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ART. I.—*An Appeal in behalf of the views of the eternal world and state, and the doctrines of faith and life, held by the body of Christians who believe that a new church is signified (in the Revelation, chapter XXI.) by the New Jerusalem, embracing answers to all principal objections.* By the Rev. S. Noble, minister of the New-Jerusalem church, Hatton Garden, London.

ON the 29th of January A. D. 1689, according to himself, but in 1688 according to others, there was born at Stockholm in Sweden a man, who is known to the world by the name of Emanuel Swedenborg. He was the son of a Bishop in Sweden, was himself a good scholar, made considerable attainments in science, rose to the order of nobles in the kingdom, travelled extensively over Europe, exhibited amiable dispositions, was kindly treated by his monarch, Charles XII., wrote voluminously, and at last died in the city of London in the year 1772, aged either 82 or 83 years and 2 months. During the earlier parts of his life he made some important contributions to science and the arts; but that which has given him the most notoriety, was

the peculiarity of his views on the subject of religion. In 1743, when he was 54 or 55 years of age, he relinquished other pursuits, and devoted himself to teaching and propagating his new doctrines. He made a few disciples in several places, among whom were some persons holding eminent stations; but it is not thought to be interesting or instructive to enter into a history of his sect. The number of his followers at this time is not exactly known to us; but we have seen no evidence that it is large.

In the United States the number is inconsiderable. His disciples are popularly called Swedenborgians; but they designate themselves in their associated capacity as the "New Church," or the "New Jerusalem." According to the minutes of their "General Convention" for 1844, they have 6 ordaining ministers, 18 pastors and teaching ministers, 2 ordained ministers and 5 licensed ministers, in all 31 ministers; of whom, however, 6 do not constantly and regularly officiate. Thus their effective preaching force appears to be 25. From the same minutes we learn that they have the following "Societies," or churches: In Maine 3, in Massachusetts 8, in Rhode Island 1, in New York 6, in Pennsylvania 7, in Maryland 2, in the District of Columbia 1, in Virginia 2, in Ohio 14, in Illinois 2, in South Carolina 1, and in Missouri 1: in all 48.

Of the numerical strength of these societies we have no means of certainly knowing, but suppose it not to be great. Nearly or quite all the houses appropriated to their meetings, so far as we have observed, are small. We have often heard that the number in attendance was generally less than their houses would accommodate. This fact may, however, mislead us; for we believe the members are not generally very zealous in attending their meetings.

The pecuniary statistics of the body would not indicate large numbers or great zeal. At the meeting of the General Convention in 1844, the Treasurer received for all purposes the sum of \$161 83 cents; about one half of which went to pay for the publication of their Journal, \$20 to the fund for educating ministers, and \$50 for the publication of books. These statistics are supposed to be interesting to our readers, and are given here, because we suppose that very few of our readers have access to them in their general reading. Such being the state of

facts, some may ask, why do we notice so small a body, or its publications? We reply: 1st. We have not previously noticed it and we wish to keep our readers advised of such things. 2. Considerable zeal has of late been manifested in some quarters in disseminating the tenets of the "New Church," especially by the circulation of books and tracts; and it is probable still greater efforts may be made for the same purpose during the next few years. According to a quotation found in the North American Review for January 1821, p. 96, Swedenborg stated that the year 1852 is to be decisive of the destiny of the New Church. If his doctrine be not then extensively embraced, it is to be accounted false. Hence, probably, the zeal of his followers is rather greater now than formerly. It behooves them indeed to be up and doing because, counting exactly, less than four of the eighty years, within which it was to make extensive conquests, remain for the great work. If not influenced by this prediction, his followers have of late bestirred themselves; especially in a private way, and some of our readers may need warning. To despise the day of small things may lead us as much astray from our duty concerning evil things as good things. The neglected spark may lead to flames that will consume a city.

We must, however, premise that we have no idea of attempting to tell our readers all or half that is involved in Swedenborg's views. No man can read his writings and those of his followers without thinking of Chaos, described by Ovid as *rudis indigestaque moles*. We do not remember in our lives to have seen so many incoherent, strange and wild opinions brought together. We do not, like one of our countrymen, profess to have read the whole of Swedenborg's works. *Twenty-seven* pretty large volumes of such writings far transcend our powers of endurance, although we are not esteemed by our intimate friends very impatient of labour, if any reward is to follow. Yet we have in possession and have read a pretty respectable shelf of books written by the Swedish Baron and his followers, and we have found in them enough to enable us to make up our minds as to the bearing of the New Church doctrines on some important points.

Before we had read for ourselves, we often heard Swedenborgianism spoken of as a sublimation of Christianity, as a refinement of doctrine and ethics, harmless at least to many. Again

we heard it spoken of as an innocent kind of romancing concerning the spiritual world and a future state. This language did not satisfy our minds. It even alarmed us. For "what is the chaff to the wheat?" Yet until we read for ourselves we had no conception of the extent of Swedenborg's assaults upon fundamental truths and principles.

