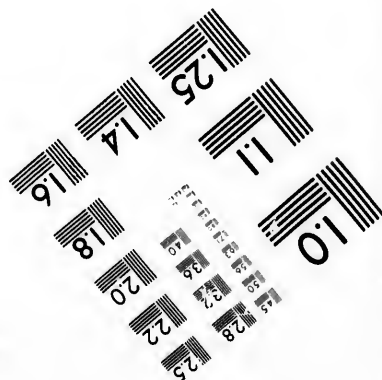
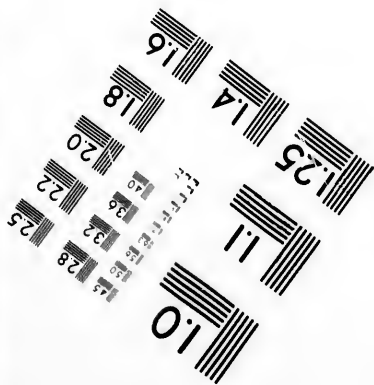
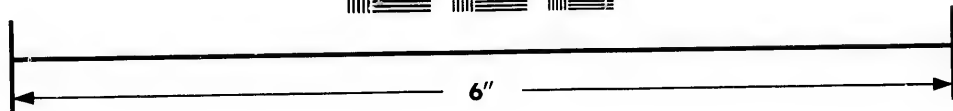
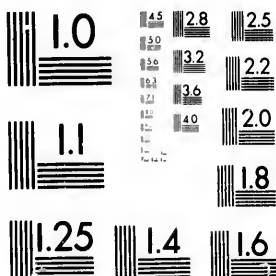


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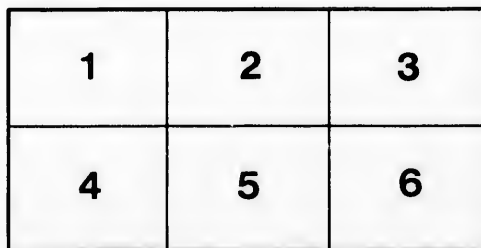
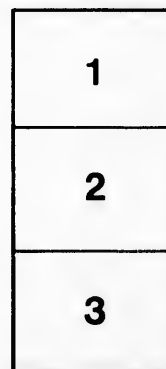
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SCIENCE OF CORRESPONDENCES:

OR THE RELATION OF SPIRIT TO MATTER, CONSIDERED AS A MEANS
OF SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE NEW JERUSALEM TEMPLE OF TORONTO, NOVEMBER
25th, 1878, BY HON. WM. C. HOWELLS, U. S. CONSUL AT TORONTO.

PUBLISHED BY R. CARSWELL, TORONTO.

In the last chapter of the Gospel of Mark, in the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses, are these words:—

“And he said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

“And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.”

These words were spoken to His disciples by the Lord at their last interview, when He gave them their commission to teach His Gospel. Indeed these words constituted their commission—being His command to go, and the promise of what should follow as the result of their labors. The injunction to preach this Gospel to *all* the world and to every creature, was given that it might be presented to all alike, the spirit of Divine Love knowing no distinctions in its direction, but extending everywhere, and embracing *all* in its limitless arms. All nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, alike in the sight of the Universal Father, are alike called to the fold of His Gospel, alike to the full enjoyment of its rich inheritance, on equal terms, with equal opportunities to do his will and fulfil the whole law of love.

Like all expressions in the Divine Word, this text will bear unfolding; for though, when first spoken to the Apostles, its application may have been *literally* and *externally* true, it is at this day applicable, as a Divine injunction, and its promises are as certainly (though in a higher degree,) fulfilled to-day, as they were eighteen centuries ago. It contains a deeper meaning than was understood in that period, one that was to outlast the intelligence of those to whom it was immediately spoken, and is at this moment applicable to all places, as it will be to all times. To-day, those who really *believe* are baptized; they cast out

devils ; they speak with new tongues ; they take up serpents ; and they drink deadly things unharmed.

