

# LETTERS

TO A

MAN OF THE WORLD.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

J. F. E. LE BOYS DES GUAYS,

EX-SOUS-PRÉFET DU DÉPARTEMENT DU CHER.

REVISED.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE "Letters to a Man of the World," of which we here present to the reader a revised English translation, were first published by M. Le Boys des Guays, in the year 1841, in a French periodical entitled "La Nouvelle Jérusalem," edited by him. They were written but a short time after he had embraced the doctrines of the New Church. Still full of the first enthusiasm excited by the discovery of the pearl of great price, and anxious to make known his discovery to men of the world, he addressed these letters to those who were not wedded to any particular creed, but who felt the need of some rational religion. Assuming the existence of this state of mind, he endeavors to lead them by gradual steps to a recognition of the fundamental points of New Church philosophy. His treatment of these questions is so fair, and harmo-

nizes so well with the inquiring spirit of the age, that his letters were received with universal approbation by the members of the New Church, and have for many years been employed as a successful medium, for the introduction of a knowledge of their doctrines to minds thirsting for truth. An English translation of these letters by Mr. John Murdock speedily followed their publication in France, and first appeared in this country in a journal called the "Retina," published in Cincinnati. From this a re-print was made in book-form; but the whole edition having soon been exhausted, Professor George Bush issued an edition of the "Letters" in New York in 1848, after revising and correcting the original version, and adding a translation of the three letters of the second series, which was never completed by M. Le Boys des Guays. In 1849 a German translation was made by the present writer, which appeared some years afterwards in the "Monatschrift für die Neue Kirche," published in Baltimore, and again in book-form, in 1860.

The demand for these "Letters" still continuing, and the need of a better translation and thorough revision being felt, the present trans-

lator was requested by the publishers of this edition to undertake the work. To this he readily consented ; just seventeen years having elapsed since the time when he presented them to the public in their German version. He applied himself faithfully to the task before him, until he came to Letter VII., when he noticed a decided discrepancy between the teaching of M. Le Boys des Guays and that of the doctrines of the New Church. This, he contented himself with pointing out in a foot-note. But, when in Letter VIII., these differences began to increase in number, he became gradually convinced that M. Le Boys des Guays had misapprehended so greatly some *fundamental* points of New Church philosophy, as to vitiate the whole of Letters VIII., IX., X., and XI. The errors were so sweeping, and so interwoven in the text, that he found himself completely at a loss how to proceed. After presenting the case to the publishers, however, and consulting with some of the ministers of the New Church, he came to the conclusion that he would be justified in removing the objectionable matter, and replacing it by the correct teaching of the Church. He was confirmed in the adoption of

this course, by the representations of a former pupil of M. Le Boys des Guays, to the effect, that the latter, before his death in 1864, had expressed regret that the "Letters to a Man of the World" had been so widely circulated, as they had been written at a period of his life, when his mind was still in a state of transition from the old to the new faith; and that he had announced his intention of *revising* them. He passed into the other world, however, before he could accomplish this purpose. It is pleasant to feel that the effort to bring these Letters into greater harmony with the doctrines of the New Church is thus a fulfilment of the wish of their author; and the translator trusts that the usefulness of the book will be enhanced by the revision, and that the desire of one, whose life was devoted to the spread of the truth, will be more fully accomplished thereby.

Some of the principal changes which it was found necessary to make, are here noted. In Letter VII. the argument from p. 106 to p. 113, is re-written, with the retention, however, of as much of M. Le Boys des Guays' language as was possible. In Letter VIII., a paragraph on p. 122, is omitted, and the portion from p. 132 to

p. 138 re-written. Letter IX. is entirely new, with the exception of pp. 141-145. Letter X. is also new, with the exception of pp. 170-173. Letter XI. was cancelled, and Letter XII. divided into two parts. Letter XI. of this edition, treating of the Redemption and the Trinity, is entirely new, with the exception of pp. 190 and 191, and some two or three pages at the end. Letter XII. is remodelled and re-arranged, new matter introduced, and objectionable matter dropped. In Letter XIII. the explanation of the memory, and the problem of the origin of language is re-written. Letter XIV. is a translation of the original.

The second series of Letters having been left unfinished, and its whole chain of argument being at variance with that which was adopted in the first series, Letter I. was dropped, and Letters II. and III., which treat of The Word, were reduced into one; and this was entirely re-written in order to bring it into harmony with the spirit of the first series. This Letter is number XV. in the present edition.

It is admitted that with this revision the "Letters" can no longer be strictly called those of

M. Le Boys de Guays. Still they are written in accordance with his original plan, and it is hoped, also in accordance with the spirit of the true doctrine of the New Church. The hesitation which the translator at first felt, to substitute his own language for that of M. Le Boys des Guays, and which led him to quote extensively from the writings of the New Church, may be noticed in Letter IX., which is heavy in style, owing to the difficulty of reducing into unity the diverse language of different writers. In the succeeding letters, the style and method of the argument will be found more uniform.

R. L. TAFEL.





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# LETTERS.

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## I.

Introduction.—Painfulness of doubt.—Existence of God, and immortality of the soul.—Reason not to be banished from the domain of religious philosophy.—Conditions of the present discussion.

**L**IKE yourself, sir, I have been a prey to the moral disease, the spiritual lethargy, which has been engendered by the philosophy of the last century. What you tell me of the present state of your mind, does not, therefore, in the least affect me with surprise. I know from experience how painful, how almost insupportable, is a condition of doubt. My own mind has passed through all the intellectual phases by which yours has been disturbed. In vain one seeks refuge in science, in the arts, or in higher philosophy; in vain one plunges into the turmoil of business, or abandons one's self to the pleasures of the world; not by such means can doubts be driven from the mind of one who is naturally disposed to serious reflection. You characterize this as a most painful state. Unquestionably it is; for such doubts, like the furies described by

the poet, for ever cling to their victim. But happy are they who in this age of indifference, feel these pangs of religious doubt. Anxiety to be released from this state impels them to search; and whoever perseveres in seeking shall surely find. Your condition may be compared to that of a sick man well acquainted with the nature of his disease, and feeling keenly all its attacks; but who, for this very reason, may be restored to health. Would you not be more deserving of pity, if like the greater part of your associates, you had sunken into a condition of utter indifference? In this case you would be like a man stricken by palsy, who experiences no pain, but for whom there is no hope of recovery so long as this fatal state of insensibility continues.

You desire to believe, but, as you add, without being obliged to give up the exercise of your reason. I accept this reservation with the greatest pleasure; it agrees so well with my own views, that I should have proposed it if you had not. In discussing with an unbeliever questions connected with the philosophy of religion, I am very careful not to tell him, "Set aside your reason, and believe blindly." This would be a sure means of breaking off the discussion, or at all events, of rendering it fruitless. On the contrary, I try to induce him to state all the objections which the subject admits, and even go so far as



to point out to him those which he has overlooked, lest at some future time they might suggest new doubts ; for experience shows, that in a debated question, man can arrive at conviction only so far as he has investigated all its bearings, in the full exercise of his freedom and rationality. Truths can enter into the mind only by degrees, and only as opposing errors are removed ; errors, however, can be removed only when man fully and rationally acknowledges that what he believed to be true is false.

You see that, far from circumscribing our future discussion, I propose to allow it the greatest possible latitude. Our next object will be to define, as clearly as possible, our respective positions. From your letter I learn that you admit the existence of a God distinct from nature, and that there is no doubt in your mind on this important point. In this respect, you are much in advance of the majority of persons whom we meet with in society ; for, although it is no longer the fashion to deny openly the existence of God, yet how many are there, especially in the learned world, who make no distinction between God and nature ! If you interrogate them on this subject, they declare, once for all, that they admit the existence of a God ; but when you press them with questions, you very soon find that they confound God with nature.

To so lamentable a result are we driven by the

principle of admitting the existence of those things only which come under the cognizance of the bodily senses. This sad condition, which I have compared to the state of one afflicted by palsy, who feels not his malady, makes you unhappy. If you suffer, it is because your belief is limited to the bare acknowledgment of the existence of a God, the Creator of nature, and because on all other questions, you are in distressing perplexity. For instance, in respect to the immortality of the soul, you have mere probabilities, no certainty. The arguments of philosophy, and of the Roman-Catholic religion in which you were born, are far from satisfying your reason. You would like to believe in the life after death, because there is something within you which opposes the limitation of human existence to this miserable earthly life. But, as soon as you turn your attention to what you are taught in regard to the soul, you find the hypotheses of philosophers and the ideas of theologians, so vague, so incoherent, and so little in harmony with your inner feeling, that you are obliged to reject both.

With respect to this inner feeling, let me make one remark. Theology and Science, in producing beautiful treatises on the immortality of the soul, without first clearly defining the idea of the soul itself, have obscured rather than illustrated the subject; and the conception of it which lies in



the mind of a little child who has lost his mother, or of a simple-minded peasant who deploras the loss of his wife, comes much nearer the truth — as you will see hereafter — than that which is entertained by a learned doctor of divinity or philosophy. I am therefore not at all astonished at the little benefit you have derived from a study of those works.

Your desire to believe, without being obliged to give up the exercise of your reason, explains to me also why you have preferred to address your letter to a disciple of the New Jerusalem, rather than to a theologian of the old school. You no doubt thought that a religion appearing in this age of rationalism ought not to exclude reason from its philosophy, and in this respect you are not mistaken ; but should you imagine that the disciples of the New Jerusalem, like those innovators who are seen rising on all sides, discard the doctrines of Christianity, you would be very greatly mistaken. The New Jerusalem rests upon Christianity, as this rests upon the law and the prophets ; it does not destroy, but it restores and perfects. We are therefore Christians, and indeed Christians in the largest acceptation of the term, as you will be convinced when you come to understand the principles of the Lord's New Church.

Now since it is settled that you are *an unbeliever*, disposed to *believe* provided you are not required

to dispense with the exercise of your reason, and that I am a Christian in the largest acceptation of the word, one who acknowledges with an inmost conviction all that the New Jerusalem teaches, our respective positions are sufficiently defined. The discussions which shall follow can alone make known to you what is implied by the name of a Christian in the New Church.

We might now enter upon our subject; but, before doing so, it will be well for us to come to an understanding on some points which relate to our mode of argumentation. In this first letter, I shall note those which I deem most important.

You desire to be convinced by reason. To your reason, therefore, I must address myself. Now, in treating on subjects so elevated as God and his attributes, the soul and its immortality, and in general, on a world not visible to our natural or material eyes, your reason tells you that you cannot ask for natural or material proofs; for proofs which address the senses of your earthly body. As for the rest, I do not believe that your reason will reject the arguments which I shall offer. I purpose not to deviate from the rules of sound logic, but to follow, as much as possible, the method of the mathematicians. Like them, I shall proceed from the known to the unknown; and like them, I shall have recourse to proofs drawn from analogy; and, since this kind of argumentation is admitted in' the exact

sciences, I doubt not you will admit it here. Finally, in speaking of the spiritual world, I shall require you to abstract space and time, as in geometry we are required to abstract one or two dimensions of a body; and in mechanics, motion, the resistance of the air, friction, &c.

Should this mode of treating rationally, and as it were mathematically, the lofty questions of religious philosophy, excite your astonishment by its novelty, I would meet it thus: If religion and reason have been divorced, man alone has been the cause of it. God has never objected to reason so long as it was reason; but from the time when man himself perverted this noble faculty, God's own gift to him, his vitiated powers became incapable of grasping spiritual and heavenly things. And how can the method of the geometers be opposed to the divine science? Do we not say, in speaking of God, that he is the great Geometrician and Architect of the universe? Is not God the creator of those globes which revolve above our heads, and the courses of which are the embodiment of all mathematical science? Moreover, have not the exact sciences also a metaphysical side? If you question the mathematicians who have penetrated the profound depths of the infinitesimal calculus, they will acknowledge that several of them, struck by the results attained, have been led out of their former materialism to a more spiritual view of things.

You see that all these are questions properly belonging to the philosophy of religion. As regards doctrinal questions, so called, it would be out of place to discuss them now. We must wait until the philosophical errors opposing their admission are removed from your mind, and until the spiritual truths which will take their place shall have disposed you to receive them favorably. In a word, it is necessary that your convictions concerning those questions which will occupy us first should be firmly established; but keep well in mind that these convictions, however strong, are not faith, but will lead you to that faith which God alone gives to man when he is prepared to receive it.

Before concluding this letter, I must make one other observation. Although the New Jerusalem claims to possess truths of the highest order, and although by their means many questions may be resolved which hitherto have remained without solution, it is nevertheless far from pretending to explain every thing. The intelligence of a created being, whether angel or man, will never rise so high as to comprehend the Creator. In order to understand God in his infinite essence, one must be God himself.

## II.

Reconciliation of the existence of evil with the idea of a God essentially good and omnipotent.—The spiritual sun.—The freedom of man.—The laws of Divine order.

THE conditions which I proposed as to our mode of discussion, were so much in conformity with the reasoning spirit of our age that I was convinced you would accept them; and I should have entered upon the subject itself in my first letter, had I not been restrained by an altogether personal consideration. When an author writes professionally, he can arrange the plan of his work to suit himself, and as he deems best; but I am debarred from this by my present object. I have undertaken to produce in you a philosophical and religious conviction; and I should regard myself as departing from my design, did I not leave you in entire freedom to direct the discussion yourself. I have therefore awaited your reply in the full expectation that you would propose some questions on the points which most engage your attention. Your letter shows that I was not mistaken: it contains sev-

eral questions which afford me an insight into the present state of your mind ; and I think I shall fully meet it by considering first the most important of them.

You ask, “ How can *the existence of evil* in the universe be reconciled with the idea of a *God essentially Good and Omnipotent?* ”

You are aware, sir, that this first question presents the greatest philosophical difficulties ; we may however, as well take it up now as hereafter ; but, do not be astonished, if in treating the subject, I adopt a somewhat indirect course. In order to prove that the existence of evil is not incompatible with the infinite goodness of God, nor with his omnipotence, it is necessary to have exact ideas, not only of God and his attributes, but also of man and the universe. You see then, that at the very outset, we need to enter upon subjects which for three thousand years have baffled philosophy, and which have given rise to a host of systems so little conclusive that the friends of truth still await a satisfactory solution. Nevertheless, it is not the fault of philosophy, but of philosophers, who, unenlightened by religion, have endeavored to sound its depths, or who have had recourse to religion only after it had lost its true light. But this is not the time to demonstrate this proposition : the line of my argument will furnish abundant evidence of its truth. I shall now pass to the question, or rather

to the preliminary matters which will facilitate its solution.

It is evident that our material world, as a whole and in its parts, is sustained by the sun which we see shining over our heads. Without the presence of this luminous body, the globe that we inhabit, and all those which constitute our planetary system, would inevitably fall into chaos. No less evident is it that all the effects produced by the sun are due to the heat and light emanating from it. Heat and light, therefore, are the two principles which cause the material subsistence of our planet. In our world, however, there are, not only natural heat and natural light, but also spiritual heat and spiritual light. Does not man feel an interior warmth when he is moved by an affection? And is not a thought that strikes him an interior light? This is so true, that in no language can we speak of an affection without employing terms which have reference to heat, nor of thought without using such as relate to light. In speaking of love, we say, it inflames; of truth, it enlightens; of an affection, it is lively, or ardent; and of a thought, it is brilliant or luminous. What other conclusion can we draw from this, than that the affection of man is spiritual heat and his thought spiritual light?

But whence the heat and light which affect what is within us? Can they possibly come from the sun that is visible to the eyes of our

earthly body? No one will venture to maintain this: for the sun being visible, is also material; and the material can never produce the spiritual. In vain will the materialist bring into requisition his scalpel; he can never succeed in discovering in a material organ the beginning of an affection or of a thought. In vain will he analyze an affection or a thought; he can never find in them the least atom of ponderable matter. In order to discover the source of this heat and light, we must have recourse to analogy; and by means of it, we may draw the following conclusion: If natural heat and light proceed from a natural sun, — which cannot be denied, — spiritual heat and light must proceed from a spiritual sun, like them invisible to our material eyes. You will see hereafter how very useful the knowledge of this simple truth is in the study of that part of the universe which is inaccessible to the senses of our earthly body, and which we call the spiritual world.

Analogy further teaches, that since the material world is sustained by its sun, the spiritual world must be sustained by its sun; and the light in which we can now view ourselves will confirm this conclusion from analogy. If by our body, we live in the natural world, by our spirit we belong to the spiritual world; and, as our spiritual being is but a composite of affections and thoughts, it is evident that it can subsist only



from the central spiritual fire, whence emanate spiritual heat and light, or affection and thought. And if, while still invested with matter, we cannot exist apart from this spiritual centre, how much less can purely spiritual beings, who constitute the other world, exist without and apart from its sustaining cause?

Having established the existence of a spiritual sun, and its central agency in the subsistence of the invisible part of the universe, we can proceed to inquire into the nature of that sun. As all the affections of man belong to the will, and all his thoughts to the understanding, and as these faculties of will and understanding constitute the life of man,— for it has long been held that will and thought are the man,— it follows clearly, that spiritual heat and light, which in their essence are love and wisdom, constitute life itself; and, since they emanate from the spiritual sun, that life itself resides in it, and is distributed from that sun throughout the universe.

But, although life resides in the spiritual sun, this sun, nevertheless, is not life itself, but only the first recipient thereof. Life itself is God; and as real life with man is constituted of love and wisdom, God being Life itself, must needs be Love itself and Wisdom itself. Love is his very Being (*esse*), his substance; and wisdom his very existing Form (*existere*), his manifestation. All his other attributes are concomitants of Love

itself and of Wisdom itself; as all the faculties of man are the concomitants of his will,—the seat of his affections, and of his understanding, the seat of his thoughts.

That I have begun the line of my argument with man, in order from him to ascend up to God, instead of starting from God and descending to man, is because of the profound darkness in which all these questions have been enveloped, which renders it necessary to appeal to the reason before addressing the heart of man.

Love as manifested in the creature, is far from giving a just idea of that love which is the very essence of the Creator. However pure our conceptions of human love, there will always be, between it and the Divine love, that immeasurable distance which exists between the finite and the infinite. Nevertheless by resting the thought upon the basis of our highest conception of true human love, we may succeed by degrees in having our minds relieved from the greatest difficulties presented by the philosophy of religion.

Communication is essential to love: it needs to go out of itself to an object; for to love one's self is not true love. God therefore, who is Love itself, required objects—i.e., created beings—whom he might love. Hence the creation of the universe.

I shall not enter here into particulars concerning the work of God; if you are anxious to be-

come acquainted with them, you will find them in one of the treatises of Swedenborg (“*Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom*”): I will merely add, that in order to obtain an adequate idea of the work of creation, you must lay aside the hypotheses hitherto maintained. The idea of an original chaos will only obscure the subject. That notion of the old theology will not bear examination; for to suppose the world to have been created out of nothing is against the axiom, “*Out of nothing, nothing can be produced.*” And God who is truth itself, cannot make a self-evident truth an untruth. The Divine Omnipotence, as you will see at the close of this letter, is never in opposition to the truth.

As it was God’s design in the creation of this vast universe to pour out his love upon objects fitted to receive it, let us take a survey of the immensity of creation, and among so many created objects, seek those who were specially destined to satisfy the ardent love of the Creator by an intimate connection with himself. Our eye first descries myriads of shining orbs; and analogy, supported by our knowledge of the planetary system, indicates millions of other orbs revolving around the former; but our understanding enables us to see that bodies passively subjected to the invariable laws of gravitation have none of the qualities capable of fulfilling the final purpose of the Deity. These innumerable suns, and

these still more innumerable earths, have therefore been placed in the immensity of space simply for the use of a still higher order of created objects. If now, we descend to our earth, what a multitude of varied objects does not nature spread out before our eyes! There are minerals, vegetables, animals, and at the summit of this scale of existences there is man. Does not a simple inspection of this chain of existences at once show that the mineral kingdom was created for the use of the two higher kingdoms; that the vegetable kingdom is indispensable to the animal; and that the animals themselves, deprived of all moral attributes, are only *means*, provided by the Creator, to enable the only being capable of reciprocating his love, to exist in the worlds of his immense domain, and there to employ for his use these objects of his divine munificence? For man then, and for man alone, has the whole universe been created.

Having presented to you God as Love itself and Wisdom itself; having shown you that the universe, the outbirth of his Love, was formed by his Wisdom; and that all was created for man alone, I am at last prepared to discuss your proposition. You may think, however, that so far from facilitating the solution, I have increased its difficulties in representing God *as Love itself and Wisdom itself*, — a definition that seems to embrace much more than your own, which repre-

sents *God as essentially good*; for, as you say, there still remains the impossibility of denying the existence of evil upon earth, where every thing bears witness of the miserable condition of man, and where all nature presents a permanent antagonism among all beings. I am entirely of your opinion with regard to this impossibility; but you will very soon see that I have simply followed the course marked out by the nature of things; and I hope to demonstrate to you that whilst evil does not come from God, it is nevertheless, a consequence of the definition which I have just given.

All things proceeded pure from the hands of the Creator. It will be necessary for me to dwell upon this proposition, which agrees perfectly with your own ideas. Love itself acting according to the laws of Wisdom itself, can produce only what is good. What then, is the source of evil? and how could evil oppose Love itself, in which resides Omnipotence? A close investigation of the nature of love will remove this apparently insurmountable difficulty.

If love, as we have seen, is essentially communicative, if it needs an object, the necessity is equally great that the object loved should return love for love. To be convinced of this truth it is only requisite to have once loved. Reciprocity therefore, is essential to love; and God in creating man for the purpose of being loved by him-

self, must have imparted to him all the faculties necessary to enable him to return to his Maker the love which he received from him. And mark this well, it is not sufficient merely that the love of man should flow back to the Creator, but that it should also fulfil the conditions indispensable to all true love. In a word, it is necessary that the love of man should in every respect be worthy of God's love. But such a love can exist with man only in the degree of his full and entire liberty to love God, or not to love him; for without liberty love is impossible. How can any one, indeed, consider himself beloved, if he discovers that the loved object is compelled to love him? If feeble creatures possessing but a small grain of love, disdain to be loved from compulsion, how can any one suppose that God, who is Love itself, should violate one of the essential conditions of love by forcing man to love him? Such a supposition involves a failure of the very purpose of creation. God has wrought in vain; his essential nature prompted him to create beings capable of loving him, and he has created only automatons, — passive instruments, to be moved by wires. Would this not be to degrade, nay, to outrage the Divine majesty, and to compare God to a child playing with puppets?

No: God created man free. He could not have created him otherwise, because he is Love itself, and because liberty is an essential principle of love.

Besides, upon this principle of liberty in man reposes whatever is most sacred in the world,— religion, morals, law. Without this liberty religious rites become superstitions; the rules of morality, deceptions; the punishments of law, atrocious injustice. Without this liberty, moreover, there is neither blessedness for the good nor misery for the wicked in the future life; or, God is a tyrant, who, in dispensing favors and awarding punishments, is actuated only by caprice.

Man, created free to love God or not to love him, or in other words, free to conform to the laws of divine order or to transgress them, at first lived in full conformity with these laws. All things in the universe were then in their order; nothing disturbed their native purity; every thing in its spiritual part was good and true, and in its material part good and beautiful. The other beings of our earth followed the laws of their respective natures; not possessing liberty, they could not disturb the established order. Man alone could re-act against God; but as long as he did not make any use of his freedom, the primitive order was preserved. So soon, however, as by virtue of his freedom he began to deviate from the laws of order, he gave rise by this act to a spiritual antagonism. Opposition to good produced evil; opposition to truth engendered falsehood; and this spiritual antagonism subsequently caused a

similar antagonism in the material creation. The substance of natural objects perverted by evil, gradually became bad; and the form of these objects distorted by the false, became deformed.

Do not imagine, however, that the evil and the false, the bad and the deformed, which were introduced into the universe in the early times of the creation, were like the evil and the false, the bad and the deformed, which we see at present. The evil and the bad were then but slight perversions of the good and the orderly, and the false and the deformed but small deviations from the true and the beautiful. Humanity sank into those states of savageness and barbarity which history presents to us, only by a series of successive perversions and deviations.

Thus you see that the existence of evil can be easily reconciled with the idea of a God essentially good, since it is the product of man alone, and is a result rendered possible by human freedom, which is an essential condition of the love of the creature for his Maker. It now remains for me to prove that the *existence of evil* is also perfectly reconcilable with the idea of an *Omnipotent God*.

The habit of judging of the attributes of the Deity by those with which royalty is surrounded has been the source of many errors. Whenever a king, abusing his high station, has placed himself above law, and governs his people accord-



ing to his caprice, undoing to-day what he did yesterday, it is said that he is *all-powerful*; and, as most despots pretend to derive their power from God, it has been inferred that Divine Omnipotence, being so much superior to human power, can compass even the absolutely impossible. This error is the source of all superstitions; for if the words, "Every thing is possible with God," are to be interpreted in the sense which I have indicated, there is no absurdity that may not be admitted.

If God according to the popular idea of the Divine Omnipotence, could do every thing, he would not be God. This will appear paradoxical to you, but it is nevertheless true; and a little reflection will serve to convince you of its truth. Man, subject to error, can perfect his work only by dint of frequent revision and correction. If he be a legislator, his code of laws will grow into shape and form only after long meditation; and, having been promulgated, it will still remain subject to the changes which experience may suggest. But can this be so with God, who is Wisdom itself and Foreknowledge itself? When God created the universe, he said, "Let it be; and it was." Yes, by this word of Jehovah the universe was created, with all the laws by which it is governed; that is, with all the laws which could then be manifested, with all those which have since been successively manifested, and with

all those which will be manifested in all coming time. All these laws together constitute the Divine Order, and are called Laws of Order.

You will understand now, why it is not paradoxical to say, that if God, according to the popular idea of the Divine Omnipotence, could do every thing, he would not be God. If God were to change any of the laws of his Divine Order, would he not thereby declare that he had been mistaken? Where then would be one of his principal attributes, his Divine Foreknowledge? Oh! let us beware of degrading the Deity to the rank of a capricious tyrant; let us not even compare him to the best of kings; and let us regard him only as a Father, whose love for all his children as much surpasses the love of the tenderest of human fathers as the infinite surpasses every finite quantity.

As the freedom of man is one of the essential laws of divine order, Divine Omnipotence does not consist in breaking, but in maintaining it. The existence of evil is therefore perfectly reconcilable with the idea of an Omnipotent God. But if man, acting in freedom, has introduced evil into the universe, he can by this very freedom not only check its progress, but also restrict and prevent its manifestation; and in this he will finally succeed, if he adopts and practises the principles of the New Jerusalem.

## III.

The most certain means of enabling man to receive true principles of religion is to assure him of his immortality.

YOU remark that the theory developed in my second letter is ingenious. You admit the logical connection of the propositions by which it is maintained; yet you discover therein so many new points of view, that you are still somewhat confused, and are justly of the opinion that it would be rash in you to adopt this theory without thorough investigation and deep reflection. This is precisely what I desire: you enter fully into my views, and your hesitancy pleases me much more than would an entire acquiescence. I willingly excuse the expression *ingenious*, which you apply to this theory, as you seem so very anxious to study it more deeply. Examine it attentively, and you will soon come to acknowledge it to be the only theory that your reason can adopt. Moreover, you already admit—and this ought to satisfy me for the present—that it is greatly preferable to any thing heretofore advanced on so important a subject; that it removes great phi-

losophical difficulties, and with regard to the Deity, offers more exalted and at the same time sounder ideas than have ever before been presented. You add, that you would like to make objections, ask explanations, and submit some reflections; but that in your present position, being ignorant of our solution of the other difficulties in higher philosophy, you prefer to await a more suitable opportunity, and meanwhile desire me to *give you some elucidations on the human soul, which may convince you of its immortality.*

You are perfectly right, sir, in desiring to be assured of the immortality of your soul; for this is indeed the most important point. The chief reason why at this day so many people are utterly indifferent to all the concerns of religion, is that little beyond mere probabilities has ever been presented to them respecting their immortal existence or the future life. Our philosophers and theologians have so muddled the question, that at least a moiety of mankind has been led to deny this immortality altogether, if not in words yet in heart, while the other half entertains a belief founded upon no more than its probability. But is a faith resting only upon probabilities sufficient to give us a strong determination to resist evils, in a world in which all things seem to invite the indulgence of our selfish propensities? Does not every passing event or occurrence prove the contrary? But let a

man who has hitherto had only a vague idea of his immortality, acquire a certainty of it, and he will very soon be a different person; a healthy change will speedily be wrought in him.

Suppose, that instead of discoursing with men in vague terms about their existence after death, this existence were to be demonstrated by showing wherein it consists, and by answering all questions honestly proposed, with a single eye to the establishment of a strong conviction in their minds; would this not cause a wholesome revolution; a revolution the more salutary, indeed, because unaccompanied by violent commotion? Impelled by their new conviction to come out of the state of indifference to religious matters, which is the bane of modern society, men would seek to be instructed in the principles of true religion; they would cast far from them all the falsities which have sprung from scepticism and superstition, and would gladly embrace a doctrine full of self-devotion, full of love. Firmly convinced that their present life is but a state preparatory to a life which will never end; and intimately persuaded that their state in eternity depends entirely upon their short pilgrimage on this earth, they would live in the peaceful enjoyment of all the blessings which the Creator showers daily and abundantly upon them. Instead of regarding their fellow-men as so many rivals, they would look upon them only as broth-

ers ; disinterestedness would gradually take the place of selfishness, and feelings of envy and hatred would insensibly disappear, to make room for charity and love. Nevertheless, I am far from saying that man would be exempt from faults ; that he would always live in conformity with the principles of true doctrine ; but he would at least learn, by this doctrine of charity and love, how to distinguish good from evil, truth from falsity ; he would thus know when he did wrong ; and his lapses, by producing in him repentance and a desire for renovation, would aid his progress on the way of goodness.

What man is there who would not regret having done evil, and who would not resolve to do good, if he were fully convinced of the immortality of the soul ? What a state ! To be inmosty convinced that I shall live to eternity ! To have my reason tell me every day, that the longest life upon earth compared with eternity, is not as a grain of sand to the widest desert, or as a drop of water to the immensity of the ocean ! To know that my existence to all eternity depends upon the manner in which I have fulfilled my duties to my country, my fellow-citizens, my family and myself.

Every thing proves that a man's conduct depends upon the principles he adopts. See with what zeal those who believe only in this earthly life, pursue the objects presented by their false

principle; and judge from this how it would be, if men were intimately convinced of their existence to eternity. A certainty of this existence, therefore, is of the utmost importance to man, and will be the surest means of preparing him to receive true religious principles.

This certainty, however, is not attained without effort. In respect to all things spiritual, the mind of man is enveloped in a darkness so dense, that it can see the light, or the truth, only in proportion as the clouds, or the falsities, which intercept it, are removed. But, if he be well-disposed and persevering, his prejudices will gradually pass away; and as they disappear, conviction will take root, and by degrees become so firmly established, that after reflection and observation will but serve to confirm it more and more.

I do not therefore assume that I can convince you at once; but to judge from the favorable state of your mind, I feel sure, that after a thorough examination, you will admit the several propositions which I shall submit to you, however strange they may appear at first sight; and that this will result in a complete conviction of your eternal existence.

Your desire to be enlightened on this important point, induces me to postpone to another time the further development of the question of the origin of evil, which I had intended to present. This will naturally find its place, when we

come to points of doctrine, and when I explain to you the nature of the fall. Before commencing I must remark, that I shall consider as established, the propositions which we have already discussed, and that I shall continue to base my arguments upon them, so long as you do not positively refuse to admit them. The very nature of our argument gives me this right.

Without human free-will, creation would fail to accomplish its end; for, as I have shown, the very design of God, in creating the universe, was to give his love to objects, who were capable of reciprocating it; and I now add, still on the basis of the essence of God, which is Love itself, that creation would also fail of fulfilling its end, were man to cease to live after his natural death. This solution, you will say, is quite unexpected; you promised me new arguments, and now you treat the question after the manner of philosophers and theologians, many of whom have taken the goodness of God, as the ground from which to argue in favor of man's continuing to live after the death of the body.

Have the kindness, I pray you, to wait a moment. You would undoubtedly be justified in thus exclaiming, if, like philosophers and theologians, I were to rest my argument in favor of another life upon the goodness of God, without giving you precise and clear ideas of this goodness. But have they ever presented any other



than common-place ideas, in regard to what they call the goodness of the Creator? and are not most of these ideas in manifest contradiction to the other attributes which they ascribe to the Deity? What, for example, is the God of theologians? A being, ever angry, who consents to pardon the human race for the disobedience of their first parents, only on condition, that his own son, perfectly innocent of this fault, shall atone for it by suffering the most frightful torments; and who, not satisfied with the fulfilment of this condition, must be propitiated by the son's continual supplications for mercy, and by his continually reminding him of his sufferings, and of his blood shed for the redemption of mankind. The goodness of a Creator who is presented under so gloomy an aspect, certainly affords no ground upon which to base a conclusive argument in favor of the existence of man after death. What, on the other hand, is the God of philosophers? A purely metaphysical being, of whom it is impossible to form the least idea; who is moreover, in their eyes, a mere compound of abstractions, of which a word is the subject. When the Deity is thus reduced to a mere word, however imposing this word may be, they cannot deduce from the alleged goodness of such a being any evidence to sustain the postulate of a new existence of man.

Not thus do the new Christians, or the disciples

of the New Church, represent the God of the universe. They lay down the principle that Love itself is his Being, Wisdom itself his Existing Form, and that all his attributes flow either from this Divine Love, or this Divine Wisdom. You will see hereafter (for I should be departing too much from my subject, were I to attempt to demonstrate it now), that Divine Love is Substance itself, the first substance, whence proceed all substances; and that Divine Wisdom is Form itself, the primitive form, whence are all forms; and that the Deity, far from being what is called a mere metaphysical or ideal being, is Being itself, possessing, in the highest degree, all that constitutes a real being; viz., substance and form. Strong in this principle, the members of the New Church draw from it all possible deductions, which, without exception, serve to corroborate and confirm it. That this principle is very truth itself, can be put beyond dispute, by showing: that it is in perfect harmony with true philosophy and true theology; that the doctrine derived from it, full of charity and love, is in entire agreement with the teachings of the Bible, and reconciles all their apparent contradictions; and that the historical events, which have furnished the strongest arguments against a Divine Providence, when viewed in the light of this principle, bear clearest testimony to the inexhaustible love of the Creator for his creatures.

To enter, at this time, upon a discussion of these topics, would lead me too far from my subject. Besides, they are of a nature to require more than a merely incidental treatment. I shall have occasion, hereafter, to speak of them again.

Having, as I believe, sufficiently answered the objection which I myself anticipated, it will be easy for you to understand, in view of the miserable earthly life of man, that the end of the Creator or of Love itself, would have completely failed, were human existence to terminate in this world. This proposition is so self-evident that it is useless to dwell upon it any longer.

Do not imagine, however, that I regard this as entirely deciding the question of the existence of man after his natural death. Had this been my only argument, I should not have undertaken to convince you. My purpose in using it, was simply to show you what additional strength it acquires when we substitute for the idea of the Deity generally entertained by theologians and philosophers, that of a Being who is Love itself; and especially, when we become convinced that God, in creating the universe for man, had no other end than to satisfy his love. This argument would, nevertheless, have sufficed to establish the existence of a future life, if the human mind, so long under the influence of the subtleties of philosophers and the errors of theologians, had not finally lost the most simple ideas of an inner

being, and of that part of the universe which is purely spiritual. Spiritualistic philosophers, it is true, tell us of the immortality of the soul, but they are very careful not to inform us of the nature of this soul; for they do not know themselves, and their ideas on this subject are far below those of the simple peasant. They speak of a future life, but would be greatly embarrassed to state wherein it consists. Theologians, also, are silent whenever required to define the soul; and when they attempt to give an idea of the other life, their description only serves to frighten children.

So long, therefore, as man, to convince him of his immortality, shall have only the commonplace ideas, for so many ages dispensed by poets, moralists, and philosophers of every shade, and theologians of every sect, he will remain in that uncertainty which has become so insupportable to you; for no conviction can be established on mere probabilities. If, however, instead of a presentation of the soul as a breath, as an aërial or ethereal somewhat, there were offered some clear and definite ideas of the inner being which animates man, which is himself, and which is destined to survive his earthly body; if, moreover, instead of vague dissertations upon what is commonly called the other world, the existence of that world were demonstrated to him; if he were told wherein it consists; if its topography, so to

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speaking, were explained to him ; if, finally, the continual relations which exist between that world where he is to live for ever, and this where he remains for but a brief period, were pointed out, so that he could daily and hourly verify the reality of many of them ; — oh, then, you will agree with me, man would easily succeed, by means of this new knowledge, in forming a firm conviction that he will live after laying aside his earthly body. And, would not this conviction make him a truly religious man ? Would not this belief, if generally diffused, produce, without any commotion, the most glorious revolution ?

Well, sir, in this manner, and by no commonplace ideas, do I expect to establish in you a settled conviction. Yes, let me repeat it, you will in time see and accept all the truths which I shall place before you. I am assured of this, because you are actuated by a sincere desire to be convinced. This desire will stimulate your attention, and give you the necessary perseverance. Had you been impelled by mere curiosity, I should have tried to afford you some light, but should have regarded it as useless, to undertake seriously your conversion ; for my efforts would have proved abortive, and my reasonings futile. They alone who desire it, can be convinced.