Our readers will perhaps be much surprised at hearing that Swedenborg and his followers reject from the canon of Scripture a large number of the books received by the Christian world as divinely inspired. This is their language: "The books of the Word are all those, which have the internal sense, but those, which have not the internal sense, are not the Word. The books of the Word in the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, the books of Kings, the Psalms of David, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; and in the New Testament, the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Apocalypse. Total, Thirty-four books, which complete the canon of the Sacred Scripture or Word of God."* Indeed we believe the Baron's followers, so far as they are informed of his doctrine, universally embrace his views of the Sacred Canon. We have indeed known some of them to deny that such were his views, and voluntarily pledge themselves to renounce his teachings, if such could be shown to be his doctrine. The evidence has been given. They could not deny it. But they still held fast their delusions.

The list above given excludes from the Old Testament the book of Ruth, the two books of Chronicles, the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, in all ten. And it excludes from the New Testament the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and every Epistle, in all twenty-two. Total rejected from both Testaments, *thirty-two*. Total received from both Testaments, *thirty-four*. Pretty sweeping work this, our readers will say. We think so too. It is in our view just like Mr. Jefferson's plan of treating the New Testament. He tells us that he selected those things, which he

*See "Arcana Coelestia," n. 10, 325, "New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine," n. 266, and "White Horse," n. 16, and "Hindmarsh's Seal," n. 136.

discovered to be the genuine teachings of Christ and rejected all the rest. How much he rejected we are not told, but we can hardly suppose he rejected a larger proportion of what he attempted to expurgate, than has the Swedish Baron from the whole Bible. We may be thankful that he has left us any of the New Testament. He has rejected *twenty-two* out of its *twenty-seven* books.

The reasons assigned for thus rejecting so large a part of Scripture, are sufficiently curious. One is that these books have not the "internal sense." Whatever may be the meaning assigned to such a phrase, we think it would be very difficult so to define it as by the definition to include the Lamentations of Jeremiah and exclude Solomon's Song. If the former has an internal sense, surely the latter has also. The authority of Swedenborg, capriciously exercised, is the true cause of rejecting these books. The above reason has no application. But Hindmarsh is very bold, and attempts to found the rejection upon the authority of Christ himself. He quotes Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 27, and 44, as follows: "Then said he unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . And he said unto them, these are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." On this passage he says: "It is remarkable, that our Lord, in this passage, has designated or given us a key to discover those books of the Old Testament as well as of the New, which alone ought to be regarded as *canonical* or of *divine authority* in the church, because written under the *immediate influence* and dictation of the spirit of JEHOVAH, or the LORD, and in their inmost sense treating of HIM alone. The *Law of Moses* denotes all the historical parts of the Word; the *Prophets*, all the prophetic parts, and the *Psalms* may fairly be supposed to include not only that portion of the Word, which is so named, but likewise all those other parts which bear the form and spirit of prayers, praises, thanksgivings and celebrations of the Lord. This rule, therefore, which so well applies to the Old Testament, may also

be applied to the New; and by it we are enabled to distinguish those books, which are absolutely *divine to the very letter* from those, which, though excellent in their kind, are yet only the productions of good and pious men." pp. 309 and 310. Seal. Our object is rather to give a view of what Swedenborgianism is than to refute any of its fancies. Every scholar knows that by the terms, "*Law, Prophets and Psalms,*" every Jew in the days of our Saviour understood every book of the Old Testament, as now contained in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, or our English version of the Old Testament. Any work on the canon will make this sufficiently plain even to the common reader. As to the assertion that Christ is found in the "inmost sense" of the book of Judges, and not in that of the book of Job, that he is found in the books of Kings, and not in the books of Chronicles, any reader must see that the application of the rule is purely capricious. As to the attempt to apply the rule to the book of Acts and the Epistles of the New Testament, we can but say its folly is hardly exceeded by its impiety. The Epistle to the Hebrews is almost throughout a treatise on the priesthood of Christ. That to the Colossians sets out with a formal defence of his divinity, and all the rejected books of the New Testament have ever been precious to the pious. Yet they stood in the way of some doctrine of the Baron, and they must be rejected. The truth is, this rejection of *thirty-two* books is an open and arbitrary act of infidelity; and no reason can be given why we may not upon like grounds renounce the whole word of God. We are therefore constrained to admit that Swedenborgianism is strongly tinged with the spirit of infidelity. This spirit is not the less insidious or dangerous, perhaps, because those, who follow the Baron, make a show of respect to some portions of the word of God, bearing no higher evidence of inspiration than other parts, which they reject.

