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ART. I.—*The Spirit of the Fathers of Western Presbyterianism.*

ON Tuesday, February 12th, of the present year, a centenary convention was held at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, composed of representatives of the twenty Presbyteries contained in the four Synods of Pittsburgh, Allegheny, Wheeling, and Ohio, which was designed to commemorate the visit to that region of the Rev. Charles Beatty and the Rev. George Duffield, by the appointment of the old "Synod of New York and Philadelphia." While the interest in the religious history of that region, so important in itself and in its influence upon the Presbyterian Church, is fresh, it is a favourable time to consider some points in the character and labours of its pioneer ministers.

It may be premised that this is a late hour to hold a "centenary" convention. The visit of Messrs. Beatty and Duffield was made in the summer of 1766; and the commemoration of that event is a year too late. But we cannot grant that to have been the kindling of the light of Presbyterianism in that territory. In the early part of the last century large numbers of the people from the North of Ireland were driven by the

ART. III.—*Life of Emanuel Swedenborg. Together with a Brief Synopsis of his Writings, both Philosophical and Theological.* By WILLIAM WHITE. With an Introduction. By B. F. BARRETT. First American edition. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1866.

The Divine Attributes, including also the Divine Trinity, a Treatise on the Divine Love, and Wisdom, and Correspondence. From the "Apocalypse Explained" of EMANUEL SWEDENBORG. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1866.

Heaven and its Wonders and Hell. From Things heard and seen. By EMANUEL SWEDENBORG. Originally published in Latin at London, A. D. 1758. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1867.

Observations on the Authenticity of the Gospels. By a LAYMAN. Second edition. Chicago: E. B. Myers & Chandler. Boston: Nichols & Noyes. 1867.

The New Jerusalem Church. The True Eclecticism. Boston: T. H. Carter & Co. Chicago: E. B. Myers & Chandler. 1866.

Swedenborgianism Examined. By ENOCH POND, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Bangor, Me. Revised Edition. Published by the American Tract Society, 28 Cornhill, Boston. 13 Bible House, New York.

THE above publications, issued in a style most creditable to their respective publishers, are evidences of growing zeal and activity in propagating Swedenborgianism. There are few who have not heard of this eccentric system of religious doctrine, and fewer still who know anything about it or its author. We therefore avail ourselves of the occasion and materials thus afforded, to draw up a succinct account of both. All the foregoing publications are by Swedenborg, or his supporters, except the last, by Dr. Pond. His book is a clear and candid summation of facts and arguments against Swedenborgianism. We know of no better thesaurus of its teachings and principles as seen by its adversaries. This little book, together with the first in the above series, viz., the *Life and Doctrines of Swedenborg*, by Mr. White, presenting the other side of the

case, present a very fair view of the substance of the arguments for and against the system. From this latter work by a friend of the New Church, the material facts and proofs in this article will mostly be taken. We now invite the attention of our readers, first to Swendenborg's life, and next to his system.

Emanuel Swedenborg was born at Stockholm, Sweden, Jan. 29, 1688. His father's name was Jesper Swedberg, his mother's Sarah Behm, both belonging to highly respectable Swedish families. His father was a clergyman, and, at the time of Emanuel's birth was chaplain to a regiment of cavalry. After passing through several offices, one of which was a professorship of theology in the University of Upsal, in the year 1719, he became bishop of Skara, in West Gothland. He was not a brilliant, but a learned and industrious man, upright, patriotic, pious. The following extract from his diary indicates that his son's extraordinary fecundity in book-making was an hereditary trait. "I can scarcely believe that anybody in Sweden has written so much as I have done; since I think ten carts could scarcely carry away what I have written and printed at my own expense, and yet there is much, yea, nearly as much, not printed." When Emanuel was forty years old, the father says, "Emanuel, my son's name, signifies God with us, a name which should constantly remind him of the nearness of God, and of that interior, holy, and mysterious connection, in which, through faith, we stand with our good and gracious God. And blessed be the Lord's name! God has to this hour been with him, and may God be further with him, until he is eternally united with him in his kingdom." All this gives a favourable impression of Swedenborg's parentage, early training, and character.

Few memoranda of Swedenborg's childhood have been preserved. In a letter to Dr. Beyer, he says, "from my fourth to my tenth year my thoughts were constantly engrossed by reflections on God, on salvation, and on the spiritual affections of man. I often revealed things in my discourse which filled my parents with astonishment, and made them declare at times that certainly the angels spoke through my mouth. From my sixth to my twelfth year, it was my greatest delight to converse with the clergy concerning faith; to whom I often observed, that charity or love is the life of faith; and that vivifying cha-

rity or love is no other than the love of one's neighbour; that God vouchsafes this faith to every one; but that it is adopted by those only who practise that charity. I knew of no other faith or belief at that time, than that God is the Creator and Preserver of Nature; that he endues men with understanding, good inclinations, and other gifts derived from these. I knew nothing at that time of the systematic or dogmatic kind of faith, that God the Father imputes the righteousness or merits of his Son to whomsoever, and at whatever time He wills, even to the impenitent. And had I heard of such a faith, it would have been then as now, perfectly unintelligible to me."

His admiring biographer well says, "this confession very vividly shadows forth the future man." The sequel will show that this contains the germ of his future career, and of the religious system which he gave to the world. He knew no faith but charity or rectitude, no merits as a ground of justification but those of self-righteousness, no Saviour but personal virtue. And he then conceived himself to have intercourse with angels.

Emanuel received the best education which his age and country could afford. At the age of twenty-one he took the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Upsal. He showed himself an extraordinary Latinist in the dissertation written for his degree, and in a Latin version of the Book of Ecclesiastes, published in the same year in a work of his father. In this tongue all, or nearly all, his voluminous works were written and published. And this year (1710) finished the educational and strictly scholastic period of his life. He now passed to the duties of manhood.

Henceforward he spent much of his time in travelling. In the year 1710 he started for London via Gottenburg, and before reaching his destination narrowly escaped death four times. He passed nearly a year in London and Oxford. Then he visited the chief cities of Holland, and proceeded through Brussels and Valenciennes to Paris. Here and at Versailles he spent a year, when he hastened to Hamburg, and, after other excursions to places of less note, returned home, having been absent four years. During this journey he published an oration and little book of poems, which, however, evinced but feeble poetical power, although a certain kind of speculative

imagination played an important part in his future development.

Being the son of a bishop, his family connections were high and influential. One of his sisters married an archbishop, another the governor of a province, and other members of his family held leading offices in the kingdom. He was thus able to secure a position in life congenial to his tastes. While travelling on the continent, he had closely examined every novelty in mathematics, astronomy, and mechanics, which came under his observation, and written full accounts of them to scientists at home. On his return he became editor of a new periodical called "*Dædalus Hyperboreus*," to which Christopher Polheim, a celebrated mathematician, called the "*Swedish Archimedes*," contributed. This led to his appointment to the office of Assessor of the Board of Mines, which he held for many years, till he withdrew from secular pursuits, while he was allowed to retain its emoluments through life. The periodical, however, like so many others, soon died for want of support.

The king, Charles XII., who had conferred this office upon him, discerning his high powers, advised Polheim to give the rising young man his daughter in marriage. Swedenborg warmly responded to the proposal, for he tenderly loved the fair Emerentia. She, however, did not reciprocate the affection, and refused to be betrothed to him. This blight on his first love prevented all further attempts in this direction, and made him a celibate all his days, while his mind and imagination were ever exuberant on the subject of "*conjugal love*."

The king had occasion to call to his aid Swedenborg's high powers, at the siege of Frederickshall. He devised ingenious rolling machines, by which several vessels of war were transported overland a distance of fourteen miles. Under cover of these Charles was able to transport his artillery under the very walls of the town; but without avail, as a fatal cannon-ball struck him in the head.

In 1719 the Swedberg family were ennobled by Queen Ulrica Eleonora, and their name changed to Swedenborg. This change of name was about all, however, which the empty honour really conferred. Emanuel Swedenborg was neither Count nor Baron, as he has so generally been called.

Meanwhile he was rapidly acquiring fame as a writer and thinker. In 1717 he published an "Introduction to Algebra," also, "Attempts to find the Longitude of Places by Lunar Observations." In 1719 he published four new works: "A Proposal for a Decimal System of Money and Measures." "A Treatise on the Motion and Position of the Earth and the Planets." "Proofs derived from Appearances, in Sweden, of the Depths of the Sea, and the greater force of the Tides in the Ancient World," and "On Docks, Sluices, and Salt Works." Many of the views advanced in these works were in advance of his age and country. In reference to objections on this account he says, "It is a little discouraging to me to be advised to relinquish my views, as among the novelties the country cannot bear. For my part, I desire all possible novelties; aye, a novelty every day in the year, for in every age there is an abundance of persons who follow the beaten track, and remain in the old way, while there are not more than from six to ten in a century who bring forward innovations founded on argument and reason." While this shows the just recoil of a profound and ingenuous mind from blind and stubborn hostility to salutary innovation, it also betrays a swinging past the even balance of truth to a morbid passion for novelties as such, whether good or evil, right or wrong. This love of novelty appears to have been a ruling passion which will go far to explain the most remarkable phenomena of his subsequent career.

In the spring of 1721 he again visited Holland, and in Amsterdam published the five following works: "Some Specimens of a Work on the Principles of Natural Philosophy, comprising new attempts to explain the Phenomena of Chemistry and Physics by Geometry;" "New Observations and Discoveries respecting Iron and Fire, and particularly respecting the Elemental Nature of Fire, together with a new construction of Stoves;" "A New Method of finding the Longitude of Places on Land or at Sea by Lunar Observations;" "A New Mechanical Plan of constructing Docks and Dykes;" and a "Mode of Discovering the Powers of Vessels by the Application of Mechanical Principles." We quote the titles of these works because they afford a considerable clew to the grade and drift

of Swedenborg's mind. They must, in all candour, be conceded to prove that he was no common man.