In my next letter I will enter upon an explanation of these important truths.

## IV.

Spiritual substances and forms. — God is **VERY MAN**. — The soul of man is an image of God; it is a substantial being, having a spiritual body endowed with all the organs which constitute the earthly body by which it is clothed.

**Y**OUR eagerness to become acquainted with the exposition which I promised in my last letter does not (I assure you) at all astonish me; and I am almost ashamed to receive apologies from you, which ought to have come from me, for having intentionally postponed to the present letter, the beginning of this exposition. I will not conceal from you that my sole object in so doing, was to increase your desire to learn our ideas respecting the soul of man, and respecting the world to which we shall all go, after leaving this earth. A man must, indeed, have sunk into the lowest sensualism, if his noblest faculties remain unaffected in the presence of such important questions. The reason, however, why so few at the present time are interested in spiritual subjects, is not — you may believe me — because the generality of men have fallen into this gross sensualism; but because the necessities of the

natural life, the cares of business, and the propensity to worldly pleasures, continually distract them. But let some event happen, by which the attention of a man of the world is turned to this important subject, and you will see how readily he devotes himself to the serious meditations which it demands. If he continues but a very short time in this frame of mind, it is, because the intellect labors in vain to second the noble aspirations of the heart ; it is, because the understanding, perverted by the lucubrations of philosophers, or the errors of theologians, offers nothing satisfactory to the reason. Tired of wandering about in the labyrinth of so many fictitious ideas, man hastens to return to what he very improperly calls the realities of life.

Allow me to make one more observation : How can we help being astonished at seeing philosophers still moralizing, and theologians still dogmatizing, when it is as clear as daylight, that the writings of both, being based on entirely false grounds, are the principal causes of the moral and religious disorders, against which they declaim ? I admit very willingly that they write in good faith, that their intentions are pure, and their labors conscientious ; yet this cannot excuse them, when the experience of the past, and of every day, is sufficient to show them that they are pursuing a false course. Do they not know that for ages their predecessors have moralized

and dogmatized without success? Do they not see that they themselves are moralizing and dogmatizing, without making men any better? After so many delusions, the one following hard upon the other, can they, without being charged with a lack of foresight, entertain the hope of being more successful than their predecessors, especially when they continue to adopt the same errors? But why do they persist in following these crooked paths, on which men have so long been misled? Why do they not enter the new way, which is open to every one who seeks the truth from a pure love of truth? Why is this? Because like the Abbé de Vertot, *their opinions are fixed*. For them truth has no more attraction than it had for this historian. Yes, *their opinions are fixed*. Can it be believed for an instant, that they are men to forget all they have learned, and to commence their studies anew? Can it be believed that they have self-denial enough to acknowledge that the writings, to which they owe their reputation, are opposed to the truth? If the Abbé de Vertot, who had only his indolence to overcome, was unable to conquer it, how can they, who have the whole force of self-love to struggle against, overcome this?

This remark is not out of place, since it anticipates an objection on your part, which is often made: "Why do not the celebrated men of the day adopt the principles of higher religious phi-



losophy, advocated by the Christians of the New Church? Does not the silence they maintain on this subject afford a strong presumption, that these principles, however brilliant and solid they may appear, do not bear the test of a thorough examination?" This objection has long been urged against us; but you may now see what it amounts to, although, I confess to its appearing quite strong enough at first sight. Far from furnishing an argument against our principles, this silence is, in fact, altogether in their favor; although it undoubtedly operates as a temporary check to the spread of our doctrines, owing to our not always having opportunity to expose its real ground. There are many persons, indeed, of so great simplicity, as to judge of men by their writings, and to believe, that they who assume to be instructors of the people are isolated beings, who rise superior to the major part of human weaknesses; but daily experience teaches, that the learned, more than all other men, are subject to one common passion, which leads to most lamentable results. This passion is pride of intellect, which, unconsciously to themselves, is the moving principle of nearly all their actions, and constrains them to a profound silence in regard to Swedenborg's religious writings, for the sake of their own reputations. The reason of this is found in the fact that these writings contain true principles of religion, as well as of philosophy, and afford a

complete refutation of the vain systems of philosophers and theologians.

I pray you to pardon me, my dear sir, for this digression, and for those which will follow, as I shall have frequent occasion to make excursions here and there. You may rest assured, however, that I shall not lose sight of the propositions which are to be the subjects of our discussion, and that after each deviation whether longer or shorter, I shall always return to them. Your own position prescribes this course to me. It would be difficult, for instance, to make myself well understood, were I to be confined to a mere statement of the preparatory propositions which I shall be obliged to introduce, and not at liberty occasionally to dwell upon those which, as they are not familiar to men of the world, can only be admitted in proportion as they are rationally understood. Hence the necessity of occasional digressions from the main subject. Some of the truths that I shall place before you may excite your surprise, as much by their novelty, as by their contrast with the ideas current in the world. But do not let this disturb you; lend me your undivided attention for a short time, and you will soon become familiar with them. These truths, moreover, have not always been strangers upon this earth; they were known and received in ancient times, and their disappearance is due only to the depravity into which the human race

fell, by the bad use to which it put its free will.

At length I reach the exposition which I promised you. It is naturally divided into two parts: the first comprising the questions concerning the soul and its immortality, and the second those relating to the spiritual world; but as these questions are connected, and illustrate each other, I desire you to await the conclusion of my exposition, which will, no doubt, fill several letters, before pronouncing a definitive judgment on propositions that, at first sight, may appear strange, or at least, need further developments.

It is generally agreed, that what lives in man is his soul or his spirit; materialists alone affirm, that what is called soul ceases to exist, when the body can no longer perform its functions; while spiritualistic philosophers maintain that the soul or the spirit survives the decomposition of the body. Without dwelling any longer on this point, I may assume as true, that it is the soul or the spirit of man, which lives in him.

But what is it that lives in man? or what is it that constitutes the *being* (*esse*) of his life? Evidently, it is his affection or his love, which resides in the will-faculty. Still, if there was in man only affection or love, without any manifestation, he would not exist. Being requires a form in order to exist really. The affection or love of man, therefore, manifests itself by his thought,

which resides in his intellectual faculty. Although Being and Existing are inseparable, and make one, since a being is a being only so far as it exists, yet they may be separated in thought; thus, it may be said that love or the affection of man is the being of his life, and intelligence or thought, the existing, or the form of his love or affection. Hence, I have already told you, that Love itself in God, is his Being, his substance; and Wisdom itself the Existing or the manifestation, that is, the form of his Love.

If it is evident that man lives, it is also evident that he does not live of himself; man does not produce life, he only receives life. And whence does he receive it? From God — from God alone — who is Life itself. Life is *one*, as God is *one*. God diffuses life throughout the universe, and no created object has life in itself; for this would be an extension of God, which is impossible. All things are recipients of Life, or of God, not by *continuity*, but by *contiguity*; and thus it is that life is in every thing, according to the nature of the object which receives it, and that no being has life of itself. The father does not give life to his children; to give it to them, he would need to possess it himself, when yet he is but a recipient of it. From the father proceed only germs out of which may be developed recipients, like himself, of the life which emanates from God alone. It is thus that men, receiving life from God alone, are

brothers — not only those who inhabit this earth, whatever may be their diversity of color, but also those who people all the terrestrial orbs scattered through the immensity of space. They are all brothers, since they all have but one real Father, who is the only God of the universe. Let the learned dispute, as long as they may, whether the different races inhabiting our earth have descended from one or several men: their debates are of no concern to us. The brotherhood of man is established in our doctrine on too solid a foundation ever to be shaken by science.

I know, indeed, that for eighteen centuries it has been repeated in the Christian world, that we are all children of God: I know that this proposition is at the head of all our catechisms; but, alas! this Christian truth is in the same case as that of the immortality of the soul, which we are now considering. Because they have not been presented and understood rationally, they have both been regarded as capital propositions to figure in sermons and moral essays, but as too obscure and uncertain to deserve any consideration in the practical affairs of life. Oh! were men generally convinced that man does not live of himself; that he does not derive life from his father; that he does not give it to his children; that there is only one life; that this one life is God himself; that God in his essence is Love itself; that his Love causes him to diffuse life continually into all the objects

of creation, according as each is adapted to its reception ; that of all created beings man alone, by virtue of his organization, is capable of receiving life in the highest degree, by not opposing the entrance of the Divine Love into his will, or of the Divine Wisdom into his understanding, — were men, I say, generally imbued with these sublime truths, the “brotherhood of man” would no longer be a mere word ! The love of child for parent, and of parent for child, far from being weakened, would be augmented. The son would regard his father as the true representative of God upon earth ; the father, impressed with the goodness of the Creator to all his children, and with the importance of the functions intrusted to him, would strive to perform them worthily ; and then, God being better known to men, could be loved by them with a love, such as his love has so long invited and called upon them to give him.

In a former letter we considered the nature of man, in order to arrive at a knowledge of God ; and now, since we have conceded that man receives life from God alone, the knowledge of God will be a means of disclosing to us the very nature of the soul, or spirit of man. Before proceeding to this inquiry, however, I must premise some observations on the subject of spiritual substance. Some of the modern spiritualistic philosophers willingly admit that there are forms in what they call the other world. This no doubt

arises from an early familiarity with the idea of these forms, the existence of which is admitted by the Greek and Roman mythologies. But these very philosophers are greatly offended when they hear mention made of spiritual substances, as if a world composed of forms only could be any thing but an imaginary world, or, as if a being without substance and form, was not a mere imaginary entity, which in itself is nothing. And, observe what strange ideas prevail in the present age. People who are not all shocked, when such puerile notions are seriously advanced, will cry out if a single word is said about spiritual substance. And yet it is easy to understand, that a form without substance is no more possible than a substance without form; for substance and form are two things that may indeed be separated in thought, but never in reality.

When I remarked that God, so far from being a mere ideal being, which in itself is nothing, is very Being itself, possessing in the supreme degree all that constitutes a real being, i.e., substance and form, this my remark implied, that his Divine Wisdom envelops and contains his Divine Love; and thus that God has really a form which envelops and contains a substance; Love being the true substance, and Wisdom the true form.

Do you now inquire, what is the form of the Deity, I answer, that as the universe is an emanation of the Divine Love or of the primitive

substance, and this emanation was arranged in its order by the Divine Wisdom, or the primitive form, this universe ought to present in the forms of objects of which it is composed, images of the primitive form; and I will add, that as the form of man is the most perfect of all forms, it is evident that God is in the human form.

God then, is **VERY MAN**. Yes, my dear sir, with all deference to philosophers of every school, and theologians of every sect, God, the Infinite Being, the Jehovah of the Bible, the Eternal Father of Christians of the Old Church, the One God in three essentials, and not in three persons, of Christians of the New Church, this God, the Creator, Saviour, and Preserver of the Universe, this God who is Life itself, and from whom we exist and subsist, — this God is **VERY MAN**. And because he is **Very Man**, we, his creatures, who live and subsist from Him, have the human form, in his image and after his likeness.

This important truth is so far removed from the ideas of the present age respecting the Creator, that to admit it will at first be attended with some difficulty. But when you shall have well considered it; when, in the course of our discussion, you shall have acknowledged that it is the fundamental basis of true philosophy and true theology; when you shall have seen that it not only removes the greatest difficulties, but also provides us with the means of carrying our ra-



tional investigations into the spiritual world, and the internal of man, — so far, at least, as it is possible for finite beings to reason on such profound subjects, — then you will receive it with so much more joy, because you will be convinced that, without this truth, it would be impossible for you to form an exact idea of the true God. Although I do not presume, as you see, to convince you at once that God is **VERY MAN**, I will, notwithstanding, offer you a few arguments in favor of this truth.

In the first place, it is absolutely impossible to represent to yourself a being without form. Philosophy has invented a God without form, in order to meet its own difficulty in conceiving of a God who creates, and yet is present everywhere. But, by abstracting the thought from space, this fiction may readily be dispensed with. And, having accustomed your mind to make this abstraction, and having gained some ideas of the spiritual world, and of the relations existing between that world and ours, you will be prepared to conceive how a God, who is **VERY MAN**, can have created the universe and be everywhere present in his work.

A just idea of God is far more important than is generally believed. How, indeed, can we love God, if it is impossible for us to form an idea of him? I can very easily conceive, that a philosopher may be seized with admiration for the

Creator of the universe, when he beholds the rising sun, the smiling and blooming face of nature, or looks into the starry heavens on a beautiful night. He yields to emotions of enthusiasm; he ceases to reason about the Author of so many wonders; he admires him; and I am convinced that an effort to resolve the train of his thought during such moments of rapture, and to detect its inmost ground, would result in the acknowledgment that the Creator was then to him a real being, and not a mere metaphysical or ideal somewhat, without substance and form. But were this philosopher to tell me that he loves the Creator, I could not conceive it possible. Love needs an object, and indeed, an object really present, or, at least, present to the thought of him who loves; and in this latter case, it is necessary that the presence should be very manifest. The God of philosophers, however, cannot be thus present to their thought, because he is an incomprehensible being, of whom they cannot, by reasoning, form to themselves any idea. And is not this also true of theologians? Can they form to themselves the least idea of their God? I refer here only to the first Person of their Trinity. The Roman Catholics, indeed, in their churches, represent God the Creator, under a human form; but in their writings, and at the head of their catechisms, they declare positively that he is a pure spirit; and from their idea of spirit, it is

manifest that they ascribe to him neither definite substance nor form. Now, as the real object of religion is to establish relations between God and man, and to induce man by his knowledge of God, to love him with all his heart, and to love also his fellow-men for the sake of God, it is evident that every religion which presents the Creator without substance and form, and thus without that which renders him conceivable in thought, thereby deprives man of all the means of forming an idea of this God the Creator, and consequently of loving him. Such a religion is manifestly not the true religion.

The belief in God-Man has, from the remotest times been received by the generality of men, in preference to the vapory idea of philosophers. The farther back you go into antiquity, the more you find this belief prevailing. The reason of this is, that the simple and unsophisticated are usually much nearer the truth than the learned, who are spoiled by their systems, and inflated by their pride of intellect. The former follow the impulses of the heart, while the latter abandon themselves to the vagaries of the understanding. Philosophers, however, have charged this belief in a God-Man to pride; they have said that man made God after his own image. If this assertion were true, we should see the simple-minded generally adopting the God of the philosophers, and the proud believing in a God-Man;

but this is contrary to experience. Besides, the reproach of pride on this score cannot be made to the Christians of the New Church ; for to say that God is **VERY MAN**, when the principle is laid down that God is Life itself, and that all men derive their life from God, is not this to say implicitly, that it is the human race which conforms to the very Type of Life, to God the Creator of all things ? Finally, if it be established as absolutely requisite, that God have substance and form, in order to be a real being, who can be apprehended by the thought of man, and be loved by him, it is perfectly evident, that if God were not substance and form, creation would be a failure ; for, as we have seen, the universe was created for the sake of man, and to the end that this creature, the only one endowed with liberty, might return to the Creator the love which he receives from Him.

But is it indispensable that the Deity should have the human form ? I have already said that the universe should present images of the primitive or all-perfect Form, in the forms of the objects of which it is composed ; and that of all forms, the form of man approaches nearest to perfection. These assertions are proved by the observations of science. When we examine the chain of beings, do we not find that man is the first link, and that all the succeeding links are only successive modifications of the first ?

You are no doubt acquainted with a series of pictures, between which there is a scarcely perceptible difference, when one of them is compared with that which immediately precedes or follows ; and yet the first represents the Apollo Belvedere, and the last a frog. What the painter has done for the frog, he could have done for any other animal, either by diminishing or increasing the number of pictures. The human type, then, may be found in every animal, no matter what its state of degradation ; and the reason of this is, because every creature is a more or less imperfect image of the Creator. This successive degradation of the human form in the chain of beings is thus sufficient to solve the question ; and after recognizing it, it would be absurd to suppose that the form of God the Creator was that of any one of the inferior beings of this chain, rather than that of the being who constitutes its first link, and to whom all the rest are subject. If some nations have represented God under an animal or vegetable form, this only proves the necessity of representing the Deity under some form, and shows the state of spiritual degradation into which those nations have fallen.

As this important question of God-Man has been treated incidentally, to meet the requirements of the subject under discussion, I shall not enter here into any further developments ; but I shall have frequent occasion to recur to it, either

when answering the objections to which it will give rise in your mind, or when touching upon other points connected with it. It is essential to a thorough understanding of the subject, moreover, that you should accustom yourself to abstract your thought from space and time; and I propose to submit to you shortly our ideas on this matter of abstraction.

I now return to our discussion of the soul or spirit.

We have seen, on the one hand, that God is Life itself; that his Life consists of Love and Wisdom; that his Love is the primitive substance, and his Wisdom the primitive Form; that from the Divine Love, as the primitive substance, proceed all substances, and that from the Divine Wisdom, as primitive Form, proceed all forms; that God has the human form; that he is **VERY MAN**; and, finally, that every thing in the universe presents an image more or less approximate to the form of the Creator.

And, on the other hand, we have seen that the life of man is his soul or his spirit; that this life consists of will and understanding, or of affections and thoughts; that the human will is a receptacle of the Divine Love, and the human understanding of the Divine Wisdom.

If now, we bear in mind that man does not live of himself, and that he derives his life from God alone, who is Life itself, it will only be necessary

to connect these different propositions, in order to arrive at the following conclusions: —

1st. As life itself, or God, is substance and form, the life of man, i.e., his soul or spirit, is likewise substance and form.

2d. As God has the human form, the soul or the spirit of man has likewise the human form.

3d. As Divine Love is the primitive substance, all things which in the soul or the spirit of man belong to his will, that is to say, all his affections, are spiritual substances.

4th. As Divine Wisdom is the primitive Form, all things which in the soul or the spirit of man belong to his understanding, that is to say, all his thoughts, are spiritual forms.

And as there cannot be any substance without form, there is not a single affection in the soul or spirit of man without a thought corresponding to it, so that every spiritual substance is always clothed with a spiritual form. It is thus that every thing constituting the soul or spirit of man has a real existence.

It results, then, from all that precedes, that the soul or spirit of man is a substantial being which has the human form; or, in other words, that the soul or spirit of man is a real being, having a spiritual body, endowed with all the organs which constitute the earthly body by which it is clothed.

The spirit alone, therefore, receives life, and if the material body seems to live, it is because the

spirit lives in all the parts which constitute this body; the spirit is the man, the material body is but a clothing with which the Creator has invested it, according to the laws of order, that it may perform its functions in the natural world.

The human form, consequently, belongs to the spirit, and the body has this form only by derivation from the spirit.

These truths, my dear sir, will excite your astonishment; but it will be easy to convince you that the material body of man can derive its sensibility and form only from this spiritual body, the existence of which has just been demonstrated. I think it will be sufficient, for this purpose, to prove to you: 1st, That the material body of itself, is insensible; 2d, That, of itself, it has no form properly its own.

1st. *The material body is of itself insensible.* — Chemists divide matter into inorganic and organic. It is evident that inorganic matter is insensible; with respect to organic matter, M. Dumas has lately shown, in his lectures on chemistry, that there are at the most ten or twelve elementary bodies from which physiology derives its materials, and that of these ten or twelve bodies there are only four, viz., oxygen, hydrogen, carbon and nitrogen, which constitute nearly the entire composition of living beings. The material body of man is, therefore, of itself insensible, since



it is composed only of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon and nitrogen, which are evidently insensible elementary bodies. If, then, the material body appears to be sensible, it is because each of the innumerable particles of which it is composed, is the covering of a corresponding particle of the spiritual body, the only body capable of being endowed with sensibility.

2d. *The material body has of itself no form properly its own.* — This results from the fact that matter, *of itself*, has no particular form. This proposition may seem to you paradoxical, because matter always presents itself to our eyes in a form which seems properly its own; but observe that I have said, *of itself*. As life never ceases for an instant to exist in all creation, and this life imprints a form upon all bodies according to the present state of their substances, matter presents itself, and must always present itself to us, clothed with a form which seems properly its own. In order, then, to have an idea of what matter may be *of itself*, I must remind you of the procedure of mathematicians, when treating of the movement of bodies. They lay it down as a principle, that a body which has received an impulse, must always proceed in a straight line, and never stop. This proposition, like ours, is in manifest opposition to facts, and yet no one has ever pretended to dispute it; because mathematicians would have answered: Abstract, for a mo-

ment, the resistance of the air, and the resulting friction, and you will see that our proposition cannot be disputed. Well, I shall tell you in like manner: Abstract life for a moment, and you will see that matter of itself cannot have any particular form. The four elementary bodies, of which our material body is composed, would not combine together so as to present the human form, if they did not cover a spiritual body which has itself this form.

This letter is long; but I did not wish to conclude it without having given you at least some idea of what the soul or spirit of man really is. In my next I shall continue this exposition.

## V.

Demonstration of the immortality of the soul, or the man-spirit. —  
The nature of angels.

THAT you would press me with questions, my dear sir, I had reason to anticipate; and I certainly can find no fault with your doing so; for the impatience that you evince may readily be accounted for,—and is, at best, but the natural consequence of an anxious desire to be released from a painful position. You long to comprehend without delay, the totality of these theories, which surprise you by their novelty, and still more by the sublimity of the ideas they place before you. Bewildered, for so long a time, in the dark labyrinth of modern philosophy, you have eagerly seized the thread that I have held out to you; but this thread, intended to be a guide to your reason, is as yet no more to you than a sequence of logical deductions presented by me; and, should it break, should the numerous propositions still remaining to be examined, and occupying your mind, be wanting in logical connection with their antecedents,—in a word, should there at last be discovered an absence of

continuity in the whole chain of reasoning,—how then to escape from the labyrinth? Would there not be a risk of your being drawn still further into the mazes of its dark windings, in proportion to the nearness of your approach to the glimmer of light that marks its outlet? The flashes of lightning but serve to render the darkness of midnight more profound. This is your fear; and you express it so frankly, that I feel an urgent desire to hasten to your relief. Rest assured, that there is no cause of fear; the thread will not break; follow it confidently, and it will surely lead you out of your labyrinth. I ask you but to persevere, and you shall see how the remaining theories will cluster around those with which you have already become acquainted; and by their harmonious relations, constitute the true system of religious philosophy. Then, you shall also see, that far from avoiding, this philosophy challenges an examination of historical facts; since that all those facts which have furnished to scepticism its strongest arguments against a Divine Providence, in the hands of true philosophy, supply the most convincing evidences of the perfection of the ends designed by this Providence.

I had intended to devote this letter to a consideration of the questions propounded by you; but upon reflection, I find that, for the most part, they will come up in the regular course of the

exposition which I have undertaken ; wherefore it has seemed best, that I should continue this. Those subjects which do not find a place here, we will discuss separately, before passing to other matters.

Before resuming the thread of our inquiry, I ought to say a few words with respect to the simultaneous use I have hitherto made of the two expressions, *soul* and *spirit*. My sole object in employing at the same time, a word which is in common use, and another that is more in accordance with right usage, was to render myself more intelligible ; for, by *spirit*, we designate more particularly the man, who has been disengaged from his material covering ; and sometimes, in order to avoid ambiguities, which may arise from the diverse meanings given to this word, we say, man-spirit. As man-spirit, or *spirit*, conveys to our minds the idea of man, existing in an immaterial or spiritual world, and is thus equivalent to the idea attached to the word *soul* by men of the world, that namely, of a principle surviving the decomposition of the human body, I shall hereafter not employ these expressions simultaneously, but avail myself more particularly of the one we are accustomed to use. The sequel will make you acquainted with our understanding of the term *soul*.

I now return to our main subject. From what was said in my last letter, it follows very clearly,

that man is not annihilated by the event, so greatly dreaded, which is called *death*. You have seen, in fact, that he continues to exist, but not as a breath or a vapor without substance, not as a fleeting and impalpable shadow, not as a thought without an organic subject, not by transmission of one body into another, but as a genuine man, with the same organized spiritual body from which, in the material world he derived his sensibility and his form; thus preserving all his identity, taking with him all that constitutes him a man, and only leaving upon earth the external covering, by the aid of which he had been in communication with our world and with the objects it contains. This is what we call a man-spirit, or, in one word, a spirit.

Man, then, does not cease to exist, when his material body is no longer capable of performing the uses for which it was destined: he lives, but on another stage; he lives, but a much more active and perfect life than he led upon earth; for his spiritual body is no longer encased in a gross covering, as in this world.

So much being established, does man live eternally in the spiritual world?

This last question must necessarily be settled before we can conclude that man is immortal; for it is not sufficient to prove that he lives after his natural death, it is requisite also to show, that his existence beyond the grave, will be prolonged to eternity.

You will observe, however, that at the point which we have reached, the difficulties involved in the question of the soul's immortality are entirely removed. Indeed, what we have chiefly to demonstrate to the men of our age, is that they will live after the dissolution of their bodies. If one is convinced of this truth, and still entertains some doubts, of the eternity of his spiritual existence, these doubts may readily be dislodged. If, on the other hand, very great difficulties are experienced in convincing him that he will live after death, it is because being without the light of the most important spiritual truths, he has fallen into a habit of reasoning from the illusions of the senses. He is open to entire conviction only in regard to what he sees with the eyes of the body; but whilst he daily beholds the indiscriminate work of death, he has never yet seen one of those, who have been stricken down, reappear. He does not know that this picture of the successive decomposition of beings, presented to us in all things of the material world, is due to the fact, that matter of itself is dead, and derives the life by which it seems to be animated, solely from the spiritual. He is thence led to believe that man, like all other beings which inhabit the earth with him, is annihilated by natural death. When one has fallen into such a state, it is very difficult to convince him by the commonplaces of philosophy, or even by the arguments of the

old theology, that he is an exception to this general law, and that he is destined by the Creator to live eternally. But, let it be proved to him that the soul is a substantial being in the human form; let him understand that man, after death, lives in a body which is spiritual, and not subject to the laws of matter; let him know that he dwells with this body in a non-material world, where all things are living, and he will no longer experience any great difficulty in admitting the truth, that man as a spirit, lives eternally in a spiritual world.

In order to demonstrate to you the eternity of this spiritual existence, I shall therefore confine myself to two proofs. In the one, I shall base my argument upon the very Essence of God, or the Divine Love; the other will be supported upon the Divine Wisdom in the work of creation.

The first of these proofs, which should suffice of itself to establish a complete conviction, is derived from the very Essence of God. You readily admitted, that God in his Essence is Love itself; this definition pleased you, because it satisfied your heart and reason at the same time; and besides, it accords so entirely with the sound idea which ought to be formed of God, that no one, I suppose, will venture to dispute it openly. If then, God in his Essence is Love itself, he must necessarily be constant in his love, since



constancy is an essential quality of love. But, would He not give the most evident proof of inconstancy, if, after having created beings whom he could love, and who could return his love, he should annihilate them? Let us conclude then, that a spirit, who during his life in the material body has responded to the love of the Creator, will live eternally in the spiritual world. After I shall have shown you wherein the existence of spirit consists, you will see that God, who never contravenes the immutable laws of his Divine Order, permits the spirit who has rejected his love also to subsist eternally.

My second proof, drawn from the wisdom of God in the creation, needs to be introduced by the presentation of some ideas in regard to the nature of the beings generally designated by the name of angels. If, when treating of the immortality of the soul, I am obliged to speak to you of angels, before you have been made acquainted with the nature of heaven, it is, because all these sublime questions have numerous points of contact, and it is impossible to exhaust any one without approaching the others. Moreover, this is as it should be in a true system, the various parts of which must necessarily be connected and interlaced, in order to form a harmonious whole.

Those who believe in the existence of angels, generally think that they are beings created before man, and possessed of a superior nature. This

opinion, besides having no foundation, is erroneous. All intelligent beings existing in the spiritual world, whatever other denomination may be given them, are men; and all have lived upon earths, before living in the spiritual world. It will be easy for me to prove these two truths.

1. *All angels are men.* To admit this proposition as an incontestable verity, we need to understand what is meant by man. As God is Very Man, the name of man ought to belong to every creature formed in the image and after the likeness of God; in other words, to every creature fitted to receive freely his love and his wisdom. Every being, then, endowed with a will capable of receiving freely the divine love, and with an understanding capable of receiving freely the divine wisdom, is a man. And as freedom is an inherent quality of man, it follows that every man, by virtue of his free will, either appropriates or rejects, in different degrees, this love and this wisdom, which ever seek to effect an entrance into him. Hence proceeds the difference which is remarked among men, and which causes that each is himself, and not to be confounded with another. But whatever the diversity among intelligent beings, whether they be called Hottentots or Laplanders, Chinese or Europeans; whether they be black, copper-colored, or white; whether they inhabit this earth, or the planets of our solar system, or even those of

other systems ; whatever, in short, be the features, the stature and color, of a being, provided he have a lesser and larger brain, so formed as to be fitted to receive freely the divine love and wisdom, this being is a *man*.

According to this definition of man, which is but a consequence of principles already laid down, you will see that there can be no intermediate beings between God and man, and that the angels, properly speaking, are men. If, however, from the impression made by the instructions received in your childhood, you are still inclined to consider the angels as a class of beings superior to man, I will remind you that in these very instructions, you have also been taught that God created man in his image and after his likeness. But, if an angel, who is likewise one of God's creatures, is of a nature superior to man, tell me, I pray you, what can this nature be? Give utmost stretch to your imagination and see if it be possible to conceive of a nature superior to that, which is in the image and after the likeness of God. They who held such language to you were therefore in contradiction with themselves. No, I repeat it, there are and can be no beings intermediate between God and man, or of a nature superior to that of man, because God is Very Man ; and, moreover, all beings to whom the name of angels is given, have the human form, for the primitive form is the human form. All angels then are men.

2. *All angels have lived upon earths, before living in the spiritual world.* It is evident that only in a preparatory world, such as is this natural world, intelligent creatures can make use of their free will, or in other words, choose between good and evil, between the true and the false. Were the commission of sin possible in heaven, not one of its inhabitants could deem his abode secure; heaven would no longer be heaven, for the mere idea of a possible expulsion would destroy the happiness that makes heaven to be heaven. You will presently see, when we come to treat of the mode of the existence of spirits, that in the spiritual world the choice, spoken of before, can no longer be made, since it has already been made in the natural world; that there no one enjoys free *will*, but *freedom*, which with the good, consists in freely doing good without dread of evil, and with the wicked, in freely doing evil without experiencing remorse; so that the freedom of the one is genuine freedom, with all the enjoyments it yields, and that of the other is genuine slavery, the slavery of evil, with all the torments that follow in its train. If free will then (or, more exactly expressed, free determination) can be enjoyed only in the natural world, the angels must of necessity either have lived on a natural earth, or have been created without the endowment of free will. But, on this second hypothesis, far from being

superior to man, they would be greatly his inferiors; for they would be mere automatons, unworthy of the love of God. Indeed, according to the principles laid down in my second letter, a being created perfect would in reality be a merely passive instrument, or a machine. Thus we reach the evident conclusion, that angels are men who, during their life in the natural world, prepared themselves to receive, in a very high degree, the divine love and the divine wisdom.

And this offers a new confirmation of the proposition already advanced, that man was the sole end of creation; for, since there are no beings intermediate between God and man, it results necessarily that all things in the natural, as well as in the spiritual, world, were created for the sake of man, who is the only being capable of returning to the Creator the love which he receives from him.

The spiritual world, or the immaterial universe, being therefore peopled only by men who have lived upon an earth in the natural world, if it be asserted that these men, who are either spirits or angels, are not to live there eternally, it must be supposed, either that they will successively cease to exist, as is the case in our world, or that they will cease to exist all at once. No other suppositions are possible; and yet, both are inadmissible. To suppose that the inhabitants of the spiritual world successively cease to exist,

in order to make room for others, is to suppose that the spiritual world cannot contain all the beings who daily leave the natural world; and this is to assimilate the spiritual to the material, or to compare life to death: for it is life that constitutes the spiritual world, and you know that matter of itself is dead, or deprived of life;— in a word, it is to materialize affection and thought. But, if affection and thought can be independent of the laws of space, even in this world,— of which you may very easily convince yourself by the fact, that your affection and thought make no account of distance,— how can it be supposed that they are subject to these laws, when man is no longer in the bonds of matter? The first hypothesis is, therefore, inadmissible. To suppose that the inhabitants of the spiritual world will all cease to exist at the same time, is to suppose the annihilation of that world; for what is spiritual world, totally deprived of intelligent beings? And as the material world of itself is dead, and derives its life entirely from the spiritual world, this supposition involves the annihilation of all that has been created. But, were the whole creation annihilated, God, who is love itself, could no longer diffuse his love, the very essence of which consists in communicating itself; and his divine Wisdom, which is foresight itself, would thus have been at fault; since in creating the universe that the divine Love

might be satisfied, this end would not have been attained. This supposition, which accuses the divine Wisdom of a lack of foresight, is therefore likewise inadmissible. Thus we obtain the second proof of the eternal existence of the spirit in a spiritual world.

Let us now recapitulate what has been said concerning the immortality of man. In my last letter, I showed that man does not cease to exist from the moment which is so improperly called death; that he continues to live in the spiritual world, in a body organized like the one which he had in the natural world; that this body, of a nature wholly spiritual, was not given him on passing from one world into the other, but that he carried it with him from the natural world, where, by virtue of its human form, it had rendered him capable of receiving human sensations; the material body having been but a covering with which the Creator had invested him in order that he might perform his functions in the natural world. Finally, to make it certain that the spirit, or man divested of his material covering, does live eternally in the spiritual world, I have shown in the present letter, that if he should cease to exist, God, who is Love itself, would be permitting what is inconsistent with his essential quality; which cannot be supposed for an instant; and that, moreover, the end of creation would not be attained, which cannot be admitted without

accusing the divine Wisdom of a lack of foresight. The rational result of all this is a complete proof of the immortality of the soul.

Do not think, however, that my sole dependence is upon these reasonings, which I have presented to you. I should be laboring under a strange illusion, were I to imagine that I had established in you a firm conviction, because I had proved by a series of logical arguments, that you are to live eternally. No, my dear sir, should you even tell me that you are altogether convinced, I could not believe it; not that I should doubt the sincerity of your avowal, but because, in the present state of the prevailing ideas on this subject, a firm conviction on such a point can only be obtained by a long course of reflection. I shall therefore allow you all the necessary time, and, in each of my letters, shall furnish you with additional means of pursuing your meditations on the eternity of your existence; for of all the theories that still remain to be examined, there is not one which will not provide you with new proofs confirmatory of this important truth.

As the point in our present subject of inquiry, most difficult of apprehension, is the existence of the spirit in a human form with an organized spiritual body, I cannot dwell upon it too long. I will therefore add to the proofs, already adduced, a few more, drawn from the observation



of certain facts which may very easily be verified. This new line of proof will be the more to your taste, as it will accord with the generally prevalent demand of the day, that all theories be confirmed by facts. Towards the close of my last letter, I showed you, that the material body of man of itself is insensible, and has no form which is properly its own. These truths, drawn from modern science, afford a strong confirmation of the idea that man has an organized spiritual body; for, if the material body of itself has neither sensibility nor form, it must derive both from the spiritual body. It remains now, to confirm, from the observation of facts, the statement, that the spiritual body has the same organization as the material body which covers it.

When man receives a wound, he suffers. Why does he suffer? Because the interruption of continuity in the wounded part, causes disorder in the organism of his body. But what is it that suffers in him? Is it matter? No, because of itself it is insensible. Is it the soul? Yes, because his soul, or his spirit, is his life, is himself. But how, with the ideas of philosophers, can you conceive that the soul, the spirit or life, can suffer from an altogether material fact? Up to the present time it has been absolutely impossible to account for this; explanations have been sought in vain; physiologists have been no more successful in their researches than psychologists; neither

have been able to present a satisfactory solution. But if we turn to our theories, and admit the existence of a spiritual body, organized like the material body, it is easily explained. Judge of it yourself.

Life is composed of affections and thoughts; as the affections are spiritual substances, and the thoughts spiritual forms, the life peculiar to every being is always found to be organized by means of these substances and forms, in the degree in which this being was created susceptible of affections and thoughts, or of instincts. But man having been so created as to be able to receive the divine love in his will, and the divine wisdom in his understanding, it follows, that in him life is complete; in other words, that it is an image of Life itself, or of God, and, consequently, when in a state of integrity, that it is a substance having the form of God, which is the human form. At the same time, however, man can act in the material world only by means of matter; for which purpose every portion of his spiritual body is covered with the material substances, composing his natural body. This observation will render it easy for you to understand, why man suffers when his material body receives a wound.

As long as the material body is in its integrity, the spiritual body can act freely, following its own internal impulse; but when the material body is hurt, whether by contusion, or by

incision, or in any other manner, so that the spiritual body can no longer act freely, there is pain and suffering. If, for instance, there is an interruption of continuity in any part of the material body, it does not follow that there must be an interruption of continuity also in the corresponding part of the spiritual body, but as this can no longer act in our world by the wounded part of the material body, there is pain, which is acute and severe, in proportion to the extent of the interruption. It is possible for this pain even to affect the entire organism of the spiritual body, provided the injury be of such a nature as to impede its general action. And more, if the injured part is an organ indispensable to the general action of the spiritual body, as, for example, the heart or the lungs, the material body, being deprived of its use as the agent of the spiritual body's action in our world, it becomes impossible for the two bodies to retain their connection any longer. A separation then takes place; the material body is nothing but a corpse, and the spiritual body, liberated from the bonds which have detained it in the natural world, finds itself in the spiritual world, having no need of a translation into a sphere in which it has always existed.

