

NON-FICTION

August Strindberg

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# Zones of the Spirit

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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NON-FICTION

# ZONES OF THE SPIRIT

A BOOK OF THOUGHTS

BY

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## INTRODUCTION

[Pg iii]

Seldom has a man gone through such profound religious changes as this Swede, who died last May. The demonic element in him, which spurred him on restlessly, made him scale heaven and fathom hell, gave him glimpses of bliss and damnation. He bore the Cain's mark on his brow: "A fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be."

He was fundamentally religious, for everyone who searches after God is so,—a commonplace truth certainly, but one which needs to be constantly reiterated. And Strindberg's search was more painful, exact, and persevering than that of most people. He was never content with superficial formulas, but pressed to the heart of the matter, and followed each winding of the labyrinthine problem with endless patience. Too often the Divinity which he thought he had discovered turned out a delusion, to be scornfully rejected the moment afterwards. Until he found *the* God, whom he worshipped to the end of his days, and whose existence he resolutely maintained against deniers.

As a child he had been brought up in devout belief in God, in submission to the injustice of life, and in faith in a better hereafter. He regarded God as a Father, to Whom he made known his little wants and anxieties. But a youth with hard experiences followed his childhood. The struggle for daily bread began, and his heavenly Father seemed to fail him. He appeared to regard unmoved, from some Olympian height, the desperate struggles of humanity below. Then the defiant element which slumbered in Strindberg wrathfully awoke, and he gradually developed into a free-thinker. It fared with him as it often does with young and independent characters who think. Beginning with dissent from this and that ecclesiastical dogma, his criticism embraced an ever-widening range, and became keener and more unsparing. At last every barrier of respect and reverence fell, the defiant spirit of youth broke like a flood over all religious dogmas, swept them away, and did not stop short of criticising God Himself.

Meanwhile his daily life, with its hard experiences, went on. Books written from every conceivable point of view came into his hands. Greedy for knowledge as he was, he read them all. Those of the free-thinkers supported his freshly aroused incredulity, which as yet needed support. His study of philosophical and scientific works made a clean sweep of what relics of faith remained. Anxiety about his daily bread, attacks from all sides, the alienation of his friends, all contributed towards making the free-thinker into an atheist. How can there be a God when the world is so full of ugliness, of deceit, of dishonour, of vulgarity? This question was bound to be raised at last. About this time he wrote the *New Kingdom*, full of sharp criticisms of society and Christianity.

As an atheist Strindberg made various attempts to come to terms with the existing state of things. But being a genius

out of harmony with his contemporaries, and always longing for some vaster, fairer future, this was impossible for him. When he found that he came to no goal, a perpetual unrest tortured him. His earlier autobiographic writings appeared, marked by a strong misanthropy, and composed with an obscure consciousness of the curse: "A fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be."

At last his consciousness becomes clear and defined. He recognises that he is a lost soul in hell already, though outwardly on earth. This was the most extraordinary period in Strindberg's life. He lived in the Quartier Latin in Paris, in a barely furnished room, with retorts and chemical apparatus, like a second Faust at the end of the nineteenth century. By experiments he discovered the presence of carbon in sulphur, and considered that by doing so he "had solved a great problem, upset the ruling systems of chemistry, and gained for himself the only immortality allowed to mortals." He came to the conclusion that the reason why he had gradually become an atheist was that "the Unknown Powers had left the world so long without a sign of themselves." The discovery made him thankful, and he lamented that he had no one to thank. From that time the belief in "unknown powers" grew stronger and stronger in him. It seems to have been the result of an almost complete, long, and painful solitude.

At this time his brain worked more feverishly, and his nerves were more sensitive than usual. At last he reached the (for an atheist) astounding conclusion: "When I think over my lot, I recognise that invisible Hand which disciplines and chastens me, without my knowing its purpose. Must I be humbled in order to be lifted up, lowered in order to be raised? The thought continually recurs to me, 'Providence is planning something with thee, and this is the beginning of thy education.'"<sup>[1]</sup>

Soon after this he gave up his chemical experiments and took up alchemy, with a conviction, almost pathetic in its intensity, that he would succeed in making gold. Although his dramas had already been performed in Paris, a success which had fallen to the lot of no other Swedish dramatist, he forgot all his successes as an author, and devoted himself solely to this new pursuit, to meet again with disappointment.

On March 29, 1897, he began the study of Swedenborg, the Northern Seer. A feeling of home-sickness after heaven laid hold of him, and he began to believe that he was being prepared for a higher existence. "I despise the earth," he writes, "this unclean world, these men and their works. I seem to myself a righteous man, like Job, whom the Eternal is putting to the test, and whom the purgatorial fires of this world will soon make worthy of a speedy deliverance."

More and more he seemed to approach Catholicism. One day he, the former socialist and atheist, bought a rosary. "It is pretty," he said, "and the evil spirits fear the cross." At the same time, it must be confessed that this transition to the Christian point of view did not subdue his egotism and independence of character. "It is my duty," he said, "to fight for the maintenance of my ego against all influences which a sect or party, from love of proselytising, might bring to bear upon it. The conscience, which the grace of my Divine protector has given me, tells me that." And then comes a sentence full of joy and sorrow alike, which seems to obliterate his whole past. "Born with a home-sick longing after heaven, as a child I wept over the squalor of existence and felt myself strange and homeless among men. From childhood upwards I have looked for God and found the Devil." He becomes actually humble, and recognises that God, on account of his pride, his conceit, his ubris, had sent him for a time to hell. "Happy is he whom God punishes."

The return to Christ is complete. All his faith, all his hope now rest solely on the Crucified, whom he had once demoniacally hated.

He now devoted himself entirely to the study of Swedenborg. He felt that in some way the life of this strange man had foreshadowed his own. Just as Swedenborg (1688-1772) had passed from the profession of a mathematician to that of a theologian, a mystic, and finally a ghost-seer and theosoph, so Strindberg passed from the worldly calling of a romance-writer to that of a preacher of Christian patience and reconciliation. He had occasional relapses into his old perverse moods, but the attacks of the rebellious spirit were weaker and weaker. He told a friend who asked his opinion regarding the theosophical concept of Karma, that it was impossible for him to belong to a party which denied a personal God, "Who alone could satisfy his religious needs." In a life so full of intellectual activity as his had been, Strindberg had amassed an enormous amount of miscellaneous knowledge. When he was nearly sixty he began to collect and arrange all his experiences and investigations from the point of view he had then attained. Thus was composed his last important work, *Das Blau Buch*, a book of amazing copiousness and originality. Regarding it, the Norwegian author Nils Kjaer writes in the periodical *Verdens Gang*: "More comprehensive than any modern collection of aphorisms, chaotic as the Koran, wrathful as Isaiah, as full of occult things as the Bible, more entertaining than any romance, keener-edged than most pamphlets, mystical as the Cabbala, subtle as the scholastic theology, sincere as Rousseau's confession, stamped with the impress of incomparable originality, every sentence shining like luminous letters in the darkness--such is this book in which the remarkable writer makes a final reckoning with his time and proclaims his faith, as pugnaciously as though he were a descendant of the hero of Lutzen." The book, in truth, forms a world apart, from which all lying, hypocrisy, and conventional contentment is banished; in it is heard the stormy laughter of a genius who has freed himself from the fetters of earth, the proclamation of the creed of a strange Christian who interprets and reveres Christ in his own fashion, the challenge of an original and creative mind which believes in

its own continuance, the expression of the yearning of a lonely soul to place itself in harmonious relations with the universe.

An especially interesting feature of the *Blau Buch* is the expression of Strindberg's views regarding the great poets, artists, and thinkers of the past and present. He speaks of Wagner and Nietzsche, the two antipodes; of Horace, who, after many wanderings, recognised the hand of God; of Shakespeare, who had lived through the experience of every character he created; of Goethe, regarding whom he remarks, with evident satisfaction, "In old age, when he grew wise, he became a mystic, *i.e.* he recognised that there are things in heaven and earth of which the Philistines never dream." Of Maeterlinck, he says, "He knows how to caricature his own fairest creations"; and accuses Oscar Wilde of want of originality. Regarding Hegel, he notes with pleasure that at the end of his life he returned to Christianity. With deep satisfaction he writes, "Hegel, after having gone very roundabout ways, died in 1831, of cholera, as a simple, believing Christian, putting aside all philosophy and praying penitential psalms." In Rousseau he recognises a kindred spirit, in so far as the Frenchman, like himself, hated all that was unnatural. "One can agree with Rousseau when he says, 'All that comes from the Creator's hand is perfect, but when it falls into the hands of man it is spoilt.'"

The *Blau Buch* marks the summit of Strindberg's chequered sixty years' pilgrimage. Beneath him lies the varicoloured landscape of his past life, now lit up with gleams of sunshine, now draped in dark mists, now drowned in storms of rain. But Strindberg, the poet and thinker, has escaped from both dark and bright days alike; he stands peacefully on the summit, above the trivialities, the cares, and bitteresses of life, a free man. He is like Prometheus, fettered to the rock for having bestowed on men the gift of fire, but liberated after he has learnt his lesson. In his calm is something resembling the dignity of Goethe's old age. As the latter sat on the Kickelhahn, looking down on Thuringia, and saw the panorama of his life pass before him, so Strindberg takes a retrospect in his *Blau Buch*. It is the canticle of his life, a hymn of thankfulness for the recovered faith in which he has found peace. At its conclusion he thus sums up:

"Rousseau's early doctrine regarding the curse of mere learning should be repondered."

"A new Descartes should arise and teach the men to doubt the untruths of the sciences."

"Another Kant should write a new Critique of Pure Reason and re-establish the doctrine of the Categorical Imperative, which, however, is already to be found in the Ten Commandments and the Gospels."

"A prophet should be born to teach men the simple meaning of life in a few words. It has already been so well summed up: 'Fear God, and keep His commandments,' or 'Pray and work.'"

"All the errors and mistakes which we have made should serve to instil into us a lively hatred of evil, and to impart a fresh impulse to good; these we can take with us to the other side, where they will bloom and bear fruit. That is the true meaning of life, at which the obstinate and impenitent cavil, in order to save themselves trouble."

"Pray, *but* work; suffer, *but* hope; keeping both the earth and the stars in view. Do not try and settle permanently, for it is a place of pilgrimage; not a home, but a halting-place. Seek the truth, for it is to be found, but only in one place, with the One who Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

ARTHUR BABILLOTTE.

Strindberg's *Inferno*.

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## Zones of the Spirit

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### THE HISTORY OF THE BLUE BOOK

*(Prefixed to the Third Swedish Edition)*

I had read how Goethe had once intended to write a *Breviarium Universale*, a book of edification for the adherents of all religions. In my *Historical Miniatures* I have attempted to trace God's ways in the history of the world; I included Christianity in my survey by commencing with Israel, but perhaps I made the mistake of ranging other religions by the side of Christianity, while they ought to have stood below it.

A year passed. I felt myself constrained by inward impulses to write a fairly unsectarian breviary; a word of wisdom for each day in the year. For that purpose I collected the sacred books of all religions, in order to extract from them "sayings" on which to write. But the books did not open themselves to me! The Vedas and Zend-Avesta were sealed, and did not yield a single saying; only the Koran gave one, but that was a lion! (page 45). Then I determined to alter my design. I formed the plan of writing apothegms of simply worldly wisdom regarding men, and of calling the book *Herbarium Humane*. But I postponed the work since I trembled at the greatness of the task and the crudity of my plan. Then came June 15, 1906. As I took my morning walk, the first thing I saw was a tramcar with the number 365. I was struck by this number, and thought of the 365 pages which I intended to write.

As I went on, I entered a narrow street. A cart went along by my side carrying a red flag; it was a powder-flag. The cart kept parallel with me and began to disturb me. In order to escape the sight of the powder-flag, I looked up in the air, and there an enormous red flag (the English one) flaunted conspicuously before my eyes. I looked down again, and a lady dressed in black, with a fiery-red hat, was crossing the street in a slanting direction.

I hastened my steps. Immediately my eyes fell on the window of a stationer's shop; in it a piece of cardboard was displayed, bearing the word "Herbarium."

It was natural that all this should make an impression on me. My resolution was now taken; I laid down the plan of my powder-chamber, which was to become the *Blue Book*. A year passed, slowly, painfully. The most remarkable thing that happened was this. They began to rehearse my drama, the *Dream Play*, in the theatre; simultaneously, a change took place in my daily life. My servant left me; my domestic arrangements were upset; within forty days I had six changes of servants--one worse than the other. At last I had to serve myself, lay the table and light the stove. I ate black broken

victuals out of a basket. In short, I had to taste the whole bitterness of life without knowing why.

One morning during this fasting period I passed by a shop window in which I saw a piece of tapestry which attracted and delighted me. I thought I saw my dream-play in the design woven on the tapestry. Above was the "growing castle," and underneath the green island over-arched by a rainbow, and with Alpine summits illumined by the sun. Round it was the sea reflecting the stars and a great green sea-snake partly visible; low down in the border was a row of fylfots--the symbol *Swastika*, signifying good-luck. That was, at any rate, my meaning; the artist had intended something else which does not belong here.

Then came the dress-rehearsal of the *Dream Play*. This drama I wrote seven years ago, after a period of forty days' suffering which were among the worst which I had ever undergone. And now again exactly forty days of fasting and pain had passed. There seems, therefore, to be a secret legislature which promulgates clearly defined sentences. I thought of the forty days of the flood, the forty years of wandering in the desert, the forty days' fast kept by Moses, Elijah, and Christ.

My journal thus records my impressions:

"The sun shines. A certain quiet resigned uncertainty reigns within me. I ask myself whether a catastrophe will not prevent the performance of the piece, which perhaps ought not to be played. In it I have, at any rate, spoken men fair, but to advise the Ruler of the Universe is presumption, perhaps blasphemy. The fact that I have laid bare the comparative nothingness of life (with Buddhism), its irrational contradictions, its wickedness and lawlessness, may be praiseworthy if it teaches men resignation. That I have shown the comparative innocence of men in this life, which of itself involves guilt, is not indeed wrong, but...."

Just now comes a telephone message from the theatre: "The result of this is in God's hand." "Exactly what I think," I answer, and ask myself again whether the piece ought to be played. (I believe it is already determined by the higher powers what the issue of the first performance will prove.)

I feel as though it were Sunday. The "White Shape" appears outside on the balcony of the "growing castle."

My thoughts have lately been occupied with death and with the life after this. Yesterday I read Plato's *Timaeus* and *Phaedo*. At present I write a work called *The Island of the Dead*. In it I describe the awakening after death, and what follows. But I hesitate, for I am frightened at the boundless misery of mere life. Lately I burned a drama; it was so sincere, that I shuddered at it. What I do not understand is this: ought one to hide the misery, and flatter men? I wish to write cheerfully and beautifully, but ought not, and cannot. I conceive it as a terrible duty to be truthful, and life is indescribably hideous.

Now the clock strikes eleven, and at twelve o'clock is the rehearsal.

The same day at 8 P.M. I have seen the rehearsal of the *Dream Play*, and suffered greatly. I received the impression that this piece ought not to be played. It is presumptuous, and certainly blasphemous (?). I am disturbed and alarmed.

I have had no midday meal; at seven o'clock I ate some cold food out of the basket in the kitchen.

During the religious broodings of my last forty days I read the Book of Job, saying to myself certainly at the same time that I was no righteous man like him. Then I came to the 22nd chapter, in which Eliphaz the Temanite unmasks Job: "Thou hast taken pledges of thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing; thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. ... Is not thy wickedness great and thine iniquities infinite?"

Then the whole comfort of the Book of Job vanished, and I stood again forlorn and irresolute. What shall a poor man hold on to? What shall I believe? How can he help thinking perversely?

Yesterday I read Plato's *Timaeus* and *Phaedo*. There I found so much self-contradictory wisdom, that in the evening I threw my devotional books away and prayed to God out of a full heart. "What will happen now? God help me! Amen."

The stage-manager visited me yesterday evening. We both felt, in despair... The night was quiet.

*April 16, 1907.*--Read the proof of the *Black Flags*,<sup>[1]</sup> which I wrote in 1904. I asked myself whether the book was a crime, and whether it ought to be published. I opened the Bible, and came on the prophet Jonah, who was compelled to prophesy although he hid himself. That quieted me. But it is a terrible book!

*April 17.*--To-day the *Dream Play* will be performed for the first time. A gentle fall of snow in the morning. Read the last chapter of Job: God punishes Job because he presumed to wish to understand His work. Job prays for pardon, and is forgiven.

Quiet grey weather till 3 P.M. Then G. came with a piece of good news.

Spent the evening alone at home. At eight o'clock there was a ring at the door. A messenger brought a laurel-wreath

with the inscription: "Truth, Light, Liberation." I took the wreath at once to the bust of Beethoven on the tiled stove and placed it on his head, since I had so much to thank him for, especially just now for the music accompanying my drama.

At eleven o'clock a telephone from the theatre announces that everything has gone well.

*May 29.*--The *Black Flags* come out to-day. I make very satisfactory terms with the publisher regarding the *Blue Book* (and I had thought it would not be printed at all). So I determined to remain in my house, which I had determined to leave on account of poverty.

*August 20.*--I read this evening the proofs of the *Blue Book*. Then the sky grew coal-black with towering dark clouds. A storm of rain fell; then it cleared up, and a great rainbow stood round the church, which was lit up by the sun.

*August 22.*--I am reading now the proofs of the *Blue Book*, and I feel now as though my mission in life were ended. I have been able to say all I had to say.

I dreamt that I was in the home of my childhood at Sabbatsberg, and saw that the great pond was dried up. This pond had always been dangerous to children because it was surrounded by a swamp; it had an evil smell, and was full of frogs, hedgehogs, and lizards. Now in my dream I walked about on the dry ground, and was astonished to find it so clean. I thought now that I have broken with the *Black Flags* the frog-swamp is done with.

*September 1.*--Read the last proofs of the *Blue Book*.

*September 2.*--Came across tramcar 365, which I had not seen since I began to write the *Blue Book* on June 15, 1906.

*September 12.*--The *Blue Book* appears to-day. It is the first clear day in summer. I dreamt I found myself in a stone-quarry, and could neither go up nor down. I thought quite quietly, "Well, I must cry for help!"

The German motto to-day on the tear-off calendar is: "What is to be clarified must first ferment."

To-day I got new clothes which fitted. My old ones had been too tight to the point of torture.

My little daughter visited me. I took her home again in a chaise.

*September 14.*--The whole day clear. Towards evening, however, about a quarter to six, the sky became covered with most portentous-looking clouds, with black outlines like obliquely hanging theatre-flies. Afterwards these were driven out by a storm over the sea.

This evening my *Crown Bride* was performed. Thus, then, the *Blue Book* had appeared. It looked well with its blue and red binding, which resembled that of my first book, the *Red Room*, but in its contents differed as much from it as red from blue. In the first I had, like Jeremiah, to pluck up, break down, and destroy; but in this book I was able to build and to plant. And I will conclude with Hezekiah's song of praise:

"I said, in the noontide of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave:

"My age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent:

"I have rolled up like a weaver my life; he will cut me off from the loom.

"From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

"Like a swallow or a crane, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward.

"Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

"What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it.

"Behold, it was for my peace that I had great bitterness;

"Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption.

"The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day.

"The father to the children shall make known thy truth."

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I saw beforehand what awaited me if I broke with the *Black Flags*. But I placed my soul in God's hands, and went forwards. I affix as a motto to the following book, "He who departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey."

The strangest thing, however, is that from this moment my own Karma began to complete itself. I was protected, things went well with me, I found better friends than those I had lost. Now I am inclined to ascribe all my former mischances to the fact that I served the *Black Flags*. There was no blessing with them!

## A BLUE BOOK

**The Thirteenth Axiom.**--Euclid's twelfth axiom, as is well known, runs thus: When one straight line cuts two other straight lines so that the interior angles on the same side are together less than two right angles, these two lines, being produced, will at length meet on that side on which are the two angles, which are together less than two right angles.

If that is a self-evident proposition, which can neither be proved, nor needs to be proved, how much clearer is the axiom of the existence of God!

Anyone who tries to prove an axiom, loses himself in absurdity; therefore, we should not attempt to prove the existence of God. He who cannot understand what is self-evident in an axiom belongs to the class of people of a lower degree of intelligence. One should be sorry for such dullards, but not blame them.

The first point in the definition of God, is that He is Almighty. Thence it follows that He can abrogate His own laws. But since we do not know all His laws, we do not know when He employs a law which is unknown to us, or suspends a law which is known to us.

What we call miracles, may happen according to strict laws which we do not know. We must therefore take care, when confronted by unusual or inexplicable occurrences, to see that we make no mistakes. These draw down upon us the contempt of our fellow-mortals who are gifted with keener intelligence.

**The Rustic Intelligence of the "Beans."**--The miller turns his mill and the seaman trims his sails according to the force and direction of the wind. They do not see the wind, but they believe in its existence, since they observe the results produced by it. They are wise people who use their intelligence.

Intelligence ("ratio"), or rustic intelligence, is an excellent faculty whereby to grasp what is perceptible by the senses, even when it is invisible. Reason is a higher faculty wherewith one may grasp what is not perceptible by sense. But when the rationalists try to comprehend the highest things with their rustic intelligence, then they see light as darkness, good as evil, the eternal as temporal. In a word, they see distortedly, for they see by the light of nature. Just as the rustic intelligence is indispensable when one goes to market, deals with coffee and sugar, or draws up promissory-notes, even so is the use of reason necessary when one wishes to approach what is above nature.

Voltaire and Heine are counted among the greatest rationalists because they judged of spiritual things by rustic intelligence. Their arguments are therefore interesting, but worthless.

And the most interesting fact about both these men is, that they discovered their errors, declared themselves bankrupt, and finally used their reason. But there the "Beans" can no longer follow them.

"Beans" is a classical name for the Philistines who worshipped Dagon, the fish-god, and Beelzebub, the god of dung.

**The Hoopoo, or An Unusual Occurrence.**--Johann was one day on his travels, and came to a wood. In an old tree he found a bird's nest with seven eggs, which resembled the eggs of the common swift. But the latter bird only lays three eggs, so the nest could not belong to it. Since Johann was a great connoisseur in eggs, he soon perceived that they were the eggs of the hoopoo. Accordingly, he said to himself, "There must be a hoopoo somewhere in the neighbourhood, although the natural history books assert that it does not appear here."

After a time he heard quite distinctly the well-known cry of the hoopoo. Then he knew that the bird was there. He hid himself behind a rock, and he soon saw the speckled bird with its yellow comb. When Johann returned home after three days, he told his teacher that he had seen the hoopoo on the island. His teacher did not believe it, but demanded proof.

"Proof!" said Johann. "Do you mean two witnesses?"

"Yes!"

"Good! I have twice two witnesses, and they all agree: my two ears heard it, and my two eyes saw it."

"Maybe. But *I* have not seen it," answered the teacher.

Johann was called a liar because he could not prove that he had seen the hoopoo in such and such a spot. However, it was a fact that the hoopoo appeared there, although it was an unusual occurrence in this neighbourhood.

**Bad Digestion.**--When one adds up several large numbers, one owes it to oneself to doubt the correctness of the calculation. In order to test it, one generally adds the figures up again, but from the bottom to the top. That is wholesome doubt.

But there is an unwholesome kind of doubt, which consists in denying everything which one has not seen and heard oneself. To treat one's fellow-men as liars is not humane, and diminishes our knowledge to a considerable degree.

There is a morbid kind of doubt, which resembles a weak stomach. Everything is swallowed, but nothing retained; everything is received, but nothing digested. The consequence is emaciation, exhaustion, consumption, and premature death.

Johann Damascenus<sup>[1]</sup> had passed through several years of wholesome doubt, proving the truths of faith by systematic denial. But when, after minutely checking his calculation, he had become sure of their asserted values, he believed. Since then, neither fear of men, love of gain, contempt, or threats could cause him to abandon his dearly purchased faith. And in that he was right.

**The Song of the Sawyers.**--As Damascenus wandered in Qualheim, he came to a saw-mill. Outside it, on the edge of a stream, sat two men, and sawed a steel rail with a double saw. They accompanied their sawing with a rhythmic chant in two voices, and somewhat resembled two drinkers quarrelling.

"What are you singing about?" asked Damascenus.

"About faith and knowledge," answered one. And then they recommenced. "What I know, that I believe; therefore knowledge is under faith, and faith stands above it."

"What do you know then? What you have seen with your eye?"

"My eye sees nothing of itself. If you were to take it out, and lay it down here, it would see nothing. Therefore, it is my inner eye which sees."

"Can I then see your inner eye?"

"It is not to be seen. But you see with that which is itself invisible. Therefore, you must believe on the invisible! Now you know."

"Yes, yes, yes, but, but, but.... Have you seen God?"

"Yes, with my inner eye. Therefore, I believe on Him. But it is not necessary for you to see Him, in order for me to believe on Him."

"But knowledge is the highest."

"Yes, but faith is the highest of all."

"Do you know what you believe?"

"Yes, although you don't know it."

"Prove it."

"By two concurring witnesses? Here in this district alone I can collect two million witnesses. That must be sufficient proof for you."

"But, but, but, but" ... And so on.

Strindberg gives himself this name, probably in allusion to his mystery-play, *To Damascus* (1900).

**Al Mansur in the Gymnasium.**--Damascenus came into a large gymnasium, which at first he thought was empty. But presently he noticed that men stood along the walls with their backs turned towards him, so that he only saw their perukes and red ears. "Why do they stand and look at the wall, and why do they have such red ears?" he asked his teacher.

"They are ashamed of themselves," answered the teacher. "During their lifetime they were regarded as very clever fellows, but now they have discovered their stupidity."

"What is stupidity?"

"He is stupid, in the first place, who is unpractical. These have practised gymnastics all their lives, but never used the strength which they have gained. Furthermore, he is stupid who finds it difficult to comprehend simple propositions, self-evident propositions or axioms; for instance, the axiom of the existence of God. He is also stupid who cannot

understand a logical proof; he who cannot accept reasonable premises, can draw no correct inferences. But the height of stupidity is, not to be able to accept an explanation founded on fact. When the Apostles told Thomas that Christ, the Son of God, was risen from the dead, he could not receive the new truth, because it was beyond his horizon. Such a man is usually called thick-headed, is he not?"

Damascenus did not answer, but his ears grew red, for he saw behind on the spring-board a man whom he thought he recognised by his broad neck and small ears.

"What are you looking at?" asked the teacher.

"Who is the man there?"

"He was, or was called Al Mansur, the Victorious, because he lost all battles but one--the battle with himself. By the Greeks he is called Chrysoroas, or 'Golden Stream'; by the Romans, John of Damascus."

**The Nightingale in the Vineyard.**--Johann went with his teacher through a vineyard, at the season when the vines were flourishing and exhaling their delicious perfume, which resembles that of the mignonette. "Do you notice the fine scent?" asked the teacher. "Oh yes; it is the scent of the vines." "Can you see it?" "No, it is invisible." "Then you can believe in what is invisible, as well as enjoy it. You are, then, on the way."

A nightingale was singing in a pomegranate tree. "Can you see her notes?" asked the teacher. "But you are delighted by them. Similarly, I delight in the invisible God through His way of revealing Himself in beauty, goodness, and righteousness. Do you think God cannot reveal Himself, like the nightingale, by invisible but audible tones?" "Yes, certainly." "Then you believe in revelations?" "Yes, I am obliged to." "You believe that God is a Spirit?" "Yes." "Then you believe in spirits?" "That is an incorrect inference. I believe in one Spirit." "Have not men spirits or souls in their bodies?" "Certainly." "Then you believe in spirits, *i.e.* in the existence of spirits?" "You are right; I believe in spirits." "Don't forget that the next time one asks you. And don't be afraid when the Lord of Dung comes and threatens you with the loss of bread, honour, wife, and child."

**The Miracle of the Corn-crakes.**--One summer evening the teacher went with Johann through the clover-fields. There they heard a sound, "Crex! crex!" "What is that?" asked the teacher. "The corn-crake, of course." "Have you seen the corn-crake?" "No." "Do you know a man who has seen it?" "No." "How do you know, then, that it is it?" "Everyone says so." "Look! If I throw a stone at it, will it fly up?" "No, for it cannot fly, or flies very badly." "But in autumn, it always flies to Italy! How does that happen?" "I don't know." "What do the zoologists say?" "Nothing." "Do you believe that it flies over the Sound, runs through Germany, and wanders over the Alps or through the St. Gothard Tunnel?" "They say nothing about it." "Well! Brehm calculates there are a pair of larks to every acre of field and meadow; if we reckon that there are a pair of corn-crakes to every two acres, then there are in our country in spring five million corn-crakes. The female lays from seven to twelve eggs during the summer, so that in autumn in our country there are five-and-thirty million corn-crakes. Ought they not to be visible when they fly over the Sound?" "I cannot explain it. A bad flyer cannot fly over the Sound. Is it possible that they go round by the Gulf of Bothnia?" "No, for they have rivers to cross, and one would see their flight like that of the lemmings. Besides, in England there are seventy million corn-crakes every autumn, and they cannot go by land." "Then a miracle happens." "What is a miracle?" "What one cannot explain, but has no right to deny." "Then the flight of the corn-crakes is a miracle; it must take place according to unknown natural laws or be supernatural?"

