

therefore, more may grow out of your meetings than you now may suppose. As the oak from the acorn, so perhaps heaven and eternal joy from the investigation of spirituality. So I want you to go hand and hand with him and the rest of the circle.

Mrs. Dexter, your heart will indeed be gladdened with food which will satisfy your soul. Your thirsty spirit shall drink from gushing fountains of pure knowledge, and your whole nature shall rejoice in a freedom from the bondage of error or prejudice.

Section Four.

Friday, April 8th, 1853.

This evening Dr. Dexter called to see me on business. After we had got through with that, and were sitting alone in my library, we got into conversation as to the communication of last evening at his circle. We both soon felt the spiritual presence. He heard rappings, and his chair was moved. Directly his arm was affected in a different manner than was usual, and he sat down to write, as he was conscious, under an influence other than that he had before felt. And we had the following communication:

I DESIRE to say to you to-night a few words in regard to the same subject on which Swedenborg has been teaching.

BACON.

The idea of spheres is but imperfectly understood, and the statements on that subject received and recognized as true, are so but in part, as spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Spirits, after leaving the body, are conducted to localities adapted to the capacities and the condition of their minds, in reference to education, society, and progress. Thus, a highly educated mind—one

familiar with all the knowledge of the schools, of strong desires to understand the laws of nature, and of an affinity with the purity and attributes of the Creator—is conducted to a globe or planet adapted by its locality and formation to develop the properties of his mind to an approach nearer to the plane where the Spirit of God is most manifest in all its power and glory. For though God has no special abiding-place, yet he is more distinctly manifest in some localities than in others. Thus the planets mentioned last night as the abodes of those who never die, are selected as their residence by spirits whose lives on earth correspond with the nature of the inhabitants of those globes.

It is not unnatural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect; and it would be incompatible with his nature to conclude that he places a pure spirit in daily and hourly contact with other spirits, whose minds, in their operation and action, are opposed to his own. Thus to place a good and a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation—PROGRESSION. How can a pure mind derive any pleasure from communication with an impure mind? And after the death of the body, the spirit has a loftier aspiration for the good and true, a stronger desire to develop the germ of its nature. It is in compliance with this law that localities are selected in which the attributes, desires, and characteristics of the spirit may be more distinctly developed. All good and pure spirits, therefore, do not reside near this earth, if, indeed, anywhere near it. Some reside millions of miles distant, others on planets near the earth, but all assume the characteristics of the inhabitants of the planet or globe in which they are to reside.

I inquired whether their locality was not governed by the affinity between their characteristics and those of the inhabitants of the planet where they went to reside?

It was answered:

Certainly. Spirits, or rather bodies, are born in other

planets, and it is this influence, both natural and spiritual, which guides the designation of the residence of bodies born on earth or other globes, as well as the locality of spirits after death.

I inquired if those who thus died here, and went to other planets, were there born again into the bodies of those planets?

It was answered:

A man who has lived on earth until old age, who has cultivated his mind and desires, dies.

Now, in proportion to his spiritual development does his spirit seek that place in which he will meet with corresponding circumstances, which will assist him in accomplishing the more intense action of his mind, caused by the loss of his grosser part, or body.

When he arrives at the place of his residence, his body assumes the characteristics of the inhabitants of that place, whose organization is, of course, more ethereal and spiritual than if born on this earth. As spirits do not all possess the same degree of purity of nature, they, of course, must seek a like congeniality of organization, desires, and attributes.

Many globes, spheres, or planets contain inhabitants of far inferior organization to man.

But this affinity is a paramount law in every department of nature. The dog will exhibit his affinity for one person in preference to another; and substances exist in nature whose affinities are so strong that they unite or attract toward each other, even when mixed in the most minute quantities.

I have not time to write much, but I give you these ideas in order that your researches may be made more satisfactory under my friend Swedenborg, at the Doctor's. Ponder on these thoughts, and examine well every raw material, natural or divine, and you will find I am correct.

BACON.

After this had been written, the Dr. and I read it over, and were conversing about it, when suddenly he wrote:

In regard to my identity, I have to say that you can judge whether or not it be Lord Bacon by the truth of my teachings. Now, in order to arrive at a solution of this, you have only to compare my statements with the laws of nature. I can not tell you any thing opposed to God's laws, which conflicts with your knowledge of their influence, that you would be willing to believe. And if, after just and due reflection and examination, you find that what I have said corresponds with your own knowledge of the truth of natural laws, then believe that I am BACON.

We had not been saying any thing as to his identity, and I remarked that I had not doubted it, but the Dr. said he had, and so the teaching was to his unuttered and to me unknown thought.

I remarked that I supposed his meaning was, that if we found him to be truthful in other respects, we would of course regard him as such in reference to identity. And I said that reminded me of a law maxim with which he had once been familiar, and I wished him to write it, as greater evidence to the truth.