Let me still further corroborate what has been advanced, by reference to a phenomenon which has frequently been noticed. You have no doubt had occasion to converse with soldiers who have

suffered amputation of their limbs ; our late wars have unfortunately but too much increased their number. Have you not often heard these brave fellows complain of severe pains in their heels or toes, although their legs had been left many years before in the fields of Austerlitz, or on the plains of Leipzig? Possibly you have even seen them — so strong is this impression — suddenly move a hand to the part affected, in order to repress the pain, and then have witnessed their disappointment, at seizing, perhaps for the hundredth time, a piece of insensible wood. If such facts have not come to your own notice, ask the first person who has suffered the loss of a limb, and he will confirm their existence. Should you, struck by this extraordinary phenomenon, desire to ascertain its cause, you would in vain address yourself to science. You would receive no satisfactory answer. Possibly, an application to philosophy, might prove more successful? Philosophy would remain dumb. But, have recourse to the principles which I have developed, and you will readily obtain an explanation, that shall satisfy your reason.

The amputation of a leg, or of any other member of the material body, cannot deprive the spiritual body of this member. The person who has lost a limb, still preserves his spiritual body entire ; if the spiritual leg is not visible to the eyes of our material body, it is because the ma-

terial can see only what is material. Indeed, it is not the material eye that sees, but the spiritual; but as, in general, the spiritual eye can see in our world only by the medium of its material covering, therefore I say, the material sees only what is material. Now, as the spiritual leg of the person who suffers amputation still exists, although invisible to the eyes of our body, it is not surprising that this very leg, or even its extremity, should be affected with a pain, of which the person who has lost it is sensible, seeing that, in reality, it is the spiritual, and not the material body that suffers. Besides, as there are conditions with those who still enjoy the use of their natural limbs, in which a pain originating in the upper parts extends to the heel, or even to the toe, and sometimes becomes more severe in those extremities, it is very evident that, under similar conditions, like effects may be experienced where the material leg is wanting.

On this principle of the integrity of the spiritual body, notwithstanding the mutilation of the material body, the man who has lost the use of his material eyes, still retains his spiritual eyes intact; he is blind only to the objects of this world. These he does not see, because the spiritual eye, as I have said, can see in the material world only by the medium of the material organ of sight; and when this organ is wanting, the phenomenon of natural vision ceases immediately. In like

manner, the deaf man does not hear, because the spiritual organ of hearing can perceive sounds in the natural world only by the medium of the material organ of hearing; and if this organ is injured, deafness ensues; but the deaf man preserves entire the spiritual organ of hearing.

If during sleep, the blind man has a dream, and recollects it when he awakes, he then acknowledges that he saw the objects which were presented to him in his dream, as distinctly as he saw natural objects, while he had the use of his eyes. The deaf man also acknowledges, when he retains the recollection of a dream, that he then perceived sounds as distinctly, as he perceived natural sounds before he became deaf. How are we to explain these facts? It will be said, no doubt, that they are the effects of imagination; but what is imagination? It would be very perplexing to answer this question. The imagination is very often brought into requisition; it is a word highly prized by the philosophy of our day; for it serves it as a ready means of escape from a critical situation, when driven to its last intrenchments.

It is very evident, that by attributing these facts to imagination the question is merely shifted, not solved; but it would be departing too far from my subject, for me to undertake at this time an explanation of our theory of dreams; we shall return to it hereafter. I will only remark,

that ordinarily, it is the spiritual body of man alone, which is active in dreams; and this will suffice to explain to you the sight of the blind, and the hearing of the deaf. The blind man sees with his spiritual eyes, and the deaf hears with his spiritual ears.

I might easily multiply proofs of the existence in man of an organized spiritual body, by referring to the extraordinary facts brought to light by some new branches of science; but this would lead me into extended digressions; as these new branches of science are yet, for the most part, unfurnished with theories, and, to say the least, present as many inconveniences as advantages, which I should be obliged to point out, were I to speak of them, and this might cause you to lose sight of the exposition which now engages our attention. Nevertheless, when you become acquainted with the order of the spiritual world, and the mode of existence of its inhabitants, you will always find me ready to reply to the questions which you may see fit to address to me in regard to these new discoveries, and I will be careful to put you on your guard against the dangers which they may present.

## VI.

Exposition of the spiritual world.—The relations existing between God, the spiritual, and the natural world.—End, cause, and Effect.—The spiritual world a real world corresponding with the natural world.—Space and time.

ALTHOUGH I have given you evidences of the immortality of the soul, the force of which you yourself acknowledge, yet, as I have said, I should not have hoped to produce in you a firm conviction, had I no other means in reserve by which to strengthen and fortify the ideas, which, according to your own avowal, are beginning to assume form in your mind. Of what use, indeed, would it be to have proved to you, that your material body is a mere covering, and that this covering, however necessary to your present existence, is not indispensable to your real life, of which the life in this world is but the beginning? Of what avail would it be to have shown you that there exists in you a spiritual body; that this body is organized entirely like your body of flesh; and that it is indestructible as are all things spiritual? What use would these truths subserve, were I to give you no information of the spiritual world, of which you can as yet form



no idea; and were I not to place before your eyes the new scene of action, where the man-spirit is to exercise the functions of his immaterial nature to all eternity? Without a knowledge of that world, how could you combat the objections, arising in your own mind, and in crowds assailing your new conviction? You would believe one day, what you would deny the next.

Far from having relieved your position, I should only have rendered it more intolerable by stimulating your desire to believe, without furnishing you with all the means necessary to establish your faith. You would, then, have a right to say to me: "This breath, or this vapory being of philosophers and theologians does not affect me much, because it is impossible to form a clear idea of it; my thoughts dwell as little upon the angels, who are represented in a human form, because the wings with which they are furnished, clearly indicate that they are mere fictions. Still, in some sort, by an effort of the imagination, I may picture to myself, souls wandering about in the immensity of the ethereal regions, and angels poising, or flapping their wings to sustain their bodies. But your men-spirits and your angels, in a perfect human form, what idea can I have of their existence? or, where would you have me place these spiritual bodies, which like our material bodies, seem to have the three dimensions? Philoso-

phers and theologians, moreover, put but little faith in their own lucubrations on the nature of the soul; most of them confess that they are far from being assured of the certainty of what they advance; while you, on the contrary, appear not to have the least doubt of the truth of your assertions. Hasten then to free me from this position, or else, while desiring to relieve me of my doubts, you will only have increased them." Any further delay on my part, in satisfying the desire you must feel to know something of this spiritual world, would fully justify you in the use of such language. I shall therefore do my utmost to impart to you correct ideas, that will enable you at once to comprehend the whole subject. It will then be evident to you that the spirit, when disengaged from its earthly, material integument, possesses all things needful to its existence, and enjoys a life far more complete than that which it led upon this earth.

The presentation of these ideas would undoubtedly be connected with less difficulty, were you acquainted with our theory of degrees, and our manner of regarding space and time; but your present state urges me to proceed without delay. I shall therefore enter at once upon the subject itself, only touching incidentally upon parts of these theories, to which the line of my argument may require me to have recourse.

The knowledge which we possess of the man-

spirit, leads directly to an understanding of the spiritual world. We need but to observe the law of analogy; for, between the spiritual and the material worlds, there must exist relations analogous to those which exist between the spirit and the material body. If, now, the spirit is a real man, and if the form of the material body appertains also to the spirit,—and these are truths which we have recognized,—we must conclude, that the spiritual world is a real world, and that the form of the material world appertains also to the spiritual world.

Indeed, your acknowledgment of the truths concerning the man-spirit, compels an acknowledgment of the correlative truths which apply to the spiritual world. If the matter of which our body is composed is of itself insensible, as demonstrated by the discoveries of modern science, and if this matter has, of itself, no particular form, the same must be predicated, with much stronger reason, of inorganic matter. If our material body does not live of itself, how can other natural objects have a self-existence, and how can nature, as a whole, exist of itself? If the matter of which our body is composed has no form of itself, how can that which constitutes the other bodies of nature, of itself present to us that indefinite variety of forms which charms our sight, and how can complex nature have a form? Every object, therefore, which exists in our world, de-

rives its form from similar or rather *corresponding* objects in the spiritual world. I say *corresponding*; for, although the things in the spiritual world appear like those in ours, it must be remembered that they differ from them in this respect, that they have life in them, because they exist and subsist from the spiritual sun, in the midst of which resides the Deity; while the things of the natural world, existing and subsisting from the material sun, have no life in them, but such as they receive by intermediation of the spiritual world.

Accordingly, as there cannot be a single object in this world, which does not correspond to an object really existing in the spiritual world, that is, existing in substance and form, a rigorous logic compels the conclusion, that as in our world, so in the other, there are stars, which appear fixed in the azure vault; a horizon with its zenith; atmospheres with their meteors; earths watered by rivers; seas bounded by shores; the three kingdoms of nature with all their constituent parts, and finally, an indefinite variety of all the objects of art produced by the labor of man. Thus, my dear sir, if, as I supposed at the beginning of this letter, you have up to this moment, been unable to form an idea of the existence of men-spirits, and have not known where to place these spiritual bodies, organized like our material bodies, it is now in your power to see, that by

means of these objects, all of which are of an immaterial nature, men-spirits enjoy a real existence, which it is no longer impossible to comprehend. You perceive, further, that so far from being lost in a vapory immensity, they exist on a solid earth, and are surrounded by real objects; for, the earth on which they walk, the houses they inhabit, the air they breathe, and all the objects which are before their eyes, or which they touch, are as real to them, as our earth, our habitations, the air, and the objects that surround us, are actual to us.

You will, no doubt, be as much astonished on learning these things, as you were when I informed you that your soul, or your spirit, is a real man, with a spiritual organization, similar to that of your earthly body. Nevertheless, the first truth ought to have prepared you for the second; for, as I have said, they are correlative truths, and the admission of the one necessarily leads to the reception of the other. Your astonishment would be still greater, should I at once make you acquainted with the spiritual world in all its details; but before presenting you with the details, I must endeavor to convince you of the reality of the whole. After having read what has preceded, your mind, I conjecture, will be most exercised by the desire to know where this spiritual world is situated. Such a desire appears to me so much the more natural

on your part, because as a man of the world, you will still think of spiritual things from the ideas of space and time. But the spiritual world, from its very nature, is entirely exempt from the bonds of space and time; for these are inherent conditions of matter, and can exist only in the natural world. I shall soon return to these truths, which at present I simply indicate, for it is important that I should first present to you some general considerations upon the relations existing between God, the spiritual, and the natural world. As this subject is of an abstract character, let me ask your undivided attention for a moment. When you do a work, your action is determined by a reason, and you are impelled by a motive; you have an object in view. Philosophically speaking, the motive which impels, is the *end*; the reason that determines, is the *cause*; and the work which is done, is the *effect*. These three things are connected by relations, which it is important to define. A little reflection upon the internal process that results in an act, will enable you to see the difference between end and cause, and to discover that the end, or object, has its seat in an affection of your will, while the cause lies in a thought of the understanding. But, that you may more clearly comprehend the distinction, and follow the discussion without great effort, I will illustrate it by an example.

When a sculptor proceeds to transform a block of marble into a statue, the impulse moving him, is evidently the desire to gratify an affection ; and this impulse is determined in a certain direction by a thought. His desire may be, either to provide for his natural wants, or to acquire fame.\* The moving principle in the heart of the sculptor is his *end*, or aim. To create a form for this principle, he has recourse to his intellectual faculties ; and the thought in the understanding which conceives the form to be given to the marble, (and which is the reason of the direction into which the impulse is determined), is the *cause*. It is the thought that directs the sculptor's hand in the execution of his work. And finally, the form produced by the *chisel*, — or the statue itself, is *the effect*. Now, it is clear that the end, the cause, and the effect are not in a relation of continuity to each other ; there is no proceeding from the simple to the compound, or from the compound to the simple ; as we find to be the case, for the most part, in things of the same nature. Indeed, there is no relation of increment or decrement, as of light to heavy, which is but an increase of density, or of hot to cold, which is only a decrease of heat. But if the nature of end, cause and effect is closely examined, it will be seen that these three things are

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\* Or, we may add, to ultimate an artistic idea. — *Trans.*

placed one above the other, in entirely separate or discrete degrees, and stand to each other in the relation of things anterior and posterior, or superior and inferior.

It is, indeed, evident that the end or aim is anterior or superior to the cause; the end is anterior to the cause, for the sculptor must be moved by the love of riches, or of fame [or of art], before he has recourse to his intellectual faculties, for the purpose of creating the form of his statue; the end is superior to the cause, for the love or affection of the sculptor is above his thought, since it is this love or affection which has determined his thought, and which continually sustains it. Suppose the sculptor should no longer be influenced by this love, would not his thought be immediately directed to other objects?

It is, likewise, evident that the cause is anterior and superior to the effect; the cause is anterior to the effect, for the thought of the sculptor had conceived the form of the statue, or every part of it, before his hand took up the chisel; the cause is superior to the effect, for the thought of the sculptor is above the statue, since it is this thought which determines the form of the statue. If, before finishing his work, the sculptor should abandon his thought, would not, in this case, the form of the statue remain incomplete?

In order not to confound the relations existing between things of an entirely different nature,



with those proceeding from an increase or decrease of the same thing, we call the former the relation of *discrete degrees*, and the latter, of *continuous degrees*. There are thus three discrete degrees: The end constitutes the first, the cause the second, and the effect the third or last. Continuous degrees are indefinite in number. The theory of continuous degrees does not offer any difficulties, because these degrees, presenting only differences between more and less, can easily be studied. Not so with discrete degrees; the theory of these, which constitutes a real science, is at present but little known; and to this ignorance is owing the vagueness of all philosophic speculations on the subject of ends, causes, and effects. As the nature of the questions we are discussing, will require frequent recourse to this theory, I propose to offer a successive development of its principles.

End, cause, and effect are three things of an entirely distinct nature, which, however, are connected by the relations of anteriority and superiority; it remains to be seen what results from these relations.

In the first place, it is to be observed, that ends and causes can only be comprehended so far as they are manifested by effects. Without their products, they would be as though they did not exist; but by their manifestation, they become fixed in effects, rest upon them as upon their bases, and

remain there as long as the effects subsist. So long, therefore, as the statue subsists, the thought of the sculptor will remain in this statue, the form of which is nothing else than his thought definitely arrested and fixed; but although it is thus definitely arrested and fixed, so as to strike the eyes and minds of beholders, it is nevertheless certain that this thought still continues in the sculptor; it is, therefore, also a thought out of the statue. This fact is so evident, that it will not be denied; but how can it be explained, if not by the relations of anteriority and posteriority existing between the thought of the sculptor, and the statue? Indeed, if the thought of the sculptor is contained in the statue — which no one will deny — it can only be there, as anterior and superior things are in the posterior and inferior things which correspond to them; that is to say, it is no less out of the statue, than in it, because the anterior and superior cannot be absorbed by the posterior and inferior. It is thus that the cause, although contained in the effect, subsists out of it, at the same time.

What I have just said about cause and effect, applies equally to end and cause, between which exist the same relations of anteriority and superiority. The end, then, although contained in the cause, is also out of it. And, moreover, as the cause itself is in the effect, it follows that the end and cause, although both contained in the effect, are likewise out of it.

I will sum up the results of the preceding, in the following two propositions:—

1. The end is simultaneously in the cause, and out of the cause.

2. The end and the cause are simultaneously in the effect, and out of the effect.

This being established, we proceed as follows: As all things in the universe were created for the sake of man, in order that by man the whole of creation might return to the Creator, it follows, that God is the **FIRST END** of all things.

As all things of a spiritual nature consist of affections and thoughts, i.e. of living forces ever active in manifesting themselves by acts, such activity being the essential quality of causes, it follows that the Spiritual World contains the *Causes* of all things.

As all things of a material nature consist of bodies more or less gross, which are the manifestations of causes proceeding from the First End, it follows that the Natural World is the theatre of *Effects*.

Finally, as the relations between God, the Spiritual, and the Natural World are absolutely the same as the relations between End, Cause, and Effect, the two preceding propositions reveal the following two important truths:—

1. God is at the same time in the Spiritual World, and out of the Spiritual World.

2. God and the Spiritual World are at the

same time in the Natural World, and out of the Natural World.

Every thing in creation, therefore, is connected with and bound to, God, without the possibility of God's being confounded with his work. God is the Sculptor, the Universe the Statue, formed and vivified by his Divine Thought or Wisdom, for the sake of satisfying his Divine Affection, or, his Love.

The Universe, further, is dependent upon God not by continuity, which would be to deify creation, but by contiguity.

And lastly, as to what concerns man, God and the Spiritual World are in him, and also out of him. God is within him, for man finds God in the inmost of his heart, when by renouncing his selfish interests, he devotes himself to the general welfare, or sacrifices himself for one of his brethren. The Spiritual World is within man, for he discovers in himself all his affections, and all his thoughts, which belong manifestly to that world, since their nature is altogether immaterial. But when man is freed from matter, or when his material body is as though it did not exist, then, although God and the Spiritual World are in him, he sees them also without him. He sees God as the spiritual Sun, and even as a Man, when it pleases the Deity to manifest himself in his true form, which is the human form; and he sees the Spiritual World as a real world,

containing all things necessary to the existence of the man-spirit; for as all affections are spiritual substances, and all thoughts spiritual forms, there are found in that world, by means of these substances and forms, objects corresponding to the objects in our world, which are themselves correspondences of affections and thoughts.

Thus, by a just conception of spiritual substances and forms, you can represent to yourself this spiritual world, which philosophy has dissolved by its subtilizing processes, as having all the consistency of the material world, without attributing to it the least particle of matter.

But although the foregoing truths have all been reached by logical deduction, you will be able to apprehend them clearly, only so far as you abstract your thought from space. God and the spiritual world, indeed, being out of the natural world, as the sculptor is out of the statue, are for the same reason out of space; for space belongs to the natural world, and, consequently, exists only for this world where every thing is fixed, regulated, and constant, because ends and causes here subsist in their rest.

It is, therefore, proper that I should here examine the two propositions before advanced with regard to space and time; viz., 1. That *space and time are conditions inherent in matter*. 2. That *space and time can exist only in the natural world*. We will consider these propositions separately; beginning with —

## I. What concerns space :

1. *Space is inherent in matter.* This is self-evident ; because, on account of the force of inertia in matter, it is impossible to conceive of matter without the idea of space.

2. *Space can exist only in the natural world.* It is easy to convince yourself that every thing spiritual, that is to say whatever is of affection and thought, is independent of space. Indeed, the only reason, why man cannot overleap space at his good pleasure, is, because as to all his constituent particles, he is surrounded by a material body, and thus, in what concerns this body, is subject to the laws of matter. To convey himself from one place to another, therefore, he is obliged to pass through intermediate places ; but let him abstract his mind from this body by concentrating himself in his affections and thoughts, and the case is no longer the same ; the trammels of space disappear for an instant. I say, for an instant ; because it is impossible for man to continue long in this state of abstraction ; as he lives in a world surrounded by material objects, his ideas unceasingly return to these objects. Do you not in reality abstract yourself from space, when by your will and understanding you transport yourself in affection and thought to an absent friend, or to places which awaken pleasant memories ? Space, which so often opposes your desires, exists for you only,

because the material body, with which you are clothed in this world, subjects you to the laws of matter. There is, thus, really no space for affection or thought; nor, consequently, for any thing spiritual, since the spiritual is composed of nothing but affections and thoughts.

## II. What concerns time:

1. *Time is inherent in matter.* This results, likewise, from the inertia of matter, in consequence of which, matter may be subjected to regular movements. The measure of time, indeed, is owing to the twofold motion of the earth around itself, and around the sun, or what is the same, to the appearance of the double motion of the sun around the earth, and in the ecliptic; which, as you are aware, gives us the alternations of day and night, and the succession of years. Suppose our planet were no longer subject to this double motion, and remained immovable, what would happen? The sun would cease to have his two apparent motions, and would remain for us immutably fixed in one of the points of the azure sky; there would be no night in the hemisphere illuminated by his rays, and alone habitable; no return of seasons; but one perpetual day, and one temperature, the changes of which, in each locality, would depend only upon the irregular variations of the atmosphere. How, in such a case, could we measure time?

Of what avail the instruments now in use? What regulator could be adopted? Every one would doubtless refer to his own sensations. In such a state of things, it would certainly not be time that one would measure;—for you know that pain and ennui make it appear long, while pleasure and diversion shorten it; the subject of determination, would rather be the soul, and the different modifications of its state. It follows then, evidently, that time is due to the force of the inertia of matter, and that, consequently, it is inherent in matter.

2. *Time can exist only in the natural world.* Since time is owing to the inertia of matter, and could not be measured, if material nature was not subject to regular motions, it follows that time cannot exist, where the law of inertia does not exist; but this law can exist only for matter. The spiritual, having been endowed with liberty, or with the faculty of moving freely, cannot be subject to the law of inertia; for this law, and the law of freedom, are altogether incompatible. Besides, you may easily convince yourself that time exists neither for affections, nor for thoughts, by reflecting upon the freedom with which your will and your understanding can go back even to the remotest past, and make it appear as present, and with which the same faculties can bring before you the times yet to come.

I will here add this observation, that there is



in man an innate desire to free himself from the trammels of space and time; and this desire, which constantly betrays itself, affords at least a strong presumption, if not a proof, of the independence of space and time, claimed for the spiritual world.

It is moreover straightly deducible from my second proposition. If time and space cannot exist except in the natural world, there is in the spiritual world neither time nor space. But, you ask, how then can we form an idea of that world? How can we picture to ourselves lands, mountains, valleys, meadows, gardens, houses, inhabitants, if there is no space? How concede to that world the succession of events, which, properly speaking, constitutes existence, if there is no time?

However strong this objection may seem, a few reflections will suffice to remove it.

Living in a world, in which we are necessarily subject to the limitations of space and time, it is difficult for us to conceive of an existence freed from these fetters. Our ignorance of the true nature of spiritual substances and forms, which are nothing but affections and thoughts, occasions the belief, that without space and time there could be no individuality in nature; that all would be confounded, or rather annihilated. Such, indeed, would be the case in our world, because space and time are inherent

in matter ; but it is quite otherwise in the immaterial world. Substances and forms there preserve their individuality, without having need of space and time. Being the types of the substances and forms which we see in this world, if they were not in this state of individuality, our world would not exist ; since material substances and forms exist only by spiritual substances and forms. Both the material and the spiritual worlds, therefore, are composed of individual things, but with this difference, that the individual things in the former are subject to the law of inertia, while in the latter, they are governed by the law of freedom.

It thus becomes evident, that the spiritual world possesses the equivalent of our space and time, so far as both condition the individuality of substances and forms, though not in the limitations of activity ; the latter being due to the inherence of space and time in matter, whilst the former is derived from the very mode in which spiritual substances and forms exist. Being obliged, however, for the sake of clearer comprehension, to compare spiritual things to natural, we call this equivalent of space and time an *appearance*, and say, that in the spiritual world there is an appearance of space and time, although accuracy of expression would require us to say, that the mode in which substances and forms exist in space and time, is itself a gross appearance of

their real mode of existence ; since, instead of acting freely according to their nature, they are confined by space and time in a material prison. Besides, how many appearances are mistaken for realities, and realities for appearances ! If man would but reflect a little upon this subject, he would see that our world is full of appearances, which are esteemed realities ; I need but cite, in confirmation, the multiplicity of appearances proceeding from the apparent immobility of the earth !

In conclusion, it remains for us to inquire what constitutes the appearance of space and time in the spiritual world. On account of the connection of this question with several other theories which we will soon examine, I shall content myself, for the present, with giving you a summary solution of it. The appearance of space and time is the real mode of the existence of spirits, and is, therefore, in the spiritual world, the necessary result of the life of each of them. The different states of affection then, constitute, to the spirit in whom they exist, the appearances of our space, and his different states of thought, the appearances of our time.

I have entered into these considerations concerning space and time, because it is impossible clearly to comprehend spiritual things, unless we abstract our thoughts from these conditions of matter.

To think of God from space, is to think of

natural extension, and to fall into materialism ; but to acknowledge that God is in space without space, and in time without time, is to be able to conceive of God as everywhere present, and the same in the greatest as in the least of things. By virtue of His Infinity, He fills all spaces, without being in space, like material things ; and by virtue of His Eternity, He is in all times, but absolutely unconditioned by the divisions of time. Mathematics prove, indeed, that the infinite is applicable to the greatest, as well as to the least thing, and philosophy acknowledges, that as the eternity of God is both anterior and posterior, there is for God neither past nor future !

To think of the spiritual world from space, is to materialize what in its very nature is immaterial ; but to acknowledge that the spiritual world is without space and time, although in space and time in so far as it transmits to the material world the life received from God, is to be able to conceive of the spiritual world as really existing, without, on that account, assigning to it a fixed and determinate position ; is to be able to conceive of it as in the natural world, and out of the natural world, as in man and out of man.

I intend shortly to describe to you, the mode of existence of the man-spirit. The details into which I shall enter, will afford you a ready means of representing to yourself, this immaterial world, of which you can, as yet, have but a very imperfect idea.

## VII.

An objection answered.—The soul of animals.—Man the only creature endowed with immortality.

AS you are aware, it has been my primary object, to trace the great outlines of the Spiritual World, without suffering myself to be interrupted by replying to such objections as might arise in your mind. This course seemed to offer the twofold advantage of enabling you to obtain a comprehensive view of the whole subject without great delay, and of saving time, that might otherwise be lost in the examination of questions, some of which would necessarily come up in the progress of our discussion, whilst others could only be suggested in the absence of the general or comprehensive view which I have endeavored to impart to you. But your last letter contains an objection of so much weight, as to require an immediate examination, and to cause a deviation from my plan. Aside from this, the earnest desire you express to receive such enlightenment as may relieve you of this difficulty as soon as possible, would be sufficient

of itself, to determine a change in the plan thus far pursued.

In order to retain the full force of your objection, by preserving the form in which you have put it, I will here state it again, in your own language, — thus : —

“ When I read, in your fifth letter, what you say of the human soul, there arose one objection. I willingly admit that it is the human soul alone which suffers, when the body is wounded ; I admit also that it suffers in the part, corresponding to that of which the body was deprived by amputation ; but the arguments you adduce, apply as well to animals, as to man ; for animals suffer alike with us ; and an animal, having a limb amputated, may experience pain, as man does, in a member which it no longer actually possesses. Therefore, I must conclude, that animals, as well as men, have spiritual bodies. My delay in presenting this objection to you, was caused by the expectation that it would be removed in the course of your exposition, as has been the case with several other difficulties, previously submitted to you.

But, so far from removing this difficulty, your sixth letter has added to its gravity, by the statement that all objects existing in the animal kingdom, exist also in the spiritual world. Indeed, you say, that there is not a single object to be found in this world, which does not correspond to an object, having a real existence in the spiritual world, that is, having a spiritual substance and form ; and, when enumerating these objects, you mention the *three kingdoms of nature with all that con-*

*stitutes them.* Now, by giving a spiritual body to animals, and saying that there are animals in the spiritual world, you evidently assimilate the animal to man; for you not only give it a soul, but also attribute immortality to this soul. Release me promptly, I pray you, from the confusion of ideas, into which these reflections have cast me. Your system pleased me; I was delighted to see how each of your letters removed difficulties that I had considered insurmountable. I had not yet, indeed, become very familiar with your spiritual substances and forms, but I experienced such a pleasure in being able to think of man, as a spiritually organized being, and as thus surviving in integrity, the dissolution of his material covering, that you awoke in me the earnest hope that so beautiful a conception might prove a reality. I confess that it would be a source of regret to me to be obliged to relinquish ideas from which I was beginning to draw consolation; but this I shall be necessitated to do, if you concede a soul to beasts; for reason will decide in favor of the total annihilation, both of man and beast, before extending the privilege of immortality to beings deprived of reason."

My dear sir, I shall not reproach you for having thought that we attribute an immortal soul to animals; I expected this objection. When people hear us say that there are animals in the spiritual world, there are few who do not exclaim: Have beasts also souls? This exclamation seems so natural, that it does not surprise us in the least. The ideas concerning man,

prevalent at this day, are so very vague; the discussions of philosophy on the subject of the soul of beasts, far from throwing light on the question have only rendered it so much more obscure; and besides, so large a number of the learned, though without positive declaration to that effect, have yet given the impression by their writings, that the sole difference between man and beast, is a difference of more and less; that it cannot be a matter of astonishment to us, to find people at first persuaded, that we also assimilate beasts to men. We are, however, far from putting forth such an opinion, which would be in direct opposition to all our principles. On the contrary, our efforts are directed to the destruction of this fatal error, which infiltrates all classes of society with materialism; for, let it be admitted, that between man and beast there is but the difference of more and less, and strict logic will demand the belief, that man like beast is annihilated after natural death. In combating this error, however, instead of having recourse, like the old philosophy, to common-places of acknowledged impotency, we show the difference between man and beast to be so marked, that, when once recognized, it becomes impossible ever to assimilate the one to the other.

Having re-assured you by a statement of our principles on this important point, I come to your objection, which may be summed up as follows: —



“If you ascribe a spiritual body to animals, and if animals exist in the spiritual world, you evidently attribute an immortal soul to them.”

To this I reply: —

Yes, we do ascribe a spiritual body to animals; there are animals in the spiritual world, and yet the animal has no immortal soul.

Thus, although I admit the two propositions, which have led you to infer that animals are possessed of immortal souls, I deny the inference. But, I am far from being surprised at your drawing such a conclusion from the premises, believing that every one, placed as you are, would do the same, owing to the prevalent ignorance in regard to the nature of man and of beast, and in respect to the conditions requisite to the enjoyment of immortality. Your hesitation to believe that we attribute a spiritual body to animals, makes it incumbent upon me, for the present, to insist upon the truth of what I have just affirmed. Besides, you will acknowledge that it results from the principles I have explained to you, on the subject of man. For logic says, if matter with man is insensible, it must be so with the animal; if in man there is a spiritual, organized being, which suffers when the material body receives an injury, it must be so in a parallel case with the animal; for it cannot be denied, that there is suffering with both. Moreover, when the insensibility of matter, and its inaptitude to assume any form of

itself, is acknowledged, we are forced to admit the principle of spiritual bodies.

It follows, further, from our principles, that nature of itself is dead. Now, it is a fact, that life is diffused, in different degrees, through all natural bodies. But how could each of these bodies obtain the life proper to it, if there was not within it a corresponding spiritual body, fitted to receive this life from the common fountain?

We, therefore, declare boldly, because it is a truth that can be impugned only by frivolous objections, that vegetables and animals subsist by an influx from the spiritual into the natural world; that they are produced from spiritual germs enclosed in natural germs; and that nature merely serves to fix the spiritual, which continually flows into it, under the impulse of the inherent tendency of every thing spiritual to clothe itself with a body. The animal, therefore, exists only because it is the correspondence of certain spiritual substances and forms, which, taken together, constitute the spiritual body, whereon corresponding material particles are moulded.

And here is explained the mystery of the life and generation of every thing that is born, grows, and dies. The same seed always produces the same plant. Why does an acorn always produce an oak? Because in the acorn are contained the

elements of the spiritual body of the oak. Why have so many animals, especially of the lizard tribe, the faculty of reproducing amputated members? How is it that the foot of a lizard, when torn off, grows again? One of two things must be true, — either that nature performs a miracle, or else that the material substances mould themselves on the spiritual body, as upon a model.

From all that precedes it is, therefore, evident, that animals have spiritual bodies.

I pass now to my second affirmation: *There are animals in the spiritual world.*

This truth, which has excited your astonishment, is also a consequence of the principles previously laid down. If you do not admit animals into the spiritual world, you are compelled to exclude thence also vegetables, minerals and atmospheres; and, in short, every thing that corresponds to the different objects which compose what we call nature. What then becomes of the spiritual world? It vanishes completely; it is no longer a world; for this term imparts the idea of a thing analogous to the world that we inhabit; and thus, being no longer able to form an idea of it, you fall back into the abstractions of philosophy, and thence into all your doubts concerning the immortality of the soul.

Still, I can very readily conceive your repugnance to admit the existence of animals in the spiritual world. An inner feeling tells you, that

you have an immortal soul ; but looking upon your surroundings, you behold everywhere beings devoid of reason ; you know that they live, feel, suffer, and have passions like men ; you are struck with all the other analogies observed to exist between the most intelligent of these beings and the one who claims the title of lord of creation. Then you hesitate to trace the line of demarkation between the reasoning and the instinctive being, especially when reflecting, that many animals are often more affectionate or ingenious than many degraded men ; and yet, if you accord a soul to the being nearest to man, you are forthwith compelled to grant one to the being next in order ; and thus to descend, step by step, until you reach the animals which are lowest in the scale of creation. This thought is revolting to your idea of the dignity of man ; and, in your perplexity, you are more inclined to believe in his total annihilation, than in the immortality of beings destitute of reason.

All these thoughts, shared by the major part of the men of our age, were awakened in you by the announcement that we accord to animals a place in the spiritual world. You immediately called to mind that, from their analogy with man, animals must have a spiritual body, and concluded thence, that we ascribe immortal souls to beasts. You are aware now, that we repel your conclusion with all our might ; but seeing me

nevertheless persist in maintaining the truth of the two propositions which led you to this conclusion, you will naturally be anxious to know why I reject it. I proceed to satisfy you.

I admit, it is true, that animals have spiritual bodies ; but the existence of a spiritual body by no means decides its immortality. Indeed, if its immortality were necessarily to result from the fact of a spiritual body's existence, we should be forced to the conclusion, that it has existence in itself, and therefore, is not only immortal, but also eternal, when yet we know that God alone has existence in himself, and that God alone is eternal. We shall see presently that the spiritual body of man is immortal only, because it is the receptacle of the eternal life which reposes in the bosom of the Deity.

I admit further, that there are animals in the spiritual world ; but from this proposition, no more than from the former, does it follow, that the animal forms perceived in the world of spirits, are the souls of animals, either dead, or about to be born on earth, or that these appearances of animals are immortal individualities receptive of Divine life.

This is my reply, which I give in a few words, in order not to keep you in suspense. The proofs of my assertions, I shall not present here, because they will follow in the examination of the important question, now about to engage our attention.

This grave question, generally designated as the *Problem of the Soul of Beasts*, has been the occasion of prolonged discussion among philosophers, and has never been completely solved by them. Be kind enough to lend me your undivided attention.

It was stated above, that God is Love and Wisdom ; that Divine Love is Being Itself, filling and animating all things with its life ; and that Divine Wisdom is Existing Itself, manifesting Divine Love, and creating and arranging all things.

All created objects derive their substance from Being Itself, which is the first substance, and their form from Existing Itself, which is the first form ; but they derive this substance and this form in different degrees. They tend, therefore, more or less to the form of the Creator, which is the human form ; for he is Very Man. Hence arises the long chain of created beings, of which each successive link is less perfect than the one immediately preceding.

At the head of this chain is man. Regarded simply as a form of natural existence, he is necessarily a part of the chain ; but regarded as a form of human life, he no longer belongs to it ; — he is raised above it. For, the difference between him, and the next following link, when considered in respect to his humanity, is not like the difference existing between any other two links of the chain. It is a difference of kind, and not of

degree, which lifts man out of comparison with other created objects, distinguishing him as a being of an indefinitely higher order. As a human being, man is above the chain, so to speak, and governs or controls it, as the spiritual governs and controls the natural. On the one hand, as a form of natural existence, he is linked with all things of nature; but on the other hand, as a form of human life, he is separated from them, by virtue of the spiritual principles with which he alone is gifted. With his feet he rests upon this world, but with his eyes he can pierce the very heavens. You will presently be convinced of this truth, which I simply announce here.

God pours out life continually into the universe; but this life is modified by the bodies receiving it. By examining the structure of these bodies, we may therefore obtain a knowledge of the degree in which they are able to receive life from God; and may see that it is owing to man's peculiar organization that he can ascend in thought from effects to causes, and from causes to ends. For, if we examine the brain of the animal approaching nearest to man, we find its forepart in no wise to be comparable to that of man. It is in the anterior portion of the human brain that the understanding mainly resides; and this, as you know, is the vessel recipient of spiritual light, or of the wisdom of God. Now, as all beasts without exception, are

deprived of this anterior portion of the brain, it is impossible for them to receive spiritual light in the first two degrees, which relate to ends, and causes; but, as they need some kind of light, to direct them in their actions, they receive it in the last degree, which relates to effects. But as light and heat, and thus the recipient vessels of heat and light are ever combined, it follows that animals receive not only spiritual light, but also spiritual heat, in the last degree, which is that of effects; while man receives, or is capable of receiving spiritual heat or love, and spiritual light, or wisdom, in the three discrete degrees of ends, causes, and effects.

It is owing to this threefold arrangement of the recipient vessels of his soul, that man is capable of being endowed with rationality, or the faculty of understanding rationally, and with freedom, or the faculty of determining freely. He can, therefore, reason about ends, causes and effects, and by his will either oppose himself to divine order, or else conform to it.

