited, must be verbalized, must be broken up into formulated statements or explanations of principles. The *regenerated* man, on the contrary, needs no such verbal statements of doctrine; he has outgrown such a form of revelation, or of “accommodated truth,” and this is just what “revelation” is, it is accommodated, verbalized truth. The regenerated man receives doctrine by “internal inspiration,”—that is, by sensible influx continuous from the Lord. This is the way Swedenborg received doctrine, and this is the *kind* of doctrine *he* received. And this is what is meant by his being “instructed by the Lord.” He was instructed by the Lord as *such doctrine*, as such continuously inflowing truth.

But Swedenborg did not reveal such genuine doctrine, such *continuous* truth, for unregenerated men,—and regenerated men, as we have seen, did not need it,—he need not reveal it, he could not reveal it,—could not reveal it in any other sense than that of “explanations” *about* it. And this is precisely the way in which he characterizes his great work, the “*Arcana Cœlestia*,” he says (A. R. 820):

“That the spiritual sense of the Word has been revealed, this day, may be seen in the ‘*Arcana Cœlestia*,’ where the two books of Moses, Genesis and Exodus, have been EXPLAINED according to that sense; also in the ‘*Doctrine of the New Jerusalem*,’ *concerning the Sacred Scriptures*, Nos. 5–26; in the little work on ‘*The White Horse*,’ from beginning to end, and in the passages collected there from the Sacred Scriptures; and, moreover, in the present EXPLANATIONS of the Apocalypse, where not a single verse can be understood without the spiritual sense.”

Again (A. C. 6597): “That the internal sense is such as it has been *expounded* (*expositus*), appears from the particulars that have been *explained* (*explicata*).”

Again: in "Apocalypse Revealed," "Every one may see that the Apocalypse cannot be *explained* at all except by [from] the Lord alone."

Again: "This sense" [the celestial, a part of the internal sense] "cannot be *expounded*, because it is the celestial sense itself, not even an idea of which can be expressed in human language." S. D. 4671.

Again: "I can testify how many things are contained in thought and speech when they are spiritual; and that they can never be *expressed*." Adv. iv. p. 66.

It is not necessary to multiply quotations. Every reader of Swedenborg knows that he nowhere pretends to give the internal sense of the Word, or of any part, phrase, or verbal expression of it, in any other sense than that of an *explanation*, or *verbal statement* of its representative, significative, or symbolical meaning. His great work on the Apocalypse is entitled "Apocalypsis Explicata," which contains a great deal more than "Apocalypsis Revelata," which last word is evidently used in the sense of *explicata*. And his great work is the "Arcana Cœlestia," *detaeta, laid open, uncovered*,—that is, laid open by *explanation*, certainly in no other way. In which work, as in the others on the Word, he takes up, *seriatim*, words and phrases of Scripture, and says they *represent*, or they *signify* so and so; or *it is treated (agit, or actum est)* of such and such things.

6. *The Writings and the Word.*

Swedenborg's writings, then,—it is plain as day,—are the internal sense of the Word only in the sense of an *explanation* of the internal sense; and it is equally plain from his own teachings that this is all that he claims for them. Hence there is an infinite difference between his Writings and the Word itself, either in its external or in its internal sense; all the difference that there is between the light that actually shines and warms and illuminates the landscape and creates life and beauty, and any verbal expression, statement, or explanation

about the light. The internal sense as “the essential Word of God,” as “the Lord Himself,” as the “Spirit of Truth,” is a fathomless fountain. Swedenborg’s writings are not even the bucket by which to draw even a single living draught. They only show us that the Word, in its spirit and life, *is* such a fountain, and how and why it is so; and they also show our relation to it, and how we may come into a state to drink of it. The internal sense is as the radiance continuously flowing forth from the sun and filling all space. Swedenborg’s writings are not even the optical instrument which enables us to see the wonders of such radiance. They only explain to us its nature and what we must do to come into a state to see its glories. Swedenborg’s writings are not even related to the internal sense, are not even its vessel or casket, as Sacred Scripture is; are not even the settings of the jewels within the casket; they, indeed, bear no organic relation to them whatever, as the Scriptures do; they do not even unlock the casket, much less do they open it and expose the jewels to our view; they only give us the key and tell us how to use it—how to apply it to the lock. This we can do, or learn to do, by cold intellection. To turn the key and raise the cover is quite another matter. Swedenborg did this, but for himself alone; he could not do it for another. No man can do it for another. This requires the application of “eye-salve,” which no one can apply for another. For, to really open the casket and see the jewels, is to have your eyes opened, which is the result of those regenerating processes which one man can only *explain* to another, as Swedenborg has to us, and the nature and necessity of which he has so clearly shown in his Writings.

And this one fact—namely, that they are only explanations—is enough to show that Swedenborg’s writings are not “the Lord’s writings.” The Lord never explains, never does so in any other way or sense than through that kind of responsible agency of man which makes the explanation the man’s explanation, though from the Divine Influx, thus from the Lord,

operating in him and through him, but in him and through him as a *free* agent and one under the free and unbiased exercise of his own rationality. And this was the case with Swedenborg in all his Writings. The Lord only ultimates or finites truth down into verbal statements or expressions, as the soul, as it were, finites itself down into or out into what we call the material body; or as the germ-life of the seed finites itself out into woody fibre and bark, and, at length, leaves, blossoms, and fruit. There is an *organic* connection between the soul and the body, also between the vegetable soul and its body, the evolved plant or tree. So there is, by *correspondence*, a similar connection between the Lord, or, which is the same thing, between Divine Truth and its finited verbal expression—Sacred Scripture. Sacred Scripture, therefore, is the basis and continent of the Word, of Divine Truth, as the body is of the soul, or as the tree is of its evolving life, or as the channel is of its stream. Swedenborg's writings are no such basis or continent; as mere explanations they could not be. And no one claims them to be, no one pretends that they are, finited or evolved from the Lord by *correspondence*; and yet, as we have before shown, *without correspondence* no writings can be "the Lord's writings," no words the Lord's words.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BOOKS AND THE ADVENT.

1. *Advent Written on the Books.*

ANOTHER claim, and by no means the least remarkable one, is "that the Lord effected His Second Coming once for all through Emanuel Swedenborg;" that Swedenborg's writings are, in fact, the Lord's Second Coming! It is said, indeed, that "he [Swedenborg] declares expressly that the BOOKS THEMSELVES constitute the Lord's coming!"

This is perfectly marvellous. And what is the authority for it? Why this: Swedenborg says "*in his Sketch of a History of the New Church*":

"Upon all my books, in the spiritual world, was written *The Lord's Advent (Adventus Domini)*. The same I also inscribed, by command, on two copies in Holland."

Again: "The Lord's Second Advent takes place by a man, before whom He manifested Himself in person, and whom He filled with His Spirit, so that he might teach the doctrines of the New Church." Now if "this [Second Advent] is meant in the Apocalypse by the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven,"—and it is claimed that it is so "proved by the superscriptions to Nos. 779 and 781 in 'True Christian Religion,' when read in consecutive order,"—then the "Books Themselves constitute" the New Jerusalem also!

But we fail to find in Swedenborg's writings any "express declaration," or anything even akin to any such declaration, that either his books, his Writings, or any verbal statement of doctrine whatever, constitutes either the Lord's Second Ad-

vent or the New Jerusalem. "The Lord's advent," written on Swedenborg's books, no more implies—much less "declares"—that those books constitute the Lord's Second Advent than the phrase "*Authority in the New Church*," printed on the back of a book, implies that that book is authority in the New Church.

2. *Advent a Perception.*

Let us now, in the exercise of that practical common sense and reason which are the peculiar prerogative of the man of this age, and not as trammelled and blinded by "authority," briefly consider, in the light of what Swedenborg says on the subject, what the Second Coming of the Lord is. We are all agreed that, so far as the Lord is concerned,—whatever may have been the appearances to the contrary,—all His comings to man have been *as the Word*: first, as the Word as "*Spirit and Life*," or "living truth," "living light" (this was before man was contaminated with evil); second, as the Word, or Divine Truth finited into *statements of truth*, Sacred Scriptures; third, as the Word "*made flesh*;" fourth, as a revelation of the *internal sense*. It is the last Advent—which is the most glorious of all—which Swedenborg's books are said by some to constitute. Swedenborg defines this Coming most plainly. He shows that it is a higher and more interior, *rational perception* than any preceding coming. Read the following from A. C. 2513, in connection with the remarkable statement that the "BOOKS THEMSELVES constitute the Lord's Coming," namely:

"The Coming of God signifies PERCEPTION; for PERCEPTION is nothing else than a DIVINE ADVENT, or a Divine influx into the intellectual faculty." And this is just what the Coming of the Lord is, as shown in very many places in Swedenborg's writings. And there is reason in this. And, in this connection, how full of significance the fact, as acknowledged, I believe, by all Swedenborg's readers, that "*The Lord made his Second Advent in Swedenborg's intellectual faculty!*"

This was, indeed, the advent of the Lord to Swedenborg as the Spirit of Truth. And it was such advent that gave Swedenborg *perception*, or, which is the same, "internal inspiration." And as Swedenborg was a representative man of this age,—the age of the Lord's Second Coming,—we have, exemplified *in him*, the great principle of the Lord's Second Coming to all men. That is to say, as the Lord came to him so He comes to all men. And as were the conditions of such coming in his case, such must be the conditions in all cases; and the conditions, as we have elsewhere shown, were certain states of mind as to regeneration. All men are in a state of perception, or of internal inspiration, from Divine Influx, according to their state as to regeneration. Such Influx is the conscious or perceptive influx of the internal sense of the Word, and is, therefore, the Lord's Second Coming; for His Second Coming is in the perceptive glory of the very spirit and life of the Word, and is in the form of the Word as Spirit and Life, or as the "Spirit of Truth" which He had promised as His Second Advent, and not in the form of any writing or any verbal statement of truth, much less in the form of the "books themselves" containing such statements.

3. *The Books only Treatises on the Advent.*

What relation then do Swedenborg's writings really bear to the Second Coming? Let me answer in the language of another: "Under the influence of this perception" [this perceptive coming of the Lord to Swedenborg] "Swedenborg wrote all those books in and by which the Lord effected His Second Coming in this world." I would amend this by saying, "all those books which TREAT of the doctrines of the New Church and thus of the Lord's Second Coming;" for this is all that can rationally be made of the superscription—"the Lord's Advent"—which was written on "all his books in the spiritual world." That is a very appropriate general title to his books; for they all relate, directly or indirectly, to the Lord's Advent.

The title of each treatise, in fact,—the “*Areana Cœlestia*,” the “*Apocalypse Revealed*,” the “*Apocalypse Explained*,” the “*True Christian Religion*,” etc.,—is as the title or subject of different chapters of a book under the more general title of “*The Lord’s Advent*.”

The following from a learned writer on this subject is perfectly marvellous,—namely, “*That the Lord’s Advent, which was first made in Swedenborg’s intellectual faculty and which imparted to it perception, was continued also into the very books which he wrote, is proved by the fact that ‘on all his books in the spiritual world was written the Lord’s Advent, and that the same he also inscribed on two copies in Holland!’*”

Has there not been some misprint in this case? According to Swedenborg’s own definition of the Lord’s Second Advent, no language could receive it or even adequately describe it, much less could any books contain it or hold it. For such Advent is an “*influx into*” and a “*perception by*” the “*intellectual faculty*.” Can there be any such influx into, and perception by, books, or words, or language of any kind? The Second Advent is entirely different from any previous coming. To the Israelites the Lord came, or rather *manifested* Himself in human language, in finited *statements* of truth, in what is called—because it is the Lord’s—Holy Writing,—Sacred Scripture. In this case the book or the language, or the verbal meaning of the book, was the Lord’s coming,—more correctly, was His *manifestation* as the means of His coming. The Israelite was not capable of receiving or of understanding any other kind of coming. It was, and it necessarily must have been, a revelation or manifestation to his EXTERNAL senses. To the men of the First Christian Church the Lord came, or rather manifested Himself, as the means of His coming, in a finite, visible humanity, as the “*Word made flesh*.” This was, relatively, an external coming. But even this coming could not have been embodied in a book or books. In its real nature, even His First Coming was and is a coming of truth

in the mind, of truth as "light" to show man his "foes," and as a "sword" to drive them out. Even this coming was not a "perception," nor does it even now result in perception, except as the "foes" are actually driven out, and man becomes a regenerated man, and thus comes into a "love of truth for truth's sake," and then the *Second Advent* takes place. But the Lord's Second Coming is an actual *perceptive presence*, a real, internal manifestation, a consciously illuminating Influx of the Lord as the "SPIRIT OF TRUTH." Nothing but a regenerated mind can receive such a manifestation of the Lord. And to all such minds the Lord does consciously manifest Himself, as abundantly shown in Swedenborg's writings. He so manifested Himself to him, which is an evidence of his high state of regeneration. There can be no proof, therefore, strong enough to show that the Lord's Advent . . . "was continued also"—after being first made in Swedenborg's intellectual faculty—"into the very books which he wrote;" and thus that "the books themselves constitute the Lord's Coming." Much less can the title of a treatise, and whether inscribed by men, angels, or the Lord, be any evidence that the treatise or book is the thing itself about which it is written, and even though it be admitted that the Lord Himself wrote the book. Even if the Lord wrote Swedenborg's books, as claimed, they could not constitute the Lord's Second Coming, according to Swedenborg's own definition of that coming.

4. *Man as an Instrument.*

But what does Swedenborg mean by what he says about his own agency in connection with the Lord's Advent? It is very plain what he means, if we are not so closely tied down to the letter as to be blind as to the real spirit of his language. Let us recur to the nature and means of prior comings or manifestations of the Lord. These have all been different,—different in their character and different in their means or instruments. "The Lord was able to assume the *human essence* without

being born as a man; and He was seen as a man in the *most ancient* times, and more recently by the prophets." A. C. 1573. He appeared to Moses and others through the medium of *angels*. It was through both *angels* and *men* that He came or manifested Himself in the form of *Sacred Scripture*. He afterwards came by means of a personal *incarnation*. But it is important to bear in mind that the assumed "*human essence*," in the first case, the mediumistic *angels*, in the second, *Sacred Scripture*, in the third, and His *Incarnation*, in the fourth, were not what constituted His real coming; but all these were for the sake of His real coming, which takes place only in the life of man, either internal or external. It was only through obedience to instruction or influence, communicated as a result of these several manifestations as mediums, that it was possible for the Lord to make His coming a real one, or anything more than a manifestation.

