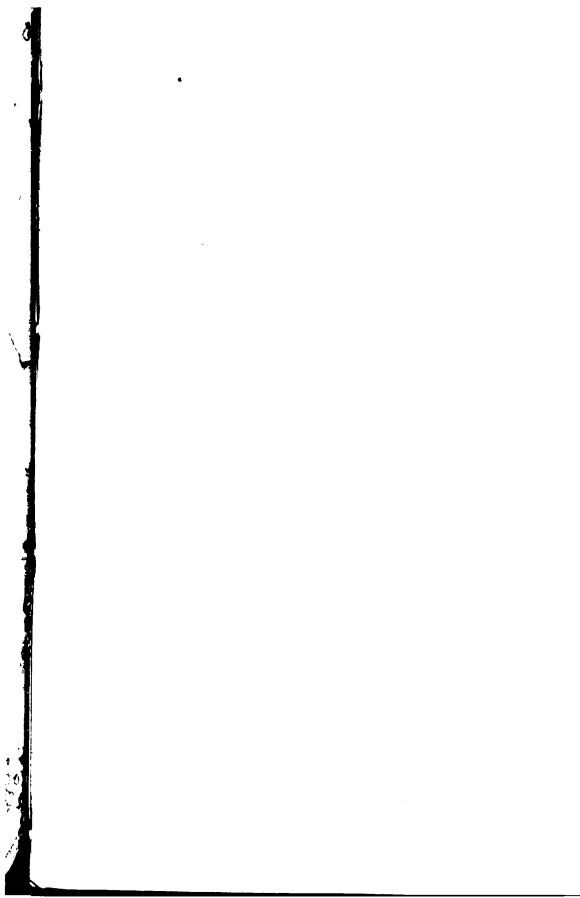


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AN APPEAL

TO THE

CANDID AND REFLECTING OF ALL
DENOMINATIONS,

IN REPLY TO THE

LETTER OF THE REV. W. J. SKIDMORE,

INCLUDING

REMARKS ON THE PRETENDED CASE OF THE
RECANTATION OF A SWEDENBORGIAN
ON HIS DEATH BED,

BY THE

REV. J. BAYLEY,

MINISTER OF THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH, ACCRINGTON.

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APPEAL.

BELLOVED BRETHREN,

The members of the New Jerusalem Church having had their doctrines assailed by the Methodists, and being anxious that truth should be known and received, addressed in a kind and conciliatory spirit their brethren who entertain other religious views from themselves, and offered the fullest investigation of the principles professed by both. In doing this we are unconscious of having been actuated by any spirit but that of reverence for the cause of that Saviour whom we adore, and a desire to obey his will by freely offering to others the teachings of heavenly wisdom that he has freely imparted to us. We are wishful to speak the truth in love, for we are deeply conscious that we owe no man anything but love—that while there are three great objects of christian regard, faith, hope and charity, the greatest of these is charity.

The members of the New Jerusalem Church are chiefly men who, when among other religious denominations, felt the want of clear light on the great truths of religion. They experienced the cloudy character of theology as commonly professed, and said, with good Dr. Watts—"It is certain there are several things in the Bible yet unknown and not sufficiently explained, and it is certain there is some way to solve these difficulties and to reconcile these contradictions. And why may not a sincere searcher after truth in the present age by labour, diligence, study, and prayer, with the best use of his reasoning powers, find out the proper solution of those

knots and perplexities which have hitherto been unsolved, and which have afforded matter for angry quarelling? Happy is every man who shall be favoured of heaven to give a helping hand towards the introduction of the blessed age of light and love." (chap. i. sec. 7.)

They have discovered the clearing up of their difficulties in the luminous doctrines they now enjoy, and having found the lost piece of silver, they call their friends and neighbours to rejoice in the recovered treasure. They know that thousands of sincere minds are like theirs have been, and they are wishful that these also should be partakers in the dawning of the blessed age of light and love.

They were well aware previously of the fearful condition of heart that frequently remains with a loud profession of piety, in connexion with systems of faith alone; but they were scarcely prepared for the exceeding bitterness of animosity, the exceeding degradation of demeanour, and the exceeding recklessness of slander which have been manifested by their adversaries. Disgusting and contemptible issues from the press have been made by parties who have had shame enough to conceal their names, but who have doubtless been by providence permitted to stigmatize themselves as we fear they will be denominated in heaven, as Frogs, Old Serpents, &c.* At length one has appeared different from the rest, not in the sanctity of its character, not in the christian tone of its style, not in the courtesy of its address, not in the accuracy of its statements, not in its language being less virulent or less slanderous, but in the circumstance that its author having somehow or other become placed in a position (that ought to be occupied by a christian and a gentleman,) has yet had the recklessness to place his name to a publication of insolence, that contemptuously violates all the liberality of feeling, candour of statement, and literary decorum that are among the few merits of the age in which we live. This production,

* Such are the names the authors have appended to their scurrilous productions.

