

Section Nine.

Saturday, April 23d, 1853.

This evening I invited Mr. and Mrs. S. to meet Dr. Dexter at my house. Just before they came, Gov. Tallmadge, of Wisconsin, called in, and I detained him for the evening. We five remained together some four or five hours, and received communications through the Dr. and Mrs. S. of which I kept an account, but which were of too personal a nature to be generally interesting.

After some conversation it was written:

SPARE me a few minutes all, while I say to you what is now on my mind.

I mentioned to you the other evening that the feelings and affections of our friends governed our action here, that is, I mean to say, that according to the condition of your feelings, so can we respond. Our affections are the life of our spirit-existence. Now the Governor is a man of strong prejudices, stern and uncompromising in what he considers to be right. He wills to do what his construction of that right is. He believes, yet he doubts, not at the fact, but at the material of thought which is sometimes exhibited in spirit-revelation. Nature to him has beauty, but the beauty consists in the proof of its tangibility. To you who have been led, step by step, through the many devious windings of this mysterious manifestation, there is much taken for granted.

Be assured all, that time is the great solver of this newism (I will coin a word), and will open to the Governor, as well as to many others, the truth of spirit-intercourse.

Here Mr. and Mrs. S. left, and we thought the intercourse was at an end, and as it was late we proposed to go home and go to bed—

When it was written:

Now don't hurry. There is time enough for sleeping. Your spirit will not sleep, even if your body does. So sit still and learn a moment or two. You can, perhaps, glean from the passing moments of time a pearl of more price than you can find in your dreams.

Listen then. In your daily connection with the world there is much to annoy, to perplex, to worry; but to the man who sincerely looks beyond the boundaries of time, and earnestly desires for wisdom, there is much, very much to be learned even from things which can not be seen.

Time in its passage makes its impress on both man and matter. Learn there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress too on the remotest bounds of eternity. Now mark this expression, and weigh it well. View the great scope of this boundless influence. There is no act either, with the full consent of your mind, but has its direct influence on spirit for good or evil. How intimate, therefore, the connection, how boundless the power that from your minds controls even spirit-action in this world!* It is so forever. God's spirit is in every thing. It pervades every thing, and fills with the evidences of his power every part of his creation. Our affinities for good or evil meet with their likes or dislikes here, and compel, if indeed good, the submission of earthy spirits to the grand, the noble influence of that principle which is the characteristic of our heavenly Father.

We read this over and commented on it, expressing our views of it and of the expansive and profound thought it awakened.

Then it was written:

I have ever been open and frank with you, Judge, and I mean you shall understand me. The properties of your mind partake of the characteristics of my own, even, I am inclined to believe, when I was on earth. It is this connection, this similarity which attracts me to you, binds me

* I inquired whether by "this world" he meant his world or ours? and he answered *his*.

to your society, and leads me to identify my own thought with yours.

I know, too, you profit by this relation; and I trust you will permit me at all times to converse freely, and to give my advice and counsel when opportunity offers.

Now it is not always that profound thoughts answer the purpose for which they were designed, without some kind of explanation.

Thus, in the ideas which I have just written, I mean to be understood to say that evil thoughts, opposed as they are to the great principle as the foundation on which the whole universe was constructed, that is, Goodness or Truth, seek out from every part of creation a correspondence with their own identity. Evil is opposed to good. It can not mingle with it, but finds elements of its own to which it assimilates, and a congenial mixture with which it corresponds.

But the good, the true, the beautiful—and they are all alike—find their constituents in that which is of God himself.

It is this which, when spirits are undeveloped, roaming through the boundaries near to earth, and finding no abiding-place, gleaning from no connection the least moiety of happiness, it is this principle of good, this germ of truth, which is breathed on them as it were by the Spirit of God, and impels them to seek for happiness in progression through the higher spheres.

They say, who are opposed to these revelations, we teach doctrines contrary to the Bible.

They believe in a hell, in a place of punishment where spirits are tortured either by other spirits more evil or by their own thoughts. But even were this so (I know I teach no doctrines untrue, no doctrine which the Great Spirit himself would not justify), can you imagine a portion of that germ, pure and self-existent, could be confined in a place where there is no hope, where the spirit could not progress? No; even were this so, were even the hell exist-

ing as it is said, no spirit could remain there; for the impelling force of that power which is of God would send it self-seeking the universe through, to seek that food which its nature so much craves.

Confine it as you may, bind it with bonds of error and evil, and the spirit will burst all shackles, and rise in the power of its inherent might and seek the source from which it sprang. To this source do we all tend, some in one position, some in another, but all arriving at last at that point at which his nature can be most developed. BACON.

