

prised at the ease with which the mind can be relieved of its strongest objections, when the influences of natural laws are permitted their full operation, limited by no narrow prejudice, circumscribed by no sect or doctrine. Thus, why should vitality or life exist in every thing God has made? Why should the barren soil of the arid desert, when removed from its original locality, be made to produce vegetation as well as that which has been cultivated for years? Take the soil from earth's center, and bring it to the surface, and it will germinate vegetation in some form as soon as it feels the light and heat. The hardest rock, when decomposed, will bring forth trees and flowers as abundantly as the most prolific soil. No matter what the substance, and no matter in what form or combination, it is teeming with life, and under some circumstance or other will manifest its ability to support or give birth to life.

Now, were the power of God exhibited only on this little ball, we might with reason say, after this earth there can be no other. All things but the soul cease here. But at the same time there is and must be a continual resurrection of matter. There is not, nor can there be, any cessation in the continual round of birth, life, decay, and resurrection, even on your earth.

But suppose it were so, does this alter the workings of God's laws in other spheres? And if, after all our struggles, the fact is proved that no matter is lost on earth, does it not prove that there is a necessity for the soul's combination with matter in some form, even after it has left the earth?

Here a pause in the writing having ensued, Mr. Warren remarked, in reference to a matter previously agitated, that it would imply the performance of perpetual miracle, if, when the spirit left the material body, there must be created for it a new body or spiritual form properly corresponding to its nature; while if, by the same inherent power, the spirit clothed itself with a form, or had one already generated within the material body, there would be no miracle; whereupon Dr. Dexter's hand was influenced, and the following was written:

I believe I said "the soul entered the body prepared for

it." The manner in which this took place I could not explain, for the spirits could not see the transformation. The body, however, is ready for the spirit, and it is, or may be, that the soul after leaving the earth generates its own form. But until I have entered the higher spheres I can not give you a just explanation of this.

My remarks have been more in explanation than in continuation to-night, as the circle was small; and I thought it best to be rather desultory than to pursue our regular subject.

At our next meeting I will continue my description of life in the spheres.

With my best affections for the absent, both the Judge and Mrs. D., I bid you good-night. SWEEDENBORG.

Section Thirty-two.

PART FIRST.

Saturday, June 4th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and I alone being present, it was written:

ONE of the hardest tasks in this our sphere of material action, is the bringing up for trial and judgment all the motives, feelings, and incentives of the heart before the stern governor of the mind, Reason, and hearing all the arguments, both for and against, on the course of conduct we have pursued relative to ourselves and others.

The difficulty lies not so much in the analyzing of motive and feeling, or in the full display of thought or passion;

but the task is indeed one of trouble, after we have heard all that can be said, in deciding justly, sincerely, and without deceiving ourselves. The man, the true man examines himself, and avows to himself the wrong he may have committed against his own nature; and not only will he bring his secret thoughts to judgment, but he will, Roman-like, sacrifice his most cherished desires, his earnest and heartfelt wishes, his carefully-concerted plans, to the requirements of duty, of love, and to the absolute demands of that law which bids us live that we may confer some good on our fellow-beings, and that we maintain a character which may not be INJURED BY DEATH.

What more noble attribute of our nature than the courage to do right, the fearlessness of truth, crucifying to the obligations which it imposes, all selfishness, all hypocrisy, every principle which militates against the advance of the soul!

The mere recognition of wrong is as much the ability of a wise man as that of a fool, and *vice versa*; but he who is indeed wise shrinks not, when that recognition teaches him conviction. The fool stumbles at the threshold of light. He shuts his eyes to the picture that light affords of the true properties of his mind. By its low desires, its cunning devices, its unhallowed pleasures, he is ever incited to delay all self-examination, and to flatter himself that in his disguise there can be no detection.

Alas! that that nature which is bound to progress by its own origin, which claims connection with God, ever should pervert the bright properties which that origin has conferred, from its upward progression, to a consort with things of earth, to a union of matter without the spirit.

But joy, unspeakable joy, when true to its relationship with eternity, true to its truth and integrity, true to the innate promptings, the soul claims to be heard against even itself, and boldly chastises when wrong has been done; when, conscious that its errors have been of its own choice, it applies, without shrinking, the just deserts which reason demands.