The recipient vessels in the souls of beasts being adapted to the reception of love and wisdom only in their ultimate degree, it follows that they can receive neither rationality nor liberty. As there is no superior region in their souls by which to examine what enters by their senses, they cannot think rationally; and as love or spiritual heat flows into their souls only in one



degree, and this the lowest, (in their souls) there can be no antagonism between a higher and a lower good; and therefore, they do not possess the freedom of resisting or perverting the divine influx. In place of the understanding they have what is called instinct, which is a sort of innate knowledge, administering to the appetites, which are with them in place of the will. These appetites are their motives of action, effecting the ends of nourishment, protection and shelter, self-preservation, and reproduction. To each of them, there is added a corresponding form of instinct, or instinctive knowledge, by which the animal is enabled to gratify its desires under different circumstances. As the soul of man is capable of development, so also is the soul of beasts; with this difference, however, that man by the opening of the different degrees of his soul, is capable of growing in height as well as in breadth; whilst the beast can only grow in breadth. The difference between a common and a high-bred horse, an ordinary and a well-trained dog, is the difference of more and less of the same quality. But the difference between a child and an intelligent man is, that in the former, only the last or lowest degree of the mind is opened, while with the latter not only the second, but even the highest or inmost degree of the soul may be opened, and he may thus receive life from God, in the first, second, and third degrees,

or in the degrees of effects, of causes, and of ends.

As man is endowed with the faculties of rationality and liberty, he is not born with any knowledge; it has all to be acquired. But the animal, being devoid of rationality and liberty, is born with all its instincts, or with all the instinctive knowledge necessary to enable it to gratify its natural desires. What is added to this by training is a mere matter of memory, made operative through the appetites, and corporeal sensations.

With man, the understanding may be elevated above the will, to the improvement of the quality of both; but with the beast, the understanding or its analogue, is under the dominion of the will; or, in other words, its instinctive knowledge is altogether at the service of its appetites and desires. Animals ever act in conformity with the laws inscribed upon their nature; the appearance of morality and rationality sometimes exhibited in their conduct, is owing to the unperverted condition of that nature, and their following their innate and orderly instincts. These instincts never change, and never deceive them; and the animal remains on the level of the knowledge into which it is born, because not being possessed of reason, it has not the power of analytic thought.

But man, having life in three discrete de-

grees, can think that he wills, or does not will a certain thing; that he knows, or does not know it; that he understands it; and that he loves, or does not love it; and in addition, he is capable of communicating this thought to others, or of giving it outward and intelligible expression. The beast, having life only in the last degree, is deprived of this power; it cannot be elevated in thought out of or above that degree; it is incapable of thinking *in successive order*; but only in a sort of *simultaneous order*, and this not in freedom, but in entire accordance with, and in strict subjection to the instinctive knowledge which corresponds with its appetites and the desires excited by them. It has no faculty or power which enables it to ascend from effects to causes, or from causes to ends. Wanting the capacity of analytical thought, it cannot compare or examine ideas of thought, judge of the lower by the higher, nor derive abstractions, nor give expressions to thoughts; it can but produce inarticulate sounds, according to the instinctive and innate knowledge of the affection that moves it. All the actions of beasts are thus the mere immediate effect of their appetites and desires, without any intermediation of rationality, and consequent freedom. As this is the order of their creation, and they are preserved in it by the power which created them, they are under the leading or impulse of an influx from the

spiritual world, operative by the heat and light of the material world which affect their material bodies, in which spiritual heat and light, or love and wisdom, take the form of appetites and instincts.

The merely sensual man, in whom the higher degrees of the soul are closed, differs from the beast only in this, that he is able to store his memory with the things he has learned, and to think and speak from these things ; this he is able to do by virtue of the faculty, common to all men, of understanding truth, provided there be a desire to understand. This faculty distinguishes man from the brute ; but many men by an abuse of it, degrade themselves below the beast.

As man, by virtue of the three degrees of his soul, can receive life in perfection, and indeed in the form in which it immediately proceeds from God, it follows that the interiors of his soul may be elevated to God, and be conjoined with Him ; and hence it is that he lives eternally. Not so with the beast ; for, as by virtue of its organization, it can receive life only in the ultimate degree, or in that of effects, its interiors cannot be elevated to God, nor be conjoined with Him ; wherefore a beast does not live after death.

In order to answer all the points raised by your objection, I ought to explain the origin of animals in the spiritual world. This origin, however, can be understood rationally only, when the mode of

existence of men-spirits is known. As we have not time now to enter upon the investigation of this subject, it will suffice for the present to say, that in the spiritual world, the objects surrounding the men-spirits are in the greatest harmony with their loves and tastes ; so much so, indeed, that they not only seem, but in reality are, the very embodiments of the affections and thoughts proceeding from spirits and angels. As there is no time and no space in that world, these objects are not fixed independently of the angels, but they change and vary with the state of their affections and thoughts. Such is the origin of animals in the other world. But, since life itself consists of affections and thoughts, it follows that these animals are not mere shades and phantoms, but appear as real to the angels and spirits as animals in this world appear real to man.

If your objection has compelled me to interrupt the course of my exposition of the spiritual world, it has at least had the double advantage of enabling us to examine one of the most important questions of philosophy, and of establishing by new arguments, not only that man is immortal, but also that he is the only being endowed with immortality.

## VIII.

Creation of the universe. — Questions on this subject. — Considerations on the Infinite. — God alone infinite. — The universe not created out of nothing, but out of God by emanation. — The universe distinct from the Creator. — The spiritual and the natural sun. — Theory of atmospheres. — Confirmations of this theory from modern science.

I HAD intended, my dear sir, to resume to-day my exposition of the spiritual world ; but as you have long manifested a desire to have an idea of the creation of the universe, and have again expressed it in your last letter, I must hasten to satisfy it. Besides, there is an advantage in the present treatment of this subject, as it will furnish you with additional means of forming a comprehensive view of the spiritual world. But do not expect a complete treatise ; this would require a volume. You desire to obtain only an idea of the creation ; I shall, therefore, give you no more than a sketch.

There is one question, however, which I must anticipate. You have, indeed, not yet asked it ; but you would certainly not fail to do so ; for it ever presents itself to the insatiable curiosity of man, when meditating upon the creation of the universe.

This question is :

*Can man know what God was, before the universe was created?*

You will agree at the outset, that to know what God was before the creation, can but little affect the happiness of man. What advantage could he derive from this knowledge, if it were possible for him to acquire it? None whatever. His curiosity, far from being satisfied, would only be augmented; and pursuing his investigations in this unfruitful field, he would reach after an understanding of God in his infinity; in other words, he would desire to be God; for, in order to comprehend God in his infinity, it would be necessary to be God. The infinite alone can comprehend the infinite.

There are, nevertheless, some spiritualistic philosophers, who imagine that after they have left this world, there will be nothing hidden from them; that they will know the how and the wherefore of all things. This is but one of the thousand errors of philosophy.

Yet, a little reflection upon the nature of man, will make it plain, that if any intelligent creature, whether man, spirit or angel could succeed in knowing all things, and, consequently, have nothing more to learn, his condition would be most unfortunate. This is not a paradox, but a truth, as I shall easily demonstrate, when we come to treat of the existence of man in the other world.

What I have just said on the subject of the *infinite*, applies equally to the *eternal*; for the eternal is the infinite in respect to *Existing*. It is therefore just as impossible for any created being to comprehend the eternity of God, as to comprehend the infinity of God.

Moreover, as man lives in this world, in the midst of space and time, there is always something of time in the idea which he forms of the eternal, just as there is always something of space in the idea which he forms of the infinite; and, as time exists only by the creation of the universe, it is therefore absolutely impossible for him to comprehend *what God was before time*, that is, *before the universe was created*.

The case with the angel is somewhat different, however; for although, being a creature, he cannot comprehend God either in his infinity, or in his eternity, he may, nevertheless, form some idea of eternity, because the idea of time has no existence with him, having been exchanged for the idea of state; and with the spirits and angels, eternity is not an eternity of time, but an eternity of states without the idea of time.

The question of eternity having led me to speak of the infinite, it will not be out of place to remind you of certain results, which are obtained by consulting mathematics on this point. If it is impossible for us, who are continually in space, to attain to a complete state of abstrac-



tion ; and if philosophical studies afford but feeble aid in our efforts to reach it, since their help is often but momentary, disappearing as soon as our thoughts return to the things of the world ; we shall find the case different with the exact sciences, the very essence of which consists in abstracting whatever may hinder the development of thought. Their replies, when interrogated, are ever clear and precise, and so exactly formulated, as to be easily impressed upon our understandings. Let us see what they say.

In the first place, it is a recognized principle, that the series of numbers is unlimited, for, no matter how great a number we may imagine, the addition of a single unit is sufficient to produce a still greater. The limits of the finite, or of space, therefore, cannot be determined by any efforts of the imagination ; should we add to a unit as many zeros as there are grains of sand in the sea, the result would not be infinite ; it would still be a number of which an idea might be formed, notwithstanding the impossibility of determining it. Hence is evident the *absolute impossibility of passing from the finite to the infinite, by way of continuity.*

Other incontrovertible proofs of this impossibility are obtained from the surprising results arrived at by introducing into the calculation the *sign of the infinite*. Two examples will suffice for our purpose.

Suppose two parallel lines, separated by a distance equal to that between the earth and the sun, or by any other imaginable distance. Let them be prolonged in thought as far as you please, they will constantly preserve this enormous distance without approaching each other a single hair's breadth in their whole course. This results from the very nature of these lines. But, let the sign of the infinite be introduced into the calculation, which amounts to an abstraction of space, and it will be seen that in spite of the enormous distance which separates them in space, they meet suddenly in the infinite, without having previously passed through an intermediate approximation.

Let us take, as a second example, a branch of the hyperbola and its asymptote, which, at a given point, have but the distance of a millimetre between them. Suppose these two lines to be prolonged as far as the imagination can reach. The calculation tells us that they will never meet, although at each step, notwithstanding the trifling distance intervening at the beginning of the course, the straight line continually approaches the curve. If you desire them to meet, you are obliged to introduce into the formula the sign of the infinite; whence it is evident, that in nature there is neither any thing infinitely small, nor infinitely large, and that the word infinite, in its true acceptation, cannot be applied to any created object.

And yet, it is said, that the study of mathematics leads man to materialism! It so leads him only whose heart, already corrupted, is deaf to the warnings of that science; and whose mind, already perverted, rejects the brilliant light it affords. Is it possible, indeed, to prove more clearly, that the infinite must not be confounded with the finite, nor, consequently, God with nature?

Mathematics, as you see, are far from deserving any reproach. If philosophy and theology, each in its own sphere, had developed this sublime question, instead of obscuring it by a mass of sophisms, there would not be so many materialists. Philosophy and theology, then, are at fault, and not a science so very rigorous, that when compelled to utter an untruth, it immediately exposes the fraud.

But, should it be objected, that the very examples we have furnished, prove that nature is without bounds, since it is impossible to determine them; we reply, what matter whether it be without bounds, if these examples afford proof most positive, that what is without bounds nevertheless preserves its finite quality, and differs absolutely from the infinite? What more can mathematics tell us? Nothing. But religious philosophy should have made itself master of these first data, and developed, instead of obscuring, them.

If this philosophy, starting on a basis of true principles, had said: God is Being itself, from whom and by whom all things exist; He is primitive Substance, and primitive Form; He alone is infinite; the universe was created by Him in order to be his image and the representative theatre of his glory, and it is for this reason, that the universe, as an image of the infinite, is without bounds or indefinite; if, I say, the philosophy of religion had used such language, and had shown that between the infinite and the indefinite there is the same difference as between the first cause and the effect, materialism or naturalism, would not have made such inroads in society.

If the universe, both as to its spiritual and natural parts, had not been separate and distinct from the infinite, it could not have had any existence; and it is precisely in order that it may have existence, that there is space and time in its natural part, and the appearance of space and time in its spiritual part. Without this, the objects of the natural world, and of the spiritual world, would neither have been distinct, nor varied, or, to speak with more exactness, there would not have been any objects, nor consequently any creation; all would have been confounded in the infinite.

I know very well, my dear sir, that you have no sympathy with naturalism; but as the occasion

offered, I thought it would not be out of place, before passing to the subject of creation, to show you that mathematics themselves lay down a distinction between God and the universe. These general considerations on the infinite, moreover, are not foreign to the subject which we are discussing, and cannot but prepare you better to comprehend the whole.

I come now to the creation; and shall first consider it under the following heads:—

1. Whence proceeds the Universe?
2. Could the Universe have been created, if God were not Very Man?
3. How has God-Man created the Universe?

I. *Whence proceeds the Universe?*

I have already said, that God did not create the universe out of nothing; this is one of those truths, which every man, endowed with sound reason, recognizes at once, because, beyond all doubt, it is impossible to make something out of nothing; for nothing is absolute negation; and from a negation no affirmation can proceed; between these two ideas, therefore, there exists a manifest contradiction.

To maintain that God formed the universe out of chaos, does not remove, but only complicates the difficulty; for it becomes necessary to say what chaos is, or out of what chaos itself was formed.

Finally, the universe did not create itself, since

it has been proved that God and the universe are absolutely distinct ; that one is the first cause, and the other the effect produced by this cause.

The universe must then, of necessity, have been created from a substance which is very substance, or substance in itself ; and this is Being itself, from which are derived all things that are : but as God is very substance or substance in itself, and consequently Being itself, it follows clearly that all existing things were created out of God and by God. *The Universe, therefore, proceeds out of God.*

It is so conformable to reason to think that the existence of all things is from God and from his *Being*, that many religious men are to be met with, who have had this thought, but who have rejected it for fear of being led to conclude the universe to be God, or the inmost of nature to be what is called God. This fear arose from the fact, that they thought from space and time, which are proper to nature ; and from the impossibility of comprehending creation without abstracting these two conditions inherent in nature.

Since the universe was created out of God, and by God, and nevertheless is not God, it follows necessarily that it must be an emanation of God.

This truth has also been partially seen by some philosophers ; but for want of knowledge of the theory of discrete degrees, these philosophers have fallen into the most egregious errors. Had

this theory been at their command, they would have known that these three degrees exist in all created things, and are in them as end, cause, and effect. They would have understood that material nature, in the work of creation, was but the last degree of the divine ray, and that this degree served to envelop and clothe the spiritual substances and forms which are in the two superior degrees. Of this I hope soon to convince you.

From the preceding we conclude that the universe comes forth from God; that it exists by emanation from his Being.

*II. Could the Universe have been created, if God was not VERY MAN?*

I have put this question in order to anticipate an objection, which you would doubtless have raised. You have not forgotten — for it is a point on which I strongly insisted, because of its importance — that I laid down the principle, in my fourth letter, that God is VERY MAN, and that we have the human form, because we were created in his image. As we are now treating of the creation of the universe, you would not fail to say to me: “Is it possible that God, being Man, could have derived the universe from Himself, and have given it its present form?” As this apparent impossibility would have aroused doubts in your mind, which could have been removed only by another letter, I preferred to show you at once,

not only that God, as Man, could create the universe, but also, that he could not have created the universe, if he were not Man.

The universe bears abundant testimony to the love and wisdom of him who created it; only Divine Love could have furnished all its substance, and only Divine Wisdom by imprinting upon it its own form, could have arranged so harmoniously all its parts. It is impossible, however, that love and wisdom should exist without a subject; and this subject is man: to separate these attributes from their subject, would be equivalent to saying that they are not. Can you conceive of wisdom independently of man? Do you not need to place it somewhere to give it a form? And what form could you give it, superior to that of man? What I have just said of wisdom, applies equally to love, for the form of wisdom is that of love, since love and wisdom are inseparable, and make a one like substance and form.

You may thus see how vain are the ideas of those who represent God, who is Love itself and Wisdom itself, otherwise than as *Man*, and who place the divine attributes elsewhere than in God-Man. If Divine Love and Wisdom were not in God-Man, and if the one did not constitute the substance, and the other, the form of God-Man; if these two essential principles of Deity were mere ideal entities, the universe could not have been created; for it is evident that the universe



must have been produced from love, and formed by wisdom.

If however, you should represent to yourself God-Man, as a man of this world, and if you should think of him from a mere natural idea, it would be impossible for you to comprehend how he, as Man, could create the universe, and all that it contains; but if you think of Him from a spiritual idea, abstracting space and time, you will be able to perceive, that God-Man could be present in all his work, and create it instantaneously; for the universe was not created from one space to another, nor from one time to another; but from a single cast. This is, moreover, sufficiently demonstrated by the laws of physics. The motions of the heavenly bodies are so dependent one upon the other, that the whole must necessarily have been arranged at once.

Is it not true that man, although his thought be in him, and although he remain in the same place, may nevertheless by this thought be present elsewhere, in any place whatsoever, and even in one most remote from him? Such also is the state of spirits and angels, even as to their bodies; for you know that they are men, and that their bodies are spiritual. When their thought is fixed upon a place, they are there in reality, and in their bodies, because spaces and distances, in the world which they inhabit, are appearances, and make one with the thought which proceeds

from affection. If, now, man, even in the natural world, may transport himself by thought wherever he pleases; and if, in the spiritual world, the man-spirit is wherever his thought may be, why refuse to admit, that God, who is **VERY MAN**, should have been able, as **Man**, to be present in the whole work of creation; He who in his quality of infinity, is the same in the first and in the last, in the largest and smallest objects; He who is in all spaces without space, and in all times without time; He who, consequently, cannot be continuous, as is the inmost of nature, since he is not in space?

We should, therefore, have a false idea of the infinite, and mistake the true nature of God-Man, if, in thinking of his Human Body, we should attribute to him any permanent stature, whether large or small; for this would be thinking of him from space. But God-Man may, and ought to be, represented according to the appearances of space; for it is thus that, whenever he sees fit, he presents himself to spirits and angels, who then behold his Human Body in a form agreeing with the state in which they are, as to their reception of love and wisdom; and this visible presence of God is in perfect keeping with his continual omnipresence in the universe which he governs.

Creation may thus be comprehended, if space and time are removed from the thought. Divest yourself of these as much as possible, and you

will see, that there is no difference between what is greatest and least in space. You will not be able to entertain any other idea of the creation of the universe, than of the creation of each individual part of the universe; you will comprehend, that the diversity among created things, arises from the fact, that there are infinite things in God-Man, and indefinite things in the first proceeding from God, i.e., in the spiritual sun; and that these indefinite things exist in the created universe as in an image. Hence the impossibility of finding in any place one thing perfectly like another; and hence the indefinite variety of objects presented to our view.

*III. How did God-Man create the Universe?*

We have seen, that God did not create the universe from one space to another, nor from one time to another, but at a single cast, and that the universe is an emanation of the Deity.

But in order to enable you to understand better the important subject under consideration, I shall have recourse to analogy, and proceed from the known to the unknown; for experience sufficiently testifies, that human reason does not acquiesce in what one desires it to admit, without a previous perception of the how and the wherefore.

As man was created in the image and after the likeness of God, who is Very Man, by directing our examination to man, we may discover by

analogy, how God created the universe. It is now generally admitted by science, that a sphere of natural emanations continually proceeds from the body of man, and also from the body of animals; from trees, fruits, flowers and even from metals. This sphere, composed for the most part, of aëriform, and consequently invisible fluids, is more intense than would at first thought be believed, and extends over a great distance. The insensible transpiration through the skin, which is so voluminous and surprising, may give an idea of the intensity of this sphere; and the emanations which affect our sense of smell, may show how susceptible of development it is. Man, therefore, may be represented as surrounded by an ocean of aëriform fluids, emanating from his own body.

All these emanations, however invisible, are evidently material; but as man, in this world, is both material and spiritual, that is, as he has both a natural and a spiritual body, and these two bodies are connected by the laws of analogy, there must also continually emanate from the spiritual body of man a spiritual sphere, analogous to the material sphere encompassing his natural body. A simple examination will make this evident.

When it is known that affections and thoughts are, in reality, spiritual substances and forms, it becomes clear that if a spiritual sphere emanates from man, it can consist only of affections, and

of the thoughts derived from them, and which constitute their forms. You may now easily convince yourself that such a sphere exists around every man. For this purpose, it will be sufficient to direct your attention to the remarkable phenomena of sympathies and antipathies.

If two persons who never met before, and do not even know each other by name, at their first meeting feel a mutual sympathy, the reason is, that their spiritual spheres are homogeneous, and instantaneously harmonize; if, on the contrary, they feel an antipathy which they cannot explain, it is because their spiritual spheres are heterogeneous, and repel one another.

How many other phenomena, still more extraordinary, might be explained by means of these spheres, and thus serve to confirm their existence! But it would lead us away from our subject to examine these phenomena now; we shall investigate them after you will have acquired a more thorough knowledge of the spiritual world; for the present it may suffice, to have established the existence of spiritual spheres.

I shall here add, that the natural and spiritual spheres surrounding man, correspond to one another, as all natural objects correspond to spiritual objects; that they are not the man, as you may very easily convince yourself, but that they derive their existence from man, and make one with him only in this respect, that being derived

from his two bodies, there is an agreement between them and man ; that, as the one derives its existence from all the parts of the natural body, and the other from all the parts of the spiritual body, they are continually supplied by natural and spiritual substances emanating from those sources ; that the substances contiguous to these bodies, are continually put into activity by the two sources of living motion, the heart and the lungs ; that these contiguous substances communicate their activity to those surrounding them, these again to others, and so on step by step ; so that the farther the substances are removed from those contiguous to the two bodies of man, the less activity they receive.

If now, we ascend from the creature to the Creator, we shall no longer experience any difficulty in comprehending that God-Man could derive the universe from himself, without the universe being thereby confounded with him.

It is very evident, that if man, who was created in the image of God, is surrounded by a sphere of emanations, it is, because God, who is **VERY MAN**, is himself surrounded by a sphere of emanations. By these emanations from God-Man, was the whole universe constituted in its spiritual as well as natural parts, and by these is it continually vivified.

The first sphere proceeding from God, in his work of creation, is the spiritual sun, in the

centre of which he resides, as the infinite, eternal, invisible, and unapproachable Being. Considered thus in his very essence, it is said that no one can see God and live; but I have told you, and soon you will rejoice in the conviction, that God created man to love him, and to be loved by him in return, and that to satisfy his love, he actually rendered himself visible and approachable.

As the spiritual sun is the sphere contiguous to God, it is no more God, than the emanations forming the spiritual sphere, contiguous to man, are man. This is an additional proof of the important truth, that the universe proceeds from God by continuity, and not by contiguity, and that when the true principles are known, it is impossible to confound nature with God.

Through the medium of the spiritual sun the universe was created, and through the same medium it subsists. The substances composing this sun are continually put into activity by the two sources of the only life, the heart and lungs of God-Man, the inexhaustible sources of the Divine Love, and the Divine Wisdom. The first proceeding from God, is thus a centre of life; its heat is love, the beginning of all affections, and its light is wisdom, the source of all thoughts.

At the very moment when the spiritual sun was created, God by this spiritual sun created the sun of our world; so that in the work of

creation, God was the first end, the spiritual sun the second end or the cause, and the natural sun the ultimate end, or the effect; God being as a soul to the spiritual sun, and this again being as a soul to the natural sun. This latter is a permanent focus of the subsiding rays of the spiritual sun, in which their spiritual fire produces, by correspondence, pure or elementary natural fire; which is to the natural, what love is to the spiritual world, the essential active principle. Imparted to the natural from the spiritual sun in the very act of creation, it enters into its every constituent part, and continues to flow in from that source, in the continued act of preservation, which is but a perpetual creation. By virtue of this first active principle, and its perpetual supply from the spiritual sun, the natural sun has its correspondent activity, which is put forth in the emission of natural heat and light. By these two suns, the one purely spiritual, radiating spiritual heat and light, or love and wisdom; and the other purely material, radiating purely material heat and light; were produced all things existing in the spiritual world, and in that part of the material universe which comprises our solar system.

I have thus far spoken of two principles, the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom of God; but wherever there is love and wisdom, there must needs be a third principle containing the



two; this may be called use. For what, indeed, is love, unless there be something that is loved? This something that is loved is use; and because use is what is loved, and produced by wisdom, it follows that use is the continent of wisdom and love. These three, love, wisdom and use follow in order according to discrete degrees, and the last degree is the complex, continent and basis of the prior degrees. Hence it may appear that these three, the Divine of love, the Divine of wisdom, and the Divine of use are in God, and are God in essence.

Now, as these three, love, wisdom and use, are in God, and are God; and as He, such as He is in himself, and in his sun, cannot present himself to any angel or man, He therefore presents himself by such things as may be received — He presents himself as to love by heat, as to wisdom by light, and as to use by the atmosphere. The reason why God presents himself as to use by the atmosphere is, because the atmosphere is the continent of heat and light, as use is the continent of love and wisdom: for the heat and light which proceed from the Divine sun, cannot progress in nothing, or in emptiness, but in a continent which is their subject; and this continent we call atmosphere, which surrounds the sun, receives him in its bosom, and conveys him to the most distant parts of the spiritual universe.

As in the spiritual world, spiritual heat and

light, and spiritual atmospheres proceed from God, by the spiritual sun, so in the natural world, natural heat and light, and natural atmospheres proceed from the natural sun; the power of emitting natural heat and light, and of generating natural atmospheres, however, being derived to the natural from the spiritual sun, as I have stated above. The spiritual sun has thus two areas on which to display its energies; in the first its effects are all spiritual, in the second they are all natural. In the first it acts by means of spiritual heat and light, and spiritual atmospheres, and in the second by means of natural heat and light, and natural atmospheres.

The use of the atmosphere in serving as a continent to interior principles is admitted by science; for even the simplest notions of physics show, that beings, in order to have individual existences, in addition to the substances and forms which constitute them, need encompassing atmospheres, which acting as compressing forces, retain each substance in its form. Besides, it is well known, that in order to act with efficacy, the heat and light of the natural sun must be tempered by the atmospheres through which they pass. As the spiritual world contains objects which correspond to those contained in our world, analogy shows that each spiritual substance can be retained in its form only by spiritual atmospheres, and that love and wisdom, which are the

heat and light of the spiritual sun, in order to act with efficacy must be tempered by these atmospheres. It is thus established *a posteriori*, as well as *a priori*, that the first emanations proceeding from the spiritual sun, and from the sun of our world, were of a gaseous or atmospheric nature.

In treating of the atmospheres proceeding from the spiritual and the natural sun, I speak of them in the plural, because, in reality, there are several in either world. You know that astronomers admit the existence of an ether, a substance more subtle and pure than the atmospheric air, which begins where the common atmosphere ceases; we go further, and say that there exists another more subtle, and purer atmosphere than the ether. This, indeed, appears from the doctrine of degrees, the key that opens the door to the hidden causes of things, and which teaches that in every thing there are discrete degrees, related like end, cause, and effect; or like anterior, posterior, and ultimate; that each degree is distinguished from the other, by a proper integument; that all the degrees, at the same time, are distinguished by a common covering; that this common integument communicates with the interior, and the inmost things, and that the communication between the degrees produces a conjunction, and combined action, of all the component parts of a body. The muscle in animals is composed of

moving fibres, and the moving fibres of blood-vessels and nervous fibres; the nerve is a compound of fibres, themselves formed of fibrils; in vegetables there are assemblages of filaments in a triple order; in metals and stones also there are accumulations of parts in a trinal order.

Since all the visible bodies of nature are in this trinal order, the case must be the same with the natural atmosphere; and as every thing in this world is an effect corresponding to a cause in the spiritual world, it follows that there must be an analogous arrangement of atmospheres in the spiritual world.

You will notice that I speak of an "analogous" arrangement of atmospheres in the other world, but not of an identical one. There are, indeed, three spiritual atmospheres to which the three natural atmospheres exactly correspond, by which they are animated and vivified, and enabled to act as divine means in the creation of worlds. But these three spiritual atmospheres belong to the ultimate degree in the spiritual world, or to that of effects, and there are other atmospheres interior to these belonging to the degrees of causes, and of ends. It is important that you should know this, for it will enable you to obtain a rational view of the organization of the human mind, and of heaven, with its relation to hell.

There are thus spiritual atmospheres proceeding from the spiritual sun, and natural atmos-

pheres proceeding from the natural sun ; which are severally distinguished from each other according to the three discrete degrees. The natural atmospheres, in themselves, are dead, because proceeding from a sun which is pure fire ; but the spiritual atmospheres are living, because proceeding from a sun which in its essence is love ; all life, therefore, is derived to the natural atmospheres from the spiritual atmospheres to which they correspond. The atmospheres in both worlds decrease by continuous degrees, in progressing towards their extremes ; and as they thus decrease they become denser and more inert, and at length reach such a degree of density and inertness, as to lose their atmospheric form, and to become substances at rest ; and in the natural world they become fixed substances, such as are on earth, and are called matter.

From this origin of substances at rest in the spiritual world, and of fixed substances or matter, in the natural world, it follows, *first*, that these substances and this matter are also of three degrees ; *secondly*, that they are held in connection by the surrounding atmospheres ; and *thirdly*, that they are qualified for the production of the uses of creation. In the case of material substances, therefore, their inmost is sustained and contained by the aura or the purer ether, their interior by the ether proper, and their exterior by the air or common atmosphere.

Thus, nothing exists, except from an anterior, and at last from a First. This First is the Sun of the spiritual world ; and the First of this Sun is God-Man. Any attempt to explain the creation of the Universe, upon any other basis than that of a procession by successive intermediates, from a First, can but result in the setting up of incoherent hypotheses, sustained by reasoning from effects, disconnected from their causes.

This general view of the creation, as far as it concerns this world, is confirmed by recent discoveries of science.

Chemistry has proved the possibility of reducing solid bodies to the gaseous state, whence it results reciprocally, that gases can pass into the solid state.

Newton found the origin of all that exists in ethereal matter ; and according to La Place, the greatest mathematician of our age, —

“Only a fluid of immense extent, could have given birth to the planets ; and this fluid, at first encircled the sun as an atmosphere ; the planets of our system, as well as their satellites, were formed on the successive limits of this atmosphere, and by the condensation of the zones which it must have abandoned upon receding.” — *Exposition of the System of the World*, Book V. chap. vi.

Cuvier thus remarks upon the assertion of La Place : —

“The conjecture of M. de La Place, that the materials of which our earth is composed, must at first have been elastic, and successively, upon cooling must have assumed a liquid consistency, and finally a solid, is greatly strengthened by the recent experiments of M. Mitterlich, who compounded several mineral specimens, which occur in the composition of the primitive rocks, from their ingredient parts, and caused them to crystallize by the fire of blast furnaces.” — *Discourse upon the Revolutions of the Earth*, p. 11.

Future progress in the cultivation of the natural sciences will be found to contribute additional confirmations to this theory of Swedenborg on the material creation.

As to the account of creation, given in the Book of Genesis, it will be sufficient to read the record of Moses, in order to be convinced that it has no reference to the material creation. I have told you that I am a Christian in the widest acceptation of the true meaning of the word; and have, therefore, the greatest reverence for the Bible, and my reason accords with my heart, in telling me that this Book is the Word of God. Some day I hope to enable you to share my conviction on this important point, by demonstrating to you, that the numerous contradictions which occur in the Bible, are only apparent; and are satisfactorily explained, when we come into possession of the key which unlocks the inexhaustible treasures it contains. For the present, how-

ever, I shall content myself with the remark, that whilst apparently treating of the things of this world, the Bible, in reality, treats only of spiritual things, and the first chapter of Genesis speaks solely of the spiritual creation of man, i.e., of his regeneration.



## IX.

The idea of God-Man necessary to an understanding of the creation of the universe. — An indefinite number of material suns correspond to the one infinite spiritual sun. — The flux of nature and of spirit. — Image of man in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. — Creation of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms. — A knowledge of the spiritual world attainable by means of a knowledge of man. — Formation of man. — Tripartition of the human mind. — Correspondence of the human mind to heaven. — Two kingdoms and three heavens in the spiritual world.

IT is extremely gratifying, my dear sir, to learn that my last letter has had the effect of rendering familiar to your mind the idea of God-Man, and that you no longer experience any repugnance to the thought of the Creator under a human form. This is a great step in advance, and will largely aid in diminishing, and finally removing the difficulties that ordinarily beset the path of one who undertakes to investigate spiritual subjects, in the consideration of which every thing depends upon the idea one forms of God. If this idea is just, the bonds which unite together God, the Universe, and Man may readily be seen, and the whole system of the world be made plain; but, if it is false, all efforts put forth in this direction will prove fruitless, however earnestly applied. This truth will enable us to

account for the fact, that whilst philosophers have found it impossible to form a rational conception of the Creation of the Universe, the disciples of the New Church have met with little or no difficulty in grasping the subject.

Spiritualistic philosophers represent God as a pure spirit, or rather as an ideal being; for in their view, a spirit has neither substance nor form. With so vague a notion of the Deity, who is the Creator, how can they form a rational conception of his work,\* the Creation of the Universe? Every superstructure needs to be reared upon a base; and what base have they on which to rest their ideas? The connection between first and second causes and their effects is unknown to them; and the hypotheses which they heap up, one upon another, but manifest the impotence of their attempts.

With the admission into the mind of the true idea of God as Man, however, the impossibility of forming a rational conception of the Creation disappears. God Himself is the basis, as He is the Centre of the Universe; He is the infinite, eternal Being in a Human Form; He is the *Very Man*, the Archetype from whom have emanated all things constituting the two worlds. The human mind readily seizes and rests upon this central support; and representing to itself the Deity, surrounded by a radiant sun, diffusing everywhere spiritual heat and spiritual light, or love and

wisdom, beholds spiritual atmospheres forming around this sun, the one proceeding from the other, and conveying the heat and light that fill them, to the uttermost bounds of their extension ; sees these atmospheres, ceasing to be fluids, become substances at rest, and form the abodes of spirits ; and finally, beholds the same things conjointly effected in the material sphere, around our sun, by the force of expansion, which it derives from the spiritual sun. For all these facts it can account, as soon as it knows, that the heat and light of our sun are conveyed by the natural atmospheres even to the outer limits of our planetary system ; and that, according to recent discoveries of science, the formation of the planets is owing to a fluid of immense extent. Thus it acquires the conviction, that the universe is a work which continues from the Creator even to the last objects of creation, and that therefore, God-Man, the common centre, holds it suspended, puts it into activity, and governs it as one coherent whole. Resting upon this central idea, the mind incurs no danger of confounding God with the universe, and the spiritual with the natural ; for, from the doctrine of degrees, it may know that the first proceeding, and the subsequent or posterior proceedings, co-exist in their order in the farthest removed, or in ultimates, in the same manner as the end and cause co-exist in the effect. This opens it to the idea of God as the all in all ;

as the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite and eternal ; and no less, to an idea of the order according to which God-Man, from his love and by his wisdom, disposes all, provides all, and governs all.

And observe, that when an idea of God has thus been formed, it cannot be said of him that he is here, or that he is there, for he is in the inmost of every thing. He is really in the inmost of our hearts ; there we must seek him, and there we shall find him.

Do not forget, however, that God, his first proceeding, and his subsequent proceedings, are not only *in*, but also *around*, these ultimates, just as the end and the causes are not only *in*, but also *around*, the effects which they produce ; this is what I illustrated to you in a former letter, by the example of the sculptor and the statue. Thus, although the spiritual world, like God, is in our interiors, it nevertheless also presents itself to our eyes as around us, when the soul is freed from the bonds which fetter it in this world. If this were not so, the soul, absorbed in God, would have no enjoyment but for itself ; which would be a mere selfish enjoyment, and opposed to the very essence of love, or of God ; whilst by means of this external manifestation, it may love out of itself, reflecting, by its own likenesses, the love it receives from the Deity. The blessedness of eternal life, moreover, consists in a reciprocal

communication of love. To love his images, is to love God.

After the general survey of the theory of creation, presented in my last letter, I am prepared to resume my sketch at the point where I left it, and also to answer an objection you offer; which I shall do before I proceed to my subject. You cannot see the analogy existing between one spiritual sun, and the immense number of natural suns, of which modern astronomy informs us; and you remark, that true analogy, seems to require that there should be but one natural sun, to correspond to one Spiritual Sun.

This objection is thus answered. In the spiritual sun there is an infinite store of love and wisdom, or of spiritual heat and light, sufficient to animate the spiritual world in its whole extent, and likewise the natural world. As every thing natural is subject to the laws of space and time, and therefore measurable, and as our natural sun has actually been measured by modern astronomers, it is readily seen that one natural sun, which may be compassed by measurement, cannot be the total, and therefore adequate natural expression of the infinite Spiritual Sun. Such an expression is attainable only correspondentially, by the indefinite number of suns scattered through the immensity of space, which appear as stars in the night-time. Similar is the case in regard to man; one finite human being would be

an inadequate finite expression of the Divine Love; for one finite human being is incapable of receiving the infinite Love of God-Man. An approximately adequate reception of the Divine Love requires an indefinite number of human recipient subjects. And for a reason evidently derivable from the foregoing, it is clear that the quality of each natural sun, must differ from that of every other natural sun, so that there may be afforded by all a somewhat adequate representation of the quality of the infinite Spiritual Sun.

In my last letter I called your attention to the activity of two mediate powers in the creation of the natural world; the one being the natural atmospheres which convey natural heat and light, and the other the spiritual atmospheres, which in their essence are love and wisdom. The former or natural atmospheres, as was stated, are in the flux of nature, and the latter, or spiritual atmospheres, in the flux of Spirit. Mathematicians, Astronomers and Physicists, by their investigations into the powers of nature, have demonstrated and explained the flux of nature, and have shown that when these powers subside in matter, they present angular and circular forms, whilst in their active state they describe curves of a higher or lower order. The flux of nature, is therefore essentially geometric, and its quality is especially manifested in the courses and revolutions of the heavenly bodies.

