

mated by intellect. The expression of its countenance was elevated and benevolent, and it raised its hand and pointed the dark denizens of that gloomy inclosure to the glorious light that was shining over them, trying thus to induce them to look up, and not ever be groveling in the earth.

As I thus stood drinking deep out of nature's pure inspiration, the sun arose from out the ocean. As its disk gradually came in sight, it lighted up the scene more and more, and opened its beauties to view. Its rays penetrated even the dark inclosure, but it only made its gloom more visible. I saw nothing there that was not revolting. No green thing grew there, but a few stunted parasitical plants, clinging with a sickly life to the barren rocks. The surface of the ground was rough and uneven; man had done nothing to smooth it or make it pleasant to him. I looked around in vain for any mansion, in vain for any cultivation of the ground, and I could not help asking myself, How do these people live? Where is derived their food, but from the reptiles that, like themselves, grovel in the earth? Where do they repose their weary limbs, but on the dark soil they love so madly? And where, oh! where is their happiness?

I had in the mean time entered farther into the inclosure, and had approached so near the bank as to look into the dark caverns they had dug in their mad pursuit of those hidden and useless treasures. As I stood gazing in mute sorrow at the strange infatuation which had made these people voluntarily embrace so sad a life, I heard far down, deep into the bowels of the hill, the noise of a maddened conflict. It was approaching me. I heard the sound of blows, the agonizing shrieks of the wounded, and the oaths and blasphemous execrations of the combatants. They rushed madly along toward the mouth of the cavern, furiously contending as they approached. As they came in view, I saw they were armed with the various implements of their employment, and they struck with them, with a deadly malignity, as if more intent on hurting others

than defending themselves, as if malice had actually conquered selfishness. One man near the head of the crowd received a blow which felled him to the ground. The others paid no regard to him, but trampled him under foot, and passed on.

After they had all passed over him, he raised himself partly up, and seizing a stone that lay near him, hurled it, with a dying spasm, at the moving crowd. It struck one of them in the side, and wounded him. He turned, and seeing whence the blow came, he uplifted in both hands a huge stone, and approaching his fallen fellow, hurled it with crushing force upon his prostrate body, and then hurried away to join again the fighting throng. The blow, however, which he had given was harmless, for the poor wretch on whom it lighted had expired in the very effort he had made to hurt his fellow, and he was a dead man before his head touched the ground. Oh, man! man! is this thy high duty and destiny?

Meanwhile, the struggling crowd passed by me out toward the extremity, trampling under foot, in their furious career, as well the mangled bodies of the wounded among themselves, as the festering carcasses of those who had died ere this, and been left to rot. Their numbers were constantly diminished by the effects of the fight, so that when they arrived out so far as to be near the end of the walls, a few only were left to carry it on.

I observed that one of them, who had been foremost in the contest, and whose furious energy had ever kept him near the head of the crowd, when they came out so far, was attracted by the scene which opened to his view, and particularly by the gigantic human figure which stood up so prominently in its midst. He ceased to fight, and stood still, wrapped in wonder at what he saw. The others, however, though reduced now in number to scarcely a dozen, continued the contest as furiously as ever. But while I gazed, an unearthly shriek rang clear and shrill through that dark atmosphere, the ground opened under their feet

and swallowed them up; earth to earth! dust to dust! and then settled as calmly over them as if it had never been desecrated by the footsteps of man's evil passions. And he who had paused to gaze on the unwonted scene was alone amid the darkness and desolation of that unholy place.

He did not observe the awful fate of his companions, but stood intently gazing on that gigantic and impressive figure. The sun had now risen some distance above the horizon, and he was so placed that the figure was directly between him and the sun, so that he did not see its orb, but only observed how brilliantly that wonderful specimen of humanity was lighted up by its rays.

He wondered if he could not approach nearer to it. He examined hastily, yet carefully, the ground around him, and finally, with hesitating steps, moved toward it. He had taken but a few steps before he was accosted by a female, who was middle-aged, highly polished according to earth's fashion, fascinating in her manners, and of clear, acute, and vigorous intellect. She engaged in conversation with him, and evinced deep sympathy with his emotion. He paused in his onward progress, attracted by her blandishments. I could not hear their conversation, but it seemed from their gestures that he was urging her to go on with him, and she persuading him to remain behind with her. He became impatient and irritable, while she remained so bland, yet so firm. At length he broke from her, and resumed his journey. He found it, at first, very rough, and he stumbled and tripped more than once over heaps of rubbish which had been thrown there in ages long past, and which were partially concealed from his view by the moss and weeds which time had thrown around them. At length he came to a pond, which seemed to be the receptacle, for long, long time, of all the refuse filth of the inclosure in which he had groveled so many years. Its waters were very offensive to sight and smell, yet he looked in vain for any means of going around it. It lay directly in his way, and on the opposite side of it he saw what seemed to him to be a com-

paratively smooth path, leading toward the colossal figure. He plunged in with a good deal of energy, and with a sort of vehement and unregulated impatience forced his way over its uneven bottom, and through its foul and slimy waters. When about midway through, the waters growing deeper, he became somewhat discouraged and paused. The female had not left her place, and she now spoke blandly to him, entreating him to return. He seemed to say with an oath that he would go through, and he pushed hastily on and through. He clambered on his hands and knees up the steep bank of the pond, seemingly regardless alike of the filth which covered him and of her endearments.