P. S.—I add to this communication, that when we were revising it for the press some questions were asked and answered as to its teaching, which we give here.

1. What do you mean by the remark, "the feelings and affections of our friends govern our action here; and according to the condition of your feelings, so can we respond?"

Why, if your feelings are adverse to ours, if they are mixed with doubts, if they are not elevated by the desire of arriving at truth, if there is any thing but the true motive to receive from us the facts and developments of the spirit-world, they repel your friends, and draw around you a class of spirits whose manifestations correspond with the unworthy characteristics of thought and purpose governing your minds.

2. You say, "the spirit will not sleep if the body does." Does the spirit never sleep?

Certainly it does; but I referred to the subject of that night's communication, your wife's presence, etc.

3. You say, "there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress on the remotest bounds of eternity." This of course refers to the future, the future of us above, or of others? And in either case, how is this?

This will occupy too long now, to explain in detail. Suffice it, that all good thoughts influence mind everywhere, for the present as well as future. Evil develops evil, and its control over the mind of man has been witnessed by

every age of the world. The principle is, that God is good, goodness is of God; therefore every thing, thought or act, partaking of that nature, has its relative effect on spirit everywhere as emanating from God.

4. You say, "there is no act with the full consent of our mind but has its influence on spirit for good or evil." What spirit do you mean, that of the actor or others?"

Both. The fate of spirit is within its own control, but the influence of good is as general and specific in our world as in yours. Now if some mind develops a good thought in your country, do not the minds of individuals receive and profit by it in Europe? Spirits in affinity with you likewise receive the good you generate, or rather the good generated through you, and they, responding, circulate it through the spheres where they dwell. So with evil.

Section Ten.

Sunday, April 24th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, Governor Tallmadge being present in addition to the circle, it was written:

In our circle, where the spirits of those we love most do congregate, are gathered together once, weekly, this number, and we celebrate what to us is the Sabbath day. It is indeed a beautiful thought to you, dear friends, that we live and act almost as you do, that we cherish a thousand associations which on earth were most dear. With all my feelings alive to the affectionate remembrances of life with my friends, and eternity with my spirit-companions too, I this

night greet you cordially, heartily, and truthfully, in the name of our heavenly Father. SWEEDENBORG.

Then it was written:

Now propose your questions.

I first proposed that which is written at the end of the minutes of last Thursday, and it was answered thus:

Beyond the confines of our spheres, away far off in the illimitable distance of space, far beyond the comprehension even of spirit, we are told is the place where spirit is manifested tangibly. It is in this locality, surrounded by the evidences of that power which is capable of creating every thing which has life, or which is inanimate. Now we are told the glory, the beauty of this sphere, is beyond the comprehension of spirit; that the full flow of spirit is curbed by no material barriers, but gushes forth in one spontaneous stream of love and wisdom; that the land is delightful, because here all the laws of God work together so harmoniously, that every spirit-thought is in unison: that all the affections, desires, will-power, and the action of the spirit are controlled by the earnest wish to do every thing according to the will and the law of the great source; that spirit, free from material bonds, is manifest as spirit, as an intelligence, seizing from every object around the very germ of thought before its utterance; that here, too, does the spirit-concentration emanate, and is sent throughout the earth to control the evil direction which material connection produces. We are told, too, that there is speciality in spirit, that each one retains the peculiar attributes of his nature, so changed by progression, so altered by its upward course, that it has become a god itself, gifted with an intelligence which is capable of exercising the influence just mentioned. Now that the spirit in its passage through the spheres retains intact the connections formed on earth, I believe does prove true in many, very many cases. As the magnet attracts some minerals to itself, and always points

in one direction, so does the spirit attract those whose feelings and sentiments correspond when on earth, and, like the magnet, it always retains them; for the soul, when freed from the grosser parts of its worldly connection, is the more ready to retain and develop those ideas which first opened to its comprehension when in the form, and especially, too, the affections.

Now distinctly and directly to answer your question I can say, that when there are affections formed on earth, death itself does not change or alter them, but when separated, the soul in the spheres develops more extensively the love it first recognized on earth, and is drawn to meet the spirit for whom that love was formed, when it is ushered into the spheres.

If, then, all their affinities correspond—and they are likely to—if there is a basis formed on earth, they will go hand in hand through all the transitions of spirit-life, together loving and being loved, together aspiring, together progressing, until they shall have passed beyond these spheres, and enter the glorious mansions of what may be called heaven.