Some may ask, do not Swedenborgians in their writings quote these very books, whose canonical authority they reject? We answer, they do. A common reader taking one of their books, and seeing Paul's and Peter's and John's and James' Epistles quoted, would be ready to deny that they reject them. In their writings they quote the rejected books, whenever it suits their purposes. The very book under review has in the title-page two such texts, viz: 2 Peter, i: 16. "For we have not followed

cunningly devised fables," and Acts xiii: 40, 41. "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work, which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." But Hindmarsh explains the reason why they thus quote the rejected books. He says: "Here and there indeed we may give a quotation from, or reference to, the books excepted from the divine code. But then it will be only by way of confirmation of the doctrine advanced, for the sake of those who know not as yet the distinction between those books, which proceed *from the Lord*, and those which proceed *from man*, even from a good and pious man." Seal note to preface, p. 8.

It is as much an act of infidelity to add to the word of God, as to take from it. The theological writings of Swedenborg claim, not to be conjectures, nor philosophical reasonings, nor uninspired interpretations, but to be revelations, and in one sense of a higher order than the writings of the prophets themselves. Thus Swedenborg in his letter to Dr. Hartley quoted in Barrett's *Life of Swedenborg*, pp. 33 and 34 says: "I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested himself in person to me his servant in the year 1743; when he opened my sight to the view of the spiritual world, and granted me the privilege of conversing with spirits and angels." "From that time I began to print and publish various *arcana*; 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 more important matters conducive to salvation and true wisdom."

In like manner he declares in "The True Christian Religion," chapter 14, "that this second coming of our Lord is effected by the instrumentality of a man, before whom he has manifested himself in person, and whom he has filled with his spirit, to teach from him the doctrines of the New Church by means of the Word."

Again: "Since the Lord cannot manifest himself in person (to the world,) and yet he has foretold that he would come and establish a New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, it follows that he will effect this by the instrumentality of a man, who is able not only to receive the doctrines of the church in his

understanding, but also to make them known by the press. That the Lord manifested himself before me his servant, that he sent me on this office, and afterwards opened the sight of my spirit, and so let me into the spiritual world, permitting me to see the heavens and the hells, and also to converse with angels and spirits, and this continually for many years, I attest in truth; and further, that from the first day of my call to this office, I have never received anything appertaining to the doctrine of that church from any angel, but from the Lord alone, whilst I was reading the Word. To the end that the Lord might be constantly present, he revealed to me the spiritual sense of the Word, in which sense Divine truth is in its light, and in this light he is continually present." pp. 516, 517.

His biographer claims for him that he understood all he wrote, but that the prophets did not understand what they wrote. Thus we suppose he intends to prefer him before them in the matter of inspiration.

In a tract busily circulated by Swedenborgians, entitled "A few plain answers to the question, why do you receive the testimony of Swedenborg?" the 12th chapter has this caption in italics: "I receive the testimony of Swedenborg, because he is presented to the world in the honourable and highly distinguished character of a Seer, as well as an expositor of the Sacred Scriptures, and because, in that character, he has been enabled to communicate information of the highest importance to the happiness and well being of mankind." There is no doubt, therefore, that his followers do claim for him the very highest character, that a servant of God could have. Practically they put his writings before those of the prophets. They do "take Swedenborg's disclosures as the standard of every thing," which bears a relation to the unseen world.

Swedenborgians also deny the doctrine of the Trinity as understood and received in the Christian world. Swedenborg says in so many words "that the whole system of theology in the Christian world at this day is founded on an idea of three Gods arising from the doctrine of a trinity of persons." See Brief Exposition of the doctrine, &c., by Swedenborg. In his work on the Athanasian Creed he endeavours to show that the doctrine, which has its name from Athanasius, "leaves a clear idea whilst it is reading, that there are three persons, and hence that

there are three unanimous Gods, and an obscure idea that God is one, and so obscure, that it does not remove the idea of three Gods."

So also Barrett, in his lectures on the doctrine of the New Jerusalem church, Lecture 8, pp. 255, 256, says "Now it is repeatedly affirmed in the revelations made for the New Jerusalem church, that this great central doctrine of religion—doctrine concerning the Lord—as taught at the present day in the catechisms, creeds, commentaries, confessions of faith, and from the pulpits of the Old Church, is not *true* but *false*. Consequently the sun of that church has become darkened; a thing, which, according to the Lord's prophetic announcement in the Evangelists, was to take place at the Consummation of the Age. (See Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24.) It is also alleged in these revelations, that, because this fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, as taught in the prevailing church, is false, therefore the doctrine of the atonement, of regeneration, and indeed all the doctrines of the Old Church which grow out of this concerning the Lord, and which depend upon it as their foundation, are likewise false. For it is well known that a solid and enduring superstructure can be reared only on a solid foundation; and if the central truth of any system of doctrines be wrong, all the subordinate and derivative truths must necessarily be not *truths* but *false*s; and consequently the whole system must also be wrong." He afterwards says, "It may be shown still more clearly that those who really believe in a trinity of *persons* in the Godhead do actually believe in three Gods." p. 259. Noble also in section 7, attempts to show that Tritheism is the alternative of what he calls the true doctrine. And yet Swedenborgians reject the doctrine commonly called Unitarian. Hindmarsh calls his work a "seal upon the lips of Unitarians, Trinitarians, and all others who refuse to acknowledge the sole, supreme, and exclusive divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Yet Swedenborg in his Brief Exposition, p. 21, says "that there is a divine Trinity is manifest from the Lord's words, Matt. xxviii. 19." After all this our readers will perhaps be surprised to find the London General Conference in the use of language familiar to the New Church declaring in the first article of their faith that there is in God "the divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which are the essential divinity, divine human-

ity, and divine proceeding, answering to the soul, the body, and the operative energy in man; and that the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is that God."*

