Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge, and other men
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FLAXMAN
BLAKE COLERIDGE
AND OTHER MEN OF GENIUS
INFLUENCED BY SWEDENBORG

TOGETHER WITH
FLAXMAN'S ALLEGORY OF THE
"KNIGHT OF THE BLAZING CROSS"

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The following chapters were contributed during the years 1909 and 1910 to the New Church Young People's Magazine. They were written with the object of showing how some of the men of genius of the last century were influenced by the philosophical and theological writings of Swedenborg. And because I believe that if the New Church is to maintain its position in the world as a divine institution it can only be by the help of that philosophy of life, which appeals to the simplest as well as to the profoundest minds, I have acceded to an urgent request to bring these articles before a wider circle of readers.

The sketches are not intended to be in any way exhaustive, but only to give a general account of the life and work of Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge and others, and to show as far as possible how and to what extent they were directly influenced by the writings of Swedenborg. They were, of course, written for young readers, but it is hoped that they may be found of interest to many of more mature years who feel that what Swedenborg said of angels is to some extent true in this life to those who are angels in heart, namely, "To grow old in heaven is to grow young."

No clergyman has been included in this series; but one of the first and profoundest students of Swedenborg in England was the "Venerable Clowes," the first rector of St John's
INTRODUCTION

Church, Manchester, whom De Quincey called the holiest of men it had been his lot to meet. It is also true that a very considerable number of the clergy of all denominations in this country and America have been directly and indirectly influenced in their preaching and writing by the teachings of Swedenborg. Nor should it be forgotten that not amongst English-speaking clergymen alone has the influence of Swedenborg been prominent and distinctly apparent, but amongst those who have acknowledged their reverence and indebtedness to Swedenborg are such men as Carlyle, Coventry Patmore, Frederick Tennyson, Goethe, George Sands, Balzac, Maeterlinck and many others.

Indeed so many men of genius of the last century have been directly or indirectly influenced by Swedenborg that I have been able to make nothing more than a small selection.

In making my enquiries about the life of Flaxman I had the privilege of seeing his hitherto unpublished sketches illustrating the Allegory of the “Knight of the Blazing Cross,” and I have to thank the director of the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge for the permission so willingly given to publish this interesting little work.

I desire also to express my grateful thanks to others who have helped with information and photographs, and especially to Mr Percy C. Gilchrist, the writer of the “Life of William Blake” and to Messrs Macmillan & Co. the publishers of the same, for permission to reproduce some of the illustrations.

Manchester, October 1914.
JOHN FLAXMAN, R.A.

About one hundred and fifty years ago in the city of London a little deformed and delicate-looking boy sat behind the counter of a shop in the Strand. His father, who kept the shop, was a moulder of figures, who not only worked for such sculptors as would give him employment, but also made plaster figures for sale.

A gentleman came to the shop to have a figure repaired, and hearing a child cough behind the counter, looked over and saw the little invalid reading.
"What book is that?" he asked. The lad raised himself on his crutches, bowed, and said, "Sir, it is a Latin book, and I am trying to learn it."

"Aye, indeed," answered the gentleman, "but this is not the proper book. I'll bring you a right one to-morrow."

As promised, the proper book came next day, and an acquaintance thus begun developed into a lasting friendship. This boy was John Flaxman, who afterwards became one of England's greatest sculptors.

From an early age he is said to have been fond of examining the seals of every watch he saw, and kept some soft wax to take an impression of any that pleased him. He made also a number of small models in plaster of Paris, wax, or clay, which showed promise of the genius that was displayed in later years.

When he reached his tenth year a great change took place in his health. He became stronger, and was able to put aside the crutches, never to resume them, although he always remained slightly deformed owing to a curvature of the spine. With his improved health there came upon him a spirit of romance and adventure. He read of the wonderful adventures of "Don Quixote," and so affected was he by them that he must go forth himself into the world "to right wrongs and redress grievances."

He set out one morning, early, in search of adventure, armed with a little French sword. Unlike Don Quixote, he had no squire to attend him. Fortunately he found no adventures, and after wandering about in Hyde Park all
day, without meeting anyone to befriend or any peril to pass through, tired and hungry, he returned home to his anxious parents, rather ashamed of his adventurous flight. Nor did he again try to imitate the exploits of generosity, courage, and humanity of the eccentric Don Quixote, but it is said that he always retained a great admiration for the chivalrous character of that hero.

At the age of eleven he gained his first prize from the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, for a model. At thirteen he gained another prize, and before he was fifteen had been admitted as a student to the Royal Academy, and gained the Society’s silver medal in the same year. His progress was rapid, and he soon became a candidate for the Academy’s gold medal. This, however, he did not gain. It was given by the President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, to another student, Engleheart, who had been a longer time at the Academy, but whose work was considered by his fellow-students to be much inferior to Flaxman’s.

His failure did him no harm. One who knew him well at this time of his life has left an interesting account of the incident.

Although little and apparently weak of body, Flaxman was, he tells us, both active and strong, a match for most of his companions in feats of agility, and more than a match for them in all that required genius. He had an earnest, enthusiastic look, and the uncommon brightness of his eyes and fineness of his forehead were not to be soon forgotten.
His fellow-students perceived his merit the grave, the mild, the proud boy was generally respected and when he became, in opposition to Engleheart, a candidate for the gold medal, all the probationers and students cried, "Flaxman! Flaxman!"

He looked on his disappointment as a fortunate humbling of a spirit puffed up and conceited. "I gave in my model," he said, "and believed the medal was my own. I knew what Engleheart could do, and I did not dread him. . . . I had made up my mind I was to win. . . . It was given by Reynolds to Engleheart. I burst into tears; this sharp lesson humbled my conceit, and I determined to redouble my exertions, and put it, if possible, beyond the power of anyone to make mistakes for the future."

He went home from the scene of his disappointment and studied more diligently than ever. His friends did not lose their confidence in his talents, and he was able to contribute substantially to the support of his father's household by what he earned as a modeller, designer, and sculptor. For many years he lived under his father's roof, a quiet, simple, secluded sort of life, working by day and sketching and reading during the evenings, working at the bust of a friend, or making designs from the poets, from the Bible, and from the "Pilgrim's Progress."

His labours for the Wedgwoods were of great help during these years. Mr Wedgwood, having heard something of the taste and skill of the young man, called upon him one day.
"Well, my lad," he said, in an open-hearted, cheery way, "I have heard you are a good draughtsman and designer. I am a manufacturer of pots named Wedgwood. Now I want you to design some models for me; nothing fantastic, but simple, tasteful, and correct in drawing. I'll pay you well. You don't think the work beneath you?"

"By no means, sir," replied Flaxman. "Indeed, the work is quite to my taste. Give me a few days, and call again, and you will see what I can do."

"That's right, work away. Mind, I am in want of them now. They are for pots of all kinds—tea pots, jugs, tea-cups and saucers, etc. But especially I want designs for a table service. Begin with that—I mean to supply one for the Royal table. Now think of that, young man. What you design is for the eyes of Royalty."

"I will do my best, I assure you," replied the youth, and he did.

Before those days the porcelain of English make had little external beauty to recommend it, and no one can say how much the fame of the well-known Wedgwood pottery owes to those years of young Flaxman's labour. He made great improvements in every kind of vase, dish, cup, etc., whether for use or ornament, which have been acknowledged throughout the civilised world.

In 1782, at the age of 27, he married Ann Denman, a woman possessed of similar tastes to his own, whom he had long loved, and who well deserved his affection. Sir Joshua
JOHN FLAXMAN, R.A.

Reynolds, meeting him soon after, said to him, "So, Flaxman, I am told you are married. If so, sir, I tell you you are ruined for an artist."

Flaxman went home, sat down beside his wife, took her hand in his, and said, with a smile, "I am ruined for an artist."

"John," said she, "how has this happened, and who has done it?"

"It happened," said he, "in the church, and Ann Denman has done it; I met Sir Joshua Reynolds just now, and he said marriage had ruined me in my profession."

"Ann," said the sculptor, after some thought, "I have long thought that I could rise to distinction in art without studying in Italy, but these words of Reynolds have determined me. I shall go to Rome as soon as my affairs are fit to be left, and to show him that wedlock is for a man's good, rather than for his harm. You shall accompany me. If I remain here I shall be accused of ignorance concerning those noble works of art which are to the sight of a sculptor what learning is to a man of genius, and you will lie under the charge of detaining me."

For five years they worked together, he earning what he could from the Wedgwoods and others who employed him, she economising in the house, taking care that not a penny was wasted in useless expenditure; and at the end of that time they had saved enough to pay the expenses of a visit to Rome, as we shall see later.
The first five years of Flaxman's married life were spent in unalloyed happiness at the little house in Wardour Street.

"What struck me most," said a friend, "was the air of devout quiet which reigned everywhere. The models which he made and the designs which he drew were not more serene than he was himself; and his wife had that serene composure of manner which he so much loved in art. Yet better than all was the devout feeling of this singular man. There was no ostentatious display of piety; nay, he was in some sort a lover of mirth and sociality; but he was a reader of the Scriptures, and a worshipper of sincerity, and if ever Purity visited the earth she resided with John Flaxman."

He was an intimate friend and companion of William Blake, who addressed him as his "dear sculptor of eternity," and who, like Flaxman, was a student and admirer of the writings of Swedenborg. So touched was he with the beauty of Blake's early poems, written between the poet's twelfth and twentieth years, that he not only advised their publication, but also joined with another gentleman in the expense, and then presented the printed sheets to Blake.

In the year after his marriage the first meetings in London for reading and conversation on the writings of Swedenborg were held. Five gentlemen then met together in response to an advertisement which one of them had inserted in the papers.

Next year a Society was formed "for the purpose of promoting the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem by
JOHN FLAXMAN, R.A.

translating, printing, and publishing the theological writings of the Honourable Emanuel Swedenborg.” Amongst those who joined together we find the name of John Flaxman, sculptor, of Wardour Street.

When a New Church Society was formed at Cross Street,

Hatton Gardens, under the ministry of Rev. Joseph Proud, Flaxman joined, and was a supporter and active member of the church committee until the minister removed with most of his congregation, in 1799, to St James’s Square, and the services in Cross Street were discontinued. When the London Printing Society was formed in 1810, in place of the Society
which commenced in 1784, Flaxman became one of its first supporters, and continued so until the time of his death in 1826. This Society afterwards changed its name to the “Swedenborg Society,” which celebrated its centenary in 1910.¹

At that time much prejudice existed against what were said to be the teachings of Swedenborg. In consequence of this, at one of the anniversary meetings of the Printing Society certain resolutions were proposed for publication in the newspapers with the object of weakening this prejudice against Swedenborg and his writings. The report of this meeting refers to an eloquent and appropriate speech in support of the resolutions made by Flaxman, who is described as a distinguished member of the Royal Academy.

In 1787, at the age of thirty-two, having, with the help of his wife, saved enough, they left England together for Rome, intending to stay in Italy for three years; but they remained for seven. Not only in the art of sculpture did he work there, but his designs for illustrations to Homer’s “Iliad,” and other classical works of Homer, Hesiod, Æschylus, and Dante, not only made him famous, but have had a widespread influence on the art of Europe during the last hundred years. They are simple and yet full of beauty and poetic feeling.

The illustration is from Homer’s “Odyssey,” and is a beautiful composition of four female figures. In the centre “Morning,” her head crowned with a star, lifts a veil from

¹ An account of the International Swedenborg Congress held in connection with this Centenary is given in the Transactions of the Swedenborg Congress published by the Swedenborg Society, 1 Bloomsbury Street. London, 1910.
her face, as though lighting up the world with her presence. It is to illustrate Homer's lines:—

"Here the grey morn resides in radiant bowers,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing hours."

The three attendant forms represent the hours that accompany the morn.

During all the years of study in Italy his wife was ever at his side, helping him with her knowledge and her taste. Soon after their return to London, wishing to show his regard and appreciation to his wife for the happiness of their home life, he made a series of about forty sketches describing the adventures of the "Knight of the Blazing Cross," a Christian hero who, passing through many wonderful adventures and being assailed on every side and almost vanquished, becomes the conqueror in the end, and after entering Paradise, returns as a guardian angel to help men on earth.

Soon after his return from Italy he was made an Associate, and afterwards a Member of the Royal Academy. It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the many monuments and statues that came from his hands. They are to be found now in Westminster Abbey, in St Paul's, and many other of our cathedrals, churches, and college chapels. Even in far-distant lands his work is found, and in the oldest of English churches in India, the Church of St Mary, in Madras, the traveller will find some of the most beautiful examples of English sculpture by him.

Many of his subjects were chosen from the Bible, quite
To Commemorate

The Fiftieth year of the Ministry of the Reverend John Clowes, M.A., the first and the present Rector of this Church, and to testify their affection, esteem, and veneration for the piety, learning, and benevolence of their amiable pastor, with feelings of devout gratitude to Almighty God, Who hath hitherto preserved, and with their united prayers that His good providence will long continue to preserve amongst them so eminent and engaging an example of christian meekness, purity, and love—the Congregation of St John’s Church erect this tablet. MDCCCXIX.
a number being illustrative of the Lord’s Prayer. Truly did he say that the Christian religion presents personages and subjects no less favourable to painting and sculpture than the ancient classics.