**Corollaries.**--The teacher said: "The bee is a little creature, but gives plenty of honey. The corn-crake is a little bird, but it has shown us that some of the most ordinary natural occurrences cannot be explained by known natural laws, and must therefore be regarded, for the present, as supernatural, and for the rest, be taken on faith.

"You have never seen the corn-crake in fields or meadows, but you believe that it is there. If now a sportsman came, who had shot the bird, you would be more quickly convinced that the bird does appear in the district, even though the sportsman were a liar.

"But the fact that millions of birds not accustomed to flying cannot fly over great spaces of water or Alpine glaciers, does not explain the autumn flight of the corn-crakes.

"Since this cannot be explained on natural grounds, it is supernatural. We must accordingly admit that we believe sometimes on the supernatural, or on miracles.

"From this proved thesis you can deduce the corollaries for yourself if you possess the faculty of drawing inferences."

**Phantasms which Are Real.**--The teacher asked: "Can one see a phantasm?"

"What is a phantasm?"

"There are in optics real images which can be caught on a screen. An image reflected in a flat mirror cannot be caught upon a screen, and is therefore a phantasm. Can you see your image in a flat mirror?"

"Yes."

"Then you can see a phantasm, or an unreal image. The eye, therefore, is a skilful instrument, which can make the unreal real. One might thus be tempted to believe in ghosts."

"What are ghosts?"

"They are phantasms, or unreal images which the eye can take in at certain distances. Great and credible men, such as Luther, Swedenborg, and Goethe, have seen ghosts."

"Goethe?"

"Yes; in the eleventh book of *Aus meinem Leben* he relates how he met the image of himself upon a country road. 'I saw, that is to say, not with the eye of the body, but of the spirit,' he adds. Do you consider Goethe's testimony credible?"

"Yes."

"Well, such sights are not seen every day, just as the hoopoo is not seen every day. But that does not give one any right to doubt that they are seen."

**Crex, crex!**--The pupil asked: "What is chance?"

"It means something accidental, irregular, illogical in the occurrence of an event. But the word is often misused by those who see, but do not understand. For instance, if after an evil deed you are systematically persecuted by misfortune, that is no chance. Firstly, because the misfortunes appear regularly, but chance is irregular. Secondly, because the punishment follows logically on the evil deed, and chance is illogical. It is therefore something else."

"Yes, it must be so. But what is it that causes me to fail in all my undertakings, to meet in the streets only enemies, to be cheated in all the shops, to get the worst eatables in the market, to read only of wickedness in the papers, not to receive pleasant letters though they have been posted, to miss my train, to see the last cab engaged under my nose, to be given the only room in the hotel where a suicide has been committed, not to meet the person I have taken a special journey to see; to have the money I earn immediately snatched away, to have to remain in a strange town from which all my acquaintances have gone? Then at last, when I have no food, and am on the point of drowning myself, I find a shilling in the street. That cannot be chance? What is it then?"

"It is something else, but how it happens we don't know, since we know so little about the most ordinary phenomena."

"That's only twaddle."

"Crex, crex!"

"That's the corn-crake."

"Yes, it is."

**The Electric Battery and the Earth Circuit.**--The pupil feigned ignorance, and asked: "What is religion?"

"If you do not know from experience or intuition, I cannot explain it to you; in that case it would only seem to you folly. But if you know beforehand, you will be able to receive my explanations, which are many. Religion is connected with the Source or the head station. But in order to carry on a conversation one must have an earth-current."

"What is that?"

"That is the draining off of superfluous earthliness to the earth. As one advances in technical knowledge, one learns to speak without a wire. But for that there are necessary strong streams of electricity, clean instruments, and clear air. The electric battery is Faith, which is not merely credence, but an apparatus for receiving and arousing the divine electricity. Unless you believe in the possibility of success in an undertaking, you will not set to work, and accordingly you acquire no energy. With faith and a good will all is possible."

"But Faith is a gift for all that."

"Yes; but if, from pride or obstinacy, you refuse to receive it, it is no gift for you. Is that clear?"

**Improper and Unanswerable Questions.**--The pupil asked: "If God is one, why are there several religions?"

"Since the existence of God is an axiom, you should say, 'Since God is one, why are there several religions?' I answer: I do not know, and, strictly speaking, it does not concern me. All agree in the chief point--that there is a God, and that the soul is immortal."

"If the soul is immortal, how is it that there are men who regard their souls as mortal, and speak of the present life as their only one?"

"Their feelings may be perverted, like a man's who believes he has a snake in his stomach. Perhaps they have committed soul-suicide. Perhaps they think the doctrine of immortality foolish, or their souls are really so rudimentary that they can be buried and dissolved. If that is the case, one cannot argue with them, for they are right as regards themselves. Either theirs is an abnormal case, or their perceptions are perverse; I cannot say which. I am inclined to regard the question as among those which are unanswerable, or which have not yet been answered, or which should not be asked."

**Superstition and Non-Superstition.**--The pupil asked: "What is superstition?"

"I don't know; but a sterile intellect calls the highest axioms superstitions, e.g. God, the religious life, conscience. The believing fertile intelligence, on the other hand, calls it superstition when an unbeliever avoids a squirrel, spits when he sees an old woman or when one wishes him luck, or dares not begin a journey on the thirteenth of the month."

"What is witchcraft?"

"When bad men misemploy their psychic forces on weaker minds, dazzle them, or torment them from a distance, and so on. You have seen all this at hypnotic seances. In them, for example, the medium's eyesight can be so perverted as to take a raw potato for an apple."

"Are there then witches?"

"Yes; certainly there are. An ugly and evil woman, who so dazzles the eyes of a man that he sees her as the most beautiful and best, is a witch."

"Should she be burnt?"

"No, for she burns herself through her wickedness when she meets a man who is mail-clad with the love of God. Then the missiles of the witch rebound and strike herself. But one should not talk of such. He who touches pitch is defiled."

**Through Faith to Knowledge.**--The pupil asked: "How shall I know that I believe rightly?" "I will tell you. Doubt the regular denials of your everyday intelligence. Go out of yourself if you can, and place yourself at the believer's standpoint. Act as though you believed, and then test the belief, and see whether it agrees with your experiences. If it does, then you have gained in wisdom, and no one can shake your belief. When I for the first time obtained Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*, and looked through the ten thousand pages, it appeared to me all nonsense. And yet I could not help wondering, since the man was so extraordinarily learned in all the natural sciences, as well as in mathematics, philosophy, and political economy. Amid the apparent foolishness of the book were some details which remained riveted in my memory.

"Some time later, in my ordinary life, there happened something inexplicable. Subsequently light was thrown upon this by an experience which Swedenborg refers to his so-called heaven and his so-called angels. Then I began to search and to compare, to make experiments and to find explanations. I come to the conclusion that Swedenborg has had experiences which resemble those of earthly life, but are not the same. This he brings out in his theory of correspondences and agreements. The theosophists have expressed it thus: parallel with the earth-life we live another life on the astral plane, but unconsciously to ourselves."

**The Enchanted Room.**--The pupil became curious and asked: "What opened your eyes as regards Swedenborg?"

"It is difficult to say, but I will try to do so. In my lonely dwelling there was a room which I considered the most beautiful in the world. It had not been so beautiful at first, but great and important events had taken place there. A child had been born in it, and in it a man had died. Finally I fitted it up as a temple of memory, and never showed it to anyone.

"One day, however, the demon of pride and ostentation took possession of me, and I took a guest into it. He happened to be a 'black man,' a hopeless despairer, who only believed in physical force and in wickedness, and called himself 'a load of earth.' As I admitted him I said, 'Now you will see the most beautiful room in the country.' I turned on the electric light, which generally poured down from the ceiling such a blaze that not a dark corner was left in the room. The man

stood in the middle of the room, looked round, grumbled to himself, and said 'I can't see that.'

"As he spoke, the room darkened, the walls contracted, the floor shrank in size. My splendid temple was metamorphosed before my eyes. It seemed to me like a room in a hospital, with coarse wall-papers; the beautiful flowered curtains looked dirty; the white surface of the little writing-table showed spots; the gilding was blackened; the brass fittings of the tiled oven were tarnished. The whole room was altered, and I was ashamed. It had been enchanted.

**Concerning Correspondences.**--"Now comes Swedenborg, but his explanation is somewhat difficult. I must make a prefatory remark, in order that you may not think I regard myself as an angel. By 'angel' Swedenborg means a deceased mortal, who by death has been released from the prison of the body, and by suffering in faith has recovered the highest faculties of his soul. It is necessary to bear this definition of Swedenborg's in mind, and to remember that it does not apply to my guest or myself.

"Swedenborg further remarks regarding these dematerialised beings: 'All which appears and exists around them seems to be produced and created by them. The fact that their surroundings are, as it were, produced and created by them is evident, because when they are no longer there the surroundings are altered. A change in the surroundings is also apparent, when other beings come in their place. Elysian plains change into their trees and fruits; gardens change into their roses and plants, and fields into their herbs and grasses. The reason for the appearance and alteration of such objects is that they are produced by the wishes of these angel beings and the currents of thought set in motion thereby.'

"Is not this a subtle observation of Swedenborg's, and have not the facts he alleges something corresponding to them in our lower sphere? Does it not resemble my adventure in the 'enchanted room?' Perhaps you have had a similar experience?"

**The Green Island.**--The pupil answered: "I have certainly had strange experiences, but did not understand them because I thought with the flesh. As I just heard you say that our experiences can receive a symbolical interpretation, I remembered an incident which resembled that which you have just related and compared with an observation of Swedenborg's. After a youth spent under intolerable pressure and too much work, a friend gave me a sum of money that I might spend the summer on the sea in literary recreation. When I saw the 'Green Island' with its carpets of flowers, beds of reeds, banks of willows, oak coppices, and hazel woods, I thought that I beheld Paradise. Together with three other young poets I passed the summer in a state of happiness which I have never experienced since. We were fairly religious, although we did not literally believe in the gods of the state, and we lived, as a rule, innocently enough, with simple pleasures such as bathing, sailing, and fishing.

"But there was an evil man among us. He was overbearing, and regarded mankind as his enemies; denied all goodness; spied after others' faults; rejoiced in others' misfortunes. Every time he left us to go to the town, the island seemed to me more beautiful; it seemed like Sunday. I was always the object of his gibes, but did not understand his malice. My friends wondered that I was not angry with him, as I was generally so passionate. I do not myself understand it, but I was as though protected, and noticed nothing, whatever the cause may have been. Perhaps you ask whether the island really was so wonderful. I answer: I found it so, but perhaps the beauty was in my way of looking at it."

**Swedenborg's Hell.**--The pupil continued: "The next summer I came again, but this time with other companions, and I was another man. The bitterness of life, the spirit of the time, new teachings, evil companionship made me doubt the beneficence of Providence, and finally deny its existence. We led a dreadful life together. We slandered each other, suspected each other even of theft. All wished to dominate, nobody would follow another to the best bathing-place, but each went to his own. We could not sail, for everyone wished to steer. We quarrelled from morning till night. We drank also, and half of us were treating themselves for incurable diseases. My 'Green Island,' the first paradise of my youth, became ugly and repulsive to me. I could see no more beauty in nature, although at that time I worshipped nature. But wait a minute, and see how it agreed with what Swedenborg says! The beautiful weed-fringed bay began to exhale such miasmas, that I got malarial fever. The gnats plagued us the whole night and stung through the thickest veil. If I wandered in the wood, and wished to pluck a flower, I saw an adder rear its head. One day, when I took some moss from a rock, I saw immediately a black snake zigzagging away. It was inexplicable. The peaceable inhabitants must have been infected by our wickedness, for they became malicious, ugly, quarrelsome, and enacted domestic tragedies. It was hell! When I became ill, my companions scoffed at me, and were angry, because I had to have a room to myself. They borrowed money from me, which was not my own, and behaved brutally. When I wanted a doctor, they would not fetch him."

The teacher broke in: "That is how Swedenborg describes hell."

**Preliminary Knowledge Necessary.**--The pupil asked: "Is there a hell?"

"You ask that, when you have been in it?"

"I mean, another one."

"What do you mean by another one? Has your experience not sufficed to convince you that there *is* one?"

"But what does Swedenborg think?"

"I don't know. It is possible that he does not mean a place, but a condition of mind. But as his descriptions of another side agree with our experiences on this side in this point, that whenever a man breaks the connection with the higher sphere, which is Love and Wisdom, a hell ensues, it does not matter whether it is here or there. He uses parables and allegories, as Christ did in order to be understood.

"Emerson in his *Representative Men* regards Swedenborg's genius as the greatest among modern thinkers, but he warns us against stereo-typing his forms of thought. True as transitional forms, they are false if one tries to fix them fast. He calls these descriptions a transitory embodiment of the truth, not the truth itself."

"But I do not yet understand Swedenborg."

"No, because you have not the necessary preliminary knowledge. Just like the peasant who came to a chemical lecture and only heard about letters and numbers. He considered it the most stupid stuff he had ever heard: 'They could only spell, but could not put the letters together.' He lacked the necessary preliminary knowledge. Still, when you read Swedenborg, read Emerson along with him."

**Perverse Science.**--The teacher continued: "Swedenborg never found a contradiction between science and religion, because he beheld the harmony in all, correspondences in the higher sphere to the lower, and the unity underlying opposites. Like Pythagoras, he saw the Law-giver in His laws, the Creator in His work, God in nature, history and the life of men. Modern degenerate science sees nothing, although it has obtained the telescope and microscope.

"Newton, Leibnitz, Kepler, Swedenborg, Linnaeus, the greatest scientists were religious God-fearing men. Newton wrote also an Exposition of the Apocalypse. Kepler was a mystic in the truest sense of the word. It was his mysticism which led to his discovery of the laws regulating the courses of the planets. Humble and pure-hearted, those men could see God while our decadents only see an ape infested by vermin.

"The fact that our science has fallen into disharmony with God, shows that it is perverse, and derives its light from the Lord of Dung."

**Truth in Error.**--The teacher continued: "Let us return for a moment to your green island. There you discovered that the world is a reflection of your interior state, and of the interior state of others. It is therefore probable that each carries his own heaven and hell within him. Thus we come to the conclusion that religion is something subjective, and therefore outside the reach of discussion.

"The believer is therefore right when he receives spiritual edification from the consecrated Bread and Wine. And the unbeliever is also not wrong when he maintains that *for him* it is only bread and wine. But if he asserts that it is the same with the believer, he is wrong. One ought not to punish him for it; one must only lament his want of intelligence. By calling religion subjective, I have not thereby diminished its power. The subjective is the highest for personality, which is an end in itself, inasmuch as the education of man to superman is the meaning of existence.

"But when many individuals combine in one belief, there results an objective force of tremendous intensity, which can remove mountains and overthrow the walls of Jericho.

**Accumulators.**--"When a race of wild men begin to worship a meteoric stone, and this stone is subsequently venerated by a nation for centuries, it accumulates psychic force, *i.e.* becomes a sacred object which can bestow strength on those who possess the receptive apparatus of faith. It can accordingly work miracles which are quite incomprehensible to unbelievers.

"Such a sacred object is called an amulet, and is not really more remarkable than an electric pocket-lamp. But the lamp gives light only on two conditions--that it is charged with electricity and that one presses the knob. Amulets also only operate under certain conditions.

"The same holds good of sacred places, sacred pictures and objects, and also of sacred rites which are called sacraments.

"But it may be dangerous for an unbeliever to approach too near to an accumulator. The faith-batteries of others can

produce an effect on them, and they may be killed thereby, if they possess not the earth-circuit to carry off the coarser earthly elements.

"The electric car proceeds securely and evenly as long as it is in contact with the overhead wire and also connected with the earth. If the former contact is interrupted, the car stands still. If the earth-circuit is blocked, an electric storm is the result, as was the case with St. Paul on the way to Damascus."

**Eternal Punishment.**--The pupil asked: "What is your belief regarding eternal punishments?"

"Let me answer evasively, so to speak: since wickedness is its own punishment, and a wicked man cannot be happy, and the will is free, an evil man may be perpetually tormented with his own wickedness, and his punishment accordingly have no end.

"But we will hope that the wicked will not adhere to his evil will for ever. A wicked man often experiences a change of nature when he sees something good. Therefore, it is our duty to show him what is good. The consciousness of fatality and being damned comes to everyone, even to the incredulous. That proves that there is an inborn sense of justice, a need to punish oneself, and that quite independent of dogmas. Moreover, it is a gross falsehood that the doctrine of hell was invented by Christianity. Greeks and Romans knew Hades and Tartarus with their refined tortures; the Jews had their Sheol and Gehenna; the cheerful Japanese rival Dante with their Inferno. It is therefore thoughtless nonsense to make Christian theology solely responsible for the doctrine of hell. It would be just as fair to trace it to the cheerful view of life of the Greeks and Romans, who first came upon the idea."

**"Desolation."**--The teacher continued: "When this feeling of fatality strikes an unbeliever, it often appears as the so-called persecution-mania. He believes himself, for example, persecuted by men who wish to poison him. Since his intelligence is so low that he cannot rise to the idea of God, his evil conscience makes him conjure up evil men as his persecutors. Thus he does not understand that it is God who is pursuing him, and therefore he dies or goes mad.

"But he who has strength enough to bow himself, or intelligence enough to guess at a method in this madness, cries to God for help and grace, and escapes the madhouse. After a season of self-chastisement, life begins to grow lighter; peace returns; he succeeds in his undertakings; his 'Green Island' again blooms with spring. This feeling of woe-begoneness often occurs about the fortieth or fiftieth year. It is the balancing of books at the solstice. The whole past is summed up, and the debit-side shows a plus which makes one despair. Scenes of earlier life pass by like a panorama, seen in a new light; long-forgotten incidents reappear even in their smallest details. The opening of the sealed Book of Life, spoken of in the Revelation, is a veritable reality. It is the day of judgment. The children of the Lord of Dung who have lost their intelligence understand nothing, but buy bromkali at the chemist's and take sick-leave because of 'neurasthenia.' That is a Greek word, which serves them as an amulet.

"Swedenborg calls this natural process 'the desolation' of the wicked. The pietists call it the 'awakening' before conversion."

**A World of Delusion.**--"Swedenborg writes: 'The angels are troubled concerning the darkness on earth. They say that they can see hardly any light anywhere, that men live and strengthen themselves in lying and deceit, and so heap up falsity upon falsity. In order to ratify these, they manage to extract, by way of inference, such true propositions from false premises, as, on account of the darknesses which conceal the true sources, and because the real state of the case is unknown, cannot be refuted.'

"This agrees with what every thinking man observes, that lying and deceit are universal. The whole of life--politics, society, marriage, the family--is counterfeit. Views which universally prevail are based upon false history; scientific theories are founded on error; the truth of to-day is discovered to be a lie to-morrow; the hero turns out to be a coward, the martyr a hypocrite. Te Deums are sung over a silver wedding, and the wedded pair, still secretly leading immoral lives, thank God that they have lived together happily for five-and-twenty years. The whole populace assembles once in a year to celebrate the memory of the 'Destroyer of the Country.' He who says the most foolish thing possible, receives a prize in money and a gold medal. At the annual asses' festival, the worst is crowned the asses' king.

"A mad world, my masters! If Hamlet plays the madman, he sees how mad the world is. But the spectator believes himself to be the only reasonable person, therefore He gives Hamlet his sympathy."

**The Conversion of the Cheerful Pagan, Horace.**--"Among the conventional falsehoods of the apes,<sup>[1]</sup> one of the best known is that conversion from irreligion is a purely Christian doctrine. By looking into Kumlin's Swedish translation of Horace, even a schoolboy can find this heading to the thirty-fourth ode of the first book, 'The Religious Conversion of

the Poet.'

"Horace belonged to the Epicurean sect who only believed in phantom gods, because they held that the divinities did not trouble themselves with the course of the world or of events, but enjoyed a careless life of continual ease. Horace accordingly had not been remarkably zealous in his religious duties. But a sudden flash of lightning and a heavy peal of thunder from a clear sky taught him at last that it was no blind unconscious force of nature, but the hand of a God, which hurled the lightning. Thereby he was awoken to reflection, and tried to warn and sober his frivolous countrymen by dwelling on the power of Jupiter. 'God can change the lowest with the highest; He puts down the exalted and uplifts the obscure.'

"After this Horace preached like a Jeremiah against the corruption of religion and morals. A modern 'ape' might feel justified in calling him a pietist since he was converted!

**Cheerful Paganism and its Doctrine of Hell.**--"*Origen against Celsus* is the title of the first refutation of the lying accusations which the pagans have brought against Christianity. Who will write a second? Who will show that the hell of the pagans was seven times worse than that of the Christians? In some Christian countries the Christian religion may not be taught in the schools, but boys are obliged to read Virgil's Sixth Aeneid, which describes the terrors of the underworld.

"There is the Lernaean Hydra, the Chimaera, Gorgons, and Harpies. On the banks of Cocytus roam crowds of the unburied; there they must roam for centuries because they have never found a grave. Is that humane? Then there are the poor suicides everlastingly immersed in the Styx. And the field of mourning where unhappy lovers hide themselves. 'Even after death their pangs are not ended.'

"But these were comparatively innocent. Criminals, however, are punished first by the fury Tisiphone. She seizes the damned, mocks them with hellish laughter, and threatens them with snakes. A Hydra opens fifty black jaws.... And so on till we come to the sieve of the Danaids, the wheel of Ixion, the thirst of Tantalus.

"Let us remember, however, that the men of the Renaissance, Dante and Michael Angelo, have depicted the most extreme torments, as though they believed in them. Anyone who wants to see how the cheerful Japanese describe hell, can look at the pictures which Riotor and Leofanti published in Paris, 1895, in the *Enfers Bouddhiques*."

Materialistic evolutionists.

**Faith the Chief Thing.**--The teacher continued: "Pietism is a condition of repentance, which men pass through like a purifying bath and gain a consciousness of inward cleanliness. It is therefore no hypocrisy, as the children of the Lord of Dung suppose. He who is severe towards himself may easily appear malicious to the unintelligent; and he who has suffered for his wickednesses feels himself freed from the past. This feeling the unbelievers call 'self-satisfaction.'

"A penitent never attains perfection, but ceaselessly relapses into the desires of the flesh. This may easily cause him to appear a hypocrite. Luther quickly saw that it is impossible to make one's acts correspond to one's belief. Therefore he laid stress on faith, let acts go, and adduced as his authority St. Paul's solution of the paradox: 'So I obey the law of God with the spirit, but with the flesh the law of sin.'

"Faith, Hope, and Love: that is the essence and kernel of religion. One's acts never come up to one's faith, and often lag far behind it. But there are some pious souls who persist in remaining in the condition of penance, and it may easily seem as though they wished to gain heaven in advance of the rest. But we should not blame them for it. There may be secret reasons which we do not know, and have never experienced.

"Socrates regarded the sense of shame and conscience as what distinguished man from the beasts. To these two Christ added pity."

**Penitents.**--The teacher continued: "Muhammed early traversed the stage of desolation and became a pietist, when he believed himself persecuted by devils. Set free finally by suffering and prayer, he exclaims in the 93rd Sura: 'By the forenoon, and the night when it darkens, thy Lord has not forsaken thee or hated thee, and surely the future for thee will be better than the past. And thy Lord will give thee sufficient, and thou shalt be satisfied. Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter? and find thee erring and guide thee? and find thee poor with a family and nourish thee? But as for the orphan, oppress him not; and as for the beggar, drive him not away; and as for the favour of thy Lord, discourse thereof!' When Buddha left his father's palace and saw the sufferings of men and the instability of life, he became a penitent, left wife and child, went into the wilderness, and chastened himself by fasting and renunciation. But after he had undergone the severest penances, he cautiously returned to ordinary life, and allowed himself moderate enjoyments in order not to devastate his soul. Some of his disciples deserted him and called him a recreant, but that did

not trouble him.

"Goethe himself passed through religious crises, and was at one period intimate with the Hermhuters, the pietists of that time. In his old age, when he grew wise, he became a mystic, *i.e.* he discovered that there are things between heaven and earth of which the 'Beans' have never let themselves dream."

**Paying for Others.**--The pupil said: "I must confess that I do not understand the Atonement." "You mean, understand it with everyday intelligence. No one can. The highest questions cannot be solved by us, just as little as problems of the fourth dimension. But the solution is given to us, if we ask for it in a proper way.

"As regards the redemptive work of Christ, you can comprehend it by an analogy. You remember, when you owed so many debts, that there were knocks at your door all day long, that you had to go out early in the morning in order to borrow, or to escape your creditors. Finally you feared your room so, that you dared not go home to sleep. You sat on a seat in the park, and said to yourself, 'It is hell!' Then there came a man who knew you; he paid your debts; you called him your saviour. Do you not see that one can pay for another, and deliver him?"

"Yes, but one cannot make an evil deed undone."

"No, but the Almighty can obliterate it from our memory, and from the memory of others. But mark this well: every time that you rummage in the past of another, although it has been atoned for, the memory of your own evil deeds starts up. Just like a badly washed stain which goes through the stuff and appears on the other side. All miracles are conditional, just as vows are."

**The Lice-King.**--As the teacher roamed one day in Qualheim he came into a wood under whose shadow many decaying funguses grew. On a footpath he saw what he thought at first was a snake writhing about. It was no snake, however, but a mass of grubs clotted together. The teacher asked his guide: "What is the meaning of that?"

"Ask first what it is; then I will tell you the meaning of it."

"Well?"

"These are the larvae of the snake-worm, which are obliged, like clay and wadded straw, to hold together in order not to perish. They love poisonous funguses, and cannot bear the light. They maintain their existence by a mutual interchange of slime, without which they become dead and dry. But they call darkness light, because the sun would kill them. They feed on the poisonous funguses. They hate each other, but must keep together. Do you understand now, or not?"

"What is the name of the creature?"

"It is called the snake-worm or lice-king, appears once in every generation, and is a herald of evil times."

"What does it mean then?"

"It is a symbol of the men who talk with their faces turned backwards, and therefore see everything distorted; who call evil good, and good evil. Because they live in pride and self-love they cannot see God, but elect one of the mass to be their king, and believe that they are, collectively, God. By 'freedom,' they mean freedom to do evil. Often an ox or cow comes by and treads upon the motely mass. Then, of course, it is obliterated in slime, but another soon takes its place."

"It seems to be as eternal as evil."

**The Art of Life.**--The teacher said: "Life is hard to live, and the destinies of men appear very different. Some have brighter days, others darker ones. It is therefore difficult to know how one should behave in life, what one should believe, what views one should adopt, or to which party one should adhere. This destiny is not the inevitable blind fate of the ancients, but the commission which each one has received, the task he must perform. The theosophists call it Karma, and believe it is connected with a past which we only dimly remember. He who has early discovered his destiny, and keeps closely to it, without comparing his with others, or envying others their easier lot, has discovered himself, and will find life easier. But at periods when all wish to have a similar lot, one often engages in a fruitless struggle to make one's own harder destiny resemble the lot of those to whom an easier one has been assigned. Thence result disharmony and friction. Even up to old age, many men seek to conquer their destiny, and make it resemble that of others."

The pupil asked: "If it is so, why is not one informed of one's Karma from the beginning?"

The teacher answered: "That is pure pity for us. No man could endure life, if he knew what lay before him. Moreover, man must have a certain measure of freedom; without that, he would only be a puppet. Also the wise think that the

voyage of discovery we make to discover our destiny is instructive for us. 'Let My Grace be sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness.'"

**The Mitigation of Destiny.**--The teacher continued: "Some appear to be destined to honour and wealth, others only to honour, and others only to wealth. Many seem to be born to humiliations, poverty, and sickness--'struck like a coin in the mint,' as the saying is. Everyone can mitigate his destiny by submitting and adapting himself to it--by resignation, in a word. The inward happiness which one gains thereby, excels all outward prosperity. All things work for good to him who serves God. The man who does not strive after honour and wealth is impregnable; in a certain sense, all-powerful.

"The hardest thing is to see the injustice in the world; but even that can be overcome by taking it as a trial. If the wicked prospers, let him; we have nothing to do with it. Besides, his happiness is not so great when one looks closer at it.

"When you are persecuted by misfortune, and your conscience cannot call it deserved, take it quietly. Regard the endurance of the ordeal as an honour. There will come a day when everything will improve. Then perhaps you will discover that the misfortunes were benefits, or, at any rate, afforded opportunity for exercising endurance. Envy no man; you know not what his envied lot might conceal, if it actually came to changing places."

**The Good and the Evil.**--The pupil asked: "Is there really such a great difference between men?"

The teacher answered: "Yes and No! But a sure mark of the evil man is, he does evil for evil's sake. That is the bad man--the sarcastic schoolmaster, the domestic tyrant. That is the child, which torments its mother by finding out everything she dislikes. That is the bad wife, the fury, who enjoys torturing and humiliating a man who only wishes her good.

