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No. 80.

THE SWEDENBORG LIBRARY.

A

PLEA

IN BEHALF OF

SWEDENBORG'S CLAIM TO INTERCOURSE

WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

COMPILED FROM HIS WRITINGS.

BY GEORGE BUSH.

NEW YORK:

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## TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

The present number closes the series of the Swedenborg Library. The article will be seen to be one which appeared in two consecutive Nos. of the N. C. Repository, and consequently will not be new to the readers of that work. But as a considerable portion of the subscribers to the Library are not subscribers to the Repository, it will have the recommendation of novelty to them, and as to others, we trust they will be satisfied when informed that we give 48 pages instead of 16, and at the same price, besides affording them an opportunity to lend or give away a valuable tract which they already possess in another form. Our object was to stereotype this number for general circulation, and this we could not well do without making it a part of the Library series. We trust that the use to be accomplished by it, will serve as an apology for giving our readers this instead of a strictly original number. The evidence accumulated in behalf of Swedenborg's claim to intercourse with the spiritual world will be seen to be very striking, and as this is the point on which it is all important that incredulity should be removed, we scarcely know of a greater service that could be performed to the cause of truth than by presenting the testimony on this head in the convincing manner here attempted.

A title page and a table of contents accompanies the present No. for the benefit of those who may design to have the work bound up in a volume. It will be borne in mind, however, that in this we have reference only to that department of the work covered by the "Memorabilia," as it is presumed that the same reasons will not exist for binding the "Extra" series, which consists, for the most part, of good sized volumes, to wit, the "Documents concerning Swedenborg" and the "Replies" to Drs. Wood and Pond. Still, if any one should desire to make up a bound volume somewhat larger than that which would be constituted by the "Memorabilia" alone, he can include some of the minor Extras, as the "Reply to Mr. Emerson," "The Last Judgment," &c. The list of the several tracts on the last page of the cover will be important as a guide in the selection of matter for the book-binder. The "Spiritual Diary," forms an entirely independent work which, when completed, will of course be bound by itself.

And now a few closing words on *pecuniary* matters. Our terms of subscription have always been announced as *payment in advance*. With these terms a considerable portion of our subscribers have all along punctually complied. In the case of others it has been found difficult, from various causes, to preserve a rigid adherence to our rule. The consequence is, that our books show at this moment a large amount of arrearages, the want of which presses as a very heavy burden on both the Editor and the Publisher. As to the Editor, the work at its commencement was nearly his entire dependence for his daily bread. It was undertaken on his sole responsibility, and thus conducted through the first two volumes, or to No. 32. Finding, however, that he was embarrassed in his higher labors by necessary attention to the financial department, he entered into an arrangement with the publisher—the only one

*The Swedenborg Library.*

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SELECTIONS

FROM THE

MEMORABILIA

OF

SWEDENBORG;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF HIS

DOCTRINES AND DISCLOSURES.

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BY GEORGE BUSH, A. M.

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NEW-YORK:

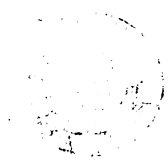
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## A PLEA

### IN BEHALF OF SWEDENBORG'S CLAIM TO INTERCOURSE WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

COMPILED FROM HIS LIFE, LETTERS, AND WORKS.

THE great and paramount fact to be established in regard to Swedenborg is *the reality of his intercourse with the spiritual world*. While it is admitted and contended that his theological doctrines are, in themselves considered, in the highest degree rational and scriptural, it is still affirmed with equal confidence, that they are entirely beyond the reach of unassisted reason : that although their truth may be seen and recognized when distinctly announced, yet that the annunciation could never have been made by one who was left to the exercise solely of his native powers, however heightened by the most elaborate cultivation or invigorated by long continued use. If this shall be construed as an implication that the Christian Church has been hitherto in darkness as to the true sense of the Scriptures, we admit the charge, so far as their *interior spiritual purport* is concerned ; and to the question, why the true explanation should have been so long delayed, we reply, for the same reason that the Lord's Second Coming and the establishment of the New Jerusalem was prophetically deferred to a late age of the world, for with these events we hold that Swedenborg's mission is indissolubly connected. It was on this ground that he was enabled to make his Revelations. Our conviction then, on the score of his doctrines, rests upon the fact that they are built upon the very inmost laws of being—upon the principles of *ontology* itself—a region which has never been penetrated by the unaided intellect of man, and which is, by common consent, placed beyond the reach of its researches. Take for instance the simple point of the love-element, which he makes to be the ground work, the substratum, of all existence, and the parent of thought, and seeing how it stands related in his system to the whole fabric of our being, we shall find that nearly every great doctrine of Revelation receives its construction from the light thrown upon it by this fundamental fact in our interior moral economy. Apart from it neither the true idea of the Divine Trinity, of Redemption, of Regeneration, of Justification, of Salvation, of Heaven and Hell, can be adequately understood. But this knowledge of the central law of our being, this grand discovery of love as the *esse* of our nature, and of thought as its *existere*, manifestation, or form, could never have been

achieved but by means of a superhuman insight into the most hidden arcana of the created universe, and an absolutely angelic perception of the properties of its uncreated Author. In other words, it required an illumination which was equivalent to a positive intromission of the revealer's spirit into the world of spirits, in order to make known the essential constitution of the human mind. So far then as the vertices of all revealed doctrines depend upon the essential laws of our spiritual being, so far was the necessity indispensable of precisely that prerogative of supernatural enlightenment to which Swedenborg lays claim. It is consequently altogether vain to think of separating the doctrines from the disclosures, and of admitting the truth of the one while at the same time denying the reality of the other. When the doctrines are clearly understood it will be seen to be absolutely impossible that he should ever have been able to announce them in this world, except upon the assumption that he was taught their veritable grounds in the other. They are the legitimate issue of the translation of his spirit into the spiritual sphere. That such a translation is intrinsically *possible*, must be conceded by every one who reposes faith in the scriptural oracles, in which we have numerous instances of its occurrence. But the admission of its *possibility* in any case advances us far towards the admission of its *probability* in the case of Swedenborg. The only question that then remains is the question of the *reasons* which may be assigned for a belief in the fact, and of the *nature of the evidence* by which the claim is to be substantiated, and this we shall consider more at length in the sequel.

We have spoken of this interior illumination as "supernatural," notwithstanding we are aware that this term may be said to be improperly applied to phenomena of this kind, especially as Swedenborg himself, in his second letter to the Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt (*Doc. concern. Swed.* p. 169), says in respect to his disclosures to the Queen of Sweden (*Doc.* p. 92), that "it is entirely true, but it should not be regarded as a miracle; it is but one of those *memorabilia*, of the same kind as those concerning Luther, Melancthon, Calvin and others. All these *memorabilia* are but testimonies that I have been introduced by the Lord into the spiritual world, as to my spirit, and that I converse with spirits and angels." From this we are at liberty to infer that the opening of the spiritual senses, which is but another name for intromission into the spiritual world, is in strictness a *natural* process, or, in other words, does not imply an absolute infraction of the laws of spiritual order. The truth is, man is constituted, by his very creation, an inhabitant at once of the spiritual and the natural world, and though his association with spirits is not ordinarily a matter of *consciousness*, yet it may become so under the peculiar circumstances without any violation of the laws of his being, any more than such laws are vio-



rated by the fact of his regeneration, which is in effect the opening of the spiritual degree of the mind, or the actualizing of an inherent potentiality of his nature, resulting normally from his shunning evils as sins, and thus putting himself into an attitude for receiving the divine influx, upon which regeneration depends. All this, however, does not, in ordinary cases, amount to such a degree of spiritualization, as to confer upon its subjects the power of *conscious* intercourse with the inhabitants of the world unseen, though it doubtless approximates it in proportion to the measure of regeneration actually attained. But in the case of Swedenborg we suppose such a vast advance beyond the ordinary elevation of the renewed mind—such an harmonious development of the whole man, physical, intellectual, and moral, that he passed, by a kind of natural transition, into the state of open or conscious intercourse with the spiritual world. It was thus in fact a virtual anticipation, during his mortal life, of that unfolding of the interior faculties which awaits, sooner or later, every regenerate soul after death in the progress of his life in heaven. The theory of this translation is well expounded by Mr. Clissold. “Being, from his earliest years, of an humble and pious disposition; a spiritual mind having been formed within him; his natural mind, which, by the Divine blessing, had been sufficiently guided into the true principles of science and philosophy, was capable of being brought into such a correspondence with the laws of the heavenly kingdom, that there could be an influx from the latter into the former, and hence, an intercourse between one and the other. This is the state in which, as Swedenborg shows, man was created to live. This was his first and natural state; his present darkness being his last and unnatural state; his spirit being as truly designed to commune with heaven within, as his body with the natural world without. Thus, when the Word of God has filled the internal man with spiritual truths, when the natural mind is filled with natural truths, and when, by the process of regeneration, the natural is brought into correspondence with the spiritual, the whole man becomes regenerated, the image and likeness of God, a heaven in its least form, a temple of Divine light and love; and he is a living fulfilment of that prophecy of old ‘Behold! the 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, and be their God.’—(Letter to Abp. of Dublin, p. 196).

Why, then, it may be asked, do we denominate the process in Swedenborg’s case “supernatural,” a term so commonly regarded as tantamount to *miraculous*, which he himself expressly disclaims? Our reply is, that we deem it due to a just estimate of the mission with which he was entrusted, to hold it up as implying a *special designation*, on the part of the Lord himself, of Swedenborg to the office of herald

or proclaimer of the New Dispensation of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and of expounder of the sublime mysteries of Heaven and Hell, and the laws and phenomena of the other life. To this work we conceive him to have had an *express vocation*, as truly as had John the Baptist to his function of harbinger of the first advent. And we employ the term "supernatural" with a view to counteract an opposite impression; for the idea that such a state as that into which Swedenborg was brought is *merely* natural and normal, will be very apt, in many minds, to draw after it another, viz: that there was nothing special in his case; that it was simply a superior kind of *clairvoyance*; and that consequently no peculiar authority or sanctity can be supposed to attach to his revelations, inasmuch as they might have occurred to any one else who should have chanced to be as happily moulded and *balanced* in his constitutional temperament. Just so far as the phenomena in his case can be resolved into *idiosyncrasy*, the claim to a special mission is vacated, and his alleged revelations sink to the level of mere natural utterances, the result of a peculiar condition or *crisis* of the natural man. Now it is this view of his case which we wish to preclude, and by the epithet "supernatural," applied to his illumination, we would indicate that character of it which is to be referred to the divine selection and extraordinary endowment of the man for the work to which he was called. In view of what he has accomplished it must, we think, be admitted, that there was *something* by which he was pre-eminently distinguished above all other men who have laid claim to or manifested similar powers of insight into spiritual arcana; *something* which marks him out as a *chosen instrument* for the proclamation of an order of truths incomparably transcending anything which had previously been communicated to the world. It is then not so much to the simple fact of the opening of his spiritual senses that we apply the term "supernatural," as to the whole train of providential circumstances leading to it; the circumstances of his parentage and birth; the influences that acted on his childhood; the course of his education and his subsequent pursuits; the development of his genius in the line of scientific and philosophical research; his immense attainments in every sphere of knowledge; his strong proclivity to psychological inquiry; and all directed by an unseen control to an issue the most momentous to the interests of the world—it is in this that we recognize the decisive evidence of a *special divine appointment*, and this we term "supernatural," in order that we may not confound the endowments of a prophet with the gifts, however splendid, of a sage.