No text has been more frequently misread, or oftener quoted in support of false theories than this. It is confidently cited by the Church of Rome ; while the various fanatical sects, quote it in support of their claim of the power to work miracles. I have seen it tauntingly flung in the face of Christians by unbelieving scoffers ; while the clause " he that believeth " etc., is the staple authority of those who believe in salvation by faith alone. And in the midst of this misuse of the text, the sincere Christian often closes the sacred volume with an air of perplexed doubt as he reads these promises, and remembers that he has seen none of them as the signs that follow them who believe. Taken in its literal sense it confounds us ; and it is one of the most striking verifications of the assertion that " the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive." He who reads, literally, " He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," is dumb, when the unbeliever asks him to show him the signs that follow them that believe ; for who, they ask, takes up serpents and drinks of deadly things without hurt ?

We must, therefore, resort to some system of interpretation, by which to read this passage of the " Living Oracles ;" or we must set it aside as either unworthy of our belief or beyond our comprehension. And yet this text is the great commission of the Gospel of Christianity, at once the mandate to its missionaries, and in the signs of their success, the rule by which to test their converts.

We know that Protestant Christendom has explained it by saying that it applied only to the Apostolic Age, when miracles were wrought literally ; but they have never successfully shown the limit to that age of miracles, or the time when the signs which indicated a believer to the Apostles, ceased to mark them that believe in later periods. These are insuperable difficulties which admonish us, that while the text may have had its literal application in the beginning, when men were so external that truths could be enforced by miracles, if the Scriptures are of universal application, they must be read by some system of interpretation that will serve to convey their real meaning, through all time, to all grades of intellect, and will make cer-

tain to us the constant use of either a literal or spiritual rendering of all parts of the sacred word.

My present object is to show that there is at hand a *system* which can be used as a key for the uniform interpretation of the Divine Word. In doing this I shall assume no originality of invention, nor affect the possession of advantages over others. I would merely invite my friends to examine for themselves and avail themselves of the advantages of a system of scriptural interpretation that indeed amounts to a science, whose rules are unvarying and yet simple and of easy access to those who would study them, and to be acquired with very little labor.

This science,—for such it really is,—is not new, as I said; for it was in use in the earliest ages. But it has recently been presented to the world as a part of the theological system taught by the celebrated, though much misunderstood Swedenborg, who calls this system the New Jerusalem, mentioned in the Revelations of St. John. This theological system embraces a series of doctrines drawn from the Scriptures, setting forth the truths that constitute the foundation of the Church of the New Jerusalem. This Church, though presenting a system of theology, extending to all the minutiae of faith, has this prominent doctrine, to which I would call particular attention: that those who live good lives, according to the faith in which they were born and educated, from love to the Lord and charity or love of the neighbor will be saved; and conversely, none can be saved who do not love the Lord and the neighbor. With such a belief those who accept this theology will not insist very rigidly upon a detailed confession of faith. Those who have organized societies for the advancement of that faith and for the exercise of religious rites according to it, are in the habit of presenting to such as ask admission among them this short Confession of Faith, as fundamental to the true Christian Church. They say in substance: We believe that God is One, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is a Divine Trinity of character, known under the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that the Holy Scriptures are Divine, and contain all instruction necessary to our Salvation; that we are to do good and live good lives, *as of ourselves*, acknowledging that all power to do good is of the Lord; that evils are to be shunned because they are evils and forbidden in the Divine Word; that love to God and charity to-

wards the neighbor embrace the all of religion; and all who sincerely do such acts, and live such lives as they understand to be good, from love towards God and charity towards their neighbors, will be regenerated and saved, of whatever nation, Church or persuasion they may be.