The chief object of his journey on the continent, however, was to improve his practical knowledge of mining and metallurgy. For this purpose he visited the principal mines and smelting works in his route. At Leipsic, in 1722, he published Parts I. to III. of "Miscellaneous Observations on Physical Sciences." Also at Hamburg, the same year, Part IV. of the same work. His friends claim that in his application of mathematics to chemistry is found the germ of the theory of definite proportions in that science, and of geometrical forms in crystallography, which modern science has elaborated and verified.

Returning to Stockholm in midsummer 1722, thus furnished for his office, he entered fully upon its duties which he quietly fulfilled for eleven years, suspending for the time his publications on Science Pure and Applied. His abilities were recognized in his election to the Professorship of Mathematics in the University of Upsal, in 1724. This honour, however, he declined. The works thus far published by him had been chiefly in pamphlet form. He however improved the long interval between his last and the next publication to prepare a large and laboured treatise, entitled, "Opera Philosophica et Mineralia." In order to secure its proper publication, and to gain still further knowledge of mining and metallurgy, he went abroad the third time, in May, 1733. He commenced the publication of his work at Leipsic in October, and finished it in the year 1734, in three handsome folio volumes, enriched with numerous copperplates. The Duke of Brunswick, at whose court he was a visitor, with noble munificence, defrayed the expense of the publication. At the same time he issued a little work called "A Philosophical Argument for the Infinite, and the Final Cause of Creation; and on the Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body," a sort of supplement to the former. It is claimed that this great work anticipated much that distinguishes later modern science, in astronomy, magnetism, and chemistry. It certainly increased his fame among contemporary philosophers. It was honoured by the Pope with a place on the Index Expurgatorius, in 1739.

It led to his election as corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg in 1734.

In July, 1735, his father died. Shortly after he went abroad "for a sojourn of three or four years to write and publish a certain book," resigning half his salary meanwhile to his substitutes—being the better able to do so, as he had received some patrimony from his father. In Holland he was struck with the great prosperity of the Dutch, and attributed it to their republican government, a kind of civil polity which he warmly extols. He noticed also and denounced the effect of Romanism and of monastic institutions in the countries he visited. In Paris he devoted himself to sight-seeing and amusements, with hearty zest going the round of churches, monasteries, palaces, gardens, museums, and theatres. His temper and life were far enough from asceticism. He went from Paris to Rome, which he left after a sojourn of five months. After various wanderings he at length reached Sweden in 1740. During this and the year following, his "Economy of the Animal Kingdom" was published in Amsterdam; and in 1744—5 the "Animal Kingdom," Parts I. and II. at the Hague, and Part III. in London. These places he visited in the years last named.

One great end of this work was to trace the connection of mind and body, and he was coming more and more to find that "correspondence" between them which his "doctrine of correspondences" enabled him to find every where *ad libitum*, and which led him to look for great results in studying the mind through the body. He made, says his biographer, a "regular study of this ratio between the respiration and the thoughts and emotions; he shows in detail that the two correspond exactly." Swedenborg himself says, "from this summary or plan, the reader may see that the end I propose to myself in the work is a knowledge of the soul, since this knowledge will constitute the crown of my studies. . . . I am, therefore, resolved to allow myself no respite, until I have run through the whole field to the very goal, or until I have traversed the universal animal kingdom to the soul. Thus I hope that by bending my course inward continually, I shall open all the doors that lead to her, and at length contemplate the soul itself by the Divine permission." He again states this design in the fol-

lowing phrase: "I have gone though anatomy with the single end of investigating the soul. It will be a satisfaction to me if my labours be of any use to the anatomical and medical world, but a still greater satisfaction if I afford any light towards the investigation of the soul."

Here we have the key to another false scent in the investigations of this, however great, no less greatly misguided, man. He undertakes to investigate the soul through external observation, zoölogical, physiological, anatomical. Now we undertake to say that this sort of investigation never yet brought to light the first mental fact, or phenomenon. Every such phenomenon is an exercise of consciousness. It can only be learned then by the inspection of consciousness. One might dissect and measure the organs of the body with never so much skill and exactness—what then? This knowledge, however valuable in its own sphere, does not give the first fact of consciousness not otherwise known. It may show that certain corporeal signals accompany these mental phenomena, first and only known through consciousness. This is all it can do. Just here lies the great error of the Phrenologists, in so far as they pretend to construct a science of mind by external observation of bumps, angles, etc. The thing is simply impossible. They cannot learn the first mental exercise which was not already ascertained by the study of consciousness, however they may ascertain any exterior indications which sometimes or usually accompany such phenomena, when otherwise ascertained. It is not inconsistent with the doctrine here laid down, that we gain a knowledge of the mind by the study of history, language, literature, &c. For what are these but the records of those thoughts, and feelings, and actions, which manifest the consciousness of the race? The study of the mind in these is the study of the collective consciousness of mankind. The only rational ground for studying the mind through anatomy and other forms of exterior observation, is the false assumption that the mind and body are in substance one, that either both are body or both mind; in short, that Materialism or Idealism is the true philosophy. This wrong fundamental bias in Swedenborg's thinking and inquiries, will go far to account for the extreme to which he pushed the doctrine of correspondence between the

material and spiritual world, and for the wonderful facility with which he could find any meaning in the phenomena of Nature and the language of Revelation that suited his fancy or taste.

Although at times Swedenborg asserts that body and spirit are radically different from each other, and are separated by discrete degrees so that neither can become the other, yet there is much in the writings of himself and followers which seems to affirm or imply the identification of mind and matter, and to look now towards Idealism, and now towards Materialism. Dr. Pond has fully shown this, as follows, p. 205.

“And what, according to Swedenborg, is the human soul? It is no other than the ‘*nervous or spirituous fluid.*’ ‘This fluid is *the spirit and soul* of its body.’ ‘We may take it for certain, that if this fluid and the soul agree with each other in their predicates, *the fluid must be accepted as the soul.*’* Swedenborg rejects the doctrine ‘of Descartes and others, that *the soul is a substance distinct from the body*, in which it remains as long as the heart beats.’ ‘Every thing of the soul,’ he says, ‘is of the body, and every thing of the body is of the soul.’ ‘The mind is that element of the body which is in first principles,’ &c.†

“These decisions of Swedenborg as to the nature of the soul are accepted by his followers, or at least by some of them. ‘The distinction between mind and matter,’ says Mr. Clissold, ‘lies not *in essence*, but in form.’‡ Mr. Dawson represents it as one of the great uses of Swedenborg’s writings, that ‘they help to break down *the mischievous man-made distinction between spirit and matter.*’§ And Mr. Wilkinson says, ‘We regard body and soul together as *distinctly and inseparably one.*’”||

These works, however, attracted little notice, and soon sank into utter oblivion, from which they have been recently exhumed by his zealous adherents, especially by an admiring

* Economy of the Animal Kingdom, vol. ii., pp. 233, 236.

† See New Church Repository, vol. i., p. 308.

‡ Introduction to Animal Kingdom, p. 54.

§ N. J. Magazine, vol. xx., p. 497.

|| Tracts for the New Times, No. 3, p. 25.

translator and commentator, Mr. Wilkinson. His long series of scientific publications was completed by the publication in 1845, in London, of the "Worship and Love of God." To this, however, his followers attach little value, "as it was probably written as much for an exercise of fancy, as with any serious intent." Here the scientific phase of his life closes. That of an alleged inspired Seer and Revelator begins. Into this let us now look.

In the year 1745, at the age of fifty-seven, at the zenith of his scientific fame and worldly success, an event occurred which gave an entirely new bias to his life. He and his friends appear to have looked upon all his former productions as mere "school-boy exercises," a propædeutic for the august office henceforth assumed by him. And this appears to have been in lieu of far more essential preliminary training. His reading, otherwise extensive, had not touched systematic theology. He had quietly rejected the doctrines of the creeds which go beyond the practice of virtue and piety, as "theoretical and mystical." This by his admirers is set forth as qualifying him for his new office, by leaving his mind unbiassed and impartial. We see in it no higher qualification than so much ignorance and error, disqualifying him to judge between true and pretended or counterfeit communications from heaven. His life, however, and the following rules of life, found in his manuscripts, go to prove him a sincere, upright, and religious man, though they are far from evincing a true knowledge of Christ. These rules were, "1. Often to read and to meditate on the word of the Lord. 2. To submit every thing to the will of Divine providence. 3. To observe in every thing, a propriety of behaviour, and always to keep the conscience clear. 4. To discharge with fidelity, the functions of my employment, and the duties of my office, and to render myself, in all things, useful to society."

It deserves mention here, that shortly before the wonderful visions and revelations which Swedenborg supposed to be given him from heaven, and in close connection with the severe mental application involved in the preparation and publication of the works last mentioned, he, while in London, suffered a severe attack of fever, attended with delirium. For this we have not only the testimony of Wesley, but of Hartley, his intimate

friend and follower. If so, it may have left a chronic affection of his nervous system, which will go far to explain the visions of heaven and hell with which his brain appears to have teemed the remaining twenty-seven years of his life. Certainly it will go far, along with a burdened stomach, to explain the following account which he gave of his first vision to a friend who asked him how he knew what was done in heaven and hell.