Our position then is, that Swedenborg has revealed truths which he never could have revealed, but for the high prerogative of intercourse with the spiritual world. That there is such a world—the abode of spirits and angels—is universally believed by all Christians. But that

it is separated by an impenetrable veil or impassable gulf from the present world; that all intercourse with it is barred, banned, and precluded to men sojourning in the flesh, is held with equal assurance by the mass of mankind. As a natural consequence, nothing is regarded at first blush as more incredible and preposterous than the claim to such intercourse. Although it is impossible to specify any declaration of the Most High forbidding the expectancy of farther light from this source—although no decision of the reason can be cited, pronouncing that that which has once occurred may not occur again—yet, so deep rooted and inveterate is the persuasion that all professed revelations from the inner sphere are the product of mental hallucination, that it is no matter of wonder to find Swedenborg's alleged disclosures turned away from as the mere idle creations of a diseased brain, and fit only to be entertained by those who are themselves laboring under a similar infirmity. Even the display of miraculous testimony in their behalf would, we are convinced, be powerless to countervail the current incredulity that prevails on this score. The antecedent improbability of new disclosures would, in the estimate of thousands, be so strong as to nullify the evidence of the reality of any miracle, however great, which might be wrought in their support. The Bible, it is said, is the last, the only revelation from God to man, and nothing supplemental to it is to be listened to for a moment, as that which followed would be a virtual impeachment of the completeness of that which preceded.

On what then can reliance be placed for the success of the appeal made by this system to the calm consideration of the Christian world? To one who has become at all acquainted with the writings of Swedenborg, it is clear that he was himself fully aware of the reception with which his claims would meet at the hands of the great body of Christendom, and that, as miracles would avail nothing towards securing their acknowledgment, the evidence that would avail must be sought in the intrinsic character of the revelations themselves and in the reasons alleged for their bestowment. Of these reasons, the chief of all is to be found in the prophetic announcement of the Lord's Second Advent at the period assigned by Swedenborg, and the connected establishment of the New Jerusalem Church, which forms so prominent a theme in the predictions of the Apocalypse. It is confidently affirmed by him and all his adherents, that that coming, which is entirely spiritual, or a coming in the glory of the internal sense of the Word, is to be viewed in most intimate and indissoluble relation to the formation of the Church known to prophecy as the Church of the New Jerusalem, announced by John. This assumption sets before us a grave question of Scriptural interpretation, in respect to the true nature, time, and object of our Lord's second Advent, and not the least

progress can be made towards the overthrow of his pretensions till the fallacy of his interpretation of prophecy, in regard to this event, is exposed. But this has never yet been attempted. The assailants of Swedenborg unanimously refuse to encounter his defenders on the ground which the latter continually declare to be the fundamental ground, although *they* have never shrunk from entering the controversial lists, even in regard to the secondary and subordinate details of the system. It may, we think, be fairly questioned whether the world has ever witnessed an assault upon a body of religious opinions so unfairly conducted as that made upon the system of Swedenborg. On every other controverted subject the disputants feel themselves bound in honor and justice to grapple with the fundamental principles involved in the topics in debate. They see and acknowledge the propriety of dealing with premises, and not simply with conclusions. They aim to overthrow the edifice of error by undermining its foundations. But in the case of Swedenborg, opponents with one consent, decline to wage their war with anything but conclusions. Deaf to all our protests against the manifest injustice of such a course—heedless of all entreaty that they should candidly weigh the arguments adduced in favor of our central positions—they incessantly spend their strength in the attempt to *show up* the minor fallacies of our belief, and to turn into ridicule those features of the scheme which contravene their own prepossessions. Yet, as the very same things which appear ridiculous to them must also, in the outset of our inquiries, be supposed to have appeared ridiculous to us, it would seem that a fair-minded opponent would bestow some attention upon the course of reasoning which has so completely changed our views in regard to them, and converted to our minds the apparently monstrous and absurd into the supremely rational and consistent. Why should not this process, as apart of the experience of sensible men, be at least an object of curiosity, even if followed by a sentiment of contempt or pity? One would think that even as a study in the department of curious mental phenomena, it would press itself upon the reflection of intelligent minds. But no hint or inkling of any such prompting ever meets us. Nothing seems ever to divert attention for a moment from the *monstrosities of the visions*, and the daring *presumption* of asserted intercourse with spirits. Unavailingly do we implore a moment's calm for considering whether the thing *may* not be possible to Omnipotence, and if so, whether it *may* not be certified by evidence that shall approve itself as sound and unimpeachable to the more rigid requisitions of reason. That our evidence is actually such, we do not at present affirm; but we demand a hearing for it. Our faith is built upon evidence, and we cannot but protest against the condemnation of our faith while no heed is given to the grounds on which it rests. We have most explicitly declared

that, if the *reasons* on which we accept any one of the visions can be shown to be unsound, we will relinquish the whole. The basis of our faith is in the conscious psychological verity of the principles affirmed by Swedenborg. These are to us so palpably undeniable, that we could as soon question the fact of our existence as to think of calling them into doubt; and admitting the principles, we are compelled by a logical necessity to admit the results. As then, his disclosures respecting the state of spirits in the other life rest upon the laws of spirit of which we are conscious in the present life, we are not only forced to regard these disclosures as true in themselves, but true to the exclusion of any other possible view. We cannot even *conceive*, on rational grounds, that the facts in respect to the future life, should be different from what he has represented them. If this high affirmation should be called in question, it will at least devolve upon the dissentient to acquaint himself thoroughly with the arguments and considerations which underlie it, and when this is done, we have a strong assurance that he will cease to be a dissentient. We anticipate no controversy with those who have come to *understand* the true grounds and reasons of the faith we repose in Swedenborg's revelations, and controversy with others scarcely deserves the name. **Objections** from such a source are a mere idle beating of the air.

In what follows, we propose to make Swedenborg the pleader of his own cause. From the entire range of his works we have collected and woven together an extended array of passages in which he sets forth some of the leading items of his experience in an asserted intercourse with the spiritual world of twenty-seven years continuance. It is, indeed, but a mere fragment of the whole body of his relations, but it embraces a very considerable portion of the *personal* allusions which bear upon the main fact of the high privilege accorded him. From these the reader is to judge of the credibility of his statements. They furnish the data on which he is called to pronounce whether his utterances savor of the ravings of a deluded visionary, or of the wisdom of an illuminated seer. A calm decision is earnestly sought of the question whether, supposing such intercourse to be possible and real, there is any thing contained in the revelations inconsistent with our most rational ideas of the state which he professes to describe. Granting that many of the intimations are new and surprising, are they any more so than we should fairly anticipate, even had an angel from heaven appeared commissioned by the Lord himself to make the disclosure? If then, on the whole, he seems to our candid intelligence to utter the words of truth and soberness, on the subject of his *mission*, can we successfully ward off the claims made upon our serious entertainment of the purport of his *message*?

P. S. As our readers may not be familiar with the works cited, of which we have given the abbreviated titles, we here exhibit the titles in full:—A. C. *Arcana Cælestia*—T. C. R. *True Christian Religion*—A. E. *Apocalypse Explained*—E. U. *Earths in the Universe*—Inter. *Intercourse of Soul and Body*—S. D. *Spiritual Diary*—D. P. *Divine Providence*—H. & H. *Heaven & Hell*—D. L. & W. *Divine Love and Wisdom*.

### § I.

#### SWEDENBORG'S MISSION VIEWED IN RELATION TO THE LORD'S SECOND ADVENT.

1. *The Second Coming of the Lord not personal but spiritual.*—“The opinion at this day prevailing in the churches is, that the Lord, when he shall come to the last judgment, will appear in the clouds of heaven, with angels and the sound of trumpets, and will gather together all who dwell upon the earth, and also those who are deceased, and will separate the evil from the good, as a shepherd separates the goats from the sheep; and that then He will cast the evil or the goats into hell, and raise up the good or the sheep into heaven; and that then also He will create a new visible heaven and a new habitable earth, and upon this send down a city, which will be called the New Jerusalem, the structure of which will be according to the description in Revelation xxi.; namely, of jasper and gold, and the foundations of its wall of every precious stone, and its height, breadth, and length equal, each of twelve thousand furlongs; and that all the elect, both those who are living, and those that have died since the beginning of the world, will be gathered together into this city; and that they will then return into their bodies, and enjoy eternal bliss in that magnificent city, as in their heaven. This opinion concerning the coming of the Lord, and concerning the last judgment, is at this day reigning in Christian churches.

“Concerning the state of souls after death, these things, in general and in particular, are at this day believed; that human souls after death are spirits, of which they cherish an idea as of a breath of wind; and that, because they are such, they are reserved until the day of the last judgment, either in the middle of the earth, where their place is, or in the *Limbo* of the fathers. But in these things they differ: some suppose that they are ethereal or aerial forms, and that thus they are like ghosts and spectres, and that some of them dwell in the air, some in the woods, and some in the waters; but some suppose that the souls of the deceased are transferred to the planets or to the stars, and there abodes are given to them; and some that, after thousands of years, they return into

bodies. But most suppose that they are reserved to the time when all the firmament, together with the terraqueous globe, will be destroyed, which will be effected by fire, either bursting forth from the centre of the earth, or cast down from heaven, like a universal lightning: and that then the sepulchres will be opened, and the souls which had been reserved, clothed again with their bodies, and transferred into that holy city Jerusalem, and thus, upon another earth, they will dwell together in purified bodies, some below there, and some above, because the height of the city is to be twelve thousand furlongs, as its length and breadth (Rev. xxi. 16).

“When any of the clergy or laity are asked whether they firmly believe all those things, as that the antediluvians, together with Adam and Eve, and the postdiluvians, together with Noah and his sons, and also Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, together with all the prophets and apostles, as well as the souls of other men, are still reserved in the middle of the earth, or are flying about in the ether or air; and also whether they believe that souls will be clothed again with their bodies, and become united with them, which yet are carcasses eaten up by worms, mice, and fishes, and those of the Egyptians, as mummies, eaten up by men, and some merely skeletons burnt up by the sun, and reduced to powder; and likewise whether they believe that the stars of heaven will then fall upon the earth, which yet is smaller than one of them; are not such things paradoxes, which reason itself dissipates, as it does things that are contradictory? But to these things some answer nothing; some, that these are matters of faith, under obedience to which we keep the understanding; some, that not only these things, but many more that are above reason, are of the divine omnipotence; and when they name faith and omnipotence, reason is banished, and then sound reason either disappears and becomes as nothing, or becomes like a spectre and is called insanity. They add, ‘Are not those things according to the Word? Who will not think and speak from that?’