But they scarce lose their material organization, sublimated it is true, by every ascending step as they rise in the circle of their progress, till at last materiality is swallowed up in spirituality, and they either become incorporated in the whole of the First Cause, or exist as I have said.

The next question I asked was this. In the course of my investigations of this matter, I obtained the idea that man consisted of three things, which I called body, soul, and spirit. Is that the same as what you describe as body, life, and spirit? the life being the connection between the other two? And if so, whence did I derive the idea, and is it correct?

It was answered:

There is no peculiar force in saying "body, life, and spirit," for the body is merely the constituents of the machine formed and fashioned to hold the spirit, and moved and impelled by the vital power or life.

You are right, and I imagine you gleaned the idea from

one Swedenborg who wrote many foolish things on earth, which he is willing to rectify in spirit.

I then asked,

These three being one, we know what becomes of one, the body. We are now instructed by you as to what becomes of another, the soul. Now pray what becomes of the third, the life or vital principle?

It was written in reply:

Can you tell what becomes of the light of the sun when darkness covers the earth? Can you tell me what becomes of the light of that star that wanders year after year through the fathomless pathway of space, and after the lapse of thousands of years at last reaches this earth, and is recognized by your eye?

Learn this, that materiality is never lost, and never will be, and when the animal constituents lose the principle which sets them in motion, they again spring up new developed by the inherent properties of their own nature. They exist as the result of their own combination, and never die.

You say that the spirit has no existence in a sentient form before it enters the human embryo, yet has existed from all eternity. Now has it any knowledge (I do not mean the faculty of knowing, but rather information) before that time?

It was answered, No.

I then asked—

You say spirit is, of all organized beings, most susceptible of impression. Why is it that it is so difficult for us to recognize that impression, and distinguish it from the operation of our minds? In other words, why is it that it is so hard to distinguish between our own self-workings and impressions from others?

It was answered:

I should think, Judge, you could answer that question.

Why, if I incorporated myself as a part of your organization, I could readily make you feel that it was my influence, and not the action of your own brain. But the avenues of communication are opened alike to the impression of the spirit and the external world. We do not act contrary to nature, and we can not monopolize your senses.

Therefore you can readily perceive that when the brain acts from the effect of nervous action, at the same time with the spirit-impression, the distinction to be made between the two causes must be very nice and difficult. Sometimes the external impression is strongest, and again the mind will be occupied with a train of thought which usurps all its faculties; and then again you are worried, or angry, or irritable, or impatient or doubting, and the spirit can not act forcibly.

Could we separate your mind from all thought but our thoughts, we could readily make you sensible how hard we try to identify our thoughts with your thoughts.

I next proposed this question:

What do you mean by the expression, "love God without guile," as applied to spirits out of the form?

It was answered:

Are spirits ever out of the form of materiality? But this is for the second part of my lectures. It is a long story, or, rather, it will take a long time to tell you all about spirit-life, that is, *daily* life, and the consequent influences of causes acting upon it. But while I am writing this, I am impressed with the thought of some one present, that the question proposed by you might refer to the earthly spirits near the earth, whose organization is so gross, because it is so mixed with the impelling animal properties of matter. Still I can only say that this will naturally come into the second part of my teaching, and I leave it here.

I then asked—

You say that the spirit sometimes leaves the embryo it once entered, returns (of course to its original elements?) and occupies some other body. Does that ever happen with an adult body?

I should not like to answer that question without more time for investigation. My present impressions are, that that is not possible. Still the laws of God are so multifarious, so peculiar, that I dare not reply to what I can not properly say I understand.

I then referred to a part of these communications, and asked why it was said, in answer to my question, "Swedenborg is not with you," when he had just been speaking to us, and spoke to us again immediately afterward?

It was answered:

Why, my dear Judge, you are very captious. Do you suppose we are always in one spot, and that it would be any thing unusual if I should leave your good company for a moment? Really, I don't recollect to what you refer; but my friend Bacon, who *is* present, says that there was an interim in the conversation, and you asked a question referring to the action of your own mind, that I had been called away for an instant, and he being more familiar with its action than myself, took the liberty of answering it.

Then referring to a remark of the spirits, I asked why could not God be himself the first violator of his laws? If he made, could he not unmake? If he established general principles, could he not create exceptions?

It was answered:

I can only say that if he has made this world on established principles, to undo the very basis of those principles would be to admit he was wrong, and consequently take away the omniscience of his nature. If he could change, why has he not done it?

Here I finish the first part of my teachings. Good-night.