How glorious that man's destiny! He leaves behind the errors of time, and boldly pushing forward through the untried future, he plants his standard on the very outward wall of eternity, and here he makes his stand; here he calls around him all the aid that position furnishes, and he leaves the traces of his progress in his errors, the doings, the actions sacrificed to truth, which he scatters in the pathway which has led to this goal.

BACON.

The Doctor expressing his admiration of that teaching, I asked him to wait a minute, for I supposed there was some personal application of the lesson intended.

When it was written :

No. No personal application to you or the Doctor, for the heart that has applied the remedy to its own sufferings needs not to be told that the operation was painful.

In our intimacy with the world, the foregoing general aphorisms may pertinently apply; but it is when those feelings of our nature, the finer susceptibilities of the soul made manifest in the tender threads of affection, and in the emotions which attract the gushing response from other hearts; when the soul, assuming as its own its birthright of love, claims the prerogative of its bestowal on that heart which is congenial with its own; when casting from it all the trammels of conventionalism, it bids the spirit seek its affinity in the very spirit of another, that the trial surpasses the agony of all material pain.

The soul in agony! The soul crucified on its own affections! Oh! this indeed is the exquisite misery of the wounded spirit! Who hath power to heal?

Who hath power to heal? The very love which it subdued, the very affection which it has called back to its heart, like a tired dove, shall be to it like a well of living water springing up to an eternal life, refreshing, invigorating, restoring.

This lesson is finished.

Now, dear Judge, if you feel able for a few moments,

we will try to impress you with a vision relative to some teaching affecting the Doctor.

I then lay down on my sofa, and shutting out, as usual, external objects, by tying a handkerchief over my eyes, I received the vision which I have described in the paper of this date.

At a particular part of it, from the length of the pause, I supposed it was done, and arose from my recumbent posture, and asked if I had described it right?

It was written in answer:

Yes; but the vision is not yet ended. Your head is better [all the evening I had been suffering with a headache]; lie still a little longer. There is something personal to the Doctor.

I then lay down again, and the vision went on as far as I have recorded. Then it was written:

We can not bring the matters concerning the Doctor before you, but we will try again some other time. Write out the vision as a general teaching, but when you feel better we will impress you again.

PART SECOND.

June 4th, 1853.

VISION.

The scene which opened to me was an old man bent over with age, walking slowly, supported by his cane, along a pleasant path, lined on his right by green shrubbery. He came in view from the extreme right. The general scene was dark, but he was enveloped in a bright silver light, which seemed to come from above, behind him, and shot down upon and around him, like the shooting rays of the northern lights in their most playful mood. As he advanced, the light followed him, illuminated the scene all around

him, and left it still bright behind him, though all else was dark and gloomy.

I observed, as he advanced, he became more erect in his carriage, and more alert and active in his movements. He occasionally uplifted his cane with a joyous gesture, as if saying to himself, "Why! I'm a boy again."

He occasionally paused and looked intently upon the ground, stirring up something with his cane. It seemed to me that he was examining the mineral and vegetable productions that lay in his path.

The light accompanied him still, and a little preceded him, though not much. So that it was only when he had advanced nearly opposite to it, that I discovered standing close by the path in which he was moving what seemed to be a somewhat spacious Doric temple, not open, and with columns all around, as of old, but closed at the sides like a modern church, and with a Doric colonnade in front, with some fifteen or twenty steps ascending to its entrance, and extending the whole front of the building.

The old gentleman was so intent on examining what was in the path, that he did not discover this building until he had got directly up to it. He then stopped and looked up at it, and examined its exterior carefully. He finally concluded he would enter it, and as he began to ascend, he discovered, what I had already noticed, that the light which accompanied him had paled somewhat, and he began to doubt whether there was enough of it to enable him to explore satisfactorily the interior of that building. Just at this moment, a cloud of golden light came out of that part of the heavens whence the silver light had issued, and passed along the path which the old man had trod, marking its course very distinctly, like as we have often seen a summer shower fleeting amid the sunshine o'er the dusty fields. It moved along until it came opposite to where the old man had turned to ascend the steps, then it also turned, followed him, and completely enveloped him, mingling and forming one with the silver light. As soon as he had as-