“That the Word in the letter is written by appearances and correspondences, and that, therefore, there is in every part of it a spiritual sense, in which the truth is in its light, and the sense of the letter in the shade, was shown in the chapter concerning the SACRED SCRIPTURE. Lest, therefore, the man of the New Church, like the man of the old church, should wander in the shade, in which the sense of the letter of the Word is, especially concerning heaven and hell, and concerning his life after death, and here concerning the coming of the Lord, it has pleased the Lord to open the sight of my spirit, and

thus to let me into the spiritual world, and not only to give me to speak with spirits and angels, and with relations and friends, but with kings and princes, who have departed from the natural world, but also to see the stupendous things of heaven, and the miserable things of hell; and thus that man does not live in some unknown place of the earth, nor fly about blind and dumb in the air, or in empty space; but that he lives as a man in a substantial body, in a much more perfect state, if he comes among the blessed, than before, when he lived in the material body. Therefore, lest man should become more deeply grounded in the opinion concerning the destruction of the visible heaven and habitable earth, and thus concerning the spiritual world, from ignorance, which is the source of naturalism, and then, at the same time, atheism, which, at this day, among the learned, has begun to take root in the interior rational mind, should, like a mortification in the flesh, spread itself around more widely, even into his external mind, from which he speaks, it has been enjoined upon me by the Lord, to promulgate some of the things seen and heard, both concerning HEAVEN AND HELL, and concerning the LAST JUDGMENT, and also to explain the APOCALYPSE, where the coming of the Lord, and the former heaven, and the new heaven and the holy Jerusalem, are treated of; from which, when read and understood, any one may see what is meant there by the coming of the Lord, and by the new heaven, and by the new Jerusalem.”<sup>a</sup>

2. *That by the Lord's spiritual Coming is meant a Coming in the internal, essential, and spiritual sense of the divine Word which is from Him and is Himself.*—“It is read in many places that the Lord is to come in the clouds of heaven. But hitherto no one has known what was meant by the clouds of heaven: they have believed that He would appear in them in person. But that, by the clouds of heaven, is meant the Word in the sense of the letter, and by glory and virtue, in which also He is then to come (Matt. xxiv. 30), is meant the spiritual sense of the Word, has been hitherto concealed, because no one has ever yet even conjectured, that there is in the Word any spiritual sense, such as it is in itself. Now, because the spiritual sense of the Word has been opened to me by the Lord, and it has been given to me to be together with angels and spirits in their world, as one of them, it has been discovered, that by the clouds of heaven is meant the Word in the natural sense,

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<sup>a</sup> T. C. R. 768-771.



and by glory, the Word in the spiritual sense, and by virtue, the power of the Lord by means of the Word.”<sup>b</sup>

“That the Lord is the Word, is evident from these words in John: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word; and the Word became flesh’ (i. 1, 14). That the Word there is the divine truth, is because Christians have divine truth from no other source than from the Word, which is a fountain from which all the churches named from Christ draw living waters in their fulness, although as in a cloud in which its natural sense is, but in glory and virtue, in which its spiritual and celestial sense is. That there are three senses in the Word,—natural, spiritual and celestial,—one within another, was shown in the chapter concerning the SACRED SCRIPTURE, and in the chapter concerning the DECA-LOGUE OR CATECHISM. Thence it is manifest, that by the Word, in John, is meant the Divine Truth. John also testifies the same in his first epistle: ‘We know that the Son of God hath come and given us understanding that we may know the TRUE, and we are in the TRUE, in his Son Jesus Christ’ (v. 20). And therefore the Lord so often said, ‘VERILY [AMEN] I say unto you;’ for *amen* in the Hebrew language is truth; and that He is the AMEN, may be seen Rev. iii. 14; and the TRUTH, John xiv. 6. When, also, the learned of this age are asked what they understand by the Word in John i. 1, they say, that they understand the Word in its supereminence; and what else is the Word in its supereminence, than divine truth? Hence it is manifest, that the Lord is also now to appear in the Word. The reason that He is not to appear in person, is because, since his ascension into heaven, He is in the glorified Human; and in this He cannot appear to any man, unless He first open the eyes of his spirit; and these cannot be opened in any one who is in evils, and thence in falses; thus not in any of the goats which he sets at the left hand. Wherefore, when He manifested Himself to the disciples, He first opened their eyes; for it is read, ‘And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; but He became invisible to them’ (Luke xxiv. 31). The case was similar with the women at the sepulchre after the resurrection; wherefore they at that time also saw angels sitting in the sepulchre and speaking with them, whom no man can see with the material eye. That neither did the apostles, before the Lord’s resurrection, see the Lord in the glorified Human, with the eyes of the body, but in the spirit (which appears, after awaking, as if it were in sleep), is evident from his transfiguration before Peter, James, and John, in that ‘their eyes

were heavy with sleep' (Luke ix. 32). Wherefore, it is a vain thing to believe that the Lord is to appear in the clouds of heaven in person; but He is to appear in the Word which is from Him, thus is Himself."<sup>c</sup>

3. *That this Coming is effected, in the first instance, through the instrumentality of a man divinely qualified and endowed for this sacred office.*—"Since the Lord cannot manifest Himself in person, as has been shown just above, and yet He has foretold that He would come and establish a New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, it follows that He is to do it by means of a man, who is able not only to receive the doctrines of this church with his understanding, but also to publish them by the press. That the Lord has manifested Himself before me, his servant, and sent me on this office, and that, after this, He opened the sight of my spirit, and thus let me into the spiritual world, and gave me to see the heavens and the hells, and also to speak with angels and spirits, and this now continually for many years, I testify in truth; and also that, from the first day of that call, I have not received anything which pertains to the doctrines of that church from any angel, but from the Lord alone, while I read the Word."<sup>d</sup>

"In your gracious letter, you ask, how I attained to be in society with angels and spirits, and whether that privilege can be communicated from one person to another. Deign, then, to receive favorably this answer. The Lord our Saviour had foretold that He would come again into the world, and that He would establish there a New Church. He has given this prediction in the Apocalypse, xxi. and xxii., and also in several places in the Evangelists. But as he cannot come again into the world in person, it was necessary that He should do it by means of a man, who should not only receive the doctrine of this New Church in his understanding, but also publish it by printing; and as the Lord had prepared me for this office from my infancy, He has manifested himself before me, His servant, and sent me to fill it. This took place in the year 1743. He afterwards opened the sight of my spirit, and thus introduced me into the spiritual world, and granted me to see the heavens and many of their wonders, and also the hells, and to speak with angels and spirits, and this continually for twenty-seven years. I declare in all truth that such is the fact. This favor of the Lord, in regard to me, has only taken place for the sake of the New Church which I have mentioned above, the doctrine of which is contained in my writings. The gift of

conversing with spirits and angels cannot be transmitted from one person to another, unless the Lord himself opens the spiritual sight of that person. It is sometimes permitted to a spirit to enter into a man; and to communicate to him some truth; but it is not granted to the man to speak mouth to mouth with the spirit. It is even a very dangerous thing, because the spirit enters into the affection of man's self-love, which does not agree with the affection of heavenly love."<sup>e</sup>

"With regard to what passed in the earlier part of my life: from my fourth to my tenth year, my thoughts were constantly engrossed by reflecting upon God, on salvation, and on the spiritual affections of man. I often revealed things in my discourse which filled my parents with astonishment, and made them declare at times, that *certainly the angels spoke through my mouth*. From my sixth to my twelfth year, it was my greatest delight to converse with the clergy concerning faith; to whom I often observed, that charity or love was the life to faith, and that this vivifying charity or love *was no other than the love of one's neighbor*. That God vouchsafes this faith to every one; but that it is adopted by those only who practise, that charity. I knew of no other faith or belief at that time then that God is the Creator and Preserver of Nature. That He endues man with understanding, good inclinations, and other gifts thence derived. I knew nothing at that time of this systematic or dogmatic kind of faith, that God the Father imputes the righteousness or merits of the Son to whomsoever, and at such times as He wills, even unto the impenitent. And had I heard of such kind of faith, it would have been then, as now, perfectly unintelligible to me."<sup>f</sup>

"I was prohibited reading dogmatic and systematic theology, before heaven was opened to me, by reason, that, unfounded opinions and inventions might thereby easily have insinuated themselves, which with difficulty could afterwards have been extirpated, wherefore, when heaven was opened to me, it was necessary first to learn the Hebrew language, as well as the correspondences of which the whole Bible is composed, which led me to read the Word of God over many times; and inasmuch as the Word of God is the source, whence all theology must be derived, I was thereby enabled to receive instructions from the Lord, who is the Word."<sup>g</sup>

"I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested himself in person to me, his servant, in the year 1743; when he opened my sight to the view

<sup>e</sup> Let. to Landg. of Hesse (Doc. p. 138.)    <sup>f</sup> Let. vii. to Dr. Beyer (Doc. p. 129).  
<sup>g</sup> Let. iv. to Dr. Beyer (Doc. p. 125).

of the spiritual world, and granted me the privilege of conversing with spirits and angels, which I enjoy to this day. From that time I began to print and publish various *arcana* that have been seen by me, or revealed to me ; as respecting heaven and hell, the state of man after death, the true worship of God, the spiritual sense of the Word ; with many other most important matters conducive to salvation and true wisdom. The only reason of my latter journeys to foreign countries, has been the desire of being useful, by making known the *arcana* entrusted to me.”<sup>h</sup>

“It is asked, *why from a philosopher I have been chosen to this office?* Unto which I give for answer : to the end that the spiritual knowledge, which is revealed at this day, might be reasonably learned, and naturally understood ; because spiritual truths answer unto natural ones, inasmuch as these originate and flow from them, and serve as a foundation for the former. That what is spiritual is similar unto, and corresponds with what is human and natural, or belonging to the terrestrial world, may be seen in the treatise *On Heaven and Hell*, 87–115. I was, on this account, by the Lord, first introduced into the natural sciences, and thus prepared from the year 1710–1744, when heaven was opened unto me.\* Every one is morally educated and spiritually regenerated by the Lord, by being led from what is natural to what is spiritual. Moreover, the Lord has given unto me a love of spiritual truth, that is to say, not with any view to honor or profit,

<sup>h</sup> Let. to Hart. (Doc. p. 38).

\* From an unpublished manuscript by Oetinger, containing his autobiography, Dr. Tafel has given a number of extracts, from one of which we insert the following :—

“Swedenborg (says Oetinger, in another place) is, in my estimation, the forerunner of a new era. That, in the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth, the faithful will have a faculty, by which they will be able to hold communion, and converse with those who are in the marriage of the Lamb, cannot be doubted. This gift, or this office, by which others, who cannot see and hear, may be instructed in the things of heaven, ought not to be doubted or denied in respect to Swedenborg, because the facts evincing Swedenborg's communication with the world of spirits, are denied by nobody in Stockholm, and this fact proves that Swedenborg's assertion is true, when he says, that he has communication with the world of spirits. Hence it may be seen, why God has, at this time, permitted such a man as Swedenborg to arise, and why he was educated by his father, a most venerable bishop, and of noble rank, so carefully, in innocence and in scientific learning ; all these preparations, under Providence, tended to fit him to pass through the most important events, which no other man has had to experience. As Swedenborg is the instrument of restoring the lost communion with the invisible world, that pure and unspotted life, in which we see he was trained and educated, was necessary. The first promise that Jesus gave to His disciples, was, ‘That they should see heaven open’ (John i.) ; and this, we might reasonably expect, would be the first thing announced at His second coming. God may have appeared to Swedenborg in a way which we may not fully understand, but he is certainly a phenomenon, such as the world never saw before.”—*Doc. Conc. Swed.* p. 150.

but merely for the sake of truth itself : for every one who loves truth, merely for the sake of truth, sees it from the Lord, the Lord being the 'way and the truth' (John xiv. 6). But he who professes the love of truth for the sake of honor or gain, sees truth from his own self-hood, and to see from one's self, is to see falsity. Falses confirmed shut the church, but truths, rationally confirmed, open it. What man can otherwise comprehend spiritual things, which enter into the understanding ? The doctrinal notion received in the Protestant Church, viz., that in theological matters, reason shall be held captive under obedience to faith, locks up the church ; what can open it but an understanding enlightened by the Lord ?”

