

AN

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ADDRESS

FROM THE

TRANSLATOR

TO THE

READERS OF THE THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS

OF

BARON SWEDENBORG,

INTENDED

To point out the General Design and Tendency of those

WRITINGS,

AND

PARTICULARLY TO SHOW

THAT

THEY DO NOT AUTHORIZE THE READERS IN A

SEPARATION AT THIS TIME,

FROM

EXTERNAL COMMUNION

WITH OTHER

PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.

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RECORDS OF THE

GENERAL INVESTIGATION

1918



THE
TRANSLATOR
TO THE
READERS OF THE WRITINGS
OF
BARON SWEDENBORG.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

HAVING taken a principal Part in the Translation and Circulation of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and having lately received several Letters, in which the Sense of those Writings seems to me to be misunderstood, in Regard to the Expediency of the Readers thereof separating themselves from all other Communities of professing Christians, and adopting new Forms and Ceremonies of Worship peculiar to themselves, I feel myself called upon at this Time to declare to you my free Sentiments concerning the End

and Design of those Writings, trusting that in so doing I shall not only discharge what appears to me to be a Duty, but also may be instrumental in preventing the Perversion, and promoting the right Application of heavenly Truth and Knowledge. If my Views are wrong, I shall be happy to have them corrected in the Spirit of Christian Charity and Moderation, that so others may be warned and preserved from falling into Error; but if they are right, it will be a Satisfaction to me to think, ~~that they may lead~~ others also to think rightly. At all Events I am happy in the Persuasion that I am addressing myself to those, who will weigh what is said in the Balance of Candour and Impartiality, and who will believe me sincere when I assure them, that I am actuated by no other Motive in this Address, than a real Concern for the Interests of Truth.

It must be very plain to every considerate Person, that the Writings in Question, like all other even the best Things, are liable to Misconstruction and Perversion. The Bible itself, that best of Books, hath not escaped this Fatality attending whatsoever is applied to, and connected with Man. This is no Argument

ment against the Truth of those Writings, any more than it is an Argument against the Truth of the sacred Scriptures: It is only a Reason why we should be more watchful and zealous to prevent such Misconstruction and Perversion, both with ourselves and others.

A diligent and attentive Perusal of the theological Works of Baron Swedenborg, during a Period of now more than eighteen Years, hath served more and more to convince me, that they contain immense Treasures of heavenly Knowledge, highly deserving the serious Consideration of Man, as having a Tendency to promote his real Well-being, both in Time and in Eternity.

It seems to me impossible for any Person of a pious and candid Mind to look into those Works, but he must be obliged to confess that the Doctrines they contain are grounded in eternal and immutable Truth, being derived from the great Fountain thereof the sacred Scriptures, or Word of God, and presenting to Mankind such solid Interpretations, Explications and Elucidations of that Divine Book, as were never yet unfolded in any former Age, neither could have been unfolded in this,
but

but by a Scribe highly enlightened, and *instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven.*

If it be deemed a sure Mark and Criterion of Truth, to suggest worthy and just Ideas of the Divine Being, and his Mode of Operation; to assert the Divinity of the Christian Redeemer, and clear away all Doubt and Perplexity respecting the Union of the Divine and Human Natures in his Person; to maintain the Sanctity and Divinity of the revealed Will of God in his written Word, and to show wherein that Sanctity and Divinity consist; to deduce thence the purest and most sublime Doctrine for the Regulation of human Life, and to enforce Obedience to that Doctrine; to point out the Evils and Errors which in former Ages have tended to darken the Light of Divine Knowledge, and to show how those Evils and Errors are to be removed; to make known to Man the Dignity and Divinity of his Origin, and convince him of the infinite Importance of his present Life and future Destination; to unfold to him the internal Principles of his own Being, and make it thus clear, as the Sun at Noon Day, that he was created for Immortality, either to be a blessed Angel perfected in the Love of God, or a miserable Devil ever separated

separated from that Love ; to excite thus to the Love and the Practice of Virtue, and to a Hatred and Abhorrence of Vice—if, I say, all or any of these be sure Marks and Criterions of Truth, then it is equally sure that the Truth is contained in the above Writings, wherein all these Marks and Criterions are to be found united.

In short, the more I have read and weighed the Contents of these wonderful Volumes, and especially the more I have endeavoured to live according to the heavenly Precepts with which they abound, so much the more have I been successively convinced, that we can never be enough thankful to the God of unutterable Mercy, for having favoured us, in these Days of Darkness, with so clear a Light for our spiritual Guidance; whereby, if we continue faithful to follow its Direction, we may be enabled to detect all the subtle Windings of Evil and Error, and to discover and walk in the blessed Path, which leadeth to the Regions of eternal Day, agreeable to the Promise of our divine Lord and Redeemer, *“ He that followeth ME, shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.”**

But

* John viii. 12.

But convinced, as I am, of the Brightness and Importance of those Principles of heavenly Truth, in which we rejoice, and for which we have so much Cause to be thankful, I am equally persuaded, that their sole End and Object is to purify, perfect and exalt the corrupted Principles of human Nature, by leading Man to Conjunction with the great Author of his Being, and thereby to an ordinate Reception of heavenly Life from Him; and that this happy End and Object cannot be attained any further, than as Man is careful to form his whole Life, in its several Degrees, according to the Truth, by the Humility, Simplicity and Sincerity of a dutiful Obedience to its pure Dictates, in the Ways of Repentance, Reformation, and Regeneration.