"In the battles of life it is quite human to rejoice when a foe is defeated. On all battlefields God has been thanked for the victory. That is something different.

"When one sees the insolent struck by misfortune, one rejoices that there is justice. When one sees the wicked punished, one feels satisfaction at seeing the balance of equity restored. That is something different.

"But he who rejoices over every evil deed which he himself has been under no necessity of committing; he who rejoices when the criminal escapes his punishment; he who gloats over the misfortune of a good man; he who suffers when goodness and merit are rewarded--that is the evil man. Such were those who clamoured for the murderer Barabbas's release and perhaps gave a feast in his honour."

**Modesty and the Sense of Justice.**--The teacher continued: "Properly speaking, the question you should have asked just now is, 'What men are good?' Socrates, according to Plato, said, 'Those who possess modesty and a sense of justice. Those are the religious men.'

"He, on the other hand, who has neither faith nor hope, can assume the outward aspect of an honourable man. But when his worldly interests or advantages are concerned, he lets honour drop. Similarly, when it is a question of saving one of his associates from punishment. Then he can bear false witness, and believe it is a good act. He does not stick at helping forward an unworthy friend or relative. He will swear falsely in order to attack a believer. He thinks everything lawful, *i.e.* on his side against others, and he never repents anything, saying to himself, 'He who lets himself be misled must pay for it.'

"When a religious man makes a slip, he is wont to feel ashamed, and to reproach himself. Often he is naive enough to confess his fault or his mis-doing. Then the Lice-King shouts 'Hurrah!' For he would never be so simple. Still, though a believer fall seventy times and seven, he rises again and confesses his fault. That is the difference."

**Derelects.**--The pupil asked: "How is one to judge of the men who are overthrown in the battle of life without being armed for the conflict? You remember such characters at school; they could not learn, could not attend; they were not ashamed, however, but regarded themselves as a kind of victims. They left school, went out into life, and collapsed. It was not the fault of their domestic surroundings, for they came of good families, who supported them. They were not bad, possessed talents, were clever, but had no knowledge and no interests in life. 'What is the object of it?' they were in the habit of saying. They could not bring themselves to work, but dozed at their desks. They seemed to be born to do nothing, which is a punishment for the active. Explain to me their destiny!"

"That I cannot."

"Some have died young in poverty; others begged their way through to their sixtieth year, while they saw former

school-fellows who had been worse than they, prosper and flourish."

"I have seen and lamented them, but I cannot explain their destiny."

"Then they are not to blame, and yet live such lives of shame and poverty; that is cruel."

"Hush! Criticise not Providence! What is now inexplicable may some day be explained! And remember that life is not paradise. Two shall be grinding at one mill; one shall be taken, and the other left!"

**Human Fate.**--The teacher said: "The destinies of men are obscure; therefore one should be extremely careful in judging. The Tower of Siloam was ready to fall, and fell on good and evil alike. The disciples asked Christ what sin the man born blind had committed. Christ answered that neither he nor his parents had committed any special sin. When we see how some are born crippled, blind, deaf, and dumb, we had best be silent. To lament their lot may annoy them, for they seem to be protected in a mysterious way. They are objects of pity, and seldom fall into abject poverty. They are good-humoured through life, and hardly seem to suffer under their ailments. But woe to the man who ridicules anyone marked out by such a fate! If he is persistently pursued by calamity, or struck himself by a greater misfortune, one can hardly ignore it by using the formula 'chance.' A person who had scoffed at a blind man was struck in the eye by a stone which was thrown into a tramcar. At first he was alarmed, and thought of Nemesis. But when he heard that the stone had been so hurled as the result of some blasting operations he became cheerful, *i.e.* more ignorant, and said it was a chance. He saw the phenomenon, but nothing behind it; the effect, but not the cause.

"The 'Beans' cannot see beyond their noses. Sometimes, when they have long noses, they see somewhat further. The supernatural in nature is incomprehensible to their intelligence. Indeed, all which passes their limited understanding is for them supernatural. That is logical, but these rustics regard it as illogical."

**Dark Rays.**--As the teacher wandered through his Inferno, he came to a temple of black granite, which was quite dark inside. Within it something was going on, but he could not distinguish what.

"What is it?" he asked a white-robed figure, which wore a laurel-wreath, but had a green face spotted blue like a corpse. "That is a temple of light," it answered; "but the initiated cannot see our black rays until he receives the white arsenic-kiss from the ultra-violet priestess."

"Give me the kiss," answered the teacher, but he turned his back to her at the same time. However, she did not notice this, as she could not distinguish back from front. Now his eyes were opened, and he saw how within the temple they were offering incense to their "gods of light," as they called them. There stood the murderer Barabbas, a halo round his head, and a plate on his breast with the inscription: "Acquitted because of insufficient evidence." There sat Judas Iscariot under his fig-tree, with the thirty pieces of silver, in the bosom of his family, promoted to be general-director of customs. There were the Emperor Nero, fresh from the bath, with a white dove on his hand, and Julian the Apostate near an altar, with geese sacrificed upon it.

The priests and priestesses sang a chant of New Birth and Resurrection, burned incense compounded of rose-leaves and arsenic-acid, and danced a snake-dance, which they called "the joy of life." Then they began to quarrel about a laurel-wreath, and fought one another. As the teacher went, they all sat there in the darkness and wept. But when a fresh north wind blew through the temple, they trembled like dry leaves.

**Blind and Deaf.**--The teacher said: "There are, as you know, people with whom one cannot be angry. Perhaps it is because of their natural good-nature, which shines even through a cutting jest. And there are people whose malice comes to light long after one has met them. Such an after-effect I have experienced myself.

"Five-and-twenty years after a conversation with a man, I felt angry with him. Naturally, during a sleepless night, when memory threw a new light on the scene which had taken place between us. Not till then did the insulting word he spoke receive its proper signification, which I now understood. There are words which can murder. Such a word this one was. What a good thing that I did not understand it at the time! It would have resulted in calamity to four people.

"By developing a peculiar instinct I have succeeded in fabricating a kind of diving-costume, with which I protect myself in society. When the insulting word or the biting allusion is uttered, the sound certainly reaches my ear, but the receptive apparatus refuses to let it go further. In the same way I can make myself literally blind. I obliterate the face of the person I dislike. How it is done, I do not know, but it seems to be a psychological process. The face becomes a dirty whitish-grey spot and disappears. It is necessary to make oneself deaf and blind, or it is impossible to live.

"One must cancel and go on! That is generally called 'forgiving,' but it may be a device of the revengeful for sparing himself trouble, or a scheme of the sensitive for not letting insults reach him. One cannot undertake more than one can bear!"

**The Disrobing Chamber.**--The teacher continued: "Swedenborg says in his *Inferno*...."

"Say 'Hell,'" the pupil interrupted him. "I know that there is a hell, for I have been in it."

"Well, Swedenborg has in his *Hell* a disrobing chamber into which the deceased are conducted immediately after their death. There they lay aside the dress they have had to wear in society and in the family. Then the angels see at once whom they have before them."

"Does Swedenborg then mean that we are all hypocrites?"

"Yes, in a certain way. An inborn modesty compels us to conceal what has to do with the animal; politeness obliges us to be silent on many points. Consideration, friendship, kinship, love, oblige us to overlook our neighbour's weaknesses, although we disapprove them even in ourselves. A man who is ashamed of his faults is also silent about them. To boast of one's faults is shamelessness."

"Can one really call such consideration hypocrisy?"

"Hardly; especially as things go wrong, however one behaves."

"Yes, life is not easy; it is hard to be a man; almost impossible."

**The Character Mask.**--The teacher said: "I knew in my youth a man who was imperious, quick to anger, revengeful, emotional. Accidentally his gifts as a speaker were discovered. He could thrill the minds of his hearers, bring them into touch with himself, lift them up--yes, and nearly carry them away. But on one occasion when he was at the height of his oratory he halted, became grotesque and ridiculous, and people laughed. The first time that this happened, he was depressed. But they thought he wished to produce a comical effect, and he obtained the reputation of a humorous speaker.

"Out of his misfortune he made a virtue, accepted the role which had been assigned to him, and finally enjoyed a great popularity as a humourist. He often felt annoyed at having to play the part of a buffoon, but the desire to hear his own voice and to be greeted with applause unceasingly spurred him on to win new triumphs.

"Society had made of him a sort of 'homunculus,' which it cultivated. But in his family and in his office it was not to be found."

**Youth and Folly.**--The teacher said: "What do you think of the proverb, 'The young *imagine* that the old are fools, and the old *know* that the young are fools?'"

"It is quite true. When I was young, I imagined that I understood everything better than the old, but I really understood nothing. I was young and stupid, confused my own knowledge with that of others', believed that what I had learnt was my own. When I had read a book, I went into society and proclaimed what I had read, as though it were my own discovery, I was therefore a thief.

"But I was the victim of another delusion, *i.e.* I believed that I understood all that I remembered, or that I knew what I happened at the moment to remember. For instance, when I was fourteen I did not understand logarithms, but I learnt the way of proceeding with them by heart, and used logarithms as a short-cut.

"When one studies a science in detail, one begins to collect material, else the result is nil. But the young man attacks the difficult science of life without experience, *i.e.* without material. And the result is what we see.

"I can see myself now as a young student. How proud I was of borrowed knowledge and borrowed plumes! How I despised the old! And yet all that I had stolen from books was stolen from the old, who had written the text-books. The young write no text-books. O Youth! O Foolishness!

**When I was Young and Stupid.**--"When I was young and stupid, I always had a band of hearers who saw a light in me. When I grew older, and wisdom came, I was left alone with my lecture and regarded as an old ass. But the passage from youth to age was bitter, when I discovered that the old could not be deceived. They read my secret thoughts behind my lofty words; they anticipated my evil purposes; they unmasked my crude desires; they prophesied the results of my actions; and found in my past the true cause of my present condition. They seemed to me to be wizards and prophets, although they were simple characters.

"When I asked myself how they could know this and that, I found the answer later--because they had collected material; because they had passed through all the stages which were new to me; because they had also tried to deceive the old in the same way, but had not succeeded. Youth, however, is always believing that it can deceive old age, were it only by stealing a thought from him. I know, moreover, why the young obstinately imagine they are superior because

they can deceive. There are old wise men who have come to terms with life, and therefore think it a duty to let themselves be deceived now and then; they let themselves be deceived tastefully.

"Youth is only an idea, an abstraction, a boast, a theme for an essay, a song, a toast!"

**Constant Illusions.**--The pupil continued: "When I was young I was never really happy, because my seniors oppressed me, because the future disquieted me, because I lived on my parents' money almost as though I were a pensionary. When the first symptoms of love showed themselves, life became a hell. I was never very well, for the most serious illnesses--measles, scarlet fever, agues, croup, and others--affect only the young. I could never satisfy an innocent fancy, for I had no money; every desire was nipped in the bud. I was a slave, for my time was not at my own disposal, and I could not leave my place in order to visit foreign countries. Such is the huge humbug which is called 'youth.' No one has dared to unmask it, for fear lest the young might pelt him with stones, or draw caricatures of him on the walls. The teachers in the schools crouch before them, flatter them, pretend to envy them. If anyone comes who does not flatter these shameless and conscienceless little bandits, these lewd apes who live in the age of innocence, these parent-murderers--there is always some old woman there who exclaims, 'Ah! he does not understand the young!' He understands them very well, for he has been young himself. But the young do not understand the old, for they have never been old.

"The young assert that the future is in their hands, and that therefore they are feared by the cowardly. Let us wait and see! If thirty per cent, reach the future at all, they will work just as their elders have done, and with the thoughts which they have borrowed from them. Exceptions prove the rule."

**The Merits of the Multiplication-Table.**--The teacher said: "All wish to haul at the rope called 'Development.' The word generally signifies 'alteration,' and men usually love any novelty which does not injure them. But there are some excellent things which are very old, and therefore they remain unaltered. The multiplication-table, for instance, is splendid, though it is said to be as old as Pythagoras. The Rule of Three holds good, though it was the ancient Hindus who discovered this law of causes and effects. The geometry of Euclid and the logic of Aristotle is still read in the schools. Our architecture imitates Greek and Roman models, and the sculpture of the ancients is not despicable. We regulate our calendar very much as the Egyptians and Chaldaeans did. Goethe and Schiller can be read, and Shakespeare is still performed.

"We see, therefore, that not all which has been done in the past is to be despised. He who prophesies that Christianity will disappear because it is old, makes a miscalculation. Homer is a thousand years older. And the Old Testament would first have to be cancelled. But Christianity lives and flourishes, although it may be in secret and not published in the newspapers. Still they sing in schools and barracks every morning, 'Trust in God and in His word and strength in order to do good.'

"But it must go hard with the Christians. 'In this world ye have tribulation.' Through periodical seasons of bondage under Egyptian Pharaohs, they learn patience till they begin their wanderings in the wilderness."

**Under the Prince of this World.**--The teacher wandered in Qualheim and came to a town. In the midst of the chief market-place there stood a bronze image of the destroyer of his country. The youth of the place came out in holiday attire in order to celebrate the hero's memory. The teacher asked his guide: "Why do they celebrate the destroyer of the fatherland?"

"I do not know," answered the guide.

"Are they mad?"

"Probably. Here below everything is topsy-turvy. This hero<sup>[1]</sup> was considered mad, and certainly he was so. He carried on mad wars, fled when defeated, and cast the blame on others. When misfortune came he collapsed like a weakling, took to his bed, and pretended to be ill. In his leisure hours he plotted, but always ill. At last he made false coins, but managed to procure a scapegoat, who was broken on the wheel. The country was ruined and could never recover its former prestige."

"And this is the man they celebrate?"

"Yes! but they have other statues besides. There back in the park stands one, crowned with a laurel-wreath. He was the wickedest man of his time. And there by the harbour is a third statue--of a perjurer..."

"That is just as it is with us," said the teacher.

"Yes, it is about the same."

"Where are we then?"

"Under the Prince of this World, the Lord of Dung. 'But be of good courage! I have overcome the world!'"

He probably refers to Charles XII of Sweden.

**The Idea of Hell.**--The pupil asked: "When I read Swedenborg's *Hell*, I often believed he was describing our life on earth. Is it possible that we are already there? As a Christian, I have learnt that there was a Fall followed by a curse. Certainly life seems to me rather an Inferno than a school and a prison, for nothing keeps what it promises. The most beautiful things seem only made in order to become ugly, the good in order to become bad."

"Have you never seen anything permanently beautiful here below?"

"Yes, Nature at all seasons is so beautiful, that I exclaim with a feeling of pain, 'How super-naturally beautiful! And we are so hideous!' Life may also seem beautiful in a well-ordered family where there is peace and happiness and festival. I have seen it so, but only for two minutes at a time, and perhaps it was my way of looking at it."

"Yet there are people who can thrive down here."

"He who can thrive here is a pig. I know fellows who think they are in Paradise when they are on a summer holiday, have a well-spread table lit up by Chinese lanterns, and let off rockets. But 'Woe to the man who is born sensitive!' says Rousseau. Either he goes under, or he must arm himself with brutality. In the last case it may happen that he cannot divest himself of the armour, which has become a second nature. There are some extremely sensitive natures who cannot come to terms with life nor touch reality. These unfortunates finally lose the power of looking after themselves, and end in asylums."

**Self-Knowledge.**--The teacher said: "One may have already lived a long time, consider oneself a respectable man, and, as such, have enjoyed the esteem of others. Then there comes a day when one awakes as out of slumber, sees oneself as a spectre, is alarmed, and asks, 'Am I *that*?' One discovers that one has done things which now appear inexcusable. And one asks oneself, 'How could I?' On one occasion one has even committed a crime; on another, one has been dragged, so to speak, by the hair; on a third, one fell into a trap."

"But there are men who are so sleepy that they never awake; and so wanting in intelligence that they cannot see how black they are. Once I had a friend who was sixty years old. On one occasion, with an outbreak of stupid astonishment, he exclaimed, 'Why are people so prejudiced against me? I seem to myself an excellent fellow!' And this man was a tyrant who trampled men underfoot, a hired executioner, a murderer who betrayed the innocent, took bribes, and practised simony and all kinds of wickedness. I did not wish to condemn him, but tried to defend him. Perhaps he felt justified in becoming an executioner, for there must be such officials; so he adopted it as a profession. He had an evil nature, and found it therefore natural or right when he acted in accordance with it. He lived in complete harmony with himself, and those who resembled him pronounced him a 'fine fellow'--'healthy, naive, and, therefore, excellent society.'"

"When he died, I drew a picture of his character for an acquaintance. The latter was himself a black sheep, and answered quite naively, 'You are unfair to him; I think he was a fine fellow.'"

**Somnambulism and Clairvoyance in Everyday Life.**---The teacher said: "I am now fifty-eight years old, and have seen four generations. I have not been pure-hearted, for all black blood streams into the heart, but I have had moments in which I was transported into a childlike, unconscious mood, and took delight in intercourse with men. I knew that they hated me, laughed at my misfortune, and waited for my fall. But I was immune against their malice. I saw in them only poor men, who liked my company and were sympathetic with me. Even when they made ill-natured jests against me, I did not understand them; and when they gave vent to an open rudeness, I took it as a meaningless joke. That is a kind of pleasant somnambulism."

"Often, however, I can be wide-awake; then I see society naked; I see their dirty linen beneath their clothes, their deformities, their unwashed feet. But, worst of all, I hear the thoughts behind their words; I see their gestures, which do not harmonise with what they say; I intercept a side-glance; I notice a foot-stamp under the table, a nose turning itself up over my wine, or a fork critically passing by a dish.... Then life seems ghastly! I had a friend, who once in society had an attack of this clairvoyance; he sat down on the middle of the table, declared all he had seen in the course of the evening, and stripped his friends bare. The result was, he was pronounced mad and taken to an asylum."

"There are many kinds of madness. Let us confess that!"

**Practical Measures against Enemies.**--The pupil asked: "How can I love my neighbour as myself? In the first place, I

ought not to love myself; secondly, I feel so out of sympathy with men, that it is difficult to regard them as objects of love."

The teacher answered: "The verb *agapao* generally means only 'treating kindly,' and that you can manage to do."

"But to love one's enemies is suicide."

"You think so! But have you tried this method? It is very practical, and I have tested it. Once against my worst enemy, who attacked my honour and means of livelihood, I established a wholesome hatred like a bulwark, as I thought. But my hatred became a conductor by which I received the currents of his. They surprised me in my weak moments, and his wickedness passed over to me. He grew to gigantic proportions, and became a Frankenstein which I had myself produced.

"Then I resolved to break the conductor. I avoided seeing him, and never mentioned his name, for that is a kind of incantation. When people spoke of him in society, I was silent, or threw in a friendly word on his behalf. My Frankenstein pined away for want of nourishment, and disappeared out of my thoughts. Finally information reached my enemy that I had spoken good of him. He was struck with amazement, dwindled down, felt ashamed of himself, and believed he had made a mistake. Therefore, never speak ill of your enemy; that only rouses people in his defence, and procures him friends. You see, therefore, what deep wisdom lies in the simplest teaching of the Gospel, which you believed yourself competent to criticise."

**The Goddess of Reason.**--The teacher continued: "The fact that our intelligence finds so many contradictions and difficulties in the great truths of religion is due not only to defects in our understanding but to an evil will. The presumption of wishing to understand God and His purposes is as though one attempted to steer a frigate with an oar. Every Greek tragedy closes with a warning against insolence and [Greek: *hubris*] Nothing is so displeasing to the gods.

"Swedenborg says: 'As soon as we break our connection with what is higher, our understanding is darkened. At the same time we are punished by being allowed to imagine ourselves more illuminated than others.'

"All the philosophers of the 'Illumination' grope in darkness. That period of history which is jestingly called the 'Illumination' is the darkest we have had. The goddess of reason, Mademoiselle Maillard, was adored only by madmen. The truths of religion never contradict reason until the latter has been clouded by an evil will. But then the discoveries begin, and then every religious truth 'contradicts reason,' such as the simple truth that God exists, that the Almighty can employ unknown laws or suspend laws which He Himself has given, that He can impart spiritual blessings by means of material symbols, and so on.

"All 'free-thinking' is foolishness, for thought is not free, but bound by the laws of thought, by logic, just as nature is bound by the laws of nature. The evil will seeks freedom in order to do evil, and the evil mind seeks freedom in order to think perversely."

**Stars Seen by Daylight.**--The teacher said: "The fool lives only for the present, for the moment, in the last fashionable error of the day, in the diving-bell of his daily paper, in dependence on public opinion, in the slavery of partisanship. The wise man lives in all times. For him there is neither time nor space. He is present always and everywhere; on this side and that side of the grave. He ranges over the world's history and fathoms the depths of himself; he regards himself as an inhabitant of the Universe, and not merely of the earth. He feels himself related to Plato and Aristotle; holds converse with the great spirits of the past in their writings. Sometimes he lives in his childhood; sometimes in his mature age. He lives in the past, as though it were present. He can 'think himself' into the lives of others; he rejoices with the joyful, mourns with the sorrowful, sympathises with the suffering. He feels on behalf of humanity; has no age, no nation. He sees the record of to-day's conflict laid up in historical archives, often without any other result. On the morrow, to-day's wisdom is only straw, in which something else grows; even errors are useful as manure. Everything serves. He bears everything, for he hopes; and hope is a virtue; it means believing good of God.

"Ephemeral flies get excited about trifles, and believe one can discover new truths among the telegrams in the breakfast-table newspaper. If a new star is discovered, they believe the others are extinguished. But hitherto the new have all been extinguished. The new star in Perseus appeared only for two years, and then it vanished. The Chinese Y-King says, 'If one goes into one's tent, and makes it dark about one, one can see the star Mei in the Archer in broad daylight.'

"Retire then sometimes to your tent in the wilderness, and you will see the stars by day."

**The Right to Remorse.**--The pupil asked: "Is one right in feeling remorseful for one's past, after discovering one's errors?"

"If you mean by 'feeling remorse,' wishing the past undone, you are not right, for in every man's life there is a rectifying element; every error by being refuted becomes an involuntary occasion for the triumph of truth. But if you mean by 'remorse,' hating yourself as a purveyor of falsity, you are right. But say something in your own defence."

"I can say this much: I was the child of an evil time; I was misled by the seducers of my youth; I mention none of them. My understanding was stronger than my divine reason. My flesh ruled over my spirit. My inborn defiance of authority, my inherited sensitiveness of nature received impressions, without stopping to criticise them. In a word, I might call myself a victim of my seducers, of heredity, of my natural weakness, and sensitiveness. The final awakening of my reason, however, I reckon not as a merit of my own, but as a grace conferred upon me. The fact that I have had sufficient time in which to refute my former errors, I count as the greatest good-fortune which has ever befallen me. Therefore I do not wish my past undone, although I abominate it."

**A Religious Theatre.**--"It looks as though men did not think very highly of themselves. If they see a maliciously satirical piece represented, they enjoy it without applying it to themselves. They take it as intended only for others.

"In my youth there was a dramatist, who was at first a satirist, but finally came to feel sympathy with men. After his feelings had become modified by his living a steady and fairly happy life, he saw men in a more cheerful light. Accordingly, he wrote a piece portraying only noble characters with fine feelings and warm hearts.

"What happened? The public believed at first it was irony. But during the second act they discovered their mistake. A voice exclaimed from the stalls: 'Deuce take it! It is meant seriously!' The further the piece progressed, the greater was the disgust! The audience felt ashamed before each other, and for the author. Some hurried out, and those who remained ended by laughing. They laughed at the goodness, self-sacrifice, renunciation, forgiveness depicted in the piece. They did not know themselves any more, and regarded the descriptions as unnatural; real life, they said, was not like that; men were not angels. It may therefore be risky to speak well of men. But one must not forget that religious people do not visit the theatre, because the theatre is godless. Greek tragedies used to commence with a sacrifice to the gods, and all tragedies deal with the powerlessness of men in conflict with deities. Why do not our religious leaders build a theatre in which one might see the evil unmasked and put to shame?"

**Through Constraint to Freedom.**--The teacher continued: "This world is governed by constraint. All men are dependent on one another and press upon one another like the stones in a vaulted building--from above, from below, from the sides. They watch and spy on one another. There is therefore no freedom, and there can be none, in this edifice which is called Government and Society.

"The foundation-stones have the most to bear; therefore they must be of granite, while the upper ones are of light brick. For there are fancy-bricks, which support nothing, but are merely ornamental; they are supported by others, feel themselves in the way and dispensable; but they serve as ornaments, and of that they are aware.

"He who demands more freedom than the rest, is a thief and tyrant; if he withdraws himself from his burden, he lays it upon others. This perpetual longing for freedom, which figures in biographies as a virtue and a distinction, is really only a weakness. More strength is required to bear than to be home. The only justifiable striving after relative freedom is, not to have to bear more than one ought. Therefore it is the business of rulers to apportion the burdens precisely. But for that, adequate knowledge, a mathematical gift, and a nice sense of justice are necessary.

"But behind this common longing after freedom lies another deeper one, which is confused with the former. That is the sighing of creation for deliverance from the bondage of the flesh. This has found its strongest expression in St. Paul's exclamation: 'Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' But this freedom can only be won by patiently bearing the constraint of this world. Through constraint is the way to freedom therefore!"

**The Praise of Folly.**--"In this world of foolishness one sees constantly how fools smile even when their views are ratified by time. That is, in truth, a silly smile. The fool says, 'We are here in order to develop ourselves.' When they see a man who, in the course of years, has grown wiser and more righteous, they should be glad that their assertion is established. Instead of that they make a malicious grimace, and say scornfully, 'Yes, now you have grown old!' Yet we both started with the assumption that wisdom should come with years. Let us rejoice together that it is so. If the Devil really becomes a monk when he is old, what a happiness and blessing for mankind that there is one evil spirit the less. Is it not so? Why should they make a grimace at it?

"Voltaire was a scoffer and a bit of a knave up to old age. Finally, however, he recovered his reason, just like lunatics shortly before they die. And then he wrote of human life:

"Pleasure, in the freshness of youth, I sought thy deliciousness;

"Finally, in the winter of old age, I discover thy vanity;

"The thirst for reputation and honour makes men enemies to one another. What was it that I thirsted for? Reputation is but vanity.

"Genius in its pride roams through realms of knowledge.

"But my knowledge only plagues me; knowledge is but vanity."

"But the fools make grimaces, when one of them recovers his reason. Then they say, 'He has gone mad.'"

**The Inevitable.**--The teacher said: "The question, 'What has one a right to feel remorse for?' is very complicated. I once followed the career of a foreign writer. I read his works, which seemed to belong to another world, with great admiration. His dramas all appeared to breathe a melancholy fear of some unknown terror that was bound to come. His philosophy was that of a saint. His landscapes seemed to be bathed not in common air but in pure aether. He was then about forty years old, and I expected every day to hear that he had gone into a convent.

"But afterwards I heard he had married an actress, with whom he went about, and who appeared as a 'living statue' in one of his pieces. He also wrote new dramas for her, and now, when they became cynical and brutal, he achieved a greater popularity than he had ever been able to gain before. He degraded his person, his genius, his wife; and as he sank, I wept inwardly. One day I read in the paper that she had deserted him, but that may have been false. The thought of his fate tormented me; it seemed to have been predetermined. All his dramas written while he was still unmarried treated of this terrible thing which he foresaw and feared. It seemed to me as though he were compelled to take a mud-bath, and obliged to let himself be besmirched by life precisely in this way. It seemed as though he had not the right to ante-date heaven; as though he were not allowed to lead a pure, saintly life. It is terrible, because it is inexplicable."

**The Poet's Sacrifice.**--The teacher continued: "This man's destiny reminds me of the Indian drama, *Urvashi*. A penitent who withdraws to solitude in order to purify his soul by renunciation, may finally attain such lofty spiritual heights that his power may become dangerous to the lower deities. In order to hinder such a penitent in his spiritual development, the god Indra sent an Apsara, a sort of celestial courtesan, in order to distract and seduce him.

"Does not that resemble the case which I mentioned just now? How can the one who has been seduced feel guilty in such a case, or have the right to repent a wrong he did not do? Now a poet is something different to a recluse, and in order to be able to describe life in all its aspects and dangers he must first have lived it. What sort of a poet would Shakespeare have been if he had lived as a steady young fellow, continued in his father's honourable profession, and in leisure hours written about his little affairs? Although one does not know much about the great Englishman, one sees from his works what a stormy life he must have led. There is hardly a misfortune which he has not experienced, hardly a passion which he has not felt. Hate and love, revenge and lust, murder and fire, all seem to have come within the circle of his experience as a poet. A real poet must sacrifice his person for his work. I can conceive of a symbolical monument to Shakespeare under the figure of Hercules kindling his own pyre on Mount Oeta, sacrificing his opulent life as an offering for mankind. That is a good idea, is it not?"

The pupil answered: "Truly you have the power of binding and loosing; now you have loosed me."