One of his most beautiful works is entitled “Maternal Affection,” and is from the collection of Mr Tulk, who was an enthusiastic student of the writings of Swedenborg. It represents a child held up for a mother’s kiss by its elder sister. The girl is standing on tip-toe, looking proud of her little burden. The mother’s face is bent over to kiss the child, and presents a picture sweet and tender beyond description.

Another work of great interest and beauty is a monument to Rev. John Clowes, in St John’s Church, Manchester. Mr Clowes was one of the earliest students of Swedenborg in this country, and translated many of the writings into English. He was the first rector of St John’s Church, and ministered there continuously for over fifty years. The tablet was erected by the members of his congregation to commemorate the fiftieth year of his ministry. It represents a group of persons of various ages—children, parents, and grandparents—receiving religious instruction from their pastor. An angel is standing behind him with a palm branch in his hand.

In 1810 the Royal Academy created a Professorship of Sculpture and bestowed it upon Flaxman. In the following year he delivered his first lecture. One of his more worldly-
mindful fellow professors of the Academy, who was at a dinner party on the evening of his first lecture, suddenly started up and said, "Farewell, friends; farewell, wine; farewell, wit. I must leave you all and hear sermon the first preached by the Rev. John Flaxman."

If depth of learning, gravity of manner, and simplicity of appearance mark the preacher, his friend's description was correct, and no one need be ashamed of such a title.

Some of his lectures were afterwards published, and are recognised classics to all art students.

"We know," he said in his lecture on Beauty, "that sickness destroys the complexion and consumes the form, until that which was once admired for grace and attractive loveliness becomes a ghastly spectre; and is it not equally evident that brutal ferocity, revenge, hypocrisy, or any other of the malignant passions still more effectually destroy the very traces of beauty by reducing man to a savage beast in his most degraded state?"

"The most perfect human beauty is that most free from deformity either of body or mind, and may be therefore defined, 'the most perfect soul in the most perfect body.'"

After nearly forty years of happy married life, his wife, who had shared his joys and sorrows, ended her career on earth. It was a terrible blow to him, and for the few remaining years of his life he has been described as like a dove that had lost its mate. Six years later, in the 72nd year of his life, in consequence of a severe cold resulting in an
inflammation of the lungs, he passed away from this world.

"His life was simple and blameless," said Sir Thomas Lawrence, a few days later. "He was mild and gentle; and a more perfect exemplar of the good man was to be found in his conduct than in all the theories of the learned. Peace be with his memory, in his own small circle of affection; enduring pain, but full of meekness, gratitude, and faith."
FLAXMAN'S "KNIGHT OF THE BLAZING CROSS"

The charming allegory of the "Knight of the Blazing Cross," which was referred to in the last chapter, was illustrated by forty outline drawings, and bound in book form and presented to his wife on her birthday in the year 1796, fifteen years after their marriage.

It had been to him a work of love, and was prepared with much care. It has never been published, but after remaining in the hands of his near relatives for many years, was exhibited at Burlington House in 1881, and in 1883 was purchased for the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge.

The book contains 24 pages, on each of which is one or more outline drawings, with the text of the story written at the side or underneath. The illustrations reproduced here are just half the size of the originals.

The first or title page contains the words, "The Knight of the Blazing Cross," and underneath is a scutcheon and feathers and the date MDCCXCVI. On this page is written in ink, "Presented to my beloved nephew, Thomas John Denman, by his Aunt Maria Denman, March 4, 1857" (page 27). You will no doubt remember that Flaxman's wife was Ann Denman before her marriage.
On the top of the dedication page are the words, "To Ann Flaxman" (page 29). On either side are two lovely angel figures; underneath, hands clasped inside a wreath, and the inscription:—

"The Anniversary of Your Birthday calls on me to be grateful for Fifteen Happy Years passed in Your Society. Accept the tribute of these sketches which were produced at Your desire; under the allegory of a Knight Errant's Adventures are indicated the Trials of Virtue, the Struggles and Conquest of Vice, preparatory to a happier state of existence; after the Hero is exalted to the Spiritual World and blessed with a Celestial Union, he is then armed with the power of the Elements for the exercise of his ministry in the dispensations of Providence, he becomes the Associate of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and his Universal Benevolence is employed in the Acts of Mercy.

"October the second. J. F."

The fourth and subsequent pages contain the words of the allegory and the sketches illustrating them.

The Knight, accompanied by his attendant squire, sets forth on his adventures. He starts "armed in the cause of God," and is encouraged by a fair company of angelic beings who appear to him and wish him good fortune. Those who have fallen from the path of virtue are in the allegory prisoners in an enchanted castle, prisoners in the power of evil spirits or "goblins," who wonder at the "Knight's bold daring" (page 33).

But at the sight of the Blazing Cross, that sign of a loving,
enthusiastic, heart-felt Christian character, the evil spirits fled, as all evil spirits do at the presence of virtue, and without a fight the hero was able to rescue all those within this enchanted castle walls, whose groans and sighs had been so terrible to the hearing (page 31).

His next adventure is in the rescue of two maidens from their wicked captor. Arise, to horse! (page 37).

With the help of his faithful attendant, he rescues the "trembling doves," carries them away on prancing steeds, and draws the sword of heaven to slay the spoiler (page 37).

Then as the fair ones leave, the Knight experiences very bitter temptations (page 39).

For a time he is weak and miserable, and the artist shows our Knight falling down a symbolic precipice—the gulf of sin, and angels pitying him. He shows how God's mercy is greater than his sin (page 41).

Then the Knight sees around him great ugly forms that mock him. He is in a chamber of imagery and these forms are a picture of what lies within him (page 43).

But by repentance he is saved. He kneels repentant before the apparition of the Blazing Cross, and is led by his own guardian angel back to the light of Day and the light of Life (page 45).

Further temptations are in store for him. First come the assaults of fear, and you see the Knight and his attendant squire tempted by the dreadful forms that fear assumes. As all temptations come from the insinuations of evil spirits,
so this is expressed by the crowds of ugly forms shouting at
the Knight and trying to lead him astray by fear (page 47).

The next temptation is from the assaults of "Envy," more
terrible to look at even than the spirits of Fear. "Fly!" says
our author, "nor contend with Envy's foul enchantments."

The next picture shows us the Knight and squire asleep,
surrounded by angelic beings. Neither fear nor envy have
led him astray, and now the angels come to him (page 49).

The next picture shows us the Knight standing upon a
cliff looking up to the Blazing Cross, whilst all the evil spirits
fall down before him. It shows us the power of prayer, and
of holy thoughts, to put to flight whole legions of wicked
spirits (page 51). Thus all temptations are shown to be
for our good, and in the next picture the Knight is seen
victorious, and attended by two guardian angels. He dis-
mounts from his horse and follows the fair vision of heavenly
beings who lead him to true joy and happiness (page 53).

He is welcomed by fair bands of angels and enters into
real happiness (page 55).

Happiness, however, does not consist in idleness, but
the angels have their employments, and not the least im-
portant of these is seen in the next picture where an angel
is shown taking care of little children (page 57).

This reminds us of the beautiful teaching of the New
Church about infants and children in Heaven; that when
they leave this life they are still infants in the other life, and
that they are taught by angels; those who in this life had
been influenced by a tender love for little children, and at the same time by love of God; and that they grow up to manhood in heaven. This is all described in a very interesting chapter from Swedenborg’s “Heaven and Hell,” No. 329 to 345, “Of Infants or Little Children in Heaven,” of which we will add one short extract:

“As these angels (who have charge of the children) had while in the world loved all infants with a tenderness like that of their mothers, they receive the little ones committed to their charge as if they were their own; and the infants, on their part, from an inherent inclination, love them in return as their mothers. Every one has as many infants under her care, as, from spiritual maternal love, she desires.

“They are chiefly instructed by representatives suited to their respective genius; and these are so beautiful, and at the same time so full of wisdom from an interior ground, as to surpass belief.”—“Heaven and Hell,” 332 and 335.

We have seen how beautifully Flaxman illustrated the Lord’s help to good men who in His strength resist the evils of Hell, and how tenderly good angels take care of and teach infants and children who go to heaven. In the next illustration those who, like the Knight, trust in the Lord are sheltered from all dangers in times of temptation. Spiritual storms and tempests may rise up against them, and fierce passions like the lion may roar and rage against them on the way through life; but if they are like the Knight they are safe— if they are obedient travellers, letting the commandments
guide them—they are safe from the tempest, and the wild beasts attack them in vain (page 59).

You know that nearly all the men, animals, and objects referred to in the Word have good and bad correspondences, as the mountain, the lion, and the spear which Flaxman drew have. Thus we have the "mountain of the Lord’s house," and the "mountain and hill" that shall be "laid low"; "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah," and the lion that Samson slew when he was in the way to obey the Lord’s command; the lion that David slew in defence of his lamb, and the lion greedy of his prey. Then the spear has not only to be turned into a pruning hook, but, as we read in another place, the pruning hook must be turned into a spear; and when Joshua was attacking Ai the Lord said, "Stretch out thy spear, and I will give it into thine hand."

The bravery referred to in the good correspondences is more than earthly courage (page 61). It is the virtue of fortitude—the Faith that comes with more than belief. It is the spiritual acknowledgment that the good realise when they have obeyed—first from knowledge, then from trust, and then at last from the love of goodness; from the delight in doing the Lord’s work, and in finding happiness in making others happy. Those who have this faith can remove mountains of selfishness and sin that may rise against them. But it only comes with repentance, prayer, or spiritual fasting,—that is by loving the Lord with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, and in fasting from all that is opposed
to this. And so our lives may be graced even here with the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

Again we are shown the power of those guardian angels, those who have passed through the world and fought the good fight and conquered, and now exercise their delight in helping others to conquer. We have seen illustrations of dreadful forms that evil tempters assume to try and persuade us to do wrong.

We are now shown how temptations come sometimes as blustering winds. These are evil spirits that tempt us to be selfish and worldly, insinuating their false ideas into our thoughts. All spirits are spoken of by Swedenborg as the wind. The words "spirit" and "wind" are the same in their origin. When temptations are spoken of, the wind and tempest is used in a bad sense, and refer to evil spirits. In this sense the word is used in the well-known parable in which the wind blew upon the house that was founded upon the rock, but it fell not, for the house represents a character that is founded on a true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and no temptation, no evil spirits can weaken such a character (page 63).

Next comes the fire, a deeper temptation than that which was likened to the wind, for fire consumes. In a good sense it is the warmth of the sun giving life to all things; it is the Lord's love. But in its opposite sense it is a fire that consumes and destroys. It is hatred and lust, it is the flame of pride and self-love. But the Knight, like every good man,
is protected from such fire as in a chariot, and the tempters are in his power. Not only has he control of the tempestuous winds, and the fire, but even the sea, the rivers and the fountains serve him. Nothing but good can come from them.

The next illustration shows how a mother and her little helpless babe are protected from harm by guardian angels, and how all those who are helpless and innocent are so protected. The presence of the Knight as a guardian angel keeps away the evil spirits. Swedenborg has much that is beautiful to tell about the nearness of heaven and the absence of the powers of evil from those who are in innocence, and in particular from little babes at their mothers' breast. Truly we are well guarded in our infant days. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy" (page 67).

The Knight is now a messenger from the Lord, and helps in every "orderly endeavour to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, instruct the ignorant and relieve the oppressed."

When we join in the prayer in which these words are used, may we remember that the Lord sends His messengers of Mercy to help us, and that through the Open Word we can so arm ourselves that the assaults of evil will have no effect.

The Lord is the instructor of the ignorant, through the sacred pages of the Word; and he performs a noble purpose who either in this world or that spiritual world into which
we shall all some day come, helps others to reverence and to understand that Divine message (page 69).

The Lord is also the Feeder of the Hungry. Not only does He satisfy the longing soul, and fill the hungry soul with goodness, but it is He who sends even our daily bread. He provides for all our needs. He knows that our bodies must be fed.

Of all the beautiful teachings of the New Church none is more reasonable and more important than that “all religion is of the life”; that in order to live the life of heaven we must do good; and that true happiness consists in doing good without any thought of reward. Not that it is of little importance what we believe and what we love; but in the doing of a good deed there is included both faith and love.

You will remember what the Lord once said as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, with His disciples round Him, speaking of Himself as a King and a Judge:—

“I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: I was naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

“Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

In the concluding illustrations of Flaxman’s story the Knight is engaged in deeds of kindness and of love (page 71).
He helps to clothe the naked, and no doubt we have to understand here not only those who are unable to procure the bare necessities of life, but also those who are conscious of their spiritual nakedness and long to be clothed in garments of righteousness.

He comforts the afflicted and the downcast with something a thousand times more precious than anything of his own—he reads God’s Word.

He relieves the sick and comforts the mourning, not only as far as the wants of nature require, but by raising up the sinking spirit to thoughts of Immortality.