though purporting to be from a minister of a religion whose meanest receivers are required to love not only one another, but even to love their enemies; which commands all who acknowledge its authority to unite all the human race in brotherhood with themselves when they approach the throne of mercy; and let the language of their hearts be *Our Father*, declaring all men to be their brethren; yet here is a minister, a master in Israel announcing that such is the desolation of all charity in his heart, that if he were to call members of the New Church his beloved brethren, he would be a hypocrite. "You must pardon me, says he, because I do not address you as my beloved brethren. No laws of courtesy shall induce me to act the hypocrite, or to give you titles of endearment to which you have no claim." Alas, we pity the poor man from our hearts! We smile at the vanity that led him to tell us so humiliating a fact, and we abhor the pretended religion of faith alone that leaves such feelings of uncharitableness and hostility to rankle round the heart. On the contrary, the religion of the New Jerusalem impels us to feel and to say, wherever we discern one who lives in love to the Lord Jesus Christ and the practice of his commandments, whatever be his creed—this is my brother, for he loves the Lord, and is a good man.* Such is the difference in the effect of faith only as exemplified in the declaration of this Wesleyan minister, and the union of charity with faith as ever taught in the church which is our glory, and our blessing.

* Wesley, with all his errors and changes, and he had many, was a man of sincere and enlarged mind. His definition of a Christian, is that of a New Churchman; see letter to Clarke, vol 16, p 27. Could any man answer these questions? Dost thou believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God over all, blessed for ever; (which, indeed, no Arian, Semi Arian, or Socinian can do?) Is God the centre of the soul? The sum of thy desires? Art thou more afraid of displeasing God, than either of death or hell, (which no wicked man can possibly do, none who is not a real child of God?) If I say a man could answer these in the affirmative, I would then gladly give him my hand. How different, this, from the spirit of Mr. Skidmore's letter. Its strain is—

"Grunt up a solemn, lengthened groan,
And curse all parties, but your own;
I'll warrant then, you are no deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer."

But the progress of this gentleman, *by courtesy*, is worthy of the declaration of his feeling at the commencement of his production. I profess to be a servant of Christ, says he, thereby insinuating that we profess to follow somebody else than Christ; and this style he continues through his tract, as though his doctrine of, and reverence for Christ, was for a moment to be placed in comparison with ours. We acknowledge Christ to be the first and the last, as the scriptures teach—does he? We acknowledge Christ to be the only God of heaven and earth—does he? We acknowledge Jesus to be the Everlasting Father—does he? Do not his doctrines represent Christ, instead of being on the throne of the universe as the majesty of heaven, to be before the throne as a petitioner, a pleader, a beggar only, for us, with his wounds open yet, and bleeding yet, entreating another who is God for us; and he calls adopting this degrading idea following Christ, and the worship of the New Jerusalem that permits no rival of the Saviour, that adores him as the only God, the only Saviour, the only King eternal, he calls forsaking Christ. This individual, in fact, reasons upside down; to cling the more closely to Jesus is with him to forsake him, to reduce him from being God over all, to be only a third of God in doctrine, and only a petitioner of God in thought, is to follow Christ. Surely there is a generation that “put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. But woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight.”—Isa., v. 20, 21.

This writer next indulges, on the same page, in a mass of rhapsody, intended to pass, no doubt, for fine writing, but as it is unsupported by a shadow of proof, and has no application whatever to the subject in hand, may be entirely passed over. He then deems it necessary, he says, that he should notice two publications that have been lately issued. The first is the “Correspondence with Mr. Pike.” And one would naturally suppose, that he intended, at least, to try to invalidate the declarations there, but no, he says;

“my reason for introducing this is not to confute the charge made in it concerning Mr. Pike and the Methodists, for the pamphlet is itself a sufficient confutation.” Well, why then notice it at all? If it be self-confuted, why not let it remain so? If he had no argument to offer respecting it, if he could not bolster up the cause it had declared false, why allude to the publication at all? It was that this worthy follower of a false and slanderous leader might gratify his disposition to malign, and his ignorant endeavour to display, by insinuating abominable charges that he could not prove. But his silly declaration that the object of the authors, (so he speaks,) was not to convict Mr. Pike and others of slander, but to make you (the Swedenborgians, as he terms them) believe that the Baron’s works have been misquoted and misrepresented, evinces that his folly is equal to his disposition to pervert. The treatise on Conjugal Love is one of the commonest works in the houses of the readers of Swedenborg. Its contents are well known; it is there to be immediately referred to. Can anything be more ridiculous, then, to say nothing of its wickedness, than the unfounded declaration that the authors of the correspondence, &c., had for their object, to keep the public and the *Swedenborgians* in the dark, respecting the character and tendencies of Swedenborgianism? Now, I am the person responsible for the whole of that paper, except Printers’ mistakes. I can best tell my motives in its publication, and in the presence of that Saviour whom this gentleman has daringly defied in presuming to judge motives, when Jesus said, “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.” I declare that my only motives were, to announce truth and to repel slander. “No proof, and utterly false,” was placed against the declaration that Swedenborg allows fornication and adultery, because it is as false and abominable as any charge can be; and I arraign this reckless imputer of wicked motives to answer for his conduct to that God, by whose laws we shall one day both be judged. But his style throughout evinces that he is