It is not, therefore, any mere Knowledge of those Principles, nor even a Delight therein; it is not any Speculation, or Science, or intellectual Perception, howsoever exalted and extensive; still less is it the Faculty of talking, writing, or debating learnedly and acutely about the Contents of these heavenly Volumes, which can secure to us their above blessed End and Object. Unless the Life be changed, the Will renewed, the Affections purified, and the
 Actions

Actions made conformable thereto, by sincere Humiliation, Obedience, and renouncing of all known Evil, we must for ever remain Strangers to the genuine and blessed Effects, which it is the Design of all the Writings of Baron Swedenborg to produce in us.

This is the universal Testimony of the Writings themselves, in which it is again and again asserted, *That Truths which are destitute of Good, are not really Truths, because void of Life, for all the Life of Truths is derived from Good: That the Knowledges of Truth and Good, which are only in the Memory, and not in the Life, are thought by some to be Truths, but are not: That Truths are not appropriated to Man, or become really his, by his only knowing and acknowledging them from worldly and selfish Causes: That Truths which are destitute of Good, are not accepted of the Lord, neither conduce to Salvation: That they who are principled in Truths without Good, are not real Members of the Church, neither can they be regenerated.**

This, you well know, is the universal Testimony of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and therefore I shall not press it any further

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* See the heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, N. 22.

at present than only to observe, that the happy End and Design of those Writings can only be secured so far as this Testimony is well attended to and reduced to practise in the Life.

If it is not well attended to and reduced to practise, the unhappy Consequence must needs be, that the deluded Reader will become a Subject of more terrible Condemnation than if he had for ever remained ignorant of the Truth, agreeable to those Words of the Lord, "*That Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes.*"* In this Case, howsoever learned he may be in Doctrine and Speculation, or whatsoever Knowledge he may retain in his Head concerning the Lord, his Kingdom and Operations, his Heart will be without Life; and he may be fitly compared, in this State, with the Children of Israel in the Wilderness, *dancing round the golden Calf*, his own corrupt Affections constituting that *Calf*, and his unpractised Principles of heavenly Truth and Science, constituting the *Gilding* thereof. For I will be bold to assert,

* Luke xii. 47.

assert, there is not a single Truth contained in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, which will not administer more or less to the *gilding of this Calf*, if it be not received in true Humility and sincere Obedience, and thereby conjoined with heavenly Love and Charity, by Purification from all corrupt Affections.

But on the contrary, if the above Testimony be well attended to, and reduced to practice, it is my full persuasion, that in such Case, a purer and more perfect State of Good may be attained by Man, under the present Dispensation of heavenly Truth, than hath heretofore been attained, in any former Period of the Church, on Earth; and that for this Reason, because the State of Good in Man will always depend upon the Order of Truth with which it is conjoined; and as I conceive the Order of Truth, contained in the Writings in Question, to be of the purest and most perfect Kind, so I have not a Doubt, but that the Good with which it is conjoined, will be also most pure and perfect.

It is on this Account I have flattered myself for several Years past, with the pleasing Persuasion and Prospect, that Mankind, under the present Dispensation of heavenly Truths offer-

ed to their Acceptance, will be enabled to attain unto a Purity, Power, and Peace of heavenly Life, hitherto unexperienced, and even unconceived. Warned of the Danger of resting in a mere Illumination of the Understanding, and of sitting still under any imperfect States of Purification and Renovation, the Children of this new Dispensation will be watchful to press forward, in the Ways of Repentance and Obedience, to the entire Separation of all known Evil, and to the Establishment and Regeneration of their Minds and Lives in all heavenly Good. Hence they will be enlightened to see, and empowered to oppose and overcome all the subtle infernal Influences of Self-love, and the Love of the World, in which the Spirits of Darkness have their Abode, and by which they operate to seduce and to destroy. Hence too, the Influences of an heavenly Love and Charity, will be more distinctly perceived, and more sensibly felt by them, and in and by those Influences a closer Conjunction formed, and a freer Communication opened with the Lord of Heaven, and his holy Angels, for Guidance, for Protection and Salvation. Being more enlightened than other Men, they will see the
Necessity

Necessity of a greater Watchfulness, a deeper Humiliation, and a purer Conversation, having learnt to believe that *to whomsoever much is given, of him will much be required.** It may therefore reasonably be expected, that they will be, of all other Men, the most meek and lowly, the most patient and contented, the most just and upright, the most diligent and active, the most merciful, kind and compassionate, this being the genuine Life and Spirit of Heaven, wrought and rendered operative in all pure Minds, receptive of the Truth of Heaven, according to the Degree of the Purity of that Truth which they receive, and the Measure of Obedience in which it is received. Hereby they will be taught a truly Christian Toleration and Forbearance towards all those, who as yet stand in imperfect Dispensations of divine Knowledge, and knowing that what God solely respects in every one, is Sincerity of Obedience to that Degree of Light, which is communicated, they will respect the same, and learn to love and reverence the Principle of Good in others, as much as in themselves; always giving this Principle the Preheminence
over