“I was in London, and one day dined rather late by myself, at a boarding-house, where I kept a room, in which, at pleasure, I could prosecute the study of the natural sciences. I was hungry, and ate with great appetite. At the end of the meal, I remarked that a vapour, as it were, clouded my sight, and the walls of my chamber appeared covered with frightful creeping things, such as serpents, toads, and the like. I was filled with astonishment, but retained the full use of my perception and thoughts. The darkness attained its height, and soon passed away. I then perceived a man sitting in the corner of my chamber. As I thought myself entirely alone, I was greatly terrified; when he spoke and said, ‘Eat not so much.’ The cloud once more came over my sight, and when it passed away, I found myself alone in the chamber. This unexpected event hastened my return home. I did not mention the subject to the people of the house, but reflected upon it much, and believed it to have been the effect of accidental causes, or to have arisen from my physical state at the time. I went home; but in the following night, the same man appeared to me again. He said, ‘I am God, the Lord, the Creator and Redeemer of the world. I have chosen thee to lay before men the spiritual sense of the holy word. I will teach thee what thou art to write.’ On that same night, were opened to my perception the heavens and the hells, where I saw many persons of my acquaintance, of all conditions. From that day forth, I gave up all mere worldly learning, and laboured only in spiritual things, according to what the Lord commanded me to write. Daily he opened the eyes of my spirit to see what was done in the other world, and gave me, in a state of full wakefulness, to converse with angels and spirits.”

“Such,” says Dr. Pond, “is Swedenborg’s account of the manner in which his spiritual senses were opened; of his inter-

views with the Lord Jesus Christ; and of his commission to unfold the hidden sense of the word, and make other important disclosures to men. As to the particular state of his mind while in the spirit, Swedenborg gave no further explanations."

Ever after he proceeds upon the assumption, express or implied, that he is a Prophet or Messenger of God, commissioned and infallibly inspired to reveal his truth and will. He says, "I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested himself to me, his servant, in the year 1743 (5?) when he opened my sight to a view of the spiritual world, and granted me the privilege of conversing with angels and spirits, which I enjoy to this day. From that time I began to publish and print various arcana that have been seen by me, or revealed to me; as respecting heaven and hell, the state of man after death, the true worship of God, the spiritual sense of the Word, with many other most important matters conducive to salvation and true wisdom."

Again, in the preface to his "*Arcana Celestia*," he writes, "Of the Lord's divine mercy, it has been granted me now for several years to be constantly and uninterruptedly with spirits and angels, hearing them converse with each other and conversing with them. Hence it has been permitted me to hear and see stupendous things in the other life, which have never before come to the knowledge of any man, nor entered his imagination. I have therefore been instructed concerning different kinds of spirits, and the state of souls after death; concerning hell, or the lamentable state of the unfaithful; concerning heaven, or the most happy state of the faithful; and particularly concerning the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged throughout all heaven."

It is admitted by Swedenborg's adherents that his claim "does appear startling." They must as surely admit that it cannot demand the assent of reasonable and conscientious men, without the most cogent and unanswerable proof, internal or external. As it is not pretended that these claims are supported by miraculous attestation, or by the testimony of other witnesses, (Swedenborg alone having witnessed these visions,) or that his sole testimony would suffice, more than Mahomet's, to vindicate them, unless supported by the internal self-evidence

of his doctrines themselves, it follows that the whole controversy in regard to their truth or falsity is narrowed down to this single question: Do the doctrines propounded by Swedenborg as divine, bear a self-evident divine impress; a stamp of divinity which must be their own attestation to every intelligent and candid mind? And does that mind prove itself perverse and uncandid which cannot, or does not, discern this imprint and self-evident witness of divinity upon them? And to this issue is it reduced by his abettors. They call on us to credit him, "not by any means on account of his own declaration merely, but from *the nature of the truths and statements brought forth by him*, of which our own minds, enlightened, we trust, by reason and God's word, are the judges."* "The Christian has no choice but to acknowledge, or refute Swedenborg's claims on the ground of intrinsic merit."† Here then issue is joined. To this we will soon address ourselves; remarking previously that, in deciding this question, both parties concede the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures, except so far as certain books are rejected by the Swedenborgians.

Meanwhile it deserves notice that, after this time, Swedenborg displayed the same fertility in authorship as before, the difference being that afterward his works were occupied with his visions and revelations, the statement and indication of his peculiar religious system. He published what would amount to twenty-seven volumes, octavo, of five hundred pages each. Some twenty of these were occupied in developing his view of the spiritual sense of the Holy Scriptures. He wrote much too without printing, which has obtained a posthumous publication. His most important theological work was his "Arcana Celestia," of which most of his later publications, such as those on "Heaven and Hell," the "Apocalypse," the "New Church," the "Last Judgment," &c., are little more than the fuller development and application. His Diary is also an extended work, illustrating the man and his doctrine. He was simple in his habits of life, almost a vegetarian, wore a garment of reindeer skins in winter, and a study gown in summer. He took snuff, with which many of his manuscripts are soiled. He

* Life and Writings, p 64.

† *Id.*, p. 67.

seldom attended church, finding the worship and doctrines of the existing churches uncongenial. He was seized with apoplexy and partial paralysis on Christmas eve, 1771. He died in London, March 29, 1772, with his mind apparently calm and clear, at the advanced age of eighty-four. His body was deposited in the Swedish church in Prince's Square, according to the rites of the Lutheran church. There it still lies, without visible monument or memorial.

Thus far Swedenborg's life. Next let us consider his doctrines. What are they? And do they bear such an evident Divine impress as to render us inexcusable for not receiving them as the "oracles of God," and their author as his inspired messenger?

1. As underlying all else, let us ascertain Swedenborg's doctrine in regard to the Holy Scriptures. "The assumption then with which Swedenborg starts, is, that the Scripture is in very truth the word of God; that every syllable and expression therein are his; that Moses, David, the prophets and the evangelists, were simply the inspired penmen, who wrote implicitly according to Divine dictation."* This seems indeed to be a sufficiently high and stringent view of the inspiration and plenary authority of the Bible. But it is completely neutralized by other outgivings in the premises. He teaches that the word has "three senses or meanings; first, a celestial sense apprehended by the celestial or highest angels; secondly, a spiritual sense, apprehended by a lower range of angelic minds, the spiritual; and thirdly, a natural sense, with which we are all familiar, written down to the comprehension of the lowest, most worldly and sensual of men, the Jews. These three senses make one by correspondence."† And it is clearly possible by the magic of this alleged "correspondence" to extract whatever meaning one sees fit from the letter of Scripture. Whatever may be the obvious meaning of the words of Scripture, it easily evaporates into some unknown celestial sense by some turn of correspondence. The plain meaning of Scripture is not its highest meaning. This is left in a chameleon-like variableness or incertitude, to be resolved by the *ipse dixit* of a Swedenborg, or whoever else claims to have threaded the

* Life and Writings, p. 80.

† *Id.*, p. 80.

labyrinths of "correspondence," and to have had visions of the celestial world.

It is utterly vain to vindicate this doctrine of "correspondence" on the plea of any supposed analogy to figurative language, or metaphor. Such language, in its legitimate sphere, is just as plain and intelligible as any other, often more vividly accurate than a mere dead, dry literality can be. The human mind is so made as spontaneously to form and to understand such imagery. These Swedenborgian correspondencies, however, are wholly beyond the plane of the normal human faculties, and are quite arbitrary, without rational basis, or intelligible key. How can the Bible be a real message of God to us, if such exegesis as the following be necessary to reach its real meaning. In regard to the account of the ark (1 Samuel v. 6,) Swedenborg says: (See Dr. Pond's book, pp. 66, 67.)

"The Philistines represent those who exalt faith above charity; which was the occasion of their continual wars with the Israelites, who represent those who cherish faith in union with charity. The idol Dagon is the religion of those who are represented by the Philistines. The emerods are symbols of the appetites of the natural man, which, when separated from the spiritual affections, are unclean. The mice, by which the land was devastated, are images of the lust of destroying, by false interpretation, the spiritual nourishment which the church derives from the word of God. The emerods of gold exhibit the natural appetites, as purified and made good. The golden mice signify the healing of the tendency to false interpretation, effected by admitting a regard to goodness. The cows are types of the natural man, in regard to such good qualities as he possesses. Their lowing by the way expresses the repugnance of the natural man to the process of conversion. And the offering them up for a burnt-offering typifies that restoration of order which takes place in the mind, when the natural affections are submitted to the Lord."*

The story of the forty and two children destroyed by bears (2 Kings ii. 24) is thus interpreted. "Elisha represented the Lord, as to the word. Baldness signifies the word, devoid of its literal sense, thus not anything. The number forty-two

* True Christian Religion, § 203.

signifies blasphemy. And bears signify the literal sense of the word, read indeed, but not understood.”* No wonder that the Swedenborgians have found it necessary to publish a “Dictionary of Correspondencies,” which, however, makes confusion worse confounded by its inconsistency with itself and with Swedenborg; that some of their writers maintain that the Bible, in its literal sense is self-contradictory and comparatively useless; and that one of the greatest lights of the New Church, Mr. Tulk, denies that there “has been a single Swedenborgian writer,” who has correctly understood the doctrine of correspondency. Every one, he says, ‘has either dropped all notice of *real* correspondency, and treated it as a system of symbols, or has merely stated the fact of there being an intimate connection between the sign and the thing signified, and left his reader to discover, as well as he could, the reason.’ This same author—who seems to be a leader among the New Church brethren—affirms that *the language of Swedenborg needs to be spiritualized*,—else, he says, we shall be compelled to receive greater mysteries in the New Church theology, than those from which we have escaped in the Old. Pp. 10, 16—37. We honour the frankness of this Mr. Tulk. At the same time, we are anxious to know where this labour of *spiritualizing* is to end. Swedenborg spiritualizes the Scriptures; and Mr. Tulk spiritualizes Swedenborg, and the next improvement will be to spiritualize him.”†

Not only, however, does this process destròy the utility and authority of the Sacred Word as a guide to men; Swedenborg arbitrarily disowns the inspiration of many books of Scripture, and abjures their Divine authority to control our faith and practice. He pronounces the first eleven chapters of Genesis “purely allegorical.” He also excludes the books of Ruth, 1st and 2d Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and the Epistles of the New Testament from the sphere of inspiration and infallibility. These liberties might just as lawfully be taken with any other books of Scripture. To expunge from the New Testament the Epistles, is to expunge the most doctrinal and didactic part of the Bible, in respect to the distinctive articles of the Christian

* Apocalypse Revealed, § 573.