Totally different is the flux of the spiritual atmospheres. They are continents of spiritual heat and light, which in their essence are love and wisdom. But, since it is impossible to conceive of love and wisdom apart from man, as I set forth in my last letter, they must be regarded as tending ever towards the development of the human form. While, therefore, the tendency of the natural atmospheres is towards angular and circular forms, this being derived to them from the natural suns, the spiritual atmospheres must tend to the production of the human form, or of man ; such a conatus being implanted in them from the Spiritual Sun, which is the first emanation of God-Man, who is in its midst. But, inasmuch as each natural atmosphere is animated by a corresponding spiritual atmosphere, there is also a tendency inscribed upon the former from the latter, to produce natural substances, serviceable and useful for the growth and development of man.

I had occasion, in some of my earlier letters, to present the idea that creation in all its parts, offers a more or less distinct image of the Creator ; and also, that the form of the Creator, which is the human, may be traced throughout the entire animal kingdom. I shall now show, that a tendency to the human form can likewise be discovered in the vegetable, and even in the mineral, kingdoms.

The phenomena of plant life present many

resemblances or analogies to those which are observed in the animal kingdom ; as that plants spring from seeds, in which there is a sort of prolific principle ; that they produce a germ, like an infant, a trunk like a body, branches like arms, a top like a head, bark like the skin, and leaves like lungs ; that they grow with age, and afterwards blossom as maidens before their nuptials, and after blossoming, expand as it were wombs or eggs, and bring forth fruit as foetuses, in which are contained new seeds, wherefrom, as in the animal kingdom, new proliferations or fructifications of the same species or family take place. The resemblance of the mineral kingdom to man appears only in the endeavor to produce forms, which have such a relation, viz. the forms of the vegetable kingdom ; and thus of contributing mediately to the formation of man ; for as soon as a seed falls into the lap of the earth, it cherishes it, and offers it food from all sides, so that it may germinate, and present itself in a form representative of man. That such an endeavor is also in its dry parts appears from flowers in mines, produced there from minerals and metals, where there are cavities ; and also from the forms of the particles of snow, which are emulous of plants.

The reason why all objects in nature tend to the human form, and contribute more or less directly to the growth and sustenance of man, is



because the end of the creation of the universe is the formation of a heaven of angels; and because a heaven of angels is the end, it follows that men or the human race are likewise the end, for heaven is composed of them. All created objects, consequently, are mediate ends, and they are useful objects or uses in the order, degree, and respect, in which they have relation to man, and thus to the Creator. It follows from this, that the sun, the atmospheres, and the earths, are only means to ends, and that the ends of creation are those things which are produced from the Creator, as a sun, by the atmospheres from the earths; which things are all the objects of the vegetable kingdom throughout its entire extent, all those of the animal kingdom, and finally the human race, and from them the angelic heaven.

Creation proper, therefore, or the creation of the animal and vegetable kingdoms and of man, is effected altogether by the agency of spiritual powers, the natural sun only furnishing materials wherewith the spiritual may be clothed. Things produced in nature by the agency of these spiritual powers, are either last, middle, or first. Things last are of the mineral kingdom, which are different matters of stony, saline, oily, and metallic substances, covered with earth, consisting of vegetable and animal matter, reduced to finest powder. In these lies hidden the end, and also the beginning of all the uses which are from life.

The end of all uses is in the endeavor to produce them, and the beginning is in the force acting from this endeavor. Things middle are of the vegetable kingdom; such as grasses, herbs, plants, shrubs, and trees of every kind. Their uses are for the individuals of the animal kingdom, for the imperfect, as well as for the perfect; these they nourish, delight, and vivify; they nourish their bodies with their matter, delight their senses with their taste, smell, and beauty; and vivify their affections. The endeavor to do so is in them from life. Things first are of the animal kingdom; the lowest being called worms and insects; the middle, birds and beasts; and the highest, men. For in each kingdom there are lowest, middle, and highest; the lowest for the use of the middle, and the middle for the use of the highest; thus the uses of all created things ascend from the last to man, who is the first in order.

In addition to the influence of the spiritual sun through the spiritual atmospheres, by which material substances, in themselves angular and circular, are moulded into likenesses of animals and plants, there are two mediate causes in nature, by which all production and formation within its limits, are effected; these mediate causes are the heat and light of the natural sun. By them the conatus or endeavor, existing in natural objects from the spiritual, is stirred into

life, and becomes an active power even in the most minute things of nature. This power is derived to them by the natural sun, from the Spiritual Sun, which it serves in a subordinate capacity. That not only plants, but also animals, are ruled by this influence from the natural sun, is very evident from the fact, that when the earth, on which animals dwell, stands in such a position to the sun, as to receive his heat as well as his light, as in spring, animals have their rutting time; but when the earth approaches its autumnal position and the heat of the natural sun begins to fail, their stimulus to procreation ceases. But the freedom from any such influences experienced by the human family, renders it apparent that man receives the heat and light of the spiritual sun not only mediately through the natural sun, like the animal, but also immediately from God himself.

On the showing, made in the beginning of this letter, that the tendency of all things spiritual, and therefore also of the spiritual atmospheres, is to the human form, as the tendency of the natural atmospheres is to the production of angular and circular forms, I hold it to be conclusive, that a knowledge of man is the best means of obtaining a clear understanding of spiritual things, and thus of the Spiritual World. To this end I will now proceed to unfold our idea of the formation of man, and of the organization

of his spirit, and will then apply this to the organization of the Spiritual World.

It is one of the principal tenets of our philosophy, or theology, as you have already seen, that man was created in the image and after the likeness of God — that he is man, because God himself is **VERY MAN**. But man cannot be in the image of God and after his likeness, unless God is in him, and is man's life from his inmost. As God is Divine Love and Divine Wisdom, and these two are essentially Himself, in order that He might dwell in man, and give life to him, it was necessary that He should create him with two receptacles, or dwelling-places, the one for love, and the other for wisdom. These two receptacles are called will and understanding; the receptacle and dwelling-place of love being called will, and that of wisdom, understanding.

The life of man in its beginnings is in the brain, and in its derivations in the body; in the beginnings it is in its first things, and in the derivations in what is produced and formed from these first things. By life in the beginnings is meant the will and the understanding.

Anatomy demonstrates the beginnings of the life of man in the brain. It tells us of two brains, of a larger and a lesser; it points out their continuance from the head into the spine; shows them to consist of two substances, called the cortical and medullary substances; and lays bare

the innumerable little glands which compose the cortical, and the multitude of small fibres which compose the medullary substance. As the glandules of the former are the heads of the little fibres of the latter, science demonstrates them to be their beginnings. Commencing in them and proceeding from them, these fibres successively colligate themselves into nerves, and as such descend to the organs of sense in the face, and to the motory organs of the body, which they form. And this cortical or glandular substance constitutes the surface of the one brain, the cerebrum, and of the striated bodies which compose the prolonged marrow, or *medulla oblongata*; also the middle of the lesser brain, or cerebellum, and of the spinal marrow; whilst the medullary or fibrillous substance commences everywhere from the former, and proceeding thence forms the nerves, the chief constituents of all parts of the body. All this is matter of ocular demonstration.

It thus appears that the beginnings of life are at the starting-points of the fibres, which are little glands, and which in multitude may be compared to the number of the stars in the Universe, whilst the number of the little fibres proceeding from them, may be likened to that of the rays sent forth from the stars, and conveying their heat and light to the earth.

The texture of the members, organs and viscera

of the human body as to form, is derived from the fibres, originating in the brains, and is fixed by substances and matters such as exist in the earths, and from the earths in the air and ether. This fixation is effected by means of the blood, the necessary supply of which, and the consequent subsistence of all things of the body in their forms, and in the exercise of their functions, requires the introduction of material food into the body.

It may be interesting, in this connection, to notice the complete adaptation of the different parts of the external organism of the body to the reception of the influences of the world around it, the observation of which led the ancients to call the human body a microcosm or little world. We find the ear so constructed as to respond to every modification of the air, and the lungs to the nature of its pressure; whilst the outer part of the body is kept in form by its circumpressure. The eye we discover to be fitted to accord with the nature of ether and light; and the tongue to be adapted to the reception of dissolved particles of matter. This latter organ also, in connection with the lungs, the windpipe, the larynx, the glottis, the throat and the lips, is so constituted as to modify the air and produce articulate sounds, or expressions of speech, and of feeling, or musical notes. The nostrils are formed for the sense of particles floating in the atmosphere; and the

touch, which is common to the whole body, for the changes of the atmosphere, or for the sense of heat and cold, also for the sense of liquids and of weight. The interior viscera, to which the common atmosphere cannot penetrate, are preserved in their connection and form by a more subtle air, the ether. And finally, we observe that all the arcana of mechanics, of physics, of chemistry and optics, are inscribed upon the human organism and applied to its functions and operations; thus affording us a clear demonstration of the truth, that universal nature conspires to the formation of the body of man.

We have now obtained an idea of that part of man, which corresponds to the natural atmospheres, and have not only seen this correspondence, but also how by means of it these atmospheres actually contribute to the formation of the body. Their aptitude to the performance of this use is derived to them from the spiritual atmospheres, by which they are animated. These latter, which belong to the degree of effects, enter into the composition of man's spiritual body, from which the natural body receives its form and shape. It thus appears that the external spiritual degree, or that of effects, extends with man from the extremities of his spiritual body to the very brains, wherein reside his will and understanding.

To the question, which will naturally arise in

this place, where are the two higher degrees of the human soul, by which man is distinguished from the animal? we reply, that they are in his will and understanding, and thus above the natural sphere, in which they appear only by correspondence. It is owing to the presence of these two superior degrees that the brain of man is human, and so much larger than that of animals, which has them not. In the very inmost of the higher of these two degrees, God dwells with man, surrounded by his Spiritual Sun, and animates the inmost degree of the human soul, or of the will and understanding; acting from this upon the next or interior degree, and from this finally upon the external will and understanding. This last degree is encompassed by the most subtle essences of nature, and in this form constitutes the beginnings of the visible brain, of which we have spoken.

Whether we say will and understanding, or mind, it is the same thing; for these two faculties together constitute man's mind. There is thus an inmost, an interior and an external mind in man, the last of which is clothed with substances from nature, and may be called the natural mind. The interior mind may be denominated spiritual, and the inmost, celestial.\* As both the spiritual

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\* In the future, instead of speaking of the inmost spiritual, the interior spiritual, and the exterior spiritual degrees, or the spiritual degrees of end, cause, and effect, I shall call them celestial, spiritual, and natural.



and the celestial minds are above nature, we sometimes comprise the two under one term, and call both together man's spiritual mind, in contradistinction to his natural mind which is within nature. In each of these minds there is an inmost, an interior and an external.

To have a clear understanding of this tripartition of the human mind, we must have a knowledge of the relation existing between the exterior and the interior of discrete degrees. In the first place, observe, that we must distinguish between the interior of continuous, and the interior of discrete degrees. The former differs from the exterior of continuous degrees, not in kind, but simply in relative position; the difference being such as is noticed between the interior and exterior of the crust of the earth; of the fleshy part of an apple, or of the white of an egg. But the interior of discrete degrees differs from the exterior in quality, as may appear from the difference between the seed and pulp of an apple, and between the pulp and the skin; or from the difference between the pith or marrow and the woody fibre of a tree, and between the latter and its bark. The relation of the exterior and interior of discrete degrees will, however, be most clearly shown by a reference to the human body; as for example, by the muscle, which is a fascicle of moving fibres, and this again of fibrils. The muscle is a general composite of particular

fibres, and each particular fibre is a composite of least or single fibrils. The fibre is thus seen to be the interior of the muscle, and the fibril of the fibre; which illustrates this proposition of the doctrine of discrete degrees, that the exterior is the general, which is composed of the particulars of the interior degree, and that the interior is the particular, which is composed of the least particulars, or of the single things of the inmost degree. And when applied to the organization of the human mind, it gives us this result, that the external or natural mind consists of generals, which are composed of the particulars of the interior or spiritual mind; and that these particulars are composites of the least or smallest particulars of the inmost or celestial mind.

Now, since the human mind, as was shown above, is adapted to the reception of the Divine Love and Wisdom, and the recipient vessels are thus arranged in triple order, which is also the order of the influx of love and wisdom, we have a view of their perfect mutual adaptation; according to this it is provided, that the highest or third degree of the Divine Love and Wisdom is received into the inmost or celestial mind; the intermediate or second degree into the interior or spiritual mind; and the lowest or first degree into the external or natural mind. And from what has been said, it will be apparent likewise, that as Divine Wisdom proceeds from the highest

to the lowest degree, it becomes more general, and therefore less clear and distinct, or more obscure; and that the Divine Love in the same manner, grows less and less ardent and intense, or more cold.

During man's existence in the natural world, he is unconscious of this his endowment with degrees of mind, elevated above the natural sphere; he enters into the consciousness of it as he enters into the other life, when he comes into that degree, which has been opened in him.

It is evident that different degrees of the mind, may be opened in different individuals; and that the same degrees may be opened more or less interiorly in different persons. All men, however, begin their career of life at the same starting-point; for all are born into the external or natural degree. As they grow in knowledge they become interiorly natural; and by proper digestion and use of their accumulated knowledge they are rendered rational in a measure, and capable of having the highest natural degree of the mind opened in them. Most persons, at the present day, do not advance beyond this point, or indeed attain it; few have the spiritual degree opened in them, and still fewer the celestial degree; and with none are these degrees sensibly opened before they enter into the other life.

Each spiritual degree with man is opened according to his reception of Divine Love and

Wisdom from God. Divine Wisdom is received in the thought of his understanding, and Divine Love in the life of his will. Wisdom or truth alone does not open the spiritual degree, but wisdom and love combined; in other words, it is not sufficient for man to know truth; it must be lived and done, or applied to life, in order to effect the opening of the spiritual degree in him.

Those who receive the Divine Love and Wisdom in the lowest or external degree, and with whom the natural mind only is opened, after their departure from this life, become angels of the first or natural heaven. Those who receive them in the interior degree, and with whom the spiritual mind is opened, become angels of the second or spiritual heaven; and those who receive them in the inmost degree, and with whom the celestial mind is opened, become angels of the third or celestial heaven.

I have thus far treated of the three regions of the human mind, or will and understanding, as though love and wisdom were received in each of them in equal proportions. But this is not the case, for in the celestial mind love or good preponderates over wisdom, as on earth in summer heat prevails over light; and in the spiritual mind wisdom or truth preponderates over love or good, as in winter light prevails over heat. In the natural mind, also, in some cases, good or

love predominates, and the mind is therefore celestial-natural, and in others, truth or wisdom predominates, and the mind is therefore spiritual-natural. All men are thus divided into two general classes, according to their ruling or predominating dispositions; or, in other words, according as they live and act more from love in the will, or from truth in the understanding. In the former case, they are said to be of a celestial, and in the latter of a spiritual disposition; the one manifesting strength and intensity of will and action; and the other deliberation, thought, and study. The former possess quick, perceptive intellects, and evince great readiness of action, and power of execution; whilst the latter reach conclusions by reasoning, and wait upon the judgment to determine and direct the energies of the body. The one class belong to the celestial, and the other to the spiritual kingdom; according to and in that degree of the mind which is opened in them, and in which they are in the other world.

The celestial angels or those of the third heaven, breathe an ineffably purer and more living atmosphere than the angels of the lower heavens, and the objects surrounding them are immeasurably more beautiful. So also the angels of the spiritual or middle heaven live in a brighter and more transparent atmosphere than the angels of the first heaven, and the objects

surrounding them are in harmony with their interior nature. The atmosphere of the natural or lowest heaven, also, is much more excellent and invigorating, and the objects there are more beautiful and refined than those in the natural world, which offer but a gross representation of them, whilst our atmosphere is dense and sluggish when compared with that of this heaven.

As love is the predominating element in the highest or celestial heaven, the spiritual sun appears there glowing and ruddy from the intensity of the Divine Love. In the spiritual or second heaven, where wisdom is the prevailing element, the appearance of the spiritual sun is of dazzling whiteness and purity; the quality of its light being, however, more like that of the moon than of the sun. In the lowest heaven the presence of the spiritual sun is felt as generally diffused light, a thousand times more intense than the light of our sun in this world, and this light assumes a hue of ruddiness or whiteness to the eyes of the angels there, according as they are themselves of a celestial or spiritual quality. In the extreme parts of this heaven the spiritual sun is beheld as the moon in the night-time; the inhabitants not being able to bear a greater degree of spiritual light. The light of heaven is thus seen to decrease from the highest to the lowest degree, in the exact ratio of the decrease of love or spiritual heat.

If now we compare the organization of the spiritual, with that of the natural world, we discover this great and important distinction between them, that whilst the latter is composed of material parts and particles, in the former, men, or rather angels and spirits, are the composing units, without whom, it is evident, there could be no heaven, nor any spiritual world. In the natural world, man is in a certain sense subject to his material surroundings, being himself held and bound by the laws of space and time which are inherent in nature. But in the other life, the world surrounding angels and spirits, is dependent upon them for its appearance; changing its aspects as their states of affection and thought change; growing beautiful or deformed in correspondence to the quality of their life; and even disappearing when they go from one quarter to another. For this reason it is said that angels and spirits are the composing units of the spiritual world. And, since heaven in its higher and lower degrees is composed of angels, in whom the higher and lower degrees of the mind have been opened, it is clear that the relations existing between the three degrees of the human mind, must correspond to the relations existing between the three degrees of the heavens. These relations I shall examine in my next letter.

## X.

Synopsis of the organization of the heavens.—Relations between the heavens and the natural world.—Duration of the natural universe.—History of the fall of man.—Law of transmission by germs.—Action and Reaction.—Re-active power of man's natural mind.—Equilibrium between man's spiritual and natural minds.—Influx and Efflux.—Formation of an inverted natural mind in man.—Definition of angel and devil.—Organization of hell.—Three hells.—Two infernal kingdoms.—Definition of spirit.—The world of spirits.—Its use.

YOU say that you are becoming more and more interested in my exposition of the spiritual world. You admire the simplicity of the system,—how it all hinges upon the organization and form of man, which is the form of God. There are many points on which you desire to be further instructed, but you prefer to wait until I shall have finished my exposition. I will therefore proceed with my subject.

In my last letter I laid down the following points:—

*First*: Heaven is composed of angels.

*Secondly*: There are three heavens. The highest or third heaven is composed of angels, in whom the highest, or the celestial degree of the mind is opened. The second or middle heaven



is composed of angels in whom the second, or the spiritual degree of the mind is opened; and the lowest or first heaven is composed of angels in whom only the lowest, or the natural degree of the mind is opened.

*Thirdly*: In the highest or third heaven love is the prevailing element; in the middle or second heaven, wisdom, and in the lowest or first heaven, either love or wisdom, both in the lowest degree. The first heaven is therefore divided into two parts, the one in which love is the prevailing element being called the celestial-natural heaven; and the other in which wisdom is the prevailing element, being called the spiritual-natural heaven.

*Fourthly*: The internal or celestial parts of these three heavens, together form the celestial kingdom of God, and their external or spiritual parts together form the spiritual kingdom.

Now, as the relations between the three heavens and the natural world are the same as those existing between the three degrees of the human mind and the natural body of man, it is evident that a proper understanding of the latter will throw light upon the former.

You must bear in mind, however, that the natural world which corresponds to the three heavens, and which stands to them in the relation of a body to its soul, is not that world of nature which derives its origin from the natural sun, but

the world of men, which is commonly called mankind.

As there is a plenary correspondence between every thing in the natural world, and every thing in the spiritual world, and as every cause in the spiritual must produce a correspondent effect in the natural world ; as, further, the angels and spirits impress their likeness upon the objects of the spiritual world by which they are surrounded, it follows that the form of the world of nature is likewise determined in a general manner by the spiritual state of mankind. That such an influence is actually exerted by mankind upon nature, I shall have occasion to demonstrate, after having treated of the creation of the hells. You will then see that the form of the world of nature, i.e., of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, is determined by the existing state of mankind. For the present I will assume the existence of such an influence of mankind upon nature, as a part of the proposition, that mankind are the natural world corresponding to heaven, and that God through heaven and mankind governs the world of nature.

The human mind, as you will have seen, has three degrees ; an inmost, an interior, and an exterior degree ; the least particulars of the inmost or celestial mind being arranged into particulars in the interior or spiritual mind ; the particulars of this mind into generals in the external

or natural mind ; and these generals, finally, being clothed in the natural world with a correspondent natural garb, whereby they are rendered still more common or general. This natural garb is the natural body of man, wherein the three degrees of his mind rest and terminate.

This arrangement of the three degrees of the mind of man, illustrates the arrangement of the heavens, as the relation of those degrees to man's natural body, illustrates the relation of the heavens to mankind in general, which is their corresponding natural world. And, on the ground of this order, it is evident that thousands of the most minute or least particular forms of affection and thought existing with the angels of the inmost or celestial heaven, will appear as one form when presented to the minds of the angels of the interior or spiritual heaven ; and that a multitude of these particular forms, will appear as one general form to the angels of the exterior or natural heaven ; whilst the general forms of affection and thought of this heaven, are apprehended only in a most general way by man in the natural world. Again, the inmost mind being thus contained in the interior, and this in the exterior mind, and this last, finally, in the natural body ; it is clear that the celestial heaven must be contained in the spiritual, this in the natural, and the natural in mankind, which is thus the natural basis and continent of the

whole. The inmost degree of the human mind is indeed distinct from the degrees beneath ; but the love and wisdom received from God, being active and operative principles, would be dissipated in this degree, if they could not pass into the next or interior degree, and be received by it. The same is true of the light and intelligence of this degree, which, unless received by the next or lowest degree of the mind, would be dissipated ; as would also the intelligence and life of the last degree, if not received in the human body. These degrees of the mind, have therefore been so created, as to be successive forms of reception, resting upon the organs of the human body, as ultimate or last forms of reception, by which the mind communicates with the outward or natural world, and expresses or completes itself in speech and act.

The third heaven also, is distinct from the heavens beneath, but unless there was reception in the second heaven, its wisdom would be dissipated there ; in like manner unless the light and intelligence of this latter were received in the first heaven, and by this heaven finally in the natural mind with man, the intelligence of those heavens would likewise be dissipated. The heavens, therefore, are so formed by God, that one serves another for reception, and at length that mankind by its natural and sensual forms, serves for ultimate reception ; for what is Divine is

there in the ultimate of order, and passes into the world.

It is evident, therefore, that the heaven of angels is conjoined with the human race in such a manner, that the one subsists from the other, and that the angelic heaven without mankind, would be like a house without a foundation; for heaven closes with mankind and rests upon them. The case is the same with the individual man; the things of his will and understanding flow into his sensations and actions, and in these they terminate and have subsistence. If man had not these boundings and ultimates, the thoughts and affections of his spirit would be dissipated, like something unbounded, or like something without any foundation. Another consequence of the above, is, that when man passes from the natural into the spiritual world, which takes place at death, being then a spirit, he no longer subsists on his own basis, but upon the common basis, which is mankind.

A corollary of this position is, that the natural world, and thus mankind, will continue for ever; for if heaven without mankind is like a house without a foundation, it is evident, that the perpetuity of the human race and of the earth which it inhabits, must have been part and parcel of the original Divine plan in the creation of the universe.

Still another consequence of the preceding po-

sitions is, that heaven is in man, and being composed of angels, that there are angels in man. Hence the commonly received belief in the presence of guardian-angels. As long as man is in the natural body, he is utterly unconscious of every thing belonging to his spiritual body, thus also of the presence of angels with him; but he can see them, and converse with them, when the eyes of his spirit are opened.

I have thus far treated of the spiritual world and its connection with the natural world, in the primitive times, subsequent to the first creation of man. All things were then in order, and harmony prevailed throughout creation. This harmony, however, did not continue, but in process of time changes were introduced through the instrumentality of man. These I shall now discuss.

In my second letter, I set before you the object of God in creating the universe, and you have conceded that this object would not have been attained, had man not been created free to love God or not to love him; in other words, had he not been at liberty to conform to the laws of divine order, or to transgress them. From this it results, that the free will of man is itself one of the principal laws of this order; and that God, who never contravenes the laws which his wisdom has established, is careful not to break human free will, but has recourse to other means

of preserving the order of the universe, which man in his present state, is ever disposed to destroy.

Man being in the likeness and image of God, or, in other words, having been created a recipient of the love and wisdom of God, received by this very organization, a power of change, which became subversive by the abuse of his free will. So long as he freely applied, in his own life, the love and wisdom which he received from God, the order of creation was not changed by him, but when he opposed his own will to that of God, and trusted his own senses rather than the truth revealed to him from God, an antagonism arose between him and God.

Man's violations of the divine laws were at first very slight; for all things in the universe, both spiritual and natural, proceed by gradation; and as is well understood at the present day, man does not pass suddenly from a good to an evil extreme. The beginning of change, on the part of man, was but a desire, — the desire of leading himself, instead of suffering himself to be freely led by God, as formerly. This desire did not precipitate him into evil, but by so much as it was a desire in the human heart, and produced a thought in the human mind, which turned him away from God, it disturbed the perfect relation existing between the Creator and the creature. The disturbance once introduced, progressed by

slow degrees, until it finally produced that inversion of divine order, which is called the fall of man. The repugnance evinced by men of the world, to any mention of the fall, has not its origin in the denial of a primitive golden age, or of the corruption of the human race, but either directly or indirectly, in the absurdity of their early religious instructions on this subject. And it is not to be wondered at, that a healthy reason revolts at the teaching of the old theology, which makes a single fault of a single individual the sole cause of the condemnation of the whole race? Is this not to accuse God of injustice?

These remarks upon the fall, are but incidental; my object is to show, in a few words, that it was progressive, not instantaneous, and that it was a lapse of humanity in general, and not of a single individual. We shall examine this dogma more thoroughly hereafter.

There is one law of divine order, the existence of which you will very readily acknowledge; it is the law of transmission by germs. If agriculturists select the best grains to intrust to the ground; if breeders of cattle choose the healthiest and best formed animal for the propagation of a species, it is because the experience of all time has proved, that bodily defects are transmitted in increasing progression, from germ to germ. This law, which has been recognized by all good observers, applies equally to man's moral



and spiritual nature ; although the results of its operation are less manifest, owing to the power of concealing their desires and thoughts which men acquire from education, example, and long habit. It is, nevertheless, a fact that man is born with a propensity to the open and hidden faults of his parents and ancestors. I will enter more fully into this subject, when I come to treat of hereditary evil ; for this evil consists in the transmission of the evils and falsities, which accumulate from generation to generation, and not in the transmission of the fault of one man.

The men who had not, originally, the desire of being led by themselves, but who had merely conceived this desire during their life in the natural world, transmitted it to their children, according to this general law of order. Small and feeble with them, it gained strength in the succeeding generation, and although they were still good, the men of this generation failed to reach the standard of their fathers ; and the inclination to depart from the law of order having been thus engendered, and gathering force from generation to generation, the human race finally fell into evil.

Such is the history of the origin of evil, but in order to understand the changes it wrought in the spiritual organization of man and of the spiritual world, it is necessary to have a knowledge of the re-active quality of the natural mind.

Man, in common with all created objects, is held in connection and form by two forces, the one acting from without, and the other acting from within. I have alluded above to the fact, that the atmospheres preserve the body in connection, by a continual pressure or incumbence from without, or, in other words, by a force acting upon it; that the lungs are thus held by influx of the lowest atmosphere, or common air; and also the ear, an organ which is constructed so as to receive the modifications of this atmosphere. I have likewise stated that the middle atmosphere, or ether, performs the same use to the interiors, flowing in freely by all the openings of the body, and preserving the internal viscera in their forms, by a similar pressure and incumbence from without, and thus by a similarly acting force.

This atmosphere also holds in connection and form, the eye, that organ to which it serves as a medium, and which is adapted to receive its modifications.

Now, it is clear, that if there were no internal forces impelling and acting from within upon these external forces, so as to maintain an equilibrium, no created object could possibly subsist. Such internal forces, as may appear from what has been said in former letters, after having been first brought into operation in the divine work of creation, are continually put forth in the divine

work of preservation, which is but perpetual creation. They are therefore from heaven, and by heaven from God, and are thus real, living forces ; whilst the others, acting from without, are natural, and in themselves not living, because derived from nature, which is dead in itself. By means of the action and re-action of these forces, in and upon every natural object, its existence becomes a subsistence. In respect to animals, it is to be observed, that the operation of these forces being limited to but one degree, and this the lowest, they are unable to re-act upon them in the higher degrees, or upon the divine action in the inmost. Devoid of freedom and rationality, animals remain in the order of the life impressed upon them in creation. But the case with man is different. As you will recollect, his natural mind receives an integument or covering from the substances of external nature, which constitute the visible brain, the finest and purest essences of which so enter into the composition of that mind, as to cause it to consist of both spiritual and natural substances. Being in the lowest or ultimate degree, the natural mind encompasses and encloses the spiritual and celestial minds, and re-acts upon them. By virtue of this re-action it prevents their component parts from relaxing, escaping, and being dispersed ; as by the re-action of the various integuments of the human body, its viscera, or interior parts, are kept in place, and prevented from dispersion.

Now, this action and re-action takes place in the natural mind, because of its peculiar composition, which is derived in part from the substances of the spiritual world, which are in the flux of the spirit, and in part from the substances of the natural world, which are in the flux of nature; the former tending to the production of living human forms, and the latter to the production of dead material forms. Being in this manner, both the re-agent whereby human equilibrium is effected, and by virtue of its constitution, also, the plane on which it is effected, the natural mind is a part of that spiritual form, and indeed the last or lowest degree of it, which man takes with him into the spiritual world, and in which he introduces into that world those finest and purest essences of natural substances that enter into its composition. These natural substances serve there to bound and limit the life of the spirit; without them it could have no subsistence, and would be dissipated. By means of them, also, it is possible for angels and spirits to be adjoined to men on earth, and to perform their use of ministry to the human race; thus to have an ultimate ground or plane for their spiritual activities, and a foundation for their world. I may here observe, by the way, that in this presentation of the constitution of the natural mind, there lies an interior and most conclusive argument against the notion that angels were created

in the spiritual, and not in the natural world, and in favor of the doctrine that the human race, which has been created on the earth, is the semi-nary of heaven.

Since the action and re-action of which I have been treating, takes place in the natural mind, it is clear that this mind is subject to two opposite influences; heaven with its love and wisdom flowing in by the spiritual mind, and the natural world with its conditions and appearances, pressing in by the body and its senses. These two influences, acting and re-acting upon one another, serve to keep man in a state of equilibrium, or of freedom of determination and action. So far, then, as the natural mind simply re-acts upon the spiritual mind, it is in a state of co-action with the latter, and the man develops freely in the direction of the acting force, to the production of a quality of life in accordance with that which is present in this force. This development is accompanied by a constant gain of re-active power, producing constantly a more perfect co-agency, whereby there is established a fuller plane and more solid basis for the operation of the influences flowing in by the spiritual mind. Under these conditions, the actions and speech of the body become expressions of the loves of heaven, and of the intelligence of reason, whilst the loves of the body, and the affections and powers of the senses, responding to the former, and acting with

them, effect a conformity of the flux of nature, with the flux of the spirit, whereby all the forms and substances in the natural mind, which are from the natural world, are brought into harmony with the forms and substances which are therein from the spiritual world.

When, however, the natural mind re-acts *against* the spiritual mind, it is evidently in a state of opposition to it, and of co-action with those influences which are pressing in from the world without; and the man then develops in the direction of this acting force, to the production of a quality of life in accordance with that which is present in the force. In this case, the re-action of the natural mind, tending to a rejection of the influences acting by the spiritual mind, closes the door to their entrance, and becomes subject by degrees to the opposing forces, upon which it re-acts. The actions and speech of the man then proceed from the lusts of the body, and the insinuations of the senses; and there is produced an action and re-action of the natural mind, altogether according to the flux of nature, and opposed to the flux of the spirit, which eventuates in its being closed to the latter, and coming into the position of an inverted spiral.

But this closing of the spiritual mind does not deprive the natural mind altogether of the power of reasoning. It can exercise this power, but under the influence of the force in the direction

of which it is turned ; that is, under the influence of ends and purposes and ideas, of an earthly, bodily, and worldly nature and quality, which are in opposition to the things of God and of heaven. All apparent reasoning in favor of the latter, is a pretence assumed for the sake of attaining or establishing the former.

It is a universal law, that influx is in accordance with efflux ; and that if efflux be checked, influx will be proportionately restrained. The influx of love and wisdom, or of goodness and truth from God, by the spiritual mind, ought to have a corresponding efflux, by the natural mind, into the actions and operations of the body. When this efflux exists, there is a continual influx from God out of heaven ; but when it is impeded, or restricted, or cut off, by the resistance of the natural mind, under the influence of opposing loves, the influx from God becomes impeded, restricted, or closed off. In consequence of this, there results stupidity in all spiritual concerns, which grows even to the point of a man's knowing nothing of heaven, or of God, and, indeed, of his being utterly unwilling to know any thing of the one or the other. Still, as before remarked, there is a general and indirect influx into the natural mind, such as is the influx from the sun in the night-time into that part of the earth's surface which is turned away from it, from which the opposing loves exercising sway

over the natural mind, receive their existence, and are capable of coming into corresponding acts, by the instrumentality of the body.

When the spiritual mind is closed, there is formed in the natural, an inverted internal mind out of the elements which operated as opposing forces. In this inverted internal mind, the highest or inmost place is occupied by the love of evil, which is essentially self-love, and by love of the world; the second or intermediate place by thoughts derived from what is false, by which evil is justified and confirmed; and the lowest place, by the conclusions derived, and the productions formed from this love by thought. These three degrees, which are related like end, cause, and effect, descend towards the body, and therefore grow denser by descent, and become corporeal and material. And clearly, as the natural mind, in these its degrees thus descends into the body, its higher regions, called the rational and interior natural, contract and gradually close, until at length only the outermost or lowest region, called the sensual, remains open, but only towards the world and the body. And, it is in this lowest or outermost region, that the inverted natural mind is fully formed and developed into its three degrees, which are diametrically opposed to the three spiritual degrees, by which man receives life from God, and is enabled to become an angel, either of the first, second, or third heaven.



In order to present to you a full rational view of the nature of the fall, I must direct your attention to one additional fact in regard to the natural mind, viz., that it necessarily appears different according as the spiritual or celestial degrees are either open, or not; and that it is immeasurably brighter and more living when the spiritual degree is open, and still more so when the celestial degree is open. Again, as the spiritual and celestial minds may be opened in a greater or lesser degree, so the natural mind also may be illuminated and animated by them in a greater or lesser proportion. The natural mind may thus continuously increase in light, until it ascends to the spiritual degree, and finally to the celestial. The extent in which it may thus be elevated, is determined by the degree in which it suffers the re-action from self and the world to be overcome by the action from heaven and from God.

Man was created by God with the natural mind in complete subjection to the two higher minds. His chief delight then was to study the will of God and to do it. At that time, therefore, the natural mind could be elevated to a much higher degree than at any subsequent period; and on their departure from this life, the men of that age could be received in the very inmost of the celestial or third heaven. When, in the course of time, they began to entertain the desire of lead-

ing themselves, instead of being led by God, their natural mind could no longer be elevated to the same high degree as before, nor could their celestial degree, consequently, be opened to the same extent; hence, on their departure from this life, they could no longer dwell in the highest or inmost regions of this heaven, but in such as were lower and exterior. This desire of leading themselves was impressed by them upon the organical forms of their natural mind, and handed down to their posterity, with whom, in process of time, it became so powerful, as to overbear the natural mind, and to prevent its ever being illustrated again immediately from the third or celestial degree. By the reception of truth in the understanding, however, and by the doing of the precepts of truth, this mind could still be elevated so far as to receive light from the spiritual degree, so that men, after their departure from this life, were able to enter into the second or spiritual heaven, in which truth and the love of truth is the prevailing element. By the continually increasing quality of opposition in the re-active power of the natural mind, which in this form was handed down from generation to generation, and especially by the influence of the senses which became overpowering in the course of time, and drowned the voice of reason, this mind, in the end, could not be raised high enough for men to become angels of the second

heaven ; though they were still able to become angels of the first heaven. But when at last they lapsed so low, that they could not even enter into this heaven, and when there was danger of mankind being entirely destroyed, because they were no longer receptive of life from God ; then God resorted to that miraculous interposition, which in the Church is called REDEMPTION. I cannot enter now into the particulars of this great work, and shall limit myself to the general statement, that by it the power was restored to men from God, to enter again into the first and second, and even into the third heaven, and of becoming angels of these heavens.

We are now prepared to discuss the organization of the hells. I am well aware that this word sounds disagreeably in your ears. So many absurdities have been promulgated on the subject of hell, that at the present time a man of the world cannot hear the word without a smile. But you will soon acknowledge that one may speak of hell, and even believe in hell, such as it really is, and not such as it has been heretofore depicted, without for that reason, being obliged to renounce the exercise of one's intellectual faculties.

As heaven is composed of angels, so hell is composed of devils. An angel is a human being in whom the action from heaven and from God, has overcome the re-action from self and the

world, and in whom consequently the natural mind is formed in the image and likeness of the superior minds which are in the image and likeness of God; whose external form, therefore, is one of inexpressible beauty and symmetry. A devil is a human being in whom the re-action from self and the world has overcome the action of heaven and of God, flowing into him through the superior degrees of his mind; in whom, consequently, the spiritual mind is closed, and the natural mind is open in the direction of the body and the world. In a devil even the higher regions of the natural mind, called the rational, and the interior natural, are closed, and the only region which is open is the sensual, which is nearest to the body. A devil in the light of heaven, appears not as a man, but as a monster, and with his like constitutes hell.