* Luke xii. 48.

over every intellectual Attainment whatsoever, because; in the Sight of God, it is infinitely more precious and more approved. They will not, therefore, contend any longer about Doctrines and Opinions, Forms and Ceremonies of Worship, or any such external Things; neither will they judge others from such Things, but, aware that what God requires and looks for in all, is a new Heart and a new Spirit, they will be anxious only about the Renovation and Regeneration of their own Hearts and Lives, that each may love his Neighbour better than himself, and manifest his Love by corresponding Works of Use and Service for the general Good. The sole Contention therefore will be, who shall be most humble, most charitable, most upright in his Intentions, most sincere and earnest in his Obedience, most watchful over himself, most attentive to the Good of others, and whilst each is striving that he himself may excel in these Virtues of Heaven, he will desire and pray earnestly that he may be excelled by all others, and that his Fellow-Men may be as much or more the Favourites of Heaven than he himself. In short, I conceive, and firmly believe, that under the present Manifestation of the
 pure

pure Doctrine of Truth, with which the World is favoured, every spiritual, rational and natural Power and Principle of the human Mind will be highly purified, perfected and exalted, through the heavenly Influences of an holy Love and Wisdom from the manifested JEHOVAH, producing its corresponding Image and Likeness of Righteousness, Truth and Peace, in the Earth, to the perfect Fulfillment of that figurative Prophecy where it is written, “ For
 “ *Brafs I will bring Gold, and for Iron I will bring*
 “ *Silver; and for Wood Brafs, and for Stones*
 “ *Iron; I will also make thine Officers Peace, and*
 “ *thine Exactors Righteousness. Violence shall no*
 “ *more be heard in thy Land, Wasting nor Destruction*
 “ *within thy Borders, but thou shalt call thy Walls*
 “ *Salvation, and thy Gates Praise.”* Isaiah lx.
 17, 18.

And this blessed and heavenly State of Life amongst Men, arising from a vital obedient Reception of holy and pure Doctrine, I conceive to constitute that glorious *New Church* spoken of by our enlightened Author, as pre-figured under the Character of *the Bride the Lamb's Wife*, and predicted by our Blessed Lord as about to be established under his second Advent, of which it is declared, that “ *the*
 “ *Tabernacle*

* *Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them their God;** a Church not to be limited by any external Forms or Ceremonies of Worship, neither to be pointed out by a *Lo here*, or *Lo there*, but universal as the Reception of heavenly Truth and Obedience to its Dictates, consisting of the upright and sincere in Heart amongst all People, Nations and Languages, and forming one Grand Body or Kingdom here on Earth, whereof the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Soul or Head, and of which all are living Members, who worship him in Spirit and in Truth. Wo be to those, who would endeavour to confine this blessed Tabernacle and Temple of the Most High and Holy One, within any Pale of their own framing, under the delusive Imagination, that any mere Opinion, Speculation, Doctrine, Form or Ceremony whatsoever, can of themselves constitute that spiritual Building, in which the Almighty and Eternal JEHOVAH, Jesus dwells, with all the Blessings of his parental Love, and the Powers of his Salvation! Whereas it must be very plain to every attentive

* Rev. xxi. 3.

attentive Reader, both of the sacred Scriptures and of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that the Church of Christ consists solely of the humble, the upright and the obedient, agreeable to those Words of the Lord himself, "*My Mother and my Brethren are these, which hear the Word of God, and do it;*"* and in another Place, "*My Sheep hear my Voice,*"† where to hear is to obey.

But methinks I hear you ask, Is not then this New Church to be distinguished by any particular Forms or Ceremonies of Worship? Is it to remain merely an internal spiritual Church, and not to be made known externally, by what Baron Swedenborg calls the External of a Church, and which he shews to be necessary, both to preserve and manifest its Internals? Are the Members of this New Church to continue mixed with the Members of the Old Church, in the Use of their imperfect Forms, which are in many Instances contrary to the Truth? or rather, is it not their Duty, and are they not particularly called upon at this Time, to separate themselves from external

C

Communion

* Luke viii. 21.

† John x. 27.

Communion with all other Societies of professing Christians, that so having a purer and more perfect Form of Worship, they may serve their God more in the Spirit and Truth of Devotion, and may likewise by their Examples and Preaching be instrumental in leading others to the Knowledge of the Truth?