4. *A more particular statement of the reasons of Swedenborg's illumination.*—“Men are enlightened variously, every one according to the quality of his affection and consequent intelligence : those who are in the spiritual affection of truth, are elevated into the light of heaven, so as to perceive distinctly what comes from the Lord, and what from the angels ; what comes from the Lord is written [or given in my writings], and what from the angels is not written. Moreover it has been given me to discourse with the angels as man with man, and likewise to see the things which are in the heavens, and which are in the hells : the reason was, because the end of the present church approaches, and the beginning of a new one is at hand, which will be the New Jerusalem, to which it is to be revealed, that the Lord rules the universe, both heaven and the world ; that there is a heaven and a hell, and what is the quality of each ; that men live also as men after death, in heaven those who had been led of the Lord, in hell those who have been led of themselves ; that the Word is the Divine [Principle] itself of the Lord in the earth ; also that the last judgment is passed lest man should expect it in this world to eternity ; besides many other things which are effects of the light now arising after darkness.”

“It has been given me to be in company with angels, and also to speak with those who are in hell, and this now for several years, sometimes continually from morning to evening ; and thus to be informed concerning heaven and concerning hell ; and this in order that the man of the church may not continue any longer in his erroneous faith concerning resurrection at the day of judgment, and concerning the state of the soul in the mean time, as also concerning angels, and concerning the devil ; which faith, because it is a belief of what is

false, involves darkness, and with those who think on those things from their own intelligence, induces doubt, and at length denial. For they say in heart, How can so great a heaven, with so many constellations, and with the sun and the moon, be destroyed and dissipated? And how can the stars then fall from heaven to the earth, when yet they are larger than the earth? And how can bodies eaten by worms, consumed by corruption, and scattered to all the winds, be gathered together again to their soul? Where is the soul in the mean time, and what is it when without the sense which it had in the body? Besides many similar things, which, because they are incomprehensible, cannot become objects of faith, and with many destroy faith concerning the life of the soul after death, and concerning heaven and hell, and with these the other things which are of the faith of the church. That they have destroyed it, is evident from those who say, Who has ever come from heaven to us, and told that it is so? What is hell? Is there any? What is this, that man is to be tormented with fire to eternity? What is the day of judgment? Has it not been expected in vain for ages? Besides other things, which imply a denial of all. Lest therefore those who think such things, as many do, who from their worldly wisdom are called erudite and learned, should any longer trouble and seduce the simple in faith and heart, and induce infernal darkness respecting God, respecting heaven, respecting eternal life, and respecting other things which depend on them, the interiors which are of my spirit have been opened by the Lord, and thus it has been given me to speak with all whom I have ever been acquainted with in the life of the body, after their decease; with some for days, with some for months, and with some for a year; and also with others so many that I should say too few if I should say an hundred thousand; many of whom were in the heavens, and many in the hells. I have also spoken with some two days after their decease, and have told them that preparations were now being made for their interment. To which they said, that they did well to reject that which had served them for a body and its functions in the world; and they wished me to say, that they were not dead, but that they live equally men now as before, and that they had only migrated from one world into another, and that they are not aware of having lost any thing, since they are in a body and its sensuals as before, and also in understanding and in will as before, and that they have similar thoughts and affections, similar sensations, and similar desires, to those which they had in the world. Most of those who were recently dead, when they saw themselves living men as before, and in a similar state (for after death every one's state of life

is at first such as it had been in the world, but that is successively changed with him, either into heaven or into hell), were affected with new joy at being alive, and said that they had not believed this: but they wondered very much that they should have lived in such ignorance and blindness concerning the state of their life after death; and especially that the man of the church should be in such ignorance and blindness, when yet he, above all others in the whole world, can be in the light concerning those things. Then they first saw the cause of that blindness and ignorance, which is, that external things, which relate to the world and to the body, occupied and filled their minds to such a degree, that they could not be elevated into the light of heaven, and view the things of the church beyond the doctrinals; for from corporeal and worldly things, when they are loved so much as they are at this day, there flows in mere darkness, when men go farther."k

"I this year published the work entitled *The Revelations Revealed*, which was promised in the treatise *On the Last Judgment*, and from all which writings it may be plainly seen that I converse with angels. Every person may see, that by the New Jerusalem is meant a new church or congregation, the doctrines or articles of whose faith cannot shine in their true splendor, and give light to others, without the divine aid, because they are only figuratively described in the Revelations, that is to say, according to *correspondence*; and the true doctrine of it cannot be published to the world, but by such as to whom the needful revelation is made. I can sacredly and solemnly declare, that the Lord Himself has been seen of me, and that He has sent me to do what I do, and for such purpose has He opened and enlightened the interior part of my soul, which is my spirit, so that I can see what is in the spiritual world, and those that are therein; and this privilege has now been continued to me for twenty-two years. But in the present state of infidelity, can the most solemn oath make such a thing credible, or to be believed by any? Yet such as have received true Christian light and understanding, will be convinced of the truth contained in my writings, which are particularly evident in the book of the *Revelations Revealed*. Who, indeed, has hitherto known anything of consideration of the true spiritual sense and meaning of the Word of God, the spiritual world, or of heaven and hell; the nature of the life of man, and the state of souls after the decease of the body? Is it to be supposed that these and other things of a like consequence are to be eternally hidden from Christians? That many very important particulars relating to them are at this

day revealed for the first time, is done in regard to the New Jerusalem, and for the sake of the New Church, because the members thereof are endowed with a capacity to apprehend them, which others might also have, were it not for their weak unbelief of the possibility of such things being made known to any, and by them to the world. These writings of mine do not come under the term of prediction, but of revelations."<sup>1</sup>

"The Lord is preparing at this time a new heaven of such as believe in Him, and acknowledge Him to be the true God of heaven and earth, and also look to Him in their lives, which is to shun evil and do good; because from that heaven shall the New Jerusalem, mentioned in Rev. xxi. 2, descend. I daily see spirits and angels, from ten to twenty thousand, descending and ascending, who are set in order. By degrees as that heaven is formed, the New Church begins and increases. The universities in Christendom are now first instructed, from whence will come ministers; because the new heaven has no influence over the old clergy, who conceive themselves too well skilled in the doctrine of justification by faith alone."<sup>m</sup>

"Unless the Lord defended man every moment, yea, even the smallest part of every moment, he would instantly perish, for such mortal hatred exists in the world of spirits against these things of love and faith towards the Lord, as cannot possibly be described. That this is the case I can declare with a certainty, inasmuch as I have now for some years, though also in the body, been with spirits in another life, and surrounded with evil spirits, yea the worst, and sometimes by thousands of them, to whom it was permitted to pour forth their venom, and infest me by every way in which they could, yet they could not hurt the least hair, I was so protected by the Lord. From so many years' experience I became thoroughly instructed concerning the world of spirits, of what quality it is, and also concerning the combat which they who are regenerated cannot otherwise than sustain, that they may attain the felicity of eternal life."<sup>n</sup>

5. *The testimony of miracles not to be expected in confirmation of such a mission as that of Swedenborg.*—"To the interrogation, *whether there is occasion for any sign, that I am sent by the Lord, to do what I do?* I answer, that at this day no signs or miracles will be given, because they compel only an external belief, but do not convince the internal. What did the miracles avail in Egypt, or among the Jewish nation, who, nevertheless, crucified the Lord? So, if the Lord were to appear now in the sky, attended with angels and trum-

<sup>1</sup> Let. i to Oeting. (Doc. p. 152).

<sup>m</sup> Let. iv. to Dr. Beyer (Doc. p. 125).

<sup>n</sup> A. C. 59.



pets, it would have no other effect than it had then. The sign, given at this day, will be an *illustration*, and thence a *knowledge* and *reception of the truths of the New Church*; some *speaking illustration* of certain persons may likewise take place; this works more effectually than miracles. *Yet one token may perhaps still be given.*"<sup>o</sup>

"It cannot be denied but that miracles induce faith, and strongly persuade that that is true which he who does the miracles says and teaches; and that this in the commencement so occupies the external of man's thought, that it as it were binds and enchants: but man is thereby deprived of his two faculties, which are called rationality and liberty, so that he cannot act from freedom according to reason, and then the Lord cannot flow in through the internal into the external of his thought, except only to leave to man to confirm that thing from his rationality which was made of his faith by the miracle. The state of man's thought is such, that by the internal of thought he sees a thing in the external of his thought, as in a certain mirror; for, as was said above, man can see his thought, which cannot be given except from interior thought.

"From these things it may be evident, that faith induced by miracles is not faith, but persuasion; for there is not any rational in it, still less any spiritual; for it is only an external without an internal: it is the like with all that man does from that persuasive faith, whether he acknowledges God, or worships Him at home or in temples, or does kindnesses: when a miracle alone induces man to acknowledgment, worship, and piety, he acts from the natural man, and not from the spiritual; for a miracle infuses faith through an external way, and not through an internal way; thus from the world, and not from heaven; and the Lord does not enter through any other way with man but through the internal way, which is through the Word, doctrine and preachings from it: and because miracles shut this way, therefore at this day no miracles are done." <sup>p</sup>

"Instead of miracles, there has taken place at this present day an open manifestation of the Lord Himself, an intromission into the spiritual world, and with it illumination by immediate light from the Lord, in whatever relates to the interior things of the church, but principally an opening of the spiritual sense of the Word, in which the Lord is present, in His own Divine Light. These revelations are not miracles, because every man as to his spirit is in the spiritual world without separation from his body in the natural world. As to myself, indeed, my presence in the spiritual world is attended with a certain separation, but only as to the intellectual part of my mind, not as to the will part. This manifestation of the

<sup>o</sup> Let. iii. to Oeting. (Doc. p. 153).

<sup>p</sup> Div. Prov. 130, 133.

Lord, and His intromission into the spiritual world, is more excellent than all miracles; but it has not been granted to any one since the creation of the world as it has been to me. The men of the golden age, indeed, conversed with angels; but it was not granted to them to be in any other light than what is natural. To me, however, it has been granted to be in both spiritual and natural light at the same time; and hereby I have been privileged to see the wonderful things of heaven; to be in company with angels just as I am with men; and at the same time, to pursue truths in the light of truth, and thus to perceive and be gifted with them, consequently, to be led of the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

"I hope that my new work, entitled *True Christian Religion*, is now in your hands, and that the two copies, which I sent at the same time to the Landgrave, have reached him. I desire to have your judgment upon the subjects there treated of, because I know that, being enlightened by the Lord, you will there see in light, more than others, the truths which are there manifested in accordance with the Word. I send to-day my reply to the letter which his Highness, your Prince, has recently sent to me; and by his orders, I speak to him of the conversations which I have had with two personages in the spiritual world. But these conversations, as well as that between the queen of Sweden and his brother when he was living, which was made known to me by him in the spiritual world, ought by no means to be regarded as miracles; they are only testimonies that I have been introduced by the Lord into the spiritual world, and that I have been in association with angels and spirits, in order that the church, which until now had remained in ignorance concerning that world, may know that heaven and hell exist in reality, and that man lives after death, a man, as before; and that thus there might be no more doubt as to his immortality. Deign, I pray you, to satisfy his Highness, that these are not miracles, but only testimonies that I converse with angels and spirits.