As there are three degrees of ascent in man's spiritual mind, and as he, according to the opening of these degrees within him, becomes an angel, either of the first, second, or third heaven; so also there are three degrees of descent in his perverted natural mind, and according as its first, second, or third degrees are opened within him, he becomes a devil of the first, second, or third hell.

There are thus three hells, which are in the relation of end, cause, and effect, and which are opposed to the three heavens: the lowest or

third hell, to the highest or third heaven; the second or middle hell to the second or middle heaven, and the ultimate or first hell, to the ultimate or first heaven. These hells, like the heavens to which they are severally opposed, are to each other in the relation of what is exterior to what is interior and inmost; the third hell being interior to the second, and this to the first. As heaven in the end rests on mankind, and forms their spiritual mind, into its image and likeness by the influx of good and truth; so hell, also, is based upon the human race, and organizes the perverted natural degree in man, by the influx of evil and falsity. In the beginning, before the hells existed, the re-action against the spiritual mind arose only from the body of man and the natural world; but since the existence of the hells, the re-active power of the body and the natural world has been increased a hundred-fold by the influx of evil and falsities from hell. Nevertheless, this influx of hell into man is counterbalanced by the influx of heaven; so that he is kept in a most exact state of equilibrium, and has complete power of turning either to the right or to the left, and of obeying the action from heaven, or the re-action from hell.

With an angel the three inverted degrees of the natural mind are not dispersed, but only closed, and they are kept closed by the divine omnipotence of God. With the devils, also, the

three interior degrees of the spiritual mind are not destroyed, — but only closed ; and it is by their presence in him, that he has eternal life, and that his evils and falsities are governed, and kept within bounds by God. In a similar manner the hells at large are governed and kept within bounds by the agency of the heavens at large ; the third heaven keeping within bounds and governing the lowest hell, the second or middle heaven, the second or intermediate, and the ultimate heaven, the ultimate hell, — so that a complete equilibrium is preserved between these two opposing organisms of the spiritual world.

Again, as the heavens are distinguished into two kingdoms, viz., into the celestial and the spiritual kingdoms, so also are the hells distinguished into two dominions opposite to those kingdoms, the dominion opposite to the celestial kingdom being composed of devils who are in the love of evil, and the dominion opposite the spiritual kingdom being composed of Satans who are in the love of falsity. The reason why there are two dominions or kingdoms in hell, is for the sake of establishing an equilibrium between them and heaven ; for it is so ordained of God, that all the genera and species of good and truth in the heavens, should have opposite to them their opposing evils and falsities of correspondent kinds in the hells, — thus goods and truths from a celestial origin have for their opposites the evils and

falsities which are called diabolic, and in like manner goods and truths from a spiritual origin have for their opposites the evils and falsities which are called satanic. The cause of this equilibrium is, that the same divine goods and divine truths which angels in the heavens receive from God, are turned by spirits in the hells into evils and falsities.

From the definition of angels given above, it appears that no human being is an angel, nor, consequently, capable of being received into heaven, unless the action from his spiritual mind has completely overcome the opposing re-action of his natural mind, i.e., unless the natural mind has become an image and a likeness of the spiritual mind, and co-acts with it. From this it follows, that if a human being leaves the natural world, before this process of assimilation has been completed, he is not yet prepared to be admitted into heaven, and has to remain, therefore, out of heaven, until the process is accomplished. So also very few men who are in the love of evil, and are thus devils and Satans interiorly, allow this love to show itself in full in their external life. The usages of society, and the fear of the laws restrain them, so that they have frequently the appearance of being good and honest men. With such there is formed a good external, covering and hiding their perverted internal. There is a discrepancy, therefore, even

with evil men between their external and internal natures, which discrepancy has to be removed before they can be associated with their like in any of the hells.

This condition of men, both of the good and of the evil, at the time of their departure from the natural world, clearly requires that they should first pass into a place or state, in which their exteriors may be assimilated fully to their interiors, and they may be prepared for their final abode either in heaven or in hell. In this state good and evil spirits meet and mingle very much as good and evil men do in the natural world, there being very little difference in appearance, between their exteriors. But, as the work of assimilation progresses, and the good as well as the evil by degrees manifest their interiors, a separation gradually ensues ; evil spirits approaching more towards hell, and good spirits towards heaven ; until finally the latter are prepared to ascend into heaven, and the former to descend into hell.

This preparatory place or world, is called the world of spirits ; and as heaven is composed of angels and good spirits, and hell of devils and Satans, so the world of spirits is composed of spirits ; human beings after leaving the natural world being called spirits before they are received into heaven, or hell. There is this difference, however, between the world of spirits and



heaven and hell, that spirits have no stationary homes there, but as soon as their period of preparation has been accomplished, they leave it either for heaven, or hell. The world of spirits has, consequently, no constant form and organization like heaven and hell, but is ever changing. It serves in the capacity of a stomach to the spiritual world at large, receiving the supply for heaven from the natural universe in the form of departed souls. As in the stomach, so in the world of spirits, the useful is separated from the useless; and as the useful particles are collected in the stomach and intestines, and sent by various channels into the human system to perform their duty there, so after the exteriors of good spirits have been assimilated to their interiors in the world of spirits, they are sent thence by various channels into the different parts of heaven, where each meets with his like, and performs the functions of his immaterial nature — while the useless, selfish, and worldly subjects are cast out from the world of spirits into the hells.

This is not a mere comparison for the sake of illustration; as every thing spiritual has reference to man and to the human form, there must be a correspondence between the economy of the human body and that of the spiritual world. This correspondence I shall refer to again hereafter.

## XI.

Heaven at large in the form of a man. — The doctrine of redemption. — Its object threefold: 1. The glorification of the humanity, assumed in the world. 2. The subjugation of the hells. 3. The establishment of a new church. — The doctrine of the divine trinity. — Jesus Christ the Mediator. — What makes a Christian?

**I**N your last letter there is a remark which induces me to postpone for a future occasion a detailed description of the spiritual world, of which I gave you the general divisions in my last letters.

You say, you are struck with the sublimity of the new theories contained in the writings of Swedenborg. The more familiar you become with them, the more clearly do you discern their agreement with the laws of sound reason; and the chain of connection between them heightens your admiration. But when you consider that with all these rational theories we still call ourselves Christians, you are met by a serious difficulty. You cannot conceive it possible that our ideas of God should square with the doctrines of Christianity.

The difficulty arises from several causes, but

principally from the two following: *First*, it is one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity that Christ is God, and you are as yet unable to see how this teaching harmonizes with the philosophical idea of the one and only God, which I have developed thus far. *Secondly*, you confound Christianity with the different Christian sects, all of which really believe in the existence of three Gods, although with their lips they say that there is but one; and you have, therefore, been led to the conclusion, that a profession of Christianity is equivalent to a renunciation of the exercise of reason in all matters of doctrine.

This renders it incumbent upon me to explain my intentional avoidance, during the whole course of our discussion, of any mention of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, although I have repeatedly avowed myself a Christian.

The nature of my argument seemed to require this course; for I could not speak of the Lord Jesus Christ without touching questions that properly belong to the doctrinal part of the Christian religion. Of what use, indeed, would it have been to discuss dogmas at the very outset? You were desirous of believing, it is true, but you had long since abandoned the doctrines, which you had been taught in your youth. Could I, then, have succeeded in securing your attention even for a moment? To do this, I was compelled to commence with the philosophical part of the

Christian religion. When you are convinced of those truths which we have already discussed, and of some others which need to be presented, the time will have arrived for us to undertake an examination of the Christian doctrines.

Meanwhile, in order to show you, that our ideas concerning the Deity are by no means incompatible with those of Christianity, I shall give you a short explanation of the doctrines of Redemption and the Trinity; premising a brief, general statement of the organization of the heavens and the hells, and of their relations to mankind, which is their basis in the natural world.

As God is Very Man, and as the Divine Sphere which proceeds from Him, is in the perpetual endeavor to produce the human form, both in the spiritual, and in the natural world, you will be prepared to receive the announcement of the truth, that *heaven at large, in the eyes of God, appears as a man.* This statement may, at first, have an appearance of strangeness, but upon a closer examination, you will not fail to perceive, that it is a strictly logical conclusion from the positions, which have been established in my previous letters. Nevertheless, you will require time to become familiarized with the idea, and such objections as may arise in your mind, will need for their removal, what I propose to say on the subject of Redemption, and of the Trinity.

A corollary of this conclusion is: That, as heaven, which is composed of angels, in the eyes of God appears as a Greatest or Grand Man, so the hells, which are composed of devils, must appear as a Grand Monster.

The whole Heaven, or Heaven in general, being in the human form, it is evident that the individual angels, who are the component parts of that whole, or the particulars which enter into and compose that general, are no less in the human form; and indeed, that they are in the human form for that reason. For, it is a principle, which will require no demonstration, that the parts are formed by influx from the whole, to the image and likeness of the whole; and that by virtue of the likeness which a part bears to the whole, or a particular to the general, the latter is enabled to act upon the former, and in turn to be the subject of its re-action. And, just as the human body is composed of different organs, or larger parts, so is heaven composed of different larger parts or members. In other words, the angels of heaven are organized into different angelic societies, each of which is represented by a certain organ in men. In a general sense, the angelic societies represented by the organs of the head, are composed of the angels of the third or celestial heaven; those which are represented by the organs of the body as far as the loins, are composed of the angels of the second or spiritual

heaven ; and those which are represented by the organs in the extremities of man, as the arms and the legs, are composed of the angels of the first or natural heaven.

Another division of heaven is into the celestial and spiritual kingdom, or into the kingdom of the will and the understanding, which is represented by the kingdoms of the heart and lungs in the body ; the kingdom of the will by the heart, and the kingdom of the understanding by the lungs.

I cannot here enter into a full discussion of the subject of the Grand Man, but what I have said will enable you to follow intelligently my explanation of the doctrines of Redemption and of the Trinity ; and in case you should desire to become more familiar with the doctrine of the Grand Man of heaven, you will find it specially treated of in the appendix to each chapter of the " *Arcana Cœlestia* " of Swedenborg, Vols. IV.—VII.

CONCERNING THE REDEMPTION. Man, who was created free and rational, abused his freedom and rationality, and fell. Foreseen by God, the consequences of this fall, and the necessary means of human restoration were provided for. The Divine being, who is Love itself, could not leave man in that low condition, whose only change, without interposition, must necessarily be to one still lower. But how was his restoration to be effected ? How should man be brought again to his primitive state without a deprivation of his

freedom, and a virtual destruction of his humanity? As man evidently delighted in his misery, and found his very life in that which produced it, God took good care not to interfere with his freedom of determination, and in the work of restoration proceeded strictly in accordance with the laws of his eternal order.

You saw in my last letter, how by the fall of man there was developed a spiritual organism, diametrically opposed to the primitive organism, and how this new organism re-acted upon our world with an ever-increasing force. In the struggle which ensued between these two spiritual organisms, or between heaven and hell, the Deity was indeed continually striving to check the progress of evil and falsehood, and to preserve withal human freedom; but hell at last became so overpowering, that there was danger of an entire subversion of spiritual order, and thus of the destruction of at least that part of the spiritual universe, which is composed of the souls of the men of this earth. This would necessarily have entailed destruction upon all mankind on earth; for the Divine influx, transmitted by heaven, on account of this preponderance of hell, no longer availed to preserve order in heaven and upon earth. It was then that God had recourse to the great act of redemption; the necessity of which he had foreseen, and for which he had provided from the beginning of time.

This act consisted in his reaching hell, and restricting it within its own limits, by fighting with it hand to hand, as it were ; for it was absolutely requisite that the spiritual equilibrium of man should be restored, in order that by means of his freedom of choice and his rationality, he might again enter upon the ways of eternal life which had become closed to him. But how was it possible for the Deity who dwells in the purest essences, to reach the enemy of man, who is in the most corrupt essences ? God the Creator, or Jehovah, resides in the bosom of his spiritual sun, and, as you have seen, the heat and light of this sun need to be tempered by spiritual atmospheres, in order that they may be received even by the angel of the highest heaven. And, if Jehovah, in his spiritual sun, cannot even approach the highest heaven without burning and consuming it, it is very evident that encompassed by this sun, he could not reach the hells, which are beyond the heavens and the world of spirits, without totally destroying them. Precluded by the laws of his own order from employing this means, those laws, nevertheless, so far from offering any opposition to the work of redemption, became the very divine means and way of its full and perfect accomplishment. You know that God, or Jehovah, is Very Man, and that for this reason we, his creatures, formed in his image and after his likeness are men, i.e., beings endowed with will and



understanding, capable of receiving his love and his wisdom, or good and truth; you know also that by virtue of this form of God every thing in creation is either in the human form, or else displays a more or less direct tendency towards this form. If now you will call to mind what I told you about the formation of man, and the two opposite influences operating upon him from the spiritual world, it will be easy for you to see, that in order to reach, combat, conquer, and subjugate hell, and thus to accomplish the great work of redemption, it was necessary that Jehovah should become flesh and dwell among us, and that in so doing, he was acting in perfect conformity with the laws of his divine order.

As God is life itself, he resides, in his entirety, in the whole and in each part of creation; for the Deity cannot be divided — hence it is said that God is everywhere. God is everywhere, as the soul of man is in every part of the body; and as this universal presence of the soul does not prevent its moving and governing the body as a whole, so also, although God is in the inmost of every individual man, he is not, for that reason, inhibited from presiding over the government of the universe as a whole. Nay, as the soul by the very fact of its intimate presence in every part of the body, is enabled to rule and govern it as a whole, so also is God by the very fact of his being in the inmost of every angel and

of every man, enabled to rule and govern the heavens and humanity as a whole, for they appear in his presence as One man. Dwelling thus within the inmost of every human being, with all his divine attributes, and being Himself Very Man, it was possible for him to invest himself with the external of a spiritual body, and by this with a material body, without a surrender of the least principle and attribute of Divinity.

It will become clear to you as we proceed, that by becoming flesh, and thus descending to the lowest degrees of creation, Jehovah, who when encompassed by his spiritual sun, could not approach even the heavens without consuming and destroying them, was enabled to reach the lowest hells, without disturbing, in the least, the operation of the laws of his own order. For, as the combat against hell is renewed in man every day, when God invested Himself with our humanity, He placed Himself on the only proper battle-ground, on which, without arbitrary interference with human action, he could struggle with the enemy, conquer and subdue him.

My limits will not allow me, to treat at any length, the important subject of the divine incarnation. What I shall have to say upon the subject, I will premise by the observation, that just as the heat and light of the sun are successively surrounded by the highest or inmost atmosphere, then by the middle, and finally by the

lowest, which is nearest to the earth, and are thus attempered and accommodated to the receptive condition of the ultimate substances of nature, so did Jehovah, in his descent into the world, first put on the nature of the third or inmost heaven, afterwards that of the second and first heavens, and then even that of the world of spirits; and having thus put on these various spiritual coverings, he finally clothed and veiled his spiritual body in the garb of a material human body, derived from the womb of the Virgin Mary.

The object of the incarnation was threefold. *First*, to bring Jehovah himself into direct communication with humanity in the different degrees of its existence, by putting on these degrees, as they existed in the angels of the three heavens, in the world of spirits, and in the world of men on earth. Before this assumption of humanity, He could flow into the lower heavens only by the higher heavens; thus by the third into the second, by the second into the first heaven, and by this again into the world of spirits and into man; but after the incarnation this influx was so conditioned that it was possible for Him to flow immediately not only into the lower heavens, and into the world of spirits, but also into man himself. In order to enable the Divine Itself, as it is in the inmost of the spiritual sun, to enter by influx immediately into the various degrees of

humanity, these degrees themselves, in the person of Christ, had first to be purified and freed from all human infirmities with which they were charged. This process of purification, which is also called the process of glorification, was carried on during the lifetime of Jesus Christ; and when it was accomplished, the Divine Itself, such as it is in the inmost of the spiritual sun, was enabled by the glorified Humanity to send its influx immediately into every part of the spiritual world, nay, into man himself, without destroying him. This influx of the Infinite Divine by the glorified Human of the Lord Jesus Christ, is what is called the Holy Ghost, by which God reforms and regenerates man.

The glorification of the Lord's Human, could not be effected without the most direful temptations and sufferings. You will recollect the statement made in the beginning of this letter, that each particular angel is formed by influx from the whole heaven, which is in the human form. To this I now add, that man is likewise formed by influx from the Grand Man, but that when the hells were brought into existence, by the fall of man, he also became a subject of influx from the Grand Monster. The influx from the Grand Man of heaven forms the two interior degrees of his soul, or his spiritual mind, and the influx from hell, together with that from heaven, his natural mind, and his natural body. All parts of the

Grand Man of heaven, and of the Grand Monster of hell thus contribute to the formation of the humanity of every individual man, which is thereby brought into connection with every part of heaven and of hell, and is subject to influx therefrom. Such also was the case with the humanity in which Jehovah God descended upon earth; when he successively assumed the natures of the different heavens, of the world of spirits, and finally of man himself. By this humanity He was connected with every society of heaven or the Grand Man, and of hell or the Grand Monster, and was subject to their influence. There was a remarkable difference, however, between the humanity of Jesus Christ, and that of ordinary men; therein, that whilst the quickening life in the souls of men, is not Jehovah Himself, but from Him, as the physical principle imparting life to natural objects, is not the solar fire itself, but its proceeding heat and light, — the essential, animating principle of the humanity of Jesus Christ was Jehovah God, who is Life itself. And the humanity itself, though made tripartite, like that of other men, by the successive investiture of the divine with the nature of the three heavens, by the descent of the Infinite Jehovah into the material body, with which He clothed Himself in the womb of Mary, yet differed from every other humanity, in this particular, that its last or ultimate degree, was as pure as the two higher degrees,

whilst in man since the fall, and by derivation from his natural ancestry, it is perverted. In this respect, the humanity of the Lord may be compared to that of man when first created. The only infirm, and perverted part of his humanity, was that which he derived from Mary; and this was his natural body, which was the natural or material effect of the sunken spiritual state of mankind, inherited by Mary from her ancestors, and transmitted by her to her offspring.

There was thus in Christ an inmost Divine nature which was Jehovah God Himself; this was encompassed by a humanity put on by Him when passing through the heavens, and bringing Him into immediate connection with every society in heaven; and this, finally, was clothed with a perverted natural body, derived from Mary, by means of which He was made subject to influx from the whole of hell, and brought into connection with every society therein.

In saying that the natural body derived from Mary was the only part of the humanity of Christ which was perverted, I do not mean that the interior degrees of His humanity which were derived from the heavens, were Divine. They were human and finite, even as every angel, though he belongs to the inmost part of the third heaven, is still human and finite. There is a difference between the Divine Proceeding in the heavens, and the Divine Itself above the heaven; just as there

is a difference between the solar fire, and the heat and light which it emits. The Divine itself, as it is in the interior of the spiritual sun, is infinite; but in the love and wisdom, or the spiritual heat and light proceeding from the spiritual sun, it takes a finite quality, and is accommodated to angels and spirits. This accommodation is effected by successive mediations and derivations; the first and second of which are so full of the Infinite, that they are far above the heavens, and in the sight of the angels appear as radiant belts of light encompassing the spiritual sun on all sides; whilst the third is received in some measure by the angels of the third heaven, and the fourth by those of the second heaven; and so on. By each successive derivation or mediation the Divine Proceeding becomes more general, and thus grosser and more obscure, as well as more sluggish and colder. It was the object of the glorification of the Lord's humanity to connect most intimately each degree of this humanity with the Infinite Divine, and thus to make himself omnipotent in each degree. As the degree corresponding to the third heaven was thus intimately conjoined with the Infinite Divine, and filled with the Divine Omnipotence, the Lord thereby took upon himself the power to be present with his Omnipotence in every part of the third heaven, and to restore it into the same order in which he brought the corresponding degree of his human-

ity. So also by glorifying that degree of his humanity which corresponded to the second heaven, he took upon himself the power of being present with his Omnipotence in every part of that heaven, and by glorifying the first degree of his humanity, he was enabled to govern with his Omnipotence every part of the first heaven. During the work of glorifying those degrees of his humanity to which the three heavens correspond, he was brought personally into contact with, and under the influence of, every society of heaven, and while glorifying or making Divine that part of his humanity to which each of these societies corresponds, he brought these very societies, and thus heaven at large, into a corresponding order.

While man is in this world, his spirit rests upon, and performs all its functions by means of the natural body. To give freedom of action to the spirit, it is requisite that the body should agree with it in form and quality. In the case of the Lord, however, there was the greatest possible disparity; his spirit being divine in form, and his body bearing the form and imprint of hell.

Upon the natural body of Christ, inherited from Mary, there had, indeed, been impressed also the likeness of his spirit — for in the formation of the natural body of the future man the essence from the father acts upon and assimilates to itself the



substances and forms which are furnished by the mother — but it was not according to the laws of his order, that during the formation of his natural body in the womb of Mary, there should be eliminated thence those perverted forms which Mary herself had inherited from her ancestors. These forms remained; and as the Lord communicated with the whole of heaven, by the humanity derived from the heavens, so did He communicate with the whole of hell, by the perverted forms of his natural body derived from Mary. Hell rested on these forms, and flowed into them, as the cause ever rests upon, and flows into its effects; and there was no possibility of removing these forms, except by the most direful combats with the whole of hell. The natural body of Christ was, therefore, the battle-ground, on which the Lord met and conquered the hells. It was impossible for him to avoid this conflict. As the Divine life from within acted upon the perverted forms of the humanity, the most violent re-action was necessarily excited — the Divine Itself, on the one hand, acting with the full force of the Divine Omnipotence, and all hell re-acting on the other, and opposing its whole might to the divine fulfilment in the body of Christ. Any merely finite creature, would have succumbed at the very first onslaught of the hells; but the Lord endured such assaults, and fought such battles, throughout the whole of his natural life, from his earliest

childhood, until his last moments on the cross. In this deadly strife with hell his natural body was successively purged of all the infernal forms which he had inherited from his mother, and their place was supplied by Divine forms from within, until the process was consummated at the time of his natural death, and his very corporeal principle was glorified.

During the glorification of his natural humanity the Lord was brought into personal contact with every infernal society, and each of them, sustained by the whole power of hell, assailed and sought to destroy him. But he overcame them all, and, as by the glorification of the internal degrees of his humanity he restored the whole of heaven to order, so did he conquer and reduce to order all the hells, by the glorification of the external or natural humanity. Thus he accomplished the *second* end of the incarnation, which was, the restoration of spiritual equilibrium to man; for during his struggle with hell, he purged the world of spirits, and the lower heavens, of the infernal spirits who had established themselves there, and intercepted and perverted all influx of heavenly Divine life. When these spirits were cast into hell, the Divine influences could again reach man, and he could again freely turn towards good; and from that time forth, the omnipotence of the Lord in His glorified Humanity, holds the balance between heaven and hell, so that the latter can no

longer threaten to overwhelm the former, and deprive man of his freedom.

The *third* object, accomplished by the incarnation of Jehovah, was the establishment of a New Church on earth. Here it will be necessary for me to define what I mean by the Church. The Church on earth is constituted of all principles of good and truth, and is composed of men who are in the love of the Lord and of the neighbor; who acknowledge the Lord to be the only God of heaven and earth, and conscientiously perform their duties of life. As the angels of heaven are as one man, in the sight of the Lord; so also do the men of the Church appear as one man in his sight. They are the natural body of the Grand Man of heaven, on which it rests, as the soul of man rests upon his body. As long as the body is in a sound condition, the soul can freely flow into it, and carry on its operations, but when the body becomes diseased, the commerce between the soul and the body is interrupted, and finally broken off, if the obstructions are of an insuperable nature. In like manner, as long as the body of the Church on earth, is in a healthy and vigorous condition, it can freely receive the life of the Grand Man of heaven; but when it falls into disorder and disease, because of the overpowering influence of hell, and the consequent prevalence among its members of evils of life and falsities of doctrine, then is the intercourse between heaven

and mankind obstructed ; and if the obstruction be not removed, the Church becomes so entirely perverted, as to cease to be a Church and a medium of connecting mankind with heaven. When this state ensues, the destruction of the human race impends. Such a danger actually threatened humanity at the time when Jesus Christ was born upon earth ; and had he not instituted a New Church, whereby the communication of mankind on earth with the Grand Man of heaven was restored, the human race would have utterly perished.

CONCERNING THE TRINITY. With this statement of the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ, in your mind, it will not be difficult for you to form a rational idea of the Divine Trinity. In the Theology of the New Church, God the Father, is the infinite, invisible, unapproachable Jehovah, as He resides in the inmost of the Spiritual Sun ; God the Son, is the same Jehovah, made visible, or manifested in his divine human form to angels and to men, in such wise, that He is to their minds a determinate object of thought, and therefore one who can be loved, and with whose Divine Life, their life can be conjoined. The Holy Spirit, is the whole Divine Proceeding, from the infinite Jehovah by His glorified Humanity, by which he keeps the heavens for ever in their order, the hells in their subjection, and man in a state of equilibrium, or of freedom of choice between good

and evil, and thereby in the possibility and capacity of becoming an image and likeness of God.

The Divine Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as three essentials of one God, did not exist in its fulness before the creation of the world. It existed in potency, but not in actuality, until after the incarnation. In the beginning was the Infinite Jehovah; from Him emanated that Divine Proceeding, from which by successive mediations, were organized the heavens and the souls of men. To the heavens, organized in the form of a Grand Man, the Divine Proceeding from Jehovah, is the Soul, and this is the Divine Human of the Lord from the beginning of the world. In this Divine Human Jehovah manifested Himself, whenever, before the incarnation, He appeared to angels and to men. This is "The Word, which was in the beginning, which was with God, which was God;" for whatever proceeds from any being, is essentially one and the same with that being. By this Word, or Divine Proceeding, were "all things made, and without him was not any thing made, that was made." And this Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and was the internal humanity of Jesus Christ. By the glorification of this humanity, it was made one with the Father, or with the Infinite Jehovah, and thus entered into the very spiritual sun, causing that sun to shine

with new lustre, and greater power. The Divine Proceeding which now emanates from Jehovah, by his glorified Humanity, and which penetrates to man, both mediately and immediately, is the Holy Spirit, which "was not" before the humanity was fully glorified.

This general exposition of the doctrines of Redemption and the Trinity, will suffice to show you that the doctrinal questions of the Christian religion, flow naturally from our system of religious philosophy. It will also enable you to understand a change of expression, which I can now introduce. Heretofore, I have almost exclusively used the name *God*, for the Divine Being; hereafter I shall call him *Lord*; for there is a difference in the meaning of the names given to Him. *Jehovah* awakens more particularly the idea of God, considered as Creator; *Jesus Christ*, the idea of God considered as Redeemer, but *Lord* represents the idea of the one only God, considered at the same time as the Creator, Redeemer, Regenerator, and Saviour.

Holding these doctrines as holy and divine verities, we may assuredly feel justified in calling ourselves Christians; for the word *Christian* is derived from *Christ*; and no one can properly call himself a Christian, unless he acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only God. Now, since Jesus Christ in our faith, is God Himself, and not merely the

second of three divine persons, have we not a right to the name of Christians, superior to those who merely recognize him as the Son of God, and in reality make him only a Mediator between God and man, whilst with their lips they likewise acknowledge him as a God ?

Jesus Christ is, nevertheless, a Mediator between God and man, but not as a person distinct from the Father. He is a Mediator in the sense in which he is the Divine Body of the Divine Soul, which is Jehovah. For as in addressing a man, we cannot address his soul, which is invisible, except by means or by the mediation of his body, so also we cannot reach the Father except by the mediation of the Divine Body, or the glorified body, of Jesus Christ. For this reason he says of himself: "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me," John xiv. 6 ; and, "No man hath seen God at any time," John i. 18. The soul of man being always covered by a body, whether it be a natural one, as in this world, or a spiritual one, as in the other world, is, therefore, always invisible, and manifests itself only by the action of its body. It is the same with the Divine Soul or with Jehovah. This is now invested with the Humanity which Jesus Christ assumed in the natural world, and made divine, and manifests itself only by the action of this Divine Humanity. No one has therefore, ever seen Jehovah or the Father, nor will any one ever see him as He is in Himself ;

but the inhabitants of the heavens see Him in His Divine Humanity, as the Lord Jesus Christ, whenever it pleases Him to manifest himself to them ; and they, moreover, enjoy the continual presence of his spiritual sun, which vivifies them by its heat and light. It is not in this manner, however, that the Christians of the Old Church conceive of Mediation ; since they represent the Mediator as a person distinct from God the Father.

I shall close this letter with a brief examination of the question, why true Christians are so very scarce at the present time ? To be a real Christian it is not sufficient that one has been baptized, and observes certain religious exercises ; but it is requisite, as before remarked, that the Divinity of Christ be acknowledged from the whole heart, and that his teachings be made the law of life. The true reason why there are so few Christians at the present day, is the one given by Christ long ago, that “men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.” It is evil of heart and life, which leads men to pervert the truth, and theologians to persist in teaching that there are three divine persons, the one of whom having atoned for the sins of man, has appeased the divine wrath of the other, and so provided salvation by faith alone in his work, without any saving works on the part of man. How, indeed, can the preachers of the different Christian sects persuade their hearers, or how can they persuade them-



selves, that Jesus Christ, who, according to the Evangelists, rose with the same body in which he was laid in the sepulchre, is one with God the Father, whom they consider as a pure Spirit, in other words, as a being without substance and form, although they make a real person of him, and, indeed, a person separate and distinct from Jesus Christ? Do they know where to place the body of the Lord Jesus Christ in the other world, which they likewise deprive of substance and form, and which, in their estimation, is merely a sort of void? These difficulties of doctrine, which hinder the development of a true Christianity, vanish altogether, as soon as it is known, that the Creator of the universe is Very Man, and that the whole of creation tends to the human form; and especially, when the relations are understood, so simple and yet so wonderful, which connect the universe with man, and man with his Divine Prototype.

After this long digression, upon a subject so important that I could not pass it over lightly, I hope to be able to give you, in my next letter, a somewhat detailed presentation of the spiritual world.

## XII.

Man's passage into the spiritual world.—Appearance of the world of spirits.—Spirits live in societies.—The doctrine of correspondence.—A spirit is such as his ruling love.

**T**O complete the view of the spiritual world, presented in the general propositions contained in my former letters, it is necessary that I should lay before you, a more detailed account of its nature and organization.

Why is it that scepticism is so prevalent at the present day, and that even a strongly avowed faith in the immortality of the soul, becomes unsteady in the presence of serious reflection upon the passage from this life into the other? Is it not, because the speculations concerning the nature and existence of the soul, promulgated by philosophers and theologians, render it impossible for the mind, which is under their influence, to form a rational idea of that passage? Without a distinct notion of the soul, or a knowledge of the place of its residence in the body, man is led, either to regard it as a breath, which when freed from its prison, floats about in an empty void, and thus to offend against reason; or else to look upon it as one of those imponderable fluids,

which after being set free, collect in a common reservoir; and thus to do violence to conscience. This distressing dilemma lies before every thoughtful mind, when left without other guidance than the teachings of the old theology, or of modern philosophy.

But totally different is the case, when one has gained a distinct idea of the soul, and of that world in which it is destined to live for ever. In order to understand, how the passage from this life into the other is effected, it will suffice to bear in mind those truths which have been developed above, but which it is necessary to recapitulate here in the form of general conclusions.

1. The soul or the spirit of man is a real being, having a body composed of the same organs as the material body, with which it is clothed.

2. The spiritual world is a real world, composed of objects, which are analogous to those that exist in our world. There are in it expanses of land, seas, atmospheres; it has its firmament, which like ours, depends upon the peculiar conformation of the eye; it has finally its three kingdoms, the animal, vegetable and mineral. There is, however, this great difference between the objects composing the spiritual and those of the natural world, that the former being of a spiritual nature, are not fixed, whilst the latter being material, are fixed.

3. As the spiritual world is independent of space, it is not a place, but a state of the soul, or of the spirit. Thus it cannot be said to be either above or below, or beyond our starry firmament, or in the bowels of the earth; to be either here or there — but it is in man himself. Every man has within himself his own heaven and his own hell.

4. Although the spiritual world is independent of time and space, which are accidents of matter, still it presents the appearances of space and time, which appearances owe their origin to the states of its inhabitants.

These truths being admitted, it only remains to show how man, by natural death, passes from this world into the spiritual world.

It was stated in my ninth letter, that in every man there are as many receptacles in the human form, as there are general divisions in the spiritual world, and that these receptacles are either closed or opened according to the life which man has led in the natural world. It was further shown, that each general division of the spiritual world, although existing in us, appears also without us, according to the particular receptacle or degree of the spirit which is opened within us; because the affections and thoughts which are within us, are also represented around us by corresponding objects of the three kingdoms.

When, therefore, man is relieved of his mortal covering, he has no need of being transported

from one place to another, but at once enters into the spiritual world with the same affections and the same thoughts which he had in this world, and is then introduced into the division of that world, the receptacle of which was opened in him at the time of his decease.

As the spiritual mind, or the heavenly degrees in man, however, cannot be considered to be completely opened, unless the natural mind in which they terminate, is in a state of complete subjection, and unless it is the complete image and likeness of the spiritual mind, and as this is the case with very few men when they depart from this world; and as, on the other hand, very few men who are internally wicked, are so regardless of the opinion of the world, or of the penal laws enacted for the government of society, as to allow full sway to their infernal passions; and as they may have acquired an orderly exterior to cover their internal corruption, it is plain that there will not exist a correspondence between their exteriors and interiors, when they arrive in the other world. On this account are all men, whether good or evil, in whom this correspondence does not exist, after their decease, first introduced into the world of spirits, which is intermediate between heaven and hell, and where they remain until a complete correspondence is effected between their interiors and exteriors. As soon as this is brought about, they enter either into a higher or

into a lower heaven, or else are cast down into a more or less deep hell. The passage from this into the other world is, therefore, a setting free of the man-spirit, by a removal of the bonds by which he has been confined here ; and this deliverance is effected by the cessation of the systolic and diastolic motion of the heart. When this motion ceases, man is at once in the spiritual world without a spatial translation, and his material body remains behind a mere corpse. The man himself, however, with every thing that constitutes him, continues to live ; his senses being no longer imprisoned in matter, acquire most exquisite properties, and the two faculties of which his soul consists, viz. his will and understanding, for the same reason, exhibit a much higher degree of activity and power.

An idea of man's passage from this world into the other will more easily be formed, if it be considered, that every human being, whilst on earth, is unconsciously also in the spiritual world. His real life is there, because this consists in the affections and thoughts which make him a man, and from which he acts ; and these are not material, but spiritual in their nature. He does not see that world, nor has he any knowledge of what takes place around his man-spirit, because his spiritual senses are encompassed with matter, and can distinguish only the things which belong to this world. But when he lays aside the mortal cover-

ing, his senses, no longer inclosed in an obscure prism, enter into their full activity and exercise, and he is made conscious of that spiritual world, in which he has always existed, but which until then had been hidden from his view.

Since man, upon leaving the earth, first enters into the world of spirits, this part of the spiritual universe will now require our attention.

As the World of Spirits is an intermediate world, in which no spirit abides for ever, but into which human spirits from the earth are introduced, in order that they may be prepared for their final abode in heaven or in hell; and as the process of this preparation consists in the reduction of their exteriors into harmony with their interiors, it is evident that it will present itself in very different aspects, according to the differences of state existing with spirits. In the beginning, so long as they are in those exterior states, which they acquired in the natural world, the good and the evil dwell together. And, since the evil then lead externally moral and decorous lives, such as they led on earth, they will be surrounded by objects greatly resembling those which they left behind them in the world. This resemblance is so great, indeed, that many upon their first entrance into the World of Spirits, believe themselves still to be in the natural world, and only become convinced of their error, by meeting with others, who had passed from earth before

them, and by their no longer seeing those with whom they had been accustomed to associate in this world.

In the course of time, however, as their interior nature begins to manifest itself in their exterior life, the good and evil spirits are gradually separated, until they no longer see each other. The heavenly affections, with good spirits, flowing in from their spiritual into their natural mind, and ultimated in true thoughts and good deeds, cause the objects surrounding them to grow more and more beautiful; until at length, when a complete correspondence between their internal and external man has been effected, they are prepared to enter heaven. On the other hand, as the evil affections of evil spirits burst through the artificial exterior which they had acquired in this world, and their true nature is made apparent, surrounding objects grow more and more deformed, and from their real internal state, they at last cast themselves into hell.

I have told you that the spiritual world is the outward manifestation of the affections and thoughts of spirits and angels. On first appearance it would seem, as if each man-spirit could see only those objects which correspond to his own affections and thoughts, and would therefore live in his own spiritual world, and lead an entirely independent life. If such were the case, and if spirits did not live in society as men do in this



world, and if they were prevented from communicating their affections and thoughts to other beings, their existence in that world, however beautiful and delightful it might appear, would nevertheless be the saddest and most melancholy that can be imagined, and in the end would become utterly insupportable to them. That such is not the case, however, and that angels and spirits live in societies, as men do in the natural world, I shall endeavor to show from a principle involved in the organization of the Heavens.

It has been repeatedly declared that heaven is composed of angels, and in my last letter, I made a statement to this effect, that the heavens in the eyes of the Lord appear as one Grand Man, and that each angel is a part of this Grand Man. Now, on what principle can angels be parts of one grand organism, which is in the human form?