Swedenborg doubtless had something like the above in his mind, especially the last,—the Lord's being *born as a man* as the means of His coming,—when he spoke as he did about his own agency in what is called the Second Coming. There must be in this, as in every previous case, some finite and accommodating agency. And since the Lord could not manifest Himself in person, as previously shown by Swedenborg, "and yet He had foretold that He would come and establish [*conditutum*] a New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, it follows that He must do it by means of a man who was able, not only to receive the doctrines of this Church with his understanding, but also to publish them by the press." There must always be the means, as a precursor, a John the Baptist, before there can be the real thing. The Lord must first come or manifest Himself as an earth, before He can come or manifest Himself in the higher form of living creatures upon the earth. The soul of man must first manifest itself in the form of a natural body, before it can really come in the higher form of an angelic being. And then such comings always have been,

and, from the very nature of the case, they always must be, *gradual* comings. The tree is a long time in preparing the bud, in preparing even the first sign or manifestation of its coming, and then even, after the bud is formed, it is only by little and little, under the influence of favoring conditions, and after many progressive changes, that the tree really comes in its ripened fruit,—in an “image and likeness,” that is to say, of itself. This is so in everything. There is no coming, of whatever kind, or in whatever degree, Divine or natural, that takes place “once for all,” as said by another of the Lord’s Second Coming “through Emanuel Swedenborg.” If the Lord’s revelation of Himself as Sacred Scripture, or His Incarnation, and the consequent subjugation of the hells, had not resulted in some form of life, either external or internal, in obedience to the laws of life, there would have been no real coming on the earth in either case. It is in man’s reforming and regenerating life, as the result of obedience in each case to the lessons of the precursory manifestation or revelation, and in that alone, that the Lord’s real comings take place. Sacred Scripture reveals the laws of *external* life. So far as man obeys these laws, as laws of God, God comes to him, but comes as *natural truth*. Swedenborg’s writings *explain* Sacred Scripture, and in doing so reveal the principles of *internal*, spiritual, and heavenly life. Now, so far as man lives according to these principles, he becomes a *regenerated* man, and the Lord’s coming is an internal, conscious, illuminating Influx of Divine Truth, such as was never experienced before.

5. *The Writings only an Explanation.*

Thus it is plain what Swedenborg means when he says: “The Lord’s Second Advent takes place by a man,” etc. We see that it is of such a nature that it could not take place by means like those of any former coming. Such means had done their work, and had done precisely the work that was needful for them to do; and at each time there were *different* means, be-

cause there was different work to do ; and there was different work to do, because humanity was in a different state. More *Sacred Scripture*, at the time of the Incarnation, would have been of no use ; and a *personal* manifestation would not have been adapted to the phase of humanity *now* developing. What is *now* needed, it is plain, is precisely the *rational exposition* or revelation of truth made, by explanation, in Swedenborg's writings. For the Lord to "come in His glory," is for Him to come *perceptively* in the internal man. And to effect such perceptive coming, man needs to be instructed about the *internal man*, and about the means of bringing it into such a state that the Lord *can* come in it. This is precisely what Swedenborg's writings are for and what they do. And thus we may see, and see plainly, exactly what and how much is meant by the Lord's Second Advent "taking place," or being "*effected*," as the Latin word *fiat* is sometimes translated, "by a man." This Advent actually took place in Swedenborg. It was a matter of personal experience with him. He had the perception,—the internal inspiration,—which was an evidence of—which, in fact, itself constituted—the Lord's Advent in his mind. The actual *perception* constituted such coming ; for the Lord is always actually present in man's internal man, as really and necessarily so as the soul is in the body ; and what is called the Second Advent is the *conscious perception*—as a result of a change not in the Lord, but in the mind itself—that He is there, and the consequent illustration or internal inspiration.

Now, what did Swedenborg do as the result of such coming in his own mind ? Did he pour the "Lord's Advent" into his Writings ? Did such "conscious perception of the Lord's presence flow down from his mind, through his pen, on to the paper under his hand ? By what other process could such a coming have been "continued also into the very books which he wrote" ? We can conceive of the Lord's glorifying the instrument of His First Advent, but not of His glorifying inorganic books, or words even. Will some one please explain

the process by which such a marvel can take place, as the transference—or “continuance,” if he prefers—of “perception,” which “is nothing else than a Divine Advent, or Divine Influx into the intellectual faculty,” *into books?* No, no; this was not what Swedenborg did. On the contrary, in his state of reception of the Lord and thus of perception, he simply gave those “EXPLANATIONS,” made those verbal revelations of Divine Truths,—made them as far as verbal statements could make them,—by which, so far as they should be *heeded and obeyed* by men, the Lord could effect His real Second Coming by *perception* in *them*, as He had done and was doing in Swedenborg.

Such, then, are Swedenborg’s writings in relation to the Second Advent: they are that Advent only in the very external sense of *teachings about* it, and thus of means to it; in like manner as the Incarnation was the First Advent only in the sense of a preparation for it and as an instrument of it. And this is all that Swedenborg claims that his Writings are in their relation to the Second Advent.

6. *General Principles.*

The Second Coming of the Lord is only a certain specific coming. There have been other comings. To understand the real nature of any one coming, we need to have some true idea of certain general principles relating to all of the Lord’s comings.

And first we need to have some true idea of God in His absolute nature, or at least in His practical relation to us as our Creator and Sustainer,—some true idea of *what* God really is and *where* He really is in His relation to us. When we think of Him as creating, or as the Cause, and thus origin and Father whence all being is, we cannot think of Him otherwise than as LIFE, than as everywhere and absolutely present—omnipresent—LIFE, LIFE which contains in it all the possibilities of all that is and all that is to be; for it is Life and only life that *creates*,—life in the seed that creates or evolves a

plant; life in the egg that creates or evolves a bird, animal, or man.

It is *as the Word*,—the Word as Spirit and Life,—which is, as it were, an effluence from God,—that God is related to all that is; like as it is by its radiance that the sun is related to the earth, or to all that is outside of itself. As elsewhere stated, the Word is, so to speak, *God at work*, God in the very act and process of creating or evolving from Himself, just as the radiance is the sun at work.

All that is, and whether spiritual or natural, is a *coming* of the Lord; and this means simply a *manifestation* of Him, and in a somewhat similar sense to that in which the body and all that belongs to it, and all that takes place through it or by means of it, is a coming or manifestation of the man within the body.

* These comings of the Lord are of two kinds, *ordinary* and *extraordinary*. The ordinary comings or manifestations are creations or evolutions from the Divine into suns, earths, plants, animals, and men. The extraordinary comings are in verbal expressions,—Sacred Scripture,—the Incarnation, and at length in explanations of these.

All these comings take place, *never* from *arbitrary will* or purpose, but always, as it were, spontaneously and exactly according to *conditions*, like as the primordial germ—whose inmost life and being is from the Divine—is evolved, or “comes,” in the form of a plant or animal exactly according to conditions.

All *extraordinary* comings take place through the *agency* of *men*, or of personal, finite humanity. This was the case when the Lord as the Word, that is to say, as living Truth, was clothed in human language, and was thus finited or formulated down into *verbal truth*; and it was the case when the Word was, for another purpose, or in other conditions of humanity, “*made flesh*,” or was clothed with a finite, personal humanity.

* The rest of this chapter is an extract from the author's published lecture on this subject.

7. *The Word unveiled.*

Now, these extraordinary comings, let us remember, have been as the Word *clothed* or *veiled*, and because of the extraordinary condition of mankind. But since about the middle of the last century, mankind, it is plain to the student of history, have been coming into a different condition, and one in which a different coming or manifestation of the Lord has been taking place. This coming is, in its real nature, an *opening* or *unveiling* of the Word.

The *first step* of this unveiling, it is plain, on a little reflection, must have been in the form of an *explanation*. For mankind had lost all knowledge of the Word above the mere natural or literal meaning. They did not know that Sacred Scripture was the Word *veiled*, concealed from view, like the sun above the clouds, and so veiled in accommodation to man's state of diseased spiritual vision. They had lost the language in which it was written. They were reading even symbol and allegory as literal truth. The "*serpent*" that tempted and overcame the woman was to them a real animal; "*Noah's flood*," a flood of material waters; the "*whale*" that swallowed Jonah, a *bona fide* fish; the "*devil*" that took Christ upon a "pinnacle of the temple," and "upon an exceeding high mountain," a real personal devil, and the like. But a part of mankind were coming into a state of rational manhood thought, and thus to see, though dimly at first, that all this and more was irrational. And this was the case with the best of men then living. And they "mourned" over their condition. These were what are called, in Matthew, the "tribes of the earth." They had had great reverence for their Scriptures as the Word of God. But now, from the very fact of their somewhat advanced, more rational condition, they were losing confidence in them. In fact, the Lord, as in the dim, early dawn, was coming to them in the form of a clearer and more rational perception of truth, even though not of a high order.

How plain it is that what was most especially needed in that peculiar condition of mankind was an *explanation of Sacred Scripture* as being only the "garment," or only the formulated statement of truth; whilst the real Truth was veiled within such garment or statement as the sunlight behind the clouds! The men of that age were in the darkness as of midnight, and of a midnight without even stars to mitigate the darkness. And this means that they were destitute not only of truth, but of even a *knowledge* of truth. For, as the sun is a symbol of love and the moon of truth, so the stars are symbols of knowledge. And not only was the 'sun "darkened" and the moon had "failed to give her light," but the stars even "had fallen." And this means that, in that dark, wicked age of the Church, there was not only no love or charity, and hence no perception of truth among men, but that there was no knowledge even of truth or of spiritual principles.

8. *Knowledge First Needed.*

How plain, let me repeat, that what was needed by those who were in a state to somewhat realize their condition and to make an effort to rise out it, was *knowledge!* For as love or charity is the first thing to perish in a degenerating people, and truth or a perception of truth next and as a consequence, and a knowledge of truth last, so in a regenerating people, in the beginning, a *knowledge* of truth is the first thing needed, and it is the first thing also that *can be* restored. Spiritually blind men *can be instructed* in the way before it is possible for them to *see* the way, or whilst real truth would be even darkness rather than light to them. And how beautifully significant the fact that truth, or a perception of truth, cannot exist without love, as a sun, to shine down, as it were, upon the earth of the mind; just as the moon, as a luminary, cannot exist without the sun; whilst knowledges of truth may be intellectually acquired before a man is in a state to *perceive* truth, and may be acquired independently of that state;

just as the stars can shine independently of the larger luminaries !

9. *Kind of Knowledge.*

If knowledge, then, was what those people needed who, in that "midnight of the ages," were "looking for the morning," the question is, what *kind* of knowledge? what kind, that men had not already received and perverted? what kind, I mean, did the *then coming*, rationally thinking man *need*? We know something of his genius and character. I am speaking of the *religious* man, and religious, not in any limited ecclesiastical sense. I am speaking of the man who wants to understand himself, and understand his relation to others and to his God, or the great Father and sustainer of his being. I am speaking of the man who has a sort of vague intuition that human beings do not belong to time and space *alone*, but that they live right on and forever, after leaving this world; of the man who has great reverence for the Bible,—perhaps a more or less superstitious regard for it,—as containing, with much valuable instruction and some evidences of its Divine origin, more that is mystical and incomprehensible, and also some, as interpreted *ex cathedra*, that is most repulsive to his reason. In a word, I am speaking of the rationally thinking man who is seeking for truth, and not scientific truth alone, but spiritual truth as well. What kind of knowledge above all other kinds does such a man want and need? Is it not plain that it is the scientific and rational opening of that *casket* which has been so long held and valued, but valued, not as a *casket*, but as itself constituting a most precious treasure, and without knowing anything of the priceless jewels within,—without, perhaps, even suspecting that such jewels were there? Is it not plain that an *explanation* of the Bible, an explanation of it from a knowledge of the language in which it was written, would give the kind of knowledge which humanity was then, by little and little, coming into a state to understand and be benefited by?

10. *The Man Needed as an Instrument.*

Now is it not plain that such explanation, such opening or unveiling of the Word, was, so far, a new coming of the Lord, but coming or manifestation, like all the preceding comings, *as the Word?* And is it not plain that such coming, or the coming in that limited, external sense as an explanation of the Word, must take place through the instrumentality of a *man*, as had been the case with all the preceding ones?

But who in that dark age could make that explanation? Certainly no other than he who had experienced that coming in his own person; certainly no other than he who had acquired the requisite knowledge, and was, at the same time, recipient of the light. And such, in that age, would be a most extraordinary man. Well, every new and great development in human affairs has been inaugurated by some extraordinary man, by some one far in advance of his age. And so it was in this case.

11. *Style of Sacred Scripture.*

To explain the Word, it was necessary, first, to understand the *principles* according to which it was written. And what were these principles? The Word as Sacred Scripture was written in a *Divine style*. It was the Divine thought, rather, the Divine Truth, Divine Light evolved. Sacred Scripture is the lowest *verbal* form of the Word, just as nature is the lowest *material* form. There must, therefore, be a like relation existing between *Sacred Scripture* and the Word, as between *nature* and the Word. And to understand the former relation we need to understand the latter. The relation between nature and the Word is that of cause and effect. Hence there is a correspondence of nature to the Word,—or to the Lord as the Word,—as of an effect to its cause. Sacred Scripture, being virtually written by the Lord, was written according to the principles of such *correspondence*. It could

not have been otherwise. For the Word must descend into ultimates,—and whether in the form of verbal teachings or material objects,—*according to its own laws* or the principles of its own nature, just as is the case with the potential germ of the seed in becoming a developed plant or tree.

12. *Science of Correspondences.*

Men once were in intuitive perception of these principles; they intuitively saw the relation of natural things as effects to spiritual principles as causes. And though, by degeneration, they, at length, became incapable of such perception, they still for a long time retained a *knowledge* of such relation, under the form of what was called the “Science of Correspondences;” but which Science, as mankind became more corrupt, was at length lost; and the world has been ignorant of it ever since, and, as a consequence, ignorant of the true interpretation of Sacred Scripture. Now, therefore, to be able to explain truly Sacred Scripture, a knowledge of this “lost Science” was indispensable. Who could acquire such knowledge? Who but he whose natural tastes would lead him to an investigation of the laws of God in nature? Who but the devout scientist and philosopher? And he even could “know only in part.” He even, however learned in all that belongs to nature, could see only the material body, as it were, of those grand principles of correspondence, which, like Jacob’s ladder, rest on the earth, but whose upper part is lost in the clouds. To see the “angels ascending and descending,” it was necessary to have the vision opened so as to see the upper part. To see the soul in the body and thus the relation of the two to each other, it was necessary to have the spiritual, as well as the scientific and philosophical vision quickened. And this implies a high state of regeneration. There is no other law by which a man can come into a state of spiritual illumination, and thus of “internal inspiration” or “revelation from perception,” than by *regeneration*. It is only when a man

has arrived at that high state that he can see both ends of the ladder, both ends—the soul and the body—of those grand principles of correspondence by which the Word was written; so that the thoughts, like the angels on the ladder, could ascend and descend and thus explore the *causes* as well as their effects. It is only as a man is in the very light itself of the Word as “living truth,” that he can really understand and explain the Word in its form of verbal truth or Sacred Scripture. And to be in such light, is virtually to be “instructed by the Lord,” is, in fact, to have the Lord practically dwelling in you as the very life of your life and light of your light.