And finally he opens the prison door to the prisoners who in the picture are chained and almost suffocated in a dungeon; who are like those in bondage to sin or in times of severe trial. And the light breaks upon them, the truth shall make them free.

And here the allegory ends:—

“So shall thine own free spirit learn to spurn this prison house of flesh
And rise to Heavenly Bliss and Freedom.”
Presented to my beloved nephew
Thomas John Samuel
by his Aunt Mary Samuel
March 4th 1857.

THE
KNIGHT OF THE BLAZING CROSS

MDCCLXVI.
TO

ANN FLAXMAN

The Anniversary of Your Birth-day caused me to be
grateful for Fifteen Happy Years pasted on your Society; so at
the birth of the Shakes which were produced at Your
sitting under the influence of a Bright Moon's Adkwardnes are
indicated the Trials of Virtue, the Struggles and Conquest of
preparatory to a happier State of Existence, so the Sermons lead
to the Spiritual World and Afford with a United Nation, He is
then turned with the power of the Elements for the Service of the
ministry in the Dispensation of Providence, to become the Branch
of Faith, Hope and Charity, and has Universal Benevolence is
empiest in this field of Mercy.

[Signature]

DEDICATION PAGE
In gallant trim the noble knight sets forth, He will explore the castle, naked and
Arm'd in the cause of God and injured empty to the view,
virtue
But to the hearing full of groans and sighs terrible.
Knight of the Blazing Cross.

Dismounted from his steed.
Fair female forms arise to gratulate his
worth,
Propitious to his way.
The goblins wondered at the knight's bold daring.

At sight of the bright signal of mankind's redemption,
Which blaz'd above his head,
Swift fled the infernal crew precipitate,
Magicians, Demons, all.
His next good work to ease the Prisoner's woe.

Midst thanks and blessings for their late unhop'd deliverance,
And prayers and God-speeds often times repeated,
From Lord and Lady, Children, Damsels, Household,
The Worthy leaves the tower in quest of other Virtuous perils.
Arise! to horse.

The sword of Heaven is drawn
Which frees the trembling dove,
And punishes the Spoiler.
So falls the wicked, and with his guilty life
Pays the just price of all his foul offences.

But he, weak, miserable man,
E'en in the experience of Heaven's help and mercy,
Will listen to the tempter.
Is this the tempting bait
For which thou burst the bonds of thine allegiance,
To Him who gave thee being,
Thy Judge Eternal?
To fall in this black Pit precipitate,
Messengers of Love, Sons of perfection!
Who is fallen, indeed, in Sin.

Dash'd down from rock to rock,
Till tortur'd, fractur'd bones and armour
Lie in one bleeding mass;
But no! His mercy's greater than thy sin;
His ministers unseen preserve thee for a further trial.
Ye weep o'er him
What, dost thou fear this sight?
Thou only seest thine inward self,
These are the fiery passions, gigantic, furious, fell,
Who dance and play on thine imagination
Till they have whirled thy brains into an eddy,
Within the which thy ship-wrecked reason sinks.
By Repentance are ye freed,
And thus your Guardian Minister brings you safe back
To light of Day, and light of Life.
Be bold! remember that the Lord of Power
Defends the righteous from the assaults of fear.

Fly! nor contend with Envy's foul enchantments.
Again we are here to comfort thee,
And give sure signs of the sweet end of all thy labour.

E'en Death shall bear no terror to him
Whose mind is fix'd intently on his God.
The attempts of Hell shall but prepare thy virtue
For the enjoyment of eternal bliss.
Grown strong in good
Thy triumph now begins,
Follows to happiness.
And now be happy in the fair possession
Of whatsoever of Loveliness and Virtue
Can give Eternal Bliss.
Behold th' employment of thy Heavenly Love!
To instruct and guide the infant soul
That left this world untainted with its guilt;
Thou too shalt be employed in good,
For heavenly Joy consists in Energy, not Idleness.
Now art thou armed
With power o'er Storms and Tempests—
So shall the traveller escape unhurt.
O'er earth and the gigantic
Force of Mountains—
Faith, Hope, and Charity—
Thy fair associates, receive these
as the Christian virtue Fortitude.
Command! The Blustering Winds obey thee
In Fire as in a Chariot shalt thou ride,
Obedient to thy voice.
The Blue-eyed Sisters of the deep
The gentle Naiads of the rills and fountains,
Obey thy voice; at thy command
They leave their native deeps,
Clad in their dews, and crystal drops,
Upward they shoot, dispelling Cloud and Mist,
Or pouring out their watery treasure
Perform thy will.
A Guardian Angel now
Defends a mother’s helpless love
And cradled innocence.

Even thy presence shall appal the powers of darkness,
Defend the helpless, and keep the Innocent from harm.
Instruct the ignorant in heavenly things,
And arm the untaught mind
Against the assaults of Evil.

The wants of the frail body too,
Must be remembered.
The Hungry must be fed.
The Naked must be clothed
Against the dread inclemency of Cold and Rain,
Or poor mortality will fail and perish:

Go to the Afflicted, read God's Word,
And cheer the downcast soul,
With happiness in Heaven,
Which cannot be enjoyed on Earth.
Go to the house of mourning
And relieve the sick with kindness, comfort,
And whatever else the wants of Nature may require,
But above all raise up the sinking spirit
To thoughts of Immortality.

Open the Prison door, and set the Captive free,
Let thy poor fellow man enjoy the light
And wholesome air in common with thyself,
Nor act a Devil's part to keep him in a dungeon

Poisoned with stench, festered with galling chains,
And perishing with Hunger, Cold, and Thirst;
So shall thine own free spirit learn to spurn
this prison house of flesh
And rise to Heavenly Bliss and Freedom.
A little girl was brought one day to a poor, shabbily dressed old man. He looked at her tenderly, stroked her long curls, and said gently, "May God make this world to you, my child, as beautiful as it has been to me." The child wondered what he could mean, and thought how unlikely it was that such a shabby old man could ever find the world as beautiful as it was to her with her fine clothes and money.

It was the only time she ever met him, but in after-years she came to understand what he meant, and that the secret of happiness did not lie in wealth or position, but in the cultivation of noble thoughts. This old man was William Blake, the artist and poet.

"Were I to love money," he once said, "I should lose all power of thought. Desire of gain deadens the genius of man. My business is not to gather gold, but to make glorious shapes expressing God-like sentiments." He despised earthly riches. Had he wished, he might have had fame and fortune, but he had no desire for them. He valued only spiritual gifts. Thus he sang:—
"Since all the riches of this world
May be gifts from the devil and earthly kings,
I should suspect that I worshipped the devil
If I thanked my God for worldly things.

The countless gold of a merry heart,
The rubies and pearls of a loving eye,
The idle man never can bring to the mart,
Nor the cunning hoard up in his treasury."

The things of nature had a hidden meaning to him. He was not like Peter Bell, to whom—

"A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

He saw things, not with, but through the eye. As he quaintly said:—

"We are led to believe a lie
When we see with, not through, the eye."

To him there was something more in Nature than we see with the natural eye.

"I assert for myself," he said, "that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is a hindrance and not action. 'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea?' Oh, no, no. I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.' I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it."

Some people have called him a madman because he had
dreams and visions, but one of those who knew him best said he would rather be mad with William Blake than sane with nine-tenths of the world. The great sculptor, Flaxman, his

intimate and truest friend, a whole-hearted admirer of Swedenborg, declared that the time would come when Blake’s finest designs would be as much sought after and treasured by men discerning in art as those of Michael Angelo. And “Ah,
"sir," he would sometimes add, to an admirer of his designs, "his poems are as grand as his pictures."

A well-known artist who came on a visit to England during Blake's lifetime said, "I saw in England only three men of genius, Coleridge, Flaxman, and Blake, and of these Blake was the greatest."

He was born in London in 1757, the year when, according to Swedenborg, a new age commenced, or a New Church was established in the world. With the exception of a year in the country, at a cottage provided by a friend, he lived all his life of seventy years in London. His father was a hosier in the neighbourhood of Golden Square, and William was the second child of a family of five. The boy showed early signs of a taste for drawing, and at the age of ten was sent to a drawing school in the Strand. He began to write verses when only eleven or twelve years old, and some of these earliest productions were printed in the first volume of poems that he published, by the help of friends, when he was twenty-six.

At fourteen years of age he was taken away from the Art School and apprenticed to an engraver, with whom he remained for seven years, working hard at his trade, and spending his spare time in writing poetry and drawing.

During the first year of his apprenticeship it is probable that on his way to and from work he often met or walked beside the great Emanuel Swedenborg, then an old man of eighty-four. Certain it is that he was from a child familiar with the writings of Swedenborg. His father and his brother James were both
students and admirers of his writings. We know that both were members of the Swedenborgian or New Jerusalem Church in Hatton Gardens, London, and one at least of the "Songs of Innocence" was written by William Blake in that Church. He often spoke and wrote appreciatively of Swedenborg. To one friend he declared that "Swedenborg was a Divine teacher," and that "Swedenborg had done and would do great good." In speaking of one of his own pictures, which he called "The Spiritual Perception," he said it was taken from Swedenborg’s "True Christian Religion," No. 623. "His works," he said, "are well worth the attention of painters and poets: they are the foundation for grand things."

On another occasion he said that he had two different states, one in which he liked Swedenborg’s writings, and one in which he disliked them. The latter was a state of pride in himself, and then they were distasteful to him, but afterwards he knew that he had not been wise and sane. The first was a state of humility, in which he received and accepted Swedenborg. This statement throws light on much that is difficult to understand in Blake’s later work.

At the age of twenty-one, his apprenticeship being completed, he started in business as an engraver and artist. A few years later he married. He was not blessed with any children, but lived with his wife, often in poverty and neglect, but in almost ideal happiness, for the forty-five years until his death on August 12th, 1827, at the ripe age of three score years and
ten. He died as he had lived, cheerful and contented. "I glory," he said to his grief-stricken wife, "I glory in dying, and have no grief but in leaving you, Catherine. We have lived happy, and we have lived long; we have been ever together, but we shall be divided soon. Why should I fear death? Nor do I fear it. I have endeavoured to live as Christ commands, and have sought to worship God truly, and in my own house when I was not seen of men."

He grew weaker and weaker. He touched up his favourite picture, "The Ancient of Days." "There, that will do; I cannot mend it now." He saw his wife in tears. "Stay, Kate; keep just as you are. I will draw your portrait for you; you have ever been an angel to me." He made a fine likeness of her, and then throwing down his pencil, he chanted songs and verses of delight and exultant joy at the nearness of the great change, the music and verses being the offspring of the moment.

A poor woman who sat by his wife at his deathbed declared afterwards, "I have been at the death, not of a man, but of a blessed angel!"

Death was to him but the passing from one room to another. How beautifully he has expressed this:—

"The door of Death is made of gold,
That mortal eyes cannot behold;
But when the mortal eyes are closed,
And pale and cold the limbs reposed,
The soul awakes, and, wondering, sees
In her mild hand the golden keys,
The grave is heaven's golden gate,
And rich and poor around it wait."
SONGS OF INNOCENCE

The Author & Printer W Blake
1789

Reproduced from Gilchrist's "Life of Blake," by permission of Mr Percy C. Gilchrist and of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.
Blake commenced at an early age to write poems, and before he was fourteen he had written those delightful lines:

"How sweet I roam'd from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the prince of love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

"He shew'd me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
And led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

"With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
And Phoebus fir'd my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

"He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty."

One of his earliest biographers described this as "the playfulness of a child-angel's penning." "Criticism," he said, "is idle. How analyse a violet's perfume or dissect the bloom in a butterfly's wing?"

Some of his earliest poems were printed at the expense of two friends when he was twenty-six, but not many copies of them were sold. A few years later the "Songs of Innocence and Experience" appeared. These and all his later works were engraved, and some of them he coloured and sold to the few friends who took an interest in him.

He also designed illustrations for books, writers or publishers paying him occasionally small sums of money for them.
They were not, however, generally appreciated at the time. For a copy of his "Songs of Innocence and Experience," engraved and coloured, he only received 30s., and he was once paid £2 a week to devote all his time to the preparation of a series of designs. Yet a few years ago, at an auction, a copy of his "Songs of Innocence" was sold for £300, and a series of small designs for the Book of Job for £5,600.

Soon after he was married he set up as an engraver and designer, and took his younger brother Robert as an apprentice. The affection between these two brothers was most powerful, and when Robert fell ill and died at the age of twenty-five it was a severe blow to our artist. William had been sitting up nursing his brother night after night, and when he died, so exhausted was he that he slept continuously for three days.

A short time after this, when Blake and his wife were almost destitute, he says that he had a remarkable dream one night. His brother Robert appeared and disclosed to him a new process of engraving. He spent his last penny on the necessary materials to carry out the process, and immediately began to engrave his "Songs of Innocence." From this time to the end of his life he continued to work at this engraving process that had been suggested to him in the dream, and you will see on page 81 an exact reproduction in size and design of the title-page of the "Songs of Innocence."