I am well aware that such Questions as these will be asked, and are already asked by many; and as the Answer to them is a Matter of much Importance, and involves a Subject of nice and intricate Discrimination, about which the Minds of many are at this Time divided, I wish to be more particular in delivering my Sentiments upon it, and to deliver them with all due Deference to the Sentiments of others, but at the same Time with that Freedom to which every Member of the Church is entitled; and it is my sincere Prayer, to be directed herein by the real Truth, it being my first and ruling Desire, if I know my own Heart, to be so directed, and to be determined accordingly in all Judgment and Opinion on every Subject whatsoever:

There are two Points, it appears to me, which ought more especially to be attended to in the Decision of the above Enquiry, and by
which

which every Member of the Church should be guided and determined in his Judgment; 1st, how far a Separation from external Communion with other professing Christians is in itself at this Time reasonable, expedient, and tending to diffuse the Knowledge of the Truth? and 2dly. how far such a Separation is agreeable to the Spirit and Letter of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg? I say *at this Time*, because it must be obvious to every one, that in all Cases, what may be very right and expedient to be done at *one* Time, may be very wrong and inexpedient at *another*; and that it is a great Part of Wisdom to know the *proper Time* for doing every Thing, as appears plain from numberless Instances, but from none more than from the Parable of the *Wheat and Tares* spoken by our Lord, in which we read that the Reapers were urgent for making an *immediate* Separation between them, “ *Wilt thou, say they, that we go and gather up the Tares?*” but the Lord answers, “ *Nay, lest whilst ye gather up the Tares, ye root up also the Wheat with them; let both grow together until the Harvest.*”* Here is a Case in Point, by which it manifestly appears, that

* See Matt. xiii. 28. 29. 30.

that Men may be *too hasty* in doing what otherwise would be right and proper to be done; and that by such intemperate Haste they may do Mischief where they intended to do Good; and that therefore the Dictate of Truth and Prudence on all such Occasions teaches to wait patiently for the proper Time, in which the Good may be done without the Mischief.

The sole Question therefore seems to be this, Is it *now* the proper Time for the Members of the New Church to separate from external Communion with all other professing Christians, by adopting a Form of Worship peculiar to themselves? And doth it appear from Reason and from Considerations of Expediency, as also from the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that it is *now* the proper Time?

Suffer me to trespass upon your Patience a few Minutes longer, whilst I endeavour to answer these Questions by showing, 1st. what appears to myself, and to several Friends, with whom I have conversed and corresponded on the Subject, reasonable and expedient herein; and 2dly. what appears to us to be the Sense and Decision of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg on the Subject.

And

And first, in Regard to what appears to myself, and to several of my Friends, reasonable and expedient herein. We take it for granted, that in every Congregation of professing Christians, there are some who are in the real Desire of eternal Good, and consequently in the Desire of knowing eternal Truth, of Course in the Faculty of receiving the same, provided it be proposed to them without Prejudice, and in such a Manner as to do as little Violence as possible to those Appearances of Truth, in which they have been principled by Education from their early Years. Persons of this Description, we conceive to abound, more or less, in every Christian Community, and we cannot help regarding all such with an Eye of tender Love and Charity, as being very dear unto their heavenly Father, the Children of his House, the Sheep of his Fold, and about to constitute a Part of his glorious New Church and Kingdom, whensoever their Understandings shall become enlightened with the genuine Truths thereof. We conceive further, that it is our Duty, as Men and Christians, to aid such to the utmost of our Power, by leading them to the Knowledge of that Truth, which they are seeking with the Earnestness of
a sincere

a sincere Desire, agreeable to that Commandment of the Lord to his Disciples, "*Go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel,*"* and that on this Account we are bound by every Obligation of Charity, to remove out of their Way, every Stumbling-Block of Offence, which is likely to prejudice their Minds against the Doctrines which we wish them to receive, and which they also would be glad and thankful to receive from us, if fairly and prudently proposed. But for this Purpose, and with this View, we cannot think it right or reasonable to separate ourselves from such Persons, rejecting all their Forms and Ceremonies of Worship as impure and unholy, and establishing ourselves into a distinct Community in the Adoption and Use of other Forms and Ceremonies. We conceive that in so doing we shall excite in their Minds an unnecessary and insuperable prejudice against us and our Doctrines, which will operate most powerfully to prevent their receiving the Truth from us. We shall not have the same Influence to press upon them our Persuasions, whilst we separate from their Communion, which we should have had by remaining in their Communion. It is a
 Tenet

* Matt. x. 6.

Tenet of our enlightened Author, that all People have strong Prejudices in Favour of those religious Principles and Ceremonies in which they have been educated, and that the Lord never *breaks* but *bends* such religious Principles and Ceremonies,* and we dare not adopt a Rule of acting herein contrary to the Lord's, by *breaking* instead of *bending*. We conceive that if we do not observe this Law of the Divine Procedure, in Respect to weak and wandering Brethren, we cannot in any Sort be said to fulfill that other Command of *going to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*; but rather we shall act in direct Opposition to this Command by *going away from them*, whilst we separate ourselves from their Community, and consequently them from ours. For it is hardly to be supposed, that they will leave their Forms and Ceremonies of Worship to come to us, any more than we should leave ours, when adopted, and go to them. It is on this Account we think we are acting according to the Wisdom and Prudence of Charity, whilst we remain still in external Communion with the Old Church, in the Hope, and with the Design, of thus gathering many sincere and upright
 ones

* See Arcana Cœlestia, N. 1992.

ones into the Fold of the true Shepherd, who will gladly receive our Doctrines, if we do not reject their Forms, but who will assuredly reject both us and our Doctrines, in Case we offer any Violence to those Institutions and Establishments which they account most holy and sacred.

