

## *News, Notes, and Comments*

**O**ur readers' attention is drawn to two works recently published by The Swedenborg Society, London: newly-translated *The White horse*, and *the arms of morpheus*.

### *The White Horse as described in the Book of Revelation, Chapter 19*

© 2007, The Swedenborg Society. 52p. £6.00 ISBN-13: 978-0-85448-150—04

This small work was originally published by Swedenborg in 1758. In his Translator's Preface, K.C. Ryder says: "I have tried to be sensitive to current ideas, outlook, and practice. This has meant that at times I have had to go all around the Wrekin, as it were, to express basically straightforward expressions or concepts in an acceptable way for today's reader . . . My guiding aim has been to produce a version which is readable and readily understandable for a 21st century readership while staying faithful to the nuances and progressions of Swedenborg's thought. I hope my aim has been true" (p. viii).

The book design by Stephen McNeilly, the society's publisher, is an interesting departure from the usual. The work is in two parts: Concerning the White Horse as described in the Book of Revelation (## 1-5); and The Word and its Spiritual or Internal Sense from *Arcana Caelestia* (## 6-17). The departure from the usual is that whereas ## 1-5 are laid out continuously as is usual in other editions, ## 6-17 each begin on a new page. This has the obvious effect of increasing the size of this little book; but more significantly, by setting off each number with its own introductory line set above and apart, its content takes on clearer definition—at least to this reader.

The work closes with Translator's Endnotes and an Index.

### **the arms of morpheus [essays on swedenborg and mysticism]**

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Edited by Stephen McNeilly

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Morpheus, a lesser god in Greek mythology, is a god of dreams, and being “in the arms of morpheus” (I was told by the editor) is a nineteenth-century expression that refers to being in a dream-like or visionary state; hence the title of this collection of essays.

The work opens with Notes on contributors, a chronological list of Selected Works by Swedenborg, and a Preface by the editor that opens with this quotation, as front matter, from Georges Bataille’s *Inner Experience*: “Who among us does not dream of storming the gates of the mystical realm.” This in turn leads us into the preface in which, following an introductory paragraph on the meaning of the word “mystic” in general terms and a paragraph on Swedenborg in this context, we are given an annotated introduction to the six essays: Swedenborg the Mystic (Czeslaw Milosz); Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg and their readers (Ariel Hessayon); Swedenborg, Rudolph Steiner and the hypnogogic state (Gary Lachman); The Feminine Mysticism of Madame Guyon: A Modern Perspective, including Comparisons with Swedenborg (Richard Lines); Swedenborg and the Kabbalah (Reuben Bell); and Swedenborg and Paracelsus (James Wilson).

The back matter includes two items: 1) short biographies of the Ibn ‘Arabi, Jacob Boehme, Madame Guyon, Paracelsus, and Rudolph Steiner that complement the main text; and 2) an extensive index.

I look forward to making a closer reading of the text to provide a broader background to my own understanding of what mysticism is about and how Swedenborg is thought to relate to it.

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