"You may see in the work above mentioned that there are no more miracles, at this time; and the reason why. It is, that they who do not believe because they see no miracles, might easily, by them, be led into fanaticism. I have seen two volumes, in quarto, of miracles wrought by the Abbe Deacon Paris, which are nothing but falsehoods, being partly fantastic and partly magical; and it is the same with the other miracles of the Roman Catholics. Examine, I pray you, what I have said on the subject of miracles in that work. At this day, faith will be established and confirmed in the New Church,

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<sup>4</sup> Hob. Life of Swed. p. 42.

only by the Word itself and by the truths it reveals; truths which appear in light to the reader of my last work, which is itself an indication that the Lord is present and enlightens him. For every truth contained in the Word shines in heaven, and comes down from thence into this world to those who love truth because it is truth.”<sup>r</sup>

6. *His anticipation of the manner in which his relations would be received.*—“I foresee that many, who read my Relations will believe that they are inventions of the imagination; but I assert in truth, that they are not inventions, but were truly seen and heard; not seen and heard in any state of the mind buried in sleep, but in a state of full wakefulness. For it has pleased the Lord to manifest Himself to me, and to send me to teach those things which will be of his New Church, which is meant by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation; for which end He has opened the interiors of my mind or spirit, by which it has been given me to be in the spiritual world with angels, and at the same time in the natural world with men, and this now for twenty-seven years. Who in the Christian world would have known any thing concerning Heaven and Hell, unless it had pleased the Lord to open in some one the sight of his spirit, and to show and teach? That such things as are described in the Relations, appear in the heavens, is manifestly evident from the like things, which were seen by John, and described in the Revelation, as also which were seen and described in the Word of the Old Testament by the Prophets. From these and many other things in the Word, it is evident that the things which exist in the spiritual world have appeared to many, before and since the coming of the Lord: what wonder that they should also now, when the church is commencing, and the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven?”<sup>s</sup>

“I have conversed with many after their decease, with whom I was acquainted during their life in the body; and such conversation has been of long continuance, sometimes for months, sometimes for a whole year; and with as clear and distinct a voice, but internal, as with friends in the world. The subject of our discourse has sometimes turned on the state of man after death; and they have greatly wondered that no one in the life of the body, knows, or believes, that he is to live in such a manner after the life of the body; when nevertheless it is a continuation of life, and that of such a nature, that the deceased passes from an obscure life into a clear and distinct one; and they who are in faith towards the Lord, into a life

more and more clear and distinct. They have desired me to acquaint their friends on earth that they were alive, and to write to them an account of their states, as I have often told them many things respecting their friends: but my reply was, that if I should speak to them or write to them, they would not believe, but would call my information mere fancy, and would ridicule it, asking for signs or miracles before they should believe; and thus I should be exposed to their derision: and that the things here declared are true, few perhaps will believe, for men deny in their hearts the existence of spirits; and they who do not deny such existence, are yet very unwilling to hear that any one can converse with spirits. Such a faith respecting spirits did not at all prevail in ancient times, but does at this day, when men wish by reasoning of the brain to explore what spirits are, whom, by definitions and suppositions, they deprive of every sense; and the more learned they wish to be, the more they do this."

"I know that few will believe it possible for any one to see the things which exist in the other life, and thence to give an account of the state of souls after death; because few believe in a resurrection; and of the learned fewer than of the simple. They affirm indeed with the lips, that they shall rise again, because it is according to the doctrine of faith; but still they deny it in heart. Nay, some even openly avow, that if any one should rise from the dead, and they should see, and hear, and touch him, they would then believe. But if this were to take place, it must be done for each one, and after all, not a single person who in heart denies, would be thus persuaded, but a thousand objections would flow in, which would confirm him in his negative conclusion. Some profess to believe that they shall rise again, but at the day of the last judgment; and the notion they have conceived of that day is, that then all things appertaining to the visible world are to be destroyed: but, because that day has been expected in vain for so many ages, they still have doubts. Hence it may appear what sort of persons there are at this day in the Christian world. The Sadducees, spoken of in Matt. ch. xxii. 23, openly denied a resurrection: yet they did better than those at this day, who profess not to deny, because it is an article of faith, and yet deny in their hearts; so that their profession is contrary to their belief, and their belief to their profession. Lest, therefore, mankind should any longer confirm themselves in that false opinion, it has been granted me, by the divine mercy of the Lord, whilst I am in this world in the body, to be in the spirit in the other life (for man is a spirit clothed with body)

and there to discourse with souls that have risen again not long after their decease, and, indeed, with almost all those whom I knew when they lived in the body, but who have since died ; as, also, now for some years, to converse daily with spirits and angels, and to see there stupendous sights, such as never entered into the idea of any person ; and this without the least fallacy. As many persons say, that they would believe, if any one should come to them from the other life, it will now be seen, whether they will be persuaded against the hardness of their hearts.”<sup>u</sup>

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§ II.

SWEDENBORG'S STATE OF SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION  
PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED.

1. *Man was originally created capable of conversing with Spirits and Angels.*—“Inasmuch as, by the Divine Mercy of the Lord, it has been granted me to know the internal sense of the Word, in which are contained the deepest arcana, such as have never heretofore come to the knowledge of any one, nor can come, unless it be known how things are in another life, for most things which are in the internal sense of the Word regard, describe, and involve those things ; it is allowed me to lay open the things which I have heard and seen, now for several years, in which it has been given to be in the fellowship of spirits and angels.

“I am aware that many will say, that no one can ever speak with spirits and angels while he lives in the body ; and many, that it is a phantasy ; others that I relate such things, that I may gain credit ; others otherwise ; but I do not regard these things, for I have seen, have heard, have felt.

“Man was so created by the Lord, that during his life in the body, he might have a capacity of conversing with spirits and angels, as also was done in the most ancient times ; for he is one with them, being a spirit clothed with a body ; but because in process of time mankind so immersed themselves in bodily and worldly things that they paid little regard to any thing else, therefore the way was closed ; yet as soon as the bodily things, in which he is immersed, recede, the way is opened, and he is among spirits, and associates his life with them.”<sup>w</sup>

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<sup>u</sup> C. A. Pref. to Gen. xvi.

<sup>w</sup> A. C. 67, 68, 69.

“That man is a spirit as to his interiors, has been given me to know by much experience, which, if I should adduce all of it, would, so to speak, fill volumes. I have spoken with spirits as a spirit, and I have spoken with them as a man in the body; and when I spoke with them as a spirit, they knew no otherwise than that I myself was a spirit, and also in a human form as they were: my interiors thus appeared before them, since, when I spoke as a spirit, my material body did not appear.

“That man as to his interiors is a spirit, may be evident from this, that after the body is separated, which takes place when he dies, still man lives afterwards as before. That I might be confirmed in this, it has been given me to speak with almost all whom I had ever known in the life of the body; with some for hours, with some for weeks and months, and with some for years, and this principally in order that I might be confirmed, and that I might testify.

“To the above it is proper to add, that every man, even while he lives in the body, is, as to his spirit, in society with spirits, although he does not know it; a good man is by them in an angelic society, and an evil man in an infernal society; and that he comes also into the same society after death: this has been frequently said and shown to those who after death have come among spirits. A man does not indeed appear in that society as a spirit, when he lives in the world, because he then thinks naturally; but those who think abstractedly from the body, because then in the spirit, sometimes appear in their own society; and when they appear, they are easily distinguished from the spirits who are there, for they go about in a state of meditation, are silent, and do not look at others; they are as if they did not see them, and as soon as any spirit speaks to them, they vanish.”<sup>x</sup>

“When my interior sight was first opened, and spirits and angels saw, through my eyes, the world and the objects contained in it, they were so astonished, that they called it a miracle of miracles; and were affected with a new joy, that a communication was thus given of earth with heaven, and of heaven with earth: this delight, however, only lasted for a few months: the thing afterwards grew familiar to them, and now occasions no surprise. I have been informed, that, with other men, spirits and angels do not see the least of any thing in this world, but only perceive the thoughts and affections of those with whom they are. Hence it may appear, that man was so created, that, during his life on earth amongst men, he might at the same time also live in heaven amongst angels,

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<sup>x</sup> H. & H. 436, 437, 438.

and vice versa, so that heaven and earth might be together, and might form a one, men knowing what is in heaven, and angels what is in the world; and that when men departed this life, they might pass thus from the Lord's kingdom on earth into the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, not as into another, but into the same, in which they were during their life in the body. But as man became so corporeal, he closed heaven to himself."<sup>y</sup>

2. *This privilege may even now be enjoyed, but not except upon certain conditions.*—"They who are in heaven can discourse and converse with angels and spirits, who are not only from the earths in this solar system, but also from other earths in the universe out of this system; and not only with the spirits and angels there, but also with the inhabitants themselves, only however with those whose interiors are open, so that they can hear such as speak from heaven: the same is the case with man, during his abode in the world, to whom it has been given of the Lord to discourse with spirits and angels; for man is a spirit as to his interiors. the body which he carries about in the world only serving him for the performing functions in this natural or terrestrial sphere, which is the ultimate of all spheres. But it is given to no one to discourse as a spirit with angels and spirits, unless he be such that he can consociate with angels as to faith and love; nor can he so consociate, unless he have faith and love to the Lord, for man is joined to the Lord by faith and love to him, that is by truths of doctrine and good principles of life derived from him; and when he is joined to the Lord, he is secure from the assaults of evil spirits from hell: with others the interiors cannot be so far opened, since they are not in the world. This is the reason why there are few at this day, to whom it is given to speak and converse with angels; a manifest proof whereof is, that the existence of spirits and angels is scarce believed at this day, much less that they are attendant on every man, and that by them man has connection with heaven, and by heaven with the Lord; still less is it believed, that man when he dies as to the body, lives a spirit, even in a human form as before."<sup>z</sup>

"Inasmuch as there are many at this day in the church who have no faith concerning a life after death, and scarce any concerning heaven, or concerning the Lord as being the God of heaven and earth, therefore the interiors appertaining to my spirit are open by the Lord, so that I am enabled, during my abode in the body, to have commerce with the angels in hea-

ven, and not only to discourse with them, but also to see the astonishing things of their kingdom, and to describe the same, in order to check from henceforth the cavils of those who urge, 'Did ever any one come from heaven and assure us that such a place exists, and acquaint us with what is doing there?' Nevertheless I am aware, that they who in heart have heretofore denied a heaven and a hell, and a life after death, will even still continue in the obstinacy of unbelief and denial; for it is easier to make a raven white, than to make those believe, who have once in heart rejected faith; the reason is, because such persons always think about matters of faith from a negative principle, and not from an affirmative. May the things, however, which have been hitherto declared, and which we have further to declare, concerning angels and spirits, be for the use of those few who are principled in faith!"<sup>a</sup>

3. *What is to be understood by one's being in the Spirit, &c.* "Since by the *spirit* of man is meant his mind, therefore, by being in the spirit, which is sometimes said in the Word, is meant a state of the mind separate from the body; and because, in that state, the prophets saw such things as exist in the spiritual world, therefore that is called the *vision of God*. Their state then was such as that of spirits themselves is, and angels in that world. In that state, the spirit of man, like his mind as to sight, may be transported from place to place, the body remaining in its own. This is the state in which I have now been for twenty-six years, with this difference, that I have been in the spirit and at the same time in the body, and only several times out of the body."<sup>b</sup>

"'I was in the spirit'—That hereby is signified a spiritual state in which revelation is made, appears from the signification of being in the spirit, as denoting the being brought into that state, in which spirits and angels are, which is a spiritual state. Into this state man is brought when he is introduced into the state of his spirit, for every man is a spirit as to his interiors. When man is in this state, the things which exist in the spiritual world appear to him as clearly as the objects in the natural world: but the objects then seen by him, because they are from a spiritual origin, are in themselves spiritual, and such things as are of celestial wisdom are presented to him as it were in natural images. Thus divine things are presented in visible forms before the eyes of spirits and angels; hence it is that all things which are seen in heaven, are representatives and significatives, as were also the things seen by

<sup>a</sup> E. U. 124.