But we do not wish to rest this Matter merely on our own Judgments: We conceive that we are supported in these our Sentiments by the Judgment and Opinion of the honourable Author whose Writings we receive, as I shall now proceed to show in as few Words as possible, by laying before you further what appears to us to be the Sense and Decision of those Writings on this Subject.

It must be confessed it is not an easy Thing, to discover from the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, what his real Sentiments were in Regard to the Rejection of old Forms of Worship, and the Adoption of new Ones. He speaks indeed, in many Places, concerning the Necessity of rejecting the *Principles* and *Persuasions* of what he calls the Old Church, and points out the great Danger of mixing these with the Principles and Persuasions taught in the New Church, and this has been considered and con-
strued

strued by some as implying a Rejection of the *external Forms of Worship* of the Old Church, though I will challenge any Person to produce a single Passage throughout his various Writings, in which it is asserted, or even implied, that a Rejection of such external Forms *at this Time* is either requisite or expedient. But although there are no Passages in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, which express either the Necessity or Expediency of adopting at this Time new Forms and Ceremonies of Worship, under the present new Dispensation, there are several which imply both the Necessity and Expediency of great Caution and Prudence in making such external Changes:* And there is one Passage in particular which goes still further, in which it is declared in the plainest and most unequivocal Terms, that such external Changes *as yet ought not to be made*, but that the New Church, for wise and important Reasons therein assigned, ought to abide, for a considerable Time at least, in external Communion with the Old Church. As this Passage however is little known, and of Consequence has been little attended to, being

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* See particularly Arc. Cœlestia. n. 1992. 2180.

contained in one of the Author's larger Works, which has not yet been translated into English, I think it my Duty to quote it at full Length, for your Information and Instruction, first in the original Latin, and next in an English Translation, that so you may judge for yourselves concerning its true Sense and Import.

The Passage is taken from N. 764. of the Work entitled *Apocalypsis Explicata*, where the Author gives an Explication of these Words in the Revelations, *And the Earth helped the Woman*. After giving the Explication in his usual Method, according to the Doctrine of Correspondencies, he makes this Comment on his own Words, " Hæc ita intelligenda sunt; in antecedentibus dicitur, quod Mulier fugerit in
 " Desertum, ubi habet Locum præparatum a
 " Deo, et postea quod nacta sit Alas Aquilæ,
 " et volaverit in locum suum, per quæ significatum est, quod Ecclesia, quæ Nova
 " Hierosolyma vocatur, commoratura sit inter
 " illos qui in Doctrina Fidei separatæ sunt,
 " dum crescit in plenum, usque dum provi-
 " detur inter plures, sed in ea Ecclesiâ Draco-
 " nes sunt, qui separant Fidem a bonis
 " Operibus non solum Doctrina, sed etiam
 " Vita, at reliqui in eadem Ecclesia, qui
 " vivunt

“ vivunt Vitam Fidei quæ est Charitas, non
 “ Dracones sunt, tametsi inter illos, nam non
 “ aliter sciunt quam quod ex Doctrina sit
 “ quod Fides producat Fructus, qui sunt bona
 “ Opera, et quod Fides quæ justificat et salvat,
 “ sit credere illa quæ in Verbo sunt et facere
 “ illa: At Dracones prorsus aliter sentiunt;
 “ sed quomodo hi sentiunt non capiunt illi,
 “ et quia non capiunt, nec recipiunt; ex
 “ quibus patet, quod Ecclesia ex illis, qui
 “ non Dracones sunt, intelligatur per Ter-
 “ ram, quæ adjuvit Mulierem, et deglutivit
 “ flumen quod Draco ejecit ex Ore suo.
 “ Quales autem et quam astutæ et simul
 “ perniciosæ Ratiocinationes illorum, qui per
 “ Draconem intelliguntur, de Separatione
 “ Fidei a bonis Operibus, et de Conjuncti-
 “ eorum, sunt, alibi, volente Domino, reve-
 “ labitur, tum quod illæ Ratiocinationes sint
 “ modo apud Antistites eruditos, et non notæ,
 “ quia non intellectæ populo Ecclesiæ, et
 “ quod inde sit, quod Nova Ecclesia, quæ
 “ Sancta Hierosolyma vocatur, ab his adjuve-
 “ tur, et quoque crescat.” Which Words in
 English may be thus rendered; “ These
 “ Things (viz. what he had just been saying)
 “ are thus to be understood; it is said above,

“ that the Woman fled into the Wildernes,
 “ where she hath a Place prepared of God,
 “ and afterwards that she got the Wings of
 “ an Eagle, and flew to her own Place, by
 “ which was signified, that the Church,
 “ which is called the New Jerusalem, is to
 “ tarry (or abide) for a while amongst those
 “ who are in the Doctrine of Faith separate
 “ (from Charity and good Works), whilst it
 “ grows to the full, until provision is made
 “ (for its Establishment) amongst greater
 “ Numbers, but in that Church there are
 “ Dragons, who separate Faith from good
 “ Works not only in Doctrine, but also in
 “ Life, whereas the rest in the same Church,
 “ who live the Life of Faith, which is
 “ Charity, are not Dragons, although amongst
 “ them; for they know no other than that it
 “ is agreeable to (or grounded in) Doctrine
 “ that Faith produceth Fruits, which are
 “ good Works, and that the Faith, which
 “ justifies and saves, is to believe those
 “ Things which are in the Word, and to do
 “ them; whereas the Dragons are altogether
 “ of another Way of thinking; but what the
 “ Sentiments of these latter are, the former
 “ do not comprehend, and inasmuch as they
 “ do