Blake called this "illuminated printing." The prospectus or explanation that he wrote for the first copies reads thus:—
"The Author has invented a method of Printing both Letter-
The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee,
   Dost thou know who made thee,
   Gave thee life & bid thee feed,
   By the stream & o'er the mead;
   Gave thee clothing of delight,
   Softest clothing wondrous bright;
   Gave thee such a tender voice,
   Making all the vales rejoice;
   Little Lamb who made thee,
   Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
   Little Lamb I'll tell thee;
   He is called by thy name,
   For he calls himself a Lamb;
   He is meek & he is mild,
   He became a little child;
   A child & thou a lamb,
   We are called by his name.
   Little Lamb God bless thee,
   Little Lamb God bless thee.
press and Engraving in a style more ornamental, uniform, and grand than any before discovered, whilst it produces works at less than one-fourth of the expense. If a method of Printing which combines the Painter and the Poet is a phenomenon worthy of public attention, provided that it exceeds in elegance all former methods, the Author is sure of his reward.” Thus to produce books in Blake’s manner the author had to be, as he was, his own artist, engraver, and printer.

The “Songs of Innocence,” or the Songs of Joy as they might be termed, contain much that is excellent; they are full of New Church truths, and go far to show how much Blake was indebted to Swedenborg for his advanced views. In those beautifully simple lines commencing “Little lamb, who made thee?” a reproduction of which is given on page 85, there is the central teaching of the New Church, that God, the Creator of all things, clothed Himself with a human form, came into the world as a little child, and became the Saviour of the world.

Another of these songs is of a little black boy “whose body is black but his soul is white,” and whose mother tells him that our bodies here are only like a cloud put on till we stand in the presence of God. She says:—

“And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.
"For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice
Saying, 'Come out from the grove, My love and care,
And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice.'

"Thus did my mother say, and kissed me;
And thus I say to little English boy,
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy.

"I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me."

Then again there is a simple "Cradle Song," that tells
of the angels guarding children whilst they sleep:—

"Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown;
Sweet sleep, angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child.

"Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe, once like thee,
Thy Maker lay and wept for me.

"Wept for me, for thee, for all,
When He was an infant small.
Thou His image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee:

"Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small;
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles."

Again there is the little chimney Sweeper, Tom, who has
a dream one night in which he sees thousands of dirty little
chimney sweepers like himself all locked up in black coffins. But lo! an angel opens them all with a bright key, and the children spring out into a beautiful country:—

"And by came an angel who had a bright key,  
And he opened the coffins and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,  
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

"Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;  
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his Father, and never want joy.

"And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.  
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:  
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm."

In the poem, "The Divine Image," which was composed by Blake in the New Jerusalem Church, Hatton Gardens, London, there is the beautiful idea that Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love are all qualities that we have in common with our God, in whose image and likeness we are, and that they are all united in the Divine Image, the Lord Jesus Christ:—

"For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face,  
And Love the human form Divine,  
And Peace the human dress.

"Then every man of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form Divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace."
WILLIAM BLAKE

"And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk or Jew.
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,
There God is dwelling too."

Another poem full of deep religious feeling, and showing clearly the influence of Swedenborg's teachings upon him, commences with the lines:—

"Can I see another's woe
And not be in sorrow too?"

and is reproduced on page 91.

If the "Songs of Innocence" are the Songs of Joy, the "Songs of Experience" are the Songs of Sorrow. These Blake describes as the two contrary states of the human soul; joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain. They are the states that we all have to pass through in this world.

An eminent artist and man of letters who lived at the beginning of last century once said that the country would have to advance in civilisation for two centuries before it could appreciate Blake, and that if such a time of appreciation ever arrived it would be seen that only a man of the deepest spiritual insight into the mysteries of life could speak like him "as from the faultless lips of children."

These latter words describe the "Songs of Innocence," those gems of child-like simplicity, expressions of innocent joy and happiness.

In the "Songs of Experience," however, we meet with things of disorder and sorrow, which Blake would have us
On Another's Sorrow

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear
And not feel my sorrows share.
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan an infant fear.
No no never can't be.
Never never can't be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small.
Hear the small hinds grief, care.
Hear the woes that infants bear.

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast.
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear on infants tear.

And not sit both night & day
Wiping all our tears away.
O' no never can't be.
Never never can't be.

He doth give his joy to all
He becomes an infant small.
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Thou know'st what men's hearts dost sigh,
And thy maker is not by
Think not, thou canst weep a tear
And thy maker is not near.

Oh, he gives to us his joy
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled or gone
He doth sit by us and moan.
know are not from God. Everything that is good and pure and orderly is from God, and so intended or willed by Him, but nothing of evil, impurity, or disorder comes from Him.

He expresses this in several of his "Songs of Experience," and in none more forcibly than in the lines on "The Tiger."

"Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?"

"In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?"

"And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?"

"What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?"

"When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?"

"Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?"
The tiger is a form of disorder, and the Lord of Love who created the lamb would not bring such fearful creatures into being. It was "when the stars threw down their spears and watered heaven with their tears," or when men had fallen from a state of order in which they were in the most ancient times, that such forms of disorder came into existence. If there had been no "Fall" there could be no tigers or vicious beasts.

This is Swedenborg’s teaching, and is given at length in the work on the Divine Love and Wisdom, which we know Blake studied thoroughly, pencil in hand. The notes that he wrote on the margin of his copy of this work are only now arousing special attention amongst Blake students. The fourth part of this book treats of creation. Swedenborg there says: "Evil uses are not created by the Lord, but arose together with hell," and by evil uses he says are meant "noxious things in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, including poisonous serpents, scorpions, crocodiles, etc.—creatures that do hurt to beasts and men."

The title-page to the "Songs of Experience," which is reproduced on page 95 gives the idea of sorrow.

The execution of the design may not be considered perfect, but we must remember that it was done more than 100 years ago, and by a man who thought much more of the idea he wished to convey than of mechanical accuracy of detail.

The lines entitled "Holy Thursday," a reproduction of the engraved copy of which is given on page 99, shows that
poverty, misery, and suffering in this world are all forms of disorder, and are not intended by the Lord.

The "Poison Tree" shows how anger has in it the seeds of murder.

"The Poison Tree."

"I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my woe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow:

"And I watered it in fears
Night and morning with my tears,
And I sunnèd it with smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

"And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

"And into my garden stole
When the night had veil’d the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch’d beneath the tree."

Here anger cherished and nursed within the breast leads to enmity and hatred, which Swedenborg calls "death-breathing passions, because murder lies concealed within them just as fire does in wood embers."

Dr Garth Wilkinson, who was the first to introduce Blake to the public after the latter’s death, said that the "Songs of Innocence and Experience" contained nearly all that is
excellent in Blake’s poetry. No one with the fuller knowledge of Blake we now have would agree with this.

It is true most of his later writings are mystical and incomprehensible to most people, but many volumes have been published during the last few years dealing with these mystical works, and attempting to interpret them. One of the latest writers suggests that the reason so many have failed to understand these later works of Blake is that they have not first studied Swedenborg, and that they would have greater success if they first mastered Swedenborg’s system of interpreting the Scriptures.

We must leave this to be decided by Blake students of the future.

Some of the later poems are of rare beauty, perhaps the best known being "The Auguries of Innocence," commencing with the lines:

“'To see a world in a grain of sand,
     And heaven in a wild flower;
     Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
     And eternity in an hour.'"

This described Blake’s own condition. There is much that is well expressed in these "Auguries."

“'The bat that flits at close of eve
     Has left the brain that won’t believe;
     The owl that calls upon the night
     Speaks the unbeliever’s fright.
     The gnat that sings his summer’s song
     Poison gets from Slander’s tongue;
HOLY THURSDAY

Is this a holy thing to see,
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reduced to misery,
Fed with cold and usurious hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty.

And their sun does never shine
And their fields are bleak & bare.
And their ways are full of thorns.
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,
And where-e'er the rain does fall;
Babe can never hunger there.
Nor poverty the heart appall.

Reproduced by permission of Mr P. C. Gilchrist and Messrs Macmillan & Co.
The poison of the snake and newt
Is the sweat of Envy’s foot;
The poison of the honey bee
Is the artist’s jealousy;
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Cæsar’s laurel crown.

"He who mocks the infant’s faith
Shall be mocked in age and death;
He who shall teach the child to doubt
The rotten grave shall ne’er get out;
He who respects the infant’s faith
Triumphs over hell and death.

"Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.

"A truth that’s told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.
He who doubts from what he sees
Will ne’er believe, do what you please;
If the sun and moon should doubt,
They’d immediately go out.

"God appears, and God is light!
To those poor souls who dwell in night;
But doth a human form display
To those who dwell in realms of day."

Blake believed what Swedenborg had said, that a new age was beginning, that there was "a good time coming," and late in life he sang:—

"Bring me my bow of burning gold,
Bring me my arrows of desire,
Bring me my spear, O clouds, unfold,
Bring me my chariot of fire."
"I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land."

You have now had a few examples of the work of this extraordinary man of genius, who was misunderstood and neglected in his own time except by a few intimate friends, and who lived a retired and simple life, and in a state of almost ideal happiness with his wife, who was a true helpmate for him.

Above is a reproduction of a sketch by William Blake of himself and his wife.

Many interesting stories are told of the happiness of his home life, some of which have been given in previous pages.

One of his most intimate friends wrote of him:—"Blake
once known could never be forgotten. . . . He was a man without a mask. . . . Above the tricks of littleness or the least taint of affectation; loving to be with little children and to talk about them. . . . He united freedom of judgment with reverence for all that is great. . . . He fervently loved the Christian art. . . . Christianity, he said, was the sole regenerator of nations. He had great powers of argument, and on general subjects was a very patient and good-tempered disputant, but materialism was his abhorrence.

"He was one of the few to be met with in our passage through life who are not in some way or other 'double-minded.' . . . Moving apart in a sphere above the attraction of worldly honours, he did not accept greatness, but conferred it. He ennobled poverty . . . and made two small rooms in Fountain Court more attractive than the threshold of princes."

The extraordinary modern revival of the study of Blake can only be accounted for by the fact that the Lord is making His second coming not only in the regions of doctrine, but also by a radical change in the whole of the spiritual plane of life and that this will show itself in the regions of poetry, art, and music.

The study of Blake must have the effect of calling attention to some of the leading doctrines of the New Church:— the doctrine of the Divine Humanity in the Lord Jesus Christ; the reality of the Spiritual World, and the doctrine of Correspondences. And we must hope with Dr Wilkinson, who, in
giving the "Songs of Innocence and Experience" to the world, said:—"If it gives one impulse to the new spiritualism that is now dawning on the world; if it leads one reader to think that all reality for him in the long run lies out of the limits of time or space, and that spirits, not bodies, still less garments, are men; if it gives one blow, even the faintest, to those term-shifting juggleries which usurp the name of philosophical systems, it will have done its work in its day."
Reference has already been made to the words of a distinguished visitor to this country at the beginning of last century, who wrote, "I saw in England only three men of genius—Coleridge, Flaxman, and Blake, but the greatest of them was Blake."

Of these three, Flaxman was what may be called a thorough New Churchman. He fully accepted the teachings of the New Church to the end of his life, and for some years took an active part in the management of the Hatton Gardens Society under the Rev. Joseph Proud.

Blake was brought up in a New Church atmosphere, and frequently attended the Church services with his father and brother, who were active members. He was also a student of Swedenborg's writings, and, as he himself said, in his better states fully accepted their teachings.

Coleridge was never associated with any New Church Society, but was for many years, and especially during the last eighteen or twenty years of his life, an appreciative reader of Swedenborg. It was during this latter period that he wrote to a friend: "Of the too limited time which my ill-health and the exigencies of to-day leave in my power, I have given the larger portion to the works of Swedenborg, particularly to
the Universal Theology of the New Church (The True Christian Religion). I find very few, and even those but doubtful, instances of tenets in which I am conscious of any substantial difference of opinion with the enlightened author."

He described Swedenborg as a man who had been unjustly branded, and whom he was prepared to vindicate; and further, that as a moralist he considered Swedenborg to be above all praise; that as a naturalist, psychologist, and theologian he had strong and various claims on the gratitude and admiration of the professional and philosophical student.

He undertook, at the request of a member of the London
Printing Society, to write a biography of Swedenborg, but owing to the opposition of one of the members of the Society the offer was not accepted.

It is a matter of peculiar interest to New Churchmen that these three men of genius, Flaxman, Blake, and Coleridge, who have had such a powerful influence upon the art, literature, and philosophy of the last hundred years, and whose influence is being felt more every year, should have been so much in sympathy with, and so largely influenced by, the teachings of Swedenborg. May we not see in this the workings of the Divine Providence, and that the light of the New Dispensation is making itself felt in every department of life?

The life of Coleridge was an extremely sad one, but full of interest. He was born in the year 1772, at the little town of Ottery St Mary, in Devonshire, where his father was vicar of the parish church and headmaster of the Free Grammar School.

The father was a man of eccentric character, but of great learning, and one who gained the affections both of his scholars and his village flock. In his sermons he used to quote from the Old Testament in Hebrew, which, being the original language in which the Scriptures were written, was commended by him as the "immediate language of the Holy Ghost." This habit of quoting Hebrew exposed his successor to the complaints of the villagers that "no immediate language of the Holy Ghost was ever to be heard from him!"