And it was written:

I don't know that I can read exactly your mind, but I think it is, that you are bound to believe every thing to be true until proved false.

I said, No, that is not it, but a law maxim which is the converse of your proposition. (I had in my mind, though I did not speak it, the maxim, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.*)

He wrote:

Do you not know that when you try this test you set on the Doctor's mind itself to solve the question?

I replied, Yes, I see I do; but still I thought it might be satisfactory to the Dr. if he would write it.

It was answered:

That would be the *argumentum ad rem* truly. But I have not thought of earth's law for past a century. I am studying the higher law of God now in spheres where there is no other interpretation than that given by spirit.

After some further conversation between the Dr. and myself, this was written:

You will recollect some years ago, when you first commenced your duties as Judge, that in a case under your consideration how much trouble you had to satisfy your mind that you had arrived at a just conclusion, and how suddenly your mind at last arrived at what you thought was right?

I remarked, I did not remember the incident, and asked if he could recall the case to my recollection?

It was answered:

In a case, I think, of a will or property passing from one person to another. You will recollect. The nature of the evidence was very conflicting, and on retiring one night, your mind was suddenly enlightened as to the true bearing of the testimony

I said I yet did not remember the case very distinctly. But supposing it to be so, what then?

It was answered:

I impressed your mind, as I am frequently with you, and have been for years.

He inquired, Why have I never known that before?
It was answered:

Very good reasons, which I am not yet permitted to set out by my fruits; ye shall know me.

When the Dr. and I were talking, it was written:

When you were in the prison, did you not, when that man from being whipped, feel a sudden and unaccountable to yourself? Why can't you have an impression? Have you not lately had a sudden impression of the nature of your own duties as Judge, and how they should be performed before?

He answered, I know exactly to what he referred.

When you arrive at results, and that many men were ineffectual in attending for?

I replied, Certainly. I had so much learned to disregard the old rules and precedents when they stood in the way of substantial justice, that it had perhaps established such a character for me.

I then asked the Dr. if I had ever related to him the incident in the prison alluded to? And I went on to tell him that when I was President of the Board of Inspectors of the State Prison, at Sing-Sing, whipping prisoners was the common mode of punishment. I was very averse to it, and never witnessed it, but felt that it was my duty, however painful, to see what it was which I thus tacitly, if not expressly, sanctioned. That accordingly, one day, seeing a man tied up to the whipping rings, and surrounded by the officers prepared to flog him, I had approached them to witness it, and while I was inquiring of the officers what was his offense—

I had proceeded thus far in my narrative, when the Doctor's hand was suddenly affected, and he wrote:

Pray tell me, if his exhibition of feeling is not evidence of the affinity of his nature with the bad feelings of the minds of those who were preparing to whip him? and if this is not proof of my teaching?

I resumed my narrative—that after I had learned what his offense was, I moved off a short distance, so as to witness the punishment. And the prisoner, who had evidently looked upon my approach with hope, gave up his hope, as he saw I did not interfere, and with a diabolical look, exclaimed, "Whip away, it has never done me any good yet, and will not now." I immediately said, "Then don't whip him. He knows best whether it will do him good or not. Take him down, and we will think of something that will do him good, for we do not whip for any other purpose." And I had afterward so dealt with the man, that without whipping him, a wonderful change was worked in him.

Monday, May 23, 1853.

P. S.—This evening, in my library, the Dr. and I being present, with Mr. and Mrs. Sweet, we resumed our task of revising our notes of Lord Bacon's teachings.

We asked questions, and received answers as follows:

You say spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Does that mean below as well as above? Are some spirits carried straight through the lower ones, or what I. T. Hopper called the sphere of remorse, to their proper place?

Of course they know all about the sphere through which

they have passed. It refers to the sphere beyond. As they are indeed pure, they are carried through the spheres, till they arrive at those bright ones, which are next door to the celestial spheres. But there are only a few, a very few, who are so happy.

Are there some who have no duties in respect to the spheres below them?

No.

Can a spirit know what is below if he pleases?

Certainly.

Are some so ignorant of what is above, as to suppose themselves in the highest heaven?

Yes. Why, there are spirits who imagine that heaven can only exist where they are. They are not wicked. They are good; but they suppose, from a kind of vanity, that the place where they are must be holy ground, from the ideas which they learned in life, and which it will take many, many years to eradicate.

Is our earth the abiding-place of spirits from planets, where beings inferior to us dwell, and also from planets superior, where some of the inhabitants sink below the level of their native world to that of ours?

In answer to the last part of your question, Yes. To the first part, No. Their own abode is bad enough.

But I mean the abiding-place of those who are on their way ascending from such inferior planet?

I understood you as sent to your earth as a sort of punishment. However, I think, if they stay here at all, it is but comparatively a short time.

Why is it natural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect?