Our readers will naturally enquire is not this a revival of the doctrine of Sabellius. We answer that to a certain extent it certainly is. Sabellius and Swedenborg both maintained, that there is but one person in the Godhead, that that one person was the maker of all things, that he became incarnate, and, that exerting his influence, he was called the Spirit. There is indeed considerable variation in the language used, but the substance seems to us to be the same. Swedenborgians seem to feel the difficulty arising from this quarter. Accordingly Noble in his appendix endeavours to show that the New Church doctrine of the Trinity is not a revival of Sabellianism, or any other ancient heresy. He also contends that with all its errors the doctrine of Noetus is greatly superior to that of Tripersonalism.

We have strenuously endeavoured to understand the Swedenborgian doctrine concerning the Trinity. In brief it seems to be this, that Jesus Christ is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We have already stated that it is not our main object to refute Swedenborgianism, but to give a view of it. Our readers will therefore not expect in this place a defence of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Swedenborgians also deny that Jesus Christ in his own person bore any punishment for us, or made any satisfaction to divine justice on behalf of sinners. We have already quoted from Barrett's Lectures, where he pronounces "the doctrine of the Atonement false." Thus also Noble in his appeal pp. 438, 439, 440 and 444, speaks. Having quoted Rom. v. 11, he says "It is not a little extraordinary, that a word (atonement) which occurs but once in the whole of the New Testament, from which, more especially, Christians profess to derive their creed, should have come to occupy so great a space in the language of the theology of the day. And it is more extraordinary still, that it should have come to be supposed, that the Lord made an atonement to the Father." Yet he admits that "the atonement is reconciliation with God, including the means by which reconciliation is effected." He also declares "our doctrines never teach that we

* See Sketch of Swedenborg and Swedenborgianism, p. 14.

may not view Christ as a sacrifice for sin; but they show on the contrary how he truly was such." He then undertakes to show "that the sacrifices of the Mosaic law were not meant to represent the punishment of sin;" "and that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ did not consist in his suffering the punishment due to sin, but that his sacrifice consisted in the hallowing of every principle or element of his Human Nature to the Godhead, till at length his whole Human Nature became a living sacrifice, or thing fully consecrated, sanctified, and hallowed, by perfect union with his Divinity."

Swedenborg in his tract on Faith p. 17, says, "The Christian faith, in its universal idea, is this: That the Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah, came into the world to subdue the hells, and to glorify his Humanity; that without this no mortal could be saved; and that they are saved who believe in him." So also in his "doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord," Swedenborg has an entire chapter to show that "the Lord by the passion of the cross did not take away sins." He subsequently says that "by taking away sins, the like is meant, as by redeeming man and saving him." Nay, he says more, that "any one may see from reason alone, if he be in any illumination, that sins cannot be taken away from man, except by actual repentance, which is, that a man sees his sins, implores the help of the Lord, and desists from them. To see, believe, and teach otherwise is not from the Word, nor is it from sound reason but from lust, and a depraved will, which constitute man's *proprium*, by which intelligence is debased into folly." pp. 29, 33, 34. Our readers will by this time perceive why Swedenborgians reject the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the New Testament. Doctrines more contrary to those taught by the Apostles we may safely say have never been propagated.

Swedenborgians also deny the doctrine of justification by faith, as it is generally received in the Christian world. Thus Swedenborg says in the "Apocalypse Revealed," n. 571, that the doctrine of faith alone, that is, faith without the works of the law, justifies and saves, is not from the word, but from a single expression of Paul misunderstood, Rom. iii. 28. So also in his work on "Divine Providence," n. 115, says: "They who are of faith separate from charity, and have confirmed themselves from the saying of Paul to the Romans, *that man is justified by faith without the works of the law*, iii. 28, adore this saying as

those who adore the sun, and become like those, who fix their eyes earnestly on the sun, from which the sight becoming blunted does not see anything in the midst of light; for they do not see what is there understood by the works of the law, that they are the rituals which were described by Moses in his books."