“ do not comprehend, neither do they re-
 “ ceive: From which Considerations it is
 “ manifest, that the Church (consisting of or
 “ formed) from those, who are not Dragons,
 “ is meant by the Earth which helped the
 “ Woman, and swallowed up the Flood (or
 “ Stream) which the Dragon cast forth from
 “ his Mouth. But what is the Nature and
 “ Quality of the Reasonings of those who are
 “ meant by the Dragon, concerning the
 “ Separation of Faith from good Works, and
 “ concerning their Conjunction, and how
 “ cunning and at the same Time pernicious
 “ those Reasonings are, will be revealed, the
 “ Lord willing, in another Place; also that
 “ those Reasonings have Place only with the
 “ learned Rulers (or Dignitaries of the Church)
 “ and are not known to, because not under-
 “ stood by, the People of the Church, and
 “ that hence it is that the New Church,
 “ which is called the Holy Jerusalem, is
 “ helped by these latter, and is also encreased
 “ (or grows).”

In this Passage it is asserted in the plainest
 and most express Terms, that the new Church,
 called the Holy Jerusalem, is to tarry (or
 abide) for a while (*commoratura fit*) with the
 Old

Old Church, which is in false Principles of Doctrine, *whilst it grows to the Full, until Provision is made for its Establishment amongst greater Numbers*; and the solid and weighty Reasons assigned for this Non-Separation are, that the New Church may hereby *be helped*, and also *be increased* (or grow) from the Members of the Old Church, who are in Good of Life, although in false Principles of Doctrine.

Now I would here wish to ask this one single Question—Can it with any Degree of Truth or Propriety be said, that the New Church is as yet *grown to the full*, and that Provision hath been made for its Establishment amongst greater Numbers? Or rather is it not at present quite in its Infant State, confined comparatively to a few, and therefore requiring both *Help* and *Increase*? And if this be the Case, is it not expedient that it abide, for a while at least, with the Old Church, from whence that *Help* and *Increase*, according to the Testimony of our enlightened Author, are to come? And may it not of Course be attended with Danger and Mischief to attempt any Separation before such *Help* and *Increase* are *fully* afforded, just as it would be dangerous and mischievous for the natural Birth to be brought forth before the
full

full Time of Gestation, or for the Child to be weaned and taken from the Nurse or Mother, before it arrives at a proper Degree of Strength to bear such Separation?

Far be it from me to put an Interpretation upon the Author's Words which they will not bear; but I confess I cannot see what other Interpretation can possibly be put upon the above Passage, than as implying an absolute Expediency and Necessity for the rising New Church to continue in external Communion with the Old Church, *whilst it is growing to its Fullness*, as the fit and only Means of its receiving all that *Help and Increase*, which are absolutely necessary both for its Formation, its Growth, and its full and final Establishment.

The Advocates therefore for *immediate* Separation, as it appears to me, are reduced to this Dilemma, either to show that the Author's Interpretation of the Words in the Apocalypse, *The Earth helped the Woman*, is not grounded in Truth and Reason, or to show that the New Church is at this Time *grown to the full*, and that sufficient Provision has been made for its Establishment amongst greater Numbers. But as I am persuaded they will be unwilling to admit the former Position possible, so I am inclined

inclined

inclined to think they will be unable to prove the latter, since to assert, that the New Church is at this Time *grown to the full*, seems to me as preposterous as to assert that a Child of a Year old is a *full-grown* Man, or that a Plant is come to the Maturity of its Growth, when its tender Shoots are but just beginning to appear above Ground.

Nor will it be to any purpose for the Advocates for immediate Separation to urge, that the Forms of Worship used in the Old Church are, in many Instances, expressed in Words not agreeing with the Truth, or that its Ministers are corrupt, and that there may be Danger in the hearing such Ministers, and in joining in such Worship, and that the Conscience may be hurt thereby, for our enlightened Author must needs have been aware of these Objections, as being well aware both of the Imperfection of the Forms of Worship used in the Old Church, and of the Corruption of some of its Ministers, and yet notwithstanding all this we find him asserting that the New Church is still to tarry for a while with the Old, *whilst it is growing to its Fullness*, and gaining the *Help and Increase* necessary for its Existence and Subsistence.