Because in every department of nature there is no struggle to deviate from the ordained condition instituted, except in the action of mind. Nothing in life, organized or unorganized, evinces any disposition to rebel against the state

in which its attributes can be exerted. But mind, which can reflect on the circumstances which control or influence it, is oftentimes disposed to question the condition, the result of those circumstances; but the equality of the effect is observable in the certainty of the action, and that no deviation takes place as a law.

Why is it incompatible with His nature to place a pure spirit in contact with others opposed to it? It is done on this earth all the while, and why not with you?

If God places all kind of good and bad spirits together on this earth, certainly the good do not seek the society of the bad, and *vice versa*. Therefore, to insure the happiness of the good, it would be incompatible.

You say, "to place a pure spirit where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation." Yet it is done here all the while, and why not elsewhere?

No. It can not be done here, or elsewhere, for a pure spirit can not be so situated that it will not progress; but to place a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would conflict with the nature it derived from God itself. If it could not progress, what would become of it? No spirit, even the vilest, can be placed in a situation where it is impossible to progress.

You say, "it is the condition of the spirit, after death, which governs its selection of an abiding-place, and that it is the same influence which governs the birth of beings in that place." Now, is it true that some spirits, on entering the embryo, are more advanced than others?

This question is answered simply thus (though the text is somewhat obscure): The condition or state which characterized it, when born into the spirit-world, not the spirit born with the embryo. I would say, that to suppose the spirit, when first given off from God, was evil, would knock away the whole of the foundation of our teachings. No. I do not mean so. This I mean: It is this affinity which governs the selection of the spirits born in those good spheres. Where their material nature is less gross, they

possess the ability in consequence, of rising faster than ourselves; but it is after their birth, not before.

You say "affinity is a paramount law of nature." In this life it does not have full swing, the circumstances which surround us prevent it. Now, may not, and do not, circumstances in the next stage of existence also prevent in a greater or less degree?

Yes, in proportion to the ethereality of organization.

You say you "can not tell us any thing opposed to God's laws which conflict with our knowledge of their influence which we would be willing to believe." I don't understand this.

Why, suppose I told you the sun rose out *south*, what would you say?

Section Five.

Thursday, April 14th, 1853.

At Dr. Dexter's this evening, all the circle present, and through his hand it was written:

I am here. I salute you all in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I mentioned that the spirit emanated from one source, which was God, or the universal germ. This germ has neither sex nor speciality, but being implanted in the embryo, there assumes the characteristics of the body which is to be developed. The exact time when the spirit is introduced into the embryo is not yet known, but the embryo must possess sufficient vitality to permit the development of both spirit and body. Life is distinct from spirit, and the union of the two is not understood, even by spirits of a higher development.

But the embryo must possess sufficient of life* to maintain the spirit connection; thus when the spirit enters the embryo there must be vitality enough to maintain an equilibrium of the two forces. The sex of the human or animal is not determined at first, but there is a stage when the stronger vital forces direct the development, and thus characterize the sex. Now, when a child dies free from sin or impurity, it is taken by spirits of some near relative and conducted to a sphere where the spirit will be developed according to the primary law regulating spirits.† It is

* Here there was a break, during which was written as follows:

I feel a necessity to say that there is no need of doubt in any thing which takes place under the teaching of spirits. Every thing which is now taught, apparently irreconcilable, will in time be made entirely to correspond with apparent and manifest facts visible to all, and so contrived as to be perceptible in every respect to the comprehension of all who choose to investigate. Therefore, let not your minds be troubled. In good time the spirits will reconcile every incongruity, and make that which is dark, light.

I remarked he was speaking to the Dr. It was written:

No. I speak to all. Yet I do desire to convince the Dr., but I want also to assure you, my friends, that there is more of truth in every thing that is told you of spirit than your understandings would be willing to admit, from the seeming incompatibility.

† On another occasion, more than a year and a half prior to this, and through another medium, I received this teaching on this subject:

Those who die in infancy grow up to manhood, and are instructed in the spirit-world in those things which they ought to have learned here. It is a misfortune and a violation of a law of nature to die in infancy, because the object of their first stage of existence is thereby thwarted.

In the spirit-world infants are placed in a sort of intermediate condition between the lower and higher, and they are attended and taught by superior spirits. They are never without such attendance, and although they are carefully instructed, yet their condition is in some respects unfortunate; for, though by their early death they escape the physical sufferings of this sphere, yet that very ignorance of our sufferings takes away from them the capacity to enjoy the happy change which they would attain if they remained here till maturity. They know nothing of the contrast between that stage of existence and ours, which adds so keen a zest to the enjoyment of those who depart from this sphere after having experienced all its sorrows and sufferings.

Another disadvantage is, they never have many of the feelings and emotions which a longer continuance on earth would have taught them, and which enter much into the happiness or misery of the next state of existence.