**The Function of the Philistines.**--The teacher said: "Israel had some unpleasant neighbours called Philistines, who guarded the coast-line along the sea. They worshipped weird gods, such as Dagon the Fish-god, Beelzebub the Lord of Dung, and Astarte. But unpleasant though they were, they seemed to have had a part to play in the life of Israel. As soon as the chosen people abandoned the temple, the Philistines came and closed the sanctuary, set the Lord of Dung upon the altar, and burned incense before the Fish-god. As often as the children of Israel quarrelled among themselves, the Philistines advanced irresistibly. The hand of the Lord was with them, so that they punished and chastised their enemies. Once they took possession of the Ark of the Covenant.

"We have our Philistines on the Bosphorus; they are called Turks. When the Christians were unfaithful to their Lord, the Turk took possession of Christ's grave, and St. Sophia became a mosque. Whenever the Christians fought with each other, the Turk appeared. After the Thirty Years' War, when the Christians had tom each other like bloodhounds, the Turk came as far as Vienna, and the Crescent surmounted the Cross in Hungary."

The pupil asked: "Why do not the great powers recapture the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of St. Sophia? They could do it in a moment!"

"I do not know. Perhaps they cannot. We need our Philistine, the bogie-man with whom one frightens children. In France the churches were shut by the pagans when people ceased to attend Mass. Now they set up the Lord of Dung on the altar. Marat, in his time, was buried in the Pantheon; but when Christ reentered, Marat was thrown into the

sewer. The last to obtain apotheosis in the Pantheon was an engineer, who had a single merit--that of being murdered by a friend of freedom. When we become Christians again, we shall receive back both the Holy Sepulchre and Santa Sophia. We do not need to take them. Such is the great function of the Philistines in the spiritual economy of nature."

**World-Religion.**--The teacher continued: "Goethe wrote in his youth a treatise maintaining that the religion imposed by the State was the most favourable for the maintenance of the State."

The pupil objected: "But how will it fare with the individual conscience?"

"As it has done hitherto. The State determines the views of the individual in geometry, botany, history, and religion, by instruction in the schools, by religious services in the colleges, and prayers in camps and barracks."

"But what about freedom of belief and thought?"

"We have already agreed that there is no freedom, but that all is dependence and compulsion enforced by mutual pressure. Therefore misuse not the sacred name of freedom. During the course of my long life, I have often thought I could interpret the intention of Providence thus: If all religious forms fell off like husks, and only the kernels remained, they might grow together like botanical cells, and form a single plant--a world-tree, under whose shadow all nations might rest in devotion and in unity." The teacher continued: "I had also believed that I had noticed there is a special purpose in the intermingling of races which is now proceeding. This has already gone so far, that in my insignificant family, which is registered as Scandinavian, we find traces of all the five quarters of the world."

"But do you really believe it?"

"I do not know."

"And do you think that all nations will be united in a common Christianity?"

"I do not know! But the promise to Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all nations be blessed,' has already been fulfilled by Abraham's descendant, Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, Christian Europe and the western hemisphere of North and South America rule the world. And before the actual reality, our wishes, ideas, theories, and anticipations collapse."

**The Return of Christ.**--The pupil asked: "Are we to expect the promised return of Christ?"

"Christ Himself answered this importunate question of his disciples by saying, 'The Kingdom of God is among you.' And when He left them He said, 'Behold, I am with you always till the end of the world.'"

"Good. But how is Christ's Kingdom to be set up on earth?"

"Not by crusades, as you perhaps believe. You know that there are plants which cannot simultaneously thrive in the same ground; one kind must die out. So there are races which cannot dwell together in the same land. As soon as Christians become Christians again, the pagans do not thrive, and depart. Just like the giants who got earache when they heard the sound of church-bells, sniffed and snorted when they smelt Christian blood, and finally slunk back into their caves. One ought to be tolerant, but not to carry it so far as to take down the church-bells or lay the cross low, because they make the giants ill. Swedenborg says that the gift of free-will is never revoked, and that therefore the damned themselves choose their own hell. If they come into a purer air, they are tested; if they happen to get into good company, they do not thrive, and cast themselves headlong into the region of the Lord of Dung. There they find an environment in which they can breathe. If therefore you wish to fly evil companionship, you need not shut your door. Only acquire an upright character, and your fellows will shun you like the pest."

**Correspondences.**--The teacher said: "We have discussed Swedenborg's hells and found that they are partly states of mind, and partly resemble earthly life under certain conditions. I remember now certain striking details in them, which bring to my mind certain experiences of everyday life. The fire of hell consists, he says, partly in this, that passions are aroused, only to be mocked and punished; partly in the kindling of desires, which really must be gratified, but die away immediately afterwards since suffering consists in missing something. Do you know that?" "Yes, I know it." "Further, when heavenly light reaches the damned, an icy chill pervades their veins, and their blood ceases to flow. Do you know that?" "Yes, I know it! And I remember once when I was very wicked a good man began to talk kindly to me. I was not warmed thereby, but began to feel so cold in the room where I was, that I put on my overcoat." "Further, they wander about lonely and gloomy: they hunger, and have nothing to eat; they go to houses, and ask for work, but when they get it, they go their way, to be tormented again by ennui. But when they return, the doors are shut; they must work for food and clothing, and have a harlot for a companion, is that so?" "It is!" "The ruling principles of hell are: the desire to rule from self-love; the desire for other people's goods from love of the world; the desire for dissipation. The ruling principles of heaven are: the desire to rule with a good object; the desire for money and property, in order to use them

for the benefit of others; the desire for marriage."

**Good Words.**--The pupil asked: "Does Swedenborg never speak a good word to comfort and cheer one?"

The teacher answered: "Yes, certainly he does. He says, for example, 'The chosen are those who have conscience; the reprobate are those who have no conscience.' That agrees with Socrates' definition of a man as a being possessing both modesty and conscience. In another place Swedenborg thus explains temptations: 'Evil spirits arouse in the memory of a man all the evil and falsity which he has thought and practised since childhood; but the angels who accompany him produce his goodness and truth, and in this manner defend him. It is this conflict which causes pangs of conscience.

"When a man is tried with respect to his understanding, evil spirits summon up only the evil deeds which he has committed. These are symbolised by unclean animals. The evil spirits accuse and condemn by distorting the truth in a thousand ways.'

"Swedenborg also mentions a kind of spirits who raise scruples about trifles, and thus trouble the consciences of the unwary. Their presence arouses a feeling of discomfort at the pit of the stomach, and they take delight in burdening the conscience. Finally there are some pagans from the countries inhabited by black men, who bring with them from their earthly life the wish to be treated hardly, under the idea that no one can enter heaven without having suffered punishments and torments. *Because they have this belief*, they are at first treated hardly by some whom they call devils.

"In another place Swedenborg says: 'There are no devils except bad men.' One word more. The Master met some in a state of despair, who believed that pain would be everlasting. 'But it was given me to comfort them.' These are good words for you."

**Severe and not Severe.**--The pupil objected: "But Swedenborg is in general too severe."

The teacher answered: "No! it is not he, but life which is severe, and life's laws are severe for the unrighteous. The Master says: 'Women who attain to power and wealth from the lower ranks often become furies; but women who are born to power and wealth, and do not uplift themselves, are happy.' 'To renounce the pleasures of life,' he says, 'and wealth and power, with the idea of earning heaven by asceticism, is a false view.'

"We know that Swedenborg was temperate in everyday life, but went willingly into society, and then he allowed himself a *poculum hilaritatus*, a cup of cheer. He declares himself decisively against those who retreat from the world: 'Many think it is hard to lead a life which conducts to heaven, because they have heard that, for this object, one must renounce the world and live to the spirit. By this they understand that one must cut oneself off from all that is earthly, and devotes one's whole life to spiritual contemplation and devotion. But that it is not really so, I have learned through long experience. He who thus separates from the world in order to live to the spirit, enters a gloomy life, which is irreceptive of the joy of heaven. In order to prepare for heaven one must live in the world in activity and employment.... I have spoken with some who had withdrawn from their occupations in order to live a spiritual life, and also with some who had tormented themselves in various ways, because they believed they ought to suppress the desires of the flesh.... As a rule they are puffed up with pride, and regard heavenly joy as a reward without knowing what heaven and heavenly joy is.'"

The pupil interrupted: "This seems to be the case with the pietists."

"Not with all. There are among them penitents, or those who really prepare for death. Leave the pietists in peace, and don't try to sever the wheat from the chaff.... Religion should not merely be a Sunday suit, but a gentle accompaniment to mitigate the ponderous tones of everyday life. But one must not be cowardly or indifferent, as so many modern Christians are. When they hear the big words 'Development,' 'Modern Thought,' 'Science,' they think at once that Christianity is a thing of the past. If they read in the papers that the Lice-King has overcome the Christians, they believe at once that God has forsaken His own. They forget that the Egyptian bondage was an education for Canaan, and that the Philistines were employed as goads to spur on the lazy.

"Unbelief, superstition, deliberate falsehood, error--all serve the Truth, for all things serve. And to him who loves God, all things turn out for good."

**Yeast and Bread.**--"The neo-pagans who have now rushed forward on the stage, and believe they are the lords of the world because they serve the Prince of the World, seem to be a sediment of savage races which by marriage and immigration have penetrated the old nations of Europe like yeast. Yeast fulfils its function in the warmth of the oven, but is itself changed into gases and disappears, leaving bubbles and holes behind. The dough remains, changed into

mellow, low, crisp, white, fragrant, warm bread. Yeast is a kind of mould produced by corruption, yet it must be present in order to make white bread.

"Everything serves! But mould by itself can make no bread. One ought therefore not to be angry with the pagans, for they know no better. To enlighten them is difficult; one can locate a grey star, but not a black one. One ought not to fear them, for then they bite. But they must have their day. 'I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green tree in its native soil; but I passed by, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.'"

**The Man of Development.**--The pupil asked: "Can the pagans really not be enlightened?"

"Experience has shown that it is almost impossible. For a blockhead cannot understand the simplest things; he cannot see the self-evident nature of an axiom. If he is systematically followed by misfortune, he calls it 'bad-luck'; if he is prostrated with illness, he rises as stupid as he was before; if he gets into prison, he sits there and meditates new tricks; if he lies on the rack, he thinks he is suffering for his faith, although he has not got any; from warnings and trials he emerges as great a calf as he was before, for he has no intelligence. All the denizens of the dunghill praise his firmness of character, his strength of soul, his strong belief in his cause. He is sixty years old, and he has worked for 'development,' but he has not been able to develop himself. He hawks about the same rubbish as he did forty years ago, when he discovered what he called 'the truth' in the books of his teachers; he has never produced an original thought, nor obtained a new view of an old subject. He has stood still, but the world has gone forward; he believed he was leading the van, when he was bringing up the rear. Christianity beckoned, but crab-like he went backward to paganism. Such is the man of 'development.' Do you know him?"

"I have known him, but renounced his acquaintance."

**Sins of Thought.**--The teacher said: "According to Luther, man is a child till his fortieth year. I was a child till my fiftieth, *i.e.* unintelligent, conceited. I believed that I was inaccessible and irresponsible as regards my thoughts. But I was obliged to change my opinion when I began to observe myself. I discovered, that is, that when I had sinned, hated, killed, stolen, though only in thought, and then came into the company of friends, they treated me ruthlessly, as though I were a murderer or a thief. I could not explain, but finally believed that my evil thoughts were legible in my face. And when I observed that my friends began to touch on precisely the same unpleasant subject which had occupied my secret thoughts, I saw that so-called thought-reading is daily and hourly practised in social life.

"When subsequently I read Maeterlinck's fine book, *The Treasure of the Humble*, my belief in this was strengthened, for he made the same observation. When I finally took in hand my own spiritual education, I found that this was the principal point, and by watching my thoughts I prevented them breaking out into action. Now for the first time I understood why I had so often in my life thought myself unjustly accused and punished for offences which I had not committed. I confess now that I had committed them in thought. But how did men know that? Assuredly there is a hidden justice which punishes sins of thought, and when men make each other accountable for suspicions, ugly looks or feelings, they are right. That is a hard saying, but it is so."

**Sins of Will.**--The teacher continued: "There are also sins of wish and volition. You know that one can hate and worry a man dead. I was once in a watering-place in which the hotel proprietor had introduced a sort of monopoly. He had arrogated to himself the privilege of alone providing food for the boarders. He starved them by cooking the goodness out of the meat before he roasted it, by making soup of rye-meal, and so on. The boarders were patient, and no one wished to make a disturbance. But their hatred of the man increased. After a month I observed that the hotel proprietor began to look yellow in the face and to pine away. As he sat at his bar he became the object of glances full of hatred. At last, one day, the whole company, a hundred in number, rose during the midday meal and departed. Then the proprietor became ill of a liver disease. It seemed as though the collected gall of all the guests had somehow transferred itself to his liver, and curdled there. He vanished; they had killed him. But their hatred was this time justified, or quite natural.

"When, however, we hate a man because he will not admire us or further our selfish interests, we may become simply murderers. That, however, depends on the behaviour of the other. If he is innocent in the matter, he will be immune and irreceptive of the poison. I know a person who hated me because she could not rob me. She was a servant to whom I had shown nothing but kindness. Her hate did not affect me so long as I was upright."

**The Study of Mankind.**--The teacher said: "One ought not to attempt to study men. Partly because they do not lay themselves open to be studied, partly because they are aware when they became objects of deliberate investigation. He

who does not give himself, receives nothing. He who does not approach men in a spirit of sympathy, finds no point of contact with them. When I regard them as companions in misfortune, fellow-wanderers in the wilderness, they open themselves to me. If I expose myself, I show a confidence in them, which meets with a response. If I approach them with suspicion, they show suspicion. If anyone visits me, in order to examine me, I let him sit for his portrait to me.

"When I have had frank intercourse for a considerable time with a man, and then sum up his characteristics in my recollection, I get a fair idea of him, but never quite a correct one. Men have a right to hide their secrets. When I was young and unintelligent, I believed that, as an author, I had a right to investigate the past of others; but I soon discovered that it is not allowed. They seemed to be guarded.

"He who says one ought to be so on guard in one's intercourse with a friend, as though he might some day become an enemy, has had little pleasure in friendship. I have always behaved to men as though they were going to be my friends for life, and therefore I have received something in return. When they have disappointed me, I have said to myself. 'What matters it? Nothing for nothing!'"

**Friend Zero.**--The teacher continued: "There are people who seem friendly, harmless, considerate; they leave others in peace, never pry into their affairs, never say evil behind people's backs, nor allow evil to be said. I have admired and envied them for their good natural qualities. But among such persons I have found some who keep remote from unpleasantnesses out of pure selfishness, and who out of love for ease and comfort wish to know nothing of other people's affairs in order not to be drawn into them. These are those who will not give evidence in court, even for the sake of defending a friend. They are silent when they ought to speak. They avoid recommending a relative on the plea that 'they do not know him.' When their names are mentioned as authorities for such and such a report, they have 'lost their memories.' They will not lend money to anyone who needs it, because 'they do not wish to have a disagreement with him.' They have no positive virtues, and no positive faults. Consequently they are colourless, unreliable, characterless, formless; they can not be classified under any system.

"I once knew one of these for ten years; then I forgot him. Twenty years later I found some of my old letters in an attic; among them were hundreds of letters from my formless friend. I was astonished to find that I had had such a lengthy correspondence with him. And I looked to see what he had had to say. I read five-and-twenty letters. They contained nothing. I read fifty; the result was the same--nothing. They consisted solely of handwriting, ink, paper, envelopes, and postage-stamps. I burnt them and forgot Friend Zero henceforth. He did not even leave a memory behind him."

**Affable Men.**--The teacher said: "When I have seen a character-drama, I have always asked myself, 'Are men really so simple and transparent?' There is a kind of men about whom one can never be certain. They are so disposed by nature that they adapt themselves to their companions out of pure affability. Such a man once came into my circle; I found him sympathetic, lovable, good-natured. On one occasion I imparted to a third person my opinion of my affable friend. He answered, 'You don't know him! He is a malicious man; he has only put on an air of affability with you.'

"Then there came a fourth: 'He! He is the falsest man in existence!' Finally his wife came: 'No! he is neither malicious nor false; he only wants to be on good terms with people.'

"At the beginning of our acquaintance (he confessed it himself later on), he had determined to win me by affability, and to preserve my affection by doing everything, or nearly everything, that I wished. He also abstained from contradicting me. During a whole year I never heard him express a view of his own; he only repeated my thoughts. I believed he had no will, no views, not even feelings. He seemed to me to be a mirror in which I was reflected; I never found him, only myself. Then I became tired of him, did not know how to hold myself in, and asked him to do something wrong. Then at last I discovered the man himself. With an unparalleled strength of character, he left wife, child, and home! In order 'to save his soul,' as he said. 'Have you then got a soul?' I asked. 'Judge for yourself,' he answered, and departed.

"It is dangerous to be affable, and it is dangerous to consider men simple."

**Cringing before the Beast.**--The teacher said: "When a man once yields to desire, the ceasing of a certain restraint carries with it a feeling of freedom and deliverance. This pleasurable feeling we almost regard as a reward, and conclude that we have acted rightly when we have thrown a bone to the barking dog. But had we forbore to do so, the dog would not have formed the habit of barking, and we might have gone our way in the proud consciousness of not having cringed before the beast, by bribing it to silence. The feeling of pleasure would have been changed into a consciousness of victory and power, which is far superior to sensuality.

"Never cringe before the beast; then it will not get the better of you. The suppression of an unlawful desire is like winding up a watch; the mainspring contracts till it creaks, but it does not do its work properly till then. Preserve your strength for yourself; then you will conquer your foes in the battles of life. Waste not your virile energy, or the woman

will get the better of you.

"You know very well what I mean by 'desire': I do not mean moderate eating and drinking; and you know very well what 'waste' means. You must also not believe that desire decreases with age. It is not so; but the intelligence and will-power increase, and therefore the victory is proportionably easier. I make you a present of this explanation: keep it, and show that you are intelligent enough to be able to receive a real one."

**Ecclesia Triumphans.**--The teacher said: "The world is full of lies, but there are also errors and misunderstandings. No two men give words the same meaning. But there are persistent lies which circulate like coins. There are lies of the lower classes, and lies of the upper classes; lies of the Catholics and of the Protestants. But those of the pagans are the worst of all. They believe they have the right to lie, because it profits them or their friends. One of the greatest lies of the pagans which misled me for a long time is the false assertion that Japan has accepted the material culture of Europe, but rejected Christianity. Two Japanese professors, who lately visited our land, declared on the contrary that there was a Christian church in each of the larger towns of Japan. There are Christians in the army, parliament, and universities. Their number is great--five-and-forty thousand Protestants, eight-and-fifty thousand Catholics, and five-and-twenty thousand adherents of the Greek Church. In the Second Chamber of the Japanese parliament two of the presidents have become Christians. And all that has taken place in thirty-five years. A thousand years pass by like nothing, and the future seems to belong to Christianity, since we have already seen that the chief powers of the world, Europe and America, are Christian.

"There is certainly no obligation to be a Christian, but some day it may be a disgrace not to be one, when one is born in a Christian country. It may come to be thought retrograde and conservative, and a failure to keep pace with development. The pagans celebrated the end of the eighteenth century as marking the overthrow of Christianity, but in 1802 appeared the finest book which has been written on Christianity, *Le Genie du Christianisme*, by Chateaubriand, and by its means the Church triumphed again."

**Logic in Neurasthenia.**--As the Teacher wandered in Qualheim, he came into a mountainous region, and saw a castle which was of dreamlike beauty. "Who is the enviable man who lives in such a palace?" he asked. His guide answered: "He is an unhappy, helpless hermit, without peace, and without a home. He was born with great artistic gifts, but employed them on rubbish. He drew nonsensical and trifling caricatures, distorted all that was beautiful into ugliness, and all that was great into pettiness."

"How does he occupy himself now?"

"Shall I say it? He sits from morning till evening, making balls out of dung."

"You mean to say, he continues as he began. Is that his punishment?"

"Yes! Isn't it logical? He obtained the castle, but cannot use it." Then they went further and came into a garden, where they found a man grafting peaches on turnips. "What has he done?" asked the teacher. "In life he was especially fond of turnips, and now he wishes to inoculate peaches, which he finds insipid, with the fine flavour of turnips. He was, moreover, an author, and wished to rejuvenate poetry with bawdy peasant songs." "Why, that is symbolism!" "Yes, and logical most of all."

Then they came to a cottage, where they found a man lying on a bed, surrounded by piles of books. The man had read himself ill; he lay there exhausted by hunger and thirst, and could hardly breathe.

"What is he reading?" asked the teacher.

"Only theology, exegetics, dogmatics, isogogy, eschatology. During lifetime he denied the existence of God. Now he seeks Him in theology, but has not yet found Him."

"Will he find Him?"

"Yes, certainly he will. But he must first seek!"

"Why, it is just like that in our lunatic asylums."

"And there is logic in neurasthenia, here as there."

**My Caricature.**--The teacher said: "Men often appear in our lives as though they were sent; we do not know why they interfere with our destiny; they themselves perhaps do not know. When I was a young man who gave promise of a future, which I had not fulfilled, I received as a colleague in my work a man whom I at once felt to be antipathetic to me, and who hated me. But he sought me, drew me out, and compelled me to drink, although I was not exactly difficult to

persuade. He drank himself terribly, and often I thought he wished to make me drink myself to death. When half-intoxicated, he always made personal remarks on me, both flattering and critical. He also appeared as a charlatan, professing to know and prophesy my destiny. This sometimes attracted me, and sometimes repelled me.

"Finally, on one occasion when intoxicated, he attacked me before others, and called me 'a humbug who would come to nothing.' I was at that time fully conscious of my vocation as author; excited by the attack, and being partially in liquor, I made a presumptuous assertion that I would be 'great.' Then the man fell in a rage and swore by h--l that I should not be great. After this our ways divided. My friends noticed it, and asked, 'Do you not go about any more with your caricature?' 'What do you mean by that?' I asked. 'His face was really a caricature of yours.' And so it was.

"Two years afterwards I emerged from the ruck, and remember that my thoughts turned back to the mysterious person who had interested himself in my destiny. Somewhat later I heard that the man had died at twenty-seven years of age under peculiar circumstances. He was standing on a mountain in the evening of Midsummer Day when he had a stroke. 'He flew asunder like a goblin in the sunlight,' I said jocosely.

"This man looked like a Hun or a death's-head. He was born in the seventh month, and preserved by being wrapped in wadding and laid in a corner of the tiled stove. But that explains nothing perhaps?"

**The Inexplicable.**--The teacher continued: "He had, however, a peculiar influence over people, and that not only because he flattered them. I saw him when he was twenty-five years old talking with our foremost statesman, who was then fifty. The widely experienced, sceptical politician listened to the ill-dressed unwashed man, flushed with wine, who almost monopolised the talk. He claimed an authoritative knowledge of all subjects, teemed with facts and figures, alluded to all prominent men as old acquaintances, was well versed in family chronicles and political intrigues. 'Where did he get all that?' I asked someone. 'I don't know, but he is a remarkable man with great influence,' was the answer. In addition to his other characteristics I can mention this: with all his coarseness he had traits of sensitiveness. He wept when he read of the cruelties in the Russo-Turkish war. He loved beautiful poetry. He had a chivalrous enthusiasm for women. He gave out his money generously, but when he was tipsy he was stingy. Demons plagued him, and he used to roam in the woods alone; but he always smashed his top-hat first. One could see into his nostrils, and, when he laughed, all his back teeth could be counted. He always wore too long trousers on which he trod, for he was in the habit of walking on his heels. He was beardless like Attila, because his cheeks simply consisted of nerves.

"But what had he to do with my destiny, and whence sprang his boundless hatred for me? It is inexplicable, like so much else."

**Old-time Religion.**--The pupil said: "I have heard, I have thought; now I will speak. I believe in Christianity as a world-historical fact, with which a new era has begun and proceeds. I believe that all nations will one day bow the knee in the name of Jesus Christ. Every time that the pagans gain the upper hand, I will regard it as a test, and not immediately believe that God is with them against His own.

"But let us have a simple, cheerful Christianity which gathers all to the Sunday festival. Regard it as a misuse of God's name to have religious services every day. Simplify the dogmas and keep them flexible so that all may find a place in them. Shorten the services; let praise, thanks, and worship predominate, and let the sermon, which should be only twenty minutes long, be subordinate. The preacher should stick to his text, and not make personal allusions like a journalist. Not till that is done will one be able to talk of 'assemblies,' of national festivals like the Pan-Athenaeum and Olympian games.

"But it is madness to put pagans at the head of a Christian State as teachers, educators, or officials. That is not tolerance, but tomfoolery. That is making the goat the gardener, setting the foe in the fortress, playing the coward before public opinion, and mere weakness.

"There will come a day in which the name 'Christian' will be a title of honour and a diploma of nobility. To say 'I am a Christian' is equivalent to saying 'I am a Roman citizen.' He who dares to call himself a pagan or an atheist, will be regarded as a blockhead, an old-fashioned ass, a conservative reactionary, a stick-in-the-mud."

**The Seduced Become Seducers.**--The pupil continued: "The reason why it has been so hard for me and many others to become really Christian, is that we are all directly descended from the pagans. We were not acclimatised in the Christian atmosphere, but liable to wild impulses; our flesh was too coarse to endure renunciation and restraint. We had been educated in the evolutionary ape-theory, and been taught that man belongs to the department of zoology and not that of anthropology. We had also been told that the physical process that precedes the New Birth of the soul, which is called conversion from evil, was neurasthenia, and should be treated with warm baths or bromkali. Veterinary doctors held professorships of philosophy and introduced zoology as a compulsory subject in priests' examinations. The

servants of the Lord learnt that religion was a deposit from the tertiary period, that animals were more religious than man, and that man had created God. The seducer of our youth taught us that the Life of Jesus was a lubricious novel, that the doctrine of the Bible regarding Christ simply amounted to this--that He was a prominent Galilaeen; and finally, that the superman was the bandit who may commit any outrage against others, provided he can prove a false alibi and has no witnesses.

"It was a terrible period which recalled that of the Roman emperors, and like that, heralded the arrival of Christianity. We, who had been seduced, then became seducers. But we thank God that no harm was done. Everything serves, and we had to serve as a terrifying example. There is always something.

**Large-hearted Christianity.**--"But we ought not to frighten men with Christianity, nor become hair-splitters. Let faith be a uniting bond to lead us onward, let faith be hope in a better life after this, a connecting-link with that which is higher. Let the fruits of faith be seen to be humanity, resignation, mercifulness. But don't go and count how many glasses of whisky your neighbour drinks; don't call him a hypocrite if he once in a while gives way to the flesh, or if he is angry and says hard words. Don't ask how often he goes to church; don't spy on his words, if in an access of ill-humour he speaks otherwise than he would. You cannot see whether in solitude he does not regret it and chastens himself. A white lie or the embellishment of a story is not a deadly sin; an impropriety can be so atoned for by imprisonment that it ought to be forgotten. Do not secede from the Church because of some dogmas which you do not understand. Don't form a sect with the idea of raising yourself to the rank of shepherd, instead of forming part of the flock. One should have a large-hearted Christianity for daily use, and a stricter one for festival days.

"Don't talk about religion. It is too good for that.... Virtue consists in striving, even when it does not always succeed."

"The noble Spirit now is free  
And saved from evil scheming,  
Who'er aspires unweariedly  
Is not beyond redeeming.  
And if he feels the grace of Love  
That from on high is given,  
The blessed hosts that wait above  
Shall welcome him to heaven."

*(Faust, Part II.)*

**Reconnection with the Aerial Wire.**--The pupil spoke: "You said once that the tramcar comes to a standstill if it loses connection with the aerial wire. I know that very well. Would that my friends who are atheists and pagans knew what a relief it is to find the connection again. It is like diving in crystal-clear sea-water after perspiring in the heat of the dog-days on a dusty high-road. The heart grows light; the systematic ill-luck ceases; one has some success, one's undertakings prosper, one can sleep at night, and neurasthenia ceases. I remember how, after a night of debauchery, the most beautiful landscape at sunrise looked ghastly; while after a night of quiet sleep the same scene looked paradisaical.

"When we gain the certainty, and the belief founded on certainty, that life is continued on the other side, then we find it easier on this one, and do not hunt after trifles till we are weary. Then we discover the divine light-heartedness of which Goethe speaks, which finds expression in a certain contempt of honours and distinction, promotion and money. We become more in-sensible to blows and abuse. Everything goes more softly and smoothly. However dark the surroundings may be, we become self-luminous so to speak, and carry the little pocket-lamp hope with us."

**The Art of Conversion.**--The pupil continued: "Plato describes earthly life as follows: 'Men sit in a cavern with their backs towards the light. Therefore they only see the shadows or simulacra of what passes in front of the cavern. Whoever hits on the brilliant idea of turning round, sees the originals, the realities in themselves, the light.'