13. *The Expounder.*

It was such a man, a man thus qualified, thus highly regenerated, that was required to “open the Word,” and to do so by rediscovering and restoring the long lost key to its interpretation. Swedenborg, as we have seen, rose to that high state.

He had a thirst, a taste, and a capacity for those very kinds of knowledge without which he would have lacked the basis on which the science of correspondences rests. He was equally a searcher for the laws of God in Sacred Scripture as in nature. And he was not only a searcher but a doer. It was to the fact that he was a *doer* that he was indebted for his high state of regeneration and consequent illumination, without which he would have been like other scientific men, in the light, not of causes, but of effects only. In mere scientific light he never could have discovered the relation of natural effects, or the things of nature, to spiritual causes, and he never could have received the spiritual light, the instruction or illumination from the Lord,—from the Lord as the Word,—while he was reading its letter, to enable him to understand and explain that relation. He must not only have the facts in nature, but the light to shine on them, before he could see their spiritual significance. And though regeneration would

have given him the light, yet without the scientific facts, without a knowledge of the natural principles, the light would have been like that of the sun on deserts of rocks and sands. The angels could not aid him, for, though regenerated men, and therefore in the very light itself of the Word, they were without the ultimate principles. The Lord only could instruct him, but the Lord, let it be distinctly understood, *as the Word*, thus as the influx of living, Divine light. Swedenborg had laid up in the grand store-house of his own memory, as the result of his own vast labor and experiences, all the knowledges requisite, when illuminated by the Word as spirit and life, to enable him to fulfil his mission as expounder of the internal sense of Sacred Scripture. It is plain that he needed, and could receive, aid from no other source than the Lord alone, but the Lord as the all-illuminating, living Truth itself. He stood alone, therefore, with the Lord, as His chosen servant for a certain mission, just as the angels do, just as all regenerated men do, and each as the Lord's chosen servant for a specific work. He wrote as the Lord dictated to him, but dictated, not in words, not in formulated principles, but in "revelation from perception." The Lord gave him simply illuminating Truth; he by his own rational faculties, as thus illuminated, finited that truth, as it were, into verbal expressions, into specific doctrines or teachings, according to his own wonderfully developed understanding. It is plain that the influx from the Divine into his mind must have been most powerful, but thus powerful, because his mind had become so open and receptive, and because his regenerated will had become so perfectly subordinate to the Divine will,—as is the case with all regenerated men and angels; and it is plain that his rational faculties must have been correspondingly quickened and strengthened; so that he wrote in no sense or manner whatever, as a passive instrument or tool in the hands of the Lord. And let me repeat here, and with, if possible, greater emphasis, what has been said before,

Swedenborg was never more himself, and never was what he wrote more his own, at the same time that it was so purely the Lord's, than when thus so completely the Lord's servant. His faculties were never in so intense activity, and he was never so completely in possession of them as his own, as when receiving most purely and powerfully the Divine influx; and the measure of his manhood was never so great, and never so distinctively his own. For it must be always true, that the more of the Lord there is in a man, the more fully and perfectly he is a man, and is himself.

14. *What Makes Man Man.*

It is the Divine that *makes* man man; for the Divine is itself man in his highest essence and cause. The more purely and fully, and thus powerfully present the Divine is in man, therefore, the more fully and perfectly he is a man. Man is, therefore, no true servant of the Lord, but in proportion as he is fully and intensely a man; and this means, but in proportion as he acts in freedom and according to his own, not another's, not the Lord's, rationality.

15. *His own Writings.*

Swedenborg's writings, then, are his own writings, and in the fullest conceivable sense of the phrase his own. They are so fully his own, because he was so completely a servant of the Lord. If they are not his own, then he was nothing but an instrument; he was not a servant. My pen is only an instrument of my thoughts, not their servant. There is an infinite difference between an instrument and a servant. What Swedenborg received from the Lord was Divine, was the Lord Himself as the Word, as the living truth; but the formulation of that truth into finite principles, and the expression of those principles in language, was purely the work of the freest and intensest action of his own rational faculties; the Lord had nothing to do with such formulation and expression, further

than to fill him *as a man*,—just as He fills all men, each exactly according to his measure,—and to thus give him power to act as a man. It is because Swedenborg was in a condition to act so completely from the Lord, that what he did was so completely his own. For regeneration, thus a more pure and more perfect reception of the Divine, does not make a man less, but more himself, more a man in the image and likeness of God, and thus more perfectly a servant of God. And herein lies the wonderful adaptation of these Writings to the man of this new age; it is in the fact that they are the Writings of a MAN, a *man of the age*, a man so completely a man, and thus so perfectly a servant of the Lord.

Such was the man, and such are the Writings of the man; what is their relation to that extraordinary advent or manifestation of the Lord which is now taking place?

Such advent actually took place in Swedenborg. The Lord came in great power and glory to him,—rather *in* him,—but the great power and glory of Himself *as the Word*, thus of Himself as the living Truth, living Light. He so came or so manifested Himself, because Swedenborg's mind was in such a condition that He could so come. And as He came to Swedenborg, precisely so has He since been coming, and is He going to continue to come, to all men, but to each in power and glory according to his condition and measure. We may regard Swedenborg as van-courier and exemplar of His coming, as in a sense inaugurating and visibly ushering in the new age. We may regard him as actually receiving the Lord, the Lord as the Word and as the Word in its “spirit and life,” as, indeed, the “Spirit of Truth,” into his own mind, and then, by his writings, preparing the way, or showing the way, by which others could receive Him. He did this *by his writings*. Thus, in a certain external sense his writings are the Advent of the Lord; they are so, in so far as they open or unveil Him as the Word to our understanding,—in so far as they show by *explanation* the internal sense of the Word, or its real nature

as spirit and life, or as the Lord Himself. In this showing we *intellectually* see a higher manifestation, a more interior coming of the Lord than man ever saw before. But it is plain that no human language, no verbal statement or explanation about the Lord, can bring Him to us in His "great power and glory." This, from the very nature of the case, must be an *internal, personal experience*, and of each individual, and only as he puts away his sins and thus renders his mind consciously receptive of the Lord; and in His coming, not "with observation," not with any outward show, but as the very "Spirit of Truth." For this, namely, the "SPIRIT OF TRUTH," was to be, according to His promise, that "other Comforter," that next coming or manifestation of the Lord.

16. *Why and When the Lord Comes.*

If now we understand the real nature of the Lord as the very living Word itself, that is to say, as the very "Spirit of Truth" itself, in His Second Coming, if we also understand the relation of man, and especially of the one man, Swedenborg, to that coming, we are prepared to see and see clearly why He did not come before, and why He came so soon. For all of the Lord's comings, as we have seen, have been simply *manifestations* of Himself, and have been owing, not at all to any change in Him,—any change in what He was or did,—but entirely to change in recipient humanity. The state of humanity has always been the occasion, and also the measure of His comings.

17. *Humanity in the Middle of the Last Century.*

Humanity was in a terrible condition about the middle of the last century,—especially the ecclesiastical part of it. It was the midnight of the church. Why a midnight? why is there a midnight of the day? is it because the sun has turned from the earth, or the earth from the sun? And why does not the morning come sooner? is it because the sun tarries?

is it not rather because the hemisphere lingers in its own shadow? And does the Lord turn away from mankind? Never! How could He do it? He is to the world of mind what the sun is to the world of matter. And can the sun turn itself away from earth? Can it even hide itself from earth? can it withhold, for an instant, anything it has to give? is it not, on the contrary, from its very nature, eternally shining and in the fulness of its glory? It is man that turns himself from the Lord. But for mind or spirit to *turn*, is for *state to change*. For God is not in space *without* you, but is *within* you. And you turn from Him, when you pervert the good and truth which you receive from Him, that is to say, when you live a selfish and evil life. While you are living this kind of life, you are like the earth at night turned from the sun. The appearance is, that the Lord has left *you*; but, on the contrary, *you* have left *Him*. Do you not see, then, why the Lord delays His coming to you? Do you not see that your own state makes it impossible for Him to come? Do you not see that He can never come but as you *change*, but as you cease to do evil and learn to do good; precisely as the sun cannot come to earth, but as the earth changes, but as it turns itself round to the sun. How plain, then, the reason why the Lord did not come sooner! Man was perverting and profaning the Word as formulated, verbal truth: how could he receive Him, then, as the "Spirit of Truth?" The wonder is, when we come to understand the real nature of the case, not why the Lord did not come sooner, but why He came so soon, —why He came or could come, at all, in that dark age.

18. *Why the Lord Came When He Did.*

Why, then, did the Lord come so soon? Because it was the "fulness of time," that is, of state; because there was a crisis in the condition of humanity, and a consequent change. Every disease has its crisis. And this was the condition of humanity,—it was diseased. And the disease had come to its

crisis or consummation ; it had spent its force, had done its worst. "Prodigal" humanity had gone to its extremest endurance, even to filling itself "with the husks that the swine did eat." The disease must now prove fatal, unless its terrible severity should bring into action some rallying energies which had, as it were, been lying dormant. "And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." It was midnight ; like the sun at that crisis of the night, the Lord was farthest away ; humanity was in the blackest state of spiritual darkness ; its evil lusts, like the taskmasters of Egypt, had become very exacting, and very oppressive in their burdens. But all men were not alike. The very extremes of suffering had, in some cases, brought out and brought into action redeeming qualities. *They* had lamps, and also had some oil in their vessels with their lamps. *They* were "looking for the morning." There was in them the "tender branch of the fig-tree putting forth leaves," sweet tokens of coming summer. *All* in that wicked age were not *buried* in the darkness of the dark valley ; some were groping for the acclivity of the mountain, where they could *begin* to climb up towards the bright sunshine at the top. Such persons were in a state to see their sad condition and mourn over it. They saw their destitution ; they were conscious that their riotous living had brought them into that state ; they knew they were feeding on husks, and yearned for better, spiritual food. They longed for the day, and were in effort to put away their sins, that the day might come. They revered and obeyed the Word as natural, or verbal truth, and were thus coming into a state to see and love the Word as the Spirit of Truth. And, so far, this was a second coming of the Lord to *them*. These and such persons were, as it were, on the mountain-tops of humanity, to receive first the tokens of coming day. The Lord came to them, though in the dim distance, because He *could* come, or rather came so soon, because they were in a state to receive Him ; just as the sun

comes so soon or comes first to the natural mountain-tops because they can first receive him. The Lord could not help coming in that midnight of universal humanity, any more than the sun can help ascending towards the morning when it has passed the nadir; any more than the ripened bud can help opening into a leaf or flower when it feels the warmth of spring. The Lord would have come centuries sooner as the Spirit of Truth, as the Word unveiled, instead of as the Word veiled, if humanity had only furnished the conditions which alone could have rendered it possible for Him to so come.

19. *Results of Second Advent.*

But the results of this Second Coming, this coming as the Spirit of Truth, as living light in the mind,—what are they? We can measure them best by contrast. The Lord's prior comings,—comings as the living truth formulated into verbal truth, or Sacred Scripture,—were followed by comparatively *external* results, a change in the object and external forms of worship, and, to some extent, a change in external life. His coming as the Word "*made flesh,*" released man from bondage, so that he could return to obedience to the commandments as laws of life. This coming also *told* him that his real foes were not without, were not other nations and other people, but within his own being, the household of his own mind. The coming *now* taking place as the Spirit of Truth, as the living light actually flowing into the mind and illuminating it, is to him as the restoration of sight to the blind; it enables him to *see* what was before only *described* to him in *words*. And this is a wonderful difference; it is as the difference between brightly shining light revealing to your eye the whole landscape, in all the symmetry and beauty of form and color, and having that landscape described to you; it is really the difference between a mind actually illuminated from within, and a mind only verbally instructed from without. The Spirit of Truth, the Word unveiled, comes into the mind through an

“inner door,” and as living light; this is the door at which Christ as the Word stands and knocks; and for us to open which is to put away our sins, and thus remove the darkness which prevents His coming in unto us. The Word as Sacred Scripture comes to us through an *outer* door, but not as light, but as verbal precepts *about* light and about life. A man with the Word as the Spirit of Truth shining in his mind, is in intuitive perception, thus in “internal inspiration.” And the results of such perception are marvellous. We see them, at the present time, or in the present phase of developing humanity, in every department of human thought. It is this that makes this age different from all other ages. Swedenborg, as shown by his life and his works, was a most wonderful exemplar of this kind of coming of the Lord.

Of course, the Lord as the Spirit of Truth, or living light itself, manifests Himself differently in different degrees of the mind, or in the different states or stages of regeneration, and in different kinds and forms of mind. Results of such influx of light are as varied as the minds themselves are which are recipients of the light; and such variety is infinite. It is just as it is in nature. The sunlight flowing into one plant, into one flower, leaf or bud, manifests itself differently from what it does while flowing into another. And so it is also in the different stages of forming and ripening fruit. There is such infinite variety in nature, not because there is any difference in the inflowing life, but entirely because of the difference of reciprocity of such life. Just so it is in mind or spirit. The manifested results of the Lord’s coming must necessarily always be according to the tastes, and capacities, and character, and occupation of the man. They must be of one kind with the inventor; of another with the scientist; of another with the artist; of another with the novelist, the poet, the statesman, the theologian, and so on. It is from the light flowing into the mind as the Spirit of Truth, that we have in this age such wonderful developments in machinery, in litera-

ture, in science and philosophy, in all the fine arts, as well as in religion,—in all the appliances and conditions and circumstances of human life, in fact. The sewing-machine, the railroad, the telegraph, the telephone, the steam-engine, and the rest, with all their wonderful mechanisms and capabilities, could not possibly have been the result of any other coming of the Lord than as the Spirit of Truth. This kind of coming warms all the faculties of the mind into life and energy. It quickens and sharpens and intensifies the perceptions. It is as the summer's sun to the fields and meadows; it changes what was before cold, dead and barren, into blooming life and beauty. The mind at length becomes a paradise, and the world without, a glorious living outcome and thus representative image of the world within. All nature, and even the commonest affairs of life, even the humblest duties, become, though in a sense unchanged, transformed and transfigured and all aglow with living beauty. The Son of Man,—God as the living Light,—is seen “coming in the clouds of heaven,” and not only so, not only in the letter of Sacred Scripture, but in every natural object also. In the fulness of this coming, everything will be seen to be alive with His presence, as the lovely human face is seen to be alive with the intelligent, loving spirit behind or within the face. For all that is, will then be seen to be, as it were, and as it really is, the manifested face of the Divine. God will not then be “afar off,” but always “at hand,” and always speaking to us, always giving us lessons of love and wisdom, and from all that is within us and from all that is around us. All things will be transparent of Him, as the all-pervading, loving Spirit of Truth. As with Moses when he came to the “mountain of God, to Horeb,” so with loving, rational, regenerated humanity of this New Jerusalem age, as it rises to its spiritual mountain state; not only the “bush will burn with fire,” but every tree, every plant, every hill and mountain and valley, every landscape, every flowing stream, every rain-drop, every pebble even, “will

burn" with the presence of God, with the presence of God as the very Spirit of Truth, will glow with living fire, and yet will not be "consumed." And all this will be, not from any transfiguration without, but from a transfiguration within; not from a coming of the Lord with "observation," with a "lo, here," or "lo, there," but from a coming of the Lord "within you."

