

## IN BOTH WORLDS SIMULTANEOUSLY \*

BY ALFRED ACTON

You know it is rather embarrassing to me to be called on year after year to address you on Swedenborg, because Swedenborg had only one life, and I cannot invent new things for that life! Today, the ninth of February, we celebrate Swedenborg's birthday more near the true date of his birth, which was February eighth according to the new style, which was not adopted in Sweden until 1752.

The subject on which I am going to address you this evening is one which many of you will find contains nothing new, but I wish to assemble together the various statements of the Writings throwing light on the statement by Swedenborg that he was in both worlds at the same time. Of this he says: "The manifestation of the Lord and introduction by the Lord into the spiritual world as to sight and hearing and speech is more excellent than all miracles, because nowhere in history is it said that such commerce with angels and spirits has ever been granted since creation" (*Inv.* no. 43). And he says further: "The men of the Golden Age did indeed speak with angels, but it was not granted them to be in any other than natural light, but to me it has been granted to be simultaneously in both spiritual and natural light, and by this it has been granted me to see the marvels of heaven, to be among angels as one of them, and at the same time to draw forth truths in light and so to perceive and teach them, and consequently to be led by the Lord" (*ibid.* no. 52).

That it was not granted the men of the Golden Age to be in any other than natural light is rather a curious statement. Possibly natural light is an error for spiritual light. This is suggested by the context—it was not granted them to be in any other than spiritual light, "but to me it has been granted to be simultaneously in both spiritual and natural light"; for the men of the Most Ancient Church were certainly in spiritual light. It is shown in the Writings that the Lord spoke to them by means of angels; that they were instructed in this way; and that when they saw natural things, they saw within them spiritual things. Thus, when they saw natural

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things, they were with the angels by virtue of the fact that they then saw the corresponding spiritual things. It is said they were almost like angels, that is, their thought was one with angelic thought even while they were in the natural world. They saw visions, and angels spoke with them in dreams when they were just coming out of sleep. They were instructed as to the correspondence of the dreams. But they were not in natural light, that is, they were not able to meet the evils and falses that arose subsequent to the Fall by means of rational argument. They could simply say, "Yea, yea," and "Nay, nay," and those words would be of no effect to any one who lacked their perception. And so it is said in the *True Christian Religion*, that the men of the Most Ancient Church worshiped an invisible God, that is, they were in obscurity as to the natural. They did not see the Lord, the Divine Truth, the Word in the natural mind; they saw only representatively. Therefore, in the same passage it is said they were in the light of the moon, whereas the New Church is to be in the light of the sun.

The Ancient Church had communication with the spiritual world in much the same way as the Most Ancient Church, with this difference, that instead of seeing the correspondences of the representatives in dreams and in nature by perception, they learned them by science. The Israelitish Church was in somewhat the same state, but they did not even have the science of correspondences. They had representative dreams and visions, but they did not understand their meaning. It is said that their visions were like dreams, and that sometimes they had them when they were awake. Such was Abraham's vision when he saw the three angels; when he had that vision, his spiritual eyes were opened but not his understanding. He saw the phenomena of the spiritual world but with merely natural comprehension. The Prophets were even obsessed by spirits so that they were led to make peculiar gestures, or were led from place to place, they themselves being in a state of sleep like somnambulists.

Swedenborg had the experience of all these various states of spirits. He had dreams, he had representations, he was obsessed by spirits, and led about from place to place. But he had these experiences merely that he might understand how the case was with the Prophets in the Israelitish Church. The great difference between Swedenborg and them was that, while Swedenborg saw the phe-

nomena of the spiritual world in clear rational light, the Prophets saw them without any rational understanding. This is seen in the Apocalypse; John described the things seen in the spiritual world as one describes a dream, merely in natural light without any spiritual enlightenment. But Swedenborg, when he saw the phenomena of the spiritual world, and when he heard spirits and angels speaking, saw and heard with understanding; he was held in interior reflection so that he could penetrate the inner meaning of the representations and also the inner meaning of the speech. Indeed, sometimes spirits were very indignant because he penetrated the interiors of their speech and actions. This understanding Swedenborg had from the Lord, and therefore he says that what he wrote was not from any spirit or any angel but from the Lord alone.