This is not the first instance in which the doctrine of justification by faith alone, has been greatly misrepresented. The Christian world does not hold that the faith, which justifies, is separate from charity, or that it alone exists in the heart, but the doctrine is, that that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world is the grace and the only grace that so lays hold of Christ as to obtain an interest in his redemption. Faith is not meritorious but only instrumental in justification. If Swedenborg had half the information or discernment attributed to him by his followers, he must have known that he was misrepresenting the doctrine of the Christian world. At the same time it is evident that he is utterly averse to the doctrine of justification by faith as held by the Protestant world. In his "Brief Exposition of Doctrine," n. 109, he says, "The imputation of the righteousness or merits of Christ, enters at this day, like a soul into the whole system of the reformed Christian world; it is from imputation that faith, which is therein accounted the only medium of salvation, is affirmed to be righteousness before God; and it is from imputation that man by means of that faith, is said to be clothed with the gifts of righteousness, as a king when elected is invested with the insignia of royalty. But, nevertheless, imputation, from the mere assertion that a man is righteous, effects nothing, for it passes only into the ears, and does not operate in man unless the imputation of righteousness be also the application of righteousness by its being communicated and so induced." And in n. 114, of the same work, having described a spell of sickness which he had, he says, he "heard shocking speeches such as the following. . . . Whilst we are saved freely without any merit of our own, what need is there of anything but only the faith, that God the Father sent the Son to take away the curse of the law, to impute his merit to us, and so to justify us in his sight, and absolve us from our sins, and then to give the Holy Spirit to operate all good in us?" If such doctrine be "shocking" to Swedenborgians, Christians cannot be at a loss to know what to think of the "New Church" doctrines. There lies before us a little Sweden-

borgian tract called the "The Golden Wedding Ring." It is written by the Rev. J. Clowes, a minister in the established Church of England, who seems to have embraced Swedenborg's views. On the last two pages is a prayer for the married couple, in which there is not any allusion to the merits of Christ, or redemption by his blood. But we have this. "We have pledged ourselves at thine altar, to love, comfort, honour, and keep each other in sickness and in health. Enable us then to recollect that if we are negligent in the discharge of these duties, we are offenders against thee, to whom we have pledged ourselves for the performance of them; but if we conscientiously fulfil them, we then secure thy favour, and draw down upon our heads thine eternal blessing." We suppose that works are the ground on which Swedenborgians generally expect the divine blessing. Swedenborg himself, in the "Brief Exposition of Doctrine, &c." n. 108, says, "that the first reason why the Roman Catholics may be brought into the New Jerusalem, or New Church, more easily than the Reformed is, because the faith of justification by the imputation of the merit of Christ, which is an erroneous faith, and cannot be together with the faith of the New Church, (see n. 102 to 104,) is with them obliterated, and is like to be more fully so; whereas it is as it were engraven upon the Reformed, inasmuch as it is the principal tenet of their Church."

After these declarations, our readers cannot be at a loss to determine what is the tendency of the New Church doctrines. If justification is "the article of a standing or falling church," as Luther said, and as Swedenborgians admit, then the Protestant world must give up its most cherished and clearly established principles on justification by faith, or it must reject the doctrines of the New Jerusalem.

Swedenborgians, as we have already seen, deny the doctrine of Regeneration, as understood in evangelical churches and pronounce it "false." It would make this paper too long to go into a minute consideration of their views on this subject. We simply state that they utterly reject the evangelical doctrine, although they write much about what they call regeneration.

Swedenborgians also deny the doctrine of the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ, or of any of his saints, or of any human being. Thus in the tract already quoted, entitled "A Sketch," &c., p. 16, article 11th, declares, "that immediately

after death, which is only a putting off of the material body, never to be resumed, man rises again in a spiritual or substantial body, in which he continues to live to eternity; in heaven, if his ruling affections, and thence his life, have been good; and in hell, if his ruling affections, and thence his life, have been evil." Barrett in his lectures says, pp. 335 and 336, Lect. x: "The spirit of man, after the death of the body, appears in the spiritual world in a human form, altogether as in the world; he enjoys also the faculty of seeing, of hearing, of speaking, of feeling, as in the world; and he is endowed with every faculty of thinking, of willing, and of acting as in the world. In a word, he is a man as to all things and every particular, except that he is not encompassed with that gross body, which he had in the world; he leaves that when he dies, nor does he ever re-assume it."

"This continuation of life is what is understood by the resurrection."

It is also said in the *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 5078, by Emanuel Swedenborg, that "man rises immediately after death, and then appears to himself in the body altogether as in the world, with such a face, with such members, arms, hands, feet, breast, belly, loins; yea, also when he sees himself and touches himself, he saith that he is a man as in the world; nevertheless it is not his external principle, which he carried about in the world, that he sees and touches, but it is the internal principle, which constitutes that very human principle, which lives, and which had an external principle about it, or out of singular the things belonging to itself, whereby it could be in the world," &c., &c. Noble also goes into this subject at great length in the work under review. From p. 35 to p. 119, he defends the New Church doctrines on the resurrection. We cannot forbear here to quote the words of Paul, 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17, 18. "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as a canker; of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." So also he says, Rom. i. 4, that Jesus Christ was "declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." In 1 Cor. xv. 12, 22, the apostle has argued at length and with much earnestness, that his preaching and the faith of his hearers were alike vain, "if Christ

be not risen." In Heb. vi., Paul puts the doctrine of the "resurrection of the dead" as lying at the "foundation" of "the principles of the doctrine of Christ." Without quoting more texts we simply refer our readers to the texts found under the word resurrection in any good concordance. It is true indeed that Swedenborgians hold a doctrine, which they call, the doctrine of the resurrection. But it is not a resurrection at all. It is, as we have already seen, not a reviving or rising of the dead, but, as Barrett calls it, a "continuation of life." That is, they do not hold to annihilation at death; but that the soul will exist after it shall be separated from this body, and will always have a substantial or spiritual body. They do not hold that any, much less "all that are in their graves shall come forth." John v. 28, 29.