either entirely unaware of, or scandalously braves the commonest usages of right. He imputes all manner of evils to others, and offers not a particle of proof, but calls upon them to disprove them. Surely there is some cool head, some regarnder of common justice among his society, that can tell him that he who *first* makes a charge is the party called upon to substantiate the charge, and if he fail to do so, the disgrace he intended for others, recoils upon himself.

That Swedenborg maintained the inviolable excellence of chastity and marriage, the whole of the work on Conjugial Love was written to shew. I might fill pages with extracts to evince this truth. He says: "The ground and reason why no others can be principled in love truly conjugal but they who receive it from the Lord, that is, who come directly to him, and by derivation from him live the life of the Church, is, because this love considered in its origin and its correspondence, is celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, above every love implanted in the angels of heaven and the men of the church, as was shewn above; and these its distinguishing characters and qualities cannot possibly be given and have existence, except with those who are joined to the Lord, and by virtue of such conjunction are consociated with the angels of heaven, for these shun extra-conjugal loves, which are conjunctions with others than their own proper partners, as they would shun the loss of the soul, and the lakes of hell."—C. L. 71. Again: "The natural man whose conjugal love derives its pleasure only from the flesh, cannot approach to heaven."—C. L. 71. Again: "The Church with its truths and goods can in no wise have place except with those who live in love truly conjugal with one wife."—C. L. 76. Again: "Moral wisdom shuns evils and false principles as leprosy, especially the evils of lasciviousness."—C. L. 102. Once more: "Adultery ruins the soul, defiles the reason, pollutes the morals, and infects the body with disease; for adultery is not human but bestial, not rational but brutish, and thus not in any

respect christian but barbarous.”—C. L. 105. Indeed, I might load page after page with similar denunciations by Swedenborg, of the evil it is pretended he freely allows, exactly on the principle that it might be contended by an infidel partizan that our Lord allowed it when he said to the woman taken in adultery, “neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more.”—John, viii. 11.

Swedenborg says—“That when adultery has been once committed by an individual who has not had proper command of himself, either from being in a delirium at the time, or in a fit of insane drunkenness, but in the future course of his life abstains from it as a sin against God, in such case it is mild.”—C. L. 486, 487. That is, not in the sight of men, but in the sight of God. But this writer says, Swedenborg freely allows fornication, while E.S. really says; “fornication is lust, but not the lust of adultery, because it proceeds from the natural man, and in every thing which proceeds from the natural man there is concupiscence and lust, for the natural man is nothing else but an abode and receptacle of concupiscence and lust; inasmuch, as all criminal propensities inherited from the parents, reside therein.”—C. L. 448.

Again: “There are degrees of the qualities of evil, as there are degrees of the qualities of good; wherefore, every evil is lighter and heavier, as every good is better and more excellent. The case is the same with fornication, which, as being a lust, and a lust of the natural man not yet purified, is an evil; but, inasmuch, as every man is capable of being purified; therefore, so far as it accedes to a purified state, so far that evil becomes a lighter evil.”—C. L. 452.

So then, while E. S. says; “that fornication is only a principle of the natural man, whose mind is the abode and receptacle of lusts of every kind;” he is *allowing* it, while he says it is a lust, an evil that must be wiped away, he is *sanctioning* it. Oh, the soul sickens at perversions so malignant! We tremble, while we remember that Mathew, who first spread about the falsehoods respecting Swe-

denborg's imputed insanity, became insane himself; a Methodist local preacher, who, some years ago, in Yorkshire, charged E. S.'s writings with sanctioning impurity, a short time after was expelled, because he was an adulterer himself; another preacher, not of the same body, who loudly assailed the New Church in a similar strain, a few years ago in Accrington, had to leave his society in a neighbouring town, for this very crime. Their mischief came down upon their own heads, and their violent dealing upon their own pates."—Ps. vii. 16.

Such, in brief, is the foundation of the perverse charge of allowing adultery, made by persons who habitually preach that the vilest villain that ever lived, who repented and had faith just before his departure, would go direct to heaven. According to the Conference holden in Bristol, 1746, "In *whatsoever moment* we believe all our past sins vanish away, they are as though they had never been, and we stand clear in the sight of God."