With this Confession of Faith it will be seen that we leave very little room for intolerance towards others, inasmuch as we acknowledge every man who lives a truly good life as of this Church. We impose no conditions of Faith in our fraternal relations of the Church, but accept every sincere person, who lives a life of purity, acting from an affection for the good and the true, as of this New Church, let them belong to whatever persuasion they may, or however they may have been educated on the subject of Religion. With this very catholic platform, we may be indulged in the claim, that in matters of speculative faith, we have some light to which we may invite the world—*especially* since we do not require them to accept our views, *unless they see them to be true and good.*

The Doctrines of this new Church teach that all things in the universe have a spiritual origin. That the Spiritual World is the world of causes; and that all the existences of the natural world are the outgrowth of some principle, quality, or form, existing in the world of spirits; and that all the natural things around us represent the principles that give them birth, from which they spring, or around which they grow. That there exists a permanent correspondence, or relation between the forms of thought and affection belonging to the spiritual world, and the things in the natural world that have been caused by these thoughts and affections.

To illustrate this doctrine of correspondence: Suppose I have in my mind an end to perform—a house to build, for instance; I have in view the purposes of the house, therefore in thought I conceive of all its parts and details. Every room, the size and arrangement, etc., will be established in my mind as completely as if already built. There it exists—a house in the world of spirit or world of mind. If I were merely a spiritual being, such a house would serve my purpose; but as I am also an inhabitant of this natural world of matter, I must bring my spiritual house down into the natural world; and therefore I call about me the agencies of this natural existence, and build

it of wood, stone, iron, glass, etc. It still exists in my mind a permanent house, as before it was built of matter, while it also has come to exist in the natural world. Between the house in my mind and that on my building lot, there exists a perfect correspondence in all their parts; because the mental or spiritual house gave birth to the material one. Any one who has built a house or constructed a machine to which he has given much thought, will be sensible of this correspondence; and so well will he be acquainted with that mental or spiritual form, that his house or machine will not appear new to him when completed, but will seem to be an old affair. Any one familiar with machinery of any kind will see this idea fully exhibited in its construction. Each and every part of a good machine corresponds not only to the mental idea from which it is born, but it also represents the use it is intended to perform and from which it was conceived. By it, in a thousand years after its construction, the intelligent mechanic can read in the machine, the purposes and thought of the inventor. The forms of all the parts are so expressive of every conception in his mind that it is impossible to misread them.

This is *correspondence*, as it appears in its finite range between man and matter. But when we come to trace it in the works of the Creator, the Infinite, it grows into a study as grand as infinity. We see in the whole world of nature a complete revelation of the Divine mind, and creation becomes "that elder Scripture," in which the whole universe may read the Divine plan, through all times and ages. He who looks upon the surface of the earth, contemplates its structure and its productions, sees in them all the purposes of the Divine Father, to provide man with habitation, sustenance, and the means of developing the man, in industry, and works of charity and usefulness to his fellows. No part of the Bible can tell more plainly than the earth itself, that it was made for man, as a means to promote the great sum of happiness throughout the universe—to enlarge Heaven by peopling it with properly developed humanity.

We see this correspondence illustrated very strikingly in the Universal Creation, where every creature represents some spiritual principle of importance connected with us, and corresponding to some of our moral qualities; and, while promoting our

natural comfort or convenience, they exhibit in their peculiar traits of character, the idea from which they spring. Thus, when the Creator would provide for man, among the lower animals, one that would supply his wants, of food and clothing, which should multiply rapidly, and subsist upon vegetation, he created the *sheep*, a creature whose usefulness, gentleness and innocence, most plainly represent the best qualities of the regenerated human mind. When he designed to assist man with the means of locomotion and progression, he made the *horse* and similar animals of burden. So of every other creature. Each being created for a certain end, and each springing from a certain moral idea, or spiritual principle, they necessarily represent these ideas and principles; and he who will look at them from this standpoint, will see that their very forms, and natures express the Divine purpose, in the natural world, and are so to speak, so many *letters* of a written revelation, which can be read in all times and by all peoples, conveying the *same* ideas to all with absolute certainty, whatever tongue they may speak.