Swedenborgians also deny the doctrine of future and final judgment. They hold that the last judgment took place ninety one years ago, that is, "that the last judgment spoken of in the New Testament, was effected by the Lord in the spiritual world, in the year 1757; it being a judgment upon those in the world of spirits, who had been of the former church; the good were then elevated to heaven and the evil cast down to hell." Edinburgh Encyclopædia, Art. Swedenborg. In his Appeal, Noble lays down and argues at great length this proposition, "That the general judgment announced in the scripture, as to be performed at the second coming of the Lord, was not to take place in the natural world, as commonly supposed, but in the spiritual." This proposition he puts in italics. He supports it by attempting to prove, 1st, that there is no such thing as the resurrection of the body taught in scripture. 2nd, that a personal coming of the Lord in the clouds is a thing impossible, and 3d, that the world will not be consumed. Section 4, part 4, has this caption: "The last judgment actually accomplished." In corroboration of his view that the judgment is past, he gives in a note from a friend various improvements in arts, science, &c., touching such matters as the "Linnean system of natural history," "the steam engine," "the true nature of thunder and lightning," &c. &c. Near the conclusion of the section he says: "What change could there be adequate to the production of so great a change as we are witnessing here, but the performance of the last judgment? . . . The illustrious Swedenborg, so long ago as the

year 1758, declared, (in his work on the Last Judgment) that, by the last judgment, then just accomplished, spiritual liberty was restored, and the state of servitude and captivity, in which men's minds were previously held, in regard to spiritual subjects, was removed." We have turned to Swedenborg's work on the last judgment, and there we find him maintaining, "that the procreations of the human race on the earth will never cease," and assigning many whimsical reasons for his belief. He also asserts "that all the things, which are predicted in the apocalypse, are at this day fulfilled," "that the last judgment has been accomplished," "that this last judgment was commenced in the beginning of the year 1757, and was fully accomplished at the end of that year," n. 6, 40, 45. The evidence of the assertion, that the last judgment is past is given thus: "It has been granted me to see with my own eyes that the last judgment is now accomplished;" "it was granted me to see from beginning to end how the last judgment was accomplished;" "it was granted me to see all these things with my own eyes"—very strong, and satisfactory proof, no doubt, to a man who has already determined to believe whatever the Baron may say. The same work and its "Continuation," abound with vagaries of the very wildest nature. We give one of many as a specimen. Speaking of the world of spirits, which is mediate between heaven and hell, and of members of the Reformed Churches, who have died, he says they are "arrayed according to countries. In the centre of this middle region are the English; towards the South and East of it are the Dutch; towards the North, the Germans; towards the West and North, the Swedes, and towards the West, the Danes."

Perhaps the most pervading principle of Swedenborgianism is what is called the Science of Correspondence. With the Baron and his followers, every thing in scripture is figurative. Thus a horse signifies the understanding, a chariot signifies doctrine, land signifies church, an earthquake signifies a change of the church, Adam signifies "the most ancient church, or all the men who belonged to that church, or the genuine principles of faith and love," and "all proper names of scripture denote universal principles of the mind, which proceed from the Lord." Barrett says: "Inasmuch as man was created an image and likeness of God, therefore every thing in the natural world must also represent by correspondence some spiritual principle appertaining to

the mind of man." p. 191. In illustration of this doctrine, he quotes from Swedenborg as follows, (Barrett pp. 192, 193)—

"No one can know what is the quality of the life of the beasts of the earth, of the birds of heaven, and the fishes of the sea, unless it be known what their soul is, and the quality thereof; that every animal hath a soul is a well known thing, for they live, and life is a soul, wherefore also in the word they are called living souls. That the soul in its ultimate form, which is corporeal, such as appeareth before the sight, is the animal, cannot be better known from any other source, than from the spiritual world; for in the spiritual world in like manner as in the natural world, there are seen beasts of all kinds, and birds of all kinds, and fishes of all kinds, and so like in form, that they cannot be distinguished from those which are in our world; but the difference is, that in the spiritual world they exist apparently from the affections of angels and spirits, so that *they are appearances of affections*, wherefore they also vanish away as soon as the angel or spirit departeth, or his affection ceaseth; hence it is evident that their soul is nothing else (but some human affection); consequently that there exist as many genera and species of animals, as there are genera and species of affections." (Apocalypse Explained, n. 1199.)