And so, because Swedenborg says in a case of a person who has from imbecility fallen once into adultery, and lived a penitent, virtuous life. ever afterwards, the adultery is mild, he is to be condemned; while the Conference says—In "*whatsoever moment*,"—thus, the moment before the last breath we believe, *all our past sins*, though there had been a thousand adulteries, vanish away. And they are to be lauded and followed. O wonderful judgment! O unparalleled recitude! But may we not say to a Wesleyan minister—"cast out the beam out of thine own eye, then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. The Methodist doctrine of instantaneous salvation, is one of the strongest holds of sin—Swedenborg's maxim, "All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good," is the high road to heaven.

We next come to this writer's notice of the "Affectionate Address to the Methodists," and galled by the sensible and valuable evidences from experience there given of individuals who have felt and declare the light and

love of the New Jerusalem ineffably superior to the shades of Methodism, he sets himself not to reflect upon the fact as a serious mind would have done, not to make further enquiry as a reasonably cautious mind might have done, but at once falls to his chosen vocation, that of defending Methodism by discharges of mud. He says, "I have no means of ascertaining their genuineness. They may be genuine, or they may be mere *fabrications*. Yet only three lines further this same person admits that it declared any person, on making application, will have the names and addresses of the parties given to him. And yet he has no means of ascertaining whether the letters were genuine. Has he applied? Not he. Why did he not apply then? Because that would have deprived him of the opportunity of launching the twaddle and the insinuated calumnies of the remainder of the page. But although he admits that he knows nothing, and has not applied to know, and consequently has no right to say anything: this meek apostle of Methodism says, he has a right to conceive the writers were ignominiously expelled from Methodism, and no other church would receive them; or they are from persons who have voluntarily given up the religion of the Bible; or they are deranged in their intellect, or fearfully depraved in their hearts. I know as much of this writer, as he knows of the writers of the letters; have I therefore a right to suppose that no other sect but Methodism would have him; that he is deranged in his intellect, or fearfully depraved in his heart? Just as much as he has. To every candid mind, those letters breathe an incomparably superior tone, both of intellect and heart, than his letter. But in fact, his frantic bigotry, acting upon his ignorance of common courtesy; and argumentative decency impel him to the delusion that he has a right to use any foul inuendo and vile insinuation that he fancies will serve his purpose; and he rises in all the majesty of mud, to fire his volley against the hated approach of light.

We have next a perversion of a fact, and here every man may perceive, from the way in which this circumstance is represented, how likely opinions are to be truly and justly described. But how lamentable a state of mind must that be, in which such contortions of truth so constantly are made. He says; "he was told the names and addresses were given, but only on the condition *that he never divulged them.*" Knowing that this was untrue, and feeling certain that the respectable man (a Methodist local preacher) to whom they were given, would not represent the matter untruly, however much he might wish to serve his party, I immediately wrote to him the following letter, which, with *his own answers*, I subjoin. I do not affix his name, from delicacy to the feelings of one whom I believe to be a worthy man, though of other religious views than mine. There can be no doubt, however, of his being the individual referred to, and I feel certain it will not be denied :

MR. P—

Dear Sir,—I perceive in a letter, purporting to be from the Rev. Mr. Skidmore, the following words:—"I am told that a person did accordingly call, and that the names and addresses were given to him, but only on the conditions that he never divulged them.

These words can only refer to you, as you were the only person who requested and obtained the names and addresses a luded to and permit me to have from your-self the fact, whether you have; indeed so represented the matter to Mr. Skidmore.

1st question—Are you the informant of Mr. Skidmore?

Answer—No.

2nd—Did you represent the matter as he has written it either to him or others?

Answer—You gave me liberty to make them known to a few of my friends, if I thought fit, but they were not to be published without your permission.

3rd—Were not my words often repeated that you were not to *make them public* without my permission?

Answer—Yes.

4th—Did I not inform you that the reason of this was, that the writers had not given me permission to publish their names; but that if it were desired I would apply for, and no doubt should obtain it?

Answer—Yes.

5th—Did I not tell you that you were at liberty to write to them, and make any enquiry you thought fit from themselves?

Answer—Yes.

6th—Did I not inform you that any number of your friends who applied for them might have the names and addresses?

Answer—Yes, on the same conditions that I had them.

Now, may I not appeal to every honest and fair-dealing mind, whether in this case everything was not done that the interests of truth required? The applicant had the names and addresses freely given to him; he might mention them to his friends; any number of his friends might have them on application; he might write to them and make any enquiry from themselves.

Let any sincerely just man now say whether Mr. S. has given a true account, when he says *he was never to divulge them*. Is this fair? Is it just? Is it honest and legitimate controversy? Why not, if these persons have sounder views of divine truth than ours, bring forward their proofs in a spirit of love, as we have done in the Address alluded to? Because it was believed more likely to answer, to make slanderous charges, and spread perverted stories. But “The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thy eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.” —Isa. xxxvii, 22, 23.