We call this the *Science of Correspondences*. Like other science, it must be learned—studied—when it will be found to contain all the elements of a science, and applicable to the purposes of mental development. Swedenborg tells us that it was once well known to the ancient world, afterwards lost and unused; like the Egyptian hieroglyphics, unreadable because of disuse. He tells us that a leading feature of his mission was to *re-present* to the world this lost science and make it available to us as the means of reading the Divine Word in its *full* meaning. He maintained that before this science fell into disuse, and men habituated themselves to looking at every thing from a material point of view, the mysteries of the various ancient theologies were simple and easily understood; and that they only came to be called mythologies or fables when this means of interpretation was lost. It was only after the Greeks had so lost this science of correspondences that they came to regard Minerva as a personality, that it was wrong for them to say that she sprang from the brain of Jupiter; for nothing could have been so strictly as well as poetically true, as that the personification of wisdom should be born from the mind of the Supreme Deity. This was the case with most of ancient theosophies. They

came to be mythologies, only when the people who received them sunk into such profound materialism that they could no longer conceive of the invisible to material eyes from the material representatives before them.

Here let me remark to those who may not be aware of it, that Swedenborg claimed to have been instructed, from the Spiritual world, in this science, by the Divine Providence, and commissioned to present it again to the world. I need not stop here to establish that claim by argument. To those who obstinately say there is no Spiritual world, and never can be any spiritual revelations; or those who as obstinately insist that all revelation or spiritual instruction has ceased, I do not present this claim for him; because it would be useless labor. But to the earnest man who is prepared to receive truth for its own sake, I submit a view of the application of this science, according to Swedenborg, in reading the Scriptures; and I shall be content to trust it for its intrinsic value, knowing that "Wisdom is justified of her children."

As all spiritual principles are represented in the natural world, by the forms to which they have given birth; and as those forms are expressions of spiritual ideas, as a written chapter or a composition drawing, is the expression of an idea in the mind of the writer or the artist. This system of correspondence is the best suited, as the most natural style of language, for Divine revelation; because it is less liable to the mutations to which other forms of language are subject.

The Scriptures were written for our *spiritual* instruction and moral improvement through all ages; therefore they could not be expressed in ordinary changeable language; and they were written in the immutable alphabet established by the Almighty himself, in the work of Creation. So that the Book which is to direct our lives is a composed exhibit of all that was created around us in the Spiritual World, for our happiness there, brought down into the natural forms that fill the Universe, to prepare us for that happiness. For this reason the more certain system of embodying ideas in symbols is used; and the created forms are given to express the idea of their origin.

Many of these expressions are very readily conceived of, while others are more remote. The idea of innocent simplicity is very clearly expressed in the *lamb*—so much so, that in all

the world, in all languages, that word alone expresses the moral quality of truthful innocence. But though equally true, it is not so apparent, that the grown animal represents the same idea, only matured and strengthened by years. This correspondence of animals is very generally recognized and appreciated. The habits of the creatures, their living motions, exhibit the internal originating quality so plainly that the poets of all times and nations have used the names of animals to express in the most intensified manner the ideas they represent. Indeed, it is a noticeable fact that the best poems are susceptible of an analysis by this system of correspondence, as are the Scriptures. We are also in daily use of this style of speech in our ordinary conversation. Thus, if we wish to say of a man that he is groveling, sensual, and greedy, we shorten and intensify the expression by calling him a *hog*. If he is rapacious, we call him a *wolf* or a *shark*. In these expressions we have reference to the man's internal *quality*, and we express it by naming the *creatures that represent* the qualities predominant in the disordered man. If we would describe a perfect man, our strongest term would be a *man*, meaning that he possessed the qualities pertaining to him as the likeness of his Creator. But as this science of correspondence is so comprehensive that it embraces everything and is made up of minutiae that are overlooked by those who have not made it a study, it is a very natural *quere* how can it be made the medium of conveying that exactness of expression proper to the Divine Word. An acquaintance with the science will answer this question. But to those who have not become acquainted with it, I will present a few examples, to show the operation of the system; though I have not the time now to explain the *why* of every correspondence that I quote. But I can show you that they work out a consistent explanation of the passage of Scripture illustrated; while I assure you that a thorough knowledge of the system, will convince you of its power to work out *certain* results in *every* case. I will quote a few.