"Inasmuch as the universal heaven is distinguished into societies, in like manner the universal hell, and also the universal world of spirits, and the societies are arranged according to the genera and species of affections, and inasmuch as the animals there are appearances of affections, as was just said above, therefore one kind of animal with its species appears in one society, and another in another, and all kinds of animals with their species in the whole together. In the societies of heaven appear the tame and clean animals, in the societies of hell the savage and unclean beasts, and in the world of spirits beasts of a mediate character. They have often been seen by me, and it has been given thereby to know the quality of the angels and spirits there; for all in the spiritual world are known from the appearances which are near and about them, and their affections from various things, and also from animals. In the heavens I have seen lambs, sheep, she-goats, so similar to those seen in the world that there is no difference; also turtle-doves, pigeons, birds of paradise, and several others of a beautiful form and colour; I have seen like-

wise various kinds of fish in the waters, but these in the lowest parts of heaven. But in the hells are seen dogs, wolves, foxes, tigers, swine, mice, and several other kinds of savage and unclean beasts, besides venomous serpents of many species, likewise crows, owls, and bats." (Ibid. n. 1200.)

On this principle of correspondence the scriptures are made to mean any thing that the fancy of man can invent. Thus notwithstanding Christ says that in heaven they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God, the truth is that there are many marriages in heaven, and that the angels themselves are married. The whole of n. 40 of Swedenborg's work on "Conjugal Love" is in these words, "CONSEQUENTLY THAT THERE ARE MARRIAGES IN HEAVEN. This, being now confirmed by reason, and at the same time by experience, needs no further demonstration." The "experience" here referred to, has been recorded in previous parts of his works, where he tells of having been at some splendid marriages in heaven.

Lest the patience of our readers should be exhausted we will not weary them with further lengthened details. We will notice only a few more and that very briefly. Swedenborg in the *Arcana* says: "Eating the flesh of animals, considered in itself, is somewhat profane," yet he concludes that "no one is by any means condemned for this, that he eats flesh," n. 1002; quoted in his life, p. 139. His disciples hold that they have intercourse with spirits. With some of them it is customary to have plates set at their tables for some departed one. Swedenborg is said to have had all the apostles to dine with him, as he averred. Another notion of Swedenborgians is that the next world will be like this. Thus he said: "In the world of spirits I have not seen any one so splendidly served and waited on as the deceased empress Elizabeth of Russia," and that Frederick V. and "all the kings of the house of Aldenburg were very well off." Life of Swedenborg, pp. 133, 134, General Tuxen's Letter. In Swedenborg's work, entitled "the earths in our solar system," p. 28, n. 39, we have the following: "On a time I saw that spirits of our earth were with spirits of the earth Mercury, and I heard them discoursing together, and the spirits of our earth, amongst other things, asked them, on whom they believed? They replied, that they believed on God; but when they inquired further concerning the God on whom they believed,

they would give no answer, it being customary with them not to answer questions directly. Then the spirits from the earth Mercury, in their turn, asked the spirits from our earth, on whom they believed? They said, that they believed on the Lord God; the spirits of Mercury then said, that they perceived that they believed on no God, and that they had contracted a habit of professing with the mouth that they believe, when yet they do not believe; (the spirits of Mercury have exquisite perception, in consequence of their continually exploring, by means of perception, what others know): the spirits of our earth were of the number of those, who in the world had made profession of faith agreeable to the doctrine of the church, but still had not lived the life of faith, and they who do not live the life of faith, in another life have not faith, because it is not in the man. On hearing this, they were silent, inasmuch as, by a perception then given them, they acknowledged that it was so."

The question naturally arises, by what kind and amount of evidence mankind are called on to believe these crude, contradictory and absurd opinions? It seems the question was asked in the life-time of Swedenborg. Mr. Ottinger, superintendent of the mines in Sweden, wrote to him, and in 1766 received from Swedenborg the following reply: "To your interrogation, Whether there is occasion for any sign that I am sent by the Lord to do what I do? I answer, that this day no signs or miracles will be given, because they compel only an external belief, but do not convince the internal. What did the miracles avail in Egypt, or among the Jewish nation, who nevertheless crucified the Lord? So, if the Lord was to appear now in the sky, attended with angels and trumpets, it would have no other effect than it had then. See Luke xvi. 29, 30, 31. The sign given at this day, will be an illustration, and thence a knowledge and reception of the truths of the New Church; some speaking illustration of certain persons may likewise take place; this works more effectually than miracles; yet one token may perhaps still be given."

One cannot fail to be struck with the points of agreement between Mohammed and Swedenborg as teachers. As men indeed their characters were very different. As to the means of propagating their doctrines, they were very different. But as to the evidence, on which they ask us to receive their professed revela-

tion, there is very little difference in principle. Mohammed no less than Swedenborg admitted the inspiration of Moses and the authority of the Pentateuch, and of the prophetic writings; and also acknowledged the divine mission of Christ, and the truth of the Christian scriptures.