Now in order that Swedenborg might have this understanding, it was requisite that he should be prepared and that the preparation should be a long and arduous one. Otherwise the opening of his spiritual eyes would have been no more than the opening of the spiritual eyes of John of the Apocalypse.

He himself tells us that this period of preparation extended from the year 1710 to 1744. But there was also preparation prior to this. The first preparation was in Swedenborg's heredity. He was a child of Dalecarlian stock, and throughout Swedish history, the Dalecarlians have been noted for their absolute independence of character. Whenever the Swedish Legislature threatened to enact or did enact laws trespassing on Swedish freedom, it was the Dalecarlians who were always the foremost to rise in protest. By heredity Swedenborg had courage; and he needed that courage, for he was an ambitious man. From his earliest youth he wished to shine in the literary world of Europe. In his early manhood he expressed the hope some day that he would write something worthy of being reviewed in *Acta Eruditorum*, the leading journal of Europe. By his first published Latin works he achieved renown, but when in later years he further developed his philosophy, his renown began to fade. Swedenborg needed courage to persist in writing, despite this loss—to persist in publishing doctrines that he knew would be regarded with disfavor by the learned world. That required courage—especially in a man of Swedenborg's ambition. Yet he persisted in this writing.

Then in his childhood he was also prepared by a peculiar retention of breath. He says: "Before speaking with spirits, I often had the experience that respiration agrees with the thought; as when in infancy I wished purposely to hold my breath when praying in the morning and evening, and also when I wished to know the alternations of the respiration with those of the heart. The intellect then began almost to vanish" (*S.D.* no. 3320), that is, he came into interior thought. The words are rather peculiar: "I wished purposely to hold my breath" in infancy. By infancy he means of course what we call childhood. It appears as if Swedenborg, in his early childhood, wished to think of God and, as it were, to abstract his mind from the body. At any rate, that is the way I would interpret the words "I wished purposely to hold my breath during morning and evening prayers." He says further: "For many years, especially when writing from my memory the works that were published, I often observed that the respiration was tacit and hardly sensible. Of this it was later given me to think and also to write." He writes about this in the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* (II, no. 10). "Thus for many years I was introduced into such respiration mostly by intense speculations in which the breath was almost quiescent; otherwise intense speculation of truth is not possible" (*S.D.* no. 3464).

With regard to these last words "intense speculation of truth is not possible without some suspension of breath," Swedenborg says that such speculation would not be possible without early training in childhood. These are his words: "To think profoundly is a peculiar gift into which the brain must be initiated from its very rudiments" (*I E.A.K.* no. 19). Unless Swedenborg had had the early experience in childhood of withholding the breath, he could not have been introduced into the profound thought which his writings manifest; for this early experience had an actual effect on the brain, and so enabled him in later years to suspend his breathing, as it were, and to think profoundly. Few if any of us think profoundly. At any rate, profoundly like Swedenborg; nor have we had in childhood this experience of suspending our breath. But we do experience this, that when we are in deep thought or when thinking interiorly within ourselves, the breathing is quiet, whereas when we are in passion, or the external senses are aroused, the breathing is loud and stertorous or tends to be so.

I divide Swedenborg's life into six periods. First his childhood, then his school days up to the time when he was twenty years of age, then his scientific period during which he gathered facts and studied authorities, then the philosophical period, followed by the period when he learned the phenomena of the spiritual world, and finally the period of revelation.

The scientific and philosophical periods are covered by the years 1710 to 1744. In 1710, in May of that year, he visited England, and he stayed there for nearly three years. He had come from the University of Upsala where dogmatic religious thought prevailed, though in Eric Benzelius and Professor Roberg and perhaps one or two others there was a tendency to more freedom of thought. But the general atmosphere of Upsala University at that time was dominated by dogmatic theology. To Swedenborg, therefore, it was a great contrast to come to a country where there was freedom of thought in religion, leading to freedom of thought in science and to that development of science which is witnessed in Sir Isaac Newton's day when Swedenborg was in England. It was also an experience for him to come from a small university town, almost a village, to a town of half a million inhabitants. There also he met many learned men and interchanged ideas with them. From that time he began to investigate nature with the view of basing conclusions on facts. On his return to Sweden he made many experiments, he studied chemistry, anatomy, metallurgy. The fruits of these studies is contained in his *Principia*. This work begins Swedenborg's philosophical period, for in the *Principia* he lays down principles that run through all his later works.