† Dr. Pond, p. 66.

faith—especially those most unwelcome to Swedenborg. Which comes to us with the brightest radiance of Divinity, Paul, “speaking, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” or Swedenborg, telling us that he has not “given them a place in his Arcana Celestia, because they are dogmatic writings merely, and are not written in the style of the Word?” Wherever the writings of the two are compared, ten thousand will recognize a Divine wisdom and truth in the Epistles for one that will see the faintest glimmer of a Divine light in the dark bathos of Swedenborg’s endless discursions. We might safely leave the issue here. Swedenborg abjures the authority of a large part of the Bible, and asserts for himself an infallibility of inspiration, which he denies to Job, Solomon, Paul, Peter, James, and John, in his Epistles. Is not this destroying all foundations? And if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do? Let us look farther into the particular doctrines of Swedenborg, and we shall see strong reasons why he renounces the authority of those portions of Scripture which most expressly militate against them.

2. We will then consider some of Swedenborg’s teachings concerning the nature and attributes of God. There is much in his utterances that has a pantheistic sound, and looks towards only one life or substance in the universe. Thus he says, “it is evident that the human soul is not life from life, or life in itself, for there is only one single life, and this is God.”*

“The angelic idea concerning the universe created from the Lord, is as follows: that God is the centre, and that he is man, and that unless God was a man, creation would not have been possible, and that the Lord from eternity is that God. Concerning creation, they (the angels) said, that God, by his Divine proceeding, created the universe and all things therein, and since the Divine proceeding is also life itself, that all things were created from life and by life.”† “Life viewed in itself, which is God, cannot create another being who shall be life itself.”‡ “That God is a man, and that the Lord is that

* Divine Attributes, p. 230.

† *Id.* p. 312.

‡ *Id.* p. 43.

man, is manifest from all things which are in the heavens, and which are beneath the heavens.”* Mr. White says, the “treatise on the Divine Love and Wisdom . . . affords a key to the whole philosophy of the New Church, and to a rational understanding of all the writings of Swedenborg . . . The first part sets forth, in the simplest language, the doctrine of the Divine nature. The Lord’s essence is shown to be infinite love, and its manifestation to be infinite wisdom. It is proved that the Divine Love is the only life in the universe, and that in God, ‘all things live, move, and have their being.’ The Lord is also proved to be very and essential man, yet above and independent of all space and time, filling all spaces of the universe without space, and all time without time, and being in the greatest and the least things evermore the same. . . . The end of creation is, that all things may return to their Creator.”† That God is man, and that there is but one life in the universe, and that all things will return to God, this, if not pantheism, is surely pantheistic.

3. Swedenborg denies the Trinity, and insists that the doctrine of three persons means the doctrine of three Gods. This abundantly appears from the chapter on the Trinity, in the work on the “Divine Attributes.” Mr. White thus represents his doctrine: “To conceive of a trinity of Divine *persons* from eternity, is to think of three Gods, and no amount of word-playing and creed-making can prevent the mind from falling into Tritheism, as long as a Trinity of *persons* and not of *essentials* is thought of. A trinity of persons was unknown in the Apostolic Church.” (p. 239). “The doctrine of a trinity of persons in the Divine being, is the keystone of Roman Catholic and Protestant theology. If this doctrine be false, the whole structure totters to its fall. When the faith in three Gods is rejected, then it is possible to receive the true and saving faith, which is, a faith in one God, united with good works.” (*Id.* p. 211). With the Trinity, of course, the whole system of evangelical doctrine and experience falls to the ground, and is accordingly abjured.

4. He claims to have “shown the errors of the existing doctrines of justification by faith alone, and of the imputation of

* *Id.* 41.

† Life of Swedenborg, pp. 151—2.

the righteousness or merits of Jesus Christ." (*Id.* p. 204.) "An imputation of the merits and righteousness of Christ is impossible." (p. 251.) "The doctrine of the faith of the present church, ascribes to God human passions and infirmities; as, that he beheld men from anger; that he required to be reconciled; that he is reconciled through the love he bore toward the Son, and by his intercession; that he required to be appeased by the sight of his Son's sufferings, and thus to be brought back to mercy; and that he imputes the righteousness of his Son to an unrighteous man, who supplicates it from faith alone; and that thus from an enemy he makes him a friend, and from a child of wrath a child of grace; all which dogmas are the opposite of truth, and repulsive to every wise man."

"The faith of the present church has produced monstrous births; for instance, instantaneous salvation by an immediate act of mercy; predestination; the notion that God has no respect to the actions of men, but unto faith alone; that there is no connection between charity and faith; that man in conversion is like a stock; with many more heresies of the same kind; likewise concerning the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, as to the advantages reasonably to be expected from them, when considered according to the doctrine of justification by faith alone; as also with regard to the person of Christ; and that heresies, from the first ages to the present day, have sprung from no other source than from the doctrine founded on the idea of three Divine Persons or Gods." (*Id.* pp. 212—13.)

Although this indignant protest against, and repudiation of, scriptural, evangelical, and catholic truth, is aimed at the caricature which adversaries are wont to make of it, it is none the less an utter abjuration of that truth. The bitterness of Swedenborg's unrelenting antipathy to justification by faith through the merits of Christ is conspicuous throughout his writings. It is none the less pronounced and implacable against regeneration by the immediate agency of the Spirit of God, or even the possibility thereof. He tells us, "if man could be saved by immediate mercy, all would be saved; even the inhabitants of hell, and hell itself would not exist. . . . Man's spirit is substantial; and if formed to evil, to change it would be equivalent to anni-

hilation. . . . Ample experience has taught me that it is impossible to implant the life of heaven in those who have led an opposite life in the world." Is it not enough in answer to all this to point to the conversion of Paul, of the dying thief, the thousands on the day of Pentecost, the myriads who from age to age are born into the kingdom of God? Is any thing too hard for the Lord, and can he not out of the stones raise up children unto Abraham?

5. A cardinal doctrine of Swedenborg was that the last Judgment was already past, having occurred in 1757, when the previous dispensation was terminated by the visions vouchsafed to him, which inaugurated the new and final dispensation. (*Id.* p. 95.) The coming of Christ is not personal. It is in the unveiling of the ideas, the light, the truth of the New Dispensation. The last Judgment separated the good from the evil, the false from the true, the hypocrites who overrun the Reformed churches from sincere Christians. (*Id.* p. 156.)

6. "Angels are men, and live together in society like men on earth, therefore they have garments, houses, and other things similar to those which exist on earth." "In heaven, two married partners are not called two, but one angel." For "there are marriages in heaven as well as on earth." (*Id.* chap. xxii.) Space and Time in heaven are purely subjective. They are without objective reality to the angels. Apparent changes of season and passing of time are only an outward reflex from the changes of the soul within. Greater or less apparent distance in space have no objective reality, they only represent degrees of love. If this be intense, there is nearness to the object loved. If feeble, distance intervenes and increases. (*Life and Writings*, p. 109. *Heaven and Hell*, pp. 104—119.)

7. So Swedenborg himself entered or was present in heaven. "By such changes have I also been conducted by the Lord into the heavens, and likewise to the earths in the universe. I was carried there as to the spirit only, my body meanwhile remaining in the same place. Thus do all the angels journey. Hence they have no distances; and since they have no distances, they have no spaces; but instead of spaces they have states, and their changes, change of place being only change of state, it is evident that approximations are similitudes as to

the state of the interiors, and that removals are dissimilitudes. Hence it is that those are near together who are in a similar state, and those distant who are in a dissimilar state." (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 119.) Here the secret is revealed as to the manner in which Swedenborg passed to and inspected the heavens and "the earths in the universe," and the sources of his strange visions and revelations. What he thinks he saw in all these places, and elsewhere, will go far to decide his assumed infallibility as a seer and revelator.

8. It is a consequence of his doctrine of the impossibility of an immediate transformation of the human soul, that there is an intermediate state between heaven and hell, and between death and glory. He says, "The world of spirits is neither heaven nor hell, but an intermediate place or state between both, into which man enters immediately after death; and then after a certain period, the duration of which is determined by the quality of his life in this world, he is either elevated to heaven or cast into hell. . . . Some only enter it, and are immediately taken up into heaven, or cast down into hell; some remain there a few weeks, and others several years, but none, (since the last Judgment) more than thirty years." (*Life and Doctrines*, p. 122.)

9. As a consequence of renouncing the future judgment and general resurrection, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body evaporates. "Immediately after death, which is only a putting off the natural body never to be resumed, man rises again in a spiritual and substantial body, in which he continues to live to all eternity." (*Liturgy of the New Church in England*.) What sort of a body this is, may appear, if we consider that, in the Swedenborgian theology, heaven is a state and not a place.