"So simple is it! Only to turn round, or be converted, in a word. But it is not necessary on that account to become a monk, ascetic, or hermit. I almost agree with Luther that faith is everything. Our deeds lag far behind, and need only consist in refraining from all deliberate evil. As a beginning, one may be content with not stealing, lying, or bearing false witness. If we have greater claims and wish to train ourselves into supermen, we may. But if we do not succeed, we should not throw the whole system over-board, but ceaselessly commence anew, never despair, try to smile at our vain efforts, be patient with ourselves, and believe good of God.

"When the religious man falls, he gets up again, brushes himself, and goes on; the irreligious one remains lying in the dirt. Thus the whole art of life consists in not turning one's back to the light.

**The Superman.**--"The gentlemen who talk about development say that Christianity is out of date and lies behind us. No! Christianity is everywhere; behind us, near us, before us.

"Pagans of all kinds really created their gods in their own likeness. But with Christianity came the transcendent God and revealed Himself to men who had the goodwill to understand Him. Therefore Christianity is the beginning of the world's history, its middle, and its end. 'Whither and whence everything streams,' as Hegel says.

"The multiplication-table is still older, but is not out of date; it is still used, though logarithms have been discovered. The laws of thought, atomic weights, oscillations of waves of light and sound, have not been left behind us, but are still continually close to us.

"But if one does reattach oneself to Christianity, one should take it without refining--stock and barrel, dogmas and miracles. One should swallow it uncritically, naively, in great gulps, then it goes down like castor-oil in hot coffee. 'Open your mouth and shut your eyes.' That is the only way.

"I am a Christian, *i.e.* I am a nobleman; I belong to the upper class; I have been vaccinated; I have served my time in the army; I am a citizen and of full age; I am a white man; I have a clean birth-certificate; I am a superman."

To be a Christian Is not to be a Pietist.--The pupil continued: "If my pagan friends would only give up the idea that a Christian must be a pietist, they would come into our pantheon in crowds. Luther ate and drank what was set before him, as St. Paul enjoins; he played, sang, hunted, and played skittles. He swore also; but notice well, he never asked God to curse him, or the Devil to take him; he only said, 'Curse such and such a thing,' or 'To the devil with it!' Certainly I think he might have modified that habit, as it created annoyance, and he was a chief priest and prophet.

"It is a standing error to think that we lay-men should live every day like priests. We cannot; we have neither the time nor the means; it is a shame to demand it. But with the priest it is otherwise. He has devoted his life to the service of the Lord. He should spend the six days of the week in so preparing his sermon that he can say it by heart. I will not compare the clergyman with the actor, but on Sunday he ought at any rate be able to repeat his role verbatim. For doing that he gets his bread. If the congregation see that he reads his sermon, they think, 'We could do that too; there is no art in that!' And the minister of the Lord must take good heed to himself else he arouses annoyance. People will not take it ill if he is austere, and refrains from society, for he is a representative, not a private person. With the layman it is otherwise. He is a poor sinful man, of whom too much cannot be demanded as he drags his daily burden through the wicked world."

**Strength and Value of Words.**--The teacher said: "Thought is an act of the mind, and words are congealed thoughts. The uttered word can have an effect like a charm or an adjuration. There are men who are so sensitive that they are aware at a distance whether people are speaking well or ill of them. There are men who are not afraid of committing a crime, but are startled at the word which names it. Weak men cannot endure hard words; they make them ill. A word may kill. If I were a judge, I would always first ask the man-slayer, 'What did he say which made you strike him down?' And then I should allow for extenuating circumstances, or even acquit the man, if the deadly word caused the deadly blow as a reflex-action. If for fifty years I have cherished the memory of my parents, and my family, property, and honour is based on my relationship to them, and then someone comes and tells me I am not my father's son, he has killed me; the whole edifice of my emotional life collapses. He has paralysed my energy and willingness to sacrifice myself; he has imposed upon me the monstrous task of radically changing my views of the world and men; he has rooted-up my filial affection; with a single word he has annihilated my whole life. If he has lied, he is simply a murderer!"

**The Black Illuminati.**--The teacher said: "Everything serves, and error often helps forward truth. At the end of the last century, the materialists began to sniff about in the occult. One day they discovered the capacity of men, when in a hypnotic state, of seeing at a distance, of beholding the invisible, and of penetrating the future. Then they accomplished, curiously enough, the honourable task of establishing the truth of clairvoyance and prophecy, as well as the possibility of miracles. The theosophists, who really at a terrible period of the 'black illumination' sought to penetrate behind phenomena and dug up useful fragments of ancient wisdom, were however hostile to Christianity. They went so far as to send one of their prophets to India to warn the natives against the missionaries.

"But in course of time they began to investigate Christianity again; they were now provided with the proper means for understanding the mysteries of Christ's incarnation and atoning death, of sacraments and miracles. And see now! their latest prophetess has written a book to explain and defend Christianity! All roads seem to lead to Christ. No one has done such good service to Christianity as the materialistic occultists and the atheistic theosophists. Young France has been Christianised by the pagans. The last apostle of the rustic intelligence stands isolated there in his damnable infatuation, believing himself to be the only 'illuminated' one in the world. Let us hope that he is the last of the 'Illuminati.'"

"Yes, let us hope so."

**Anthropomorphism.**--"Man is inclined to make everything after his own likeness. When the heathen made themselves gods, the latter resembled their creators in all their defects and sins. That is called Anthropomorphism. The artist who paints a portrait, always puts something of his own into it. I know a sculptor who always used to model his own undersized figure with its two short legs, whether he was representing mountaineers, fauns, men of science, or kings. The plumper he became in course of time, the more rotund his figures grew. I know a photographer who always retouches his portraits of people till they resemble himself. He must admire his own exterior, and wish to have it taken as a standard-type. The critic when he describes an author, proceeds in a similar fashion. Every point in which the author resembles him is reckoned a merit; everyone in which he differs, a fault.

"When anyone says, 'This poet is the best I know; you must read him!' that means, 'This poet has my views; you must share them, for they are the best in the world.' Everyone would like to fashion humanity and the world in his own image. But if everyone had his way, what would the world look like?"

**Fury-worship as a Penal Hallucination.**--The teacher said: "Swedenborg describes, in his fashion, how the greatest tyrant arrived in Hades. He wished to stir up hell against heaven, and he was punished by having a terrible woman sent to rule him, whom he worshipped. She was a compendium of original sin, deliberate falsehood, wilful deceit, ugliness, uncleanness, destructiveness. But he was compelled to see in her the good, the beautiful, the lovable; he called her 'my angel.' All his adherents were obliged to worship her, or he called them 'woman-haters.' Whence Swedenborg derived his narratives, I know not, but his descriptions are like photographs of our everyday life. The modern worship of women does not come down from the Christian ages of chivalry, for those romanticists honoured womanhood in its virtues. Our new gyneolatry is derived from the heathen; it is a kind of fury-worship imposed on us as a penal hallucination. The sons of the Lord of Dung deify their furies, and praise their faults. In their view sin is virtue, wickedness is character, deceitfulness is a proof of intelligence, coarseness is strength. He who will not join in this devil-worship is called a woman-hater. Chaste wives and mothers are called old-fashioned and perverse. Euripides describes in the *Hippolytus* how this king's son dedicated his devotion to the chaste Diana and fled the demotic Venus. This impure goddess avenged herself by accusing the innocent Hippolytus of incest and then caused him to be put to death. Euripides on account of writing this tragedy was called a 'woman-hater,' and is said to have been tom in pieces by female dogs. That is a pretty legend!"

**Amerigo or Columbus.**--The teacher said: "Human greatness and the way of becoming great is something very remarkable. Often envious hatred of the deserving seems to be converted into immense love for the undeserving. The infatuation of hatred may go so far that when the deserving has done a good work, the undeserving gets the glory of it. But often also there are secret reasons for this abnormal result. Every schoolboy has asked why America was not named after Columbus, who discovered it. I also made that inquiry, and while I served the Lord of Dung I found it quite natural that the undeserving cartographer Vespucci should have the honour of the discovery.

"But when I recovered my reason (and men called me mad), I read the biography of Columbus again. There I found that, together with his merits, he had great faults. Like David, he sinned by pride, avarice, cruelty, and deceit. His pride was boundless. Before undertaking his doubtful voyage, he laid down as a condition that he was to be Viceroy (he, the weaver's son!) and receive a tithe of the revenues. Well, he never learnt that he had discovered a new quarter of the globe. He died and was forgotten.

"Vespucci, on the other hand, was not only a cartographer, but sailed round South America, and discovered that the New World was not India. He seems to have been a good-natured, upright, and modest man. Toscanelli, his contemporary, is also said to have announced the existence of a new world, but that is not so certain."

**A Circumnavigator of the Globe.**--The pupil said: "Can you resolve my discords?"

"I will call you a circumnavigator of the globe. You have sailed round it, and returned to the point whence you set out. No one can go further than that. But you return with a freight of experience, knowledge, and wisdom. Therefore the journey was not in vain, or to speak more correctly, it has fulfilled its object. Max Muller, who at the time of the decadence was the scapegoat for all the atheists, concludes his history of religion thus: 'It is easy to say that the completest faith is a child's faith. Nothing can be truer. The older we grow, the more we learn to comprehend the wisdom of children's faith.' And in another place he says: 'To explain religion by referring it to a religious impulse, or a religious capacity, is merely to explain the known by the less known. The real religious impulse or instinct is the apprehension of the infinite.' Thank your misfortunes that you have arrived at the infinite. 'The fortunate do not believe that miracles still happen, for only in misery we recognise God's hand and finger, which leads good men to good.'"

"Do you know who said that?"

"No; is it Luther?"

"No; it is Goethe in *Hermann and Dorothea*. And the 'great pagan' wrote in 1779 to Lavater: 'My God, to whom I have been ever faithful, has in secret richly blessed me. For my destiny is quite hidden from men; they can neither hear nor see at all, how it is determined.' The Lice-King omits such expressions when he wishes to incorporate Goethe among his slimy larvae."

**The Poet's Children.**--The teacher continued: "Moreover, as I have already told you, you are a poet, and must pass through your incarnations here. You have a right to invent poetic personalities, and at every stage to speak the speech of the one you represent. Shakespeare has done so, whether he did it consciously, or whether life assigned him the various roles he played. At one time he is a cheerful optimist; at another, the misogynist Timon, or the world-despiser Hamlet; he is the jealous Othello, the amorous Romeo, so-and-so the panegyrist of women, and so-and-so the misogynist. I believe indeed that he has, by way of experiment, been the murderer Macbeth, and the monster Richard III. He utters the malignant speeches of the last with real relish. Every rascal may defend himself, and Shakespeare is his advocate.

"There the poet should have no grave; his ashes should be strewn to all the winds of heaven. He should only live in his works, if they possess vital power. Men should accustom themselves to look upon him as something different from an ordinary man; they ought not to judge him, but regard him as something which they cannot understand. You remember the dying Epaminondas. When they condoled with him because he left no children, he answered: 'Children? I have Leuktra and Mantinea.'"

**Faithful in Little Things.**--The pupil said: "I had a friend, who died lately at the age of sixty. According to my view, he has in his own way realised the type of a good citizen and a good man. He was a tradesman, and had passed through a youth of hardship, being from six in the morning till ten at night in the shop, the doors of which were open even in winter. Under his first master he quickly discovered that dishonest tricks did not pay. Therefore he became rigidly honest, studied the details of his trade, made rapid progress, kept sober and wide-awake. Accordingly he soon became his own master, and wealth came of itself. He married and had children, who turned out excellently in consequence of their father's example. Now, this man lived his whole life according to the teaching he had received in school and church. He did his duty, honoured father and mother, obeyed law and authority, never criticised those who managed the government of the country, which he did not profess to understand. He took no notice of selfish agitations, did not worry himself about the riddle of the universe, and warned his children not to be eager after novelties. He also possessed positive virtues; he was merciful and helpful, faithful and modest.

"When his sons began to study, he did not attempt to vie with them in learning. But when they attacked his childlike faith, he defended it like a man. He never ventured to occupy a public post, for he knew his limits. He never sought for distinctions, nor did he obtain any. Well, what name do the larvae of the snake-worm give such a blameless, good, faithful man? They call him 'a servile rascal.' Is that just?"

The teacher answered: "No! it is flagrantly unjust! But there are other types of character, which are also laudable."

"Yes, indeed, but that does not lessen the value of his life; he was faithful in small things."

**The Unpracticalness of Husk-eating.**--The teacher said: "Young people say, 'What do we want with the wisdom of age? We want to learn for ourselves.' I generally answer, 'Yes, learn for yourselves--from us! What good-fortune to be able to inherit the rich experiences of others, and not to make these expensive, dirty experiments for oneself! If the young commenced where we left off, the world and humanity would progress with giant strides. Instead of this everyone begins afresh, that is, in the moral sphere. When it is a question of making a new incandescent lamp, we do not begin with a machine for generating electricity, but continue from the latest discovery of our predecessors.

"I have also asked myself whether it is necessary first to be burnt in order to dread the fire. I have never seen my children go to the oven and lay hold of the red dampers to see whether they would be burnt. They let themselves be warned, and therefore escaped the painful experience. I have asked myself whether one must first feed with the swine before one can appreciate the food of the household, and whether the Prodigal Son is a necessary transitional type. But to all these stupid and impertinent questions life has given a negative answer.

"Swedenborg says that all sin and wickedness leave traces behind them, but that these are not apparent in the human face till old age. Subsequently, in the disrobing-room on the other side, they look as if they had been thrown through a magnifying-glass on a white screen. I once looked into an attic-room; the curtain was drawn aside, and an old man put out his head in order to look at the sun. When he saw me he hid his face immediately.

"That was a face!... God protect us!"

**A Youthful Dream for Seven Shillings.**--The teacher said: "There are people who carry about with them a measuring-rule for everything. They demand exactness and order; they love perfection in all things. They are called discontented, carping, pedantic. But it is unfair to blame them. If one is content with the mediocre, one will at last only get the worst. Men give only as little as they can, and the whole of life is defective. Conscientious men are not happy, for they cannot lower their demands; they appear to simpletons who have not learnt, that nothing is what it gives itself out to be, that nothing answers the expectations we formed of it. One is inclined to ask whether such men bring with them at birth recollections of a place or a condition where ideal perfection existed. When I was seven years old, I often remained standing fascinated before a music-dealer's shop window, and contemplated a hunter's horn which was hung up there. There was something charming in the proportions of these curved lines. This brass tube tapered off beautifully from the great width of its bell-mouth to its narrowed mouthpiece. In the gloomy street it made me hear nature's music in woods and fields; I loved the instrument. But when a boy told me that it cost thirty shillings, I wondered whether life would ever fulfil my desire, for in order to buy it I would have to go for two and a half years without breakfast. Finally I got to be thirty years old, and had some money to spare for the first time in my life. I bought the hunting-horn; it cost only seven shillings; the boy had told a lie. But the instrument had only three notes. When I got tired of my prize it was consigned to the attic.

"It was, at any rate, the fulfilment of a youthful dream!"

**Envy Nobody!**--The teacher said: "Envy nobody! As a child I was boarded out in the country in mean surroundings. I lived in a kind of shanty, ate from an earthenware plate, sat on a wooden stool. But there was a castle in the neighbourhood, a real castle, with portraits of kings in the entrance-hall, the ancestors of the young count who lived there. One Sunday we were allowed to go, first into the castle, then into the garden. That was paradise! We could bathe, and were allowed to pick the cherries, blood-black, gold-yellow, fire-red. The count looked on, but ate nothing; he had had enough. Then we left, and the gate of paradise was shut behind us.

"Fifty years later I saw the portrait of the young count, and heard his history. He looked unhappy and despairing, as though he were weary of everything. He had passed through the bitterest experiences of life, including poverty for a time. His affairs came into liquidation, and he had to spend ten years abroad in an hotel, his expenses being defrayed by his creditors. He also had his wife with him, who, as she thought, had married into paradise, in order to be immediately driven out of it again. The man had been nothing and had done nothing; all he could do was to wait for his meals. He had possessed horses and a yacht; he had gambled and borrowed money; he had eaten truffles and drunk wine; but when he was forty had to give it up, for his nose grew red and he had gout in his great toe. I will not speak of his domestic miseries.

"Now he sits in his castle, rich as Croesus, but lonely, and educates his housekeeper's children, which are his, but which cannot bear his name. His evening meal consists of gruel, and he goes to bed at half-past nine. He dares not use his wine-cellar, for then his great toe aches. His solitary comparative pleasure is to be able to walk, in order to eat his gruel and be able to sleep. Envy nobody!"

**The Galley-slaves of Ambition.**--The teacher said: "Balzac speaks in one place of the galley-slaves of ambition, and describes their condition very much as Swedenborg describes certain of his hells, or as Homer depicts Tantalus, Ixion, and the Danaides. They are ceaselessly haunted by their passion to be superior to others; to be seen and heard before all others. The malice and love of power which this involves are necessarily punished. When the ambitious man cannot be the first and only one he becomes ill. Voltaire had to go to bed when a prince travelled past his house without visiting him. If one of such people's letters remains unanswered they think it is a sign that their credit has sunk, and they worry about the reason of it till they grow how hypochondriacal. If they read in the paper such and such important people were present when the king landed, and their names are omitted, the world is darkened for them. That is to say, it is not enough for them that they should be praised and called the greatest; they suffer pains like death when others are eulogised. They feel perpetual fear lest they should be set aside and their juniors get ahead of them. In that they resemble a great criminal who expects to be detected. The portrait of an ambitious man has a great resemblance to that of a galley-slave. Imperiousness, hatred, fear--especially fear--are depicted in his face.

"Balzac, on the other hand, was impelled by the noble ambition to make discoveries, and to do good work in which he took pleasure. But his own life was hidden. Unknown and misunderstood in his own Paris, which he had discovered, he saw petty chroniclers obtain the first prizes without being made ill by it. And when, at the age of fifty-one, he had succeeded in making a home for himself, into which he was about to bring his first and only wife, he died on the day of the publication of the banns. A fine death after a life of renunciation!"

**Hard to Disentangle.**--The teacher said: "With age, as is well known, one arrives at a different view of life than one had formerly. Then, on account of its wealth and variety, life is almost immeasurable, and above all, very difficult to disentangle.

"At the age of forty I came home after an absence of many years. On my arrival I received a dunning letter from an antiquarian bookseller. Curiously enough, without my being able to explain why, this debt caused me no further uneasiness of conscience. But then a friend came and advised me to settle the matter, as the bookseller was spreading an evil report about me. I went and paid the trifling account, but the bookseller looked so uneasy and strange, was so polite and grateful, that I began to reflect about him. When I came home I remembered this: twenty years previously I had entrusted him with an antique work of art to sell. After I had visited the man several times in his shop and the article had not been sold, I felt ashamed to go any more, began to think of something else, and forgot the matter. His present thankfulness showed that he had not forgotten it; we were then quits, if he did not still owe me something.

"Now I felt ashamed on his account, and determined not to mention the matter. But then it occurred to me that I owed his predecessor a sum of money for books. I went again, found him showing the same uneasy manner as before, and asked for his predecessor's address. He was in America. I asked whether he had relatives here in the town. He had none. I went home and thought to myself, 'Then we must drop that matter also.' In this way, in old age, one must alternate pay and let go; now as a debtor, now as creditor. But who strikes the balance of accounts? The goddess of justice, and she is neither deaf nor blind."

**The Art of Settling Accounts.**--The teacher continued: "It really looks as though we could not go hence till everything is settled, great and small alike. Recently there died an early friend of mine, who, at an important juncture, had helped me with a hundred kronas.<sup>[1]</sup> I had at first regarded it as a loan. But he never dunned me, and during the forty years which have since elapsed he was gradually transformed in my memory into a benefactor, and all was well. When at last he died a millionaire, I did not wish to trouble his executors with the trifle, but sent a wreath to the funeral with a sigh of gratitude and many kindly thoughts. Was that the end? No! Shortly afterwards I felt a kind of inward admonition to resume relations with a bookbinder whom I had ceased to employ on account of his carelessness. He came and was glad to get work again; he was greatly pleased, and declared that I had appeared just in time to deliver him. When I understood his difficulties, for he had a family, I was willing to give him fifty kronas in advance, but as I had no change I gave him a hundred, though reluctantly. I saw how his back straightened itself, and his confidence in life reawoke. He went--and never returned. I was angry at first, because he had treated me like a fool, and I dunned him with letters. But then the memory of my departed friend recurred; various thoughts wove themselves together in my mind--the pleasure of calling him a scamp, the fifty-krona note which had turned into a hundred-krona note, the scamp's need, and the part I had played as deliverer. In my own mind I gave him a discharge, and became quite quiet."

A krona = 1s. 3d.

**Growing Old Gracefully.**--The teacher continued: "When one becomes old, one wonders at first how men have, as it were, permission to do one an injustice. If one complains, one finds no sympathy. Even our friends take the part of those who injure us. But when we have discovered the secret of it, we take it all quietly. One is cheated in ordinary business, and says to oneself, 'This is in requital for that.' Our children prove ungrateful and difficult to manage, exactly like we were. Young people are insolent and pert towards us, and we see our former selves reflected in them. Servants do their work badly, and perpetrate petty thefts; we must put up with it, when we think of our own work scamped on various occasions. Friends are faithless, just as we have been ourselves. By practice one comes at last so far, that one asks for no more, demands no more, and is no longer angry. I then always think of David when Shimei cast stones at him and cursed him, and Abishai wanted to strike off the calumniator's head. David declined to take vengeance, saying, 'Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.' When the same king, because of his sins, had to choose between famine, pestilence, or raids of the enemy, he prayed 'to fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man.'

"He understood how to grow old gracefully, and to make up his accounts. So he departed praising God, 'Who proveth the heart and loveth uprightness.'"

**The Eight Wild Beasts.**--The teacher said: "You know yourself that when one awakes from somnambulism, one finds the world quite mad. Then one loses all hope and all confidence, and believes we are delivered into the power of the Devil. Once during such a moment of awakening, I read the works of the Adventists, and the idea struck me that they were right. They ground their belief on the Revelation of St. John, and say as follows: 'We live in the last era during which the eight wild beasts rule the earth. Of Christianity no trace is to be found: power, wealth, industry, art, science, literature, are in the hands of the pagans. The state-craft of the wild beasts is lying and force, alternating with the most insidious hypocrisy. They preach peace, distribute peace-prizes, build peace-palaces, but are always seeking war in

order to be able to rob and tyrannise. If their subordinates believe them, and preach peace themselves, they are thrown into prison. But, says St. John, nations will come from the East and destroy the godless who have rejected Christ. The last battle is to be at Megiddo in Syria. But since all this takes place under God's control, the wild beasts are protected in order to carry out their work of execution. The number of the last wild beast, 666, is not yet interpreted, for it is not yet come. The eight wild beasts you can find in a book, which is called *A de G*,<sup>[1]</sup> of the people of the East you read every morning in your paper. It looks almost as though it were true. The pietists believe it, and keep their lamps burning."

**Deaf and Blind.**--The teacher continued: "Under the rule of the wild beast men have become demoralised. They reject every idea of a retributive justice. If anyone points to an instance of it, he is suppressed. If a blasphemer loses his tongue, they call it 'Actinomyces,' nothing more. And the obstinacy of the unrepentant revolts against heaven itself: 'It is so far to heaven; what do we know about it? We are ants; no God troubles himself about us.' If something good happens to a man, he attributes it to his own power; if something evil, he calls it 'bad-luck.' Science explains earthquakes by algebra, and if it wants to be very learned, by seismology. The quantity of crime and wickedness which *must* exist is fixed by statistics. And yet heaven is so near. God's invisible servants are around us, in the streets and in our rooms. We do not see them, but those who have eyes, and only they, behold their operations. The world is like a vast institute for the deaf and blind, in which the unfortunates are told by their teachers that they are the only ones who can see and hear. The theosophists say that we are already living two lives--a conscious one on the earth, and an unconscious one above. But most men seem to have broken off communication with the higher plane, and therefore they cannot comprehend what is from above, but have discovered that there is no higher and no lower in the universe."

Not explained in original footnote.

**Recollections.**--The pupil said: "Often has my experience confirmed this saying of the theosophists, that, as well as here, we live also on a higher plane from whence we receive our inspirations, ideas, and intuitions. After such visitations (do they take place by night?) I do not flourish down here, but find everything perverse, defective, absurd. I once conceived the strange idea that I have my true home somewhere else, and that a vague recollection has made me give my present home an arrangement similar to that of my real one.

"In my present abode there was a room which, after certain storms that lasted for two years, was so devastated that it looked as if devils had haunted it. Then a sum of money came into my hands unexpectedly. The next morning I awoke with the distinct determination to repair and furnish the room. I went at once to the upholsterer, and knew so exactly what furniture and curtains I wanted, that when I saw the material it looked to me familiar and welcome. A workman came, proved honest, worked quietly like a spirit, and in a few days the room was ready. When I entered it, I was seized with a sort of ecstatic shiver as though I had already seen this room once before under happy circumstances. And now when I enter the room alone, I see it resembles something which I do not remember, but which waits for me. I seem to know that *there* I am waited for by my only true wife, by my children, friends and relations, and that this incompleteness I see is only a poor copy drawn from a dim recollection. Think, if it only were so!"

**Children Are Wonder-Children.**--The teacher answered: "What you say accords with Plato's theory of recollection. He believes that all which a child learns is recovered from some previous knowledge. During my long experience it has often happened to me to meet people who, the first time I saw them, seemed like old acquaintances. It seems, too, that the woman we love appears congenial to us, made for us, sent in our way. But most of all is this the case with our children. All children are, in spite of idle talk, wonder-children--till they have learnt to talk. Little children often say things which astound one. They understand all that we say even when we hide it from them. They seem to be thought-readers, divine our most secret purposes, and rebuke us beforehand. 'Don't do that,' said my two-year-old child before my plan was half formed. 'What?' I asked. The child did not answer, but smiled roguishly and half embarrassed, as though it wished to say, 'You know yourself already.' When the child had learnt to be silent, it pushed with its foot against the chair when the parents' talk bordered on impropriety. Often it spoke like an elder person who understands things better than others. At three years old it pronounced this opinion on the nurse, 'Hannah is very nice, but she does not understand how to treat children.' When her mother was sad, it said, 'Sit down here and don't be sad; I will tell you a story.' I will only add--there was no mimicry about it, as the ape-king would be inclined to believe. What was it then?"

**Men-resembling Men.**--The teacher said: "It seems as though some errors were necessary and unavoidable. They appear as a kind of infectious virus. A generation is inoculated with it, carries the germ till it has sprouted, and then there is an end of it. Views of the world and man come up, are disseminated, evaporated, and disappear. But those who

have been inoculated with them believe they are their own views, because they have assimilated them with their personality. Often the error ends in a compromise with a new view. Thus Darwinism made it seem probable that men derived their origin from animals. Then came the theosophists with the opinion that our souls are in process of transmigration from one human body to another. Thence comes this excessive feeling of discomfort, this longing for deliverance, this sensation of constraint, the pain of existence, the sighing of the creature. Those who do not feel this uneasiness, but flourish here, are probably at home here. Their inexplicable sympathy for animals and their disbelief in the immortality of the soul points to a connection with the lower forms of existence of which they are conscious, and which we cannot deny. The doctrine that we are created after God's image involves no contradiction, for the spirit is from God; but there is no word which frightens these anthropomorphists so much as the word 'spirit.' Yes, there is one, and that is the word 'spirits,' which makes the fleshy part of them shudder."

**Christ Is Risen.**--The teacher said: "After we have had Christianity as a civilising agency for nineteen hundred years, people begin to discuss it. Is this the opportune time to ask whether Christ has existed and whether the documents of Christianity are genuine? It reminds one of the author who wrote a book to prove that Napoleon never existed. It is as if we were now to discover that Caesar's *Commentaries* are false, and that he never conquered Gaul, or as if we discussed whether the discovery of America had been useful. Ibsen's partisans have denied that Columbus discovered America; they say it was Leif Erikssen (perhaps we shall soon hear it was his wife).

"However, Christ returned again at the end of the last century, and was received by all. The pagans depicted him as the poor school-teacher; the anarchists celebrated him as the type of suffering humanity; the symbolists did homage to him as Christus Consolator; the socialists preached his gospel to the obscure, the weary, and heavy-laden. He was to be seen every-where--in the quarters of the French general staff and in the espionage office; in Lourdes and in Rome; on Mont Martre and in Moscow. His churches and convents were purified; his miracles explained by occultists, spiritists, hypnotists; science progressed and confirmed the prophecies. Finally we saw at the congress of religions in Chicago in 1897 that all peoples and religions of the world bent their knees when Christ's especial prayer, the Lord's Prayer, was recited. Then the believers gave each other the brotherly kiss and greeting, 'Christ is risen!'"