Now the *Principia* is one of three volumes, the other two volumes treating of Copper and Iron, and they were to have been followed by other volumes on other minerals. These, however, Swedenborg did not publish. He began with the *Principia*, and there can be no doubt that his intention was not only to show that creation is from God but also to develop the doctrine of degrees, and within this intention was a very manifest intention to know what was the relation between the soul and the body. Here let me note that an understanding of the relation between the soul and the body implies, or at any rate prepares for, an understanding of the relation between the spiritual world and the natural. This final fruit of his work

was what Swedenborg fully realized when he was admitted into both worlds at the same time.

That in the *Principia* his intention was to prepare the way for the investigation of the soul, is shown by writings written at the same time as the *Principia* but which he did not publish. These writings were *The Mechanism of the Soul and Body* and also a little work which I have called *Psychologica* in which he identifies the soul with the first and second finites of the *Principia*. He also wrote and published the *Prodromus* or Forerunner,\* where he further applies the doctrine of the *Principia*.

The ostensible reason why Swedenborg wrote the *Prodromus* was that he had seen in his conversation with the learned, though it did not appear in their writings, a tendency to agnosticism, a doubt as to the teachings of the Christian Church, especially about the spiritual world and the resurrection of the body. Swedenborg begins his *Prodromus* by proving the existence of a Deity and of a ruling Providence by that Deity. But in the second part of the work he treats of the relation between the soul and the body. In the *Principia* he defines the first natural point as the finiting of the Infinite, but in the *Prodromus* he goes further, showing that this is the Proceeding from the Deity; that this Proceeding is the soul and life of the universe. He also shows that the spirit of man is not a breath, and it is in this connection that he gives the first intimation of what is said in the Writings as to the finest things of nature, namely, that when we die these remain as the ultimate of the spiritual body. This he brings out in many ways, evidently with the intention of showing the learned world that the spirit is not a mere breath but actually dwells in an organism drawn from nature, and thus that the spiritual world exists within the natural world.

This *Prodromus* or Forerunner was in Swedenborg's mind when, in 1736, he wrote to the King of Sweden asking for a three years' leave of absence, because, he says, "I have promised to continue my work"; that is, in the *Prodromus* he had promised to write more fully concerning the soul and the body.

Receiving the King's leave, he left for Paris. Here, on September 7, 1736, he drafted his "Introduction" to the proposed work.

\* *The Prodromus of a philosophy, reasoning concerning the Infinite and the final Cause of Creation.*

Previously he had drafted the title-page as follows: "The Animal Kingdom or concerning the Soul and the Body and the Atmospheres in which the soul lives."

It was at this time also that Swedenborg began to have representative dreams which in part he interpreted. These dreams were recorded on nine pages. After his death, these pages were found among his papers, but they were of such a nature that the heirs decided to withhold them; and they have been so well withheld that all trace of them is now lost.

Swedenborg says that in these dreams he was instructed "in part" concerning what they signified. They were not ordinary dreams; they came to Swedenborg as the result of the profound thoughts to which he had been accustomed. These profound thoughts were introducing him into the spiritual world; that is, he was thinking more in spiritual light than in natural light so that his breathing was almost suspended. When he slept, the spiritual world, as it were, drew nearer to him and revealed itself in representative dreams.