We come now to the case of John Walker, and at the first blush of this story, I could not but smile at the straits to which the opposers of the New Church are driven. Unable to find a case of a living man who can give a rational account of himself, who has left the New Church for their contradictory notions; they rake up the account of some person who is dead, no doubt on the principle of “Dead men tell no tales.” But if we had no testimony in the case of this dead man, might we not fairly assume, that, as in the case of the person who applied for the addresses,

this writer has published the most glaring departure from truth, and as soon as the living person is applied to, he gives at once a different story; if we had had the opportunity of referring to this dead man, a correction as complete would have been given.

I have written to Bolton upon the subject, and the worthy leader of that society replies: "*I have investigated the supposed case of John Walker. I have examined the society's books, and questioned some of our most active and oldest members, and find that we have no knowledge of any person of the name of John Walker. We can confidently assert that for the period of thirty years no person of that name has been either an acknowledged member, a seat holder, nor an attendant at our worship.*" Such then is the trumpery case of John Walker.* If the case is not purely imaginary, it is one of an individual who had some speculative knowledge of the truth, but who did not love it—who did not even attend public worship,—and as the consequence of his evil life, "*his candlestick was removed out of his place,*" and writhing under the alarm of accumulated guilt, he took the spiritual poison of faith alone to make peace where there was no peace. Yes, it is thus sin is fostered—thus the commandments of God are made of none effect—thus a life of righteousness is made a non-essential—thus all the declarations of infinite mercy that we shall be judged according to our works, are presumptuously set aside. But woe unto such false prophets, "Because with

* Since no such person, as John Walker, could be found, as having been a receiver of the New Church doctrines, in Bolton, by our friends; I wrote to Mr. S., desiring to be furnished with the date of his death, and the precise place of his previous residence. I received the following reply, which, setting aside its implied impertinence, the reader will judge, whether it is the attendant of a good case, or whether our Lord's judgment is not the right one: "They love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."—John iii. 19.

"W. J. Skidmore has received a note from Accrington, signed J. Bayley, requesting to know the residence, &c., of the late John Walker, of Bolton, which he presumes is from the Rev. J. Bayley. The information Mr. B. requires, W. J. S. possesses, having received it from the surviving relatives of that unhappy man, who are persons possessing unimpeachable characters. W. J. S. however, cannot correspond with Mr. B. on the subject.

"Haslingden, March 16th, 1844."

lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way by promising him life."—Ezek. xiii. 22 And this case, if it should turn out to be a real one at all, is to be set against that of pious, intelligent, respectable individuals who are now living lives of righteousness and virtue—who were men of station, among the Methodists—and who, with one voice, declare that the transition from Methodism to the New Church was like the passage from darkness to light. Verily, this is an impartial judge!—A Daniel come to judgement.

But this reckless asserter says further: "I defy you to produce one instance in which a believer of the Lord Jesus Christ has in his last moments fled for refuge to your baseless fabric." Of course to do this as he has put it we should never attempt, as those who come to us come to the Lord Jesus Christ in his perfect character, as God over all blessed for ever.—Romans, ix. 5. But we suppose he means to say, in the impertinent style peculiar to him, that no one has embraced the New Church doctrines in the view of death. Let no person notice the slanderous manner in which he puts it; it is only his way, poor man.

Now, if this writer will rest any argument upon it, I will furnish him with a dozen instances. I will just furnish him with one for his inspection to digest, along with his bootless defiance; the name, address, and authentication are at the service of any applicant. The occurrence detailed took place only a few weeks ago, and is related by a most respectable tradesman in Preston.

Dear Brother,—The name is——. Divine Providence has enabled me to be useful to the young man in opening his mind to behold the beauties of the New Church truth. He has long been labouring under a broken constitution, and came to me a customer, and finding him to be a person of strict integrity and of a religious turn of mind, our conversation frequently turned that way, and I found he had an appetite for genuine truth. I led him on till he saw that God is one in the person of Jesus Christ, and that the Word is a great storehouse of heavenly blessings which display

themselves in rich profusion when the literal sense is uncovered. He has been confined to the house for some weeks, and as often as I called on a Monday, in my peregrinations through the town, we invariably had an agreeable conversation, and he often exclaimed, "Well, I never heard the scriptures so beautifully explained before." He was very happy on Monday when I conversed with him on the divine goodness, the nature of redemption as being a divine work, and that salvation is a thing altogether distinct, that we are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; and also when I came to treat on the nature of death and heavenly joy. That natural death is not a consequence of Adam's transgression, but was a law of the creation, and from the foundation of the world there are all the appliances of love and accommodation for our birth and reception into the spiritual world, and of a more excellent kind than what accompanies our birth into the natural world. He was in extacies, I remember, when we were on the subject of baptism and the holy supper; when I took occasion to illustrate the miracle of changing water into wine, he was much delighted and said he never saw anything so beautiful and instructive. On Tuesday his friends saw he was dangerous, and urged him to make a will; he sent for me to do it for him, and happily I succeeded in embodying his wishes in a brief form, and he signed it in the presence of another person and myself. I afterwards read our service in the liturgy for the visitation of the sick, which was very reasonable and appeared to allay every fear. His end was very calm and peaceful; he was conversing cheerfully with some acquaintances till about half-past ten on Wednesday night, and he departed before eleven. I have been thus particular because in our conversation he often said, "I wish my Father and relations could hear you, for I never heard the scriptures unfolded so well before."