Very little is known of his mother, except that she was
most attentive to her household duties, and devoted to her husband and family, having little sympathy for what she called "your harpsichord ladies," meaning those who look down upon the work of the household.

Our author’s boyhood was that of an extraordinary child. He has told us something of this himself. "I never played," he says, "except by myself, and then only acting over what I had been reading or fancying, or half one and half the other, cutting down weeds and nettles with a stick as one of the seven champions of Christendom. Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child’s habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child."

He was the youngest child of a large family, and special attention was given to his early education by his father, who no doubt noticed that the child had exceptional gifts. Before he was nine years old his father died. "In my ninth year," he says, "my most dear, most revered father died suddenly. O that I might so pass away if, like him, I were an Israelite without guile. The image of my father, my revered, kind, learned, simple-hearted father, is a religion to me."

Shortly after this he was removed to London, to the Christ’s Hospital School, where Charles Lamb was one of his schoolfellows. Up to his fourteenth year he describes himself as a "playless day dreamer," and even during these school days he delighted to enter into conversation with anyone,
old or young, who would listen to him, his favourite subject being "Providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate."

At nineteen he left school for Cambridge, where within a few months he distinguished himself by winning the Browne gold medal for a Greek ode on the "Slave Trade"—a powerful appeal in Greek verse to Death to come as a welcome deliverer to the slaves, and to bear them to shores where they might tell their beloved ones what horrors they, being men, had endured from men.

It was an eventful day for him when, on a visit to a school-fellow at Oxford, he was accidentally introduced to Robert Southey, and a friendship commenced which was destined to influence both their lives. A few years later these two young men together with a few other enthusiastic friends resolved to escape from the corrupt state of society and government in England, and to form an ideal society on the banks of the Susquehanna, in America. This new society Coleridge called a Pantisocracy or an All-Equal Government. He delivered lectures at Bristol and elsewhere with the object of gaining converts and collecting money to pay the passage. These lectures at first created quite a sensation, but it was short-lived.

It was in one of these lectures that the well-known lines occur in which he divided readers into four classes. The first he compared to an hour-glass, their reading being as the sand—it runs in and runs out, and leaves not a vestige behind. A second class, he said, resembled a sponge, which imbibes
everything and returns it in nearly the same state, only a little dirtier. A third class he likened to a jelly bag, which allows all that is pure to pass away and retains only the refuse and the dregs. The fourth class, of which he trusted there were many amongst his hearers, he compared to the slaves in the diamond mines, who casting aside all that is worthless, preserved only the pure gem.

Enthusiasm for the "Pantisocracy" ideas soon died out, and three of the enthusiasts, including Southey and Coleridge, fell in love with and married three sisters—Mary, Edith, and Sara Fricker. Coleridge soon afterwards went to live in a cottage in Somerset, near to where the poet Wordsworth was living, and a lifelong friendship commenced between the two poets. Each had much to learn from the other. It was during one of their walks together that the idea was first conceived which developed into the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," a poem which has made Coleridge known to nearly every school child in English-speaking lands.

Who does not know those lines which contain the moral of the poem:—

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

Although the son of a clergyman of the Established Church, Coleridge did not remain in that Church. At the University he became a sceptic, or, as he afterwards said,
"skirted the howling deserts of infidelity." He had therefore to give up all idea of entering the Church.

Shortly before his marriage he became a Unitarian, and was in time asked to preach. His first appearance as a preacher was in Bath, where he refused to put on the black gown usually worn by the minister, saying that not a scrap of that "Babylonian woman," as he called the Established Church, should appear on his person, and he entered the pulpit in a blue coat with bright buttons, and a white waist-
coat. On later occasions he learned to conform better to the established form. A few years later, when only twenty-six, he became a candidate for the vacant pastorate of a small Unitarian Church in Shrewsbury. He went to preach for a few Sundays by way of trial, and his services were much appreciated. An enthusiastic description of the first sermon has been left by the son of a minister of the neighbourhood, who walked ten miles on a cold January morning in order to hear the Unitarian poet. He did not accept the pastorate, but was provided by the Wedgwoods, the well-known Staffordshire potters, with the means to travel and devote himself to poetry and philosophy.

He spent a year in Germany, and formed an acquaintance with the German language and literature, and in 1800 returned to England and went to live at Keswick, and it was here that a great calamity befel him, and cast a sadness over much of his subsequent life.

When about thirty years of age he was confined to his bed for nearly six months with swellings in the knees and other parts of the body, accompanied by palpitation of the heart, supposed to be due to rheumatism. In a medical journal he read of a case similar to his own which had been cured by a preparation of opium called the "Kendal black drop."

"In an evil hour," he afterwards wrote, "I procured it; it worked miracles—the swellings disappeared, the pains vanished. I was all alive, and all around me being as ignorant
as myself, nothing could exceed my triumph. I talked of nothing else." It was thus that he acquired the habit of taking opium which threatened to ruin his life and health. He seemed to lose his will power, and to become incapable of "breaking off" the habit. "Alas!" he wrote, "it is with a bitter smile, a laugh of gall and bitterness, that I recall this period of unsuspecting delusion, and how I first became aware of the fatal whirlpool to which I was drawing, just when the current was beyond my strength to stem. From that time I was a victim of pain and terror, nor had I at any
time taken the flattering poison as a stimulus or for any craving after pleasurable sensation.”

He remained a slave to the drug for twelve or thirteen years, having to separate himself from his family, until at length he was received as a patient and guest into the house of a doctor and his wife, Mr and Mrs Gillman, at Highgate.

Here he remained for eighteen years, till his death in 1834, and during the whole of this period, according to Mr Gillman, he never once touched the poisonous drug, although he suffered at times terrible pain.

One of the rooms was enlarged so as to enable him to place all his great book-chests in it, and in this room he worked and produced some of the best work of his life. It was at the house of the Gillmans that he was introduced to the writings of Swedenborg and learned to appreciate what he read.

It was here that he wrote his “Aids to Reflection,” which shows unmistakable signs of the influence of Swedenborg upon him at the time.

The book rests on the proposition that “Christianity is not a theory or a learned speculation, but a life,” that all religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good.

The house of the Gillmans was in a beautiful situation in Highgate, overlooking the valley, with green heights and shady walks around. Here Coleridge spent his last years,
suffering much in body, owing much to the wise and loving care of James and Ann Gillman, and never tired of expressing his sense of the deep obligations he was under to the worthy couple.
We do not know when he commenced to read the writings of Swedenborg. Copies of "Heaven and Hell" and other works have been found with numerous marginal notes from his pencil. He seems to have known something of the teaching of the New Church when he wrote to an atheist friend, some years before he came to Highgate:—

"You say the Christian is a mean religion. Now the religion which Christ taught is simply, first, that there is an omnipresent Father of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, in whom we all of us move and have our being; and secondly,
that when we appear to men to die, we do not utterly perish, but after this life shall continue to enjoy or suffer the consequences and natural effects of the habits we have formed here, whether good or evil. This is the Christian religion, and all of the Christian religion."

At Highgate we know he became a close student of the New Church doctrines. At one time he writes expressing his firm conviction of the truth that Christ was both God and man, and discusses the spiritual meaning of the Flesh and Blood of "the Divine Humanity." At another time he commences a letter to a friend with the words: "They say, Coleridge, that you are a Swedenborgian." His grandson, Ernest Hartley Coleridge, has found no less than twenty-five of his letters, written to a gentleman who was at that time the president of the London Printing Society, now called the Swedenborg Society. These letters, he says, were read at the gatherings of the Swedenborgian community.

It was during these latter years at Highgate that he made an offer to write a "Life of Swedenborg," which was refused by the London Printing Society. Later on he contemplated writing a book on the "Doctrine of Correspondence," with the idea, he explained, of "reducing the science into a more definite, correct, and well-grounded form, by tracing it up to first principles, and thus founding it on the harmony originally established at the creation between things spiritual and things natural."

The Rev. John Clowes, to whom this proposal was made,
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
did not at first approve. Soon afterwards, however, he wrote
to a mutual friend, "I begin now to be better satisfied with
your friend Mr Coleridge’s views on the Doctrine of Corres-
pondence. Still I have my doubts how far it will be possible
to convince merely scientific men of the truth and solid grounds
of that science, and yet, I must confess, I should be glad to
see the experiment made, especially by a person so well
qualified to make it successfully as Mr Coleridge. When you
see that gentleman, I wish you would tell him, with my kind
regards, that I shall be glad to hear of his having commenced
the work, and that my most devout prayers will be offered
up for its prosperous issue."

The proposed work was not published. Whether it was
commenced, or how far it was completed, we do not know; perhaps we never shall know.

His conversation, especially during these last years, is
described as astonishing by those who heard him. Charles
Lamb said that he talked like an angel. Others described his
conversation as "brilliant." "Nothing was too high; nothing too low for it. It glanced from earth to heaven,
from heaven to earth with a speed and a splendour, an ease
and a power which almost seemed inspired."

He suffered from an early age from a painful bodily
infirmity, an internal complaint, not visible to the general
observer; but, according to the Gillmans, his personal suffer-
ings were hidden and concealed by an extraordinary fortitude
and resignation. For the last three or four years he was, with
Photograph of Tablet in Highgate Church.
few and brief intervals, confined to a sick room, and at length passed peacefully away at the age of sixty-two. He had written in his life-time an epitaph for his own grave:—

"Stop, Christian passer-by; stop, child of God,
And read, with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seemed he—
O, lift a thought in prayer for S. T. C.—
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death:
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame—
He asked and hoped through Christ. Do thou the same."

This was, however, not used, but a handsome tablet, erected by his good friends the Gillmans, bears a touching inscription, which is given on page 119.

Only a few days before his death, in a letter to his god-child, he had written:—"With all the experience that more than three score years can give, I now, on the eve of my departure, declare to you, that health is a great blessing; competence obtained by honourable industry a great blessing, and a great blessing it is to have kind, faithful, and loving friends and relatives—but that the greatest of all blessings, as it is the most ennobling of all privileges, is to be indeed a Christian. But I have been likewise, through a large portion of my later life, a sufferer, sorely afflicted with bodily pains, languor, and manifold infirmities; and for the last three or four years have, with few and brief intervals, been confined to a sick-room, and at this moment, in great weakness and heaviness, write from a sick-bed, hopeless of recovery, yet without prospect of a speedy removal. And I thus, on the brink of
the grave, solemnly bear witness to you, that the Almighty Redeemer, most gracious in His promises to them that truly seek Him, is faithful to perform what He has promised; and has reserved, under all my pains and infirmities, the inward peace that passeth all understanding."

Years before he had written these memorable lines:—

"I expect neither profit or general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without either. Poetry has been to me its own 'exceeding great reward': it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me."

What better wish can anyone have than to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds them?
HIRAM POWERS
THE AMERICAN SCULPTOR

Few people who have any knowledge of art have not heard of the statue of the Greek slave. It is a graceful work representing a beautiful girl with sad face and shackled hands, an image of beauty and modesty, in the power of shameless men. It had been suggested to the artist, who was then in Italy, by the hateful war between Austria and Italy, the accounts of which filled all Europe with indignation. It was bought by a wealthy Englishman, and was exhibited at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851, where it attracted great attention.

This statue not only made the name of Hiram Powers famous all over the world, but it showed that America could produce an artist of the highest rank.

He was a true American. His father had a small farm near Windsor, in the State of Vermont, and Hiram was born in 1805, the eighth of a family of nine children. Like most of the New England boys of that time, he worked on his father’s farm in the summer and studied in the district school in the winter.

When he was only fourteen years of age a great trouble
came upon the family. The father had helped a friend who was in financial difficulties, and through this act of friendship and generosity he lost all his property. Their condition was indeed desperate, and they had to give up their farm and emigrate to the neighbourhood of Cincinnati, where, with the assistance of an elder son who had settled in the town, the father was able to obtain a farm.

Unfortunately, the locality turned out to be so unhealthy that the whole family was stricken with fever and ague, from
which the father died. The family was broken up, and Hiram went to live with his brother in Cincinnati.

After a year at school he obtained a situation as superintendent of a reading-room. He was evidently not well paid for this, for he soon gave it up, being, as he said, "forced at last to leave that place, as the clothes and shoes were fast leaving him."

He next became a clerk in a general store, but his master failed. Then he took employment with a firm of clock makers and organ builders, with whom he stayed for several years.

These were important years for Hiram. His employer, Mr Lieman Watson, was an earnest New Churchman, and introduced him to the new doctrines. He became interested in them, and his enthusiasm for the truths of the New Church increased throughout the remainder of his life.

Whilst employed in Mr Watson’s factory he showed his mechanical skill and inventive genius by improvements that he made in the machinery used there. It is said that his first tendency in the direction of art was roused by seeing a statue of Washington in the Cincinnati Museum.