<sup>b</sup> T. C. R. 157.



John, which are treated of in the Apocalypse. Whilst man is in the body, he does not see the things that are in heaven, unless the sight of his spirit is opened, but when this sight is opened, he sees them; thus John saw the things which are described in the Apocalypse, and in like manner also the prophets saw, who are therefore called *Seers*, and are said to have had their *eyes opened*; thus also angels were seen in ancient times, and thus also the Lord was seen by the disciples after his resurrection. This sight is the sight of the spiritual man; and because in such case all things seen appear representatively, therefore it was opened in John. He who does not know anything of this sight, believes that angels, when they were seen by men, assumed a human form, and that when they vanished out of sight, they laid it aside; this, however, was not the case, but angels then appeared in their own form, not before the sight of the bodily eyes, but before the sight of the spirit, which sight was then opened; this is evident from the Lord being seen by the disciples after his resurrection, when he himself showed them that he was a man in a perfect human form (Luke xxiv. 39; John xx. 20-28); and nevertheless he became invisible; for when they saw him, the eyes of their spirits were opened, but when he became invisible they were closed. That man has such a sight, is manifest to me from much experience, for all the things which I have seen in the heavens were seen by that sight, and on those occasions I was in a like state of wakefulness as when they were not seen; but that sight is seldom opened to any one by the Lord at this day, and that for many reasons.”<sup>c</sup>

4. *How Swedenborg's state, in this intercourse with spirits, differed from that of other men.*—“Unlike what happens in regard to other men, spirits have been with me as they were in the world, for with me they have been not only as men as to their mind and memory, but also as to sense, so that they would even suppose themselves to be, as it were, in the world, or to have returned into the world. They were able to lead me, to see through my eyes, to hear through my ears, others speaking, yea, to speak with them in return in their own speech, had permission been given, and to write to them in their own style; but these things were not permitted, neither to touch others through my hands. With other persons the case is different, for my state is so ordered by the Lord, that I can be possessed by spirits, and yet without injury, very much like those who are obsessed, though *they* lose all command of themselves, whereas

I was perfectly myself throughout; and this has been the case for several years, even from the first of my enjoying this intercourse; I have been as I was before, without the least observable difference.”<sup>d</sup>

“It is to be known, that they who are in the other life, cannot see anything which is in the world through the eyes of any man; the reason why they could see through my eyes was, because I am in the spirit with them, and at the same time in the body with those who are in the world. And it is further to be known, that I did not see those with whom I discoursed in the other life, with the eyes of my body, but with the eyes of my spirit, and still as clearly, and sometimes more clearly than with the eyes of my body, for, by the divine mercy of the Lord, the things which are of my spirit have been opened.”

“Before my mind was (spiritually) opened so that I could converse with spirits and thus be persuaded (of spiritual things) by lively experience, there were, for many years, such peculiar indications in my case, that I now wonder that I did not sooner come into the conviction of the Lord's ruling men through the medium of spirits. I not only had dreams for a number of years informing me upon the subjects of which I was then writing; but there were also changes of state during the time that I was engaged in writing, and a certain extraordinary light shed upon what was written. I had afterwards numerous visions when my eyes were closed, and a kind of miraculous light was granted me; the influx of spirits was also as manifestly perceived as any bodily sensation; and infestations and temptations occurred in many cases and in various ways through the agency of spirits. Afterwards evil spirits held in so much aversion what was written, that I was horribly beset by them. Then there appeared fiery lights, and voices were heard in the early morning hours, besides many other things, till at length a certain spirit spake to me in a few words, causing me great astonishment that he perceived my thoughts, and still more at finding my interior senses so opened that I could speak with spirits; and equally astonished was the spirit abovementioned at the same fact. From all this it may be inferred with how great difficulty man is brought to believe that the Lord rules by means of spirits, and to recede from the opinion that he lives his life from himself independent of spirits. I perceived also, after the space of some months, when I spake with spirits, that if I were remitted into my former state, I could easily have slid into the belief that the whole was mere phantasy.”<sup>f</sup>

5. *How spirits are present to each other.*—“The divine omnipresence may be illustrated by the wonderful presence of angels and spirits in the spiritual world. In that world, because there is no space, but only an appearance of space, an angel or spirit may, in a moment, become present to another, provided he comes into a similar affection of love, and thence thought, for these two make the appearance of space. That such is the presence of all there, was manifest to me from this, that I could see Africans and Indians there very near me, although they are so many miles distant upon earth; nay, that I could be present to those who are in other planets of this system, and also to those who are in the planets in other systems, out of this solar system. By virtue of this presence, not of place, but of the appearance of place, I have conversed with apostles, deceased popes, emperors and kings; with the founders of the present church, Luther, Calvin and Melancthon, and with others from distant countries. Since such is the presence of angels and spirits, what limits can be set to the Divine presence in the universe, which is infinite! The reason that angels and spirits have such presence, is, because every affection of love, and thence every thought of the understanding, is in space without space, and in time without time; for any one can think of a brother, relation, or friend in the Indies, and then have him, as it were, present to him; in like manner, he may be affected with their love by recollection. By these things, because they are familiar to every one, the divine omnipresence may, in some measure, be illustrated.”<sup>g</sup>

“Since angels and spirits are affections which are of love and thoughts thence, therefore neither are they in space and time, but only in the appearance of them: the appearance of space and time is to them according to the states of the affections and thence of the thoughts: wherefore, when any one thinks about another from affection, with the intention that he wishes to see him, or to speak with him, he is set forthwith present. Hence it is, that spirits are present with every man, who are in like affection with him; evil spirits with him who is in the affection of evil, and good spirits with him who is in the affection of like good: and they are so present, as when one is included in society: space and time make nothing towards presence, for the reason that affection and thought thence are not in space and time; and spirits and angels are affections and thence thoughts. That it is so, has been given me to know from a living experience of many years; and also from this, that I have spoken with many after death, as well with those

who were in Europe and its various kingdoms, as with those who were in Asia and Africa and their various kingdoms; and they were all near me; wherefore, if there had been space and time to them, journeying and the time of journeying would have intervened. Yea, every man knows this from what is implanted in himself or in his mind; which became evident to me by this, that no one thought of any distance or space, when I related what I have spoken with any one deceased in Asia, Africa, or Europe; as, for example, with Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, or with any king, officer, or priest, in a distant country; and it did not at all fall into their thoughts, how one could speak with those who lived there, and how they could come to and be present, with him, when yet lands and seas intervene: from this it has also been manifest to me, that no one thinks from space and time, when he thinks of those who are in the spiritual world.”<sup>h</sup>

“The spirits who are thought of by others (as those who have been in any degree acquainted together during the life of the body), are present in a moment, when it is granted by the Lord, and so very near that they can hear and touch each other, or at any little distance, notwithstanding they may have been thousands of miles distant, yea, even at the stars; the reason is, because distance of place does not operate in the other life.”<sup>i</sup>

“In the spiritual world, they appear present with whom another desires to speak, provided the person has had any idea of them, from seeing them in the world, especially if this has been the case with both. Hence it is, that friends meet together there, and also wives and husbands; the reason is, because the internal sight, which is the understanding, in a spirit, acts as one with the external sight or sight of the eye; and as spaces in the spiritual world are not as spaces in the natural world, what any one desires to see in that world is near, and what is not desired is far off. From this circumstance it is that aspect signifies presence.”<sup>j</sup>

6. *Swedenborg made a medium of vision to spirits in the spiritual world.*—“As to what pertains in general to spirits and angels, all of whom are the souls of men living after the death of the body, they have much more exquisite senses than men, viz., sight, hearing, smell, and touch, but not taste. Spirits however are not able, and angels still less, by their sight, that is, by the sight of the spirit, to see any objects in the world; for the light of the world, or that of the sun, is to them

as thick darkness. So man, by his sight, that is, by the sight of the body, is not able to see any objects of the other life; for the light of heaven, or the heavenly light of the Lord, is to him as thick darkness. Still, however, spirits and angels, when it pleases the Lord, can see the objects of the world through the eyes of men; but this is only granted by the Lord, when he gives to man to discourse with spirits and angels, and to be in company with them. It has thus been granted them to see through my eyes the objects of this world, and to see them as distinctly as myself, and also to hear men discoursing with me. It has several times happened, that some have seen through me, to their great amazement, the friends whom they knew when in the life of the body, as present as formerly. Some have seen their husbands and children, and have desired that I would tell them that they were present, and saw them, and that I would tell them concerning their state in the other life. This, however, I was forbidden to do, and for this, among other reasons; because they would have said that I was insane, or would have thought that it was the invention of a delirious imagination: for I was well aware, that although with their lips they allowed it, yet they did not in heart believe in the existence of spirits, and the resurrection of the dead.”<sup>k</sup>

“The spirits who were with me saw through my eyes the objects of this world, as perfectly as I; but some of them, who were still in the fallacies of the senses, supposed that they saw them through their own eyes; but it was shown them that it was not so, for when my eyes were shut they saw nothing in this atmospherical world. The case is similar with man: it is not the eye which sees, but his spirit through the eye. The same may also appear from dreams, in which sometimes man sees as in open day. But this is not all: the case is similar with this interior sight, or that of the spirit. This does not see of itself, but from a vision still more interior, or that of its rational: yea neither does this see of itself, but there is a sight still more interior, which is that of the internal man: but not even does this see of itself: but it is the Lord, through the internal man, who alone sees, because he alone lives; and he gives to man that he may see, and that it may appear as if he saw from himself.”<sup>l</sup>

7. *That he was also in several respects brought into a like state with them.*—“That spirits have a pulse and respiration as well as men in the body, cannot be shown otherwise than by

spirits and angels themselves, when permission is given to converse with them. This permission has been given to me. When questioned concerning this matter, they said that they are as much men as men in the world, and that they also have a body, but a spiritual one, and that they also feel the pulsation of the heart in the chest, and of the artery at the wrist, like men in the natural world: on this subject I have questioned many, and they all said alike. That a man's spirit respire in his body, has been given me to know from my own experience. The angels were once allowed to guide my respiration and diminish it at pleasure, and at length to stop it, until the respiration of my spirit only remained, which I then sensibly perceived. That the like was then done to me when I was instructed of the state of dying persons, may be seen in the work on *Heaven and Hell*, n. 449. I have sometimes also been reduced to the respiration of my spirit alone, which I then sensibly perceived to be in concord with the common respiration of heaven. Many times also I have been in a similar state with the angels, and likewise elevated to them into heaven, and then in the spirit out of the body, and spake with them with a respiration in like manner as in the world. These and other living proofs convinced me, that a man's spirit respire not only in his body, but also after he has left the body; and that the respiration of the spirit is so secret, that it is not perceived by a man, and that it flows into the manifest respiration of the body, as cause into effect, and as thought into the lungs, and by the lungs into speech. Hence also it is evident, that the conjunction of the spirit and body in a man, is by means of the correspondence of the cardiac and pulmonary motion of both."<sup>m</sup>

"Angels speak one with another just as men in the world, and also on various subjects, as on domestic affairs, on affairs of civil society, on the affairs of moral life, and on the affairs of spiritual life: nor is there any other difference than that they converse more intelligently than men, because more interiorly from thought. It has been granted me often to be in company with them, and to speak with them as a friend with a friend, and sometimes as a stranger with a stranger; and then, because I was in a similar state with them, I knew no otherwise than that I was speaking with men on earth."<sup>n</sup>