You have no doubt heard many a sincere and affectionate Christian, whose piety would not allow of a doubt of the sanctity as well as the truth of the Bible, wonder how it was that things were there spoken of as proper, which, if anywhere else, would have severely shocked his moral sense. Who has not read that

beautiful 137th Psalm, describing the Israelites in captivity: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down, yea, we wept when we thought of Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof," etc., and closing with, "Happy shall he be that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against the stones," and has not felt that something was wanting to supply the true meaning of that sublime hymn? Let us read this last jarring verse in the light of this system of correspondence. Babylon signifies false doctrines and the evils arising from them. The Jews were led captive there, and enslaved by the evils represented by the Babylonians as well as the Babylonians themselves. When suffering from these evils, in their despair, they exclaim: "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." The little ones of false doctrines and their evils, are the beginning of error and temptations—the children of heresy. Stones represent truths in the lowest sense, as rocks do in a higher sense,—as shown in the expressions "On this rock"—"Thou art Christ," etc., (Matt. xvi., 18.) I will build my Church." A man built his house upon a rock, Matt. viii., 29; and they convey the idea of foundations and permanency. In this light we read the Sweet Singer of Israel, exclaiming: "Happy shall he be who takes the incipient errors and evils about him and dashes them against, and breaks them with even the lower forms of truth!"

The Lord said thou art Peter, (the word *Petros* signifying a rock), and upon this *rock*—truth, I will build my Church. This was said in answer to the confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God"—a confession in which the fundamental idea of the Church was expressed. The Church was not to be built upon Peter or by Peter, as the Roman Catholics suppose, but upon the great truth confessed by Peter, whose name, (*Petros*, a rock,) *represented* the truth. In this representative sense all the Apostles had their significance. While Peter represented *faith* and *truth*; John, the *beloved* disciple represented *love* and *charity*.

In the Revelations of John, we are told of a judgment when the "Books were opened," and men were judged according to what was written therein. Many in their simplicity, understand this to be a general judgment, where account or record books, kept by some recording angel, are to witness against those judged. Perhaps it may do no great harm for them to so

understand it. But how much more rational does this appear, when we understand that a book corresponds to the memory; and that it is the memory of the man that is to be opened, that he may be judged by what is there,—where every act and every thought of his life has left its indelible impress, to be read by those spirits who are to search out the quality of his character! In passing, let me remark that the true idea of a future judgment is not to see how much punishment a spirit being judged deserves, but to find out what he is fit for, and assign him association accordingly.

We also read in the Apocalypse of a book and *horses* coming out of it. This is impossible even in a dream. But if we understand that *horses* represent intelligence, or the knowledge of and means of advancing in truths, the expression is seen at once to be rational and very forcible. We expect to find intelligence and knowledge in the memory, but not horses in a book, till we know what horses and books mean. The reason why a horse corresponds to intelligence is that he is a traveller, a progressive, and a means of progression. By this same analogy, roads and paths, and chariots, all have relative correspondence to knowledge and truth, and the means of their acquirement. There is a woe pronounced by one of the Prophets against those who put their trust in horses—who go down into Egypt on horses—which is a woe to them who trust merely in what they *know*. Egypt signifies *natural science*, which is the first step in intellectual progress. Those who use their horses (knowledges) to go down into Egypt (mere natural science,) are retrograding, and justly incurring woes. In this interpretation of Egypt, as meaning science, we see the propriety of the command to the Israelites to borrow from the Egyptians their jewels and ornaments, and carry them away with them. For a people being instructed in spiritual things, to obtain and keep the jewels and ornaments of natural science, is consistent with our highest standard of morality and justice.