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST AND SWEDENBORG.*

1. *What Christ is to Man.*

CHRIST says, "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

Christ our Master or Teacher! What is really meant by this? Who and what is Christ? What is really His relation to us? What does He do for us, and how does He do it? The thinking man wants answers to these questions, and he must have answers, or be of those who are accounted as unbelievers.

We have many things to unlearn before we can truly learn who or what Christ was and is. He is infinitely more than the loving and self-sacrificing being whom we see, in our imaginations, as living on this earth a few centuries ago; a being with finite and measured shape and outline. That, as then conceived of, was the Christ for that dark age, for men too carnal-minded to conceive of Him or have Him revealed to them in His higher, true character. That was the Christ whom men have learned to love, *because He loved them*; just as "sinners love those who love them." He was their Rabbi because He personally taught them and cared for them. In this, and by His pure and loving life, thus by His example, He was a "bright and shining Light." Since that dark age, He has been loved and adored for what He then did for men, and because,

* This chapter is from the author's printed discourse.

as a result of what He did, He gave them hope of a happy hereafter, because He was their Savior.

All this is well, until men rise out of this low, selfish, mere carnal-minded state. Such men have found their Christ "*risen.*" He now comes to them, as He promised that He would do, as the "SPIRIT OF TRUTH." And such men now understand what is meant by Christ AS THE WORD, and how it was the Word which was, "in the beginning, with God, and was God, and made all things," that was "made flesh." To such men Christ is now all lovable and adorable, not because He has loved and saved *them*, but because He is, in Himself, in His own real nature, lovable and adorable.

But how is this? We shall know how it is when we come to know what is really meant by the Word, and thus by Christ as the Word. The Word is, in its real nature, LIFE AND LIGHT; "in Him [the Word] was Life and the Life was the Light of men." How full of meaning! and how unmistakable the meaning! The Word, or—which is the same—God, as "*Life,*" creates. And is not this so? does anything, so far as we can see, come into being but from the operation of life,—the plant, the animal, men? The Word as *Light* shows the *way of life.* O how wonderful! Is not Christ, the Word, then, in Himself, and for what He is in Himself, lovable and adorable?

And now how plain what is meant by Christ—the Word—as "*Master*" or Teacher. He is the "LIGHT," and this means that He is the LIVING TRUTH,—not verbal truth, but truth that internally *flows*, as it were, into the mind, shines in it and illuminates it.

Such is Christ as Rabbi, or Master, in the present—which is the New Jerusalem—age of the world. He is the Christ in His now second coming, not personally, but as the "SPIRIT of Truth," and coming, therefore, not outside, but within the mind itself of men.

2. *The Man of the New Jerusalem.*

There is a great difference between the character of the coming, or New Jerusalem phase of developing humanity, and that of all preceding ages. This difference is as that between ripening manhood and the preceding stages of infancy, childhood, and youth. And we meet with practical illustrations of this difference every day, especially among religionists, some of whom are perfectly satisfied with what is *taught*; they have unbounded respect for the "Fathers," in other words, for the "authorities." They regard themselves as all right if they think and believe as the Fathers thought and believed,—and no matter if the Fathers did live and form their opinions and creeds in a less mature and a darker age of human intellect. And there are some possessing these traits of character, even among professed believers in the doctrines of the New Church. Such persons refer everything to Swedenborg. The first question with them is not, is it true? does it look reasonable? but, what does Swedenborg say on the subject? is it in accordance with his teachings? If so, this settles it; they do not need to think any more about it; their minds are at rest; they are perfectly satisfied. But you talk with them about it, and you will see that they have really got nothing, nothing that has entered into the real fibre of their own mind. Nothing that they have is theirs; it is but borrowed material which they have taken only within the walls of their external memory. They can, perhaps, tell you all that Swedenborg says on the subject, and they are proud of their knowledge, though such men have very little that is their own. They have a plenty of words, a plenty of borrowed thoughts, but little or no real *light*. Their intellectual stores are as borrowed grain in the sack, and not as bread digested, appropriated, and entering into the very substance of the tissues. Such men lack the most essential elements of the real New Jerusalem. They simply *know*; they do not possess, do not *own*. They are mere Swedenborgians,

as others are Calvinists, Lutherans, or Wesleyans. They differ from these mainly in having a different Rabbi. They may be good and true men, but not men of real manhood. They are the last lingering remnants of an age that is passing away. They are not, in the real fibre of their nature, of the real New Jerusalem.

With another class of men the case is entirely different. They are men of the New Age. They possess its genius and imbibe its spirit. They love its manhood character. They have more respect for an infidel who is a MAN, than for a blind believer who is not a man. No mere authority, but the one only Master, is authority for them. Everything must be brought to the test and approval of their own thought before they can believe it. That another has thought it out and believed, is no satisfying element or condition of faith for them. Their belief must have its basis within their own minds.

Such is the character of the men of the real New Jerusalem. And such men must, of necessity, remain irreligious and unbelieving, until they can see something more rational than the religious systems of the past, and until the Sacred Scriptures are so explained as to be relieved of so much that, in the letter, is an offence to the sensibilities of a pure, loving heart, and that does such violence to the unsophisticated intuitions of reason and common sense. Such men can never believe that the Sacred Scriptures are of Divine Origin, until they are satisfied that they are capable of a very different explanation from what has been given them by the "Fathers." For men of this character believe only as they themselves see. They take nothing requiring intellectual thought on mere authority. They belong to an age whose blindly trusting childhood and easily misguided youthhood are passing away; an age in which humanity is fast advancing into its rational, Godlike manhood. And this is a humanity which must, *for itself*, examine and weigh and judge.

3. *Light of Experience.*

And is not this the genius of the present and coming age of the world? And do we not see this manifesting itself in every department of human thought? The dust-covered tomes of olden time are now taken from their alcoves, not, as formerly, as *authority*, but as gratulatory evidence, by contrast, of modern progress, or to test the degree of present advancement. The number of those is now rapidly increasing, who resort, not alone to books, not to authoritative teachers, but to free rational thought, or to the revelations that are made to such thought for instruction. For the true light comes, not through books, or teachers, or Rabbis, or fathers; but it comes as the result of the exercise of free, rational, regenerated manhood thought. And, inasmuch as this thought is excited by love, or is, as it were, love itself thinking, the light is brighter and brighter as the love is purer, thus as the mind becomes more perfectly regenerated.

And this kind of mind is becoming more and more characteristic of the age in which we live. If you now ask him whose mind partakes of the real genius of this age, whether certain new doctrines are correct, he will not go to some Rabbi, some favorite authority; he will not first consult some authority, as Calvin, or Doddridge, or Wesley, or Swedenborg; on the contrary, he will first take the question into the crucible of his own thought; he will first open the windows of his own mind towards heaven; he will do this by that kind of inquiry which alone can render his mind receptive of the light of heaven. If a man looks to others for truth, he gets only verbal truth; if he looks within—Christ is within—he gets living truth, that truth which illuminates the mind, and thus gives it keener perceptions and a truer understanding. If such a person goes to authorities, it is to those whose opinions and teachings he has found to be in harmony with both reason and revelation, and who have drunk from the stream, perhaps,

higher up towards its Divine fountain, or who have received light into more highly regenerated minds than his own. And he goes to them, not as "masters," but as "brethren;" not as to one who himself, like Christ, gives light, but who, like himself, receives light, and from the same Divine Source whence all receive it.

4. *Oracles.*

And this is the use of "brethren," of an oracle, or of one who speaks with more or less of authority because from the light, and thus with the authority, of his use or calling. Yet do not mistake him for your *master*; he does not give you the *truth* which you receive; he has none to give you; he is only a recipient, like yourself, though he receives, it may be, into a purer vessel and in larger measure, and you therefore regard him an elder brother.

And such is Swedenborg to those who, like him, are of the real New Jerusalem. He is an elder brother. Moreover, he speaks from the light of a peculiar use or office. We regard his writings as true and as of the very highest of finite authority. And yet they are not our Master. They are, at most, only true *verbal statements* of truth. The Lord *as the Word*, thus as the truth, is the only Light, the only "true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The Lord as such "true light"—and light actually shining in the mind—is the only acknowledged Master of the real man of the New Jerusalem. Swedenborg's writings are only *explanations* of truth. No mere verbal forms of truth, however much cause we may have for confidence in them, can be acknowledged as master by the real Godlike man of this and the coming age. Such writings give no real light to the mind. They only show the way to the Light. The Sacred Scriptures even, *in the letter*, or as mere verbal statements of truth, do not give any real living light; they are the basis and continent, and thus tempering mediums of the Light, as the clouds are of the sunlight. And thought, grounded in love, is the only vessel into

which the true light, or Christ, the Word, as the true light, can flow. When you read Sacred Scripture, you get from the letter only verbal *precepts* of life; you do not get from the letter *living truth*; but if you read devoutly, with your thoughts grounded in love and charity, living truth as living light flows into the mind; your mind receives the very "spirit of truth," or the very "spirit and life" of the Word, of which the letter is only the outer garment. The light thus received—and which is Christ your master—manifests itself in the mind, in truer thoughts, keener perceptions, brighter intuitions, and clearer convictions. You get an influx of no such light from any other writings. The truth of all other writings is measured out to you simply by what they *say*. You may be *informed*, but not *enlightened*, by them. It is only Christ in His second coming as the "spirit of truth" that can really enlighten the mind. Swedenborg's writings are, at best, only verbal truth. They have nothing in them above the letter, as the Sacred Scriptures have. They are in no sense, then, our Master. Our Master is truth as unshaded light shining in the mind, and truth as *we* see it, not as somebody else sees it and tells us about it. Swedenborg—as every truly regenerated man does—saw by Christ as the very spirit of truth; but he did not give *us* that spirit of truth; he did not write it; he could no more write that kind of truth than you can write the sunlight. He only described it. Thus we see the infinite difference between his writings, or any other mere verbal statements of truth, and Christ, or truth in its Divine or spiritual form as our Master.

Who or what, then, is Swedenborg? What is the particular office and use of his writings? I answer, Swedenborg simply takes us by the hand and leads us to our real Master and Father. He has, so to speak, gone up before us; and now he tells us how to go up. He has himself sought out the way, and now he shows us the way. This is all he does. *He* does not give us the light; but he *explains* it, explains where it is, and the way to get it. And thus we go to him, not as our

master, but as one who, if we will follow his directions, or follow his example, indeed, will *lead* us to our master.

5. *Revealed by Explanation.*

His great mission was, by EXPLANATION, to open the internal sense of the Sacred Scriptures; to open it as far as explanation could do it; was, by explanation, to uncover the Fountain of living waters; was to show *how* He who "became Flesh—" God with us"—was the Word, and was the "true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But *thus uncovering* the fountain does not give us of its sweet waters; to *know* even all that he knew, or all that he has taught about this fountain, would not enable us to drink of it. Before we can drink, we must "thirst" for the waters; and we must have a vessel formed into which to receive them. *He* shows us how this *vessel* is formed; and shows us that, in proportion as it is formed, we thirst and it is filled. *He* tells us *where* the Fountain is, *what* it is, and *how* we can go to it; and he tells us as one who has already drunk of it; he tells us how the Word that was made Flesh and dwelt among us is that fountain, and how the *Sacred Scripture*, concerning whose meaning there has always been so much doubt, is only as the outer garment or walls of the fountain.

He does not say, "Come to *me* as your master." He does not say, "Receive what I say as authority, or as Divine, for I am only your brother. What I *receive* is divine, is living truth, is, as it were, God speaking to me; for I receive from Christ as our common Master. But what I *give* is not divine, for I give only *explanations* of truth, and as I, a finite being, conceive of it. I give truth only as it is finited into thoughts, ideas, principles, in the crucible of my own mind, and thus only in words. The true light does not pass *through* me to you. I can give you a *knowledge* of truth; I can *explain* to you what truth is, and what are the *conditions* of its *reception*; just as the physiologist can give you knowledge of the influx from the brain into

the body, and can explain what that influx is, and what are the conditions of its reception. But I cannot give you truth, any more than the physiologist can give the life of the brain to the body. For truth, as I have said, is life, is the Divine life. I can *receive* it as life, but cannot give it as life. Christ alone, who is the spirit and the life of the Word, can give you truth. I can tell you how to form the vessel, but He alone can fill it: just as I can explain the sunlight to you; but the sun alone can give it to you. If your eyes are diseased, so that they are closed against the sunlight, I can tell you how they can be cured and opened; or I can tell you, if your vision is obstructed by clouds, how you can rise on a mountain above the clouds into the sunlight, but I can never give you the sunlight. *Truth* is the spiritual sunlight."

And thus it is plain what is the relation of Swedenborg's writings to us. They are not the truth, but are, in verbal explanations, sure guides to the truth. And we are to receive them, not as the light of the Holy City, but as guides to and on the way to the Holy City. And this way is simply the way of regeneration; is the way by which we become redeemed from the infirmities and the darkness of our lower nature, and thus the way by which we become capable of receiving truth from Christ as our Master; is the way by which truly rational mind is formed and prepared as a vessel into which truth from the Lord, as living light, can flow.

6. *The Crucible of Thought.*

And such mind can be developed only by little and little, and only as, step by step in its progress, it freely and rationally does its own thinking. Everything must pass through the crucible of its own free thought, must be examined and tried by the test of its own reason, and even though its reason be, as yet, but small in its development; even all the teachings of Swedenborg must pass through this crucible,—they *will* do so—he meant that they should do so—if our minds possess,

so far as they are developed, the real character and spirit of the New Jerusalem. And this was the character of his mind, and this is the reason why he advanced so rapidly and in such a direct way, to the light of the Holy City. This is the reason why he became capable of receiving, in such large and full measure, truth from Christ as his master. And so he tells us that we can really receive nothing but what we receive *rationaly*, and can really *believe* nothing but what we can *see*, or only so far as we can see.