And

And I cannot help being of Opinion, that had these Reasonings, grounded on the plain Sense and Import of the above Passage from our enlightened Author, been duly attended to by those who have been favoured with the Knowledge of the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem, they would not have been so hasty, either in London, Birmingham, or any other Place, to have adopted new Forms and Ceremonies of Worship, in a total Distinction and Separation from every other Community of professing Christians in these Kingdoms. I do not charge them with any ill Intention in what they have done; far from it; I believe them to have been actuated by a warm Zeal for the Truth; but I believe, at the same Time, that their Zeal hath not been tempered with a right Prudence and Moderation of Wisdom, agreeable to the Sentiments of the Author whom they hold so deservedly in Veneration. Mistaking those Passages, wherein he shows the Necessity of rejecting the Principles and Persuasions of the Old Church, and fancying them to imply a Necessity of rejecting all external Communion therewith, they hastily determined upon an entire Separation from every Form and Ceremony which was not in

exact Agreement with their own Ideas, not aware that in so doing they were acting in direct Opposition to their Author's Meaning and Sentiments, and were endangering the very Existence of that Church which they were desirous to establish, by depriving it of what is declared in sacred Scripture to be its proper *Help and Means of Growth.*

It may possibly to some of my Readers be a further acceptable Confirmation of the above Sentiments, to be informed, that the late Rev. Mr. Hartley, who was personally acquainted with the Author, and one of his most intimate Friends, and who translated the Treatise on Influx, and also wrote the excellent Preface to the Treatise on Heaven and Hell, was of the same Way of thinking, as he declared in several Letters which he wrote to me on the Subject, and which I have still by me: And I cannot help being of Opinion, that his Authority ought to have great Weight (if any Weight be wanting after what has been already said) in determining so important a Question, and in discovering to the World what the real Sentiments of Baron Swedenborg were on the Subject, since it is hardly possible to suppose but Mr. Hartley must have consulted

consulted with Baron S—— on a Point of such Magnitude, in which the Interests of the Church were so essentially concerned, and of Consequence must speak the Baron's Sentiments together with his own, whilst he declared himself, in the strongest Terms, averse to every Change at present in the External of Worship.

Would the Compass of this Address permit, I could here Point out some other Dangers to be apprehended by the New Church, from a sudden Separation from external Communion with other professing Christians, such as particularly the Danger of falling into a *Seclarian* Spirit, and thereby despising or thinking lightly of all others, who are not worshipping God according to certain Forms expressed in a peculiar Language; but I trust that what hath been already said will be sufficient to convince every candid Reader of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that such Separation is neither prudent nor expedient at this time, whilst the New Church is in it's present Infant State, nor yet agreeable to the sentiments of our enlightened Author.

I am however well aware that there are some Persons, in a certain State of the regenerate

Life, who, it is much to be feared, will remain yet unconvinced, and will not be prevailed upon to desist from their own Counsels, howsoever unreasonable and pernicious they may be proved to be. Such are they who are in the first State of Regeneration, under the first Reception of Truth in the Understanding, at which time Zeal for the Truth is usually very fiery and acrid, being not yet fully united with it's proper Good, so that they think, and judge and act more under the Influence of Truth than of Love and Charity. This State of the Truth is much treated of in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and may be seen particularly figured and described under the Person of Ishmael, Abraham's Son, of whom it is written, that he should be *a wild Afs Man, his Hands upon all, and the Hands of all upon him*.*
Even

* The Author's Description of a Person in this State is full of Instruction; "Such a Man, says he, "who hath such a rational Principle, that he is only "in Truth, although in the Truth of Faith, and not "at the same Time in the Good of Charity, is of this "Sort; he is morose, impatient, opposite to all "others, seeing every one as in a false Principle, "instantly rebuking, correcting and punishing; he "is without Pity, neither does he endeavour or apply
"himself

Even so all Persons in this State, under the Impulse of their fiery Zeal for the Truth, set themselves in Battle Array against all others who do not acquiesce exactly in their Sentiments and Opinions, yea, who do not express themselves even in their Words and Language, and like the Lord's Disciples of old, who appear to have been in a like Spirit, would *call down Fire from Heaven* to consume and extirpate every religious Opinion, Form, Ceremony and Observance, however venerable and respectable, which does not suit altogether with their own Ideas. If they are opposed by the Prudence of those who from their Age and Experience may be supposed capable of directing them aright, they call such Prudence by some ill Name, such as Timidity or time-serving Artifice, and misinterpreting Discretion to be Weakness, and sound Judgment to be Cunning, they abandon themselves to the Guidance of their own warm Imaginations without Controul, regarding every one as an Enemy or a Deceiver, who would attempt to

“ himself to work upon the Minds and Affections of
 “ others, for he regardeth every Thing from a Prin-
 “ ciple of Truth, and Nothing from a Principle of
 “ Good. See *Areana Cœlestia*, N. 1949.

to lead them to the Sobriety and Calmness of cool and deliberate Reflection: And what is the most unhappy Feature in the Characters of Persons in this State is, they are perhaps the last of all others to be convinced they are under the Influence of a wrong Spirit, being not at all aware that Zeal for the Truth can possibly expose them to Delusion, so that notwithstanding the Lord's Declaration respecting such Characters, *Ye know not what Manner of Spirit ye are of*, it is with the utmost Difficulty, and not without much Suffering and consequent Humiliation, that they are brought to believe that this Declaration doth at all respect or concern themselves.

In drawing the above Character, I trust I shall not be suspected of intending any personal Application of it whatsoever, this being the furthest Thing possible from my Thoughts: I only mean to point out a State in the regenerate Life, which all have alike to pass through who attain the Regeneration, and in which all are alike exposed to Danger; a State therefore which requires the utmost Caution with all, and in Regard to which, as we cannot be too circumspect ourselves whilst we are passing through it, so we cannot do a greater Deed of
Charity;

Charity, when we have passed through it, than to excite in others the same Circumspection.