The Bible abounds with passages that are either wholly unintelligible, or repulsive, in their literal reading, which when read in the light of this system of correspondence, present us the most rational ideas, and truths glorious as the noon-day sun—harmonizing perfectly with our sense of right and the science of the age.

The first chapters of Genesis have been understood by the

world generally, (and there is no particular danger to the simple-minded, of spiritual death from the belief, that I see,) to be a history of the creation of the physical world and the solar system. Scientific men have always stumbled over this part of the Divine Word. But since the science of Geology has been brought to its present perfection, the difficulty of harmonizing the literal reading of these chapters and the facts of science, has been so great, that ingenious and candid minds have despaired of its accomplishment,—while the account of Noah's flood, literally read, has set all attempts at such harmony at absolute defiance.

But suppose we read those first chapters as a sacred allegory, under the form of Creation, exhibiting the spiritual history of mankind in the complex, and each individual in particular, showing the commencement and progress of evils and their accompanying falsities and man's redemption from them. The first chapters of Genesis tell us of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. By this system of correspondence, the *man* signifies the judgment or understanding in the human mind; while the *woman* represents the associated affections; and this representation is remarkably natural and significant to the most careless observer. Here these two leading qualities of the mental or spiritual man are exhibited, as placed in a garden—a situation for culture—innocent and pure, surrounded with all the sources of happiness, good because just from the hand of the Creator, and not yet acquainted with evil; and true because unused to falsehood. Man thus represented as to his understanding or judgment by *man* and his affections by the *woman*, is told that he must not eat of (acquire,) the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, though of all other trees he may eat; and this injunction comprehending in itself all that is necessary as such, is his law. While *man* and *woman* represent the two leading qualities of the mind, every other animal represents some of the subordinate qualities of man's nature. Of these the *Serpent* represents his *sensual* principle. It dwells in his appetites and *near* his passions; and they being the lower portion of his nature, are likely to be first assailed by the blandishments of evil; and they also are the first to be tempted astray. Our sensual appetites are good in their sphere; but they are to be *ruled* and not to *rule*. Then here we have an exhibition of the

progress of the whole human race into evil, and that of ourselves individually. Every man has his Garden of Eden and his fall; while every man must have his regeneration from it, or remain fallen forever. In the beginning, the *serpent*, the sensual principle, glides into excess and learns to delight in undue indulgences. It tempts the *woman*, or affections with these delights. It presents the fruit of experience in good and evil, gathered from the tree of *knowledge* of good and evil, as delightful to the appetites, to the eye and to the taste. The affections are drawn down, and fixed upon these sensual experiences of good and evil. The *woman* in this way eats, (appropriates), this forbidden fruit at the solicitation of the serpent. These corrupted affections, thus delighting in sensual indulgences, appeal to the judgment; the *woman* tempts the *man*, and he eats also. Thus the judgment, led by the affections, which had been corrupted by the appetites, yields its assent, and approves of the *love of sensual delights*, and both these qualities of the mind, the *man* and the *woman*, are involved in the eating of the fruit of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Then the fall is complete. The sensual appetites, the affections and the judgment, all delighting in the experiences of evil, man is necessarily removed from the garden or state of innocence and purity.