**Revolution-Sheep.**--The teacher continued: "In the year 1889 we celebrated the French Revolution, but there was little life or order in the celebration. Everything which was uprooted in 1789 still existed--Church and State, kings and courts, priests and officials. The French republic was the worst of all, with its Panama Canal jobbers at the head: Wilson, Herz, Clemenceau, Arton. The constitution was kept alive by bribes, bills of exchange more or less false, and pensions. Offices were created in order to find places for voters, husbands of mistresses, and the discontented. At that time the French republic was governed by criminals, and the Church by pagans. Military and civil orders were sold, works of art bought, votes canvassed for. One could not become a deputy for less than two hundred thousand francs. Then executioners and revolutions were necessary, for the principles of the Great Revolution, if one can talk of principles in connection with a volcano in eruption, were forgotten. Now in the perspective of a hundred years the 'Great' Revolution appeared only like an execution, a decimation on a large scale; an experiment with negative results, but as such certainly very interesting. One of the recollections of my youth is that when we 'who were born with the ideas of the French Revolution' (ideas revived in 1848) began to talk of the 'Great' Revolution, we were called 'Revolution-sheep.' I did not understand this at the time, for I did not yet think for myself but merely drivelled. But now I understand it. Now we know that the constitution of a country is almost a matter of indifference for the common weal; thus one constitution is not much better or worse than another."

**"Life Woven of the Same Stuff as our Dreams"**--The teacher said: "Life itself can often appear like a bad dream. One morning I went for a walk in the country, and was absorbed in my thoughts, when a great Danish dog rushed towards me. A young rascal stood near, laughing. I drew my revolver, and exclaimed, 'Call off the dog, or I shoot it.' The young fellow only laughed, the dog retreated, and I went on. On my way back, a man armed with a musket met me, and asked how I dared threaten to shoot his son. I answered, that the threat had only referred to the dog. On the evening of the same day I was told that the dog had been found dead, and that I was suspected of having poisoned it. Although I was innocent, I was regarded as an assassin. That was a nice business!

"Again: one evening I went to see my four-year-old daughter, who waited for me below in the park. From the distance I saw her in the company of two unpleasant-looking children, but she did not see me. As I quickened my steps, I saw that she went off farther with the children. I called her, but she did not hear. I ran and saw her at the entrance of a cellar, into which the children wanted to pull her down. She resisted them, but they took hold of her clothes. Now she screamed, and consequently did not hear my call. I wished to hasten to her, but between us there was a grass lawn, with an iron railing round it, on which I did not venture to tread for fear of the police. So I stood there and called. At last my child pulled herself free, but did not see me. So weirdly things may happen sometimes!"

**The Gospel of the Pagans.**--The teacher continued: "The gospel of the pagans is immunity from punishment; if one mentions a case where it has gone ill with a scoundrel, the pagans snort and say one is too severe. But it is life which is severe. The gospel of the pagans consists in showing that virtue is simplicity and is seduced; that religion is a disease; that scoundrelism is a form of strength, and ought to conquer by the right of the stronger. Sometimes, by way of a change, they demand that a weak rascal should be pardoned; that everything should be forgiven and tolerated. By 'toleration' they mean that one should let oneself be suppressed and persecuted by them. If one resists, they cry, 'He revenges himself. He is a bad man.' But revenge presupposes some offence as the cause, and when the cause disappears the effect disappears. Certainly there are some men who avenge their own stupidity on the innocent. I have an enemy, who still revenges himself on me because he could not steal my money. The gospel for him would be the law reversed, 'You may steal, but others may not.'"

**Punished by the Imagination.**--The teacher continued: "Swedenborg speaks of being punished by the imagination. That is what doctors generally call 'hallucination.' He who suffers from persecution-mania is persecuted. The Philistines think he is only persecuted by his imaginations, but if the wise man asks why he is persecuted by his imaginations, conscience answers by ceaselessly endeavouring to discover the persecutor. The patient goes through the whole list of the persons whom he has offended. If they are many in number, and their hatred is justified, one may well suppose that the sick man is persecuted by their hatred, for which his awakened conscience is now receptive.

"In my inner life punishment by hallucinations has played the chief part; but after I had discovered the rationale of it, I regarded the hallucination itself as a punishment. The severest form of punishment is suspicion, when I am obliged to suspect the innocent. That is irresistible. My thoughts sway between trust and mistrust. I struggle and conquer myself gradually, either by acknowledging myself wrong, or by accepting the breach of faith resignedly. But if I give vent to suspicion I must ask for pardon; then I take this humiliation as a discharge. Most of my misfortunes have been imaginary; but they have had the same effect as real ones, because I came to the consciousness of my own wrongdoing. The incurable man is the obstinate one who believes himself wrongfully persecuted by other men.

**Bankruptcy of Philosophy.**--"When Kant during the dark period of the 'Illumination' had proved that philosophy can prove nothing, he set up the theory of the categorical imperative and postulate, *i.e.* the demands of religion and morality. Put in plain language, that is equivalent to faith. This declaration of the bankruptcy of philosophy saved men from useless brain-cudgelling. Christianity revived, now supported by the philosophers with Hegel at their head. But the old stream flowed parallel with it once more. In spite of the bankruptcy of philosophy, notes of exchange were issued and cashed by the dunder-headed free-thinkers Feuerbach and Strauss. They wanted to approach God with the everyday intelligence which one uses in kitchens and grocers' shops. The last fool was Renan, whose cheques still circulate mostly among college-students and the like. At the beginning of the last century E.T.A. Hoffmann wrote thus: 'In ancient times we had a simple generous faith; we recognised that there was a Higher, but knew also that our senses were insufficient to reach it. Then came the "Illumination," which made everything so clear, that for sheer clearness not a trace could be seen. And now we are told that the supernatural is to be grasped by a firm arm of flesh and bone.' To-day it is called the Science of Religion. That is a science which starts from the false presupposition that religion is a mental disease because it cannot be mathematically proved."

**A Whole Life in an Hour.**--The teacher said: "I had a strange experience, which I have not understood, but which I must remember. I woke up one morning feeling cheerful without any special reason. Obeying an impulse, I went into the town. As I wandered about at random, I came into the quarter where I had been born and brought up. I saw the kindergarten and school I used to attend, and my parents' house. I went through narrow streets and passed by the national school in which I was worried as a student-teacher. I saw two different houses in which I had suffered as a private tutor. I went northwards and came to another school in which I had been tortured. In a market-place I passed another house in which, during my childhood, our only acquaintance lived, and twenty years later in the same dwelling there lived my worst enemy. I passed by a house in which my sister had been married thirty years before, and another house in which my brother had had a hard struggle. Then I came to a third school in which I was a student; in the same house lives still my first and last publisher. I passed by a house where, forty years ago, I was accepted as an aspirant for the stage, and where I offered my first drama; also by the house where I was married for the first time. Then the meaning of it began to grow clearer. I saw the furniture warehouse whence I ordered my furniture the last time. I passed by the house where my wife and child lived three years ago.

"In the space of one hour I had seen the panorama of my whole life in living pictures. Only three years were wanting to the present time. It was like an agony or a death-hour when the whole of life rushes past one.

"Then I felt drawn northward where my last child and her mother live. An instinct told me to bring perfume for the mother and school-fees for the child, as that day it was going to the kindergarten for the first time. Then I began to

hunt for the perfume; it ought to have been lilac, but I had to take lily-of-the-valley. I also wanted flowers, but could not find any.

"So I continued northwards and came to their house; the sun shone in, the table was spread for coffee; there was an air of comfort, homeliness, and kindness over all. I was received in a friendly way, felt in a moment that the whole of my black life lay behind me, and realised the happiness of merely being alive."

**The After-Odour.**--The teacher continued: "As I went thence, I felt the happiness of the present. All the past was only the dark background. I was thankful in my heart, when I remembered all I had come through without perishing. When I came home, I learnt through the telephone that my worst enemy had died on the morning of this very day. His death-struggle was taking place at the very time that I made the pilgrimage through my past life. I reflected: Why should I pass through my agony just when he died? He was a 'black man'<sup>[1]</sup> with an obsolete materialistic view of things which he thought was modern; a literary huckster who wrote reviews of marchionesses' rubbishy books, in order to be invited to their castles, and praised his associates as long as they consorted with him; the partisan of a coterie and a log-roller.

"I had never come into personal contact with him, but once, a long time ago, he had called himself my pupil. He could not however grow, nor follow me upwards. It was now as though my old self had died in him. Perhaps therefore I suffered his death and felt it just now. But why the perfume? That I know not. But when I learnt that the deceased decomposed so rapidly that he had to be buried at once, I could not help connecting the perfume with his dissolution. When, eight days afterwards, I read a posthumous review by the deceased of my last work, and saw that he regretted that I was not a pagan and lamented my defection from the Lord of Dung, it was as though I sniffed an after-odour from the dunghole, and I seized the perfume-flask in good earnest."

Strindberg's expression for a free-thinker.

**Peaches and Turnips.**--The teacher continued: "At the same time a similar death happened. Another of the 'Black Flags' departed under peculiar circumstances two days after the first. I had known this man during the period in which the ape-king ruled. We did not like each other, but like condemned criminals were compelled to keep together. Our friendship was only the reverse-side of a hatred; his hideous appearance frightened me; his profession was equally repulsive, but brought in much money. He wrote according to the taste of the time, and lived in the false idea that he was 'illuminated' and liberal-minded. When his father died, the son expressed his regret that 'his father had recovered the faith of his childhood.' What happened then? The son who lived in faith in wickedness and ugliness, began to develop this faith in a peculiar way. He had in his writings shown a predilection for turnips; in his latter days he inoculated peaches with turnip-juice in order to make the southern fruit partake of the beautiful flavour of the latter. The same perverse taste was evident in his last book; there his sympathy is decidedly on the side of the 'blacks.' He ended in an asylum. He could not be saved, for he did not know how to seek the Saviour. So he died. I had just regretted not having sent some flowers to his grave, when I saw in an obituary notice that the dead man had vented a noisome lie against me, which a bosom friend of his now repeats in print. In the same notice the world is threatened with his posthumous writings. When they come out, I will buy a flower and hold it under my nose, while I breathe a sigh of gratitude to him, who restored to me the faith of my childhood and saved me from the mad-house."

**The Web of Lies.**--The pupil said: "I am eight-and-fifty years old; have lied less than others; and have therefore always believed what others said. When, in my old age, I sit together with friends of my youth and make comparisons, I find that my whole life is a web of lies. Last night I sat with such a friend, and had a protracted talk of the following intelligent kind. I said, 'When the Prince of X. married....' 'Married! He isn't married.' 'Isn't he? Is that a lie too?' 'He has never been married.' 'Now during twenty years I have spread it abroad that he was married, and a whole story has been built on this lie, which I was about to relate, but now I must drop it.'

"Here is another lie! During thirty years I have told people that Dr. H. was present when the Malunger murderer was executed. He had falsely informed me that, as a medical student, he had received a commission to examine the head after it had been cut off. He gave me such interesting details on the subject that I was accustomed to describe them in company. What a liar he was!

"'But he *was* there.' 'Was he there?' 'Certainly; I saw him standing behind the priest when I took a photograph of the scaffold.' 'You? Have you ... Are you lying or is he?' 'I am not.' 'No; now I don't know where I am. Everything is topsy-turvy. For the last ten years I have retracted the lie which I had spread. I have made Dr. H. a liar! One ought never to speak or write, but only draw the things which one absolutely needs. He was then really there! How can I restore to him his honour, of which I have robbed him?'"

**Lethe.**--The teacher answered: "This whole web of lies, errors, misunderstandings, which forms the basis of our lives, transforms life itself into something dreamlike and unreal, and must be dissolved when we pass into the other life. I read to-day of a dying man. Instead of seeing his life pass by him, as is usually the case, his whole life dissolved into a cloud; his memory failed; all bitterness and all trouble disappeared; and on the other hand, all his disappointed hopes assumed an aspect of reality. He thought he was loved by his wife, who had been cold to him; he thanked her for all the tenderness which she had never shown him. The children who had deserted him he saw again in the bright light of youth; he seemed to hear the sound of little feet upon the floor, the characteristic of a happy home, and his face wore a happy smile. The dark autumn weather outside changed into spring; little girls handed him roses to kiss in order to enhance their value. Finally he saw himself and his family in an arbour drinking coffee out of Dresden china cups, into which they dipped yellow saffron-cakes.... Then he fell into his last sleep. It was a beautiful and enviable death; it was paradise. From the ancient Lethe he drank forgetfulness of the troubles he had undergone before he trod the Elysian fields. If it only were so! To drag all one's bygone filth with one in memory cannot be favourable to a new life in purity. There are illnesses in which one loses memory. May death prove to be such an illness!"

**A Suffering God.**--The teacher said: "The idea of a suffering God was foolishness to the Greeks, who considered a God as a tyrant gloating over the sufferings of men. But the seeming contradiction is solved if one supposes that a Holy Being deposits itself, so to speak, in humanity, and that humanity then becomes defiled. That is a boundless grief like his who has deposited the best part of his soul and his emotions with a woman. If she then goes and defiles herself, she defiles her husband. Or a father's nature has passed over to his children, and he wishes to see his best impulses continued and multiplied by them, and his likeness ennobled. If the children dishonour themselves, the father suffers; the stem withers when the roots are injured.

"Such I imagine to be the feelings of God the Father when the sinfulness of humanity grows noisome and dishonours Him, and perhaps threatens to affect His own holiness. He will be wroth and lament--perhaps even feel Himself defiled--rather than cut off the cancerous limb of humanity. Christ is no more represented as beautiful, but with features distorted by the sins of others; these he has taken on himself or drawn to himself, for he who approaches pitch is defiled. In order to be free from the impure element he must die by the destruction of the body. Incarnation involved the greatest suffering of all.

"But the death of Christ may also signify that the Father freed himself from the sins of humanity, and broke off connection with the evil race who dishonoured Him. He who will now seek Him must rise to His heights, and gain admission by a pure life. He Himself will descend no more into this valley of filth; the air is too thick, the company too mixed. And that is why things are as they are."

**The Atonement.**--The teacher said: "The work of the Atonement has been very difficult for me to understand. Often I have tried to explain in a way satisfactory to myself, but without success. If God had offered up His Son as an atonement for mankind, there would necessarily have been peace and paradisaic quietness on earth, but such is not the case. The period of the Roman emperors before Christ was indeed terrible, but the next thousand years were no better; they rather resembled a deluge in which the old nations were exterminated by barbarians. The second millennium was better, very much better. The third will perhaps close with a complete reconciliation between humanity and God. Everything points to that, though the heathen may reign for a while as instruments of chastisement, and executioners and possessors of wealth. The Egyptian has an important part to play, and slavery is not bad as a school of discipline. In the desert one learns the difficult art of loneliness, and in the strange land of Assyria one feels a wholesome homesickness. Still, when the Egyptian raises his stick to strike, comfort yourself with Christ's words to Pilate, 'Thou wouldest have no power over Me, if it were not given thee from above.' And when you eat the bread of the heathen, think like the Maccabees, 'I eat thy bread, but I do not sacrifice upon thy altar.' Everything is tolerable so long as we do not let ourselves be beguiled into believing that those who are in power are God's friends and favourites. Our fine gentlemen who imagine that they are forwarding development and are the sole trustees of right, progress, and illumination, are only children of this world. Let that be granted them, and much good may it do them!"

**When Nations Go Mad.**--The teacher said: "Nations are sometimes seized by madness as by other diseases. The Javanese are said to suffer from chronic madness; the men run amuck with a knife in order to slay; the women suffer from a mania for mimicry; if they see anyone throw something into the air, they imitate the gesture; they can even under such circumstances throw their children away. The Japanese again are attacked by megalomania; someone begins to shout, 'We will conquer China!' and his cry is taken up by the whole town and the whole land. The French were raving when, in 1870, they sang 'A Berlin,' and did not even reach the Rhine. Paris was captured. But the French declared it was not captured, but had surrendered. When the enemy had marched in peaceably and spared the town, and after peace was concluded the French set their own town on fire. That was madness. Then they shot down thirty thousand

of their own countrymen, while in the war itself only eighty thousand French had fallen."

"But some nations are seized by a mania for suicide. I know a land from which people emigrate at the rate of a hundred a day; in which the only important industry--iron-mining--is hampered by an export duty; that is suicide. In the same land, where the taxes are generally collected by levying distraints, they voted forty million pounds for the army; but when the muster-rolls came to be made up, the men were not to be found. In the same country the State maintains a railway of a hundred miles in length; recently the train came in with one passenger, whose journey had cost the State more than a thousand kronas. That is suicide."

**The Poison of Lies.**--The teacher said: "Let us return to life, and to men whom we think we know better than anything else, although self-knowledge is the hardest of all. A perpetual accusation which people bring against each other is that of lying. All lie more or less--by omitting principal points and emphasising secondary ones, or by colouring matters of fact. Often they do it with an excusable purpose; for instance, when a friend is being spoken about.

"But there are men who seem to be composed of falsehood and deceit. Such are the liars from necessity, who lie in order to obtain something; such, too, are the liars from ostentation, who lie in order to be superior to others, and to keep them down. One may be poisoned in the atmosphere which they spread around them.

"There is a pair of liars whom I have never seen, but often heard spoken about. When I merely hear about them and their falsehoods, I feel my brain affected, and their poison works telepathically on my nerves. The pair are dogged by misfortune, and live alone. They tell each other lies also, and pretend to themselves that they are martyrs, although their misfortunes are solely due to their deceptions. They believe that they are persecuted by men, while, on the contrary, men fly from them. Such they have been since childhood, and seem unable to change. Perhaps their mendacity is a form of punishment, for 'they that hate the righteous shall be guilty.'"

**Murderous Lies.**--The teacher continued: "When one lives on intimate terms with liars, one runs a risk of becoming a liar oneself. One believes what they say, bases his views on their falsehoods, spreads their false reports in good faith, defends their sophistries, and is entangled in their deceptions. Moreover, one's whole view of life is distorted, one loses contact with reality, lives in a fictitious world of feeling, regards friends as foes and foes as friends, thinks one is loved while one is hated, and vice versa.

"On one occasion a liar with whom I lived on intimate terms made me think that my last book had been a failure. For five years I believed it, suffered under the belief, and lost my courage. On my return to Sweden I found that the book had had a great success. Five years had been struck out of my life; I was nearly losing self-respect and the courage to support existence. That is equivalent to murder. And this behaviour on the part of my only friend, for whom I had worked and made sacrifices, gave me such a shock that all my ideas were confused. It took me years to rearrange them and bring them into proper order. True and false were mingled together: lies became reality, and my whole life seemed as unsubstantial as smoke. I was not far from ruin and the loss of reason."

**Innocent Guilt.**--The teacher continued: "During the five years in which I believed myself unjustly treated, I also incurred guilt. I had cursed those who had been just towards me, wished evil to my benefactors, repelled my admirers, avoided my adherents. And when I should now have felt remorse for it, I could not do so sincerely. On the one hand I felt myself innocent, and almost the victim of another's falsehood. But the evil which I had done was there, and must be atoned for. Such tangles are not easy to undo. Yet it is not good in life to show mistrust towards men; one must take things easily, without criticism and too careful reckoning. The deceiver says, to be sure, 'He who does not keep a sharp look-out, has himself to blame if he is cheated.' But if one does look out, and will not let oneself be cheated, one is credited with a morbid mistrustfulness. It is not easy to live, and among lawless men it is better to be cheated than to cheat. The Talmud says: 'Be rather among those who are cursed than those who curse; rather among the persecuted than the persecutors: read in the Scripture, No bird is more persecuted than the dove; yet God has chosen it for a sacrifice on His altar.'"

**The Charm of Old Age.**--The teacher said: "The charms of old age are many. The greatest is the consciousness that it is not long till evening when one can undress and lie down, without the necessity of rising up and dressing again. The diminution of the body's strength lessens its resistance to the free motions of the soul. One's interest in merely temporal matters decreases, and one begins to take a bird's-eye view of things. Seemingly important trifles shrink to insignificance. Old estimates of the values of things are changed. All that one has experienced lies like a litter of straw under one's feet; one stands in it and grows in the midst of one's past. We have found a constant amid all variables, that is, the instability of life, the transitoriness and mutability of all things. Everything is repeated; there are scarcely any surprises. We know everything beforehand, expect no improvement, are no more deceived by false hopes, demand

nothing more of men, neither gratitude, nor faithfulness, nor love, only some companionship in solitude. If we are deceived, we think it is part of the play, and even find a sort of consolation in it, because it confirms our views, which we do not like to see refuted. We become, finally, cheerful pessimists. When, on the discovery of a new cheat, we can say, 'What did I tell you?' we feel almost a sense of pleasure."

**The Ring-System.**--The teacher said: "In our old schools, the pupils were arranged not in classes, but in rings, and the forms were not placed in rows, but in circles. When I read of the circles of Dante's hell, I thought of my old school. But outside in life, I found this ring-system also. Men seemed linked together in concentric circles, each of which formed a little system of views. Each circle spoke its own language, expressed its meaning in old formulas, revered its gods, created its great men, often out of nothing. In each circle they had found the truth, and worked for development, but in a different way to the others. The first circle was really the lowest, but it considered itself the most important, because it was the first. When I read a paper or a book which comes from other circles than mine, I only see so much--that they are mad or stand on their heads. It stifles me, and has a hostile effect. I surmise that the five great races of the earth feel that, when they meet one another. In their minds they are as foreign to each other as though they came from the five great planets, although they have many human characteristics in common."

**Lust, Hate, and Fear, or the Religion of the Heathen.**--The teacher said: "You know one of my tasks in life has been to unmask gyneolatry, the worship of women in history and life. I have called it 'the superstition of the heathen,' because there is something exclusively heathenish about it. Woman-worship is the religion of the heathen, but it is a religion of fear, which has nothing to do with love. Lust, hate, and fear--those are the component parts of it. As soon as a heathen comes in the proximity of a woman, he becomes tame and cowardly; faithless towards his friends, his convictions, and himself. He immediately desires that others should venerate his idol whom he hates and fears. That is a side of his animal self-love.

"Gyneolatry is not Christian in its origin, but heathenish. All animals and savage races fear their women. When heathenism in the Graeco-Roman and Moorish colonies of southern France and Italy got the upper hand, then began gyneolatry, the worship of mistresses. This worship was dishonestly confounded with chivalrous reverence for the Madonna, which was quite another thing. This religion of the heathen is the religion of fear and concealed hatred. Therefore all tyrants have been punished by having a woman oppress and torment them. Swedenborg explains the reason."

**"Whom the Gods Wish to Destroy."**--The teacher continued: "A man's goodwill and generosity towards his wife stands in direct relation to her behaviour. When therefore a woman is ill-treated by her husband, we know of what sort she is. The apparently subordinate position which the woman occupies is the direct result of the position which nature has assigned to this immature transition-form between child and man. The child has also a subordinate position; that is quite natural, and no reasonable man has objected to it. Woman is the earth-spirit who effectuates a certain harmony with the earth-life. To this earth-life we must bring our sacrifice; therefore it is that a man feels at home in his house, and therefore wife and child comfort and protect us against the cold abstraction, life.

"Marriage is the hardest school in which renunciation and self-conquest is learned; it is also a forcing-house for wickedness of all kinds, especially the hellish sin of imperiousness. How low the sons of the Lord of Dung stand on the ladder of development may be seen from their conviction that they are only equal to the woman or subordinate to her. Blinded by this penal hallucination, they work for their own destruction when they battle for the emancipation of women, for the gods wish to destroy them.

**The Slavery of the Prophet.**--"Stuart Mill, who became the prophet of the woman's cause, had formed an attachment for another man's wife.<sup>[1]</sup> As a punishment he had to live in the hallucination that he derived all his thoughts from her. She was indeed his medium, and as such she repeated his thoughts as though they came from her, and he believed she was his superior. When somebody asked if he had received his 'Logic,' which he wrote before he knew her, also from her, he answered, 'Yes.' This sober Positivist, who only believed in tables of statistics, was obsessed by the powerful delusion that the simple-minded woman was his Genius. He could not rise to a higher idea of God. One thing I am sure of: as soon as a man deserts God, he becomes the thrall of a female devil. All tyrants, above and below, are caught in these chains, out of which only God in heaven can help a man. But He can certainly. One sees it in those who have come alive out of this hell. I know one...."

"I know two!" the pupil interrupted.

**Absurd Problems.**--The teacher continued: "There are several reasons why woman is depicted as a sphinx by men. She is incomprehensible because her soul is rudimentary, and she thinks with her body. Her judgments are dictated by interests and passions, she draws conclusions according to the state of the weather and the phases of the moon. She will sell her best friend for a theatre-ticket, or leave her sick child to see a balloon ascend. She murders her husband in order to be able to go to a bathing-resort, and forswears her religion for a diamond ring. At the same time she can appear to be a charming woman, tender towards her children, amiable, and before all things polite and affable. She may also appear a good household manager, or at any rate enjoy the reputation of being one. She can produce the illusion that she is quick at apprehension, although she does not really understand a word. She can exhibit sacrifices which are only ostentation, and give away only in order to receive back. Why cannot one guess the riddle of this sphinx? Because there is no riddle there! Why is woman incomprehensible? Because the problem is absurd. She is an irrational function because she operates with variable quantities under the radical signs.

"Nevertheless we take her as a charming actuality, a delightful child who may pull three hairs out of our beard; but if it pulls the fourth, there is an end to the enchantment."

**The Crooked Rib.**--The teacher said: "Goethe says in his *Divan*,<sup>[1]</sup> 'Woman is fashioned out of a crooked rib; if one tries to bend her, she breaks; if one lets her alone, she becomes still more crooked.' Thus there is nothing to be done. The only tactics one can adopt, as Napoleon did, are flight, or at any rate to break off contact and intimacy. This never fails; if one deprives a woman of the victim of her hatred, she pines away.

"Man loves and woman hates; man gives and woman takes; man sacrifices and woman devours. When the woman wishes to show her superiority in intellect, she commits a rascality. Her utmost endeavour is to deceive her husband. If she can trick him into eating horse-flesh without noticing it, she is happy. When woman gets her milk-teeth, she does not learn to speak but to lie, for speech and falsehood are synonymous for her. Every married man knows all that. But politeness and his own vanity keep him silent. Often he is silent because of his children; often because he is ashamed in the name of humanity. He thinks how often one has drunk the toasts of mother, wife, sister, daughter--these fictions in a world of deceit, where all is vanity of vanities. But many men are silent because they are afraid of being called 'woman-haters.' They are afraid!"

The saying is originally Muhammed's.

**White Slavery.**--The teacher said: "In the whole of the upper and middle classes and a good way below them the following is the case with regard to marriage: When a man marries, his work, which he can devolve on no one else, increases. His wife, on the other hand, at once gets a servant to do her work; if she has children, then she gets a nurse besides. But she herself sits there without occupation, and tries to kill time with useless trivialities. In this way she can neither get an appetite for dinner, nor sleep at night. In the evening her husband comes home, and wants to enjoy the domestic hearth; but his wife wants to go to the theatre and restaurant. She is not tired, but bored by want of occupation, and therefore wants amusement. Women, in fact, seem not to be born for domestic life, but for the theatre, the restaurant, and the street. Therefore women complain that they must sit at home. Although they have slaves to serve them, they call themselves 'slaves' and hold meetings to their own emancipation, but not that of their servants. Their animalised husbands support them without observing that they themselves are slaves; for he who works for the idle is a slave. But it is written, 'Ye are bought with a price; be slaves to no man.'"

**Noodles.**--The pupil asked: "What is a woman-hater?"

The teacher answered: "I do not know. But the expression is used as a term of reproach by noodles, for those who say what all think. Noodles are those men who cannot come near a woman without losing their heads and becoming faithless. They purchase the woman's favour by delivering up the heads of their friends on silver chargers; and they absorb so much femininity, that they see with feminine eyes and feel with feminine feelings. There are things which one does not say every day, and one does not tell one's wife what her sex is composed of. But one has the right to put it on paper sometimes. Schopenhauer has done it the best, Nietzsche not badly, Peladan is the master. Thackeray wrote *Men's Wives* but the book was ignored. Balzac has unmasked Caroline in the *Petites Miseres de la vie Conjugale*. Otto Weininger discovered the deceit at the age of twenty; he did not wait for the consequent vengeance, but went his own way, *i.e.* died. I have said that the child is a little criminal, incapable of self-guidance, but I love children all the same. I have said that a woman is--what she is, but I have always loved some woman, and been a father. Whoever therefore calls me a woman-hater is a blockhead, a liar, or a noodle. Or all three together."