You have seen that every man, and that every angel and spirit, is the form of an affection. But an affection has for its end and object a use, and in order to come into existence must needs manifest itself in a use, which is the effect of its activity, and in which it attains the fulness and completeness of its form. Every angel and every spirit, therefore, is the form of some use; an angel the form of a good use, and an evil spirit the form of an evil use. Every use, however, of which an angel is the form, is represented by a corresponding use that is performed by some

organ or member of the human body ; and as this body, being a complex organism of ultimate uses, corresponds to the grand complex organism of heavenly uses, called the Grand Man of Heaven, every angel, by virtue of the use which he performs, is a part of that Grand Man. All those angels, therefore, who are in the love of the same use, constitute the various parts of the organ or member of the Grand Man, whose function it is to perform that use ; some being in the eye, others in the ear, others in the mouth, and still others in other parts of its body.

Those whose loves are similar are closely connected as parts of one member ; whilst those whose loves differ, are farther apart, their degree of removal depending upon the divergence of their loves. The spiritual world, also, of the spirits and angels composing the same organ of the Grand Man, or, what is the same thing, the outward manifestation of their affections and thoughts, is the same in all essential qualities, however it may differ in details ; the spiritual world of those who are in the interiors of an organ, being in general much more beautiful and delightful, than that of those who constitute its exteriors.

The difference in the ruling loves of angels and spirits, by which they are assigned to different members of the Grand Man, is very well exhibited by the different races and nationalities of

men on earth. It is known that the English, French, Germans, Chinese, American Indians, Arabs, Negroes have each a particular character, by which they are easily distinguished from one another; and in the Grand Man which is composed of the men of our earth, each of these races and nationalities forms and represents a different organ or member. The wise and intelligent among them correspond to the interior uses of the part, and the simple and uncultivated to its external uses. In the other life, also, the spiritual world of the Chinese will naturally be very different from that of Englishmen or Americans, and theirs will differ again from that of Germans, Spaniards, Turks, or Russians; for the affections and thoughts of each of these nations differ very much from one another, the Chinaman having Chinese affections, the Englishman English, the Frenchman French, and so forth; these very affections with their corresponding thoughts, in fact constituting and conditioning the several nationalities. From this it is obvious that upon the decease of men on earth, their spirits will enter into that part of the world of spirits, which is composed of those who are of their own nation or race; and that they will be conveyed thither by their own affections; for in the other world, attraction and repulsion are produced by similarity or dissimilarity of love, and each spirit seeks to be with those who are like himself.

In order that you may understand the manner in which the individual affections and thoughts of a spirit are represented externally around him, and how his spiritual world is formed, it is requisite that you should have some general knowledge of what we call correspondences. This will require another digression on my part, but as it is necessary to a proper presentation of the subject, I trust you will receive it with the same indulgence, which you have accorded to the many others, that I have felt compelled to make.

It is evident that the changes observed in the human countenance, or the different expressions of the face, proceed from the various and varying emotions of the heart, or, as we express it, from different states of the affections, which are active in the spirit of man. These expressions, with their changes, are natural effects produced from the affections, as spiritual causes; and, calling the relation of effects to their causes *correspondences*, we say that the face in general, is the correspondence of the interiors of the spirit. But in order that these correspondences may appear, it is necessary that the spirit should act; and this action of the spirit we call the *influx* of the spiritual into the natural.

It is evident also, that the understanding of man, or intellectual sight, corresponds to natural sight, for the light and the flame which sparkle in his eyes reveal the thought which is in his

understanding ; the *correspondence* in this case being the sight of the eye, or even the eye itself ; whilst the *influx* is the action of the understanding upon the eye.

So there is, likewise, a correspondence between the active thought in the understanding, and the language which depends upon the mouth and its accessories ; the *correspondence* here being the language, and also the mouth with all the organs of speech, whilst the *influx* is the action of the thought in the language, and in the organs of speech.

Finally, the action of the body *corresponds* to the will ; that of the heart to the life of love ; that of the lungs, which is called respiration, to the life of wisdom or of faith ; and the whole body with all its members, viscera and organs *corresponds* to the soul, as to all its functions and all the activities of its life.

From these few examples you may see that the spiritual and the natural make one by *correspondence*, just like the anterior and the posterior, or like the efficient cause and the effect, and that this term expresses the unitary relation between the human will and thought, and human speech and action. This relation of correspondence between the spiritual and the natural, however, is not confined to man, but is universal, and results from the influx of the spiritual into the natural universe ; as you will readily see by a reference to

the principles set forth in some of my earlier letters, and admitted by you.

In ancient times, the knowledge of these correspondences constituted a science, and was cultivated as the science of sciences, which opened the way to an apprehension of all natural things. But as men became gradually more corrupt in their lives, they also by degrees perverted, falsified, and finally lost the knowledge of the science, leaving to us only the signs of its existence, in the mythologies, monumental remains, and hieroglyphics of the nations of the Old World. In our day, however, this science has again been restored to mankind, and may be found in the writings of Swedenborg. From them you will learn that all Sacred Scripture, from beginning to end, in its literal form consists of correspondences, and that a knowledge of them, will enable you to explain all those apparent contradictions and inconsistencies which have induced our contemporaries to doubt its holiness, and even to reject it altogether.

On the ground of the correspondence of the natural to the spiritual world, and of the truth that the spirit of man is a small spiritual world, it is clear that all the objects of the natural world will be in this relation to the affections and thoughts of man, which constitute his spirit. To illustrate this statement, and to prepare your mind for the right apprehension of what is to follow, I will here specify some of these correspond-

ences. Thus: the earth in general corresponds to man, as a whole; its various products which serve for the nourishment and sustenance of the human race, correspond to the various kinds of good and of truth which nourish and sustain the life of affection and thought; solid meats to the several kinds of good, and liquid food to the various kinds of truth. Animals correspond to affections; the useful and gentle to good affections; and the useless and hurtful to evil affections. Birds correspond to thoughts; the gentle and beautiful to true thoughts, and birds of night and of prey to false thoughts. Fishes correspond to the various forms of scientific knowledge, attained by means of the senses; reptiles to sensual and bodily pleasures; and hurtful insects to the low, external falsities that originate in the senses. Trees and shrubs, and grasses, correspond to different kinds and degrees of intelligence and knowledge. The metals, as gold and silver, correspond the one to celestial good, and the other to spiritual truth; brass to natural good, and iron to natural truth; and common stones to sensual truths, whilst the precious stones correspond to spiritual truths. And so also, in regard to the various things which man makes for his use, out of the material substances of the earth, as houses and garments, they all correspond to some principle in his will or understanding. The house, as the dwelling place of man, corresponds

to the forms of affection and thought in which he dwells, or is, spiritually; in general, to man's state of goodness and truth, or of evil and falsity. And garments, which are made to clothe and protect his body, according to their substance, quality, color, and form, correspond to the truths or falsities which clothe his affections and their life.

This brief view of the doctrine of correspondence will be sufficient to enable you to understand the statement, that the world of spirit surrounding every spirit, is an image of the spirit himself. As a spirit is a human being, and the natural earth corresponds to man; so each spirit forms to himself, as it were, an earth on which he lives; having a will and understanding, with their affections and thoughts, he builds himself a house or habitation, and dwells therein; receiving into his mind either truths or falsities, he clothes himself with them, as with garments. And such as is the state of his spirit, and of his affections and thoughts, such will be the nature of his earth as to fertility and aspect; the splendor or squalor of his dwelling; the richness and beauty, or coarseness and wretchedness of his garments. And finally, as each spirit is open to the reception of a multitude of affections and thoughts, and of feelings, ideas, views and opinions derived from them, so is he surrounded by objects belonging to the three kingdoms, and formed out of them, all of which correspond



to and image forth the human life that is in him.

As a man-spirit's ordinary habitation and place of abode correspond to the habitual state of his will and understanding, he remains in them so long as this state continues, without, however, being altogether confined to them. For, even as he can come under the influence of other states of affection and thought, so also can he, and will he pass to the abodes of other spirits, in the World of Spirits, even to those which are inhabited by spirits from other planets of our natural universe. But with a change of state, always comes a change of habitation. And such changes are very frequent in the intermediate world, into which man enters after the death of the body, for the purpose of being prepared by successive changes either for heaven or for hell. In the course of this preparation he passes from one abode to another, as he progresses from one state to another, until he is ready to enter into his final habitation.

To understand how it is possible for spirits, inhabiting widely separated regions of the World of Spirits, to be present with each other, it is only necessary to remind you of the truth, that they are forms of affection and thought, and as such, no more under the limitations of space and time, than are those affections and thoughts themselves, even in the natural world. Space

cannot bound a human love, any more than time can limit the extension of human thought. The intervening ocean does not sever a friendship, nor prevent the going forth and passage of all that is good and true in the mind towards the friend, who in thought is seen as clearly, and in the sound of his voice which lingers in the memory, is heard as distinctly as when present in the material body. Drop the covering of matter, in which the man is clothed, and you will perceive the spiritual nearness of the affection, which is the man himself, or the man-spirit, as he appears in the other world.

The future life of man, as to its nature and quality, as to its happiness or misery, depends altogether upon the nature and quality of the life which he acquires to himself in this world. If, during his abode on earth, he has been entirely under the government of an evil will, even to its end, it will not be possible for him to effect a change in this respect, when he passes over; and even such truth as he may have procured to himself, will be taken from him in the intermediate state. If, on the other hand, good has predominated in his will, he will remain good, and be freed from the danger of again falling under the power of evil; and such falsities as he may have imbibed, will be removed from his mind.

In the other world, therefore, a man appears to be, what he actually is, a form of his ruling love,

which being there free to act, conforms all within and without him, to itself, and presents him in himself, and in his surroundings, as either a good or an evil spirit, in a beautiful or hideous form. For there all things of the external, are in entire correspondence with the whole internal man.

I shall continue my sketch of the world of spirits in my next letter, and will here add but one observation, and to this effect: that the dependence of the future happiness or misery of man, upon the quality of the ruling love to which he opens himself, and which he cherishes in this life, is a doctrine as simple and practical, as it is of momentous importance. No one can fail to see, that he who receives it as true, must needs be led to strive after such a change of his life, as shall constantly bring it into greater conformity with what the Truth teaches to be right and good. To him repentance, will be an actual shunning of his evils as sins; faith a living observance of every divine commandment; and life itself, such a loving of what is good, that he shall be gradually freed from the power of falsehood and of evil lust, and come forth into that genuine liberty of doing right because it is right, and good because it is good, and because both are from God; in which alone man appears in the image and after the likeness of his Creator.

## XIII.

The language of spirits.—Man's internal and external memory.—Swedenborg's experience in regard to memory in the other world.—Thought and language.—Origin of language.

**I**N my last letter I endeavored to show the similarity of the worlds, in which man lives before and after death, and which have but this characteristic difference, that the one is natural, and the other spiritual. I also sought to make plain to you that although the world of spirits is the external manifestation of the affections and thoughts of its inhabitants, they are not debarred from intercourse either with those whom they have known during their life in this world, or with such spirits as have lived in different countries, and even in different worlds. But, since intercourse among spirits, as among men, can be effected only by means of some kind of language, the question naturally arises, "In what language do spirits converse with one another?"

Modern philosophers and theologians will, no doubt, regard this as a very unnecessary question. Why should they trouble themselves about the language of spirits, when a spirit has no or-

gans of speech, and when the other world contains neither substances nor forms, being but an immense void, or rather a mere figment of the imagination?

Such ideas may suffice for the study, but will utterly fail to give support in the trials of life, or even to find support themselves when actual experience brings them to the heart and reason.

Suppose one of these spiritualistic philosophers to lose a beloved child. In vain will he have recourse to the arguments of his school on the immortality of the soul; they will prove powerless to assuage his grief; they will not aid him to revive the form of his child, his smile, his graces, his infantile prattle, each word of which struck upon his ear so melodiously — all these are gone, all destroyed for ever. This is the word of his philosophy, and he repeats it in despair. But, suddenly, a ray of light pierces the thick darkness of his understanding; a thought lifts his eyes to heaven, and presents his child as one of those angels whom artists paint in pictures; and thus looking up, his heart is lightened and his breathing relieved. Oh, how precious this thought! how it soothes his grief! What would he not give to be allowed to retain it; but his reason, perverted by false science, soon deprives him of this only consolation, and he sinks back again into gloomy despair. Oh! ye philosophers! dearly do you pay for the small pleasure you de-

rive from your science! Why will you not go to true theology? Its teachings will help you to help yourselves, as well as those whom you desire to instruct?

Suppose a theologian to visit his mother, whom death has just deprived of her husband,—what arguments does he employ to soothe her grief? Does he tell her, that after the lapse of ages she will again see him for whom she now mourns? Does he himself, in his affliction, believe that he will not see his father again, until after the complete destruction of our world? Such thoughts are not in his mind. At that moment he believes that the object of their tears is still in a human form. Listen how he seeks to comfort his parent. You will see him again; moderate your grief; we shall meet him again, when the Lord sees fit to call us to Him. Overcome by filial sorrow, he discards, for a time, his false science, and a ray of truth penetrates to his heart.

How often do our philosophers and theologians thus contradict their own systems, when the truth reaches their understandings through the openings made by the trials and experiences of actual life! But, returned to their studies, they will not listen to a word about the existence of the spirit or the soul in human form; about the reality of the other world, or of its spiritual substances and forms; and were you to tell them that the inhabitants of that world hold converse with each other as we

do here, they would laugh you to scorn. Let us, however, not laugh at their blindness, but pity them; the greater their conceit of intelligence, the more deserving of commiseration are they.

The question before us, therefore, is not whether spirits speak, or do not speak; for having admitted that they have mouths, tongues, and ears, and are surrounded by spiritual atmospheres, we must needs concede to them the power of producing sounds, and of hearing those which are produced by others. What remains to us, is to examine the nature of the language which spirits employ in their intercourse with one another. This investigation will again require some digressions on my part; for, if it is true that the language of man, in this world, depends upon his memory and his thoughts, the same must be true of him when he lives in the world of spirits. I shall, therefore, have to treat first of the memory of man, and afterwards of his thought.

With the loss of all true spiritual knowledge, men have lost the ability to solve those problems which, like the one before us, are most intimately connected with the happiness of mankind. They are as much in the dark in discussing the memory, as they are in treating of the immortality of the soul. And how can it be otherwise? Do not all these questions depend upon the general principle, that every thing natural envelops something spiritual, to which it corresponds? This

principle they ignore. Were they to receive it, they could not fail to see that man has two memories ; the one natural and exterior, and the other spiritual and interior ; and that these two memories, however easily confounded, are still distinct and separate from one another.

The confusion existing in regard to the two memories need not surprise us, when we reflect how readily we confound the spiritual, and the natural man. Not perceiving the existence of a spiritual man in his natural man, how can we expect that one shall recognize the existence of a spiritual memory in his natural memory ? Besides, it is but seldom a subject of thought and reflection with him, absorbed as he is in the concerns of the bodily life, and difficult, as he finds it, to divert his attention from them.

Whatever man thinks, wishes, speaks and does, whatever he hears and sees, is impressed upon his interior memory, and remains there for ever. Nothing of what is so received is ever entirely effaced from the memory ; nor is it there mingled with other things, however numerous they may be. This lies in the very constitution of man, which, as you will recollect, is such as to enable him to receive impressions from the whole of heaven and from the whole of the world, he being a heaven and a world in miniature, to the formation of which all heaven, and all the world conspire. Adding to this the consideration that



man is created into the image and after the likeness of God, and that, as there are infinite things in God, so there may be indefinite things in man ; you will readily understand the statement that man is capable of receiving an indefinite number of distinct impressions both from heaven and from the world. These are stored up in the interior memory, and there preserved for ever ; and among them are included even the impressions of those things which having become habitual, are entirely effaced from the exterior memory. The interior memory constitutes man's book of life.

When man leaves this world, he may enjoy in full his interior or spiritual memory, but he is not altogether deprived of external memory, although no longer in a natural body. For whilst it is true that the things which are deposited in the latter, have found entrance by means of the natural senses, the principle which has taken cognizance of them, is spiritual, and is made subject to impressions derived from them. These impressions themselves do not penetrate deeply into the spirit of man, remaining rather on its threshold ; but the particulars of which they are composed, and the matters of thought eliminated from them by the reason, being relatively spiritual, do enter further, and help to make up the interior memory. Both these memories, therefore, belong to the spirit of man, and he takes them into the other

world, when he leaves this. The impressions upon the external memory, however, being made by natural and not by spiritual objects, and the former being subject to the laws of space and time, man is not permitted, of his own will, when in the other life to make use of it. To allow him to do so, would be to defeat one object of his departure from earth, which is to withdraw his mind from the thought of things merely external and corporeal. The outermost degree of the spirit, therefore, which is open in this world, is closed upon man's entrance into the other. But this does not immediately give him the full use of all that is contained in his interior memory, or enable him at once to act and speak therefrom; for as I showed in my last letter, most persons upon their entrance into the world of spirits, are not in such a condition of agreement and harmony with themselves, that their external can fully express their internal life. In the beginning of their stay in the world of spirits, men act, therefore, from a memory which is very similar to that which they had in this world; with this difference, that its outward things become spiritually representative, to the gradual removal of all ideas of space and time, and the substitution in their place, of ideas of state. So long as this condition lasts, man seems to himself to be living in the world which he has left. By degrees, however, his true nature, as it has been placed up-

on record in his interior memory, breaks through these representative forms derived from his external memory, and dispels them; and he appears outwardly, what he is internally. Having reached this state, if his ruling love has been good, he is prepared to enter into the first heaven, which corresponds to the interior memory of man. There is a more intimate memory, however, holding the same relation to the interior, which this bears to the external. This more intimate memory contains the least particulars of the interior memory, and corresponds to the second heaven. As the external or corporeal memory must pass away before man can enter into the first heaven, so the interior memory, corresponding to the first heaven, must pass away, in order to enable him to enter into the second heaven; and the memory of this heaven again must be dispelled in order that man may enter into the third. This last, however, takes place only with those who are fitted to become angels of the third heaven.

I have said that the lower memories must pass away, or be dispelled, in order to enable man to rise into the superior heavens—but this is speaking according to appearances. To the angels of the second and third heavens it appears, indeed, as though their lower memories were dispelled, and had passed away, for they live in a brighter and purer atmosphere, into which the things of their

lower memories cannot penetrate. But they are not actually dispelled; they remain with them, but only in a quiescent state; just as during sleep, man's natural body is quiescent and passive, while his inner consciousness, freed for a season, from the trammels of space and time, revels in the bright spirit-world, whither he is borne in his dreams. In the other world, when an angel rises into a superior heaven, the lower degrees of his mind, with their memories, become quiescent; and they remain so to all eternity, being never disturbed from their slumber, except when it pleases the Lord to send the angel into a lower sphere of heaven, or to associate him with man; in which case they are temporarily excited into activity again, and he is enabled by their means, to converse with beings who are in the heavens of those lower degrees. As soon, however, as the special divine purposes of this mission have been fulfilled, the angel returns into his own heaven, and the lower degrees of his mind again become quiescent.

I made the assertion a little while ago, that the happiness of mankind is intimately connected with the solution of the problem of the memory. It is a solemn fact, indeed, when properly understood, that every act and word of man, nay his very thoughts and feelings are stored up in the memory, and remain there as a part of his mental constitution to all eternity, exerting an influ-

ence either for good or for evil. How important for us to know this, if it is so! In order to throw more light on this subject, I propose to adduce some of Swedenborg's experiences with respect to the condition of man's memory after death. It is of course optional with you to believe or not, but if what he says is in *keeping* with his system of philosophy and theology, as thus far developed in my letters, it is at least worthy of your calmest consideration. In his work on "*Heaven and Hell*" 462 (*bis*) he says :

"That man has with him from the world the whole of his memory, has been shown me by many proofs. Many things worthy of being mentioned have been seen and heard by me in this connection ; some of these I will now relate in their order. There were some who denied the crimes and enormities, which they had committed in the world ; wherefore, lest they should be considered innocent, all these things were disclosed, and recited in order, from their memory, from the first period of their life to the last ; these were mainly adulteries and whoredoms. There were some who had practised deception upon others by wicked arts, and had committed thefts ; their tricks and thefts were also enumerated in their order, most of which were scarcely known to any one in the world, except to themselves alone. They also acknowledged them, because they were made manifest as if in broad daylight, with all the thoughts, intentions, pleasures and fears, which had occupied their minds at the time. There were some again who had taken bribes, and made a trade of their judicial func-

tions: these also were explored as to their memory, and their crimes were exhibited from the beginning of their judgeship to its end; each special instance was brought up both as to the amount of the bribe and its nature, with the time, and the state of their mind and intention; all these things were recalled at the same time and displayed to their sight; these instances were more than many hundreds—this was done with several, and (what was wonderful) their very memorandum books, in which they had entered these things, were opened, and read to them, page after page. There were others who had beguiled virgins to acts of fornication, and had violated chastity; these were brought to a similar judgment, and all the circumstances were taken from their memory and recited; the very faces of the virgins and women were also exhibited, as if they were present, together with the places, the words that passed between them, and the state of their minds; and this was done as suddenly, as when a scene is presented to view—such exposures sometimes lasted for several hours. There was one who accounted backbiting as nothing; I heard his backbitings, and also his defamations brought out in order with the same words which he had employed, and the persons about whom and to whom he had uttered them; all these things were produced and presented to the life at the same time; and yet his practices had been carefully concealed by him, while he lived in the world. There was a certain person who had deprived a relative of his inheritance under a fraudulent pretext; he too was convicted and judged in a similar manner; and, what was wonderful, the letters and papers that had passed between them, were read in my hearing, and

I was informed that not a word was wanting. The same person also, a short time before his death, had clandestinely murdered his neighbor by poison; this was brought to light in the following manner: He was seen digging a hole at his feet, and when it was dug, a man came out of it, as from a grave, and cried out to him, 'What hast thou done to me?' Every thing was then revealed; how the poisoner had conversed with him in a friendly manner, and handed to him the fatal cup; also what he had thought previously, and what happened afterwards; all which having been brought to light, he was condemned to hell. In short, all evils, criminal deeds, robberies, artifices, deceptions of every evil spirit are disclosed; they are taken from his own memory, and he is convicted; nor is there any room for denial, since all the circumstances appear at the same time. I also heard, while the memory of some one was being inspected and explored by angels, what he had thought during a whole month, day after day, and this without the least mistake; every thing being recalled just as it had occurred on those days. From these examples it may appear, that man has his whole memory with him; and that nothing is so concealed in this world, as not to be made manifest after death; and that, too, in the presence of many witnesses; according to these words of the Lord: *'There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.'* — (Luke xii. 2, 3.)

463. "When a man's actions are brought to light

after death, then the angels to whom the duty of this investigation is assigned, inspect his face, and afterward extend their investigation over the whole body, commencing with the fingers of both hands, and then proceeding to the rest of the body. As I wondered thereat, I was told the cause, viz. that, as the particulars of the thought and will are inscribed upon the brain, for their beginnings are there, so also are they inscribed upon the whole body; for every thing of the thought and the will is conveyed thither from its beginnings, and terminates there as in its ultimates: whence it is that the things inscribed upon man's memory from his will and thence from his thought, are inscribed not only upon the brain, but also upon the whole man, and that they exist there in order, according to the order of the parts of the body. It was made hence evident to me, that man is such in the whole, as he is in his will and in his thought thence derived, so that a bad man is his own evil, and a good man his own good. From this it may also appear, what is meant by the book of man's life, which is spoken of in the Word, viz. that every act as well as every thought is inscribed upon the whole man, and that they appear as if read out of a book, when they are called forth from the memory, and as if seen in effigy, when the spirit is viewed in the light of heaven.

“To these things I wish to add the following memorable circumstance respecting the memory of man as remaining after death; by which I became confirmed, that not only the generals but also the smallest particulars which have ever entered the memory, abide there, and are never obliterated. I saw some books, with writing in them, such as are in the world, and I



was informed that they were books taken from the memory of those who had written them, and that there was not a single word wanting, that had been in the book written by them in the world; that thus the smallest particulars, even those that had been forgotten in the world, could be recalled from any one's memory. The reason of this was also discovered; which is, that man has an external and an internal memory, the external memory being that of his natural man, and the internal memory that of his spiritual man; and that every thing that man thought, willed, spoke, did, and even what he heard and saw, is inscribed upon his internal or spiritual memory; and further, that the things there are never effaced, because, as I stated above, they are inscribed, at the same time, on the spirit itself, and upon the members of his body; and that the spirit is thus formed according to the thoughts and acts of his will. I am well aware that these statements appear paradoxical, and will therefore scarcely be believed, but they are, nevertheless, true. Let not, therefore, any man believe, that there is any thing which he has thought in his own breast, or has done in secret, that can be hidden after death; but let him be assured that everything, in general and in particular, will then be manifest as in open day."

I have transcribed these passages for two reasons. First, because the details and principles they contain, throw much light upon the subject which we are now discussing; and, secondly, because I wished to show you with what candor Swedenborg relates what he saw, although he

well knew how difficult it would be for men to believe his statements. Let us now return to the external or natural memory. I said above that the merely natural things which are in that memory, cannot be reproduced in the other life, on account of their being subject to the laws of space and time. Among these are necessarily included the words of human language, which are produced by means of organs and forces subject to the laws of space and time; and which have even been successfully imitated by mechanical contrivances, showing conclusively that our spoken words are but modifications of the natural atmosphere, of which written words are but material signs. There can therefore be no place or use for our natural languages in the world of spirits. If there are books in that world, which seem to contain words, such as we have in our books, these are but representative appearances; for, as I told you above, the contents of the natural memory can be represented in the other world, by means of spiritual appearances, in which the ideas of state are substituted for those of space and time. The identical words, however, which are employed in this world, are useless to us in the other life; of this I will endeavor to convince you.

The language of man depends not only upon his memory, but also upon his thought. This requires some examination of the nature of the thought. Please give me, for a moment, your

undivided attention. If man will reflect upon what takes place within himself, he will see that his language is nothing but his thought speaking by means of certain organs of his body. Man's thought, in reality, is either active or passive; it is active when he speaks, and passive when he is silent. His active thought, which may also be called his thought speaking, is expressed by a mode peculiar to itself, and by the activity of its speech excites those organs of the body which correspond to language. On first appearance it might seem, indeed, as if the words of the language were in the thought; but to conclude that this is so, would be to judge from appearances. It is one of the many illusions, which surround us. If the progress of physical science has laid bare so many illusions of the senses, which for thousands of years were received as realities, should not the progress of theology and philosophy be productive of like results? This appearance then, that the words of man's language are in his thought, is a mere illusion. In the thought is only the meaning of what is spoken, and this is the language of the spirit. If it does not so appear to man, it is because the meaning and the word are so intimately conjoined, that he meets with as much difficulty in separating the one from the other, as he does in separating his spirit from his body, or his motive from his act. But, if he will reflect, he will see this great differ-

ence between the language of thought and of words, that it is possible for him to think more in one moment than he can express by words in many minutes; and more, that there are many things in his thought, which he cannot express at all by words. If the words were in the thought, this could not be the case.

But, you will ask, wherein consists the language of man's thought? I will answer the question briefly.

Man's thought is composed of ideas, as a sentence is composed of words. In the language of spirits, therefore, one idea of thought follows another, as in the language of the body, one word follows another; but the ideas of thought succeed one another so rapidly, that during our life in this world it seems to us, as if thought were continuous, and offered no distinctions.— See *Arcana Cœlestia*, 6599.

The language of man's spirit is composed of the ideas of his thought, and by its influx into the correspondent organs of the body the language of words is produced. When, therefore, man departs from this world, and lives in the spirit, he leaves behind him the words of all the human languages which he has ever known, and takes with him only the ideas that are contained therein. For there is an inner and an outer form in the languages spoken by men; the inner form contains the meaning of the words,

and the outer form is composed of vowels and consonants. The inner form of the words of natural language enters into the external memory which man takes with him into the other life, but the outer form remains in the body, which he leaves behind him in the natural world. "Human thought," says Swedenborg, "then [in the other life] becomes more distinct and clearer, and the ideas of thought become discrete, so as to serve for distinct forms of speech; for its obscurity is dissipated with the body; and thus the thought, being freed as it were of the shackles by which it was encumbered, and consequently of the shades, in which it was involved, becomes more instantaneous, and the intuition, perception and utterance of the least particulars becomes more immediate." — A. C. 1757.

The ideas of thought are then in the place of words; and these ideas which cannot be distinguished on earth, are manifested clearly, and become the distinct forms of our language, after we lay aside our natural body. You must not think, however, that this language remains mute; it is expressed, like that of men, by means of sounds which are produced and heard like those of our language; for spirits, as you have already seen, have a mouth, a tongue and ears, and are surrounded by an atmosphere; they breathe therefore, and by means of their breath, and organs of speech, produce words like men in our

world. The ideas of their thought, and the words of their language, however, are one, as the efficient cause and the effect are one; for what exists as a cause, in the ideas of their thought, manifests itself as an effect in their words.

This explanation of the language of spirits may throw light upon the great problem of the ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE. I shall not undertake to enter into a full discussion of this important subject, but shall limit myself to a statement of the principles, by which this problem can alone be solved.

Laying it down as a first principle, that the language of man is his thought speaking, I remark, that as the thought is composed of ideas, so language is composed of words. Words are the representatives of ideas; and as thought gives rise to language, so ideas give rise to words. According to the ideas, therefore, will be the words. If the ideas are spiritual and lofty, the words will be of a like nature; and if the ideas are low and grovelling, the words will bear the same character. In the beginning, when the ideas of men were spiritual and rational, their language was noble and highborn; but when they declined into corruption, and became sensual and corporeal, their language suffered a corresponding degradation.

Words are produced from ideas, by correspondence. As affections are expressed by cor-

responding sounds — so that from the sounds which a man utters, we know whether he is glad, happy, morose or sad ; and as there is the greatest variety of these sounds, on account of the great variety of affections, so also are ideas expressed by corresponding articulations, which are as numerous and various as are the ideas of the human mind. The sound of a word corresponds to an affection, and its articulation to an idea.

The origin of language itself is due to love or affection ; for love manifests itself by thought, and thought by language. The love or will of men, acting upon their wisdom or understanding, produces language as its natural effect. Language, therefore, is natural, not conventional ; it is as natural to man, as barking to a dog, neighing to a horse, and singing to a bird.

As the same affection produces the same sound by the organs of different individuals, so did the same ideas originally produce the same articulations. In the degree, therefore, in which men understood their own language, they understood that of their fellow-men. This is the principle by which spirits understand each other's language. Spirits, however, have not only the most exquisite perception of the articulation of words, or of the part corresponding to ideas, but they have also the most delicate appreciation of the sounds, by which these articulations are animated, and, con-

sequently, of the affections from which the thoughts proceed.

As long as the interiors of men freely flowed into their exteriors, and produced corresponding effects, so long was language natural, and every man understood his fellow-men. But when an antagonism arose between men's interiors and exteriors, and between their interior and exterior thought; and when the interior thought was thus checked in its influx into the organs of the body, then an external or sensual language arose, which became the expression of the material or sensual ideas of man's external memory. This language which is artificial, and not natural, conceals the inward thought to such a degree, that a celebrated diplomatist was not so far wrong in defining language to be an instrument for concealing one's thoughts. It is artificial, not in the sense, that it is manufactured by nations or tribes, met together in convention for the purpose of making a language; but in this sense, that the men composing different nations can no longer understand one another's thought, without having previously learnt one another's language.

In some of my last letters I alluded to the fact, that the peoples inhabiting our earth, in the sight of the Lord, appear as one Grand Man, and that the different nations constitute its several members. As every member of the human body has its peculiar function, and thus its peculiar char-



acter, by which it is distinguished from every other member, so also every nation has a peculiar character, by which it is distinguished from every other nation. This character, in which all the individuals of a nation participate, is a distinct species of will, expressed by a corresponding form of thought; and this particular form of thought is expressed in the national language which it employs as the vehicle of its thoughts. Compared with the language of spirits, and with that of men before the fall, these national languages are general and external, while the former are individual and internal.

The languages which are now spoken on earth, are therefore, correspondences of thought, just as much as was the language of primitive man, and as is the language of spirits in the spiritual world; and the theory is entirely untenable, which maintains the invention of languages, by conventional or artificial processes, such as are employed in the making of civil constitutions and the enactment of civil laws. Modern philosophical investigations into the origin of language all tend to show, that it is produced from the ideas of thought by correspondence; and it is interesting to see how some later philologists, who evidently know nothing of Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondence, are yet led to admit the existence of such a power in the generation of language. I refer you particularly to the work of Prof. Steinthal of the

University of Berlin, on "Grammar, Logic, and Psychology," § 87, in which he uses the term "Reflexion" or "Reflexbewegung" to express what we call "correspondence."

## XIV.

Form of the man-spirit in the world of spirits. — Why man grows old in the natural world, and not in the spiritual world. — Immortality upon earth, if possible, an insupportable burden. — In the spiritual world, the old man and the child become men in the flower of their age, the one by growing young, the other by growing old. — How one grows young again in the spiritual world. — Examples.

WE will continue our investigations of the life of spirits. In the preceding letters we considered man at the moment when he leaves the natural, and is introduced into the spiritual world. We saw him there, surrounded by other spirits, speaking their language without ever having learned it, associating with those whose characters bear the greatest resemblance to his own, and preserving his individuality by means of a human form, which is proper to him, and which distinguishes him from other spirits. Let us now examine this form, and, first of all, see whether it is the same which he had when he left our world.

As the other life is a continuation of this, and death is but the passage from one world into another, the first moments of the new existence ought to be a continuation of the last moments of

the preceding, seeing that all orderly changes, in the spiritual, as well as in the material universe, are gradual, and not sudden. Man, when he enters into the other life, preserves therefore the outward appearance by which he was recognized in this world: the infant enters it as an infant; the young man with all his youthful vigor; and the old man with his wrinkles and decrepitude. But, although he thus appears at first, in the exteriors of his spiritual body, after having laid aside his material covering, he does not remain in them. This second covering of his real spiritual body, is successively put off, and no trace of it is left, when he passes from the world of spirits, either into heaven, or into hell. In this new phase of his life, man, therefore, undergoes a process by which the interiors of his spirit being rendered manifest, his face becomes evermore the mirror of his affections, or rather of his ruling love; and, from the perpetual endeavor of this love to ultimate itself, according as it is either good or evil, his features and the expression of his countenance grow more beautiful or more hideous.

This will need no demonstration, here, as it follows legitimately from the principles already established.

But you may ask, as others have, when informed of the mode of man's existence in the other world, *Do human beings become young again?*

The answer to this question is necessarily involved in the preceding, as the fact of an increase of beauty in his countenance, does not prove that a man has returned to the bloom and vigor of life. But let us, for the present, consider the case of one who has reached old age; of whom we say, that in the other life, if his ruling love is good, he is not a beautiful old man, with the tastes and inclinations of a wise old age; but that he grows young again, and has all the tastes and inclinations of a wise young man.

Our affirmative statement may be satisfactory to those who regret that they are no longer young, but not to the mind of the thoughtful and inquiring, who desire to know more; who wish to understand how this transformation can be effected. As I do not include you among those who are satisfied with a simple affirmation, I will try to explain, how it is possible for such a change to take place in the world of spirits.

First of all, let me present to you some considerations against the conclusion, that because we have observed a certain order or growth in the natural world, as from youth to old age, this order must also obtain in the spiritual world.

It is a law of organic nature, that, after its forms have reached their maximum degree of strength and size, they enter upon a period of decadence, which terminates in their final dissolution. Such is the case with the human body,

which, in this world, never passes from the feebleness of age to the vigor of manhood; for the virtues of the fountain of youth exist but in the imagination of the poet, or in the fables of superstition. What repinings and regrets are not daily occasioned by this law of order! And yet it is a law ordained of infinite love and wisdom. Consider for a moment, the consequences of the perpetual youth, and eternal existence of man on this earth, and you will not fail to appreciate the merciful provision of the Creator in this law of natural order.

Our world changes its inhabitants three or four times in a century, and yet men complain of being over-crowded. Though this complaint may be just only in regard to the population of certain limited portions of the earth's surface; still it would be easy to show, that if there were no diminution by death, the natural increase of the human family, at its present rate, would in a few years cover the earth with a multitude beyond its capacity to sustain. A period would soon be reached, at which absolute necessity would put an end to any further propagation of the human species; when the list of births being closed, the youngest of men would be looking forward to his many thousand years of terrestrial immortality, in which to bear the wearisome burden of a life without change, without prospect of a higher and better future, without hope of liberation from the

bonds of matter, without possibility of ever entering into the fulness of the spirit's existence in the image and after the likeness of God.

And God himself, in permitting a limitation of the number of earth's inhabitants, whilst limiting the operations of his creative power, would cease to reveal his infinity in his works. For, even as he is infinite, so are all his works in nature, unlimited. He expresses his divine infinity in the natural indefinity of the created world.

That indefinite things may exist in the natural universe, which is subject to the laws of space and time, it is absolutely requisite that all forms of vegetable and animal existence, should pass through periods of increase and decrease, of birth and death; should come and go, in order that others after them, may come and go in endless succession.

It is therefore, a provision of infinite love and wisdom, that the earthly life of man, for whom the Universe was created, has a fixed and certain limit, and that he must look forward to the enjoyment of immortality, — his inalienable birth-right, by virtue of his creation into the image of God — only in a spiritual world, which, being above space and time, is of boundless extension, and immeasurable capacity, so that it may receive into itself, to all eternity, the generations of men, who shall successively dwell upon, and pass away from this earth.