Since man fell into evil by progression he must return from it by retracing the steps that he took. Cast out from the Garden, but not from the Divine care; he is given the means of redemption. From the judgment (the man,) and the affections (the woman) is born a son, *Cain*, who represents *Faith*, or *confidence in Truth*, and the power to believe. As the judgment yielded to the temptations of evil after the affections; in the retrogression or return from evil, it must lead the affections and govern the appetites; and in this state we see the *woman* placed in subjection to the *man*, while the *serpent* is denounced to go upon his belly in the dust. Then *Cain*, this principle of faith, born of the fallen judgment and affections, is succeeded by *Abel*, representing *charity* and the good of life. Here is described a step towards redemption. After *Faith* is born into the human household, we find *Charity* soon appearing. But to show how readily we pervert all good gifts, another scene is introduced. The brothers, *Faith* and *Charity*, are in the field together, guarding the flocks, the gentler useful qualities repre-

sented by sheep and cattle,—and they worship. Cain, the Faith principle, which delights in studying doctrines and forming theories, brings an offering of the fruits of the Earth,—his self-derived intelligence. It is scattered by a blast of wind. His loving brother Abel or Charity offers up the firstlings of the flocks, the tender, gentle and useful qualities represented by the lamb. This is accepted of Heaven. The self-reliant Cain is enraged because the simple offering of gentle good affections is received ; while his lofty theories are scattered to the winds ; and overcome by jealousy, he smites his brother to the earth. Then the next grand downward step is taken. The faith principle being unduly cultivated, and being corrupted, it makes offering of its fancies and theories, cultivated from the earth, of the earth earthy, and the sweet and loving qualities reared and tended by Charity are discarded ; Charity itself is slain at the altar ; and Faith is placed to rule alone in the individual and in the Church, guided only by the light of its self-derived intelligence, of which we have examples all around us—where the fine spun theories and doctrines of some cold head, are insisted upon as essential to salvation ; while the spirit of brotherly love and charity, and simple hearted, tender and pure affections towards God and man, are set aside as of minor importance, or treated with contempt or neglect. Then it is expected that much will be forgiven to those who *believe* much, rather than those who *love* much.

Under this allegory we have a rational history of the development of evil in the human race, and of the fall of the first Church, under the name of Adam, which lasted or lived nine hundred years, and then died, or fell into that state of evil where charity or love of the neighbor was extinguished, and doctrinal tests set up in its place. Then it was, as we often find it now, when the Church does not ask respecting a man : Does he love God and his neighbor ; but does he believe our particular doctrines ? And good men are condemned for want of faith in some dogma or logic that they do not understand.

Other churches or dispensations succeeded the Adamic, and in their turn became corrupt and falsified, and perished ; till in later times these false doctrines and the evils resulting from them spread over the whole earth as a *flood*, deluging and drowning out all that was manly and humanizing among men—

covering the whole earth of humanity, even to the highest mountains, or most elevated portions of the mind, leaving only a few pure principles and truths, represented by Noah and his family, and the qualities represented by the animals in the Ark, of which there were seven of all the clean and only pairs of the lower orders.

It will be readily seen that we do not therefore understand the first chapters of the Bible to be a history of the physical creation or the first times of the world. They are only an allegory illustrating the introduction and progress of evil in the first ages of the world, and the fall into evils, experienced by every individual in *all* ages. Of course, then, Adam and Methuselah and Enoch are names of churches, or epochs of the first ages, and *not* the names of individual men.

After the period described under the figure of the flood and Noah, the Scriptures become the history of the Jewish Church, in which they were written; and as such they detail actual occurrences as well as the progress of principles; while these actual occurrences are representative and typical of *after* and *higher* spiritual matters,—the Hebrews being a representative people, and their whole course a grand life drama, so to speak, containing and representing the great work of Redemption. The scenes they enacted and the language in which these scenes are related, are all correspondent to interior principles, and may be read and interpreted by this system, as I instanced in the Psalm.

But I will be excused for introducing here another reading of the Bible by this system of correspondence, wherein we have an explanation of a text in which the literal reading is almost reversed, and that so strikingly, that it cannot fail to arrest attention, while it relieves some torturing doubts.