This then is one case.

To illustrate how real New Churchmen are supported in death by the truths that illuminate and guide them in life, we will give two more out of the hundreds that are at hand. The first is that of the father of the celebrated Dr. Warren, who received our doctrines after he had been fifty years a Methodist.

Died, at Liverpool, January 14, 1833, in the ninetieth year of his age, Mr. Samuel Warren, (Father of Dr. Warren.) This gentleman, in former life, belonged to the Wesleyan Methodists, with whom he remained fifty years, and was one of the warmest supporters of that body. After a variety of changes in worldly matters, he was at length led to genuine peace and rest.

From earliest infancy he was a seeker of the truth; and for some time previous to his acquaintance with the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, he had a clear discernment that the Lord was God alone. The declaration of Jesus that the scriptures testify of Him, led him to the conclusion that they testified of Him only.

Several years ago he had a most beautiful dream or vision, which being repeated three nights successively, made so great an impression on his mind, that he never failed to relate it to encourage new beginners in the way of truth. In it he had a clear view of the New Jerusalem as described in the Revelation, only instead of precious stones, luxuriant fruit trees were the foundations. Soon after he saw the works of our scribe—he attended our chapel—and the first sermon he heard was from Rev. xxi. 2; when the minister, Mr. J. Bradley, then of Newcastle, described in a pleasing style, the meaning of the New Jerusalem.

Several pleasing anecdotes might be related of the deceased—one shall suffice: When it was known amongst the Methodists that he had received the New Doctrine, they deputed the Rev. J. Wood, one of their most influential ministers, to wait on him and dissuade him from reading the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. When the Rev. Gentleman entered, the following dialogue took place: “Well, brother Warren, I hope you read your Bible?” “Yes, bless the Lord, I do read it and understand it too more than ever.” “But,” says Mr. Wood, “I hope you don’t read any foolish books;—the Bible, the Bible only, is the book for you.—read nothing but your Bible.” “Surely,” replied our friend, “there can be no harm in my reading a little in the Methodist Magazine, or Wesley’s Sermons?” “Well, no,” said Mr. Wood, “but don’t read foolish and visionary books.” “I suppose you mean Swedenborg’s?” added Mr. Warren, “but I tell you I shall not cease to read them unless they are proved to be false. Till then, sir, neither brass, nor silver, nor iron, nor *Wood* itself, shall hinder my reading those works from which I derive good. If you approve of Wesley, I approve of Swedenborg.”

Our friend was baptized into the New Church about four years and a half ago; he was zealous in living according to the truths of which he made profession, and intimately acquainted with the Holy Word. He was especially partial to the Rev. S. Noble’s sermon on the Trinity, &c.; and he invariably recommended it to all. Frequently he has said, that if another copy could not be obtained, he would not part with it for one thousand pounds.

In his dying moments he was much engaged in prayer and praise. All his converse was about spiritual and celestial things. He partook of the sacred elements with profound humility and devotion; after which he appeared greatly refreshed. He died in peace fully confiding in the mercy of our God, whereby the

day-spring from on high hath visit'ed us. He enjoyed, during his last illness, a delightful calm; he said but little, being excessively weak. "I am going very fast," said he, "to my eternal home—to the beautiful city, New Jerusalem." Shortly after which he emitted the spirit, and left this world for ever. May every reader essay to follow him to that home where joys serenely grow, by preparing to meet his God—even the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. At his request, a funeral discourse was delivered from Isaiah, ix. 6.

INTELLECTUAL REPOSITORY.

We add another of a different kind, but equally evincing the triumphant glory that surrounds the close of a New Churchman's life, and his estimation of Baptist views at that time:

On February 29th, aged 52, in the city of Bath, John Charlesworth Howarth. The deceased was descended from a respectable family, a few miles from Leeds, Yorkshire; he had left the place of his birth twenty-two years, and had since taken up his abode in the county of Somerset. I was informed by him that his father, who was connected with the clothing business early in life impressed him with the necessity of leading a moral course; and by his mother were instilled into his mind the principles of religion and piety. She also endeavoured to impress him with the principles and doctrines of the old church; but, as possessing naturally strong reasoning powers, he examined the matter for himself, and conscientiously believing them to be founded in error, he never embraced them. Though in this doubtful state as to the old church doctrines, he did not (as thousands have done) fly to Deism, or Atheism, for succour; but to the age of 40 years he stood on neutral ground, and it was not till he became acquainted, some twelve years since, with a Mr. Rumbold, the author of a curious work, called, "The Golden Key," that his attention was awakened to the writings of Swedenborg, lent him by that gentleman. It was at this period that his mind seemed to be awakened from a deep sleep, and the kind conversation of this intelligent gentleman placed him beyond doubt as to the internal holiness of the Sacred Word. From this period, he told me his mind never lacked of the bread and wine of heaven, on which it feasted with a zeal, that, from the diligence with which he read, almost deprived him of his eye-sight. He told me he plainly discovered, that from the period of his becoming acquainted with the works of the Hon. E. Swedenborg, he could, without vanity, declare he became a better man.