**Inextricable Confusion.**--The teacher continued: "If on the other side of the grave there were a Judge Rhadamanthus appointed to arrange the disputes of men, he would never come to an end. Life is such a tissue of lies, errors,

misunderstandings, of debts and demands, that a balancing of the books is impossible. I know men who have been lied about their whole lives through. I know of one who was branded through his whole life with the stigma of a seducer, although he has never seduced, but was seduced himself. I know of an uncommonly truthful man who had the reputation of being a liar. I know an honourable man who passed for a thief. I know a man who was three times married, and had children in all three marriages, but was said to be no man, because he, as a man, would not be the slave of his wife. I know many who are sincerely religious and yet are called hypocrites, although the chief point in religion is sincerity. But, on the other hand, I know heathen who professed to be atheists, although in their bedchambers they sang penitential psalms when they were nervous in the dark and feared the consequences of their misdeeds. They were so cowardly that they dared not fall under the suspicion of being religious, but bragged of their courage and strength of character. They would not abandon the Black Flag; they would not be untrue to the ideal of their youth--godlessness. Rascally right and good-hearted stupidity form a problem too complicated for Rhadamanthus himself to solve. Only the Crucified could do it with the single saying which He addressed to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

**Phantoms.**--The teacher said: "When intelligence and the power of reflection are matured, and one thinks about men, their outlines begin to dissolve, and they turn into phantoms. Indeed, one never really knows a man; one knows only his own, or others' ideas of him, but when these ideas change, the image of him becomes indistinct and is obscured with a veil. We form our conception of a person whom we have never seen according to others' ideas of him. Thus, for example, the personality of a famous painter was described to me by an author. After two years the author had formed another idea of him, and imparted that to me, and I had to alter my view of him. Then there came another describer, and gave me quite a different idea of the painter. He was followed by a third and a fourth. After this I saw the painter's pictures, and could not understand how he could paint in the way he did. But the painter himself I never saw. He has become for me a phantom without clear outlines, composed of different-coloured pieces of glass, which do not harmonise, and alter according to my moods. I expect that when I meet him he will not resemble my idea of him at all, but have the effect of quite another independent phantom."

**Mirage Pictures.**--The teacher said: "When I have lived for some time in solitude my acquaintances begin to appear like mirage-pictures before me. Some gain by distance, occasion only friendly feelings, and are surrounded by an atmosphere of light and peace. Others whom I really like very well when they are near, lose by absence, and appear to be hostile. Thus I may hate a friend in his absence, look upon him as unpleasant and inimical, but as soon as he comes, enter into friendly contact with him. There is a woman whose proximity I cannot bear, but whom I love at a distance. We write letters to each full of regard and friendliness. When we have longed for each other for a time and must meet, we immediately begin to quarrel, become vulgar and unsympathetic, and part in anger. We love each other on a higher plane, but cannot live in the same room. We dream of meeting again, spiritualised, on some green island, where only we two can live, or, at any rate, only our child with us. I remember a half-hour which we three actually spent hand in hand on a green island by the sea-coast. It seemed to me like heaven. Then the clocks struck the hour of noon, and we were back again on earth, and soon after that, in hell."

**Trifle not with Love.**--The pupil said: "When a man and a woman are united in love, a single being is the result, whose existence is a positive pleasure, as long as harmony reigns. But this being is an extremely sensitive receptive instrument, and is exposed to disturbances from outer currents which act from all distances, an inconvenience which it shares with wireless telegraphy. Therefore a disturbance of the relationship between a married pair is the greatest pain which exists. Unfaithfulness is a cosmic crime which brings the one or the other member of the married pair into perverse relations with their own sex. If the husband loves another woman, his wife is exposed to terrible alternate currents; by turns she loves and hates the woman who is her rival. Often she can be the friend of her husband's paramour, but more often her enemy. Whoever comes between a pair who love, does not so with impunity. The hate which he arouses is so terrible, that he can be lamed by the discharge, lose all energy and pleasure in life. Therefore it is rightly said, "Trifle not with love."

**A "Taking" Religion.**--The pupil said: "When Buddhism, mixed with Vedantism, became fashionable in 1890, all the renegades from Christianity flocked to it and tried to fill the vacuum in their religious lives. Six thousand new gods were received with applause forthwith; the new trinity--Brahma, Vishnu, Siva--encountered no objections; spirits, ghosts, genies, fairies were thought quite natural; Gautama's heaven and hell were thrown into the bargain, accompanied by a slight flavour of asceticism. Those who denied the Resurrection found reincarnation quite a simple affair. But the favourite was Krishna. He was the incarnation of the god Vishnu, who descended to earth in order to be born of earthly parents and to save fallen humanity. His coming was prophesied, and so dreaded that a massacre of new-born infants

like that at Bethlehem was plotted, but unsuccessfully. Krishna fulfilled his mission, conquered the evil powers, and finally endured a voluntary death. That 'took!' The trinity Brahma, Vishnu, Siva 'took,' but Father, Son, Holy Spirit did not 'take.' Krishna 'took,' but not Christ. It was strange!"

**The Sixth Sense.**--The pupil continued: "The outer eye can reflect images, the inner eye can conceive them. There are therefore two kinds of sight, an outer and an inner. Of the senses, that of smell is the most immediate when it has to do with the conveyance of impressions. But there seem also to be two kinds of faculties of smell. Swedenborg says that a false man smells of sour gastric juice, but only for the person to whom he has been false. In this case the smell-perception is only subjective, but it is of great objective value in judging men. In this case the organ of smell seems to operate with aether-waves. According to Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences, good men exhale sweet perfume, and bad men a stench like that of corpses. He says that misers smell like rats, and so on. Legends of the saints relate that the corpses of those who have kept their souls and bodies pure, when they dissolve, exhale a flower-like perfume. In short, every soul has its scent, which varies according to its characteristics.

"This sixth sense the clothes-hygienist Jager believed he had discovered after he had begun to observe and train his outer and inner man. I will speak now of my own experiences in the matter. They did not begin till I had passed through the great purgatorial fire which burnt up the rubbish of my soul, and after I had scrambled out of the worst of the mire by self-discipline and asceticism. They are accustomed to boil off the gum from raw silk before it is spun, and so my nerve-fibres seemed to have been 'scoured' by the sufferings of life, and gone through a process like the 'fining' of silk."

**Exteriorisation of Sensibility.**--The pupil continued: "I happened once, when watching a spider in a web, to see her 'exteriorise her sensibility,' or in other words reel out a nerve-substance for herself with which she remains in touch, and by means of which she becomes aware when flies come and when the weather changes. Raspail, who in his masterly works has cast many a far-reaching glance behind the curtains of nature, has in one place philosophised over the spider's web. In other works dealing with transcendent natural sciences, one finds the doubt expressed whether the object of the spider's web is only to be a fly-trap. I myself have counted four and twenty radii in the web of the garden-spider resembling an hour-circle, and have asked myself whether, besides being a barometer and trap, the web is also a kind of clock.

"Now it seems as though I had myself in a similar manner exteriorised my sensibility. I feel at a distance when anyone interferes with my destiny, when enemies threaten my personal existence, and also when people speak well of me or wish me well. I feel in the street whether those I meet are friends or foes; I have felt the pain of an operation undergone by a man to whom I was fairly indifferent; twice I have shared the death-agonies of others with the accompanying corporeal and psychical sufferings. The last time I went through three illnesses in six hours, and when the absent person with whom I suffered was liberated by death, I rose up well. This makes life painful, but rich and interesting."

**Telepathic Perception.**--The pupil said: "While I lived in the most intimate relations with a woman, I arrived, like Gustav Jager, at 'the discovery of the soul.' I was always in communication with her, often through obscure sensations, but very often through the sense of smell; these were subjective however, as other people were not aware of them. When she was travelling I knew whether she was in a steamer or on a train; I could distinguish the revolutions of the screw from the vibration of the railway carriage and the puffing of the engine. She used to make her presence felt by me at a certain hour of the day, *i.e.* five o'clock in the morning. Once, when she was in Paris, this time changed to four o'clock. When I consulted the table of time variations, I found that it was four o'clock in Paris when it was five o'clock with me. Another time she was in St. Petersburg, then our meeting took place an hour later; that also agreed with the time-table. When she hated me, I was conscious of a smell and taste like that of mortalin; this happened one night so distinctly that I had to rise and open the window. When she thought kindly of me, I perceived a smell of incense and often of jasmine, but these scents sometimes changed into sensations of taste. When she was in society without me I felt that she was away, and when the conversation turned on me I was aware whether they were speaking good or ill about me."

**Morse Telepathy.**--The pupil continued: "I was spending one evening at home alone; I did not know where she was, but had the feeling that she was lost to me. At 10.40 P.M. I was aware of a passing breath of perfume. Then I said to myself, 'She has been in the theatre! But in which?' I took the daily paper, read the theatre advertisements, and found that one theatre closed at 10.40. Further inquiry proved that my surmise was right.

"On another occasion when in company I broke off a lively conversation with a smile. 'What are you smiling at?' 'Just now the train from the south entered the terminus.' Another time under similar circumstances I said: 'Now the curtain falls on the last act in *Helsingfors!*' and I heard the applause which greeted the prima donna who had played in my

piece. The conversation of the people in the restaurant after the conclusion of the piece sounded like ringing in my ears. I can hear that as far as from Germany when a prima donna is acting in one of my pieces there, although I do not know beforehand that it is going to be played. One evening I had gone to bed about half-past nine, and was awoken about half-past eleven by a smell of punch and tobacco and in the impression that two of my acquaintances in a cafe were talking about me. I had every reason to believe that I had been present there in some way or another, but I was so accustomed to this phenomenon that this time I did not test it. Flammarion gives a hundred such cases in his book *The Unknown*."

**Nisus Formativus, or Unconscious Sculpture.**--The pupil continued: "Once I signed a contract with a merchant. After sleeping the night over it, I noticed that he had cheated me. With angry thoughts I went out for my morning stroll. When I came back I wished to change my clothes, and threw my handkerchief on the table. After I had undressed myself I noticed that the handkerchief had been crumpled together by my nervous clutch, and now, where it lay, formed a cast of the merchant's head, like a plaster-of-Paris bust. The question arises: Had my hand unconsciously formed an image of my thoughts? Linen is a very plastic material, and one often finds excellent pieces of 'sculpture' in handkerchiefs, sheets, and cushions. When a married man comes home with his wife from a ball, he should look at the handkerchief which she has held the whole evening in her hand, and then perhaps he might see with whom she preferred most to dance.

"In India a Buddhist priest is said to represent the 208 incarnations of Vishnu by putting his hand in a linen bag, and moulding rapidly from within the linen of the bag into the shapes of an elephant, tortoise, etc. When St. Verónica's napkin retained the impress of Christ's face, that is not more improbable than that my pillow in the morning should show the impress of faces which are not like mine. I have read of Indian vases which are so modelled that at first one only sees a chaos resembling clouds, twisted entrails, or the convolutions of the brain. After the eye has become accustomed to this the confusion begins to be disentangled; all kinds of objects such as plants and animals emerge in clear outline. Whether all observers see the same I know not. But I believe that the moulder of the vase has worked unintentionally and unconsciously."

**Projections.**--The pupil continued: "But there are also projections which I cannot explain. It is possible that only poets and artists possess the power so to project their inward images in every life that they become half real. It is quite a usual occurrence that the dying show themselves to their absent friends. Living persons can also appear at a distance, but only to those who keep them in their thoughts. I used to show my initiated friends the following phenomenon: I observed a stranger who resembled an absent acquaintance. As soon as my eye completed the image, whatever unlikeness remained was erased. 'See, there goes X.,' I said. My friends saw the resemblance, understood that it was not X., comprehended my meaning, and agreed with me without further thought. If we shortly afterwards met X. we were astonished, and attempted to find no explanation in face of the inexplicable latter part of the phenomenon.

"But one day I went down a street and 'saw' my friend Dr. Y. who lived fifty miles away. It was he, and yet it was not he. It was the same little figure although somewhat wavering and uncertain. The grey-yellow face was also the same although almost ghost-like, with deep furrows which followed the oval lines of the face, and with the forced laugh of suffering. When I came home I read in the paper that the man was dead."

**Apparitions.**--The pupil continued: "One evening I passed a well-known theatre while a performance was going on inside. There was no one outside. Suddenly on the pavement I saw an actor who had died thirty years previously, after he had first gone crazy with vexation because he had failed as an actor in this very theatre. His face, like that of my deceased friend the doctor's, was lined with those parallel furrows which run from the forehead to the jaw. 'Was it he, or not?' I asked myself, and left the question open. On another occasion I was travelling by rail in a foreign country. The train halted at a station for three minutes. On the platform in broad daylight a man was going up and down with a paint-box in his hand. He looked nervous and suffering and was badly dressed. 'That is he!' I thought. 'How has he got here? Why has he come down in the world?' During this three minutes I suffered all the tortures of uncertainty and of a bad conscience, for I was partly to blame for his misfortune and his poverty. The train went on, and I have never discovered whether it were really he. It was certainly improbable.

"Yet another time I was travelling by rail. At a remote station a man came into my compartment and sat opposite me. I thought he was an acquaintance, but he looked at me unrecognisingly. Then I let my eyes fall. Immediately he regarded me with an ironical smile which I again recognised. 'It is he,' I thought, 'but he will not greet me.' So I suffered for some hours. My conscience endured all that I owed him. Whether it really was he I know not, but the effect was the same."

**The Reactionary Type.**--The teacher said: "Men seem to react against themselves and their own bad qualities when

they demand from others what they cannot themselves do. A man who is full of hate demands to be loved. A faithless deceiver came lately to me and finished his wily talk by saying, 'All I ask is that you trust me!' He only asked that in order that he might be able to deceive me. But perhaps he trusted me more than himself; he did not know himself, but had an inkling of what he was. Perhaps he felt that my belief in him would strengthen and elevate him, and might possibly neutralise his untrustworthiness. It sounded at any rate very naive, and I felt myself honoured by the compliment.

"Again, a spendthrift who had no means of his own always cautioned me to be frugal. He gave brilliant parties, but when he came to me he only got potatoes and herrings, and yet he thought that was beyond my means. On one occasion I had bought 200 grammes of nickel-sulphate for my chemical experiments. They cost fifty-two pence. The spendthrift came to visit me, looked at the sulphate, and exclaimed, 'Can you afford it? Nickel-sulphate which is so dear! Fifty-two pence! Then he invited me to a drive in a carriage, and a meal which cost fifty-two kronas for an altogether unproductive purpose. When he had to pay the reckoning he suffered torments. Perhaps he was by nature a skinflint, who had yielded to a mania for extravagance and reacted against it. I tried to explain this once to him, as on principle I wished to think well of the man."

**The Hate of Parasites.**--The teacher continued: "There are men who are spiritually so empty that they only live on others. I have an acquaintance (when one is over fifty one does not ask for friends any more) who constantly visits me but never says anything. Our social intercourse consists in my speaking alone. When he leaves me after several hours, I feel as if I had been undergoing blood-letting. It is certainly good to be able to talk oneself out often, but one would often like to have an answer to one's questions; but I never get an answer, not even to a question in his own special line. I can only remember one expression which this man used, and that was extraordinarily stupid. Somebody had slandered me, and my 'acquaintance' had believed every word and painted my figure in false colours. Finally one evening I defended myself, and proved that my slanderer was not in his right senses. He rejected my explanation, exclaiming 'Fie! how cynical you are!'"

"What did this answer mean? First, that I must not wash myself clean, for he wanted to have me dirty; secondly, that he gave me the lie; thirdly, that his sympathies were on the side of the slanderer. I draw the inference that this man hated me, and therefore visited me. If he could not have intercourse with me, he could not abuse my confidence and gratify his hate. His tactics were--to live my life, to devour my soul, to gnaw my bones. The attraction he felt to me he called sympathy, though it was antipathy. There are many kinds of hate, and a wife's 'love' to her husband is a variety of hate. She desires his virile power in order to become a husband and make him into a passive-wife."

**A Letter from the Dead.**--The teacher said: "It seems as though one could live the life of another parallel with one's own, or as though one might be in touch with a stranger on another continent. One morning I received a letter of twenty-quarto pages from America. Long letters make me nervous; they always begin with flattery and end with scolding. I read, as I usually do, the signature first, which was unknown to me. Then I dipped into the letter here and there, and saw that the writer wished to influence me. One word pricked me like a needle, and I tore the letter into small pieces which I threw in the paper-basket. In the night I dreamt that the remarkable man,<sup>[1]</sup> who seemed still to guide my steps after his death, showed me an old manuscript which I had not found worth reading. The old servant held the manuscript against the light, and then I saw like a water-mark another writing between the lines. Immediately afterwards I saw in my dream a broken-off leaden wire, but closer inspection showed its surface to be gold. When I awoke in the morning I understood the dream in its perfectly clear symbolism. I went to the paper-basket, collected the fragments of the stranger's letter, and spent six hours in piecing them together. Then I began to read. I should premise that the handwriting was so like that of my deceased and honoured teacher, that I believed I was reading a letter from the dead."

He refers probably to the Chief Librarian in the Royal Stockholm Library, where he had been an assistant in his youth.

**A Letter from Hell.**--"The letter pricked me like a packet of needles. But it was so interesting that I was continually lured onward to read to the end. The writer began by saying that he had received his first intellectual awakening through my books. Since then his course for twenty years had been very irregular; led astray by the prevailing apemorality, he had gone in evil ways. In the midst of his wandering, it happened to him as to Dante and others--he came into hell, but found a Virgil who led him out and saved him. Then his own real life began. He passed all the sciences from philosophy to chemistry under critical review, and found them consisting of mere conventional lies. He drifted about helplessly till he found an anchorage-ground in faith in Christ, the Exorciser of demons, the highest Wisdom, the Redeemer who saves from doubt, despair, and madness.

"During the perusal I felt sometimes as though I were reading my own life or a satire on it. Annoyed by what seemed a tactless encroachment, I often wished to throw the letter away but could not; the dream always recurred to me, and the

letter contained new and bold ideas sparkling in a chaos of contradictions and paradoxes. In short, it proved a turning-point in my life. It exposed my faults, but showed me at the same time that I had held the right course, in spite of the deflections and cross-currents to which I had been exposed."

**An Unconscious Medium.**--"Now let me say a few words about my deceased mentor, who already in his lifetime exercised a great influence on my development, though without knowing or wishing it. I was young, precocious, dull, and untrustworthy, mostly because I wished to preserve my personal independence, but also because I was godless, and consequently immoral without any other principle except that of getting on. He, my chief, attracted me, in spite of the fact that I was antipathetic to him in most things. My position required that I should serve him devotedly, but I wished also to serve my own interests. He was a spiritist and Swedenborgian, but I was a materialist. This he was aware of, because I was brutally truthful. But struggle as I might, I came under his influence and became his medium. There were days on which he was so blind that he could not read the old manuscripts which he was editing. One day he gave me a mediaeval codex in a difficult character, and half in joke told me to read it. I read it at once, without having learnt the character. Then he had discovered me. But I worked alone, although unconsciously. One day I stumbled on a pile of old documents, and found a date which he had been hunting for for twenty years. Another time I found an historic detail of great importance which altered our ideas of our early history. One day our paths diverged.

**The Revenant.**--"Years passed. I lived abroad, but my thoughts often reverted to the savant who had had a great influence on my life. Often, without any special reason, I spoke of him for hours at a time--not always with the respect which I owed him. I was, it must be remembered, a pioneer, to whom nothing was sacred, neither parents nor teacher. One day I heard that the old man was dead. Eight days later there appeared in the paper this mysterious announcement. An intimate friend of the deceased received, eight days after his death, through the post, a letter from him. The paper considered it a jocose mystification on the part of the deceased, who loved jokes. I guessed who might have been entrusted with the letter, but felt astonished that a dying man could take such pleasure in jesting, especially about things which he had taken so seriously. When, two years later, began the experiences described in my book *Inferno*, I felt that I was in touch with my departed teacher. There were certain roguish traits in the phenomena which reminded me of him. I remember one night addressing the question to the darkness, 'Is it you?' The whole affair was in his style, teasing in form, but well-meaning in purpose. I received no answer, but the impression remained--a mixture of terrible grim earnest and behind it a friendly smile, comforting, pardoning, protecting, just as in his lifetime, when he practised patience with my ill manners."

**The Meeting in the Convent.**--The teacher continued: "During my wanderings I happened once to visit a convent with a travelling companion in a corner of Europe. What interested me specially was the library, for I had long been trying to trace Anschar's<sup>[1]</sup> journal. After I had slept the night in a cell which bore the inscription 'B. Victor III. P.P.', in memory of Pope Victor III 'who punished the heretics who denied the divinity of Christ,' I was taken into the library. The first thing shown me was a collection of Latin hymns of the Middle Ages which had been edited by my deceased teacher. The inner side of the title-page contained some handwriting by the editor, which was so peculiar that it could hardly be imitated. I asked the Benedictine monk who accompanied me, whose signature it was. He answered, 'The convent librarian's.' 'Are you certain?' I asked. 'Yes, quite certain.' This discovery of his handwriting, which I had never seen elsewhere, after so many years made a deep impression on me. I asked myself whether the monk, acting as a medium, could have imitated the handwriting of the deceased editor. After an afternoon's search I found the valuable explanation that Anschar's journal had been taken by Abbot Thymo from Corvey to Rome in A.D. 1261. It was known that it had since disappeared, but now I had found a trace of it. I felt as though my deceased friend had brought me here into the convent in order to discuss Anschar's journal, concerning the fate of which we had often made guesses and searches."

A famous French missionary in Sweden, a.d. 801-865.

**Correspondences.**--The teacher said: "It seems to me as though Swedenborg's correspondences or correlatives were to be found again in all departments, as though natural laws on a higher plane can be applied to the spiritual life of man. If an object comes too close to the magnifying glass, it becomes indistinct. Similarly one cannot see the object of one's affections if she comes too close. She becomes small and indistinct, loses outline and colour; but remove her to the proper focus, and she becomes magnified and clear. Thus it is with princes and their valets de chambre.

"But there are also exceptions to the rule. Many friends gain by proximity; one must see them often, otherwise they change their shape and become ghostly and alarming. Others again seem better at a distance; whenever we meet them we lose an illusion. The attraction between lovers can increase in proportion to the square of the distance between them, and also in reverse proportion; the greater the distance, the greater the pain of separation. It seems also possible

to apply the facts of electricity in the psychical sphere. Pellets of elder-pith attract one another so long as they are of opposite polarity, but when they are saturated or over-saturated they repel one another. But the mutual repulsion also takes place when a foreign body is interposed between them, for then an influence is produced which operates laterally."

**Portents.**--The teacher continued: "As soon as I believe in an Almighty God, who can suspend the few natural laws which we know, and bring into operation the countless host of laws which we do not know, I must believe in miracles. Swedenborg does not deal so hardly with anyone (at the same time that he commiserates them) as the asses who revere the creation and the laws of nature, without believing in the Creator and Law-giver. They go with their noses on the ground, and if anything unusual happens 'in the air,' as they say, they call it 'a meteorological phenomenon,' and attribute it to such and such natural causes. They register the phenomenon in their records without dreaming of anything behind it, and forthwith forget the matter.

"We, on the other hand, will mention some events of recent years and connect them with certain natural phenomena which may possibly denote the presence of warning and chastising powers.

"On the 7th June, 1905, Sweden and Norway separated. A year previous an earthquake took place which had its centre in the Kattegat. One shock reached Christiania and caused a terrible panic in the churches; people trampled one another to death or lost their reason. Another shock affected Stockholm and caused alarm, but in a minor degree; among those affected by it was a prince of high military rank. In January, 1905, a hurricane burst over Christiania, tore the roof from the royal castle, and injured the fortress of Akershus. The same hurricane travelled east-ward to Stockholm, tore the roof from the guards' barracks and threw it on the drilling-ground. These statements can be verified by reference to the newspapers. The question is: 'Are these portents or not?' Are symbolic natural phenomena portents?"

**The Difficult Art of Lying.**--The teacher said: "When people lie deliberately, usually with the object of gaining something, I often do not hear what they say. One day a carpenter came to me with a complaint. I listened to him and helped him. The next day he came again in order to do a piece of work. Then, among other things he let this remark fall: 'To-day, thank God, she is better.' 'Who?' I asked. 'I mentioned yesterday that my child had fallen down the staircase.' Then I felt ashamed of having taken so little interest in his troubles, and murmured some sympathetic words. But when he had gone I thought over the matter. Since I generally hear very well and attend to what people say, I was astonished that I had not noticed his account of his trouble. I could not explain it to myself.

"Some time later, after some months, I conceived a strong feeling of distrust towards this man. I remembered the German proverb, 'A liar should have a good memory,' and determined to test him. Therefore I said to him abruptly, 'Did you have a good summer?' 'Splendid,' he answered. 'Is your wife quite well?' 'Perfectly.' 'Your child too?' 'She has never passed through the summer so well.' Accordingly he had lied when he said the little girl had had an accident, and had subsequently forgotten it. What was unreal could leave no impression behind--an interesting fact, as it seemed to me. In connection with this I remembered that an actor, a pessimist and hopeless despairer, had to play the part of a believing and positive character on a certain occasion. That evening the audience could hardly hear a word of what he said. I was astonished at the time, but now I understand that he was lying."

**Religious and Scientific Intuition.**--The pupil said: "The everlasting strife between Faith and Knowledge would have been stifled at the outset if some sharp wit had discovered in time that the problem is wrongly stated, for the two ideas form no real antithesis. What I know, that I believe; consequently faith presupposes knowledge, consequently knowledge is subsumed under faith. But the word 'belief' has received other significations. In religion it means reception or absorption. Science recognises the fact of intuition or rapid inference, *i.e.* the faculty of reaching certainty without sufficient reason and without a complete chain of proof. That is scientific belief, and is in complete analogy with religious belief. When a man arrives at the knowledge of God and of His laws by way of intuition, when he then tests this knowledge by observing his experiences and finds it confirmed, then the final outcome of his investigation is Belief. Belief is complete objective certainty, but on a higher plane, so that all scientific chatter that Knowledge is higher than Belief is mere nonsense. By 'knowledge' in this case one understands for the most part information about stones, plants, and animals, and historical facts such as the year in which a certain book was published, when Goethe was in Strasburg, whether Rebecca Ost's real name was Popoffsky or Johanna Hagelstrom, or whether an Apostle-mug is genuine or imitation. The antithesis 'Faith *or* Knowledge' is the stupidest dispute about words which ever took place, and a disgrace to humanity."

**The Freed Thinker.**--The teacher said: "In order to think rightly and in accordance with law, I must free my reason from

fetters of rustic intelligence, from interests, passions, conventional considerations. One must go into deep solitude, and not be afraid of remaining alone, deserted by all. Above all, one must not belong to any party which regulates, inspects, and degrades. In order to be able to dare to give up the weak and hampering support of men, one must be able thoroughly to rely upon God. In order to do that one must keep one's conscience as clean as possible, must hate evil, strive after righteousness and goodness, bear everything except humiliation, exercise mercifulness, and take trials as such and not as persecutions.

"The electric clock has contact and connection with a correctly-timed chronometer. And so my reason cannot think logically till I have opened connection with the Logos, and no longer discharge contrary currents of sterile denial and doubt. Only in life with God is there freedom of thought, freedom from impure impulses, selfish and ambitious interests, freedom from the wish to stand well with the crowd. That is the *freed* thinker in contrast to the 'free-thinker,' who has left the rails and lost connection with the overhead wire; he will come to grief at the next street-corner, and is of no more use as a vehicle of traffic."

**Primus inter pares.**--The pupil continued: "Religions seemed to be determined by regions like nationalities. Swedenborg hints at something of the sort, saying that people have the religion which they ought to have. Those who have no religion are tramps and vagabonds, pariahs and gypsies, scoundrels and swindlers. They think they are at home everywhere, but are so only on the high-roads, in the market-places, behind the circus-stable, in the alehouse. When Lessing asserts in *Nathan der Weise* that all religions are equally good, he shows that he has not understood Christianity, which is the beginning and end of the world's history. The Muhammedans are certainly religious, more religious than the Christians, and among the adherents of Islam are many sects, but no atheistic ones. All observe the hours of prayer, fasts, and daily washings. Muhammed was no Christ-hater. But they are alien to our climate. Still we have something to learn from them; they are not ashamed to show their religion, while we shuffle with it. They are not only religious on Sundays but every day and all day.

"But, if we heard that a Christian had gone over to Islam we should regard it as a fall from the higher to the lower, while the conversion of a Muhammedan to Christianity would be hailed as an ascent. Saladin was certainly noble and Nathan wise, but the nobleness of the former had somewhat of a pose about it, and the wisdom of the latter was of the same homely kind as Voltaire's. On the other hand, Godfrey de Bouillon accepted the crown of thorns instead of the king's crown, and St. Louis gave his life for the wisdom which surpasses all understanding."

**Heathen Imaginations.**--The teacher said: "Religions are represented by regions, defined territories, circles, of which each considers himself the centre. The modern heathen sit in their little bag, which is big enough to be seen, and when they only see heathen they imagine that Christianity is decaying or altogether done with. And yet it is flourishing as it never did before; everything serves the Gospel with or against its will. The heathen find new weapons in heaps of ruins and in temple-libraries; they close churches and thereby bring Christianity into life and into the domestic circle. When they make life bitter for the Christians, the latter turn from the sour and seek the fresh. The missionaries who were only lately regarded with a contemptuous smile are now discovered by great explorers in deserts and wildernesses, where they have established oases of humanity and mercy. There the plundered wanderer can rest his weary head, secure of having found one trustworthy man. He who wishes to know the effect of Christianity on an idolater should read Kanzo Utschimura's *Memoirs of a Japanese; or, How I Became a Christian*. Those who preach 'cheerful paganism' can see in this work how a polytheist is tom and tortured by doubt, and tossed to-and-fro between the contradictory commands of eighty million gods."