Thus 1736 was the beginning, as it were, of Swedenborg's intercourse with the spiritual world, an intercourse that slowly developed until it came to its final fruition. "For many years," he writes in 1748, "before my mind was opened so that I could speak with spirits, such proofs existed with me that I now wonder that I did not come into persuasion concerning the Lord's government by means of spirits. Not only were there dreams for some years, informing me concerning what was being written, but there were also changes of state while I was writing. An extraordinary light in the matters which were being written; and afterward, moreover, many visions when my eyes were closed, and a light miraculously given" (*S.D.* no. 2951, *W.E.* no. 1891).

While still in Paris, Swedenborg gave up the idea of commencing with a work on the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body. He felt that more preparation was necessary. He took up the study of anatomy and, in Venice in 1738, he wrote a work on the *Cerebrum*. Later, when he went to Amsterdam, he again changed his plan and decided to commence his search for the soul with a treatise on the human blood and the heart. With this in mind, in June 1739 he commenced the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*. In October 1744, he refers to this beginning of the *Economy* in June 1739.

These are his words: "There came upon me a swoon such as I had had previously six or seven years ago, in Amsterdam when I commenced the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*. It signifies, as on the former occasion, that I was being cleansed of what might distract my thoughts, and it gave me penetration, especially with the pen" (*Jour. of Dreams* 282).

Swedenborg speaks of his dreams as informing him "concerning what was being written." In his work on the *Senses*, we have evidence of this, for in the *Journal of Dreams* written at the same time, he several times tells of dreams which gave him enlightenment on the subject of which he was treating. He had the same enlightenment when writing the *Animal Kingdom*—an enlightenment that came upon him when in deep thought. This is what I understand him to mean by the swoon which he experienced when commencing the *Economy*. It was not a swoon in which he was senseless, but a swoon in which with profound thought, the breathing seemed to cease; a swoon which gave him "penetration, especially with the pen." This is indicated by something he writes in his preface to the *Economy*. There, speaking of true philosophers, he says: When they discover a truth, "there is a cheering light and a joyful confirming brightness which plays around the sphere of their mind, and a kind of mystical radiation, I know not whence, which darts through some sacred temple in the brain. Thus, a sort of rational instinct displays itself and in a manner gives notice that the soul is called into a state of more interior communion, and has returned at that moment into the golden age of its intellectual perfection. The mind that has known this pleasure is wholly carried away in pursuit of it; and in the kindling flame of the love thereof, it despises in comparison all merely corporeal pleasures" (*I E.A.K.* no. 19).

Swedenborg speaks here of a nearer approach to the soul, and this indeed was what was taking place. He was ascending from the plane of science and intelligence to that of perception and intuition, and from this nearer approach to the soul came that "mystical radiation" darting "through some sacred temple in the brain." Certainly, in the *Economy* and in his later writings, he expresses thoughts at which the New Churchman must wonder, so much are they in harmony with what is revealed in the Writings.

He finished the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* on December

27, 1739, and at once put it in the hands of the printer. While it was being printed, he wrote a short piece called *Corpuscular Philosophy* in which in part he applies the doctrine of the *Principia* to the animal creation, showing that man lives in the first aura, animals in the second, and insects in the third. But the remarkable thing about this piece is its final phrase: "These things are true because I have the sign." What the sign was is not stated, but from other passages we are justified in inferring that it was the seeing of spiritual light.

We often say a light dawned upon us, or some similar expression involving light. To us these are metaphorical expressions; but Swedenborg, when thinking deeply, actually saw light—spiritual light. When we see spiritual truths, we also see in spiritual light, but the light does not appear to us as actual light. To Swedenborg it did, and this first seeing of spiritual light as actual light seen by the eyes of the spirit was the first step in the gradual opening of Swedenborg's spiritual eyes. I quote his own statement as given in *The Word Explained*: "Lights appeared to me as vivid as the light of a hearth" (no. 6905). These lights were the appearance of that spiritual light whereby he was given "deeper penetration" into the meaning of the facts that lay before him.

It was doubtless because he saw "the sign" to which I have referred, that Swedenborg was led to hasten his search after the soul, by devoting the second volume of the *Economy* to a study of the relation between the brain and the soul. He afterwards states that in this he acted somewhat prematurely, but I have no doubt but that his action was due to his having seen "the sign."