Let us not flatter ourselves, then, that we are necessarily of the New Jerusalem, because we believe and love its doctrines. This love and faith must be of an entirely different character from what has existed in any previous age or phase of humanity. There have been other masters than Christ in all other ages, and *He* has been truly acknowledged as master in *none* of them. The nature of the faith in all these ages has been like that of childhood and youth. It has been founded only on external evidence, or only on authority; there has been no *rational* conviction; the clergy have derived it from the "fathers," and the people from the clergy. Thus the fathers have been the masters of the clergy, and the clergy of the people. This has been peculiarly the case in the age that is now passing away. The time has been when no one dared to question the utterances from the pulpit, when no one, in fact, was disposed or even thought to do so; when everything that the minister said was believed as a matter of course, for he was regarded as a kind of demigod. And this has been almost the only kind of religious belief that has existed in the ages past. This is the case now in the papal church; it is less so in the protestant church; and it still lingers even among those professing to be of the New Church. Is any one's mind, indeed, free from it? Is not the faith of each one of us resting, in part, at least, on what we regard as authority,—that is to say, on some verbal expression of truth, rather than on truth itself? Is not this still, to some extent, the tendency of our own mind?

Are not all more or less inclined to rest in the authoritative statements of Swedenborg, or of those in whom they have confidence, without applying the test of their own rational thought? *This* is to have *other* masters than Christ. But this kind of faith, and this quality of mind must pass away; they are not of the New Jerusalem; they must pass away as the characteristics of youth pass away on advancing into manhood. This was not the character of Swedenborg's mind, which, at the same time that it was the harbinger and the herald, was also the grand exemplar of the real genius of the descending New Jerusalem. He, looking to his one only Master for light and life, moulded his character, built the temple of his own manhood. He used authorities, all the great lights, all the learning of the world, but only as means; he sifted and tried everything; he winnowed out the chaff by means of the light flowing into rational thought, and used the wheat as the nourishment of that very thought. *Truth*, living truth, truth as living light, of which he believed the Word, or Christ in the Word, was the only source, was his master. And because such *truth* was his master—truth rationally seen—the *pursuit* of this opened new avenues of thought, and was constantly revealing new means of arriving at truth. Thus it was free, rational thought, prompted by love for the common good, that led him to Christ as his master, or, rather, that led him to shun evils as sins against the Lord, and to do His commandments, as the only way to his Master. It was this kind of life and discipline, and not mere intellectual training, that gave his mind such a high state of illuminated, rational thought, and made the letter of the Word transparent to him of its own Divine, spiritual light, for it opened his mind—just as similar life and discipline will open any mind—upward towards heaven, so that the Sun of heaven could shine into it and enlighten it; in other words, so that Truth—Living Truth—could come in and make its abode in the mind.

Swedenborg, as our brother, was simply a fellow branch of

the same vine. We are to receive from the same Source whence he received, and in a similar way. His writings and his example are simply instructive lessons to us, how we can come into co-ordinate states with his as branches of the same vine, or members of the same body. In the same sense the angels are our brethren. We are all branches of the same vine, all children of the same Father, whose relation to us is as the vine to the branches. We may give each other *knowledge*, we may *instruct* each other in *regard* to the truth. But we cannot receive *truth*—that truth which is Master—from each other, any more than we can the sunlight, or any more than one branch can receive life from another branch, or than one member of the body can receive the influx of the heart or of the brain, which is as truth to the body, from another member. We can receive truth, which is the life of the soul, as the blood is of the body, from one only source, from one only Father who is in heaven, and who is the one only life and light.

How plain it is, then, that we have no Rabbi but Christ; that Swedenborg even in no sense stands between us and Christ, the Lord; that his writings are in no sense the Word, or a substitute for the Word; but that, on the contrary, his teachings and his example only show us into what form we must be moulded, in order that we may go ourselves directly to Christ as our Master!

CHAPTER IX.

AUTHORITY AND INFALLIBILITY.

1. *Different Kinds to Different States.*

MAN had never before been capable of a rational understanding of the Word. He knew nothing about it as "spirit and life," or "the spirit of truth;" nor was he capable of knowing. But he was now becoming capable of understanding a rational *explanation*, or of understanding the "spiritual sense of the Word" in the sense of an *explanation* of that sense. Such explanation was all that was needed and all that could be given. It would have been of no use before, or it would have been given before. Blind obedience to *verbal* authority was all that the Israelite was capable of, and therefore all that was required of him. The so-called Christian was only one step in advance of the Israelite. With such Christian the Bible meant just what it literally says; and his reason, if he had any, must be suppressed while reading it. No verbal Scripture statement was to be questioned. The difference was, authority to the Israelite meant, "Thou shalt, or shalt not, *do*;" to the Christian, "Thou shalt *believe*."

But the time had now come, when man was coming into his full, rational manhood. He must now use his God-given reason in all that he read and in all that he did. But the Bible, as given to the Israelite, or as given to the Christian, as mere *literal* truth, would not bear the test of manhood reason. As read in the full exercise of unbiassed, rational thought, as the truly rational man must now read it, in the mere letter,

it contains inconsistencies, contradictions, absurdities. And if the letter were all that there was of the Word, it must inevitably have been repudiated as the Word of God, and rejected. One was raised up, therefore, by the Lord, to show rationally and logically that the literal meaning was not all the meaning of Sacred Scripture; to show that Sacred Scripture was only the Word finited, clothed, and accommodated to man in a very gross, "earnal-minded," "froward" state; and thus was raised up rationally to *explain* its real nature as "spirit and life." It is plain that such explanation, to be *adapted* to the man of the Age, must be *given* by a man of the Age. For the Word was to be hereafter—different from what it had been heretofore—authority to each man as he should himself rationally see and understand it, and not as somebody else said it meant. Its authority, therefore, must not be in the man explaining it, in reverence for his learning, his wisdom, his integrity, nor in any external evidence, even if there were any, that "the Lord *explained* it;" but its authority must be in what each one should *see*, see for himself, IN the explanation. I mean that, to the man of this new age, all the elements of conviction must be in the very nature of the explanation itself; and that, therefore, the explanation must come through a man of the Age, through a man who was in the very light itself of that spiritual sense,—spiritual sense in the sense of Spirit of Truth,—which it was his mission to explain, at the same time that he possessed all other requisite qualifications. I mean that the explanations of the spiritual sense of the Word were to be, on account of the peculiar genius of the coming man, in the highest degree, *rational*; and hence Swedenborg's most peculiarly rational qualifications. For they were to satisfy rational want, rational inquiry; they were to help men, not merely to know, but to *see*; and in this, in their helping men to *see*, consists all their power and all their authority. Swedenborg, therefore, enforces his teachings with no other kind of authority than that of an appeal to man's rational convictions. It

is not to be, I insist, with the coming man, as with the past, "thus saith the Lord," and you must, therefore, submit without rational thought or question. The Lord is to speak to the coming man, not as verbal truth speaks, but as the "Spirit of Truth" speaks,—which is the Lord—the Lord as the Word—coming "in His glory," and so coming because coming as the glorious, bright shining of truth *in* the mind, instead of in verbal statements of truth outside the mind. It was thus in His glory, as the Spirit of Truth, that He came to Swedenborg, the forerunner, herald, and great exemplar of the coming man. The man of this New Age is going to believe, on account of what he rationally sees, on account of the things revealed to his rational convictions, and not on account of what he is authoritatively told, or of his confidence in the medium through whom the revelation comes. Christ, Christ in His advent as the "Spirit of Truth," is to be his only Master. It will be impossible for him to believe on any other ground, or in any other authority. He is going to respect any revealer, therefore,—revealer in the sense of explainer,—only as he learns to do so through his respect for the revealed.

The reverse has been the case, but because of as yet immature, undeveloped manhood. This is the secret of the peculiar nature of Swedenborg's qualifications. He is to be judged according to the character of his message, and as this produces rational conviction, and not according to his authority as a messenger. In this some have entirely mistaken the nature of the authority of Swedenborg's writings, as well as the real nature of the coming man for whom he wrote. The truth that *makes free* is, to the coming man, the truth that speaks *in* him and not outside of him. Thus his authority is the Lord as he himself sees Him *in such truth*, and not as somebody else sees Him; thus is the Word as he rationally *understands* it, with such helps as he can get, and not as any language, human or divine, *authoritatively says* it means. And this is the only kind of authority legitimately existing in the New Church.

The point is right here: to men in an external or merely representative state of mind the mere words or representative *forms* of truth must be authority; for this is all they can see; they cannot understand and therefore respect any other kind of authority. And this must be substantiated as divine authority by seemingly mysterious and incomprehensible demonstrations of power. To such men the mere Incarnation itself, the humanity assumed by the Lord, the finite, maternal part of the "God with us," is all that is cognizable. The Christian world, to this day, have had no true idea of what it really is that makes Christ God. But is such to be the nature of the authority to the real New Jerusalem? Is it to be, in any sense or manner, "thus saith Swedenborg," or "thus saith the Writings?" Are not the Writings, on the contrary, designed and calculated, as we come to fully understand and imbibe their true spirit, to lead us from the representative to the real or represented Master, the real truth, the "Comforter," or Spirit of Truth? Are they not calculated to free us from old external ideas of mere representative, verbal authority, and to lead us into states of perception and acknowledgment of the Spirit of Truth as authority, and truth as each for himself sees it, and not as Swedenborg or some one else, in *words*, states it to him? How can men, really belonging to this New Jerusalem Age, if they possess, even measurably, its spirit, waste their time and talents in attempts to prove or disprove this thing or that thing from any verbal statements of truth, which at best can be but mere shadows, as it were, of truth, even if we grant—as we do—that they are in no way shadows distorted by the medium through which they came? It is not a matter worth discussing, whether Swedenborg's writings are fallible or infallible, and it is not anything of the true genius and spirit of the Age that has suggested the question. Yet one thing we may be assured of, and that is, if we are really at war with ourselves, if we are living the life of the New Jerusalem, and thus are coming into its true order and under its true authority, we

shall see ourselves so plainly, we shall be so painfully conscious of our imperfections and blindness, that we shall go to the Writings in humility, and in undoubting faith in everything essential as regards their accuracy as verbal teachings. We shall not, indeed, question, or be disposed to question, Swedenborg's teachings; we should regard it as presumption in ourselves to do so, and as evidence of our own blindness. For we know, we are all convinced that his statements were made with the Lord—the Lord as the Spirit of Truth—visibly present; that is to say, with the Lord *as the Word* livingly shining in and illuminating his mind. To question the verbal accuracy of Swedenborg's explanations, when we have acknowledged his high mission and his wonderful qualifications for it, because of some imagined discrepancies, or for any other cause, would be only less presumptuous than it would be for a man, ignorant of all but the external form and members of the body, to question a learned anatomist's description of its internal mechanism. We only disclaim Swedenborg's writings as authority in any such sense as that in which Sacred Scripture, in its mere letter, is authority to an external or representative church. We maintain that any authority claimed for them like that of the Sacred Scriptures is a misunderstanding and perversion of their real design and use, and a misconception of the real character of the age and of the wants of the age for which Swedenborg wrote. Such false claim for the Writings is one in character with the empty rituals and ecclesiasticisms of the past, which, though indispensable and useful to man in a low, sensuous state, are, nevertheless, nothing more than the old fig-leaf aprons extended over the shame of degenerate generations, or to hide, or serve as a substitute for, the want of real life of an external church. The tendency of such a claim, like all rituals observed as rituals, is to hold the mind down in mere externals. The Writings, on the contrary, virtually say in their spirit, "hold yourself in no such bondage to any external statements of truth;" but, "arise, shine; for thy light is

come, and the *glory* of the Lord"—that is to say, the glory of the real Word—"is risen upon thee." The Lord is in His second or real, full coming; in His coming to an internal church; in His coming, therefore, as real, not verbal, truth; that is to say, as the Spirit of Truth, by immediate influx into the mind with power, therefore, and great glory.

2. "*Authority in the New Church.*"

Authority in the New Church! What is it? According to the tone and drift of thought of some writers, authority in the New Church seems too much like that of another papal hierarchy. We are told, for example, that "the doctrines of the New Church are to be believed first, and afterwards to be confirmed by rational considerations." The Catholic Bishop, Ryan, in a lecture on "what Catholics do not believe," says:

"They have first convinced themselves that the church to which they pay allegiance . . . is an unerring messenger of God to them; therefore, if they submit to a decision of the Church, they submit to the decision of a tribunal which their own reason has already accepted as an unerring tribunal."

But how, in the *full exercise* of their reason, could they have first convinced themselves that any human institution was unerring? and especially how could they now do it in the light of the fearful *history* of such institution? The Catholic is evidently convinced,—if it may be called conviction,—on simple authority, that the church is infallible; and on simple authority he believes her decrees. Reason, the distinctive attribute of his race,—that which makes him a man,—has nothing to do with either his conviction in the one case, or his belief in the other. He is a mere animal; authority does it all. The authority of the church says that the church is unerring, and the church's infallibility is authority for faith in her.

3. "To be Believed First."

So this new theory of the Writings as "the Lord's writings," says, "The doctrines are to be believed first, and afterwards to be confirmed by rational considerations." But on what grounds believed first? The man of true manhood of the New Church must, as an imperative necessity, have some rational grounds for his belief. In this he is different from the man of any previous church age. If Swedenborg teaches that a man must believe before the exercise of "rational considerations," it is sufficient cause for the rejection of his writings as unworthy of confidence. The man of this age is not a true man of the age, if he can have confidence in any such teachings. But Swedenborg nowhere teaches such absurdities. The very passages from "True Christian Religion" and "Arcana Cœlestia" cited in confirmation of the above remarkable statement, are distorted from their true meaning. They mean exactly the opposite. The following is in one of the passages cited from T. C. R. 508,—which is enough for all,—namely :

"The Word with the Roman Catholics was taken away from the laity, and with the Protestants it is open, but still shut by their common saying that the understanding is to be kept under obedience to their faith. *But in the New Church it is reversed*; in her it is lawful by the understanding to enter and penetrate into all the secrets of it, and also to confirm them by the Word; the reason is, because its doctrinals are truths continuous from the Lord, laid open by the Word; and confirmations of them by rational things cause the understanding to be opened above more and more, and thus to be elevated into the light in which the angels are."