As it was the earnest wish of the deceased that his history (in regard to his spiritual concerns) should be made known to the

church. I will, as briefly as possible, state it in his words, as delivered to me at various times during my daily visits to his sick bed side. "I was," said he, "proud and haughty from my birth, and this spirit was fostered and fanned by my father, under the guise of keeping myself respectable." This, he declared, had been the rock on which he had split; "But now," said he, "that my earthly body is borne down by the weight of disease, my mind is bowed down also; and now it is that I am convinced of my utter nothingness, and the love, power, and mercy of the Lord: and now," said he, smilingly, "that proud and wicked spirit is gone, it is crushed to rise no more: my happiness, my delight, and my confidence, are now such as words cannot describe, and what must be felt to be known. My soul," he continued, "is as strong as a lion." A Baptist minister, whom he had often conversed with, when in health, called on him some days before he left this world, who began by asking him if he still continued to rely on the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church, at the same time telling him, "that if he did not acknowledge an intercessor in the person of Jesus Christ, as the second person in the Godhead, he could not possibly enter heaven." Mr. H. answered in these words: "My friend, I recognise but one God, as you know, in one Divine Person, namely, the great Jehovah Jesus, who is at all times full of love, wisdom, and mercy; so wise, and so good, that he is incapable of being taught by any; who declares that his glory he will not give to another; and who further states, that he and the Father are one, and that whosoever seeth him seeth the Father." Quoting at the same time many more strong passages in proof of his faith from the Holy Word. He concluded these remarks by telling the minister (Mr. S.) he was labouring under a dreadful delusion, and begged him seriously to consider the matter. "You see," exclaimed Mr. Howarth, "before you a dying man, but one who would not change his present temporal condition, shocking as it may appear, to come back into the world, for all the treasures of the earth! and that same man that now addresses you, is a firm believer in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church, who since his reduction to this deceased state, is more and more confirmed in the truths made known to the world by E. Swedenborg. I look," said he, "on death as a mere matter of course, and hail it with delight." The minister was not able to answer a word, but wept aloud. It may not be improper to state, that this minister is now one of the greatest enemies of the New Church in Bath. Seeing his wife shedding tears on the morning of his death, he anxiously desired her not to do so, assuring her, that did she but know the immense happiness he enjoyed, she would envy him. On the Thursday previous to his death, he underwent the rite of baptism, with two of his children, and on the day following, I

communicated to him the sacrament of the Lord's supper. His last words were, that he was happy, and in the best of company. He could, he told me often, see heavenly beings on either side of his head; and towards the last many visited him, some in white, and some in scarlet raiment, whose countenances were so beautiful and bright, as not to be imagined. Whole nights, he told me, appeared to him but as one hour. He liked to be alone, and without a candle in the room. His wife has since told me, that during his long illness, he never once uttered a single complaint, but looked on his great affliction as the greatest of blessings to bring him to God. He anxiously desired me to bring as many doubting members to see him as possible; and I can only say, on taking leave of the subject.—Would that all such could have witnessed his sufferings, his confidence, and his hope.

INTELLECTUAL REPOSITORY.

And now, in conclusion, may I not ask, could there have been a more complete disclosure of the uselessness of a religion of faith only, to repress and expel a spirit of uncharitableness, than the letter of the writer whom I have answered. Exasperation, insolence, and bitterness, rankle in every line. We don't take the same views of religious truth as he, therefore, we are not christians at all. He and his correspondent rave continually about our forsaking Christianity. He knows (O second Solomon!) what agonising pains of conscience we have, and must have. My pen almost laughs while it writes the man's emptiness. And he defines, and he denies, and he denounces, with all the fury that Don Quixote attacked the windmills. But it is the spirit of his party, the spirit of the Methodist priesthood. Their grand object is to grasp in the country, power and pelf. Who hold the r dupes in chains so tight as the Methodist priesthood? Who have been so dead a weight on the progress of civil and religious liberty, as they? When all religious bodies united in Conference to denounce the injustice that curtailed the people's bread, and thousands were starving; who discountenanced the proceeding and evinced the melancholy instance of only one stepping forward, and that one at the hazard of his own bread? The Methodist priesthood. If there be a body that needs

more than another to be pilloried on the high stage of the world as the enemies of rational illumination and liberty, both for soul and body, it is the Methodist priesthood. It is not only against those who differ from them in doctrine, that the fangs of their malice are presented; but let a man, however pious, however intelligent, however worthy, object to the exclusive possession of power and money, and at once he is consigned to eternal perdition. Witness their numerous divisions. Against what body, but the Methodist priesthood, could the black list of crimes against religious liberty, be exhibited, that is, given only in one small pamphlet, by Mr. Cooper, of Lincoln, given in 1835? These persons were all expelled for desiring the people to have a share in the government of the body.