He had heard temptation sing, and yet he turned not
 Aside. Saw sin bedeck her flowery bed,
 And yet would not go up.

When he reached the summit of the bank, he saw before him a smooth and level path, meandering pleasantly amid the green pastures, skirted on both sides with trees and flowers, and fragrant shrubs. The path was open before him; there was no obstruction to his onward passage; yet he paused, for he could hardly believe that it was permitted for such as him, stained with his recent travel, and deformed by his past career, to pass along so pleasant a path. Again the female, who had retained her place, and was ready to avail herself of every opportunity, entreated him to return. With a gesture of impatience he waved her off, and pushed hastily forward, as if to get beyond the reach of her voice.

As he moved forward, his fevered cheek, fanned by the cool breeze that played around him, and all his passions lulled to rest by the soft murmurs of the running brooks of clear water, he saw approaching him in the distance, as from the feet of the gigantic figure, several persons,

"In robes of linen, flowing, white and clean."

They moved toward him slowly and gently, and as they approached I saw very many others, clothed in the same garb, coming from different directions, singly and in small parties, some over the hills, some from the valleys, some

from shaded bowers, but all hastening toward that path to meet him. There was on all their faces an expression of calm joy and heartfelt welcome.

As he approached the little party who first went out to meet him, he was so struck with the brightness and holiness of their appearance that he fell prostrate at their feet. One of them, distinguished above the others by the dignity of his mien, and the wisdom and benignity that beamed in his countenance, raised him from the ground with one hand, while pointing to heaven with the other, said, "Worship not us, worship God alone." As he said this, he gave one glance at the female, who still retained her place, hoping through all that she might yet win the wanderer back. She was now at a great distance, yet she saw and felt the glance, and she turned and, with piercing cries and frantic gestures, fled toward the mountain, and buried herself deep from sight in those dark caverns. Earthy she was, and to earth she fled.

The shining ones then clustered fondly around the dark mortal, and led him on in that path. He moved with slow and trembling steps, for with all their encouragement he could hardly be assured he was right in traveling there.

I observed that the other bright ones, who were hastening from different points to meet him, now lined the sides of the path along which he was timidly moving, and cheered him on by smiling looks and gestures of welcome; yet no one spoke but the beneficent one who had first lifted him from the ground, and he was bidding him be of good cheer, for he was now but what they, too, had once been, and what they were, he yet might be. Thus moving slowly along, they approached the base of the colossal figure, and it was only by measuring it by their height, that I became able to appreciate its magnitude. It was several hundred feet high, of complete human form, and with just proportions as such. Though stationary, it was animated by intellect, and though not the Creator, was yet by means of that intellect the governor of all around.

As they approached it, I also drew near, and discovered in its base a doorway into its interior, and that it was inhabited inside by those shining ones.

The dark mortal was led by his kind and gentle conductors toward that doorway. He shrank back from it, appalled and trembling. It seemed dark to him. He saw nothing but the darkness which immediately enveloped the entrance. It was to him the door of death, and that had always been represented to him so terrible, so full of doubt and gloom, that he was fearfully agitated by its nearness. Several of his attendant guides, as if to reassure him, passed in and out before him, with smiling countenances, in order to persuade him how pleasant, at once, and safe the passage was.

But when at length he approached for the purpose of entering, he found there was spread across the doorway a very fine network, so fine as to be almost invisible, yet firm as adamant and strong as iron. Through it the bright ones passed with ease, but the dark one found himself too gross to make the passage, and he turned away with the thorough conviction that it could not be until he had purified himself of the grossness of his material nature that he could hope to enter.

In the mean time, while this was going on outside this figure, I entered it, and was permitted a rapid glance at its interior. It had many platforms or stories, as they would be called if we were speaking of a house, one above the other, which were approached by winding stairs. On these platforms it seemed that those shining ones dwelt, according to their various degrees of refinement, and ascended from one to the other according as they progressed in refinement and purity. The light of the sun, which I had seen rising out of the ocean behind it, entered the figure through various apertures on the several platforms, and illuminated its interior in the most brilliant and glorious manner—the more brilliant and grateful the nearer to its head—and those who inhabited up there, I discovered, had

additions to their garbs of gold and crimson and purple, that made their appearance very dazzling.

While I was wondering in what this upward progress terminated, and to what end it was that these inhabitants of the figure thus, as they became more refined and pure, ascended up and onward, I saw some of them enter within the tenement of its brain, and learned that when they became sufficiently perfected and developed, they became a part of the mighty intellect which thus ruled the world around and below them.