When he was twenty-one he found a German sculptor, Eckstein, who was willing to give him lessons in modelling, and for several years he worked hard in the factory and devoted his spare time to his new art, and produced portrait busts showing real capacity and talent.

At length a Museum of Natural History was opened in
Cincinnati, consisting of models of animals, birds, etc., and Hiram Powers was engaged as artist to repair and make the wax figures.

During the time he worked in Mr Watson’s organ factory he married Miss Gibson, who enjoyed his affection and shared his fortunes and cares up to the time of his death, more than forty years later.

He remained at the Museum for seven years, during which time his abilities as an artist attracted considerable attention, and when a wealthy Cincinnati gentleman made an offer to help him to go to Washington he accepted it with the idea that there he would have the opportunity of making busts of prominent men, and that his prospects as an artist would be improved.

It was in 1835, when thirty years of age, that he left Cincinnati with his wife and children for Washington. He was successful there, and during his two years’ stay modelled a number of busts, one of Washington, which is shown on page 124, and several of which were placed in public buildings there. Then, through the kindness of a wealthy American, General
Preston, who showed a great appreciation of his work, he was enabled to go to Italy and settle in Florence, and there he spent the last thirty-seven years of his life.

In Florence he had opportunities of studying art such as were not possible in America, and for a sculptor who had to depend to some extent on the labour of workmen it was also far less expensive. He devoted himself chiefly to the modelling of busts, some of the ideal busts like that of Diana, which is shown on the previous page, being very beautiful.

He was always pleased to meet and converse with New Churchmen who were visiting Florence, and for many years New Church services were held regularly each week there. In 1850, with his wife and six children, he was baptised into the New Church by Dr Thomas Worcester, who was then in Florence, and of whom he made a fine bust.

The early life of Hiram Powers in America was full of trials and disappointments. He was thrown on the world to get his living as best he could, and tried several and various occupations before his genius was discovered. His later life in Italy, however, was a time of almost perfect happiness. He became an enthusiastic admirer of the teachings of Swedenborg, and was the founder and leader of a little society of New Church people in Florence.

A most interesting description of a visit to him is given in a letter I have received from my friend Mr E. J. Broadfield.

"I have read your article on Hiram Powers," he says,
"with much interest, and congratulate you on your happy idea of supplementing the account of Flaxman, the great English New Church sculptor, with a memoir of the distinguished American. My interest in the life and work of Powers is all the stronger from my personal recollections of him, and I wish I could convey an adequate impression of them.

"I made his acquaintance in the early part of 1867, when in company of two friends, one of whom was Mr Ashworth Barnes, I first visited Florence. Those who knew that beautiful city, attractive almost beyond compare, by its situation, its picturesque squares and streets, its churches, palaces and towers, by the unrivalled treasures of art in its galleries, in its public buildings, and in the open air, with the charm of its historical and literary associations, are never likely to forget the fascination of their first direct experience of them.

"Florence, it should be remembered, is not a dead city, its famous buildings have never been destroyed, since the great days of the Medici war has never devastated it, and in addition to its rare masterpieces of ancient Greek sculpture— including the most famous of all the statues of Venus—it contains the mighty works in bronze and marble produced within its own walls by such mighty masters as Michael Angelo, Donatello, Benvenuto Cellini, and their confreres. In no other city in the world, therefore, could the well-trained young American have so fittingly made his home; and
nowhere else could his genius have been so splendidly matured than in the fair Italian city in which he lived so long, and where his noblest works were produced.

"More recent visits to Florence have enabled me to renew the delights of that far-away time, but the recollection of Hiram Powers in his own home makes the memory of my earliest experience there specially memorable.

"Nothing could have been kinder than our welcome by Mr Powers and his family, and during the week we spent in Florence we frequently visited him. The portrait you have given is an excellent likeness; he was a man of distinguished appearance—one who could not fail to attract when first seen, and his kindly genial manner can never have failed to impress those who made his acquaintance. He told us that the visits of New Churchmen were always welcome, but added that they were 'so infrequent as to be quite like angels' visits'.

"He was a thorough New Churchman, and never appeared tired of talking about the Church and its affairs. We attended a service in one of his rooms, where there was a congregation
of eighteen, including the Rev. W. Ford, who read the service from the American Book of Worship.

"It was a great privilege to be with Mr Powers in his studio, and to hear his comments and descriptions. The gallery contained copies or casts of some of his finest work, including a replica in marble of 'The Greek Slave.' I had seen the original at the great Exhibition of 1851, and was glad to renew my delight in a masterpiece worthy surely to be compared with the loveliest creations of Greek art. We saw also his allegorical statues of America and California, and one of his
latest works, 'The Last of the Tribe'—an Indian girl flying before civilisation. We were much struck, too, by a beautiful statue, an embodiment of Milton's 'Il Penseroso,' but in reply to our enquiry as to the whereabouts of the companion, 'L'Allegro,' he said he could never satisfy himself in attempting to produce a lively expression, and thought, indeed, that sad and serious subjects were much more suitable to the sculptor's art than merry and mirthful ones.

'Mr Powers was considered to be pre-eminently successful in his busts—of these we saw many in his gallery, including two, Faith and Hope, of inexpressible beauty. It was interesting to hear his descriptions of the methods of the sculptor's craft; how busts were modelled in plaster, and statues in clay by the artist himself, who handed them when complete to his assistants for reproduction in marble. Among other subjects of conversation was Gibson's tinted Venus—which had been exhibited at the second London International Exhibition in 1862. This famous work had been highly praised by some critics, but it had excited considerable controversy, and Mr Powers was very decided in his opinion that the sculptor should never call in the aid of artificial colour or the painter's art to produce his effects.

'Some years after our visit, Mr Powers was in England—but he did not come to Manchester—and I regret to say I did not see him; but my sister, Mrs Warren, gave me an interesting account of an evening she spent at Dr Bayley's—when Mr Powers was one of the guests—and when she was most
favourably impressed by the dignity and geniality of the fine, worthy and great artist to whose career and character you have so pleasantly called the attention of your readers.”

For some years before he died he had expressed a wish to make a statue or bust of Swedenborg, but he did not live to fulfil it. One of his sons, however—Preston Powers—who had been his pupil and assistant, a sculptor of considerable talent, carried out this and other of his father’s unfulfilled intentions. A bust of Swedenborg was produced by the son soon after his father’s death, and has been four times repeated. One copy now stands in the Swedenborg Society’s room in London.

At the age of sixty-four our artist met with a serious accident. After ascending some narrow stone steps leading from an underground gallery he had been examining, he fell from the top to the bottom, seriously injuring his side and both hands. He apparently recovered from this accident, but two years later began to suffer from an affection of the lungs, which ended fatally in the year 1873, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

“'At his death,’” said one of the daily newspapers, “'the feeling was universal that a man of singular purity of character and of a large-hearted nature had passed away from the scenes of earth. . . . It was especially as a man of large heart and genial nature that he interested all. His thoughtful and serene religious views matured a winning humanity. The little society of Swedenborgians of which he was the
founder and patriarch will miss him from their weekly meetings."

A New Church friend, who lived in Florence at the time, wrote: "A husband and father loved almost to adoration has been withdrawn from his family; a man of high gifts from art; a great name from American sculpture; and from the small New Church Society of Florence its chief stay and ornament; Mr Powers had professed the doctrines of the New Dispensation for nearly fifty years. It was ever his delight to discourse of them to those who were willing to listen; and while his superior understanding enabled him to illustrate them by his speech, he did men credit before the world by the many virtues of his professional, family, and social life."
HENRY SEPTIMUS SUTTON

POET, PREACHER, AND NEW CHURCHMAN

It is now nearly twelve years since this man of genius, whose presence and voice were for so many years familiar to the members of the New Church in Lancashire, was called to the activities of the higher life. He was a man of a gentle and retiring spirit, about whose life and conversation there was a rare charm, which could not fail to impress those who knew him, one of whom has described him as "one of the finest and rarest spirits ever associated with the New Church organisation in this country."

He was born on February 10th, 1825, at Nottingham, where his father, Richard Sutton, was the publisher and editor of the Nottingham Express. Thus his early associations helped to fit him for a literary career. He was trained to follow the medical profession, but soon abandoned this career, and returned to Nottingham to assist in his father's editorial duties.

In 1847, at the age of twenty-two, he published the "Evangel of Love," a remarkable book, written in a vigor-
ous style and attempting to explain the first chapters of Genesis in a mystical sense.

In the following year he published a volume of poems which, with the previous publication, attracted the sympathetic attention of Emerson, who invited the young man, Henry Sutton, to his lodging in Manchester during his stay in that city in 1848, and took an interest in his future career.

In 1850 Mr Sutton settled in Manchester as a reporter, and was chief of the reporting staff of the Manchester Examiner in 1852-1853. About this time George Macdonald came to Manchester, and Henry Sutton was one of his small congregation (never less than twelve nor more than twenty) that met for worship in a room in Renshaw Street. From this there grew up a lasting friendship between the two men.

In 1854 another extraordinary work appeared from his pen—"Quinquenergia, or Proposals for a New Practical Theology." This was an attempt to build up a theology, practical, and yet consistent and scientific. It was written partly in verse, some portions of which were reprinted in
the later editions of his selected poems. At the end of the book is printed "Rose's Diary," without doubt the finest of his poems, and to which reference will be made later.

Mr Sutton always showed a warm sympathy with any schemes for social reform, and at the formation of the United Kingdom Alliance, joined that organisation, with which he remained connected till his death. Soon after the Alliance News was started he became the editor, which position he held from 1854 till 1898, when failing health compelled him to relinquish the control of the paper, but he remained a regular contributor up to the last.

In 1859 a quarterly review, Meliora, was started, and published for eleven years, for the greater part of which time it was edited by Mr Sutton. It was devoted to topics of social reform, in which he took such a warm interest.

Although he had previously had some little knowledge of Swedenborg, through the writings of Dr Garth Wilkinson and others, it was only after he had finished his "Quinquenergia" that he commenced to make a serious study of those teachings in which he afterwards found such help and delight. As has been the case with so many others, Noble's "Appeal," which he read carefully and thoughtfully, made a profound impression upon him. He studied for some years under the able direction of Rev. Samuel M. Warren, and at last found himself in complete accord with the teachings of the New Church.

He became an enthusiastic worker for the Church, an acceptable missionary preacher, Sunday School teacher, and
HENRY SEPTIMUS SUTTON

an eloquent speaker. After the death of Rev. John Hyde, when the Manchester Society was for a long time without a resident minister, Mr Sutton very frequently and acceptably occupied the pulpit.

He possessed to an exceptional degree the power of fixing the attention not only of his listeners of mature years, but also of children, and was often asked to preach the school sermons or to give Sunday afternoon addresses to the children.

He generally spoke with few notes, but sometimes for special occasions he wrote out his discourses in full. One of these, "Consider the Ravens," was published many years ago, and is now out of print.

He was a frequent contributor to the magazines of the New Church, and for the last ten or twelve years of his life was engaged upon a series of "Essays for Students of the Divine Philosophy of Swedenborg," and although some of these were published, he did not live to see through the Press the last essays which were upon one of the profoundest subjects of human thought, the Resurrection and Glorification of the Lord.

Mr Sutton was only twenty-two when his first publication, "The Evangel of Love," appeared, a book that was full of deep thought and religious fervour. Even at this time he had some acquaintance with the writings of Swedenborg, and quoted them with approval, referring to Swedenborg as one of the greatest of the Mystics.

Although he withdrew the book from circulation after his full reception of the teachings of the New Church, it contained
much that was both helpful and beautiful, and when it fell under the eye of Emerson it won from him high commendation, and led to a lasting friendship between the two men.

Let those who are easily offended read these lines from the chapter on conduct:

"It is impossible to insult a true vital Christian. It is certain I am not what I ought to be, whilst it is in the power of any mortal to give me umbrage or offend me. Admit that he has said hard words to me, that he *has* called me fool, liar, madman, rogue;—how much the worse am I? Here are my arms, my legs, my eyes; I am sound as ever in mind and limb. I am as good and as great as I was before. Others indeed may have a worse opinion of me; but I am as perfect and as valuable as ever. Who is this man that I should give him so much power over me as to feel insulted by him? . . . it is impossible to be wronged or cheated, except by our own selves. If I allow myself to feel aggrieved or insulted by any, I let him rob me of part of my possession; and he will take it past all remedy."

Let me give just one more example of the work of this young man of twenty-two:

"It is nobler to love than to be loved. . . . It does not vitally concern any of us whether others love us or no: our right aim is to be lovely and to love, and not to be beloved.

". . . For no man that lives in 'Love' can look at a happy face, but straightway the invisible pearls and diamonds fall from him on all sides in showers of blessing."
"That little child with its large wondrous eyes; that girl, with calm and gentle face; that fine creature with such beautiful intention in her glance; that wan factory girl, with face and arms white as with the reflection of the coming shroud; that poor halt one or blind, that went slowly on the way;—all went past you, and spent no thought on the seemingly unobservant stranger; but all the while you were placing a garland of flowery benison on each head. Yes, this is what we are to live for—it is a little thing to be loved, but to love is all."