Blind indeed, are they who desire no other world but this, and from intense longing for the perpetuity of their life on earth, blaspheme the Deity, by violent denunciations of the law that limits the natural existence of man. Their desire flows not from the instinct of self-preservation; but it is an abuse of that natural and orderly impulse, which God has implanted in men as well as in animals, for the sake of the uses of their creation. These uses require the existence as well as the change of agencies, for their performance; but as the determination of the one, and of the other, must rest in the wisdom which provides both the uses and the instrumentalities of their accomplishment, it is as clearly abusive of divine order, for man to demand a permanence of his earthly functions, as it is to put a sudden and violent end to them. Hence there is implanted in him, as in the animal, a natural, instinctive fear of death; which, in the absence of religion in the former, and of reason in the latter, holds them in the way of the fulfilment of the objects of their creation, and subserves the great ends of God's providence by operating as a subsidiary law of that divine preservation, which is perpetual creation. But, as man has been created to live upon this earth, for a certain purpose, it is clear, that the fulfilment of this purpose also involves the termination of his natural life. Death comes to him then, as a means



of change in the mode of his existence, which he reaches after having advanced in the bodily life to the maximum degree of strength and vigor, and returned again to the last degree of weakness, through the successive stages of infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, old age and decrepitude. Man grows old in this world, because it is appointed unto him to pass over into another, in which he shall remain to eternity. And it is just because he is to remain there to eternity, that death, with its premonitions of advancing age and declining vigor, are conditions, necessarily excluded from human existence in the spiritual world. The world of spirits, it is true, into which man first goes after the death of the body, is but a preparatory state, which he leaves again, to enter finally upon a definite spiritual state; but the passage from the one to the other, can in no way be compared to the passage by death. It is but a transition from one spiritual condition to another, and not a change in the mode of existence, or a translation from natural place to spiritual state, such as is effected by the decease of the body; and, as you will see, in this passage the spirit does not grow old, but advances into ever greater and fuller strength and vigor of life.

I shall now return to our first question: How does man grow young again in the spiritual world? To present this subject in clearer light,

let me illustrate it by a few examples. And first, I will take the case of an old man whose ruling love is good. On leaving this world, he enters into the world of spirits with his own physiognomy; he carries with him his decrepitude; and the tastes and inclinations of old age follow him; for he is still in the exteriors of his spirit. To such an extent, is this the case, that he would believe himself to be in our world, were he not deprived of the company of those whom he has left behind, and did he not behold near him some of those who had preceded him into the other life. In order now to see what becomes of this decrepit spiritual body in his new abode, let us call to our aid the analogy which exists between the laws of natural, and spiritual order.

You are well aware, that in the natural world the material body undergoes continual changes. Imperceptible as they are, they nevertheless are so real that it may be truly said of the body which we inhabit to-day, that it is not the same in which we dwelt yesterday. You know also, that these changes are due to the continual expenditure of force and material required by the exercise of the bodily functions; and the constant reception of new supplies from food and the surrounding atmosphere. Why should this not take place in the spiritual body in the world of spirits? Has it not an organization similar to that of the material body? Does it not live upon an earth in ap-

pearance like ours, teeming with a variety of products, and surrounded by an atmosphere? Why, then, should it not exercise the same functions, and undergo the same changes, by wear and repair, as our body does in the natural world? But if these successive changes, are ever accompanied in this world, by an advance in age, why should they be associated with a progress in the opposite direction, in the other world? Whence this contradiction? It arises from the characteristic difference of the two worlds. Here we live in time, and are subject to the laws of time; these give us the succession of periods, which we call ages of life. In the other world, however, time and its laws not existing, periods, or ages of life necessarily disappear, and are replaced by states. Created into the image and after the likeness of God, who is **VERY MAN**, our normal state is that of manhood, and not of childhood, in which the human faculties are as yet undeveloped; much less of old age, in which those faculties are consumed and paralyzed. But, since all things of order, progress by degrees, and not by sudden and abrupt changes, as I have repeatedly shown, you will readily understand that those who enter the other world either as children, or as old men, can reach the state of manhood, in the one case, only by a gradual development of their faculties and powers; and in the other, by their gradual renovation and restoration.

Let us now recur to the case of the old man, whose ruling love is good, and observe the process by which the change is effected in him. As you are aware, every man is under the government of some ruling love, and whatever this is, when he enters into the other world, it remains with him to eternity. In the instance under consideration, this love being good, it will necessarily impart its quality to all the affections, which are derived from it; and, being also the active principle of his life, it will determine all its activities towards the good, and in opposition to such evil affections as may still adhere to the external nature. These latter, being driven to the circumference of the man's life, and having their connection with its inmost, and moving principle severed, will gradually be deprived of all activity within him, and become quiescent. Concurrently with this process of voluntary and affectional defecation, there will take place an intellectual operation of a like nature, in the understanding, which ever follows the bent and inclination of the will. By this, the falsities that still adhere to the external mind, will by degrees be shorn of all operative power, in consequence of the growing influence of the spiritual light of truth, until they also are rendered altogether inoperative, and finally quiesce in that part of the memory which is closed. Whilst, and indeed because this is going on within the

man, there is exhibited a corresponding manifestation in his outward course and conduct. The internal life with its changes, represents itself in the external, and the man passes through one kind of external surroundings to another, as he progresses from the society of spirits of one class and character, to that of another; and from having at first sought the companionship of those who were aged, like himself, he by degrees chooses his associates from among those who are younger, and in a state more in agreement with that which he has attained. If now, I tell you, that simultaneously with this advancing internal and external life, the atmosphere which the man breathes becomes purer, and the food which he takes, more delicate and nutritious, you may be disposed to inquire whether my description is not growing figurative, and whether I really mean that spirits make use of food? My dear sir, my language is not figurative; I mean what I say. And why should you be surprised at the statement that spirits eat and drink in the other life, when you admit that they breathe? Why should there not be food in the other world, if there are lands, animals of every kind, fields with their crops, gardens with fruit-trees, and, in short, every thing that exists upon our earth? If the man-spirit has a spiritual body, will it not require nourishment? And how can it be nourished, if not from the productions of the spiritual

world? "It is true," you will reply: "I have admitted all these things, but only on the ground of their being correspondences of the affections and thoughts of spirits; but the nourishment of a man-spirit I supposed to consist in good affections and true thoughts, with the good, and in evil affections and false thoughts, with the wicked."

This is precisely what I understand to be the case; but I beg you to observe that it is a principle in spiritual matters, that every internal act is manifested by a corresponding external act. It is this manifestation of internals in externals, which causes the spiritual world to be a world, and a recognition of this can alone preserve us from lapsing into the false systems of philosophers and theologians, who, in their endeavor to idealize the other life, present us with theories so hollow and utterly inadmissible, that in the absence of any other instruction, but few men at the present day believe in a life after death. In reality, you appear to have taken hold of only the interior part of our subject, and to have lost sight of its corresponding exterior portion.

The man-spirit does indeed, feed interiorly upon affections and thoughts; but affections and thoughts are real entities, having substance and form, and not the merely imaginary entities of philosophy. The spiritual world, although contained in the man-spirit, appears also exte-

riorly to the eyes of his spiritual body, as I have repeatedly demonstrated, and therefore, will the affections and thoughts by which the man-spirit is internally fed, be also made externally manifest in substantial food and meats, which are taken into the spiritual body, precisely as material food is taken into the natural body. I remarked, before making this new digression, that the atmosphere which our old man breathes becomes gradually purer, and his food more delicate and nutritious. *He breathes a purer atmosphere*, because the spiritual atmosphere which surrounds spirits always corresponds to their existing state ; and it grows purer, because he is associated with more upright and intelligent spirits. And *he eats more nutritious food*, because the food of spirits always corresponds to their affections and thoughts ; the solid food to their affections, and the fluid to their thoughts ; and it must therefore, become better, more delicate, and nourishing in the degree in which the ruling love banishes evil affections and false thoughts. A spiritual body then, which at first was weak, will grow in strength and vigor, just in proportion, as the affections become better and more gentle, and the thoughts purer and more beautiful.

Add to all this the consideration, that man takes with him into the other world his whole memory, and that by means of it he may recall the past states of his life on earth, and

have them vividly and minutely portrayed before him, and you will see that our old man in the world of spirits, must pass through states similar to those of his earthly life ; but that as his ruling love is good, he will turn with disgust and loathing from those which were produced by evils and falsities, whilst he will dwell with delight in those which flowed from good loves and pure thoughts. If you will recall the general principles, laid down above, you will find these statements to be in perfect harmony with them. In the whole spiritual world as you are aware, there exist, properly speaking, only affections and thoughts ; these are either good or evil, true or false ; good affections and true thoughts proceed from good itself and truth itself, or from Divine Love and Divine Wisdom ; whilst evil affections and false thoughts proceed from evil itself and the false itself ; and, finally, in the world of spirits, where spirits are before their interiors and exteriors are reduced to harmony, all objects corresponding to the exterior mind of the good become more beautiful in the degree in which their interiors are externally exhibited ; whilst all objects, corresponding to the exterior mind of the evil, grow more ugly and deformed in the degree in which their interior evils are manifested in their external life.

Applying this last principle to the matter in hand, you will see, that since the body of a spirit



is but the external representation of the spirit itself, it will become beautiful in the degree in which good affections and true thoughts flow into it from within, and ugly and deformed in the degree in which it is made the ultimate of evil affections and false thoughts.

This necessitates the conclusion, that the spiritual body of a man-spirit, whose ruling love is good, will continually develop in strength and beauty in the world of spirits, until it finally reaches such a degree of perfection, that he is fitted to enter into heaven, and to become an angel. Our old man, therefore, not only grows young again, but is also adorned with a form of comeliness and beauty, whatever may have been his features and form in the natural, earthly life. This conclusion may possibly give rise to an objection in your mind which it will be well to meet at once. You may ask: if man becomes so different a being in the world of spirits, from what he was on earth, how shall we, upon our entrance into that world, be able to recognize our friends, who have long preceded us thither? To this I reply, that the external modification of the features, in accordance with the development of a man's ruling love, does not involve an actual change of the expression of that love. On the contrary, as his life grows more full and perfect, and manifests itself in greater freedom, that expression becomes more clear, marked, and

intense. In it is imaged forth the characteristic quality of the man, which lies in his ruling love ; and since this is the real life of a friend, in which we have known and loved him, there can be no difficulty in our recognizing him, when thus fully and prominently brought before us.

Let us now consider the case of the evil man who departs this life in old age. Like the good man, he enters the world of spirits with the same physiognomy, the same decrepitude, and the same tastes and inclinations, which he had in this. His ruling love, coming into freedom to act itself out fully, will however, soon begin to eliminate from these exteriors of his life, all the appearances of goodness, which they were enabled to assume in the world ; and since its delight is in the gratification of evil lusts and passions, and its pleasure in the falsehoods which favor and confirm them, it will turn him in disgust from whatever is good, and cause him to treat with contempt whatever is true. From this state, he will be led to shun the society of the good and wise of his own age, and to seek that of those who are like himself.

Before leaving this world, his evil passions had become measurably quiescent, in consequence of the feebleness of his body, and its inability to answer the demands of the will ; but this being cast aside, and all impediments being removed, they revive again, and burst forth in ever wilder quest of indulgence, as the exteriors of his spirit

are reduced into agreement with his internal state. The air he breathes now becomes fouler and heavier ; the food he takes coarser and viler ; but his spiritual body, which was feeble at first, gathers strength by degrees, from the increased violence of his lusts, as he draws nearer to hell, and from the more destructive energy of his thoughts, as they become more perverted and false. Thus does this old man, too, leave his age ; but, instead of returning to the vigor, and freshness, and beauty of youth, he develops into form and features ever more monstrous, until at length, when no vestige of goodness and truth or of their appearances, is left in his exterior mind, he rushes headlong into hell, and becomes a devil.

In discussing this interesting question of man's return to the fulness of youth and manhood in the other life, I might have confined myself to a consideration of the characteristic difference between the two worlds ; and dwelt upon the necessary inference, that, if old age is an accident of space and time, it can exist only where space and time exist. But as the design of this letter was to make you acquainted with some details of the spiritual world, it comported entirely with my purpose to give to this subject a somewhat extended attention.

Before closing it, I will add a few words with regard to children, who pass over into the other life. That they become men was shown above,

on the ground, that as God, who is **VERY MAN**, created men into his image and after his likeness, in order that the spiritual world might be peopled with them, the normal state of a spirit is that of full-grown manhood. It was also shown, that a child arrives at adult state only by degrees, and in a manner analogous to that in which he grows up in this world ; for the reason, that all things of order proceed by gradation, and not by abrupt change. With regard to the manner of this growth, as well as with respect to the admission of all children without exception, into heaven, after death, you will learn many particulars from Swedenborg's work on "Heaven and Hell," to which I refer you.

A part of my design, in entering upon this correspondence, has now been accomplished. I wished to present to your mind a rational idea of God, and of the spiritual world ; and to convince you, if possible, of your continued existence after death. This having been done, I am prepared, if it meets with your concurrence, to devote some time to the consideration of one or more of the doctrinal tenets of the New Church. And, unless you have a preference for some other subject, I propose to offer you in my next letter, a statement of our reasons for believing in the divinity of Sacred Scripture. It has seemed to me manifestly proper to give some attention to this subject, for the two strong and sufficient reasons,

that the Bible, as it is usually called, or the Word, as we prefer to call it, is, or ought to be the source of all Christian doctrine; and, that men of the world are usually so greatly prejudiced against the Book, as to be unwilling to accord to it any authority, or even to allow that it contains any verities, not attainable by unaided human reason.

## XV.

The Word of God, or Divine Truth.

**Y**OUR favorable reception of my last letter, encourages me to anticipate a happy result from our discussion of the subject of Sacred Scripture. It is most important that your mind should be freed from all doubts with regard to the divine sanctity of the Word; and that you should be rationally and thoroughly convinced of its being the very Word of God, divine as a whole, and in all its parts. With this conviction fully established in your understanding, you will experience no further difficulty, in receiving and acknowledging the truth of the remaining doctrines of the New Church; for they are all drawn from the literal sense of the Word of Sacred Scripture, and confirmed thereby.

Let us first see what the Word testifies concerning itself; and then endeavor to enter into an understanding of its language. In John i. 1-4, we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life ; and the life was the light of men." In this passage from Holy Scripture are laid down the following points :

1. By the Word the world was created.
2. The Word was God.
3. In the Word was life.
4. The Life was the light of men.

It is self-evident that the light here spoken of, can only mean intellectual, or rather spiritual light, by which the understandings of men are enlightened ; and therefore, that the term must be understood in a spiritual sense.

Of the Word, then, it is said, that it is the spiritual light of men. But the word, or speech of a man, is the expression of his thoughts, and as such, is the corresponding external form which his thoughts assume, when uttered for the purpose of communication to others. Thus also is the Word of God, the expression of God's thoughts ; it is their utterance in a corresponding external form, in which they can be communicated to those who are able to hear. As a word, however, apart from the idea or thought, which it contains, is no more than a sound, or a sign ; to give the full meaning to the expression " Word of God," we must understand it to import nothing less than the thought of God ; and as this is Truth itself, " the Word " is in reality the syno-

nyme of Divine Truth. And most clearly it is the Word, as Divine Truth, which is the spiritual light of men ; which enlightens their understandings ; which being Divine, is God, and being God, is the life of men, creating, preserving, redeeming and saving them. This is the testimony of the Word of Sacred Scripture concerning itself. But how, you will ask, does this harmonize with the philosophical principles heretofore laid down ? This is my answer : God is Love itself, and Wisdom itself ; but Love and Wisdom, without their complemental third, which is Use, have no actual existence ; any more than end and cause have, without their corresponding effect. When Love and Wisdom produce a use they come into their own existence, in which they dwell and upon which they rest. This is the Trine or Trinity in God ; the Trinity of Infinite Love, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Use, which is essentially One. I may illustrate this oneness of three qualities, by what is observed in fire ; in which the burning quality corresponds to love, the shining quality to wisdom, and the fire itself to use ; the two former being combined and producing all their effects in the last. The One composed of infinite Love, Wisdom, and Use, is in its essence Divine Love or Divine Goodness itself ; for Wisdom is Love in form, and Use is Love in act : just as the essential characteristic of fire is its burning, and not its shining quality. For, if we



remove the burning quality, it is no longer fire, but simply light; but if we remove the shining quality, it remains fire, which may be felt, though it cannot be seen. God then, in His essence, is Infinite Love, as the Sun in the natural universe is essential fire. This infinite Love, or Divine Goodness itself, is the unapproachable, invisible, infinite Being, the Jehovah of the Old, and God the Father of the New Testament, who in the glorified Humanity which He assumed in this world, has taken to himself all power in heaven and on earth.

Although the essential characteristic of fire, and thus also of the sun, is its burning quality, it is not this, but its light, which conveys to the senses of men the impression, from which their understandings obtain an idea of the one and the other. To the eye of man the sun appears as a centre of the light, which encompasses it as a luminous sphere, and bears it in its rays to the uttermost parts of the universe. In a like manner, the understandings of angels and of men, can obtain no idea of Infinite Being, or Divine Love Itself, except by means of Divine Truth, which encompasses the former, as light encompasses the sun. By Divine Truth, therefore, which is spiritual light, the quality of Divine Love Itself, or of the sun of the spiritual world, is revealed to angels and men; and to the former it also actually appears to encompass the

spiritual sun as a luminous sphere, and by its spiritual atmospheres to accommodate itself to the conditions of the heavenly life.

Again, in the light by which the solar fire manifests itself to our sight, there is heat. This heat, however, is not the solar fire itself, but proceeds therefrom; just as the light is not the solar fire, but an emanation from it. The heat of the sun proceeds from its burning quality, and the light from its shining quality. Thus also in the Divine Truth by which Divine Love reveals itself to finite beings, there is Divine Good. There is this difference, however, between Divine Good Itself which is in the spiritual sun, and the Divine Good which is in the Divine Truth proceeding from the spiritual sun, that the former is like the solar fire which does not pass to the earth, because it would burn up and consume every thing; whilst the latter is like the heat which is in light in spring-time, which causes plants to grow, and transforms our gardens into paradises.

Unless, therefore, Divine Good was accommodated by Divine Truth to reception, heaven could not exist, for no angel could sustain the flame of Divine Love; it would instantly consume him.

Neither angel, nor man can know or understand, how the Divine Good itself is accommodated to reception, because it is an infinite operation; and the Infinite so transcends all finite understanding, that the mind which at-

tempts to rise to this height of the Divine Life, having nothing whereon to rest its thought, sinks back powerless, and falling as it were, into the depths of the sea, it perishes. Divine Good Itself, therefore, is so accommodated by means of Divine Truth as to be received by angels and men; and because Divine Good thus takes the form or quality of Divine Truth in the heavens, in order to distinguish it from Divine Good Itself, which is in the spiritual sun, it is likewise called Divine Truth.

In speaking of Divine Truth, we therefore mean divine life in the heavens, which not only contains Divine Good, but is also encompassed by an ultimate atmosphere which corresponds to use; for love and wisdom cannot exist without their third, which is use. So that in the Divine in the heavens, as well as in the Divine which is in the spiritual sun, and which constitutes it, there are the three principles of love, wisdom and use; in the latter they are infinite, but in the former they are accommodated to the reception and comprehension of finite beings.

The relation of Divine Truth which is the Divine in the heavens, to Divine Good itself, which is in the spiritual sun, is that of Being to Existing; the latter is from the former. As little, therefore, as heat and light can exist without the solar fire, whence they proceed, and by which they are sustained, so little can Divine Truth,

which is in the heavens, exist without Divine Good Itself, which is in the spiritual sun. On the other hand, as Being cannot communicate, nor manifest itself without its Existing, so Divine Good Itself can only communicate itself, and be apprehended by Divine Truth.

Let us now consider the passage from John, with which I commenced my argument, in the light of this explanation. It is said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Word here is Divine Truth, and God is Divine Love or Divine Good Itself. Divine Truth is existing, and Divine Good Itself is Being. The interpretation of the passage, therefore, is: In the beginning was Divine Truth which proceeds from the spiritual sun; this Divine Truth was with Divine Good Itself, and Divine Good Itself was Divine Truth: for Divine Good Itself is Being, and Divine Truth Existing, and Being and Existing are one; and Existing is the form and manifestation of Being, just as Divine Truth is the form and manifestation of Divine Good Itself. In confirmation of this truth, the words are repeated; it is first said, "and the Word was with God," and then, "The same was in the beginning with God;" to signify the absolute certainty of the union of Divine Truth and Divine Good, so that Divine Love, or Divine Being was never without a form in which it manifests itself so as to be seen

and comprehended by finite beings. And, again, it is said: "All things were made by him, *i.e.* the Word; and without him there was not any thing made that was made." Divine Truth is the Divine Proceeding from the spiritual sun, and therefore contains the three principles of love, wisdom and use, or spiritual heat, light, and atmosphere; and by the last, which is animated by spiritual heat and light, "All things were made, and without it there was not any thing made that was made." We read further, "In it was life; and the life was the light of men." This means that Divine Truth is the life of men, and from it are derived their wisdom and intelligence, which are "the light of men."

We shall now inquire more particularly, how all things in the universe were formed and created by means of Divine Truth or the Word.

Divine Truth, flowing forth from Divine Love or Divine Good Itself, which is the sun of the spiritual world, proceeds according to degrees from the supreme or inmost to the lowest or ultimate. In the form in which it immediately proceeds from the spiritual sun, it cannot be received by any living substance, thus not by any angel; for it partakes as yet too much of Infinity to be so received. God provides, therefore, successive mediations by which Divine Truth is prepared for reception, first by the angels of the third heaven, then by those of the second, after-

wards by those of the first, and finally by man in the world. By each successive mediation Divine Truth becomes more general, thus grosser and more obscure, and also more sluggish and colder.

Of these successive derivations of Divine Truth the human spirit is formed. The inmost of his soul is constituted of Divine Truth in the first and second degrees, which are far above the heavens; what is transacted therein cannot be discovered by any man nor angel, for these degrees are beyond the comprehension of any finite being; it is there that God Himself in His Glorified Humanity flows in with every man. Divine Truth in the third degree forms the third or celestial degree of man's soul, by virtue of which he may become an angel of the third heaven; this degree, also, is of such a nature that it cannot be in the least apprehended by men. Divine Truth in the fourth degree constitutes his second or spiritual degree, in which are the angels of the second or spiritual heaven; this, also, is unintelligible to man. Divine Truth in the fifth degree forms man's rational degree, which is the same as the inmost of his natural mind; in this degree are those who are in the celestial-natural, and spiritual-natural parts of the first heaven. Divine Truth in this degree may be perceived in a small measure by man, if he be in a state of illustration; but still it is of such a nature that a con-

siderable part of it cannot be expressed by human language ; and when it falls into the ideas of men it imparts to them the faculty of perceiving, and also of believing that a thing is thus or so. Divine Truth in the sixth degree, finally, is such as to be accommodated to the perception of man ; it forms the outer degrees of his natural mind.

As heaven is composed of angels, and all angels were originally men, who had come into existence upon one of the earths of the natural universe, and as in every angel there is opened a particular degree of the mind, corresponding to one of the heavens, it may be seen that there are as many degrees of heaven, as there are degrees in the souls of men ; and that as the souls of men are composed of the different degrees of Divine Truth, so also are the different heavens.

This renders it clear that Divine Truth, which proceeds from Divine Good Itself, makes and arranges heaven. For heaven properly so called, is nothing else than Divine Truth in form, since the angels who compose heaven, are human forms recipient of Divine Truth, and in their aggregate, as I have told you in my eleventh letter, they constitute a general form, which is that of a Man. It follows, therefore, that Divine Truth, both in general and in particular, is in the human form ; in general, in heaven at large, and in particular, in the angels who compose the heavens.

It thus appears that the Word is Divine Truth ; that Divine Truth is the Divine Proceeding filling and constituting the heavens ; and that both in general and in particular it is in the human form. If now you take into consideration what I told you in my eleventh letter, that, when the Infinite Jehovah passed through the heavens and was born upon earth, he put on their several natures, or, in other words, the several forms of Divine Truth or the Word, as they existed in the heavens, you will understand the further teaching of John i. 14, where he says, “ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

From this brief exposition of the passage in John’s Gospel, which treats of the Word, you will see how it appears in the light of the philosophy of the New Church, and you cannot fail to notice how completely the one supports the other. But, you may inquire, what connection is there between the Word spoken of in John, and the Sacred Scriptures, which are likewise called the Word of God ? You shall see presently.

Divine Truth, or the Word, is the Divine Proceeding, which consists of spiritual heat, spiritual light, and their enclosing atmospheres. Of this Divine Truth are organized the souls of men, who, after their departure from this life, become angels or evil spirits ; and by this Divine Truth



they are sustained to all eternity. From the same source also originate the objects of the three kingdoms, which surround angels and spirits. These are created by means of the spiritual atmospheres, which likewise animate and vivify the natural atmospheres proceeding from the natural sun, and by them produce the objects surrounding men in this world ; so that nature, or the natural world, is a representative of Divine Truth or the Divine Word.

All these effects are produced of Divine Truth by the spiritual atmospheres. In its form of spiritual light, however, this Truth also enters into the minds of angels and of men, and enables them to reason and to think. In other words, it not only illuminates the objects of the spiritual world, as the light of the natural sun does those of this world, but it also imparts an understanding of the things seen ; it enables the angelic and human mind to perceive and understand Divine Truth or the Word, as it is represented in the objects of the spiritual and natural worlds.

But you will ask, what is meant by Divine Truth or the Word being represented in the objects of the two worlds ? In my twelfth letter I stated, that every object seen around them by angels and men, corresponds to some principle in their soul or mind ; that the earth in general corresponds to the angel or man, a house to his will and understanding, garments to truths, animals

to affections, trees and shrubs to different kinds of knowledge, and so forth. Every thing in nature, therefore, from the highest to the lowest, and from the greatest to the least, has such correspondence, and a knowledge of this constitutes a great portion of the wisdom of the angels; and is indeed, as inexhaustible a source of wisdom to them, as the knowledge of nature is to man.

As the Most Ancient people before the fall were in the image and likeness of God, and therefore saw things, in a measure, as the angels of the highest heaven see them, they became sensible, indeed, of the things of the body and of the world, but they did not care for them as we do — in whatever object of nature, that was before them, they perceived something divine and heavenly. Thus, for example, when they beheld a high mountain, their minds did not dwell upon the mere physical fact of a mountain, but *upon the idea* of height, and from this they had a perception of the Lord, and His Divine Love, and of love from Him, as the highest and best. This gave rise to their habit of speaking of the Lord, as dwelling in high places, as being the Highest, the most exalted; and afterwards, when they offered external worship, to the custom of doing so on high mountains. So also when they saw the sun rise in the morning, their thought did not rest upon the beginning of a new day of time, but they perceived in it the be-

gining of a new state of heavenly life, in the giving of new truth and goodness from the spiritual rising of the Lord upon their minds, and the dawning of a higher state of illumination. For this reason also, they called the Lord Morning, East, and Dayspring. The tree, and its fruit and leaves were viewed in the same light; they contemplated them not as natural objects, but as man, and as his life — in its fruit they saw love and charity, and in its leaves they beheld faith; for in the leaves, the juice of the tree is rarified and refined, and rendered capable of producing fruit; just as by faith or truth man's understanding is developed and enlightened, and he is enabled to produce the fruits of love and charity. For this reason the men of the Most Ancient times not only compared man to a tree and a paradise, and the things belonging to him, to fruits and leaves, but they also actually called him a tree.

As to the mode in which the Most Ancient or primitive people of our earth were instructed, it was as follows: By immediate revelation, *i.e.* by consort with spirits and angels, and also by visions and dreams, the Lord taught them in a general way, what is good and true; and after they had obtained this general knowledge, it was confirmed in their minds by particular instances and examples. In this way, general principles were corroborated and established in their understandings, and were made the basis of their per-

ception, and of their thought from perception. Whatever did not agree with them, they perceived not to be true, and, on the other hand, whatever did agree, they perceived to be true. In a similar state, are the angels of the highest or third heaven. Among the general truths which were thus learned by the Most Ancient or primitive people, were the following: 1. that the Lord rules the universe, 2. that every thing good and true is from the Lord, 3. that all life is from the Lord, 4. that man from himself is nothing but evil, and 5. that man of himself is dead; besides many other like things. The perception of the innumerable particulars, by which these general truths were confirmed, and with which they agreed, was given them by the Lord. In their case the good which from the Lord flowed into their will-faculty, took form in their understanding, and became truth; and the truth which they had, was therefore according to the state of good in which they were. And thus it was, that truth was inscribed upon the heart of the primitive man, and that as each according to his state of good, had individual revelation from the Lord, there was no necessity of their having a written Word among them.

As with the Most Ancient people truth was inscribed upon their hearts, and as each man, according to his state of good had individual revelation from the Lord, it is evident, that when this

state of good was destroyed, and they became evil, their minds no longer possessed the capacity of receiving truth by illustration from within. With them the will and understanding were one, and what was loved by the will, assumed form in the understanding, and appeared there as truth ; so long, therefore, as the will was in the love of good, the understanding saw the corresponding truth, but when the will became perverted by the fall, and they preferred the things of self and of the world to those of the Lord and of heaven, then the understanding, which depended upon the will, was likewise perverted, and instead of seeing truth, men saw falsities, which appeared to them as truths.

The Lord had foreseen this decadence of the will of the primitive man, and in His infinite mercy had provided, that in their posterity the understanding should be separated from the will, and thus be capable of seeing and receiving truth without its interposition.

Such is the constitution of the human mind at the present day ; the will and understanding are separated, in consequence of which man may see truth, however great the tendency of his will to evil, provided he desires to see it ; although by virtue of his freedom he has the power of closing his understanding against truth. There is a great difference, however, between Divine Truth which first flows into the will, and through

this into the understanding, and that which flows into the understanding without the interposition of the will. The former may be represented by light in summer, which is filled with heat, and causes every thing to germinate and to grow, but the latter is comparatively like light in winter, which has indeed illuminating power, but being void of heat, has no effect upon vegetation. In either case there must be vessels in the natural mind to receive Divine Truth ; these vessels are composed of the knowledge which is stored up in the memory.

In speaking of the instruction of the Most Ancient people, I said that they received the general truths of the Church by immediate revelation from heaven, and that after these were established in their minds, by influx of Divine Truth from within they were expanded into their particulars, according to the increase of the man of the Church in the life of good. In the degree, therefore, in which the Most Ancient people applied the truths which they had learned to life, their minds were in illustration from the Lord, and they gained knowledge of a multitude of things by influx from within, without first receiving them by instruction through the eyes and ears of their natural bodies. In the Divine Truth, which flows into the understanding of men, since this has been separated from their perverted will, there is no such fructifying power, to increase

and multiply truth by influx from within. There is, still, indeed, love or spiritual heat in this Divine Truth, but it is subordinate, and manifests itself in the mind as love of truth, imparting the power to the understanding to see the truths, which enter the memory from without. As all truth, therefore, with man since the fall, has to be acquired by natural channels, it follows that other means had to be provided by the Lord, by which the knowledge of Divine Truth could still be insinuated in the mind. Hence the origin of the written Word.

The first written Word consisted of the doctrines of truth, which the Most Ancient people had received by immediate revelation from heaven, and by the influx of Divine Truth into their minds. These doctrines were collected during the decline of their Church, and preserved for the use of future times. Of this Word, there have been preserved to the present day only the first ten chapters of Genesis; but we find references to some of its books, in other parts of the Bible, as to the "Wars of Jehovah," in Numbers xxi. 14, 15, and to the "Prophetical Enunciations" in the same chapter, 27-30, which book in the common version of the Bible is called "they that write in proverbs;" and also to the book of "Jasher" in 2 Sam. i. 17, 18, and Josh. x. 12, 13. The Church which had this ancient Word, is called the Ancient Church, to distinguish it from the Most Ancient,

which existed before the fall. The remaining parts of the Word of the Old Testament were written by divine dictation among the Jews, as also the inspired books of the New Testament. In the four gospels is preserved a record of the deeds and the words of Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, during his life in a material body in this world ; and the Revelation of John describes the things seen by him in the spirit, when heaven was opened to him.

Our written Word is Divine Truth expressed in the language of men. It is composed on the same principle, on which Truth is represented in the objects of nature ; the principle of correspondence. As every natural object corresponds to some principle in the human soul, and therefore in Divine Truth, because the human soul lives and subsists from Divine Truth ; so does every word of the written Word correspond to a principle in Divine Truth ; for human words represent natural ideas, and natural ideas correspond to spiritual ideas derived from the spiritual world, and thus from Divine Truth ; for Divine Truth constitutes the spiritual world.

In the written Word of God, therefore, the natural language of man is used in a two-fold sense, the one of which is altogether different from that in which we are in the habit of employing our words.

When man speaks of fire, he means natural



fire, when of water, natural water, when of trees, animals, stones, he means natural trees, animals, stones. But in the written Word of God—natural ideas are made to contain and cover spiritual ideas; when fire is mentioned, love is meant; when light, truth; when animals are spoken of, they signify affections; when birds, thoughts; when stones, natural or scientific truth. By Jerusalem is meant the Church, and by its inhabitants the constituents of the Church; when Jerusalem, in an evil sense, is spoken of, it signifies the Church perverted, and when the Jews are mentioned in an evil sense, they correspond to those among whom the Church is perverted. So also in the first chapter of Genesis, where in the natural sense, the creation of the natural world is treated of, in the spiritual sense, the regeneration of man is described. There is thus in every expression of the written Word a spiritual principle, significative of some principle of Divine Truth, just as in every natural object which has been created by Divine Truth or the Word, there is a living principle derived from the Word or Divine Truth. The difference, therefore, between the Word or the book of God, and a book of human composition, is the same, as between a work of God, and a work of man.

Looking upon a work of man, for instance a painting or statue, when you have seen the surface, you have seen all. Not so with the works

of God ; however great their outward beauties, dissection and the microscope reveal still more wonderful beauties within ; and the scientific explorer who has pushed his researches to the extreme limits of science is obliged to confess that what he has discovered is very far short of what still remains unknown. From what has been said, you will see that the difference between the works of God and the works of man consists principally in this, that the former, from the lowest in the scale of being to the very highest, have an interior organization, beyond what appears in their external form. This is equally true of the Bible, which, by virtue of its spiritual sense, has an internal organization which does not appear in its outward form, or in its letter ; and, like all the other works of God — though infinitely superior to them, because, as the Word, it has created them, — it presents to the dissecting knife and the microscope of illustrated human intelligence, interior beauties which become more and more wonderful, the more deeply one penetrates. To this interior organization the Lord himself most pointedly refers, when declaring his words to be Spirit and Life.

Again, as Divine Truth, which is now expressed in a written Word, is the same Divine Truth which, before the fall, illustrated man by influx from within, and which still creates his soul and body ; it follows that in the written

Word there are as many degrees, or as many senses, as there are degrees in the soul of man, and in heaven. There is, therefore, in the written Word of God a natural and sensual sense for man in this world, a spiritual natural sense for the angels in the first heaven, a spiritual sense for the angels in the second, and a celestial sense for the angels in the third heaven. To the man who looks upon the Word of God only from a natural stand-point, it appears to treat but of natural things; he finds in its opening chapters a theory of the creation of the natural world, which has been exploded by the results of modern science; after that he reads a history of the rise and fall of the Jewish nationality, in which the chronologist has discovered errors. The prophecies appear to him an unintelligible jargon; the gospels seem untrustworthy, because their literal statements do not harmonize; and the Revelation of John he places among the products of diseased human imagination. Such is the appearance of the Word of God, when examined by mere natural science and reason, and without a knowledge of the laws of the influx of spirit into matter, and of spiritual into natural ideas. It is utterly impossible for men, from natural light only, to penetrate the mysteries of the written Word of God. To understand them, they absolutely need a knowledge of the sciences of correspondences; and this can only be given by direct revelation from God out of heaven.

It is a part of our faith, that such a revelation has been made by the instrumentality of Emanuel Swedenborg. In his three great works, entitled severally "Arcana Cœlestia," "Apocalypse Revealed," and "Apocalypse Explained," the spiritual, and in part also the celestial senses of the books of "Genesis," and "Exodus," and of the "Apocalypse," are explained in consecutive order. In these explanations are to be found copious illustrations from the other parts of the Word, especially from the "Psalms," the "Prophets," and the four "Gospels," so that by a conscientious and painstaking study of them, the rational mind of any man who desires to know, may be fully convinced of the spiritual sense of the Word, and come into clear light as to the real meaning of any passage of the Bible.

The doctrines contained in the spiritual sense of the Word, are presented in a systematic and philosophical form in the other theological writings of Swedenborg, viz. in the works on "Divine Love and Wisdom," "Divine Providence," "Heaven and Hell," "Conjugal Love," the "Four Leading Doctrines," the "New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines," in the "True Christian Religion," and in other minor works. To these writings I now ask your particular attention.

I am assured, by your acceptance of the principles and views set forth in these letters, that you are amply prepared not only to understand, but

also to enjoy the books of this wonderful man, who wrote them not from himself, but from the Lord, his sole instructor. And I leave them in your hands, in the confident trust that they will establish in your mind a full and strong conviction in the great truth of the Lord's second advent in the World, now being made by his breaking the seals, which have hitherto been laid upon the divine mysteries of the Word of God.



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