10. "The whole Heaven in one complex resembles one divine man," otherwise called the GRAND MAN. "Every society in the heavens resembles one man . . . therefore every angel is a perfect human form." "The angels likewise know in what member one society is, and in what another; and they say, that one society is in the member or some province of the head, another in the member or some province of the breast, another in the member or some province of the loins; and so on. In general,

the highest or third heaven forms the head down to the neck; the middle or second heaven forms the breast down to the loins and knees; the ultimate or first heaven forms the legs and feet down to the soles, and also the arms down to the fingers,—for the arms and hands are ultimates of man, although at the sides. Hence it is further evident why there are three heavens.”* Let who will see a divine impress on this, we confess we only discern in it the offspring of a distempered or phrenzied fancy. Hell also is pronounced to be one man.†

11. Swedenborg is quite as wide of infallible truth in his visions of and intercourse with Paul, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, the Synod of Dort, and the Moravians, in the other world. He represents them as debased and unhappy, either in the intermediate state or in hell. Is it to be expected that the Christian world can see in such representations the stamp of Divine inspiration? Those who wish to look further into Swedenborg’s defamatory accounts of these great lights of the church, may consult Dr. Pond’s book, chap. vii. *Instar omnium*, look at the following account of the Apostle Paul by Swedenborg.

“Paul is among the worst of the apostles, as has been made known to me by ample experience. The love of self, whereby he was ensnared before he preached the gospel, remained with him afterwards. He did all things from the end of being greatest in heaven, and of judging the tribes of Israel. He is such that the rest of the apostles, in the other life, reject him from their company, and no longer recognize him as one of themselves. He associates himself with one of the worst devils, who would fain rule all things, and pledged himself to this spirit to obtain for him his end.” Speaking of Paul in another place, Swedenborg says: “He now associated himself with the worst devils, and wished to form a heaven to himself of spirits, to whom he might give joys from himself. This also he attempted, but he became worse in consequence of it, and was cast down. I then spoke to him that this was not heaven, but hell; for such a heaven is turned into a black hell.”

In a like summary manner, he claims to have seen the departed of all grades, kings, preachers, and others in heaven,

* Heaven and Hell, pp. 42—52.

† Life and Doctrine, p. 127.

hell, or the intermediate state—very much, we apprehend, according to his preconceptions and, especially, his likes and dislikes of their character.

But Swedenborg, so he assures us, saw not only through heaven and hell, but what he calls “earth of the universe,” *i. e.*, the planets of the solar system. He found them inhabited, conversed freely with their inhabitants, and has given the most strange and ridiculous accounts of the occupants of each of them. He, however, greatly compromises his claim to infallible inspiration in some of his dicta concerning them, which are in utter contradiction of the known truths of science. He insists that Saturn is the most distant of the planets from the sun. Moreover, he appears to have found no inhabitants outside of the planets which were then known to science. Says Mr. White, “Swedenborg tells us that lunarians are dwarfs, like boys of seven years old, with robust bodies and pleasant countenances; they do not speak from their lungs, on account of the attenuated state of the atmosphere, but from a quantity of air collected in the abdomen.” (*Life and Writings*, p. 133.) After this, it is scarcely necessary to quote what he says of the inhabitants of other planets, all of which has a verisimilitude and convictive force about equal to this. But it is not out of place to see how his followers parry the objection to Swedenborg’s inspiration, arising from his great and undeniable error in regard to the relative distance of Saturn from the sun. Mr. White says, (*Id.*, p. 134,) “We reply, that it would have been disorderly for him to have become possessed of such knowledge by spiritual means. But how so? Because it would have compelled belief in the spiritual doctrines so taught, without due thought and examination, as soon as science had established the existence of these orbs; because miracles and prophecy are not permitted in these times, for they force and destroy human freedom. . . . Belief so induced would be worthless, because compelled. It may be said that this is mere special pleading, but it is not so.”

Perhaps this is ingenious. But it will hardly serve its purpose. If we were to grant that it shows good reason why Swedenborg’s revelations should not be attested by miracle, it shows no good reason why he should claim, as an inspired see:

and revelator, to see and reveal as true what is now proved and conceded to be false. He is here proved to have been a false witness, either deceived or a deceiver. How then can he demand our assent, on his mere *ipse dixit*, to alleged facts, which there are no means, no possibility of proving or disproving, beyond his own testimony? We do not mean it in any reproachful sense, or as impeaching Swedenborg's honesty or intended veracity, when we apply the legal maxim, *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*. We mean simply, that having proved himself an incompetent and unreliable witness here, he is no more entitled to credit elsewhere, his ways and means of knowledge being alike abnormal and preternatural, and incapable of disproof or attestation from other sources.

But it has been said that the Scriptures are in a like predicament. Things are there declared, which modern science has proved false. To this we oppose a categorical denial. The Scriptures may state phenomena in the common language employed by men to denote those phenomena, which may sometimes be figurative or descriptive of appearances, without assuming to enunciate the scientific form of the truth which underlies those phenomena. As we say the shore recedes, to indicate the increasing distance between it and the boat moving away from it, so the Bible may use the common language of our race, and say the sun rises, to indicate the increasing distance between it and the horizon. But the Scriptures assert no falsehood or error. Whatever they declare to be a fact, rightly understood, in the real sense and intended application of the language, is true. Moreover, the Sacred Word does not teach truth in scientific form, although what it teaches is evermore the truth. Not so in regard to this error of Swedenborg. He was a man of science, accustomed to write upon science, and to state things scientifically. He in this case professed to state a truth of science, as related to other truths of science, not to be stating appearances or using metaphors merely, but to be stating a naked scientific truth, reached by the same preternatural vision by which he discovered all else he undertakes to reveal. He was mistaken in the very region and way of knowledge in which he professed to be infallibly inspired. What then becomes of this infallibility?

Nor is the reason here offered, and so often offered by Swedenborg and his followers, against the propriety of miraculous attestation of such revelations, at all more valid, viz., that they compel belief and destroy man's freedom. For,

1. It is not true that they have this effect. Doubtless miracles, in proportion to the greatness of the Divine power manifest in them, do exercise a powerful convictive force. They furnish evidence fitted to extort the outcry, "this is the finger of God." Yet this evidence may be resisted, and ever has been resisted by vast numbers, who evade their convictive power by attributing them to jugglery, evil spirits, to illusions of the senses or the soul; to subjective impressions substituted for objective realities; or to some occult working and unusual freak of the laws of nature themselves. This was so with regard to the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, as well as those wrought by our Saviour and his apostles. Indeed, our Saviour teaches that the same spirit which will resist the self-evidence of divinity in the word, will resist that of miracles. "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one arose from the dead."

2. Not only is this so, but we are abundantly taught in the Scripture, that there are "lying wonders," counterfeit miracles, and charged to beware of false prophets, who shall come with "signs and wonders that would deceive, if possible, the very elect." We are, therefore, required to test the miracle by the doctrine as well as the doctrine by the miracle. As evil spirits may be permitted to simulate Divine miracles, even as they affect to be ministers of righteousness and angels of light, so it is necessary that every criterion of Divine inspiration be furnished by those who claim to speak as they are moved by the Holy Ghost, to distinguish the genuine message of God from its counterfeits. Mere wonders, apparently preternatural, cannot prove immoralities, or the contrary, of the religion given us from heaven. On the other hand, God has seen fit to attest the original delivery of his communications to men, not only by self-evidence of Divine origin, but by God-wrought wonders in the sensible world, such as can be imitated neither by man nor devil. When he gives a new revelation to men, which he commands them to believe, he authenticates it

by both these forms of attestation, external and internal, and makes them, moreover, mutual tests of each other. He requires us to test the miracle-monger, attempting to palm off false doctrine by counterfeit miracles, and to repudiate him if he undertakes to turn us away from the true religion. Deut. xiii. 1—5. Wonders wrought for such a purpose are not from above, but from beneath. It is to be observed further, that when God vouchsafes miraculous attestations of his revelation, they include some, like the drying of the rivers, the stopping of the sun, the resurrection of the dead after putrefaction has begun, which no evil spirit was ever able to simulate, and which show the finger of God beyond a peradventure. Yet even this evidence may be withstood by perverse minds, as the whole Old and New Testament histories abundantly show. It depends on the moral state or disposition of men, how far they accept moral or religious truths, however attested. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." This moral element upon which faith depends, or which is requisite to the due appreciation of the evidence of moral and religious truth, is what distinguishes faith or belief from apodictic judgments. These are necessary, and must be accepted by every rational mind that apprehends them, and the evidence of them. Man has no option about receiving an axiom or proposition in geometry. He cannot help it. Hence, to speak of *believing* the propositions of geometry, is a solecism. But he has some option about admitting or rejecting moral and religious truths. With this the heart or will has something to do. Hence the acceptance of them is called belief or faith, and is a proper subject of command and penalty. Their rejection is unbelief. To reject the proposition that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, is not unbelief. It is insanity or idiocy.

3. Furthermore, if Swedenborg's argument against miraculous attestations of his own alleged revelations is valid, then they are good against the propriety of the scriptural miracles, and consequently, against the Scriptures themselves. This proves too much. We conclude, therefore, that there is no weight in his attempted vindication of his failure to support his alleged claims by miracles unquestionably God-wrought,

and that this attempt implies an absolute misconception of their nature, objects, and efficacy. We are, however, very ready to let his alleged revelations be judged of in themselves, and aside of all questions about miracles. We are willing to leave it to our readers to judge, whether the doctrines and sayings of his we have brought to view, are "of heaven or of men." The answer must be what all but the merest fragment of men has ever given. Is it credible that God should have superseded the Christian dispensation over a century ago, by a system so destructive and revolutionary, in regard to the received canon and doctrines of Scripture, and left the new revelation with an attestation which, in the whole of the most enlightened and progressive century in history, has been able to gather only a very few organized Associations or New Jerusalem Churches in all christendom, and all the globe?