For several years Mr Sutton contributed to his father's paper, the *Nottingham Review*, and to the *Truth-seeker*, edited by Dr F. R. Lees. Some of his best poems appeared first in these papers. Some, but not all, have been since reprinted.

He was twenty-nine when "Quinquenergia" appeared, together with "Rose's Diary," which may be regarded as the masterpiece of his poems. It is not surprising that this was so much admired by those who loved sacred poetry. Francis Power Cobbe said the book was her companion for many years. She showed the verses to Fanny Kemble, "who read them aloud in her glorious voice and splendid intonation, and then exclaimed, 'Who on earth is this new Herbert or Vaughan you have discovered?'" Who would not be moved by those inspiring lines:—

"How beautiful it is to be alive!
To wake each morn as if the Maker's grace
Did us afresh from nothingness derive,
That we might sing 'How happy is our case! How beautiful it is to be alive!'

"To read in God's great Book, until we feel
Love for the love that gave it; then to kneel
Close unto Him Whose truth our souls will shrive,
While every moment's joy doth more reveal
How beautiful it is to be alive.

"Rather to go without what might increase
Our worldly standing, than our souls deprive
Of frequent speech with God, or than to cease
To feel, through having wasted health or peace,
How beautiful it is to be alive.

"Not to forget when pain and grief draw nigh,
Into the ocean of time past to dive
For memories of God's mercies, or to try
To bear all sweetly, hoping still to cry,
'How beautiful it is to be alive!'

"Thus ever towards man's height of nobleness,
Strive still some new progression to contrive;
Till just as any other friend's, we press
Death's hand; and, having died, feel none the less
How beautiful it is to be alive."

We cannot wonder that James Martineau included these lines in his collection of sacred songs, and that he said of "Rose's Diary," "It has long been to me as the presence of a tender and faithful friend."

Reader, ponder well over the lines,—

"Who live in prayer a friend shall never miss;
If we should slip, a timely staff and kind,
Placed in our grasp by hands unseen shall find,
Sometimes upon our foreheads a soft kiss,
And arms cast round us gently from behind."
HENRY SEPTIMUS SUTTON

Or, again, the lines:

"Who works not for his fellows starves his soul;
His thoughts grow poor and dwindle, and his heart
Grudges each beat as misers do a dole;
He dies anon, and shall with them have part
Who find in death an everlasting goal."

Or, again, the following:

"How beautiful our lives may be, how bright
In privilege, how fruitful of delight!
For we of love have endless revenue;
And, if we grieve, 'tis not as infants do,
That wake and find no mother in the night.

"They put their little hands about, and weep,
Because they find mere air, or but the bed
Whereon they lie; but we may rest instead,
For ever on His bosom, Who doth keep
Our lives alike safe, when we wake and sleep.

"And lo! all round us gleam the angelic bands,
Swift messengers of Providence all-wise,
With frowning brows, perhaps, for their disguise,
But with what springs of love within the eyes,
And what strong rescue hidden in the hands!"

Christina Rossetti was a warm admirer of Mr Sutton's poems, and introduced them to Professor Palgrave, who included some of them in his well-known "Treasury of Sacred Song." Not only are there extracts from "Rose's Diary," but from other of his poems, one short one which we cannot refrain from giving here:

"The flowers live by the tears that fall
From the sad face of the skies,
And life would have no joys at all
Were there no watery eyes."
HENRY SEPTIMUS SUTTON

"Love then thy sorrow: grief shall bring
It's own excuse in after years:—
The rainbow!—see how fair a thing
God hath built up from tears."

Not only in sacred song did Mr Sutton excel, but in poems of another class, of which "The Daisy" is perhaps the most delightful:—

"A gold and silver cup
Upon a pillar green,
Earth holds her daisy up
To catch the sunshine in
A dial-plant, set there
To show its radiant hour;—
A field astronomer,
A sun-observing flower.

"A little rounded croft
Where wingèd kine may graze:—
A golden meadow soft,
Quadrille ground for young fays;—
A fenced-in yellow plot
With pales milk-white and clean,
Each tipt with crimson spot
And set in ground of green.

"The children with delight
To meet the daisy run;
They love to see how bright
She shines upon the sun.
Like lowly white-crown'd queen
She graciously doth bend.
And stands with quiet mien
The little children's friend.

"Upon her head she lifts
Where they can best be seen,
"Her little golden gifts
    In white-fringed basket green:
Still ready to be met
    In every passing hour,
The little children’s pet,
    Their ever-faithful flower."

Then again his interest in the United Kingdom Alliance movement, and his enthusiasm in the cause of total abstinence, found vigorous expression in verse, as in "The Drink Dragon," beginning with the lines:—

"There is a murderous Thing abroad,
    What need to tell its name?
Is it not written everywhere
    In deeds of sin and shame?
A Dragon huge this monster is;
    Its claws are many and strong,
What living thing it sets them on,
    Shall not last over long.

Its eyelids are like doors of vaults
    Set over against each other;
Its cruel eyes would never shut
    From one year’s end to another.
Only at given law-set times
    They are forced to droop and blink;
But ever it chews and champs its chain,
    This greedy Dragon of Drink."

Amongst Mr Sutton’s chief friends and admirers were Coventry Patmore and Dr George Macdonald. Of his friendship with the former an interesting account appeared in an article Mr Sutton contributed to the New Church Magazine on “Swedenborg and Coventry Patmore.” Of his friendship with the latter we have an account in a recent life of George
Macdonald by Joseph Johnson, with an extract from which we will conclude this short account of this man of genius—poet, preacher, and New Churchman:

"During Macdonald's stay in the city of Manchester he formed a friendship with Henry Septimus Sutton, a man and poet of very high character and great beauty of soul, with a tender, gentle spirit, and a singularly modest and retiring disposition. A man of great personal charm with a deeply religious nature and of fine spiritual insight, and withal of simple, unworldly tastes, but of marked individuality and rare intellectual gifts; a singer of no mean order, who lived the songs he sang. No appreciation of George Macdonald would be complete that did not give a place to one whom he delighted to love and honour, and always spoke of with great admiration and exquisite affection.

"These two men, although different in many ways, had very much in common. Both rank among the select few who see the things that are eternal; both were mystic poets who looked through the garment of flesh and sense to behold the
abiding realities within and beyond. Though the friendship after the departure of Macdonald from Manchester was not resumed by personal contact and intercourse, yet it grew on in silence; time and absence made no difference to the spontaneous, intuitive affection and sympathy. These two men flew into each other's hearts almost at once, and as naturally as, after many years of physical separation, they fell, with the joy of children, into each other's arms.

"Their friendship had a fine, broad base of common religious life, with similar pleasures and delights, and with that perfect understanding and trust which neither time nor change, place nor circumstance could alter, except to increase. Anyone privileged to see them together had a beautiful and pathetic memorial of affection to treasure for the rest of life.

"Although these friends had so much in common there was much also that was uncommon to each. Their religious standpoint far removed, nevertheless they grew apart to see together in spiritual things with wonderful harmony.

"Sutton, though with a bright, happy disposition, was more of the ascetic—a prophet, but after the call of John the Baptist, a vegetarian, and a staunch abstainer. Deep fires lay burning within, which kindled and glowed and flamed forth, sometimes with fiery energy and zeal for politics. Macdonald 'came eating and drinking,' and was more the high priest of culture, the aesthetic prophet with the wide, far-reaching interest in men, and a keen sense of humour."
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"Swedenborg’s writings would be a sufficient library to a lonely and athletic student. Not every man can read them, but they will reward him who can. His religion is of universal application. It fits every part of life, interprets and dignifies every circumstance." The writer of the foregoing lines, Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the greatest thinkers and writers of the last century, although he cannot be said to be of those who are called Swedenborgians, he has, by his frequent references to Swedenborg, probably introduced many to the New Church. We know that Henry Septimus Sutton was an enthusiastic follower of Emerson before he became a student of the philosophy of the New Church. No doubt Emerson had at least an indirect influence upon him, and had probably brought his mind into an affirmative state to receive gladly the truths he afterwards came to love.

James Spilling, the author of "The Evening and the Morning," and many other excellent New Church works, tells us that he loved Emerson especially because he was the first to make him respect the name of Swedenborg.

Emerson was a man of such universal popularity and
influence that his frequent and favourable references could not help introducing Swedenborg to a wide circle of readers.

He was brought up as a Unitarian, and was for some

years minister of a church in Boston. He was born in that town in 1803, at the parish house of the first Unitarian Church, where his father was then the minister, and he died in Concord seventy-nine years later, on April 27th, 1882. He came of a clerical family, for not only was his father a clergyman, but
his grandfather and great-grandfather, and many more of his ancestors.

One of his great-grandfathers, it is said, used to pray every night that none of his descendants might ever be rich; and certainly so far as the earlier days of his descendants are concerned this prayer was strictly fulfilled. His father died when he was only eight years old. He was the second of five children, and the mother was left with only a small income, but with a strong determination to give her children a good education. An aunt, Mary Emerson, came to stay with them, and from her he learned much that was valuable to him in his later life. At the age of nine he wrote from school to her, "I go, a little after 8 o'clock, and retire to my private devotions, and then close my eyes in sleep, and there ends the toils of the day."

He had been sent to school before the age of three, but it did not make him a brilliant scholar. At fourteen he went to Harvard, and here, in one way or another, he managed to cover most of the heavier expenses of his school course by outside work. But these privations of the family were really no worse than what fell to the lot of many other clergymen's families of that period. Emerson afterwards paid homage to what he called his old nurse "poverty."

"Honour to the house," he said, "where they are simple to the verge of hardship." And, describing the sons of the poor, he said: "... they pine for freedom from that mild parental yoke, they sigh for fine clothes, for rides, for the
theatre, for the premature freedom and dissipation which others possess. Woe to them if their wishes were crowned! The angels that dwell with them, and are weaving laurels of life for their youthful brows are Toil and Want, and Truth, and Mutual Faith."

After graduating at Harvard, Emerson entered the Unitarian Divinity School connected with the University, and in due course was approved for the ministry. He became assistant, and after a year minister in charge, of the Unitarian Church in Boston. He did not remain a minister long, but in consequence of differences of opinion as to doctrine and ritual he resigned his pastorate at the age of twenty-nine, and although he did afterwards occasionally occupy the pulpit both in America and England, he devoted himself almost exclusively to writing and lecturing.

He went to Europe for the first time in 1832, visiting Coleridge, Wordsworth, Carlyle, and other men of letters, and returning to America, gave his first course of lectures at the Boston Lyceum.

During these and the succeeding years he must have been studying Swedenborg, for in 1836 he published "Nature," a little volume based largely on the science of correspondences. In this work he tries to show how every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. It is a work such as Coleridge thought of writing shortly before his death. It is known that Emerson frequently corresponded at this time with some well-known readers of Swedenborg. Only a few years
later Dr Garth Wilkinson wrote to him, "Altho' you state that your Swedenborgian shelves are full, I have ventured still to send you a thin volume, hoping that you will gently squeeze it into a place among the rest." Indeed, a long and lasting friendship existed between these two men of genius, and when Emerson came for the second time to Europe in 1847 he brought with him an introduction to Dr Garth Wilkinson, and they saw much of each other. It was during his second visit to Europe that Emerson took up his residence for some time in Manchester, and there made the acquaintance of the late Henry S. Sutton, who afterwards published a long account of his reminiscences of this and a later visit of Emerson to Manchester in 1872.

It was at the Manchester Athenæum, on November 5th, 1847, that Emerson gave his lecture on "Swedenborg, the Mystic," to an audience that filled the lecture theatre of that institution.

This lecture did not give unqualified satisfaction to New Churchmen, but it must have produced a favourable impression of Swedenborg in the minds of those who knew nothing of him. It was in this lecture that he said, "The moral insight of Swedenborg, the correction of popular errors, the announcement of ethical laws, take him out of comparison with any other modern writer, and entitle him to a place, vacant for some ages, among the law-givers of mankind."

And again, "Swedenborg had a vast genius, and announced many things true and admirable. . . . These truths,
passing out of his system into general circulation, are now met with every day, qualifying the creeds of all churches and of men of no church."

On the following Sunday, Rev. J. H. Smithson, minister of the New Church in Manchester, delivered a lecture to a crowded congregation in reply to some of Emerson's statements. It was a criticism of some of the less favourable comments, and although we cannot enter into a discussion of these, we can all appreciate Mr Smithson's concluding advice:—"Let candid young men follow the advice of the lecturer in reading the theological works of Swedenborg, and wherever there is the love of truth we will engage to say they will not readily throw them aside, but will experience a joy of heart such as the light of truth ever imparts to a sincere and reflecting mind."
"Now mind you, you keep up your Latin, you'll want it," said the master of a large private school in a beautiful village in Herefordshire, to a young pupil of sixteen who was leaving him. This was more than eighty years ago, and the pupil was James John Garth Wilkinson, who afterwards became known as the translator of Swedenborg's Latin into English, whom Emerson described as a "philosophic critic with a co-equal vigour of understanding and imagination comparable only to Lord Bacon's, who has restored his master's (Swedenborg's) buried books to the day and transferred them, with every advantage from their forgotten Latin into English to go round the world in our commercial and conquering tongue."