If, as is claimed by some, the Writings are infallible,—and the true man of this age will not waste a thought on the question whether they are or not,—a man must in some way—and it is not shown how—be convinced of it, it seems,—just as the papist, in some way, has to be convinced of the infalli-

bility of his church,—before he can be permitted to exercise “rational considerations.” And here is the difference between the papist and those who regard the Writings as “the Lord’s writings,” and, therefore, infallible: the former pretends, at least, to allow you the use of your reason in becoming convinced of the infallibility of the church, whilst the latter seem to recognize no such preliminary condition of belief as necessary as regards the doctrines of the New Church. These doctrines must be believed first, simply because they are “continuous truths from the Lord,” and thus the Lord’s teachings. How do we know that they are such truths? How can we know without the exercise, first, of “rational considerations?” The New Church mind cannot take this for granted, on blind authority, as the Catholic mind can the infallibility of his church; if it can, then it is not New Church mind. It is of no avail to say that this declaration is in the Writings and that the Writings are the Lord’s. How do we know that they are the Lord’s writings? They who have come to this conclusion, have evidently done so on their own principles, namely, that certain things “must be believed first, and afterwards confirmed by rational considerations;” for people who believe first *on* “rational considerations,” are very far from coming to their conclusions.

4. *Misinterpreted Statements.*

If there is anything taught in the Writings more clearly than anything else, it is that the man of the New Church is a *rational* man; that there is, indeed, no real manhood without rationality; that there is, in fact, no genuine manhood act, thought, affection, or motive, or desire even, and thus no belief without reason as a prime constituent element. When the general statement, therefore, is made, on the authority of Swedenborg, “that the affirmation of what is Divine, and thus the acknowledgment of what is Divine as authority, must come first, and rational thought afterwards,” we are compelled to

doubt the correctness of the understanding of Swedenborg, and even though the statement be seemingly substantiated by the language of Swedenborg. We will not believe that Swedenborg is inconsistent with himself, as we should be forced to do, if we took all his readers' representations of him as correct, or all their quotations from him as representing him truly. And as regards citations from Swedenborg, a great mistake is made in taking certain *special statements* as *general statements*, and *without regard to the subject treated of*. For example, Swedenborg is represented as making the general statement (A. C. 3388), that "the acknowledgment of what is Divine is the first thing, for then an idea of holiness is present, which gives universal confirmation to each and every thing that is said, *even though it be not comprehended*."

Now let us look at the context of this statement. *Just before* it, we read: "It is treated concerning those who are in the doctrinals of faith, and have no perception of truth from good, but only a conscience of truth from this, that it has been so told them by parents and masters. . . . With *such* persons, the first of confirmation of truth is, that it is called Divine [*illis primum confirmationis veri est, quod Divinum dicatur*]." It is plain from the Latin even, aside from the context, that Swedenborg does not make the general statement that "the acknowledgment of what is Divine is the first thing." On the contrary, it is "with *such* persons" [the peculiar class he is treating of] that "the first of confirmation of truth is, that it is called Divine," and why? Swedenborg then adds: "for then they have instantly an idea of what is holy, which gives universal confirmation to all and each of the things that are said, and this though they do not comprehend it. *But still the things said must be adequate to their comprehension* [they must have some rational perception of it]; for it is not enough that a man knows that a thing is; he wants to know what it is, and how it is or what is its quality, so that some confirmation may accrue thence to his intellectual part, and in turn from that;

otherwise, a thing may, indeed, be committed to the memory, but it remains there not other than a dead thing as if a thing of sound; and unless some confirming things infix it, from whatever source derived, it is dissipated like the reminiscence of something only sounding."

Take another example of the wrong use of special statements as general ones in support of the position of belief first and rational confirmation afterwards. The following has been cited for such a purpose, from A. C. 1911:

"Intellectual truth does not appear, *i.e.*, is not acknowledged, until fallacies and appearances are dispersed; and these are not dispersed so long as man reasons concerning truths themselves from sensual and scientific things; but it then first appears when a man believes from a simple heart that it is truth, because the Lord has spoken it: then the shades of fallacies are dispersed; and then it matters not to him that he does not comprehend it."

In order to understand the real significance of this extract, we must ascertain the subject of the paragraph whence it is taken; and the subject is the relation of the "*rational first conceived*" to "truth intellectual or spiritual." Such rational cannot acknowledge such truth as truth, "because there adhere to it many fallacies originating in sciences received from the world and from nature, also appearances derived from knowledges collected from the literal sense of the Word, which are not truths. As, for example, it is an intellectual truth, that all life is from the Lord; but the rational *first* conceived does not comprehend this truth. . . . It is an intellectual truth that all good and truth are from the Lord; but neither does the rational *first* conceived comprehend this, because it *appears to sense* as if good and truth were from self," etc.

Several other examples are given of similar import in the same number. But Swedenborg does not speak of this as a fault of this "first conceived" rational, but as being all that the mind, in *this particular stage* of development, is capable

of. For the case was precisely similar with the Lord, with whom, though there were no fallacies, yet, "when His rational was *first* conceived, there were appearances of truth, which were not in themselves truths. . . . Hence also His rational, at its first conception, like man's, lightly esteemed intellectual truth." But with Him and with man, the clouds of appearances were dispersed in the regular order of progress to higher states. The necessity of this order some men fail to recognize, and it seems that they would have a man *begin* with a state, which, from the very nature of the case, must come at a later stage in the work of regeneration, and as the fruit of several preceding states.

Man cannot believe, "from a simple heart," etc., until he *has* a "simple heart;" he can so believe only when his state is ripe for such belief; only when, like the tree in preparation for fruit-bearing, he has passed through certain preparatory states. Swedenborg recognizes at least two distinct states of progress as preparatory to that in which "fallacies and appearances are dispersed," and "intellectual or spiritual truth appears, *i.e.*, is acknowledged." He says the "progression is from scientifics to rational truths; next, to intellectual truths; and, lastly, to celestial truths." "Scientific truth is of science; rational truth is scientific truth confirmed by reason; intellectual truth is joined with an *internal perception that it is so.*" A. C. 1495-96. This is the order of progression. It was so with the Lord. And every state must come in its order. Scientifics and sensuals must have their day; but when they have done their work, the mind parts with the fallacies and appearances connected with them, as the tree parts with its blossoms when the prolific principle of the pollen is matured and the germ is fertilized. But though a man may have passed through the first two states, he never can come into the third, or that of intellectual truth, or of faith, and an acknowledgment of what is Divine, unless he is fighting against his sins, and thus is being regenerated. Thus it is not until a man has pro-

gressed to *the third state*, or a state of "intellectual truth," that he can "believe first, and afterwards confirm his belief by rational considerations." And he can do so then only because he has, as a result of prior experiences, an "internal perception that it is so."

5. *A State of "Intellectual Truth."*

And when a man has arrived at a state of "intellectual truth," "joined with an internal perception that it is so," what is his authority? what is his "Rabbi," or "Master?" Is it any *writing*, any *verbal statement* of truth or doctrine? is it doctrine as *formulated* and expressed in human language? is it truth finited and coming to him through the medium of another mind? is it what any finite being tells him is truth, or is the Lord? No, never, never, never! But before a man comes to that state of "intellectual truth," he must take such *verbal information* as authority as he is best capable of. But all such information is, at best, exceedingly imperfect; for it means one thing, or another thing, exactly according to the state of the recipient of it. There is no such thing as an infallible, finite medium of truth or doctrine. The mere letter of the Word, though spoken by the Lord, is not so. It is constantly a question with every one, while passing through the preliminary, sensuous, scientific, and "first conceived" rational states,—before he has arrived at a state of "perception,"—what does this mean? What seems perfectly transparent of truth at one time, or to one person, is full of obscurity and doubt at another time, or to another person. But when he has arrived at that state of "intellectual truth," in which he has a "perception that it is so," the doubts, the fallacies, and appearances of preceding states flee away, as birds of night before the day.

And then, when a man has come into this state of perception, he no longer remains in doctrinals. A. C. 6043. What does he care for doctrinals, that is, for verbal statements of

doctrine, and even though such statements be perfect? He now has an "authority," a "Master," even Christ, the Word, that is, the very "Spirit of Truth" itself, which is to him absolutely unerring. He has now actually come in sight of the Holy City, and is in its light. He now sees where the city is, and what it is, for it is in his heart,—sees its golden streets and pearly gates, of which he had before heard and learned so much, through doctrinals or verbal statements about them,—sees them now actually shining in the bright sunlight. And now what becomes of all the misunderstood, and thus erring guides to the city? That is, what becomes of the sensuous, scientific, or purely rational information that he has had about the city? Is he any longer necessarily, or in any such way as formerly, a subject of instruction through human language, and by any formulated statements of doctrine? He now sees like the blind with sight restored. He does not need to be led by any sensuous or "rational considerations." He has outgrown all such means. All such things are therefore now dispersed, or are used only as confirmations; otherwise they would blind him. For him now to rely on "rational considerations" for his belief, would be as if a traveller, after he had come in sight of the city, should rely on verbal directions to it, instead of his own now clear vision of the way to it. Sensuals, scientifics, and reasonings are indispensable up to a certain point in the journey of life,—they must, indeed, *lead*, up to that point; but, after arrival at that point, they necessarily and naturally take a subordinate position, and all that is fallacious about them is seen and abandoned. When a man comes into a state to *perceive* truth as it flows into the mind "*continuously* from the Lord," to believe such truth then from what is sensual, scientific, and rational, is to make it a nullity. This is clearly shown in "Arcana Cœlestia," 2538, in which and the preceding numbers Swedenborg is treating of *doctrine*, which he says, in 2516, is "from the essential Divine and the Divine Human of the Lord; this is its origin, and, indeed, insomuch

that the Lord is doctrine itself, and therefore in the Word is called the Word, the Truth, the Way, the Light, the Door." Swedenborg is evidently not speaking of doctrinals here, or of statements of doctrine, but of that substantial entity which the man in "intellectual truth" "*perceives*" as doctrine, and as doctrine as an interiorly illuminating principle.

CHAPTER X.

DOCTRINE AND THE HOLY CITY.

1. *Doctrine.*

AMONG other inferences drawn by some from T. C. R. 779, are the following, namely: first, "that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg are meant in the Apocalypse by 'the Holy City, New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven;'" and, second, "that the publication of these writings in this world constitutes the Lord's Second Coming, which was promised in the letter of the Word."

By another passage ("Coronis," Nos. 18 and 20) some think that "it is clearly proved that the New Jerusalem does not descend insensibly into the interiors of men, and hence does not transform them gradually by an interior process into the members of the New Jerusalem:" and why? "for," it is added, "it is distinctly stated here that by the descent of the New Jerusalem is meant *the descent of doctrine*, and that by means of this doctrine the New Jerusalem is established upon earth."

Now let us look at these statements. According to the above view, Doctrines are the Holy City, and the publication of them constitutes the Second Advent; and this is not a progressive work, is not a gradual transformation of men, but takes place "once for all." And yet in those very passages cited from the "Coronis," Swedenborg says that "the doctrine of the New Heaven is the doctrine of truth and good falling from heaven like the dew of twilight, by which the leaves of the grass are opened and their vegetative juice is sweetened.

This doctrine, also, is like the shower of rain, which refreshes the fruits of the field, and causes them to sprout; it is also like the fragrance exhaling from the fields, gardens, and flowery meadows, which is inhaled by the beast with an eager and glad spirit." The dew and the rain fall *gradually*, and their *effect* is a gradual one. And the fragrance also is a progressive effluence, and the beast inhales it by little and little, and is made glad by it. These are beautiful and most significant illustrations of doctrine in its descent and effects.

2. *Advent, Doctrine, and Holy City the same.*

The great confusion and inconsistency on this, as on other subjects, arises from persistently taking the mere verbal statement or explanation of a thing for the thing itself. If Swedenborg's writings, yea, the very books themselves, constitute the Second Advent, then they constitute the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem, and constitute also the New Jerusalem itself; for these three, as acknowledged by all, and as Swedenborg teaches, are one and the same,—are so in their real meaning, or when we come to know what is really meant by the Lord's Advent, by Doctrine, and by the New Jerusalem.

Nothing is more plainly taught in the Writings, than that the Lord's Advent is an influx and *perception* of Divine Truth, and also that such Truth is what is meant by "Doctrine continuous from the Lord;" and thus that such Doctrine is the Lord; and that when *received and taking effect in men*, such Doctrine is really the New Jerusalem. And that all this is a "*perception*," an internal inspiration, or illustration, will appear plain, when we consider that there has been no change in the Lord, none whatever, as the *Cause* of these results. There has been no absolutely new or different influx of Divine Truth from the Lord; neither has it been different in its operation so far as the Lord's absolute agency is concerned. The Lord, as the same Divine Truth, has always flowed into man, and unremittingly so. The change, all that has ever taken place, has

been in man, or has been a change induced by man's changed state, thus by changed receptive conditions. This change has simply enabled him to *perceive* what he never perceived before; thus has enabled the Lord, as the very Life and Light, as the very "Spirit of Truth," of the Word, to manifest Himself to man as He never had done before. And how plain it is that the Lord as such influx of Divine Truth, is the "*Doctrine of the New Jerusalem*," or of that new phase of humanity which, for the first time in the history of man, has come into a state to be illuminated by such Divine Truth, or to have it shine in his mind; and how plain that the *New Jerusalem* itself is nothing else than the Lord, *as such Truth*, "COMING," or *as such doctrine*, "DESCENDING," "from God out of heaven," into the LIFE of MEN! How plain all this is; and how it lifts the clouds from a great many passages in the Sacred Scriptures, and in the Writings! The real *Advent* is the *perceived* Influx of the Lord *as Divine Truth*; *Doctrine* is the same Influx in its *instructing* and *illuminating* efficacy; the *New Jerusalem* is the same in its "*descent*" *into the life*, or in its progressive and effective operation in the life. Thus such Truth is the *Lord coming* in me, when I have come into a state to *perceive* His presence or the presence of such Truth in me,—which *presence* is, in itself, nothing new, but is new only in its new *manifestation*, or in my new perception of it; for it is always in me, as my soul is always in my body; it is *Doctrine* when and because it illuminates me; it is the *New Jerusalem* when and because it is in my life.

3. *Doctrine and Doctrinals.*

Swedenborg says: "The case with Doctrine is this: it is no doctrine just so far as it is believed to be doctrine, from anything human, that is, from anything sensual, scientific, and rational; but so far as the sensual, scientific, and rational is removed, that is, so far as doctrine is believed without them, so far it lives, for so far the Divine flows in; the thing proper to

the human impedes influx and reception. But it is one thing to believe from the rational, scientific, and sensual, or to consult these in order to believe, and another thing to confirm and corroborate what is believed by rational, scientific, and sensual things."