A great problem here presents itself, which ought not to be passed by in any general estimate of Swedenborg and his system. How are we to account for pretensions to direct intercourse with and revelations from God, to visions of heaven, hell, and of other worlds and their inhabitants; to be the God-commissioned founder of a new dispensation and new church, involving the destruction and passing away of the church founded by Christ and his apostles, the rejection of a large portion of the received Scriptures, and of the great body of Christian doctrine?

Two hypotheses only are possible. One, that he was an impostor, putting forth claims and pretensions which he knew to be groundless—deceiving others, but not deceived himself. The other is, that he was honest and sincere, really believing what he uttered, deceived himself, but not intentionally deceiving others, mistaking his own subjective states, fancies, imaginations, for objective realities. For ourselves, we have no hesitation, with our present light, in rejecting the former and embracing the latter alternative. We consider his whole life as evincing apparent simplicity, probity, and earnestness. Moreover, his scientific eminence, his taste for philosophy and letters, his social position, everything, militates against the idea of his being a conscious impostor. As a matter of taste, aside of higher considerations, the very idea must have

been revolting to him. While this is so, we think all the phenomena in his case can be accounted for on the other hypothesis. We do not doubt that he seemed to himself to behold all that he declares he beheld in heaven, earth, hell, and the planets. But the whole explanation is, that his own inward imaginations, fancies, dreams, became objectized, through abnormal conditions of his nervous system, and of the mutual interaction of mind and body. Such conditions, resulting in such phenomena, and commonly involving a partial, or total, or monomaniac derangement, temporary or permanent, often occur. It is among the most familiar facts of psychology and physiology, that in certain states of the brain, images formed by the imagination appear objective, while most or all the other functions of the mind remain unimpaired and undisturbed. Sometimes the illusion is, and sometimes it is not, understood by the subject of it. Sometimes it is transient as the cause producing it, sometimes persistent and lasting. The books are full of well-attested cases of this kind of hallucination, arising from febrile delirium, from sudden concussion or other lesion of the brain, from excessive anxiety, study, or other drafts upon nervous energy; and especially from protracted and intense application of the mind to some single topic, or line of topics, in which case the apparitions or visions are very apt to be in the same line, or a natural development of it. And it may be due to a combination of these causes. It may exist, too, in all forms, degrees, proportions, combinations, with all degrees of strength, duration, persistency; begetting monomania, or a more extended and pervading derangement of the faculties. The followers of Swedenborg may indeed reluctant against any such hypothesis in regard to a person of his eminent powers and attainments, who showed such intellectual vigor and activity during the whole period when he is supposed to have been subject to this partial eclipse or hallucination. But such minds have no immunity from such visitations; especially if they have long overtaxed themselves in some pet specialty or one-sided theory. We all have a fugitive experience of unrealities of imagination turned into apparent realities, in dreams. And examples enough occur of persons, in every grade or sphere of life, being in a continuous and life-

long dream on one or more subjects. Without repeating the celebrated case of Nicolai, the German bookseller and man of letters, who found himself troubled with apparitions of persons apparently talking together, which he at first knew to be unreal, but at length became scarcely able to distinguish from realities, and of which he was at length relieved by resorting to a periodical blood-letting, which he had that year inadvertently omitted; or others analogous, which abound in works on mental distempers, we will bring before our readers a case comparatively recent, near, and attested by competent witnesses still living. We refer to the Rev. Daniel Haskell, formerly President of the University of Vermont.* While in this office he was attacked with inflammatory rheumatism, on recovering from which, he was wont to say that "everything looked strange." As he recovered from his disease, his mental disturbance developed into decided and incurable derangement. Prof. Hough says that he regards Mr. Haskell as having "possessed a mind characterized by clear and discriminating views, and uncommon depth of reflection and solidity of judgment. . . . My impression has always been, that it (his monomania) was the result of metaphysical investigations, and particularly of an earnest attention to Berkeley's ideal theory." However this may be, his case is thus graphically described by the Rev. Dr. Samuel H. Cox, who was his pastor during several of the last years of his life.

"Of his antecedents I had occasionally and frequently heard, and with ever-increasing interest. That he was a man of great strength and soundness of mind, with a single exception, of which I shall speak presently; that his liberal attainments in science, literature, general reading, and well-digested thought, with correct and extensive theological erudition, were exemplary and distinguished; and that he was a person of deep and genuine piety, consistent and practical, as well as beneficent and useful, in the whole tenor of his life and actions; I may rationally and sincerely affirm, as better witnesses in multitudes could, without me, fully establish. He was a profound mathematician and astronomer; and occupied much of his leisure

* See Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, vol. ii., p. 526.

time, in the almost twelve years that I was his pastor, as well as before, in exploring the wonders of that magnificent science; in preparing and manufacturing globes, planetariums, instruments, and learned helps, for its prosecution; and in reading and studying history, chronology, antiquities, and other learned matters; always engaged, and seeming to abhor idleness or a life inane and useless. His manners ever seemed gentle and obliging. His words were few, his conversation rather reserved. He seemed to court solitude rather than society; though he came sometimes steadily to attend public worship, for months and years together; yet now and then with intervals, professing indeed an attachment to the person and the ministry of his pastor. In all this his affectionate family and friends rejoiced, and did what they could to continue the practice. The reason of his absence, sometimes for months, I am now to state.

“He was, like Cowper, whom in several respects I often thought he resembled, a confirmed monomaniac, even to his death. How it seemed to be induced I would not now inquire. I suppose its proximate cause was physical and cerebral derangement; and that its operation became religious, as in the case of Cowper, incidentally; though exasperated often by intense application to study, profound and anxious thought, and perhaps some mistaken views of Christian doctrine; at least in the way of making himself an exceptional monad, in no wise related to the ordinary truths and promises of the gospel. Perhaps some metaphysical perversions of the gospel, modifying his views insidiously, in some degree, induced the malady.

“The form of it, so far as I can now command it, was in effect this. He thought he was dead since some definite epoch gone by; that he was no longer a prisoner of hope or a probationer for eternity; that it was in some other world, not this, he formerly lived; that he was there a rebel, selfish, disobedient, antagonistic to his God; and that hence God had removed him into another state, where he was then remaining, although it was a wonder and a mystery! Hence he would not pray, no, never. It were wickedness and impiety for him to attempt it. This was exactly like Cowper,—as old Mr. Bull, at Newport Pagnell, son to him who was the friend of Cowper and Newton, at

Olney, I recollect, graphically told me, in September, 1846. He well remembered Cowper.

“Sometimes Mr. Haskell could be made to forget his mania, when interested in an object or topic of conversation. But one reference to it, or recollection of it by himself, supervened only to restore his melancholy consistency; as the solemn contraction of his countenance always evinced. Once in conversation it suddenly thundered, after a very vivid flash of lightning; interrupting the course of thought and speech. As he was full of cheerful interchange of remark, and so abruptly stopped in it, one of the company inquired of him—if that was not very much like real thunder and lightning. The absurdity struck him, and produced an involuntary smile,—saying, ‘It seems very like what I remember in that world where I once was.’

“His mania was quite incurable. It was indeed the most perfect illustration of monomania, or insanity on one point only, that I ever knew. On all other subjects, especially when he forgot, he was sane, sensible, learned, instructive, and engaging.”

The main points illustrated and confirmed by this remarkable and melancholy case, bearing on our present inquiry, are, 1. The possibility of a superior mind coming under the illusion that it abides in another world or state, while still in the body here. 2. The possibility of being at the same time free from all other mental derangement, and able to prosecute scientific and literary labours with success, and to prepare important publications for the press. 3. That this illusion, with all the sad religious despair implicated with it, was persistent and incurable, except during transient lucid intervals. While the differences between this case and Swedenborg’s were great in regard to the scope and extent of his illusion, yet as to its reality and persistency, while his high faculties were unimpaired in other respects, in regard to being present in other worlds and states of existence, there is an essential oneness. The differences so far as our present discussion is concerned, are immaterial. We proceed now to state some reasons for the belief, that Swedenborg was under the sort of illusion in question, when he conceived himself soaring through other worlds,

and in converse with their inhabitants, as an inspired Seer and Revelator.

1. The circumstances under which, according to Swedenborg's account, these visions commenced, all favour this hypothesis. It will be recollected that his first vision was consequent on a heavy meal taken with a ravenous appetite—a kind of appetite which we know is apt to supervene upon recovery from fever. Be this as it may, his whole account of the occurrence indicates distempered mental action, arising from physical disturbance of the cerebral, nervous, and digestive action. “At the end of the meal, I remarked that a vapor, as it were, clouded my sight, and the walls of my chamber appeared covered with frightful creeping things, such as serpents, toads, and the like. I was filled with astonishment, but retained the full use of my perceptions and thoughts.” As our readers will remember, he then perceived a man in his chamber, and was greatly terrified on hearing him say, “Eat not so much.” “On the following day the same man appeared to me again, and said, “I am the Lord,” &c. We do not think it necessary to argue the fair interpretation of this with any who have observed psychological phenomena in such circumstances, or to ask whether it arose from a morbid state of the brain, or was a divine epiphany. His intense study, for a long time previous, of “anatomy with the single end of investigating the soul,” and of “the origin of the earth, the birth, infancy, and love, of Adam, and of the soul in its state of integrity in the image of God,” in his book entitled the Love and Worship of God, culminating in delirious fever, which involved the brain, all go to support this hypothesis. Dr. Pond collects many opinions of his “contemporaries, that he was a *mentally disordered man*. Such was the opinion of Mr. Wesley; an opinion formed, not from hostility to Swedenborg, nor from any prejudice against him; for originally his prejudices were strong in his favour. “I sat down,” says he, “to day to read, and seriously to consider, some of the writings of Baron Swedenborg. I began with *huge prejudices in his favour*, knowing him to be a pious man, one of a strong understanding, of much learning, and one who thoroughly believed himself. But I could not hold out long. Any one of his visions puts his real

character out of doubt. He is one of the most ingenious, lively, entertaining *madmen* that ever sat pen to paper. But his waking dreams are so wild, so far remote both from Scripture and common sense, that one might as easily swallow the stories of Tom Thumb, or of Jack the Giant-killer."