In this second volume of the *Economy*, he has a remarkable statement which I would call to the attention of the learned among my hearers, for further consideration. It is number 241. There he speaks of a sun which is "the beginning of motion in its universe," whose virtue and light flow by the mediation of the first aura into the spirituous fluid which is the soul of the body; he then refers to his *Principia*. One would ordinarily suppose that he is referring to the sun of the natural world; but that hardly fits in with the statement that this sun is "the beginning of motion" and flows by the mediation of the first aura into the spirituous fluid which is the soul of the body. Later on in the volume he speaks of the

Deity as the sun of life and of all wisdom, and of the proceeding from this sun as being the Spirit of God. But after speaking of this sun at some length, he concludes: "But I feel a holy tremor stealing over me and warning me to pause"; and what increases this awe is a love of truth, "it being the end of all my endeavors that truth may hold the supreme place in my mind" (no. 259).

When Swedenborg speaks of the proceeding from the spiritual sun as being the Spirit of God, he is referring, not to anything created, but to the life which flows through and by means of that which is created. This is involved in the repeated statement in the Writings, that spiritual light and heat is *in its essence* Divine Love and Wisdom. Spiritual light and heat are made manifest by means of atmospheres, but their essence, the motion which produces them is the Spirit of God, the Divine Proceeding. I am entertaining in my thought the possibility that, putting these two passages together, Swedenborg himself thought of the spiritual sun as the first finites of his *Principia*, and that the proceeding from the Deity is not the created finite but is that Spirit of God, that creative activity within the finite, without which there would be no universe.

After speaking of the spiritual sun and of the holy tremor that came over him, Swedenborg adds: "Let us therefore on no account venture beyond bounds, nor rashly trespass upon sacred things with our reasoning power. All that it is lawful to do is to kiss the threshold that we may perceive that there is a Deity who is to be adored and loved" (II *E.A.K.* no. 266).

The next work Swedenborg published after the *Economy* was the *Animal Kingdom*. Of this work he states that, "hardly a day passed in which a flame did not appear as vividly as the flame of a household fire" (*W.E.* no. 6905).

The introduction of Swedenborg into the spiritual world was a gradual process extending from 1736 to 1745. "The kingdom of God (he says) was shown to me first in the quiet of sleep and afterward in midday or time of wakefulness so that I could perceive it with the utmost clearness by very sensation" (*W.E.* no. 541). "Before I could speak with spirits," he says elsewhere, "there were not only dreams for some years informing me concerning the things of which I was writing, but also changes of state when I was writing, an extraordinary light on what was being written. Afterward also many visions when my eyes were closed and a light given miracu-

lously. Spirits inflowed sensibly so manifest to the senses as though those senses were corporeal. Frequently infestations by evil spirits in various ways, in temptations, and afterward, when I was writing things to which evil spirits were averse, so that I was obsessed almost to the point of horror; fiery lights were seen; speeches in the time of morning, besides much else, even until at last a spirit addressed me in a few words. I greatly wondered that he perceived by thoughts" (*S.D.* no. 2951).

This first occasion when Swedenborg actually heard the voice of a spirit was in London, on September 21, 1744, and what the spirit said was "Hold your tongue or I will strike you." Whatever Swedenborg was thinking of, it was displeasing to the spirit. Exactly five years later, on September 21, 1749, Swedenborg again refers to this experience: "Before it was opened to me to speak with spirits (he writes) I was of the opinion that no spirit or angel but only the Lord could understand and perceive my thoughts. And then it once happened that a spirit knew what I was thinking, for he spoke with me a few words, at which I was astounded, especially from the fact that spirits could know my thoughts" (*S.D.* no. 4390, *A.C.* no. 5855).

This was the beginning of Swedenborg's actual communication with the spiritual world; but he did not yet speak with spirits.