cended the steps till he had attained the last platform, a streak of pale-blue light, very clear and grateful to the eye, shot suddenly out from that part of the heavens whence the other light had come, and streamed with inconceivable rapidity upon his person, and mingled also with the other lights. Thus that old man was bathed in brilliant light, and as he entered that dark building, its interior was lighted up by the emanations from his person. I observed that it was divided into pews like a modern church, had its chancel, and its altar at one end, and its gallery, and splendid organ at the other. He advanced slowly up the middle aisle, until he approached the chancel, when he stopped and looked back, and took in a view of the whole interior. It had no light in it except what issued from him, and even then it was somber and gloomy. As he thus stood, I noticed, though he did not, that one of his feet was standing on the end of a monumental slab, inserted into the floor, just at the end of the middle aisle, in front of the chancel. Ere long I saw that end begin to sink under his foot, and I started, lest he might be precipitated into the vault; but he felt the motion, withdrew his foot, and looked intently down to see what was meant. The slab moved slowly down at one end and up at the other, as if turning on a pivot, until it stood upright, and exposed a full entrance below. As yet I could see nothing there, for all was dark, and the light from the old man did not penetrate its obscurity.

While I was wondering what all this meant, I heard a loud noise at the entrance to the church, and looked up to see the cause. I saw a crowd of ignorant, uneducated, but well-intentioned boors rushing in with a great cry. They had known that old man for a long time, as a physician residing in the neighborhood. He had a large family, and was believed to very skillful, yet he had never seemed to care about accumulating wealth. He had seemed to care more for others than for himself. This had seemed strange to them, as had a great deal of, to them, very mys-

terious and out-of-the way learning, which he had gathered up;

Times and tides he could presage,
And e'en, the story ran, he could gauge.

When they saw him enter that church alone, and attended by that strange light, they fancied that he was intending to play some necromancy upon their dearly loved feudal lord, who had erected that church, and after a disease which had carried him off suddenly, had been buried beneath its floor and so they rushed furiously forward to prevent him. As they approached him with all their clamor, he withdrew his gaze from the vault, and calmly looked at them. It seemed as if there was something in his look, or in the light which issued from him, that overawed them, for they paused, and, huddling close together, stood looking on him in stupid wonder, as if incapable of either advancing or retreating. He spoke contemptuously to them: "Fools! think you that I come unlawfully to desecrate the grave, attended by a light that heralds my approach to all the world?" and then turned his gaze down into the vault again.

At this moment the light from him illumined the interior of the vault to him and to me, and I saw the corpse of a man lying there, enshrouded in his grave-clothes. He looked fresh, as if only recently buried there, yet the marble slab, I had observed, was much worn, as if it had been there some time.

The savant, as he looked upon the corpse, seemed to say to himself, "He surely is not dead. It is a pity so good a master and so kind a benefactor to all around him should be cut off in the prime of life, to make way for a hard and selfish and brutal tyrant, who sows misery and depression broadcast all around him. I can save him yet, and I will." He then stood steadily and calmly looking at the corpse for a few moments, seeming to me to be strongly willing the apparent dead to awake. Soon the corpse began to show signs of life. It opened its eyes, looked around to see

where it was, and catching a glimpse of the savant, whom it seemed to recognize, arose to a sitting posture, and gazed intently upon him. The old man reached down to it one end of his cane, which was seized by it, and then with ease raised it up through the entrance of the vault, until it stood erect on the floor of the church by his side. He was a tall, majestic-looking man, of about middle age, and he looked down upon the little old man by his side, with feelings of admiration at his skill, and gratitude for the benefit of his resurrection. The savant seemed to expect the door of the vault to close, but as it did not, he looked back to see why, and the light from him shone upon the corpse of a lovely child of about two years old, the son, it seemed, of the other, and which I had not before observed. He beckoned to it, and it floated up, as it were, through the entrance of the vault, into the arms of its father, and there nestled closely, looking on the good old man with childish wonder and much affection.

The marble slab then closed gently over the vault, and the old man turned to leave the church with his rescued companions. The crowd, which had stood there during the whole time in silent wonder, opened a passage for them. He turned from them with a look of compassion, and passed down one of the side aisles, and so out behind them. They had not perceived that for the light by which they saw they were indebted to him, until now they found themselves, by his withdrawal, in profound darkness. Their ignorant fears were aroused to a fearful pitch, and they shivered in very fright.

I remained in the church to note them, and I perceived that the good old man passed along the outside of the building, toward its rear, and as he passed, the light from him shot into one after the other of the windows, as from a bright lantern carried by in the night-time, casting a fitful and startling radiance around those terrified rustics, whose superstitious alarm it most fearfully augmented.