Again, Mr. Wesley says, "In travelling this week, I looked over Baron Swedenborg's account of heaven and hell. He was a man of piety, of a strong understanding, and a most lively imagination. But he had a violent fever when he was about fifty-five years old, *which quite overturned his understanding. Nor did he ever recover it, but it continued 'majestic, though in ruins.'* From that time he was exactly in the state of that man at Argos,

'Qui se credebat miros audire tragædos,
In vacuo lactus sessor, plausorq; theatro.'

And this seems to have been the opinion widely entertained in England at that time, by those who knew anything of Swedenborg, and were not the receivers of his doctrines.

The same opinion also prevailed extensively in Swedenborg's own country. At Dr. Beyer's first interview with him at Gottingen, he entertained, he says, "the same sentiments with many others in that country, with respect to his being a *madman.*"

As this is a matter of great moment to the true solution of the problem of Swedenborg's visions and revelations, we give some further proofs drawn by Dr. Pond from Swedenborg's statements regarding himself. One of these is as follows. "I was once seized suddenly with a disease that seemed to threaten my life. My whole head was oppressed with pain. A pestilential smoke was let in from the great city called Sodom and Egypt. Rev. xi. 8. Half dead with severe anguish, I expected every moment to be my last. Thus I lay in my bed for the space of three days and a half. My spirit was reduced to this state, and in consequence thereof, my body. Then I heard about me the voices of persons, saying, 'Lo, he lies dead in the street of our city, who preached repentance for the remission of sins.' And they asked several of the clergy

whether he was worthy of burial, and they answered, 'No; let him lie to be made a spectacle of;' and they passed to and fro and mocked."

He speaks elsewhere of the *changes* in the state of his brain. "Immediately on this, I was made sensible of a remarkable *change* in the brain, and of a powerful operation thence proceeding."

As a fuller confirmation of this view of his distempered psychologico-nervous states, in which subjective impressions are transformed into veritable objective living beings, the manner in which he habitually attributes disease to evil spirits, speaks for itself, and needs no comments. Or, if it be insisted that he was really actuated by evil spirits, this agency will account for his delusions.

"Evil spirits," says he, "have been often, and for a long time, applied to me; and according to their presence, they induced pains, and also diseases." Under the influence of some, "I was seized with heaviness, with pain, with disease, which ceased in a moment, as soon as the spirits were expelled." Other spirits "infuse *unclean colds*, as are those of a cold fever, which also it was given me to know by repeated experience. The same spirits likewise cause *swoonings*." "Other spirits, when allowed to flow into the body, induce pain in *the teeth*; and upon their nearest presence, so severe, that I could not endure it. And so far as they were removed, the pain ceased; which was shown me repeatedly, that no doubt might remain."* Other spirits, when they are present, "induce great pain by weariness, which they inwardly increase even to the highest degree of impatience, inducing such infirmity in the mind, and thence in the body, that the man can scarce raise himself from the bed." "There have been spirits with me, who induced such a heaviness in the stomach, that I seemed to myself scarce able to live. The heaviness was so great, that with others it would have occasioned fainting; but

* Mr. Robsam says in his Memoir, "I once visited Swedenborg, when he complained of a grievous toothache, which he had endured many days. I recommended some common remedy, but he refused to use it, saying, 'My pain proceeds, not from the nerve of the tooth, but from the influx of hypocritical spirits which beset me, and cause this plague.'" *Hobart's Life*, p. 216.

the spirits were removed, and it then instantly ceased." "On a time, I perceived somewhat of anxiety in the lower part of the stomach, from which it was made manifest to me that such evil spirits were present. I spoke with them, saying, that it was better they should retire." This class of demons seem to have annoyed Swedenborg not a little, as they frequently do other men of studious and sedentary habits. Speaking of them again, he says, "There are certain spirits that are not joined to hell, as being newly departed from the body, which delight in things undigested, such as meat corrupted in the stomach; and they hold their confabulations in such sinks of uncleanness in man, as are suitable to their impure affections."

2. Swedenborg's visions are in the line of his previous studies and speculations, and are but a natural outgrowth from them. As all psychologically distempered persons who think they are lifted up to the heavenly world have visions and give accounts of it, which are essentially the embodiment of their own preconceptions of what that world is, so Swedenborg's visions and revelations are very largely the reproduction and expansion of the views, theories, and doctrines he had previously cherished—even from his childish days. (See *Life and Doctrine*, p. 23, before quoted.) His standards of truth and excellence, before and after his illumination, are essentially the same. Heaven is to him all aglow with the pleasures of 'conjugal' love, a subject on which his own mind was ever excited after his great disappointment. It has often been remarked, as Ralph Waldo Emerson says, "that all the souls with whom Swedenborg held converse, talked Swedenborgese." In reply, says Mr. White, "We would ask, how could they speak in any other way? Swedenborg did not profess to be a mimic; and if Cicero, or anybody else, spoke with him in the spiritual world, and in the spiritual language, Swedenborg, in translating the speech into his own simple diction, would, of course, seize the substance and care nothing for the form. That the language was not Cicero's might be true; but if the ideas were, what matter?" (*Life and Doctrine*, p. 75.) What certainty have we as to the ideas without the language? It is virtually conceded here, that whatever Swedenborg has reported to us, took its form and hue and vesture from his own mind. And this accords with that absolute sub-

jectivity which we have before seen, Swedenborg attributes to the heavenly world, and what pertains to it. Time and space, and objective realities in them, have no place there. Mr. White quotes from Swedenborg a curious instance of the way in which his angels contrive to render the annihilation of space and time subserve the annihilation of other facts. He wrote in an autobiographical letter to a friend, "I was born in the year 1689," when in truth he was born in the year 1688, and said in explanation, "Now, when I put the true year into that letter, an angel present told me to write the year 1689, as much more suitable to myself than the other; 'and you observe,' added the angel, 'that with us time and space are nothing.'" (*Life and Writings*, p. 229.) Indeed we have already seen, that Swedenborg considered his presence in heaven to consist in that congeniality of spirit which makes him at one with it. He himself, as quoted by Dr. Pond, (p. 232) says, "The spirits which attend a man are such as are in agreement with his affections and thoughts. Hence did he openly converse with them, they would only confirm him in his existing state of mind, and add their testimony to the truth of all his falses, and the good of all his evils. Enthusiasts would thus be confirmed in their enthusiasm, and fanatics in their fanaticism." Swedenborg represents his intercourse with the dead as limited by previous acquaintance. Mr. White (p. 90) quotes him as saying, in answer to the question by the Queen of Sweden, "whether he could speak with every one deceased, or only with certain persons?" "I cannot converse with all, but only with such as I have known in this world, with all royal and princely persons, with all renowned heroes, or great and learned men, whom I have well known either personally, or from their actions or writings; consequently with all of whom I could form an idea; for it may be supposed that a person whom I never knew, and of whom I could form no idea, I neither could or would wish to speak with." Just so. Unless divinely inspired, his visions and revelations must be bounded by the horizon of his antecedent ideas and knowledge.

3. Some of Swedenborg's followers recognize an analogy or resemblance between the state he was in, and that abnormal condition known as clairvoyance or mesmerism, also between

the supposed psychological exercises and nervous states involved in each. In regard to his statement, "My respiration has been so formed by the Lord, as to enable me to breathe inwardly for a long period of time, without the aid of external air. . . . I have also been instructed that my breathing was so directed without my being aware of it, in order to enable me to be with spirits, and to speak with them." Mr. White says: "Those who have studied mesmerism and clairvoyance know many facts that confirm and illustrate this position of Swedenborg's with regard to respiration; and it is quite evident that the Hindoo Yogi are capable of a similar state." The difference between the two, however, Mr. White claims, is, that the powers of the former are natural and continuous, of the latter only occasional, and often artificially induced. So Professor Bush said, as quoted by Dr. Pond (p. 215) in reference to an account given by Swedenborg of certain somnambulistic experiences he had suffered: "The state here described is so strikingly analogous to mesmerism, that it can scarcely be regarded otherwise than as an actual development of the interior condition brought about by that mysterious agency." But it is due to Swedenborg to say, that he appears to have understood, better than common spirit-rappers, the value to be put upon these real or supposed communications from the spirits of the dead. Its consistency with his general tone in regard to such communications with the spirits of the departed, and with his whole scheme, it does not devolve on us to show. But we know nothing truer than the following. "When spirits begin to speak with man, care should be taken not to believe them; for almost everything they say is made up by them, and they lie; so if it were permitted them to relate what heaven is, and what things are in heaven, they would tell so many falsehoods, and with such strong assertion, that man would be astonished. Wherefore it was not permitted me, when spirits were speaking, to have any faith in what they stated." (*Id.* p. 69.) We think Swedenborg and his followers would have been wiser, if he had more rigidly kept within the permitted limits.