Swedenborg gives both 1744 and 1745 as the years in which his spiritual eyes were opened. In *The Word Explained* and also in the *Diary*, he always gives April 1745, but in his work on the *Divine Wisdom*, in some letters which he wrote in his later years, and also in his *Autobiography*, he gives 1744 as the year of his entrance into the spiritual world. There is here no contradiction. When it comes not only to hearing spirits but also to speaking with them, then that must be assigned to the year 1745; when it comes to an actual consciousness of the presence of the spiritual world, that began in 1744. In *The Word Explained*, where he gives 1745 as the date of his entrance into the spiritual world, he also says: "The kingdom of God has been several times shown me, first in the quiet of sleep and afterward in time of wakefulness, so that I could perceive it with the utmost clearness by very sensation. The resulting sweetness and happiness was so great that it cannot be described; for in a manner indescribable it penetrated deep into the fibers and inmost marrows and affected them; and this for the past

two years" (no. 541). This was written in January 1746. When Swedenborg speaks of 1744 as the date of the opening of his spiritual eyes, he is speaking of the peculiar feeling of bliss which he experienced as the result of visions, even in wakefulness. Writing in the *Diary* on September 1, 1747, Swedenborg says: "When the corporeal senses are so withdrawn from the internal that internal things are opened and presented to view, the species of imagination are different than the imagination that is familiar to us. One species is, that it is permitted to perceive and note, not by any internal sight but by an obscure sense associated with sight. By the Divine leave of God Messiah, I have secured this now for almost three years" (no. 192). "Almost three years" earlier, on September 21, 1744, he wrote in his *Journal of Dreams*: "This was on Saturday evening before Sunday. I beheld the gable end of the most beautiful palace one could see, and the middle of it was shining like the sun. I was told that it had been resolved in the society that I was to become a member, as it were, an immortal, which none had ever been before, unless he had died" (no. 243).

A few days later, namely, on September 30, 1744, he commenced the *Worship and Love of God*. This work is written ostensibly as a story about Adam and Eve, but it cannot be taken to be such for it has many anachronisms, speaking, for instance, of the Crucifixion as a past event. Its design is to show that the end of creation was the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God, and the means by which this was effected. Only Parts I and II were published, but a first draft of Part III is preserved in manuscript. At the end of this draft, Swedenborg writes: "Thus this is proved true and demonstrated because the Son of God has written and dictated it"—evidently a continuation of his *Journal of Dreams*.

In the *Worship and Love of God*, Swedenborg was venturing into theology, and it is due to this that while he was in the midst of making a clean copy of Part III, in the middle of April 1745, he had a remarkable experience, which he describes in the *Diary*: "At dinner, in the middle of the day, an angel spoke with me that I should not overindulge the belly. While he was by me, there was clearly seen by me, as it were, a vapor issuing from the pores of my body, being a very visible watery vapor which fell down to the floor where the carpet was seen. Collected upon this floor, the vapor was turned into vermiculae, and these being gathered under the

table were instantly set on fire with a crackling and a loud noise. I supposed that in this way all the vermiculae cast out from my body, which can be generated by an immoderate appetite, were thus consumed by fire, and that I had then been cleansed of them" (no. 397). There can be no doubt that when Swedenborg speaks here of overindulgence in the belly, he refers to spiritual overindulgence, that is, to trying to enter from science into the things of theology.

On that same day, in the evening, the Lord gave Swedenborg his commission. Then commenced full intercourse with the spiritual world so that Swedenborg not only heard spirits speaking but also spoke with them himself. Through the whole course of his years of preparation, he had striven to see the presence and operation of the Lord in His works. By his profound studies, he had been led to see that presence with ever clearer sight, and now, with the eyes of his spirit and in full wakefulness, he saw the Lord Himself; and then began his complete entrance into the spiritual world, to be a spirit among spirits at the same time a man among men. Then commenced the last period of Swedenborg's preparation, during which he was to become familiar with the phenomena of the spiritual world. And here let me note, that more than four-sevenths of the *Diary* was written before the *Arcana Coelestia* was commenced.