When the Israelites were starting upon one of their expeditions against the Canaanites, they were directed to exterminate those idolators, and not spare any of the males of any age, nor the women who were married or attached to any of the men; but the young women they were to spare, and *keep for themselves*. See Numbers the 31st, 17th and 18th verses: "Now kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that has known man," etc., "but all the young women that have not known men, etc., keep alive for yourselves." Here is

indeed a monstrous order of proceeding, as literally read. But let us analyze it: The Canaanites were the representatives of all false or falsified doctrines. The *men* among them represented the judgment, perverted and corrupted by false teaching and also the *falsehoods* themselves, which the Hebrews were to exterminate, to kill. The *women* married to them, were the affections for the *false*, the *corrupted* affections, from which would be born evils of course, which evils were the *male* children. But the *young women*, unattached to, and uncorrupted by these falses, the pure natural affections for good and truth, they were commanded to spare and appropriate to themselves. Here is indeed beauty for ashes!

So it would be with any of the knotty texts in the entire Bible, if read by this system. Without it, they are dark, mysterious, and often repulsive; but with it they are lucid, beautiful and holy. But the text I quoted when I began, most eminently furnishes an example of the advantages of this method of interpretation.

He that believeth and is *baptized* shall be saved. Of the term *believe* we are to understand of course, that kind of belief which is carried out into acts, that *living* faith which makes men *do* as well as *think* the truth—with a heart unto *righteousness*. To believe in this case, signifies to act, as to hear sincerely, implies obedience, not merely to receive the truth, but that deeper act of the affection, to love and to do it. From this belief, men are baptized, washed, cleansed, purified. He that believes and is *baptized*, by that belief, will be saved. It does not say in the converse part of the text—he that believeth not *and is not baptized*; because he who does not believe in this higher sense, never can be spiritually or really baptized. When the belief extends to, and invests the heart or affections, that purity of life follows which is symbolized by the rite of baptism.

Then we are told that these signs shall follow them that believe. “In my name they shall cast out devils,”—from themselves, from their own hearts, where evil spirits previously ruled. They shall speak with new tongues, for from the abundance of the heart, from which the mouth speaks, the utterances of their hearts will be true and good.

They shall take up serpents—those sensual appetites, that tempted the woman or affections, in the garden of Eden, shall

be made pure and elevated to the position they occupied before the fall—taken up from the dust, reduced to order and applied to use ; for all our appetites are good when taken up or elevated above evil desire.

If they *drink* any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. Pure water represents truth, and hence the significance of baptism. If water is rendered impure, it represents truth falsified. If poisoned, it contains deadly errors. To drink any deadly thing would signify to receive grievous errors and false doctrines ; but they who have cast out devils, (evils,) from their hearts, and from the abundance of their hearts speak with new and regenerated tongues, and have taken up their serpents ; if they *should* drink some deadly thing, accept some false doctrine, i shall not hurt them ; because loving and doing what is good they are not led into evil *acts*, by the false views which they may receive into their understandings, as we see daily, men holding very erroneous doctrines, and yet living good lives.

They shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover. Those qualities in us which are diseased and disordered by evil, are properly called the sick. The hand represents power and guiding strength. With the good man, it would be the power of righteousness, which is potent to heal the sick on which it is laid.

If, at the time of the Apostles, when a few miracles were wrought, to arrest the attention of the very sensual men of that age, these signs *literally* or physically followed some of the believers ; that was no reason that the signs, in their deeper spiritual sense, should not always follow true faith. For though the outward appearance may not now be present ; so far as the great work of spiritual regeneration is concerned, the signs *still* follow, and the promise still holds good. He that sincerely and heartily believes and is baptized—purified in heart and purpose—his sensual nature, the serpent, shall be lifted up ; he shall speak with new tongues,—the understanding will be enlightened by true faith ; the affections will be purified and led by that true faith ; his sin-sick soul shall be healed ; “ and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, “for they shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain saith the Lord.”