Permit me then, my dear Brethren, by Way of Conclusion of this Address, to do this charitable Deed, by earnestly endeavouring to caution and guard you against the Influence of the above misguided Spirit both in yourselves and others. For this Purpose consider well the Danger to which you are exposed, whilst you are thinking and acting under the first Affection of Truth, before it be well conjoined with Charity, by Humiliation, Obedience, and combat against the evil Propensities of corrupt Nature. Your favourite Author warns you of this Danger in various Parts of his Writings, shewing you how Truth is at first received by all in much Impurity of the Affections, and in much Disorder of the Life, and that if the Mind be not very watchful over itself at this Time, the Evils of selfish and worldly Love, which are not yet removed, will mix themselves with the Truth, and thereby produce greater Mischiefs than if the Truth had never been known. Learn therefore to moderate your first Zeal for the Truth, by suffering the Spirit of Love, Mercy, Charity,

nity, Humility, and sincere Obedience to prevail over it, that so it may be guided and directed aright in all Things, and that you may never act from the Impulse of Truth only, but of Truth and Good conjoined in one. Judge others, not from their Opinions, but from their Practices, not from their Creeds so much as from their Lives, not from their external Forms and Modes of Worship, so much as from the internal Principles by which they are influenced therein; and judge them in this Manner, because you believe that God so judges them, who ever respects in Man the Tendency of the Will alone in Regard to Good, and Sincerity in the Pursuit and Practice thereof, and not any speculative Doctrines or Opinions separate therefrom. Let it thus be your chief Concern and Labour to cherish and call forth in all the Principle and Life of heavenly Good, under a firm Persuasion that if Men are in the hearty Desire of such Good, they will readily and willingly receive the Truth, but if they are not in this Desire, the Truth will not be received by them, or if received would but tend to encrease their Condemnation. Cast thus the Gospel Net on *the right Side* of
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the Ship, and you may then hope to *catch Men*, whereas if you do not first convince them that you are actuated by a real Zeal for their eternal Good, more than for any Change of Opinions and Forms of Worship, you may *toil all the night and catch Nothing*. There is therefore but one Kind of *Separation*, and but one Kind of *Change*, which I would at present recommend to you, and that is a Separation from all evil and false Principles of Heart and Life, and a consequent Change of Nature, that so by true Regeneration you may be led into that heavenly Spirit of solid Wisdom, grounded in an universal Love of Charity, and operative in all Christian Meekness, Moderation, Gentleness, and useful Works, which is the only Spirit in which you can ever hope to find Heaven yourselves, or to lead others thither. Convince the World thus, that the Temper and Spirit of the New Church or New Jerusalem, is not a *partial, Sectarian, or bigotted* Temper and Spirit, which excites Horror, and from which all wise Men flee away, but that it is *universal, not limited to a Sect, not servilely attached to Forms and Ceremonies*, consequently conciliating and amiable, and such as, like its Divine Giver, *will draw all Men unto it*. Let Man-

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kind,

kind see by the Order, Harmony, Sobriety, Purity and Peace of your Lives, that ye yourselves have found the Truth, and you may then have a good Hope to lead them to seek it, and to enable them to find it, where you have sought and found it, and will thus take a more probable Method of recommending the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and making Converts to his Doctrines, than if you should build an hundred new Places of Worship, and establish therein an hundred new Forms and Ceremonies, in every Town in the Kingdom.

Finally, let me entreat you to believe that what has been said in this Address proceeds from a cordial Affection towards you, and a real Concern for your eternal Interests, as well as for the general Interests of the Truth. Be persuaded that I bear you in my Bosom with a tender Care, lest in any Thing you should either be misled yourselves, or mislead others. If I know my own Heart, its continual Prayer for you is, that you may become *perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*. But with the Love which I bear unto you, I confess I cannot forget or be indifferent about those who have not attained unto your Knowledge, and yet are in the Desire thereof. For them

them also my Heart feels tenderly, accounting them my Brethren, to whatsoever Community of professing Christians they may belong, and whatsoever may be their present Doctrines and Opinions, believing them to be the true Sheep of the heavenly Fold, and that sooner or later, by Virtue of the Good which they love, and of the Truth which they are panting after, though as yet they have not found it, they are right dear in the Eyes of their God and Redeemer, and will finally be brought into the bright Light of the New Jerusalem.

May such also be dear and precious in our Sight! and may it become our joint Labour to extend the Blessings of the eternal Truth unto all such, by submitting as yet to the Use of their imperfect Forms of external Worship; by accommodating ourselves to their Weaknesses and tolerating their Prejudices; by removing thus every Offence which may be likely to hinder their Reception of the Truth; and especially by forming our own Lives according to the Spirit of heavenly Order, in all Love, Mercy, Charity, Humility and Moderation, that *so seeing our good Works*, they may be the more disposed to believe in and receive our
 Doctrine

Doctrine, and may thereby finally with us
glorify our common Father which is in Heaven!

Believe this to be the continual Prayer and
unceasing Desire of your affectionate Friend and
Brother,

THE TRANSLATOR.