Indeed, this whole matter of intercourse with the spirits of the departed, consulting them, or ghosts or spirits of any sort from the invisible world, save God, the Infinite Spirit, in prayer

and in his word, is utterly forbidden and condemned in Scripture. And not only so, all preternatural operations and visitations not according to God's word are lying wonders of the devil and his angels. "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? (*i. e.*, why seek unto the dead in behalf of, or concerning the living?) To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. viii. 19, 20.) We have no doubt that whatever of modern spiritualism is not accounted for by sleight of hand, distempered nervous and mental states, and other natural causes, are among the lying wonders of Satan, accomplishing their object upon those who are "given over to a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." Nor do we put any higher estimate upon Swedenborg's intercourse with the dead, or any of his really preternatural revelations, if any such there were. The Spiritualists, no less than Swedenborg, claim to have ushered in a New Dispensation, and this by the mouth of eminent judges and scientists, ensnared by the delusion. Says Judge Edmonds: "As under the Mosaic dispensation mankind were taught the existence of God, rather than the thousand gods with mortal attributes then worshipped; and under the Christian dispensation they were taught the immortality of the soul and its existence for ever, so now under this new dispensation it is being revealed to them, for the first time, what that state of existence is, and how in this life they may well and wisely prepare to enter upon it." Dr. Hare exclaims, "Praise be to God that has sent us this new way of religious light."*

4. Some of Swedenborg's personal peculiarities in his private habits strongly indicate mental aberration. Mr. White tells us, "Shearsmith gives the same account of his habits of sleep as his gardener at Stockholm. He had no regard for times and seasons, days or nights, only taking rest as he felt disposed. This was naturally to be expected, considering the peculiarities of his seer-ship. At first, Shearsmith was greatly alarmed by reason of his talking day and night. Sometimes

* Quoted in McDonald's *Spiritualism*, p. 27.

he would be writing, and then he would be, as it were, holding a conversation with several persons. (p. 260.) His house-servants said that their master often spoke aloud when evil spirits were with him, which they could easily hear, their room being adjoining. When asked what caused his disturbance in the night, he answered that it had been permitted evil spirits to blaspheme, and that he had spoken against them zealously. . . . Once it was remarkable, that after such a state, he went to bed and did not rise for several days and nights. This gave his domestics much uneasiness.' At last he awoke, and said he had been very well. Similar authentic accounts are given of his strange ways on shipboard and elsewhere." (p. 180.) Such is our theory of the visions and revelations on which the so-called New Church is founded.

These considerations are not at all neutralized in view of Swedenborg's great intellect. This, as we have already seen, is no security against the greatest eccentricities and abnormities, nor against mania and monomania. "Vanity is the infirmity of noble minds," and no vice is more apt to seize the very citadel of the soul, and make all its faculties, however great, its abject tools. Who has not seen most painful illustrations of this? How are our madhouses tenanted by those who conceive themselves kings, emperors, presidents, prophets, apostles, and in some cases, even Christ himself? Swedenborg seems never to have had a doubt of his high and holy office, as founder of a new dispensation, or of his perfect fitness for it. All his high faculties were not destroyed, but enslaved to this supreme idea and overbearing passion.

But one question remains. Why are the followers of Swedenborg so largely composed of intelligent and cultivated people?

1. Swedenborg's writings, as a whole, are unintelligible—abracadabra—to any other. If received at all, they must be so by the intelligent and educated, and even by these only after long and hard study. If received by others, it must be at second-hand from these, not directly from any personal understanding of these writings. In this respect they differ from the teachings of Him who ordained that, to the "poor the gospel shall be preached," and whom "the common people

heard gladly." It is one criterion of a genuine gospel, and a genuine preaching of it, that it is fitted to take hold of the common mind, not exclusively indeed, but preëminently. Not many mighty, not many noble are called.

2. But an inestimably small fragment of the intelligent portion of religious people have accepted the doctrines of Swedenborg. And there is no guarantee in general intelligence and refinement against the admission of great errors on religious subjects, especially if these errors be congenial to the natural tastes and predilections of the receivers. This must be conceded by religionists of every grade, and on any religious theory whatever.

3. The little volume, by "a Layman," evidently the product of a mind of refined culture, shows how Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondence has a singular fascination for cultivated minds in a certain state. There are many who cannot, and desire not, to evade the evidence of the authenticity, genuineness, and plenary inspiration of some, or all, the books of Scripture, but who disrelish, or find difficulties in the literal or obvious meaning of more or less of their contents. This doctrine of "correspondence" gives an interior spiritual meaning, far more momentous than the literal, and escapes, or offers a way of escaping, all that is perplexing or unwelcome in the latter. Now, whether or not we couple with this Swedenborg's entire rejection of the New Testament Epistles and several books of the Old Testament, in either case the meaning of the Bible can be accommodated to the most fastidious sentimentalism, and the most sturdy rationalism. Says "Layman," "If they (the Scriptures) are to be regarded as the works of God and plenary inspired, then the errors, inconsistencies, and weaknesses are evidence against their credibility. But if we adopt the theory, that the works are inspired, and contain a deeper meaning than has yet been found; if we suppose that the errors and inconsistencies are apparent rather than real, . . . our doubts will disappear, and we may satisfy the unbeliever himself that his objections are not against the Scriptures, but against the false notions of them entertained by men." (pp. 51—2.) This is the main principle developed with much

ability, taste, and rhetorical skill, in this daintily printed volume—a fit emblem of its neatness of style.

4. We will only add, that, besides providing for the rejection of the great doctrines of Scripture, as accepted by Christendom, this system does not, like common Unitarianism, end in mere negations. It opens, through the medium of “correspondence,” a boundless interior spiritual sense, to occupy the intellect and engage the affections. The study of this supposed correspondence, and threading its interior meaning, affords unlimited scope for the play of imagination and the flights of speculation. It may therefore possess an extraordinary fascination for imaginative, speculative, contemplative minds. Says Judge Parsons, the most eminent lay-advocate of Swedenborgianism known to us, in reference to the explanations of the meaning of Scripture thus evolved: “The exceeding beauty of many of these explanations delights the imagination. The profound moral significance thus given to many texts which in the letter ‘profit nothing,’ touches every heart that has any religious tendency; the emotion of surprise and the charm of entire novelty makes these explanations yet more attractive.”* Here we see what, added to its rationalism, gives this system a charm for many imaginative and speculative minds; especially if infected with a disrelish for evangelical truth, and catholic doctrine. This field of “correspondence” between the material and spiritual, the literal and the metaphorical, is boundless and alluring. Here the imagination can roam and luxuriate at pleasure. And what gives it all the greater charm and power, is the substratum of real truth of which it is a lawless exaggeration and distortion. Half-truths perverted and misapplied are the most powerful and seductive forms of error. It is true that there is, within certain limits, a correspondence between the material and spiritual world, whereby the former is typical and emblematic of the latter. This fact underlies not only figurative language, but even language itself, as applied to spiritual phenomena, which is originally borrowed from analogous sensuous phenomena. This is true of the very word, spirit, itself. And it is also true, that the tracing of these types and

* Quoted by “Layman,” p. 90.

correspondencies is among the most fascinating occupations of the mind. It has all the charm of poetry. On this the parables, figures, and metaphors of Scripture are founded. But these, except in prophetic imagery, which must receive a part of its interpretation in its fulfilment, readily speak their own meaning, to the plain and sincere reader, more accurately and powerfully than mere naked literality. This is heaven-wide of that correspondence of Swedenborg, which melts away the obvious meaning into some interior angelic significance that requires a new seer and revelator to unfold it. This obliterates all metes and bounds, all articulate sense, in the meaning of Scripture. Such an exaggeration and perversion of a beautiful truth makes it a monstrous error. But still it affords boundless scope for imaginative soarings, ecstasies, and revelries. And therefore to those who are Unitarians, or entertain the repugnance of Unitarians to the faith and practice obviously taught in Scripture and embraced by the church of Christ, while they nauseate the barren negations and dead husks of mere Socinianism, Swedenborgianism has presented an enchanting side.

Further still, the Swedenborgians maintain a more positive, earnest, strict type of practical religion than the Unitarians; thus often satisfying consciences that could not be quiet under the religious indifference and inanity of Socinianism. Eminent integrity, gentleness, charity towards men, with a strict observance of the Sabbath, and a tone of reverence and devoutness in the public worship and services of that day, have drawn towards them many, who, finding the cross a stumbling-block or foolishness, yet crave a more earnest religion than they find among the adherents of liberal Christianity. So they espouse this system which, in its own fashion, is alive with a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge.

Thus we have a partial explanation of the power and prevalence of this system among a select class, in spite of its unscriptural absurdities and enormities. But though an explanation, it is no justification of it, or of adhesion to it. The attitude it assumes in regard to the person and work of Christ, and all the fundamentals of Christianity, stamp it as one form of

Antichrist. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 3, 4.

ART. IV.—*The Position of the Book of Psalms in the Plan of the Old Testament.*

THE Old Testament is in several respects a unit. As it is contemplated in literary history and in diplomatic criticism, it has an external and mechanical unity, inasmuch as it constitutes one volume, its sundry treatises having been collected at a very ancient period, since which time it has had a common history, the record of its preservation, circulation, and interpretation, is the same for all its parts, and the principles and methods by which the state of its text is to be ascertained or its true text restored, are the same throughout. In the question of the canon, or the evidences of a supernatural revelation, or the doctrine of Divine inspiration, we recognize beyond this external unity, and lying at the basis of it, a formal oneness of its several parts, a unity of source, and, in so far as this determines it, of character, the whole being inspired of God and divinely authoritative, constituting the sum of the inspired writings belonging to the former dispensation. Such a unity, however, might be little more than negative, distinguishing the Old Testament Scriptures as a body of writings to be classed by themselves, because diverse in this important particular from all others, but without establishing any positive relation or intimate connection between themselves. Again, systematic theology attributes to the Old Testament a real and essential unity, inasmuch as the whole is occupied with one great theme, the will of God, in regard to man's duty and salvation; and this is consistently treated throughout, so that entire harmony reigns everywhere, and each part agrees perfectly with every other.