By Doctrine here—Doctrine that "lives"—is not meant "doctrinals," which "are nothing else than appearances of truth divine, or nothing else than spiritual and celestial vessels, in which is the divine." "All those things are called doctrinals which are of doctrine, which, so far as they can be received and acknowledged in heaven by angels and on earth by men, are said to respect rationals, for it is the rational which receives and acknowledges them; but the rational is such that it can in no wise comprehend things divine, inasmuch as it is finite, and this cannot comprehend the things which are of the Infinite; therefore truths divine from the Lord are presented before the rational by appearances." A. C. 3365.

Here we see the great difference between Doctrine and Doctrinals, the former being truth itself, truth in its essence, truth as an influx of living light "continuous from the Lord;" the latter being only an "appearance of truth," or the verbal vessel or medium of truth, *i.e.*, containing things or clothed with "things proper to the human which impede influx," etc. The former is for the New Church, the latter is all that the Old has ever been capable of. Strictly speaking, Swedenborg's writings contain only "doctrinals," real doctrine not being expressible in verbal statements, or in what is "proper to the human;" for, when so expressed, it becomes doctrinals, thus only "appearances" or "vessels" of truth or of doctrine. It may be said of doctrine—thus defined—that it must be "believed first and afterwards confirmed by rational considerations;" and why? Because such doctrine cannot be seen as the result of any learning however great, or of any process of reasoning however acute, but only as the result of a certain degree of progress in regeneration; and it must be *seen* before

it can be believed; from the very effect of its influx into the mind it must be "perceived that it is so." But before a man, through a proper use of sensual, scientific, and rational things, arrives at this state, he can no more believe than a man without eyes can believe in the sunlight, or without ears can believe in sound, except on external authority, which is not the belief of the New Church.

But belief in doctrinals, or in verbal statements of doctrine, is a very different matter,—and these seem to be all that some writers mean when they speak of the "doctrines of the New Church;" they evidently mean the Writings, or the doctrines as revealed in the form of teachings or doctrinals. And belief in these requires a very different exercise of human faculty from that required in belief in doctrine as just explained. A man can believe in *doctrinals*, or things that are *told* him, thus things outside of him and of which he has no internal vision or "perception that it is so," only as he sees convincing evidence of their truth. And this evidence must be founded on "rational considerations." This is a state preceding that of "intellectual truth," when such considerations would be only as clouds before the sight. He must weigh doctrinals, must turn them over, analyze them, and test them in the light, not of *perception*,—he has not arrived at that state yet,—but of such "rational considerations" as he is now capable of. Whether he can believe them must depend upon how they bear the test of such "considerations;" for either they or the opinions of men are, as yet, his only authority, unless he has been educated into a sort of belief in the Scriptures. But if he is really, in the character of his mind, a partaker of the genius of the New Church, he cannot regard the opinions of men as authority; but he may, from *evidence in themselves*, and from an influence which he *feels* from them when he devoutly reads them, be convinced of the truth of the Scriptures. They, in this case, become his authority, but as interpreted, not to another's but to his own rational convictions. If he is asked now to believe

certain doctrinals, he can really do it, only as they accord, not with his "perception that it is so," for he has none, but with his own rational understanding of the Scriptures.

4. *This and Preceding Ages.*

And this is the vast difference between this age, this New Jerusalem phase of developing humanity, and all preceding ages or phases, "*nunc licet.*" Now it is permitted; before it was not permitted; that is to say, now it is lawful—for now it is possible—to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith; before, humanity was incapable of it. In the age of the Israelitish church there was no faith but of the most external kind, and on the most external of external authority; it was a belief in which even scientific and rational considerations had nothing to do; it was purely sensuous. The man of the first Christian church age has not been capable of a faith founded on anything higher than that of "signs and wonders" and his own reasonings. And these last even have not been permitted. He has been required to believe unconditionally and without the exercise of a particle of "real" intellectuality. But in this age it is different, and different because the *capabilities* of humanity are different, and different in a sense similar to that in which the capabilities of manhood are different from those of childhood or youthhood. Man is now capable of the true light in regard to regeneration, and thus of true regeneration, as he has not been before. In the Old church, regeneration is a miraculous and instantaneous change by an arbitrary divine act, which is not regeneration at all, which does not, therefore, open the mind to the "living light," and thus does not enable it to "enter intellectually into the secrets of faith." It is lawful now for a man to know what he believes and why he believes, for he is now capable of a real belief, and he is just so far incapable of a blind belief; for he can now, as he rises by regeneration into his real manhood, intellectually see—"perceive that it is so"—as he never could before. He acknowl-

edges no authority, therefore, and needs acknowledge none,—no doctrinals, no finited teachings, no formulated statements of truth,—no authority but Christ the Lord, the Word, the Truth,—none but Divine Truth, that is to say, as he *perceives* it as an illuminating influx into his own mind. The doctrinals of this age, of this peculiar phase of humanity, are vessels, or are the external formulated expressions of real doctrine, that is to say, of “truth continuous from the Lord laid open by the Word,” whose “truths, one and all, are so many mirrors of the Lord.”

The Doctrinals of the Israelitish age—of a man in a blind, sensuous, youthhood state—must necessarily have been—to have any influence—the blind doctrinals of “thus saith the Lord.” But the Israelite was not required to believe them; was not capable, indeed, of exercising any rational thought or question about them; but he was required to *obey* them, and to obey them *because* “thus saith the Lord;” and he was goaded to obedience by threatened consequences if he did not obey. The man of the first Christian Church Age was a step in advance of the Israelite. The *true* man of that age has exercised his rational faculties in regard to the real nature of what the Lord said, has claimed the right to rationally see and understand what the Lord required of him before obeying or believing even. Paul may perhaps be regarded as a remarkable exemplar of this kind of man. Entirely different from the Israelite, he was a reasoner. This was as far as the man of that peculiar phase of humanity could go. He could believe and obey only on *rational* evidence, “rational considerations.” His mind was not open so that he could “*see* the Lord,” so that he could perceive, that is to say, “*living doctrine*,”—“truth continuous from the Lord.” The papist who takes as authority “thus saith the church,” as a thus saith the Lord, though in another form, is practically still only an Israelite. The New-churchman who adopts the view of the Writings as “the Lord’s writings” is qualifiedly the same. For such views, so

far as they have any practical influence, tend to carry the manhood of this new age back to the darkest of all the dark ages. There seems to be a labored effort to prove, we regret to say, that Swedenborg's writings—being, as it is claimed, the Lord's writings, thus the "Word without the literal sense," thus the Lord,—the "Lord in His Advent," thus, the "Thus saith the Lord"—are authority to the man of this age, in a sense similar to that in which the Scriptures were authority to the Israelite, and the "Church" to the papist. The radical difference of the manhood of this age from that of the past ages, which is as great as is that of individual manhood from childhood, seems to be entirely ignored. If it could be fairly proved from Swedenborg's writings that he makes any such claim for them, it would simply be proved to the truly rational man that his writings were utterly unworthy of himself, and unworthy of the noble, Godlike manhood of the Age for which they were given. The philosophy both of his life, that is to say, of his own developing manhood, and of his teachings, is a contradiction to such a claim. Swedenborg's writings are for the use of the New Jerusalem. And truth to the New Jerusalem is not to come, as to the dark-minded Israelite or papist, in the form of "thus saith the Lord," or thus saith the church, but in the form of an inspiration, of an internally illuminating influx.

5. *Swedenborg and the New Manhood.*

Swedenborg's life, at the same time that it is the grandest exemplification of true, Godlike manhood that the world has probably ever seen, is also the grandest exemplification of the way of *attaining* to such manhood. His journey of life, as every other man's must be, was through every phase of developing humanity. He passed over every plane, through the instructive and disciplinary experiences of every degree of life. While on the animal and sensuous plane, he was an animal and sensuous being,—an infant when an infant, a child when a child, and a youth when a youth. At each period his

mind fed upon and was exercised by what belonged to that period, as should be the case with all other minds. He passed through the several states in which "sensuals," "scientifics," and "rationals" successively had their day, and their work to do. He garnered a grand store-house of each, and to subserve higher ends as he came successively, by their use as means, into higher states. He never ignored any of them, but gave each its place and its day of rule. Each was to him successively his authority, his object of belief, and trust and guide. He bowed to "sensuals" when on the mere sensuous plane; but as modified, of course, by instruction from his superiors, and by the Sacred Scriptures, which were his constant study. He in like manner bowed to "scientifics" while on the scientific plane, and to "rationals" while on the rational plane. Like all others, he had to think and live and act according to what he *was* and *had*, in the phase through which he was at the time passing, and not according to what he was not and had not, but was only preparing to be and to have. He did not "believe," believe, I mean, in the higher, true sense of the word,—believe as it is the exclusive and peculiar prerogative of the man of the New Jerusalem to believe,—until all the prior states had ripened him for that state, and he *could* so believe. He then "believed," but not because he persuaded himself that he ought to, but because that was the next faculty opened, and he could not help it,—could not help it any more than the tree can help putting forth leaves when its state for that phase of development has come. He believed when and because he was in a state to "perceive that it was so." And did he now make the same use of sensuals, scientifics, and rationals that he had done before? By no means. This would have blinded him. On the contrary, he now used them only to *confirm* belief, not, as formerly, as *grounds* of belief. Their use, once a dominant one, is now a subordinate one.

How singularly all this is exemplified and confirmed in Swedenborg's writings! What stores he had gathered in of "sen-

suals," and "scientifics," and "rationals," up to a certain period of his life, up to the time when, from a state of "intellectual truth," he was "illuminated," or "internally inspired," so that he had a "perception that it was so!" He then *saw*, and he used rationals and scientifics only to confirm what he saw,—they were the "borrowed vessels of silver, and vessels of gold and raiment" which he took with him when he "went up out of Egypt." He wrote in the very light itself of heaven,—thus as "instructed by the Lord alone,"—and used what he had before acquired, both of learning and of development, only as means, only as instruments and recipient vessels. His writings are most peculiarly an appeal to the *rational* mind, to those who are passing through the necessary states of preparation, who are forming the good ground which renders real belief possible. For there must, from the very nature of the case, be rational belief before there can possibly be belief from *perception*. The Writings give none but rational light, rational evidence, that is, the light of rational formularies or expressions of truth, and not the light of absolute truth itself, not the light of "revelation from perception," or "internal inspiration."

6. *The Writings an Appeal to Rational Minds.*

Swedenborg's writings, therefore, it is plain, are only rational aids to states of mind such as he himself passed through, which are preliminary to states of enlightenment by real truth, and thus preliminary to that state of perception which is attended by genuine faith. Different from the Word, they give no other light than rational light, and they are authority only on the plane of reason. We cannot, therefore, possibly believe them on other than rational grounds, for they are not "doctrine that lives;" they are not the New Jerusalem as real doctrine is when it descends into life, when it flows into men as the life of the vine into the branches; they are not the Lord in His Advent, as the perception of such doctrine is; they are

not the "continent" of the living Word, as Sacred Scripture is. But they are of priceless value as "explanations," or as finited and formulated revelations of all these, as furnishing, indeed, the rational substratum of genuine belief. They show us, in fact, how we must live, and the real nature of the successive states through which we must pass, and the absolute necessity of those states, before it will be possible for us to be in a state of "*perception*," and thus in a state to truly believe. They show the real nature and significance, and relation to the others, of each state through which we have to pass,—of the "state of sensu-als," of the "state of scientifics," and of the "state of rationals;" and they show us, with most convincing evidence, that the state in which it will be possible for us to believe cannot be reached but as the result of the work done in these preceding states. They show us that there is order, and that there are series and degrees in everything, and that everything must come in its order; that the "full corn in the ear" cannot come before the "ear," nor the ear before the "blade;" for the full corn is evolved from the ear, and the ear from or after the blade. So a "state of scientifics" is evolved, so to speak, from a "state of sensu-als;" a "state of rationals" from a "state of scientifics;" and a "state of perception," and thus of belief, from a state of regenerated rationals.

It is an important fact, and one of significant bearing upon this subject, that man's normal relation to God is that of perception, and thus belief. The New Jerusalem is man's return to that relation, but with all the difference in kind and degree that there is between any state of adult age and a corresponding state of uncontaminated infancy or childhood. In both of these states there is no authority or "Master" but Christ the Lord *as an influx of Divine Truth*,—Truth that actually *shines* in and thus illuminates the mind. All other appliances of truth, such as formulated statements, or finited expressions of truth, have been made necessary only because of man's waywardness, and consequent blindness to real truth, while passing

through the intervening states; have been, as it were, an expedient growing out of certain darkened conditions of mind. As man, therefore, comes up out of those conditions,—as the real man of the New Jerusalem must do,—he outgrows that kind of authority. Think, then, of keeping man, in all time to come, under the leading-strings of verbal statements of truth,—as it is the tendency of a belief in the Writings as the Lord's writings to do,—and even though we admit—which we do not—that such statements were the utterances of Divinity Itself! The very act of subjecting man's reason to such statements as authority would blind him to the perception, and thus real authority, of inflowing truth itself. It would be putting man's mind, not his hands, into gyves. It would destroy his freedom, and thus his manhood. Why, the man of the New Jerusalem phase of humanity is the man, not groping in the dark valley and capable only of being taught in words, and how to live on that low plane and as a merely sensuous man, as the Israelite was, but actually rising on the acclivity of the mountain, and capable of being rationally instructed in the *processes of rising*, and at length capable of actually seeing, and trusting in, and being exclusively guided by the increasing light itself of the now almost visible summit.

7. *Wants of the Coming Man.*

The man of the noble, Godlike phase of humanity now developing is to be an internal, not an external man. It is the external man that must have truth finited and clothed, measured down to him in verbal teachings, in accommodation to his state. When very external, truth must come to him *verbalized* into specific statements of what he must do, and of what he must not do, as a merely physical or sensuous man; it must, as it were, be pushed down to him in such a form that he can see it sensuously, and feel compelled to obey it, and to obey it, though blindly, as imperative, unintelligible, arbitrary authority. This is the counterpart of that internal state

to which truth comes with no less authority, and with no less imperativeness, but without the appearance of either ; it giving, at the same time, a "perception that it is so," and striking a cordially responsive chord in man's nature. Then there are the intervening states which are, as it were, the "highway" from the former to the latter, and over which we must all pass. These are states in which we are passing from that of the mere blind authority of verbal truth to that of clearly perceived "intellectual or spiritual [thus real] truth." We have left our port, have left our "father's house;" we have too much knowledge and too much rationality to stay where we were, to stay in what was once home to us, to stay longer in, as it were, our "swaddling-clothes,"—we have "put out to sea," and a pathless sea. But if we have been obedient to authority we are prepared to navigate the sea ; our ship is furnished with all the appliances needed to make our voyage a safe one, and even though the sun by day, and the pole-star by night, be clouded over. We are in a transition state. We are trying our manhood. We have outgrown that blind, sensuous state in which we believed—or thought we did—every word of the Bible, "*because the Bible said it.*" We have come into a higher state, in which something within prompts us to inquire whether it is, and why and how it is,—which is necessarily a sort of doubting or sceptical state. Our minds are now made up of different materials, have different capacities, and are subject to different influences ; to the mere "sensuals" of the former state we have added, and are adding, "scientifics" and "rationals." Rightfully now everything must bear the test of reason, the as yet highest attribute of our nature. The Scriptures which we had obeyed, and the principles we had acquired from mere blind authority, must now be brought to the bar of reason, else we must necessarily remain of the religion in which we were born and educated, and even though this be paganism.