I left the building and hastily followed him, and saw

him and his companions enter the porter's lodge of some nobleman's extensive grounds. Its inmates were the aged porter, his wife and daughter, who were startled at the strange sight that was before them. The old man quieted their alarm, by assuring them that it was their good master and his son restored to them, and they must get them some clothes. How that was done I did not observe, for I was then learning that the man who had thus been rescued, had once been the lord of that mansion and those grounds, a man of great power and wealth, with very many persons under and dependent upon him, and that he had been one of very enlarged benevolence, devoting all his energies to the benefit of his fellow-creatures. That he had lost his wife, and had only one son, in whom was centred the hope that the beneficence of the father would descend down the stream of time. That he had an unworthy relative, who, anxious to succeed to his wealth and power, had administered poison to both father and son, and that so secretly as to escape all suspicion, and then had entered upon the estate, where he had played the brutal tyrant, heedful only of gratifying his own passions, and regardless of his duty alike to God and to man. So that the restoration of the former lord was indeed a wide-spread blessing.

In the mean time, the dresses of the dead-alive had been changed. I did not notice the garb of the father. Of the child I did. He wore a little purple-colored velvet cap, embroidered with golden cord, and with a feather in it. He had jacket and trowsers of like material, and similarly ornamented. And with his golden-colored hair, bright blue eyes, clear complexion, and soft and pensive countenance, he was a lovely object to look upon.

They passed out of the porter's lodge by a side door into the lawn. They had scarcely arrived there, before the crowd in the church, having awakened from their paralyzed stupor, rushed out of the building, and tore madly along toward the park gates, bellowing in their rage. They forced an entrance, and observing no other object, they

seized upon the good old man, and in an instant tore him to pieces, staining with his life-blood the soil that was that moment bearing testimony to the great good he had done.

So rapid had been the atrocious deed, that that noble lord had not had time to interfere, nor if he had had, would it have availed with them in their insensate blindness. But when the fearful deed was done, then came reflection, though, alas! too late to save—and they stood appalled at their own action. Sternly then did that noble lord reprove them. “See,” he cried, “how in your madness you have destroyed your benefactor and mine, who had no purpose in what he did but the welfare of others. And now what atonement can you make for the innocent blood you have shed, and which cries to Heaven from the ground on which you stand?”

They fell on their knees before him, and implored his forgiveness. They proffered to gather together the dismembered limbs, and give them honorable burial; but he forbade their touching them, and he even bade them cast off their shoes that were stained by his blood, as being too holy to be defiled by their contamination.

While these things were going on near the entrance, the tyrannical usurper, from his distant mansion, had discovered the disturbance near his park gates. He knew not the cause; but, being as cowardly as he was cruel, he imagined that it was his oppressed tenants who had at length, as had often been threatened, risen against his harsh domination, and were approaching to wreak their vengeance on him. He instantly called together his whole household of attendants, and sent them down, to the number of some fifty, to resist the invaders. Most of them had been servants of the former lord, though the usurper had introduced a few of his own creatures among them. As they ran toward the crowd, their former master turned to them, so that they saw him, and they instantly recognized that he lived again. They paused, and with almost one voice tendered him a welcome back. He directed them to drive that crowd of

now repentant homicides off from the grounds. They did so. He then set a few of them to watch the remains of the good old man, and, accompanied by the others, turned to go toward his mansion. In the mean time the creatures of the usurper had rushed back to him with the startling news, that the former lord was restored, and he and they instantly fled for safety. He entered again his former habitation, his mind solely intent on what he should do in reference to the sad event which had marked his restoration. He debated in his mind whether he should inclose and render sacred the spot where the homicide was committed, and there erect a monument, or gather the remains together, and directly in front of his mansion, on his lawn, erect it.

He, however, dispatched messengers for the old man's family, now by his death reduced to want, and brought them to his own residence, and there to his widowed wife he said, “You are my mother;” to his children, “You are my brothers and sisters. Henceforth be this your home, and share with me all that Providence has bestowed.” The eldest daughter, who had been exquisitely educated by her highly intellectual father, and who shared with him his attainments and his benevolence, he entreated to be his companion and the mother of his child.

Thus though a few years of a life nearly spent were cruelly cut off, yet by his self-sacrifice that old man had restored goodness and happiness where cruelty and misery had reigned, had indeed secured their continuance from generation to generation, and caused them to flow far, far down the current of time, perpetuating his own memory in the good he had done long after the other actors in the scene had passed away and been forgotten.