When the dark mortal turned away from the portal, I saw in him a feeling almost of despair at his ever becoming pure enough to enter, and of anxious inquiry as to what he should do to become worthy? Here, too, his kind and bright companions were ready to assist him. They led him to a little village or hamlet formed on a sloping bank, just behind the colossal figure, lying beautifully exposed to the rising sun, the mighty ocean, and the pleasant landscape between; and at the same time, the landscape to the west, including the dark inclosure within those gloomy walls, was partially hidden from view by the eminence on which the figure stood. He was given to understand that this pleasant hamlet of cottages and workshops and grateful gardens had been established by those good spirits as a probationary residence for such of the inhabitants of the dark inclosure as had evinced a desire to abandon their gloom and revel in the light of that mighty intellect, and that here he must work out his own salvation; that it would not come to him as a gratuity, but must be earned by his own industry; that though his weakness might at times be strengthened by kind friends, and his despondency often be cheered from above, yet the great end of his redemption could be achieved only by himself.

With these instructions they conducted him to a cottage poorly furnished, and surrounded by a garden much neglected, thus showing him that there was something for him to do at once. But, more than that, he was soon

called upon to discharge a duty, which he was told always devolved on the newest comer, and that was to take care of the sick. He entered upon the duty with alacrity, and at the farther end of the village he found a sick man, whom he attended kindly and faithfully, until he could find nothing more to do there. He was not very expert at the task, for it was evident, however kind might have been his feelings by nature, he had never given much attention to individual cases of suffering. He had rather generalized, and his active mind seemed never content unless it was in pursuit of some new object. As soon, therefore, as he had made his suffering fellow comfortable, instead of sitting down by his bedside and watching patiently as a more experienced nurse would have done, he went out into the village to see if he could not find something to do more profitable to the happiness of its inhabitants, than wasting time as he termed it, by a sick-bed.

As he passed through the hamlet, looking into the different houses, shops, and gardens, it was very evident that he was a man of great rapidity and clearness of perception, and of tremendous energy, for he formed many plans for improvement, that involved much labor, and thought, and patient industry. He began to feel proud of his power of rendering service to his new place of abode, and of signaling his entrance to it, to its inhabitants.

While pleasing himself with these thoughts, and wandering on, with more pride than humility, he came to a part of the village where a break in the sloping bank gave him a partial view of the country whence he had come. He saw a part of the dark inclosure in the distance, with the gloomy mist above it, resting like the shroud of the dead on its cold breast, and he recoiled in horror at the sight. A recollection of the life he had spent swelled up in his mind with fearful force, and overwhelmed him with a realizing sense of what he had been, and how unworthy he was to serve, much less to direct, even in that half-redeemed hamlet.

Shuddering at the thought of the past, and despairing of the future, he rushed to his lonely cot, and there, throwing himself upon a wooden pallet, gave vent to the strong yet silent agony of his mind, for inexpressibly bitter though it was, and shaking his manly form like an aspen leaf, yet his pride would not permit a groan to issue that could make his remorse known to others. But those shining ones were nearer to him than he imagined, their kind and watchful care was more than he knew of. To them his emotion was known, and they clustered around his cot to cheer and encourage him. One only of them entered, and it was she who had even in the evil past kept alive in him some of the saving instincts of his nature, and who had been dearer to him than all else besides, ere impelled by the fate which conducted her to purer regions she had left him alone in his gloom. She gently seated herself by his side, and in an old accustomed tone of fondness and heartfelt sympathy wooed him from his dark despondency. The deep bitterness of his despair was soothed, he became more gentle in his struggle with himself, his tears flowed more tenderly, he raised himself up and attempted to throw himself into her arms. But, alas! he felt that he was all too gross to clasp her, whose presence he was yet so very, very conscious of; and instead of that indomitable pride, which but a little while before had shaken his frame to its inmost recesses, he felt stealing upon him a sense of deep humility, which bowed him to the earth while it pointed him to heaven. He suffered her to lead him to the door of his cot, where, affectionately leaning upon his shoulder, and surrounded, though unconsciously to himself, by many, very many, as bright and gentle as she was, she pointed out to him the beauties of the scene around him, which he might still enjoy, and how wide was the field in which he might yet be useful in serving his fellows, and in purifying his own grossness.

When, at length, her soft pleadings had calmed the turbulence of his soul, and shed abroad upon it a holy repose,

she left him and ascended to her own bright mansions above, with a countenance beaming with affection, and pointing still higher up. And the picture closed upon my view, leaving him standing by that earthly cot, and surrounded only by earthly objects, but with all his aspirations centred upon that brightness which he hoped that yet even he might make himself worthy to enjoy.

Section Thirty-one.

Thursday, June 2d, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, only two of the circle, the Doctor and Mr. Warren, were present. The others were absent from illness. The Doctor was influenced, and the following was written:

I REGRET that any of the members of the circle are absent to-night, as nothing so much retards the full harmony of spirit-intercourse (especially when the object is of grave import) as any difference in the magnetic current. I can not even myself imagine what keeps Mrs. D., as, expecting certainly to meet her, I have made no inquiries. But even without the absent ones, let us feel that where two or three are gathered together with pure desire for knowledge and truth, the doors shall be opened, and the light they seek shall be poured into their hearts in streaming floods. I therefore greet you, the present, and those absent, with heartfelt affection, and charge you that you be true, be firm, be consistent, be self-denying, bearing and forbearing, and loving all.

SWEEDENBORG.

If we reason from nature in reference to the soul, we find