And here is precisely where the writings of Swedenborg

come in to help us. It is when we have outgrown, and become dissatisfied with, mere sensuous authority, and we yearn for a rational, practical view of things. They are our compass on the sea, but not to be followed blindly,—we should then be no better than we were,—but rationally. They are now to be our authority, but by no means in the sense in which the letter of the Word was to the Israelites; not authority as the Bible was and is to a state of mere unreasoning “sensuals,” but authority such as is required by, and is possible to, a state of “scientifics” and “rationals.” And what kind of authority is this but rational authority? And what is that but a satisfaction, as well as aid to our reason? If these Writings do not find a response in our reason, then they are not authority for us; and to acknowledge them as such would not exactly belittle our manhood, but would show how little manhood we have. Different from the letter of the Scriptures, these Writings are addressed to our reason, and are to be acknowledged by our reason, when truly acknowledged at all. If you choose to express it so, they are the Lord’s appeal to our reason; and for this reason they are an appeal made through a most eminently rational medium, and not the less rational because internally inspired or illuminated. But even though the Lord’s appeal, even though we admit (which, I repeat, we by no means do) that they are the Lord’s writings, thus the Lord’s Word, they are, nevertheless, an appeal to reason; and they must therefore be regarded only as rational authority, or authority to man’s reason. And this is the highest and only authority that it is now, while man is in this transition state of scientifics and rationals, possible for him to acknowledge and obey. He can now no more acknowledge sensuous truth as authority than he could, while in mere “sensuals,” acknowledge rational truth as authority. And he certainly cannot acknowledge intellectual or perceptive truth until he comes into a state in which he can perceive it. He must first let rational truth do its work—and its work is that of regeneration, as well as of culture and de-

velopment—before it will be possible for him to be in a state to *perceive* truth, thus doctrine that “*lives*,” which is “truth continuous from the Lord,” which is the doctrine of the New Jerusalem, which doctrine is the New Jerusalem, and which truth, when perceived or as perceived, is the Advent of the Lord, as shown above from Swedenborg. When rational truth has thus done its work, then, and only then, is a man in a state to “believe first, and afterwards confirm by rational considerations.” This is what we understand Swedenborg to mean when he says, “Now it is permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith.” Man was not capable of this before, was not capable of true rationals, and thus of arriving at length at “intellectual truth.” His ship was driven hither and thither by every changing “wind of doctrine,” he was lost upon the sea and without any intelligible reckonings. Now, on the contrary, man has his nautical instruments, and knows how to use them and his reckonings, and he trusts in them as his guide until he comes within the range of the reflected light [perceptive truth] of his destined port, when he spontaneously abandons all such aids, except as confirmations, and follows his sight.

8. *Conclusion.*

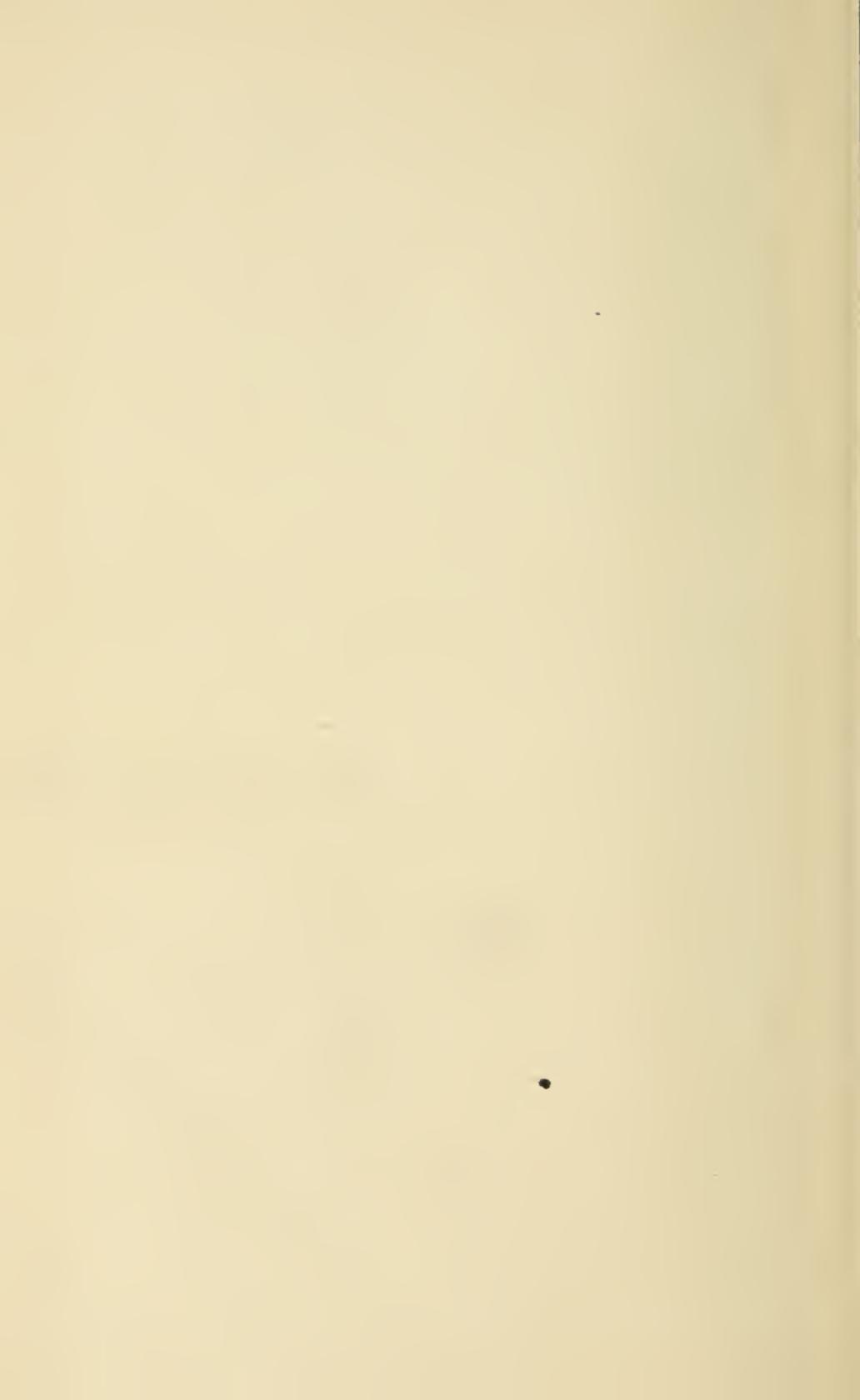
What, then, do all the labored arguments of “Authority in the New Church,” and all the zealous efforts to prove that the Writings are the Lord’s, amount to? Why simply this: if a legitimate use has been made of Swedenborg’s teachings, if they have not been perverted, and the meaning of extracts from them distorted,—and I do not believe that they have been so, intentionally,—they simply prove that Swedenborg’s writings are utterly unworthy of our confidence, either as his writings or as the Lord’s writings, and unworthy of Swedenborg himself, as a man of the New Age. For they make Swedenborg contradict, in the most unmistakable manner, the very philosophy of man, of God, and of man’s relation to God, which it was the chief aim of his writings to set forth.

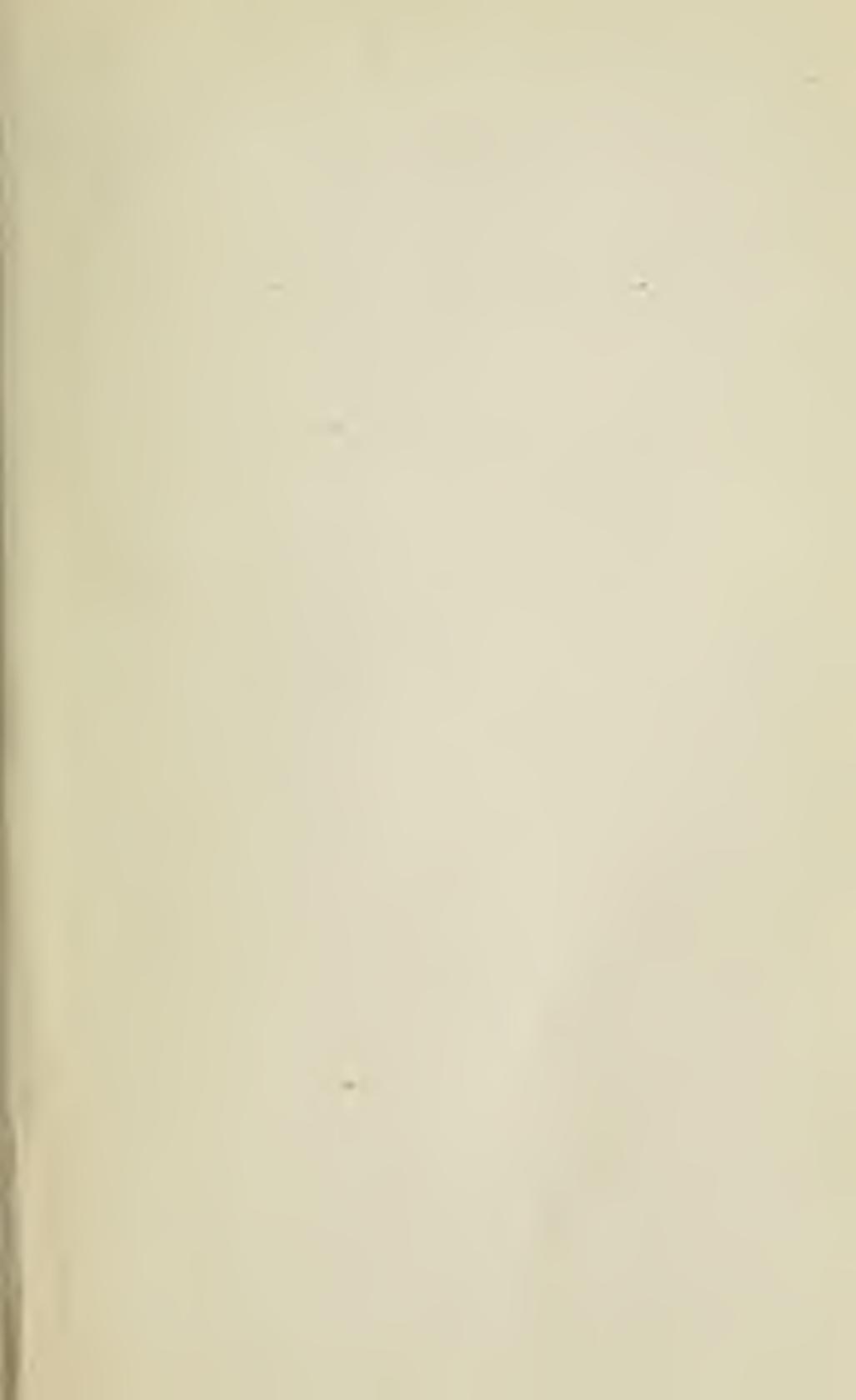
They not only fail to recognize, but they make him virtually contradict his most important teachings about the real nature and wants of that most interesting and important transition phase of man's nature intervening between his state of *sensuals* and his state of *intellectual* or *perceptive* truth. By giving the Writings (including even the "Spiritual Diary"), even every verbal statement of them.—the Authority of "thus saith the Lord." they virtually dwarf this part of man's nature down into his state of mere *sensuals*. They take away man's highway out of Egypt to Canaan. They carry man back to the old Israelitish state which could be reached only by arbitrary precepts and commands. "Thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" was the only form of authority that the Israelite could acknowledge. And this must be enforced by threatened judgments. This, on the contrary, is an age of *truth* as authority, truth in its form of living light shining in the mind, not of words spoken in the ear. Words, with the real man of this age, from whatever Source, have no authority, and they should have none, but as they are mediums of intellectual truth, of real living light to the rational faculty. For man is now coming to be man, Godlike man, which he had never been before.

What, then, is the position of the real man of this age—the man of the real New Jerusalem—in regard to the Writings of Swedenborg? It is that of a rational inquirer, as in regard to the writings of any other author, weighing them and judging them according to the measure of rational satisfaction he derives from them. They are authority to him just so far, and only so far as they help him to rationally *see truth*, or what is truth to *him*; and then it is not the Writings, which are mere statements of truth, but the truth itself thus *rationally seen*,—which is the Lord—that is the authority. No modest man who considers the real nature of Swedenborg's mission and his wonderful qualifications for it will, for a moment, question the accuracy of his statements, because he does not understand them, or because they *seem* inconsistent with other statements;

but he will not be a blind slave to them ; he will simply suspend his judgment, remembering that he is yet groping in comparative darkness, under the clouds, low down on the acclivity of the mountain, whilst Swedenborg, when he wrote, had risen above the clouds into the bright light of the summit. The Divine *words*—but words enforced by the terrible quakings and thunderings of the burning Mount—were authority to the sensuous Israelites ; the Lord's personal teachings, when confirmed by "signs and wonders," were authority to the only less dark-minded christian ; but it is truth *rationaly seen*, thus the real spirit of the Word, that is to be authority to the "coming man." We go to Swedenborg, as to one who has gone before, for a *verbal description* of the way of life ; we go to the Word, thus to the Lord, for *light to shine in* the way. And this is the difference between the Lord's writings—Sacred Scripture—and Swedenborg's writings ; the former, being correspondences, are mediums of light as well as of verbal instruction, thus of conjunction with the Lord ; whilst the latter, not being correspondences, are mediums only of verbal teachings about the Light, thus about the Lord. Swedenborg wrote while *in* the light, thus as illuminated by it ; but the light did not flow down through his pen into his words and illuminate them, nor did it make them mediums of light to the reader. The Prophets, on the contrary, did not write in the light, yet their words, being the Lord's words, and therefore *correspondences*, were, qualifiedly, mediums of the light to the devout reader. Swedenborg's writings, therefore, are simply mediums of rational instruction ; the Word, besides, of spiritually warming, illuminating, living light.

THE END.





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