This, then, was the miracle—a man in both worlds at the same time, fully a man, present and conscious in the natural world, talking with men, and at the same time talking with spirits. He could not only hear spirits and see their deeds but he could also reflect upon what he heard and saw, and could understand what was interiorly involved. "I was continually led from one company of spirits to another (he says in the *Diary*), but with a difference because I was endowed with double thought, an inmost and an interior, so that when in the company of evil spirits I could yet at the same time be in the company of good spirits, and so could perceive the nature of the spirits who desired to lead me" (no. 484). He could instruct the angels themselves, and this, not only as regards the relation between the spiritual world and the natural, but also in many doctrinal subjects.

He had two states, however, one in which he was with spirits and talked with them, while he was in company with men, and another in which he was almost separated from the body and was with spirits as a spirit as though he had died. These latter occa-

sions, however, were rare. His ordinary state was one in which he could speak with spirits while actively engaged in his occupation on earth. Thus, when he was writing, some boys in the spiritual world spoke to him; through his eyes they saw a cockroach, and he instructed them concerning it.

As regards his state among men, he speaks as follows: "In company with others I speak just like any other man, so that as yet no one has been able to distinguish me from myself as I was formerly; nor from any other man. Yet, in the midst of company I have sometimes spoken with spirits, and it may be that certain conclusions might have been drawn from this circumstance. Of this, however, I know nothing, for at such times men could think no other than that I was occupied with thoughts. The actual speech is not heard by any one save myself and those in the heavens who are present. . . . Yet sometimes it is as clear and distinct as the human voice" (*W.E.* no. 3347, *S.D.* no. 722, *W.E.* no. 943). And later he writes: "A spirit could be heard, even when others are speaking, yet their speech does not come to the ear from without but from within. Therefore it is not heard by a bystander" (*W.E.* no. 6885).

This, then, is what is referred to in the Writings as more excellent than all miracles—a man in both worlds at the same time. "As to his spirit (says Swedenborg), every man is in the spiritual world without any separation from his body in the natural world, but I with a certain separation, but only as to the intellectual part of my mind but not as to the voluntary" (*Sum. of Cor.* no. 5). That is, life still flowed into his heart, he still willed, but with his understanding he was elevated. That understanding had been prepared to think interiorly so that it could be elevated and actually see into the spiritual world while still thinking as ordinarily in the natural world.

Swedenborg's spiritual eyes were opened in a way very different than had been the case with all other men since creation. With the Most Ancients, the spiritual eyes were opened in dreams and visions. With the Prophets, as in John on the Isle of Patmos, the spiritual eyes were opened when the natural senses were closed. With Swedenborg, his eyes were opened, not by the closing of his natural sense, but as the culmination of an elevation of the understanding, which enabled him to see spiritual things interiorly, so

that at last that which he saw interiorly he saw actually, phenomenally.

This is the miracle. Just as the Lord performed the greatest of all miracles when He took upon Himself a human body that He might make the Word flesh, so this opening of Swedenborg's spiritual eyes exceeded all miracles because by that means the Lord revealed the Glorified Human as it could not have been revealed in the Christian Church, and as it is now revealed in the Writings.

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## THE SPLEEN

Adapted from Swedenborg's *Animal Kingdom*

BY DONALD G. GLADISH, M.D.

The spleen is a viscus of a blackish red color to the left of the stomach, under the diaphragm and close to the lower ribs. It is surrounded by two serous coats from the peritoneum. Interiorly it is entirely made up of little compartments and follicles of different shapes, connected together by strong fibers. It is divided into innumerable cells which are continuous productions of the common internal membrane of the organ. The venous ramifications appear to be surrounded by the same membrane. The cells intercommunicate by common orifices, causing the spleen to represent one continuous cavity with lesser and least divisions. Nerves and arteries pass into this tissue, and veins and lymphatics pass out of it. The common capsule conducts and encloses them as soon as they enter. Numerous nerves from the splenic plexus accompany the vessels, especially the arteries.

Considering its size, its supply of blood is large. The splenic artery arising from the trunk of the aorta by the left branch of the coeliac runs along the upper border of the pancreas and then, dividing into several branches, sinks into the spleen. As soon as these branches enter, they split into fine threads. Of these threads, one part ramifies on the cellular walls and there terminating opens into the cavities; another part ends in certain spheroidal granules or vesicles; and still another is reflected to the surface of the organ.