I challenge you to deny the facts if you can.

In the autumn of last year, the arbitrary expulsion, at Manchester, of Mr. John Greenhalgh; and also, "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," of Captain Barlow; by the Rev. John Anderson.

In December last, by the Rev. S. Jackson, superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit, the expulsion of Mr. David Rowland, leader and local preacher, in defiance of a written protest against the expulsion, signed by two-thirds of the meeting: also, the violent expulsion, without a trial, of Messrs. Ormes, Brook, Burnett, and Gleave, leaders, at the same meeting.

In the same month, by the same minister, at Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool, the expulsion of Mr. H. Pooley, without a vote taken in any form whatever,—the Reverend Excommunicator affirming in a strain of elegant invective kindred to your own, that the professions made by Mr. P. and the association of attachment to Methodism were all "humbug!"

In the same month, by the Rev. George Marsden, superintendent of the Liverpool South Circuit, the violent expulsion of Mr. Shorley, leader and local preacher; and also of Messrs. Widdows and Farrar, private members worshipping at Mount Pleasant Chapel, Liverpool.

In the same month, by the same minister, the expulsion of Mr. John Beynon, local preacher and trustee,—the superintendent replying, when the leaders demanded the case to be put to the vote, "No, we cannot do that!" Also the expulsion of Mr. Henry Joyce, leader, by the same minister, and under similar circumstances.

In the same month, the expulsion of Messrs. Carne, Lawry, Spry, Trethowan, Hallett, Uglow, and Johns, leaders, local preachers, and trustees, in the Truro Circuit, Cornwall, by the Rev. John Baker, superintendent; he exclaimed to the leaders, "I see you are all against me, but I don't mind; they are no longer members of society!"

In January last, the expulsion, without a trial or attempt at one, by the Rev. Mr. Blundell, of Messrs. Dale and Curtis, local preachers, in the Warminster Circuit.

In the same month, by the Rev. Thomas Dunn, superintendent of the Carlisle Circuit, the expulsion of Mr. Cox, leader and local preacher; twenty-four out of twenty-five leaders present, protesting by a written document against the expulsion!

In the same month, by the Rev. John Anderson, the arbitrary expulsion of Mr. Hughes, of Manchester, leader; six leaders giving in their class-books in disgust at the expulsion, before retiring from the meeting.

In the same and following month, by the Rev. George Marsden, Liverpool, the arbitrary expulsion, without taking a vote, of Messrs. Cole, Bridson, Christian, Morgan, Stubbs, and Colthurst, leaders, local preachers, and trustees, connected with the chapel at Pitt Street.

In February last, the expulsion, without taking a single vote, of Messrs. Griffiths, Edwards, Thompson, Parry, and Wallace, local preachers, leaders, and trustees, in the Northwich Circuit, by the Rev. Mr. Sugden, superintendent.

In March last, the expulsion of T. P. Rosevear, Esq., of Barne Park, Cornwall, by the Rev. Aquila Barber, superintendent; with sundry other airs of wanton authority shewn by the same dignitary, and the consequent loss to the conference of fourteen chapels, and the whole of Camelford Circuit.

In the same month, the summary expulsion, by the Rev. Geo. Marsden, of Messrs. Hailey, Sanderson Taylor, Johnson, Byrne, Fegan, Martin, Bennian, Thorpe, Story, Lindsay, Day, and Harrison, leaders attached to the societies at Mount Pleasant and Pitt Street chapels, Liverpool.

In May last, the expulsion of Mr. Whittaker, local preacher in the Stockport Circuit, on the sole authority of the superintendent.

In June last, the expulsion, from the office of local preacher, of Mr. John Cain, of Douglas, in the Isle of Man, by the Rev. S. Broadbent, superintendent; fifty-six out of sixty-two members of the meeting protesting against the expulsion.

On the 30th of the same month, the expulsion by wholesale of four leaders and their classes, consisting of fifty members, at Dixon's Green Chapel, Dudley, by the Rev. Thomas Edwards, superintendent; the said grand inquisitor crossing their names out and laughing while the members sat, some weeping and others remonstrating against his conduct!

These men were expelled and excommunicated, only for differing in matters of discipline from the priesthood. Such is the evil spirit of the party, and to this we owe the disgraceful tone of insolence of Mr. Skidmore. But he has not now to do with dupes who fear the dragon. The truth has made us free, and we are free indeed. The excommunications of these pigmy popes move only our pity, and from the high mountain of love to God, and confidence in his mercy, while the standard of truth is over us, and we walk in his ways, we offer the helping hand to all and cry, "come out of her, my people, and be not partakers of her sins."—Rev., viii. 4.