"There were shown to me certain species of respirations, concerning which much conversation also was had, as, for instance, that there is conjoined with the usual respiration an external one, which is common to the world of spirits; then

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<sup>m</sup> D. L. & W. 391.<sup>n</sup> H. & H. 234.

an internal with an insensible external, which is sufficiently good; then an internal without an external, which is better; and finally an insensible one that was to me scarcely perceptible, which is angelic. But these in general; there are still other genera, and an indefinite number of species, pertaining to different regions of the body and the determinations thence, concerning which, by the favor of the Lord, I shall speak elsewhere. I was first accustomed thus to respire in my early childhood, when saying my morning and evening prayers, and occasionally afterwards, when exploring the harmonies of the lungs and heart, and especially when deeply engaged in writing the works that have been published. For a course of years I continually observed that there was a tacit respiration, scarcely perceptible, concerning which it was subsequently given me to reflect, and then to write. I was thus during many years, from the period of childhood, introduced into such respirations, especially by means of absorbing speculations, in which the breathing seems to become quiescent, as otherwise the intense study of truth is scarcely possible. Afterwards, when heaven was opened to me, and I was enabled to converse with spirits, I sometimes scarcely breathed by inspiration at all for the space of an hour, and merely drew in enough of air to keep up the process of thinking. Thus I was introduced by the Lord into interior respirations. I have also again and again observed, that when I was passing into a state of sleep, my respiration was almost taken away, so that I would awake and catch my breath. When I observe nothing of the kind, I continue to write and think, and am not aware of my respiration being arrested, unless I reflect upon it. This I may say has happened in instances innumerable. Nor was I at such times able to observe the various changes, because I did not reflect upon them. The design of all this was, that every kind of state, every kind of sphere, and every kind of society, particularly the more interior, might find in my own an adapted respiration, which should come into play without any reflection on my part, and that thus a medium of intercourse might be afforded with spirits and angels.”<sup>o</sup>

8. *That the things seen and heard in Heaven are ineffable to mortals.*—“The angels see the arcana of the Word in the light which is from the Lord, in which light innumerable things are presented to the view, which do not fall into expressions of speech, and not even into the ideas of thought appertaining to men so long as they live in the body; the reason is, because

with men the light of heaven flows-in into the light of the world, and thereby into such things as either extinguish, or reject, or darken, and thereby make dim the light of heaven; the cares of the world and of the body are such things, especially those which flow from the loves of self and of the world; hence it is that the things which are of angelic wisdom are for the most part unutterable, and also incomprehensible. Nevertheless man comes into such wisdom after the rejection of the body, that is, after death, but only that man who had received the life of faith and charity from the Lord in the world; for the faculty of receiving angelic wisdom is in the good of faith and charity. That the things are ineffable, which the angels see and think in the light of heaven, hath been also given to know from much experience, for when I have been elevated into that light, I have seemed to myself to understand all those things which the angels there spake, but when I have been let down from thence into the light of the external or natural man, and in this light was willing to recollect the things which I had there heard, I could not express them by terms, and not even comprehend them by ideas of thought, except in a few instances, and these few also in obscurity; from which considerations it is evident, that the things which are seen and heard in heaven, are such as the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard."P

9. *With whom Swedenborg conversed in the Spiritual World.*  
 "That worldly blessing is nothing in respect to heavenly blessing which is eternal, the Lord thus teacheth in Matthew, 'What doth it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul' (xvi. 26): nevertheless the man, who is in worldly and terrestrial things, doth not apprehend this word, for worldly and terrestrial things suffocate and produce this effect, that it is not even believed that there is eternal life; but I can avouch that man, as soon as he dies, is in another life, and lives a spirit amongst spirits; and that on this occasion he appears to himself and to all others in that life, altogether as a man in the world, endowed with every sense internal and external; consequently the death of the body is only the casting off such things as had served for use and employment in the world, and moreover that death itself is the continuation of life, but in another world, which is unseen before the eyes of the terrestrial body, but is there conspicuous in a light which a thousand times exceeds the mid-day light of the world; inasmuch as I know this from living experience of so many years, which



is still continued, therefore I avouch it; I discourse still and have discoursed with almost all whom I have known in the world, and who are dead; with some after two or three days from their decease; most of them were exceedingly indignant, that they did not believe any thing of a life which was to remain after death: with some of them I have discoursed not for a day, but for months and years; and it hath also been given to see their states of life in succession or progress either to hell or to heaven: wherefore whosoever wishes to be happy to eternity, let him know and believe that he is to live after death; let him think this and remember it, for it is a truth: let him also know that the Word is the only doctrine which teaches how a man ought to live in the world, that he may be happy to eternity."<sup>a</sup>

"It being permitted me to declare what I have heard and seen for several years, it is first to be told how the case is with man, when he is resuscitated, or how he passes from the life of the body into the life of eternity: and that I might know that men live after death, it has been granted me to speak and converse with many who were known to me during their life in the body, and this not for a day and a week, but for months, and almost years, speaking and conversing with them as in the world: these very much wondered that they themselves, during the life in the body, had been, and that others, and the greater part, still are in such unbelief, that they think they shall not live after death, when yet hardly a few days intervene, after the decease of the body, before they are in another life; for it is a continuation of life."<sup>r</sup>

"The queen expressed her satisfaction at seeing him, and asked him whether it was true that he could converse with the deceased? He answered, Yes. She inquired further, Whether it was a science that could be communicated to and by others? No. What is it then? A gift of the Lord. Can you, then, speak with every one deceased, or only with certain persons? He answered, I cannot converse with all, but with such as I have known in this world; with all royal and princely persons, with all renowned heroes, or great and learned men, whom I have known, either personally, or from their actions or writings; consequently, with all, of whom I could form an idea; for it may be supposed that a person whom I never knew, nor of whom I could form any idea, I neither could nor would wish to speak with. The queen then asked him, Whether he would undertake a commission to her lately deceased brother? He answered, With all my heart. On this he followed the queen,

with the king and Count Scheffer, to a window in the apartment, where the queen gave him his commission, to which he promised to bring her an answer. After this he was invited to the royal table, where they put a thousand questions to him, which he answered truly. Some time afterwards, Count Scheffer paid him another visit, and asked him whether he would accompany him to court again, to which he consented. The queen on seeing him, said, Do not forget my commission. He answered, It is already done. And when he delivered her his message, she was extremely surprised, and became suddenly indisposed; and, after some recollection, she said, This no mortal could have told me! On my inquiring whether any person had heard what the queen had said when she gave him the commission, he answered, I do not know; yet she did not speak so low but that the king and Count Scheffer, if they had attended to it, might have heard it. This may be depended upon, as the late venerable man himself related it to me.\*

"I have spoken one whole year with Paul, and also of what is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, iii. 28. I have spoken three times with John; once with Moses; and I suppose a hundred times with Luther, who owned to me that, contrary to the warning of an angel, he had received the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, merely with the intent that he might make an entire separation from popery. But with the angels I have conversed these twenty-two years past, and daily continue so to do; with them the Lord has given me association, though there was no occasion to mention all this in my writings. Who would have believed, and who would not have said, Show some token that I may believe? and this every one would have said who did not see the like."†

10. *What may be known concerning the Future Life.*—"The things they might have known for themselves, if only, as was said, they had been willing to use their reason, are the following. **FIRSTLY**, that when man is divested of the body, he enjoys much greater powers of understanding than during his life in the body, from the cause that whilst he is in the body corporeal and worldly things engage his thoughts, and these induce obscurity; whereas when he is divested of the body, such things do not interrupt, but he is like those persons who are in interior thought by an abstraction of the mind from the outward things of sense. Hence they might know that the state after death is much clearer and brighter than the state before death, and that when a man dies, he passes comparatively from

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\* Let. of Gen. Tuxen (Doc. p. 150).

† Let. iii. to Oeting. (Doc. p. 154).

shade into light, because he passes from the things of the world to the things of heaven, and from the things of the body to the things of the spirit ; but, what is surprising, although they can understand these things, still they think the contrary, namely, that the state of life in the body is comparatively clear, and the state of life, when the body is put off, is obscure. **SECONDLY**, they may know, if they would but use their reason, that the life which man has formed to himself in the world, follows him, in other words, that he has a life of the same nature after death ; for they may know, that no one can put off the life which he has formed to himself from infancy, unless he dies absolutely, and that this life cannot be instantaneously transmuted into another, still less into an opposite life. For example : he who has formed to himself a life of deceit, and has found in deceit the delight of his life, cannot put off the life of deceit, but is also in that life after death. So, too, they who have lived in self-love, and thereby in hatred and revenge against those who have not submitted to them, or in other similar evils, continue in the same after the life of the body, for those evils are the things which they love, and which constitute the delights of their life, consequently the very life itself ; and so in other cases. **THIRDLY**, a man may know from himself, that when he passes into another life, he leaves many things behind, such as cares respecting food, clothing, habitation, and the acquirement of money and wealth, for in another life there are no such cares ; also cares respecting promotion to dignities, which so much engage man's thoughts during his life in the body ; and that these are succeeded by other things, which have no relation to the kingdom of this world. Hence, **FOURTHLY**, it may be known, that he whose thoughts have been employed solely about such earthly things, so as to be totally occupied therein, and to make such things alone the delight of his life, is not fit to be among those whose delight it is to think of heavenly things, or things relating to heaven. Hence also it may be known, **FIFTHLY**, that when these external things of the body and the world are removed, man is such as he was inwardly, namely, thinks and wills such things. In this case, if the thoughts inwardly had been deceitful, engaged in artful machinations, aspiring to dignities, to gain, to reputation, for the sake of worldly or corporeal things, or if they had been influenced by hatred, revenge, and other similar evils, he will necessarily after death think the same things, consequently he will think infernal things, however with a view to the above ends he might have concealed his thoughts before men, and in an external form have appeared upright, and induced others to believe that the above evils never had engaged his attention.