At school he had been a great reader. His father had sent him a copy of Milton's poems, and the boy had written asking for such books as "The Lady of the Lake," "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," "An Analysis of the Greek Metres," "Sir William Jones' Poems," and had spent his pocket-money in buying Byron's poems in serial numbers.

He was born in 1812, nearly a hundred years ago, in London, where his father was a well-known barrister. His mother, who was a native of Sunderland, was a daughter of
George Robinson, one of the twelve men who, so long ago as June 1st, 1788, met together in London and started the organisation of the New Church. His mother died when he was only thirteen, and he spent some of his childhood with his grandmother and his aunt, Mary Robinson, near Sunderland. There, at his grandmother's cottage, he was completely happy, and looked back in later years with intense pleasure to the farm-yard, the granary, the straw loft, the little garden full
of gooseberry bushes, with a high stone wall round it, the beautiful lanes, and the path from the village of Ryhope to the sea; these were some of the most precious memories of his childhood.

After leaving college at sixteen, his father thought it was time for him to choose a career.

"Now, James, I want you to choose your profession," said his father.

"I want to be a lawyer," the boy answered.

"I don’t think that would suit you," was the reply. "I have already made arrangements for you to be with Mr Leighton, at Newcastle, to be a surgeon."

Boys were obedient in those days, so Garth Wilkinson, at the age of sixteen, was apprenticed to a surgeon in Newcastle.

One of the brothers of his mother lived in the village of Woodford, in Essex, and was an earnest New Churchman. It was on a visit to this uncle, Mr George Robinson, that Garth Wilkinson first became acquainted with the writings of Swedenborg. It was at this time also, and at his uncle’s house, that he met the lady, Miss Emma Anne Marsh, who was then a governess to Mr Robinson’s family, who afterwards became his wife. Speaking of the writings of Swedenborg, he wrote to her on the second anniversary of their engagement, "I do pray that we may be enabled to live over the glorious things which are held out to us in those books of which I hope we have something of a common admiration."

When he afterwards devoted himself to the translating
of many of Swedenborg’s works into English, and other literary work for the Swedenborg Society, and for the Church, she was a sympathetic helper, as far as the claims of a family of four children would allow her. She also contributed to the literature of the New Church by the translation into English of a work by Baron Frederic de Portal, “Des Couleurs Symboliques.”

After his apprenticeship to the surgeon at Newcastle he spent two years at a London hospital, and was admitted as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. The degree of Doctor of Medicine which he afterwards received was an honorary degree of the University of Philadelphia.

He established himself as a doctor, practising in London, but was for many years unsuccessful. He was not able to put his heart into the work.

Shortly after being introduced to the writings of Swedenborg, he accepted the principles of Homoeopathy, which was at that time in its infancy, but in spite of opposition and professional persecution he was able gradually to build up a large and successful practice, and became one of the most eminent homoeopathists in England.

He became a member of the Swedenborg Society in London as early as 1837, three years before his marriage, and was a member of the committee two years later, and with the exception of a break of some years prior to 1875, he remained a member and a worker for the Society up to the time of his death in 1899, and at the end he was able to say,
"If I had my literary life to begin again, I would not argue about the Doctrines of the New Church at all, I would simply say, these things are Divine truths."

It was some years before his marriage that Wilkinson made the acquaintance of Carlyle, whose lectures he attended in London.

It was in a letter to him that Carlyle acknowledged that although he had then read nothing of Swedenborg, "a little book by one Sampson Reed, of Boston in New England, which some friend sent hither, taught me that a Swedenborgian might have thoughts of the calmest sort on the deepest things, that in short I did not know Swedenborg, and ought to be ready to know him."

A year later, Carlyle, in acknowledging the receipt of some books Wilkinson had sent him, said, "I ought to admit that this (Swedenborg) is one of the most wondrous men, whom I cannot altogether undertake to interpret for myself. I can love and honour such a man, and leave the mystery of him mysterious."

One of Wilkinson's first literary productions was the publication of Blake's "Songs of Innocence," the first printed edition, and his long introduction to these now popular poems is still considered one of the weightiest criticisms of Blake and his work that has ever been published. This little book has long been out of print.

He commenced to work for the Swedenborg Society at an early age, and translated into English the "Doctrine of
Charity,” and revised other of the smaller works for publication. In 1839, just a year before his marriage, he undertook one of the great works of his earlier years—the translation and publication of Swedenborg’s “Animal Kingdom.” In writing to Miss Marsh he said this would take him three years, and described it as the grandest and noblest work on Human Physiology which had ever appeared in the world. “It has,” he said, “solidity and depth, beauty, philosophy, reverence, and fact! All these things in the highest degree.” It was the first of a number of Swedenborg’s scientific and philosophical works which Wilkinson first introduced to the English-speaking world.

For years he continued the work of translating and editing these comparatively unknown works of Swedenborg, until all the important ones were published. At the same time he contributed to New Church and other magazines and papers, one of the most popular being an account of “Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians” for the “Penny Encyclopædia” published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which had a circulation of 25,000. This article was republished as a tract by the New Church in England, and was translated into French by M. Le Boys des Guays, and into German by Professor Immanuel Tafel.

After completing the publication of Swedenborg’s scientific works, he took a long holiday with his friend, Lord Wallscourt, visiting France, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and the United States. He was in Paris practically a prisoner
for some months during the time of the Revolution there in 1848.

On his return he set to work on a biography of Swedenborg, which was published in 1849, and was well described by a writer at the time as "a work which alike for its artistic excellence as a biography and the originality and poetic beauty of its thoughts has no equal in the English language." This was revised and republished in 1886, and is still a New Church classic that can be recommended to anyone who wants information about the life and character of Swedenborg and the teachings of the New Church.

A few years later another masterpiece appeared under the title "The Human Body and its Connection with Man," which may be called the crowning work of his life. It is a description of the correspondences of the human frame, and their application in nature, in business, in society, and in the mind. Of this book the New York Daily Tribune said: "Those who wish an intellectual treat of the very highest description, a banquet in which every dish is made to yield the subtlest and most unexpected aromas, by a cooking the most expert and masterly ever practised, may safely be referred to the book." And Henry James, the father of the late Professor William James and of Henry James the novelist, an intimate friend to whom he dedicated his book, wrote, "I have read the great book, you may be sure, with eyes enormously expanded, and mouth in sympathy. . . . All your part of the book is absolutely marvellous. I find all readers
agree in this. They say that you exhaust human power in the direction of rhetoric, and that there is no use of looking for fine writing after this. . . . It would be a monstrous compliment to the world at large to say that you were ever going to be a popular writer. Scholars will rejoice in you as in abundance of hid treasure, but only in a better world than this will you become known to the multitude.”

Not only Henry James, but many other men of letters and of genius were counted amongst his friends—Emerson, Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Coventry Patmore, Harriet Martineau, Dickens; and letters from many of these have been recently published in a biography of Wilkinson by his nephew.

He continued to write in elucidation of the doctrines of the New Church, and also in defence of homoeopathy, and as a strong opponent of vaccination and vivisection; and at the time of his departure into the spiritual world in 1899, at the age of eighty-seven, he had only just completed the last of his contributions to the literature of the New Church.
MR AND MRS BROWNING are sometimes called New Church poets, and that their poems are saturated with the same new truths as have been given to the world through Swedenborg cannot be doubted.

One of the sublimest thoughts running through their writings is that God is One, and that He is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Another is that the natural world and all that it contains is the shadow or correspondent of the invisible, the spiritual world, and that the one exists through the influence ever flowing into it from the other.

Then again there is the teaching that every man is in himself a little world; and there are other beautiful truths that readers of Swedenborg will recognise as some of the most prominent teachings of the New Church.

How far they were directly influenced by Swedenborg’s writings, and how far indirectly, it is difficult to say, but we do know that both Mr and Mrs Browning were directly acquainted with the writings of Swedenborg, Mrs Browning being for many years an earnest and enthusiastic student of them.
Robert Browning was born in London more than a hundred years ago. The centenary of his birth was celebrated in 1912. Both his father and grandfather were in their time clerks in the Bank of England.

His father is described as a man of most tender conscience; a man to whom selfishness seemed to be difficult, if not impossible. He had in his younger days thrown up an important commercial position in the West Indies because it involved him in some recognition of slavery, and he would have none
of it. His father disinherited him on this account. He was a man of culture, and had a taste for drawing and painting, and for many kinds of literature, which his son Robert inherited.

His mother was the daughter of a German merchant who had settled in Scotland. She was a deeply religious woman, described by Carlyle as the "type of a Scottish gentlewoman." His early education was not of an ordinary kind, and although he went to several schools, and was successful at none, it was at home, and from his father, that he learned most, especially in ancient and mediæval history and literature. He passed much of his childhood in the society of his sister Sariana, with whom, curiously, he also passed his last days after his wife's death.

He wrote poetry at an early age, and one of his "great" poems appeared without the author's name and when he was little more than twenty. From that time to the end of his long life of seventy-seven years he continued to give his message to the world—the message of a new Christianity, a new religion, scientific and rational, and yet a religion of the life.

As a young man he made the acquaintance of Garth Wilkinson, who, you may imagine, lost no time in introducing the writings of Swedenborg to him. To what degree he became a student of Swedenborg we cannot say, but we do know that fifty years later Browning wrote to the great translator of Swedenborg, thanking him for a book he had sent:

"I shall read it with great interest. I well remember the
letter in which you recommended me to study Swedenborg. I believe that you and I have always been in accordance as to aspiration and sympathy, though we may differ in our appreciation of the relative importance of facts connected with them."

Children will know Robert Browning best, no doubt, by the story of the "Pied Piper"; others by "Pippa Passes," that delightful story of the girl from the silk mill, who on her one holiday in the year—New Year's Day—wanders in the
neighbourhood of her home in the beautiful valley of Arno, singing as she goes along, awakening by her song the conscience of the wicked, and strengthening the good resolutions of the good; but "‘The Ring and the Book,’” “Christmas Eve,” “Easter Day,” “Rabbi Ben Ezra,” and “Saul” are perhaps some of the most interesting to the New Churchman.

The year 1845 was a noteworthy one to Robert Browning, for in that year he met for the first time the young lady poet, Elizabeth Barrett, who afterwards became his wife. She was a few years older than he, and at the time of their meeting, a confirmed invalid. Never at any time a strong child, she had injured her spine by an accident, and for years was only able to move with difficulty. She had written poetry at a very early age, and her father published one of her poems when she was only thirteen, but her first serious work was not published till she was twenty.

Shortly before her engagement to Robert Browning the doctors had declared that her health was in such a precarious condition that she must leave England for the winter. The marriage took place in the autumn, after which they left for Paris and Italy, remaining there, chiefly in Florence, for many years.

Their married life was intensely happy, and they were blessed with one son. One who knew them at this time has described the peaceful home, and its fireside where the logs were burning, and the mistress established on the sofa with
her little boy curled up by her side, a picture of perfect happiness.

"It is wonderful," said Nathaniel Hawthorne, who visited them, "to see how small she is, how pale her cheek, how bright and dark her eyes. There is not such another figure in the world; and her black ringlets cluster down into her neck and make her face look whiter." Another writer dwells on her "sweetness of temper" and "purity of spirit."

It was here at Florence that she used to sit in a low armchair, with a small writing-table strewn with writing materials and newspapers by her side. It was here she wrote her greatest work, "Aurora Leigh," a poem full of beauty from the first page to the last.

It was here in Florence, too, that she became interested in spiritualism, and it seems probable that her husband induced her to read the writings of Swedenborg, so that she might understand the dangers and evils of spirit rappings and other disorderly communications with the spirit world. Certainly it is that she became a very diligent and appreciative student of Swedenborg, and her correspondence of this period has many references to this.

In one she writes: "I am shut up in the house . . . there's a difficulty in getting books. Still, I get what I can, and stop up the chinks with Swedenborg." In another she speaks of the central doctrine of Swedenborgianism, as she calls it, being the Godhead of Jesus Christ. "I should throw up revelation altogether," she says, "if I ceased to recognise
Christ as Divine. . . . I hold to Christ's invisible Church as referred to in Scripture, and to the Saviour's humanity and divinity, as they seem to me conspicuous in Scripture."

In another interesting letter, written not long before her death, she says in reply to a friend: "With regard to the common notion of 'hell' as you ask me, I don't believe in it. I don't believe in any such thing as arbitrary reward or punishment, but in consequences and logical results. That seems to me God's way of working. The Scriptural phrases are simply symbolical, it seems to me, and Swedenborg helps you past the symbol. . . . No! Swedenborg does not hold the existence of devils in the ordinary meaning. Spiritual temptation comes, he says, through disembodied corrupt spirits out of this or other earths. The word Satan, remember, he conceives to represent a company of such evil spirits."

Mrs Browning passed peacefully away at their home in Florence after fifteen years of perfectly happy married life, loved by all who knew her, cheerful in sickness, self-forgetful, and thoughtful for others, an example of as perfect a woman as history or literature has produced.
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