Mohammed claimed to be commissioned to purify these former dispensations from their corruptions, and as the last and greatest prophet, to communicate divine instruction to mankind. Swedenborg professed to be instructed from heaven to exalt what was low in our conceptions of the Jewish and Christian religion, and to unfold that which, though comprising their most valuable contents, was before unknown. Both think rather meanly of the miracles of Moses and of Christ. The Mohammedan accounts the Koran itself as a perpetual miracle, and the greatest of miracles; the Swedenborgian esteems the inspiration discovered in the writings of his prophet, and the intercourse which he held with the spiritual world, too dignified to be placed in competition, with the greatest miracles that were ever wrought. The remarks made by Mr. White, in his Bampton Lectures, concerning Mohammed's representations of another life, apply with no material variation to Swedenborg's account of the spiritual world. "He (Mohammed) generally descends to an unnecessary minuteness and peculiarity in his representations of another life, which excite disgust and ridicule, instead of reverence; and even his most animated descriptions of the joys of paradise, or the torments of hell, however strong and glowing the colours in which they are painted, are yet far inferior in point of true sublimity, and far less calculated to promote the interests of piety by raising the hopes and alarming the fears of rational beings, than that degree of obscurity, in which the future life of the gospel is still involved, and those more general terms in which its promises and threatenings are proposed to mankind."

We shall conclude this notice by some general observations.

One is that the writings of Swedenborg and his followers constitute a labyrinth, the like of which we have never before attempted to thread. To the fanciful, who allow their imaginations full scope, the system offers boundless fields. Should the writings now in use be found insufficient, every man's wildest roving of mind can supply the defect. But to the sober-minded who wish evidence before faith, who exercise their judgments,

and are governed by any laws of reasoning, or rules of interpretation, we can conceive of nothing more unpleasant than an attempt to read, digest or understand the doctrine. We have called it above "a system," but we used the term for want of a better. It is a maze, a howling wilderness, a dreary waste of confusion and impiety.

Some of Swedenborg's writings are worse than wild. The tendency of all of them as we think is to relax the bonds of moral obligation. But some of them sunder every bond of purity, and introduce the wanton and lewd to the paradise of the vile. We do not choose to defile our pages with extracts. But we have never seen or heard of any work more likely to familiarize the mind with the lowest forms of vice than one of Swedenborg's. Those who have read his writings, know to which work we refer. Those who do not know, would not have their useful knowledge increased by our telling them.

The recent attempts to propagate Swedenborgian doctrines in some parts of our country have been anything but candid and fair. Indeed in reading the books and tracts sent out by the New Church, hardly anything has struck us more forcibly than the attempt to inveigle and deceive the unwary. Especially is this true of the smaller publications. They contain the less exceptionable opinions of Swedenborg and his followers, and are circulated with great industry in order to prepare the way for other things, which will come in due time. We are not surprised at this. Paul and Christ and the prophets long since told us that guile would mark the course of errorists. It has ever been so. It will be so to the end of the world. The world has never yet seen and will never see a zealous propagator of dangerous doctrines, who has been or shall be candid and fair and open in his avowals.

Some may ask whether we suppose these doctrines will be widely spread. We answer that we suppose not. *Twenty-seven* volumes of considerable size are likely to deter most readers. Some, no doubt, will take the doctrines as found in small tracts. There is little in these doctrines offensive to the pride or lust of the natural mind. But there is so much incoherence, wildness and extravagance in all of Swedenborg's own writings that we cannot suppose the masses of men will do more than read a little, wonder perhaps, or perhaps smile, lay down the book, and

say that if they turn their attention to religion at all, they at least desire that it should have some sobriety. Dr. Wood of Andover, has done a good service in publishing the letters of a maniac in a Lunatic Asylum, and thus letting the reader judge whether the maniac or Swedenborg had least sobriety of mind.

Our readers will ere this have gathered that we do not regard the New Church doctrines as innocent or inoffensive. Unless they have read a considerable portion of Swedenborg's works, they can have but a faint idea of their denunciations of the whole Christian world. In his "Brief Exposition" p. 53, n. 87, Swedenborg holds, "that they who have confirmed themselves in the present justifying faith" [that is the reformed churches which hold justification by faith] "are meant in the apocalypse by the Dragon, and his two Beasts, and by the Locusts; and that this same faith, when confirmed, is there meant by the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where the two witnesses were slain, as also by the pit of the abyss, whence the locusts come forth." In n. 91, he maintains that unless a New Church be established by the Lord, no one can be saved. In other words Swedenborgianism is essential to salvation. Let the friends of truth not fear to oppose this bold and impudent error.

As to the mode of treating this delusion, one text of Scripture seems to meet the whole case. Moses says: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto thee, saying, let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; then thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: For the Lord your God proveth you whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him and cleave unto him." Deut. xiii. 1, 4.