That these external appearances or pretences of uprightness, are also taken away in another life, may likewise be known from the fact, that external things are put off from the body, and are no more of any use ; hence every one may conclude from himself, how man will then appear in the sight of angels. The SIXTH thing which may also be known, is, that heaven, or the Lord by and through heaven, is continually operating, and flowing in with good and truth, and that if there be not in men something recipient of good and truth, as a ground or plane, in the interior man which lives after the death of the body, the influent good and truth cannot be received, and that man on this account, during his life in the world, ought to be solicitous to procure to himself interiorly such a plane. This cannot be procured but by thinking good towards the neighbor, and by willing what is good from him, and thence doing good to him, and thereby acquiring to himself the delight of life in such things. This plane is acquired by charity towards the neighbor, that is, by mutual love, and it is this plane which is called conscience. Into this plane good and truth from the Lord can flow, and be received therein, but not where there is no charity, and consequently no conscience. In this latter case the influent good and truth is transfluent, and is changed into what is evil and false. The SEVENTH thing which man may know from himself, is, that love to God and love towards his neighbor are what make man to be man, distinct from brute animals, and that those loves constitute heavenly life or heaven, and their opposites infernal life or hell. But the reason why man does not know the above things is, because he is not willing to know them, for he lives an opposite life ; also, because he does not believe that there is a life after death ; and further, because he has received principles of faith, and none of charity, and hence believe according to the doctrinals which generally prevail, that in case there is a life after death, he may be saved by virtue of faith, without any regard to his manner of life, and this, if he should receive faith even at his dying hour.”<sup>u</sup>

11. *Swedenborg's assurance of the vast difficulty that men would have in crediting his reports of the other life.*—“I am aware that the things which have been heretofore said, will not be believed by those who are immersed in corporeal, terrestrial, and worldly things, that is, by such of them as hold those things for an end, for these have no apprehension of other things than those which are dissipated by death. I am aware also, that neither will they believe, who have thought and in-

quired much about the soul, and have not at the same time comprehended that the soul is man's spirit, and that his spirit is his very man which lives in the body. For these cannot conceive any other notion about the soul, than that it is something cogitative, or flamy, or ethereal, which only acts into the organic forms of the body, and not into the purer forms which are of its spirit into the body, and thus such that it is dissipated with the body; and this is especially the case with those who have confirmed themselves in such notions by views puffed up by the persuasion of their own superior wisdom."<sup>v</sup>

"How difficult it is to induce mankind to believe in the existence of spirits and angels, and particularly in its being possible for any one to speak with them, was made apparent to me from the following instance. There were certain spirits, who, during their life in the body, had been among the more learned, and who were then known to me (for I have conversed with almost all with whom I was acquainted during their life in the body, with some for several weeks, with others for the space of a year, altogether as if they had been alive in the body). These spirits were once reduced to a state of thought similar to what they had been in during their abode in the world, which is easily effected in the other life. It was then insinuated to them, whether or not they believed it to be possible for man to converse with spirits? They then in that state said, that it is a phantasy to believe any such thing: and this they continued to assert. Hence it was given me to know, how difficult it is to persuade mankind, that any discourse can take place between men and spirits, by reason of their not believing in the existence of spirits, still less that themselves are to come amongst spirits after death; at which also these same spirits were then greatly surprised. Yet these were men of the more learned class, and who had spoken much in public concerning the other life, and concerning heaven and angels; so that there was reason to suppose that this was perfectly well known to them scientifically, especially from the Word, where it frequently occurs."<sup>w</sup>

"I have conversed with spirits, and on their inquiry, explained to them how the particulars I have written in regard to them seem to be received by men, when I am about to publish them; because bad spirits insinuated into me a belief that no one would receive them, but that every one on the contrary would reject them. I entertain myself at present with this subject in company with spirits when walking in the street, and it has been granted me to perceive that there are

five kinds of reception of my writings, or rather, if you please, five sorts of readers. *The first* is formed of those who reject them entirely, because they are in another persuasion, and also those that at the same time receive no faith. These reject them, as such things cannot be received by them, inasmuch as they do not enter into their mind. *The second* kind of reception is of those who receive them as scientifics, and as objects of mere curiosity. *The third* sort are those that receive them intellectually, so that they find the subject agreeable enough, but whenever it requires an application to regulate the conduct of their lives, they remain where they were before. *The fourth* kind consists of those who receive the matter in a persuasive manner, so that the subject penetrates even in a degree to the amendment of their lives, which leads them sometimes towards uses. *The fifth* kind consists of all those who receive it with delight, and confirm it in a life agreeable thereto.\*

“I have already informed your majesty, and beseech you to recall it to mind, that the Lord our Saviour manifested himself to me in a sensible personal appearance; that He has commanded me to write what has been already done, and what I have still to do: that He was afterwards graciously pleased to endow me with the privilege of conversing with angels and spirits, and to be in fellowship with them. I have already declared this more than once to your majesty, in the presence of all the royal family, when they were graciously pleased to invite me to their table with five senators, and several other persons; this was the only subject discoursed of during the repast. Of this I also spoke afterwards to several other senators; and more openly to their excellencies Count de Tessin, Count Bonde, and Count Höpken, who are still alive, and were satisfied with the truth of it. I have declared the same in England, Holland, Germany, Denmark, and at Paris, to kings, princes, and other particular persons, as well as to those in this kingdom. If the common report is believed, the chancellor has declared, that what I have been reciting are untruths, although the very truth. To say they cannot believe and give credit to such things, therein I forgive them, for it is not in my power to place others in the same state in which God has placed me, so as to be able to convince them by their own eyes and ears, of the truth of those deeds and things I publicly have made known. I have no ability to capacitate them to converse with angels and spirits, neither to work miracles to dispose or force their understandings to comprehend what I say. When my writings are read with attention and

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\* S. D. 2955.

cool reflection (in which many things are to be met with as hitherto unknown,) it is easy enough to conclude, that I could not come to such knowledge but by a real vision, and by conversing with those who are in the spiritual world. If any doubt shall still remain, I am ready to testify with the most solemn oath that can be offered in this matter, that I have said nothing but essential and real truth, without any mixture of deception. This knowledge is given to me from our Saviour, not from any particular merit of mine, but for the great concern of all Christians' salvation and happiness; and as such, how can any venture to assert it as false? That these things may appear such as many have had no conception of, and of consequence, that they cannot easily credit, has nothing remarkable in it, for scarce anything is known respecting them."

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REMARKS

In view of the preceding array of testimonies to the truth of Swedenborg's claims, a question of great moment inevitably comes up:—On what grounds are these claims rejected? In what point precisely is concentrated the essence of the incredibility alleged? Is any portion of the above statements open to the charge of being either irrational or absurd? Suppose that either Ezekiel, Daniel, or John had given the same account of their own psychological state, when made the medium of divine communications, would it not have been deemed satisfactory? Granting the intrinsic possibility of such a preternatural illumination in any case, do not the circumstances in respect to Swedenborg fulfil the requisite conditions? Is not the evidence afforded just such as we feel *ought* to be given, in case the asserted translation of spirit actually took place? Could the phenomena be more appropriate? But the prophetic trance is surely possible, because it has repeatedly occurred, and the inspired character of the biblical books is a standing testimony of the fact! Again, then, we ask, wherein do Swedenborg's pretensions fail of their due authentication? If it be said that the doctrines promulgated by him in that state are in themselves anti-scriptural and false, and that this fact stamps the alleged extacy as a delusion, why will not his impugners condescend to argue this point on its own merits? We are prepared to meet them in the open arena of debate, making the inspired volume the grand tribunal of appeal. But we regret to say, that to this proposal they universally and pertinaciously refuse to accede. The simple fact that any alleged sys-

tem of religious doctrines differs from the established belief, is accounted sufficient to condemn it at once, notwithstanding their advocates are usually very emphatic in asserting the superior rational and logical consistency of their scheme of theology, and are far from being reserved in their challenges of argumentative refutation. But for the most part, they will not argue with Swedenborg or his adherents. The different sects will readily engage in wordy warfare with each other—the Arminian will encounter the Calvinist, and the Calvinist the Arminian,—the disciples of the Old School in all the churches will earnestly “try conclusions” with those of the New,—but neither the one nor the other will deign to meet the New Churchman in debate on the fundamental principles which underlie *all* their controversies, and in comparison with the importance of which their endless logomachies on minor points sink into absolute insignificance. Against such an adversary, however, they seem to have agreed, by common consent, that the proper weapons to be employed are ridicule and abuse, instead of reason and logic.

We have no hesitation in affirming, that there is, to a candid mind, a certain indescribable air of truth diffused over the preceding extracts; and the same character we declare predicable of the entire system. Now this agreement of the disclosures with the mind's native intuitions, is a fact to be accounted for. As the spontaneous conviction of their truth cannot be easily resisted, how is this truth consistent with the presence of a mass of utter falsities? Does the same fountain send forth at the same time bitter waters and sweet? Undoubtedly there are many things strange and startling in the body of the revelations, and calculated to create a *prima facie* against them. But the objections from this source have been actually overcome in the minds of multitudes of men of high intelligence and cool judgment by the force of countervailing evidence in their favor, and is not some consideration due to the grounds of their decision? It is gratuitous to assert that they were insensible to the difficulties which meet every reader at the threshold of the system. They could not but feel them in all their force, yet these difficulties gave way before the overwhelming pressure of confirmation from a hundred sources. And in all this they strenuously maintain that the mental process through which they have passed cannot be impeached of precipitation or infirmity. They wish the world to be assured, that they profess to have yielded to the most sound and legitimate evidence of truth. They declare themselves unable even to conceive of stronger grounds of belief than they find in the internal evidence of what Swedenborg has taught respecting the nature of man, the nature of God, the import of the Word, and the conditions of future existence. They clearly perceive that all his statements on these heads rest upon *principles* which assure them-

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selves as impregnable to their most enlightened reason. They challenge the most unsparing scrutiny of the truth of these *principles*, whether psychological or exegetical. It is impossible that any one should have a stronger conviction in regard to any particular feature of the system that it is *false*, than they have in regard to the system as a whole that it is *true*. Nothing, therefore, of the nature of an objection has with them the weight of a feather, till what they affirm to be intrinsically *true* is shown to be *untrue*.

But another evasion is still in reserve—"If the evidence of Swedenborg's truth is so convincing to his disciples, why is it not produced and set blazing before the eyes of others? We ask for it, and it is never forthcoming." That is possible, and yet his adherents exculpate in the premises. They can only point to it where it is to be found, and where *they* have found it—in the body of the writings. It is by the perusal of these that they have acquired their conviction of their truth as a whole, and the refutation of their faith must of necessity require a careful study of the documents in which it is embodied, and an elaborate investigation of their character on the score of the asserted *principles*. This, however, we are constrained to repeat, is a course which our opponents invariably shun. They do not trouble themselves to master the system *as a whole*. Yet this is an indispensable requisite for one who would deal controversially with our faith. It is in view of the system *as a whole* that we have embraced it, and it is only by its being shown fallacious *as a whole* that we can ever renounce it. Let then this acquaintance with the writings in question be candidly and patiently formed, and we shall acknowledge a competency on the part of assailants to meet our assumptions in the fair field of debate. But if this be done, the debate, we believe, will seldom *come off*. Our conviction is very strong, that whoever sits down in a proper spirit to the inquiry as an adversary, will rise from it as a disciple. Let him that doubts make the trial.

G. B.



practicable—by which he shifted the pecuniary responsibility from his own shoulders. But the arrangement was such that the expenses of the publication were first of all to be met by the proceeds. These have not yet been sufficient for the purpose, although they would be ample if all arrearages were paid in. The consequence has been that since the arrangement was made with the publisher, more than a year ago, the Editor has not received a single dollar for his labor in the work, nor has he any prospect of so doing until delinquent subscribers shall come forward and cancel their accounts. We sincerely hope they will not delay to do this, for though the Editor desires nothing more for himself personally than a *bare subsistence* from day to day, yet he cannot do with less than this, and especially he deprecates being impeded in his efforts to further the cause of the New Church when he is willing to do it on the merest pittance that will keep him from actual want. Our subscribers therefore will see that our claim is a very urgent one. Several hundred dollars are yet deficient of our dues, and we need every cent of it at the present moment. Every dollar paid in will not only go to the discharge of an honest debt, but will be a virtual contribution to the uses of the New Church in disseminating its precious truths over the world. Our desire is to obtain the means of publishing more and more extensively the writings of the Church, and to one who is principled in the love of its truths, we cannot imagine a stronger appeal than the assurance that in *being just*, he is at the same time *doing good*. This assurance we tender with all confidence to our subscribers, and under the effect of it we hope there will be no *delay* in making the remittances which will be indicated in the bills sent out with this number. If our doctrines are doctrines of *life* and *high morality*, let us shun the pain of self-reflection at coming short of their demands.

P. S.—As it is very desirable to have the present pamphlet distributed as widely as possible, it is suggested to those who may approve of its plan and execution, and whose means will allow, that they order such quantities for private circulation as they may deem expedient. Ten copies will be sent for every dollar remitted. Those who may furnish the editor with funds for this purpose may rely upon the most faithful execution of their wishes.

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