**Thought Bound by Law.**--The teacher said: "When a young man comes and says he is a free-thinker, say to him: 'You lie. You think with your stomach, your throat, your sexuality, with your passions and your interests, your hate and your sympathies. But in your youthful immaturity you do not really think at all, but merely drivel. What is instilled into you, you give out, and dub your wishes by the name of thoughts.' Moreover 'free-thought' is a contradiction in terms, for thought obeys laws, just as sound, light, and chemical combinations do. Thought is bound, bound by laws. If you say 'There is no God,' you speak without thinking. 'Non-existence' and 'God' are two incommensurate ideas which cannot be brought into juxtaposition. If they are, there results an absurdity which is the secretion or excretion of an illogical and confused mind.

"If on the other hand you say 'There is no God *for me*,' there is something probable in that. But you should be ashamed to speak of it. It only means that you are a godless dog, a perverse ape, a conscienceless deceiver and thief whom men must avoid and detectives must watch. Fortunately godlessness is an hallucination imposed on haughty blockheads as a punishment. When the 'free-thinker' discovers some day how stupid he is, then he is freed, and that is a mercy for him."

**Credo quia (et-si) absurdum.**--The teacher said: "If I call myself a Christian it is because I recognise Christ as a power, a source of strength, from whom I obtain strength by prayer in order to support tolerably the burdens of life. But at the same time I confess that I cannot understand nor explain the doctrine of Atonement through sacrificial death. That is not, however, the fault of the doctrine but a defect in me. I have also no right to deny a matter of fact because I do not understand it. Here is an illustration. If I multiply 2 by 2 I obtain an increase--4. But if I multiply 1/2 by 1/2 I obtain as a result a decrease by half, *i.e.* 1/4. Here is an incomprehensible contradiction. Multiplication cannot produce a decrease. Yet it is mathematically true that 2 multiplied by 2 is doubled, *i.e.* 4, but 1/2 multiplied by 1/2 is halved, *i.e.* 1/4. My intelligence would fain deny it, but I must believe it, and in doing so I do well, otherwise the whole science of mathematics would be unusable, which would be a great loss. *Credo quia absurdum.* That means, I must believe a fact just because it is incomprehensible and absurd (for me, but not for others). If I could understand it, the emergency short-cut of 'faith' would not be necessary. That is the sacrifice, not of my reason, but of my rustic understanding and of my pride."

**The Fear of Heaven.**--The pupil said: "The astronomy or uranology of the astronomers has ceased to make any progress since it has become godless. They have given up observing the sky. They sit there and calculate, with the express purpose of calculating God's existence away. Seven years ago I met a teacher of astronomy. He did not know that the equator of the sky passes through the belt of Orion, and could not point out the ecliptic. He boasted of not knowing the constellations, saying it was no science to know them. Our nearest neighbour the moon has been ignored for a long time. And yet in 1866 it was noticed that changes had taken place there, and that the crater of Linnaeus was on the point of disappearing. On the other hand, they are trying to signal to Mars. If man, who lately in his folly thinks he has solved the riddle of the universe without God, only knew how the 'gods' are to us, and if he understood the signals which they send to us daily and hourly, he would go out like Peter and weep that he had denied his Lord or behaved as though he knew Him not."

**The Goat-god Pan and the Fear of the Pan-pipe.**--The teacher said: "Like all lower classes the apelings regard themselves as supermen, who march at the head of all movements and can regulate developments. Their god is the shaggy Pan, who had been a goat and became a half-man, and later the Evil One, Satan, or God's opponent. But they must be ashamed of their god, for they call themselves atheists. Their religion is that of the Satanists. When they hear of any good action they snort. They delight in persecuting and tormenting anyone in whom there is any good visible, and call him a hypocrite. Their children learn to lie as soon as they learn to talk. The greatest poet of the apelings has written a lament over the 'Decay of lying' and an heroic poem in six cantos in praise of unnatural vice. They are all perverse, mostly in secret, but they betray themselves in their writers, who write in the name of woman, and from the woman's point of view, against man. For by confusion of sex they have lost all distinction of sex; they have ceased to think and to feel as men. They run like dogs with their noses on the track of the white man, in order to bite him, that he may become like one of them.

"There are white men who have been seduced by the females of the apelings. The children are bastards, and their lives are a perpetual conflict against the Satanic inheritance they have received from their mothers. Some fight in vain; others find the Helper. There is only One--Jesus Christ, the Exorciser of demons. You know that I was such a bastard and fought the battle, which is not yet concluded.

"The apelings preach toleration. By that they mean that whatever they do must be overlooked, and that they should be left at liberty to propagate their doctrines, while they more or less secretly persecute the Christians. As soon as they begin to scent Christian blood they shudder. Then they begin to excommunicate the 'heretic.' His name is no more mentioned, and if it appears in print it is cut out. If he formerly belonged to the body of the apelings he is now called an apostate, and must die as a traitor.

"When an apeling dies he obtains an apotheosis in the absence of a pantheon. At the burial the wreaths are counted, and the inscriptions attached to them examined; if anyone's name is missing he is excommunicated. The ceremonial is just like that of a witches' sabbath when the 'faithful' gave their testimony. But it may happen, when they invoke Pan, that he answers with the reed-pipe. Then if he shows himself in the wood or in the bedchamber, they are seized with a panic fear; they weep like children who are afraid of the dark, or fly to sanatoriums to be cured of their neurasthenia, their sleeplessness, and their heart-complaints."

**Their Gospel.**--The teacher continued: "But the apelings have also constructed a dogmatic theology which is a parody of the Christian faith. They have a doctrine of reconciliation which proclaims reconciliation with life, but it is really a compromise with all the dirt of life which one generally wipes off on the mat at the house-door. They teach men to be tolerant towards turpitude and wickedness; they describe men as good fellows, as careless creatures who are thoroughly good at bottom--'there is no malice in them.' The really good men, who cannot do anything wicked, seemed

to the apelings puritanical. 'Why should we torment ourselves in the only life we have?' they ask, feeling quite sure that they will be annihilated at death, like maggots.

"According to this distorted gospel, it is wrong to describe in a literary work how the malicious, the liar, the deceiver, the pander get their deserts. We should, they say, pardon the conscienceless and obstinate. Christianity, on the other hand, teaches that we should pardon the repentant who improve. In the apelings' gospel all the teaching of Christ is sophisticated. In their view all Magdalenes are interesting innocent victims of social circumstances, while Christ only received the Magdalene who had abandoned vice."

**The Disposition of the Apes.**--The teacher continued: "This is the whole kernel of Darwinism, this madness which infected the mind of a generation which was overstrained with the pursuit of power and luxury. But this Beelzebub could only be driven out by another. That was Nietzsche. He was a demon let loose, who killed the ape, restored the man, and altered the old popular estimates. He was understood because he spoke the language of the apelings. That was the only way to compel them to listen, for they would never have heard a Christian prophet. But after he had his say his tongue was spiked and his tale was over.

"Joseph Peladan was a Christian prophet of the school of the Therapeutae and Essenes. The apelings feared him, and could not name his name, for it stuck in their throats. Only the Christian upper class understood him. His Christianity was luminous and esoteric, perhaps too luminous. But after a pilgrimage to Christ's grave he discovered the deceit, turned his back on the 'reconciliation with life,' and forswore the worship of beauty which was merely the dressing up of the apes with white sheets and ivy leaves. He ceased to be interested in the bestial and the nude, saw through the 'joy of life' and Nora,<sup>[1]</sup> unmasked the humbug of tolerance, and took the cross in real earnest, as it is, on himself. Peladan was a living protest against apishness. He represented the undercurrent, not the surface-stream. Still the undercurrent is always ready to mount and overflow and cleanse the banks, which at the ebb-tide have served as a place for dumping down rubbish."

The heroine of Ibsen's *Doll's House*.

**The Secret of the Cross.**--The teacher said: "The conflict between paganism and Christianity is now being fought out in the world. But just as surely as Christianity preceded paganism in time, so surely does the future belong to Christianity, although for the moment the apelings have the upper hand. Their edict of toleration allows them in the name of freedom to forbid the preaching of Christianity. They close the churches, declare Judas innocent, give mad women the vote, write heathenish schoolbooks for children, place forgers and pettifoggers in power, for their kingdom is of this world. But it is with Christianity as with the walnut-tree, whose fruit is knocked down with poles, and which is roughly treated in order that it may bear fruit and thrive. The night grows darker towards the dawn. Spinach-seed is trodden down that it may grow better; the ground must be harrowed, broken, and rolled in order to be able to yield a crop; gold must be refined in fire, and flax be steeped in water. The cross points upwards, downwards, sideways, to the four quarters of heaven at once; it is a completion of the compass. Suffering bums up the rubbish of the soul. I have seen a man who had suffered all the griefs endured by humanity; yet the more he suffered the more beautiful he became. That is the secret of the cross and of suffering. 'Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you. In the world ye have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.'"

**Examination and Summer Holidays.**--The teacher said: "When, on reaching maturity, one awakes to new consciousness and discovers that everything one has is borrowed, one begins to cut oneself down to the root, in order to let strike a new stem which is one's own. When we enter old age this stem withers down to the root (the process Swedenborg calls 'desolation'); the branches formerly cut down bloom again and put forth new foliage which is like, and yet not like the former. But when old and new flourish together, the whole result is confusing; but the root remains the same and reveals the nature of the plant. The dissonances of life increase with the years, and the material of life becomes so immense that it is impossible to survey it properly. Therefore one lives more in remembrance than in the present, and along the whole line of one's experience. Sometimes I live in my childhood, sometimes in my mature age.

"But it is strange that one does not feel old age to be the beginning of an end but the introduction to something new, *i.e.* when one has recovered the belief or assurance that there is a life on the other side. One feels as though one were preparing for an examination by doing preliminary exercises and one becomes literally young again. There is a little touch of examination fever with it, but also great hopes mingled with dreams of the future. These remind us of Christmas joys, summer holidays, family gatherings with reconciliations and wishes fulfilled. But there is also a scent of broken-off birch-leaves and the seashore; there is a sound of Sunday bells and organs, the attraction of new clothes, white linen, and a bath in green sea-water. There is a feeling like that of evening prayer and a good conscience, wife, home, and child after a journey, the hearth-fire after a snow-storm, the first ball and the one we loved to dance with

most, the opening of the savings-box, and first and last the examination and the summer holidays."

**Veering and Tacking.**--The teacher continued: "The Theosophists speak of the seven planes of the Kama-Loka, the condition after death. I will admit that, in certain circumstances, I have lived simultaneously on several planes. This was difficult for me, and still more difficult for my enemies to understand. I should like to have explained these contradictions in existence by a cleavage of the personality or a multiplication of the ego. I have also sought the solution of the riddle in the self-adaptation to one's surroundings, to which St. Paul refers in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: 'To the Jews I became a Jew.... To those who are under the law, I became as under the law.... To those who are without law, I became as one without law. To the weak I became as weak.' ... Kierkegaard speaks of Sympaschomenos who rejoices with the joyful, mourns with the sad, is coarse with the coarse, refined with the refined.

"Swedenborg makes another suggestion, 'When a man is to be born again, his desires and falsities cannot be stripped off at once, for that would be equivalent to destroying the whole man, because as yet he only lives in them. Therefore for a long while evil spirits are left with him, to stir up his desires that they may be dissolved in many ways.'

"Formerly I believed, when I was young with the youthful, old and wise with the old, mad with the mad, that I was doing them a service. As a poet, I lived for the moment in their life and their moods, which I then depicted and forgot myself. Often by these relapses into stages I had left behind, I seemed to have worked myself higher, as the ship tacks in order to get a more favourable wind."

**Attraction and Repulsion.**--The teacher continued: "There is both an attraction and a repulsion between similar souls. Like loves like, but not always; often the unlike seeks the unlike. A good man lamented to me that it was his lot always to be in bad society, and never to meet good men who could elevate him. Since he was strong he was at any rate not drawn down, but he did not observe that he exercised a good influence on his bad surroundings. He had, it is true, occasion to see and to hear evil; but, on the other hand, he was able to react against it through the disgust with which it inspired him. Without instituting a comparison we may say that Christ did not attract people of high position and good character, but poor devils and weak characters, the sick, the possessed, the wicked, thieves, publicans, and harlots. His disciples did not understand his doctrine, but interpreted it all in a material way. He answered their reproaches by saying, 'Only the sick need a physician.' I will suppress my former objection, for I bow myself experimentally before 'the folly of the cross,' since experience has taught me that wisdom can only be received by a humble mind, and that obedience is more than sacrifice. In recent times my constant prayer has been that I might come into good society which might elevate me, and avoid evil companionship which, to say the least, involves an injurious connection with the lower plane. It is in truth my fault that those who seek me seek my old ego, and, when they do not find it, believe that I am not to be found."

**The Double.**--The pupil said: "When a man begins to love a woman he throws himself into a trance, and becomes a poet and artist. Out of her plastic, unindividualised material he fashions an ideal form into which he puts all that is best in himself. Thus he creates an homunculus which he adopts as his double, and with that she lets him do as he likes.

"But this astral image may be also the doll which she the huntress sets up as a decoy, while she with a loaded gun lies behind the bush and watches for her prey. The love of a man for his homunculus often survives every illusion; he may have conceived a deadly hatred against herself, while his love for his double continues. But this masquerade gives rise to the deepest dissonances and troubles. He becomes squint-eyed by contemplating two images which do not coincide. He wishes to embrace his cloud, but takes hold of a body; he wishes to hear *his* poem, but it is someone else's; he wants to see his work of art, but it is only a model. He is happy during his trance, although the world cannot understand him. When he awakes from his somnambulism, his hatred to the woman increases in proportion as she fails to correspond to his image of her. And if he murders his double, then love is done with, and only boundless hate remains."

**Paw or Hand.**--The pupil said: "In Kipling's wonderful *Jungle Book*, the boy is intimate with all kinds of animals but not with apes, which are the worst of all creatures and composed of wickedness and crime. When Goethe, in the second part of *Faust*, wishes to represent phantoms and evil spirits, he uses the same masks and costumes as for the monkeys in the Witches' Kitchen in the first part. And it is among these degenerate brutes that man (?) now does his best to seek his ancestry. For my part I would rather trace my origin from a noble horse, or a sagacious and honest elephant, or from a courageous and thankful eagle.

"But it is probable that apes spring from degenerate men, escaped criminals, and ship-wrecked Robinson Crusoes. The hand of the chimpanzee is not a paw which is being evolved into a hand, but it is a human hand which is degenerating into a paw. A palmist could read the lines of it; a manicurist could improve it and make it capable of wearing a glove. If

man really sprang from apes, according to the law of phylogeny, a child ought to be born with a hairy body. But now it comes into the world as smooth as an angel, often without hairs even on its head. It is a disgrace to me that I served the Ape-king, the seducer of my youth! And it was so stupid!"

**The Thousand-Years' Night of the Apes.**--When the sun of Christianity rose over the world, it naturally became night for the apes. When they turned their backs to the light, everything became distorted for them. Right became left, east became west, good became evil, black became white, day became night. Therefore one reads still of their thousand-years' night, as they call the Middle Ages. When the savage tribes of Europe became tame, when the aged and sick became objects of pity, when governments ruled and laws protected, when faith, hope and love, self-sacrifice and chivalry flourished, then it was night for the pagans. When Europe received science, when Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, Arnold, and Basilius founded chemistry, metallurgy, and physics, their darkness increased. When mediaeval art culminated in the noblest work of art there is--the Gothic cathedral--then it grew dark before the eyes of the giants; their ears could not endure the chime of bells and organ-music. Finally the Middle Ages discovered gunpowder, the compass, and printing. A religious man, whose sails bore the sign of the cross, discovered America. But Pauli, the disciple of Clemens Romanus, already knew "the ocean which cannot be crossed by men, and the lands which lie behind it."<sup>[1]</sup>

In the midst of the darkness of the heathen there was the light of convent-schools and universities, in which spiritual as well as worldly wisdom was taught. Poems of chivalry, romances and dramas were composed. Charlemagne was a Christian King Solomon; he defeated the Philistines in Saxony, built temples out of the ruins of Rome, held learned conversations and listened to legends, cultivated the land and gave laws. That was the brightest phase of a Europe grown patriarchal and Christian. The gods certainly did not walk any more on earth, but God's messengers were in constant communication with men, and disclosed to them the secrets of God's kingdom, which were written down in Apocalypses and, best of all, in the *Legenda Aurea*. Thomas a Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* was printed and is still read even by Protestants. One can even read the Church Fathers, Augustine, Jerome, Chrysostom; Augustine was used in my youth as a confirmation-manual. Two hundred years before the Reformation--the schism in the Church as it should rather be called--Dante wrote the most Christian of all poems, which the heathen have tried to steal for themselves. Boccaccio expounded the *Inferno* from a professor's chair, a fitting penalty for the trespasses of his youth. Botticelli, Lippi, Ghirlandajo were the great religious painters of the Middle Ages. Their pupils Michael Angelo and Raphael were devout Christians, although the heathen have wished to appropriate them under the false designation Renaissance, or new birth of heathenism. When at the beginning of modern times it began to grow dusk, the dawn rose for the heathen and for "the last Athenians." The last? There will certainly be more Athenians who will wish to carry owls to Athens.

Clement, Epistle to the Romans, chap. xx.

**The Favourite.**--Julian was an Illyrian, from the predatory state composed of a mixed Phoenician race who worshipped Baal and Astarte. He had a small head, and no occiput; he had thick lips, a beard that swarmed with vermin, long nails and black hands with which he groped in the bleeding bodies of slain beasts in order to prognosticate the future from their hearts and livers. His cheerful religious services consisted in the sacrifice of animals, and were accompanied by the dances of immodest girls. In order to refute ancient prophecy, he wished to build again the Temple at Jerusalem. But fire broke out of the ground, so that the undertaking was frustrated at its commencement. This madman once came to Antioch, where there were a hundred thousand heathen whom he expected to receive him with public sacrifices and dances. Instead of which he was met by a solitary priest bearing a goose. That was all!

This unattractive person, who has become the darling of *The Last Athenian*<sup>[1]</sup> and the new heathen, was finally enticed into a desert. There he suffered hunger and thirst till a lance pierced his liver. But it is incredible that he exclaimed, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" He was far too stupid for that.

**Scientific Villainies.**--If anyone comes to you and says, "I don't understand the proof for the existence of God," you should answer, "You don't understand because your wickedness darkens your understanding." All atheists are rascals, and all rascals are atheists. Their intelligence is so beclouded with sin that they cannot understand the simplest teachings of Christianity, the Incarnation and, consequently, Immaculate Birth of God, His Resurrection and Ascension.

When the sectaries came to Luther and said that they could not understand him, because they had another Spirit, he answered, "I smite your Spirit on the snout! God rebuke thee, Satan!" A godless man or a so-called free-thinker is a rascal who permits himself everything. His natural sympathy for scoundrels is so strong that he will swear a false oath in order to save the guilty from condemnation by a false alibi. He will accuse an innocent man, and persecute him from one court of appeal to another, in order to get him into prison, and will demand a large sum of money as a reward for his ill-doing.

When the guilty is acquitted they give him a banquet, his companions write odes in his honour, he is promoted and finally appointed to be an instructor of youth. When an atheist adopts the pursuit of science, one is sure only villainy will result. He says falsely that he has seen such and such things under the microscope, in order to be able to write a treatise on them. If he is an astronomer he will see as many canals in Mars as his professor wishes. If his professor does not believe in the canals in Mars, he will not see any.

*The Last Athenian*, title of a work by Victor Rydberg.

**Necrobiosis, i.e. Death and Resurrection.**--During the winter I found the chrysalis of a cockchafer and laid it on my writing-table. One evening in the lamplight it began to click and make small movements. Believing that the warmth had developed my beetle I opened its black coffin, but found to my astonishment only a white slime without a sign of organisation; it smelt of sour gastric juice. This half-fluid mass, however, possessed the capacity of movement. Later on, when I had a microscope with a large field of view, I opened the chrysalis of a butterfly and examined it. On a clear yellow background of fluid matter there was sketched, as it were, the outline of the future butterfly in half-shadow, without, as yet, any bodily organisation. That is called "necrobiosis," or the dying-off of living tissue. And the deliquescence of the chrysalis in slime is termed "histolysis." Its reorganisation is said to take place by means of *corpora adiposa*, or particles of fat. More than this I do not know. I wrote to Germany (where they are accustomed to know everything) and asked for some works treating of the metamorphosis of the chrysalis, but there were none on this most important and interesting question. Father Darwin and his son Haeckel knew nothing and wished to know nothing about the resurrection; they only knew about birth and death. Finally I bought for five-and-twenty kroners a large work on butterflies composed by a professor. There was not a word in it regarding the necrobiosis of the chrysalis. But sometimes I see on a gravestone within a church wall this symbol: caterpillar, chrysalis, and butterfly.

**Secret Judgment.**--When one sees a fact repeated regularly and under defined conditions, one believes one has discovered a law. I think I have discovered a law, and consequently a tribunal whose decisions we see, but whose inner working we can only guess at. I had a relative who had reached a certain age without "ever having time" to think of death. On the 18th January of the year 18-- he had a stroke and fell. That was the first warning. Then he began to think about death and the life after this, and occupied himself thus for six years; then he died exactly on the same day, on the 18th of January. The fact of the interval being six years made me think of Bismarck's six years in Sachsenwald, when he sat alone and brooded on the transitory character of greatness, and curiously enough injured his reputation through being betrayed by vanity into making incautious revelations. Then it occurred to me that Napoleon was six years on St. Helena, and finally became so well "prepared" that he received the sacrament on his death-bed. Whether Heine lay on the ground for exactly six years, with his body wasted to the size of a child's and tormented by the fear of losing his wife, I cannot say definitely; but it was about six. It is well known that the pious Linnaeus had to spend his last years seated in a chair, lamed by paralysis; nor did even he escape being worried by a quarrelsome wife, God alone knows why!

Our great and glorious Tegner received his first warning in 1840. It was accompanied by a condition like that described in my *Inferno*, during which, among other things, he saw his whole poetical work in a depreciatory light, and even at last wished to cancel it all. After just six years' preparation he died on November 2, 1846, in a cheerful state of mind, the sky being lit up at the time by a splendid aurora. Goldschmidt mentions that and still more remarkable things in his excellent *Nemesis Divina*. I read lately how Fersen was murdered in his carriage on June 20, 1810. I recalled to mind that it was the same Fersen who drove the carriage in which Marie Antoinette fled to Varennes. I referred to the *History of the World*, and found that the flight to Varennes took place on June 20, 1791. The question arises: "Was it a crime to wish to save the queen?" The author of the article in the *Biographical Lexicon* mentions the crime by name; but it was something other than the attempt to further her escape.

**Hammurabi's Inspired Laws Received from the Sun-God.**--The laws of Hammurabi occupy fifteen quarto pages. That is the whole find! And these pages are to nullify the Bible, which is so unsearchably rich and possesses such mysterious depths that everyone in trouble, who with humility seeks for counsel and comfort there, finds it forthwith, although he may first receive some blows which strike the nail on the head!

Hammurabi's laws in fifteen pages resemble Deuteronomy to a certain degree, but are much more meagre; they often recall our old Swedish law with its trivialities. For instance: "If anyone strikes out a man's teeth, his teeth shall be struck out; but if he strikes out the teeth of an emancipated slave, he shall pay one-eighth of a mina of silver."

In any case God is one, and His laws are in principle the same. The Bible may have used the same source as Hammurabi. But when the heathen try to use the laws of the Assyrian clay tablets in order to prove that the Bible is not inspired, they miss the mark. "Inspired" means "received from God." See how the heathen has adorned his paltry

pamphlet with a frontispiece, which asserts, against his will, that Hammurabi's laws were also inspired. For the frontispiece portrays Hammurabi receiving his laws from the Sun-god.

**Strauss's Life of Christ.**--Now that I am sixty years old, it occurred to me to see what sort of a book Strauss's *Leben Jesu* is before I depart. In my youth, in the 'sixties, we read in school (of our own accord, however) "the last Athenian's doctrine of the Bible," but we never succeeded in seeing the original *Life of Jesus*. And although I have been in libraries, collected books, visited second-hand book-stalls, I have not seen Strauss's book. It seemed as though it had been confiscated by the Invisible Powers. Now when I am sixty, it has arrived and I tried to read it. But I could not.

It was simply unreadable! All these many pages contained nothing, and what was printed seemed to me incomprehensible, soulless, dry.

A man who writes a book about what he does not understand; a student who has learnt the aesthetic systems by heart; a philosopher who tries to define the beautiful; a mathematician who wants to prove or disprove axioms; a drunken man who tries to play the flute; a feeble foolish attempt to explain God's great miracle in the Atonement. I threw the book away, else I should have gone to sleep over it.

Strauss died in 1874, and in spite of the last stage of his development, when he did not believe any more in the immortality of the soul, he spent his last hours in reading Plato's *Phaedo*, in which at the death-bed of Socrates the immortality of the soul is so clearly demonstrated.

His death was like that of Socrates, his pupils said. But they do not inform us whether the cup of poison was at hand.

**Christianity and Radicalism.**--Christianity is really more radical than Radicalism. Christ turns his back on the whole of society with its institutions, science, and art. He warns us against the scribes; the rich are not his friends, but rather Lazarus; the rich youth is told to sell all that he has and to give to the poor. To soldiers Christ says, "Those who take the sword shall perish with the sword." He says nothing about science, art, and industry because He is indifferent to them. He has no great illusions about men, for he calls them "a generation of vipers." And rightly; since the earth is a prison for those who have committed crimes in heaven, we are all rascals; but it is the prison chaplain's duty to preach pardon to those who behave properly. To open the prison would be unwise and unlawful; there Christianity differs from Anarchism. Give custom to whom custom is due, and to Caesar what is Caesar's. Authority is ordained of God, and beareth not the sword in vain.

Christianity and Radicalism accordingly agree in their criticism of society, but not in the inferences they draw. The Christian endures the sufferings of the prison-house with religious resignation; he does not waste valuable time in making foolish proposals regarding the reform of prison-life and management. In order to obtain mitigation and pardon, and to escape the dark cell and scourging, he tries to behave well, but he does not believe that the prison can be a place of recreation.

All that Rousseau, Max Nordau, and Tolstoi have said against the faults of society is quite true, but their inferences are false. Socialism, *i.e.* pagan socialism, which preached development and progress, went its crab-like course backwards to the trade unions which had been dissolved, limited industrial freedom, introduced inquisitorial methods, excommunicated heretics. In the great strike non-socialists were refused water and gas, bread and milk for children. They compelled the contented to be discontented, made men wild and despairing, and really made things worse, when they ought to have improved them.

But in their pagan Radicalism they did not attain to the height of Christianity. Unbelieving, they believed in everything that was false--scientific fallacies, politico-economical errors, philosophical stupidities. Into a pagan one may instil every possible falsehood and stupidity; but for the truth in its real relations he is deaf and blind.

To have a moderate quiet contempt of the world, to be already half out of it, one's staff in one's hand and one's knapsack on one's back, ever ready for departure, to have clean hands and a good conscience--that is the way not to be easily assailable. Then one is not envied, and suffers not from disappointments and humiliations, for one is prepared for all, and has anticipated all in advance.

"Vanity, Vanity," saith the Preacher. "Sow in the morning thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall succeed, or whether both alike are good."

**Where Are We?**--If men only knew where they are!

The description which the ancients gave of Tartarus exactly fits our condition in this life. The ambitious man rolls his stone up the hill like Sisyphus, and when he has got it to the top it rolls down again. A certain architect spent twenty-five years of his life in working and intriguing in order to build a temple for the state. The temple was built and

consecrated, a torch-light procession was held in honour of the architect, and he was crowned with a laurel-wreath. The next day the newspapers informed us that the temple must be pulled down because it was a failure. The architect died half a year afterwards in an asylum; the temple was demolished and the architect's name forgotten and obliterated. Tantalus, the rich miser, stands in the midst of a spring of water, but cannot drink; branches laden with fruit hang over his head, but when he stretches out his hand to pluck a fruit a gust of wind comes and tears the branch away. The rich man has worked and swindled till old age begins. Then at last, when the grouse come flying towards him, he has no teeth left; his wine-cellar is full, but the doctor has forbidden him wine. That is Tantalus!

Ixion revolves on his wheel, at one moment up, at another down. The ancients assigned as the reason of his punishment that he had boasted of the favour of a woman who had never been his.

The Danaides, the coquettes, are perpetually drawing water, but their vessel is like a sieve; everything enters it, but nothing remains.

All day long and every day one hears the expression "That is hell!"--such is the universal view. When things look a little brighter, the table is covered, the bed made, and we feel well again. We cheat ourselves often with alcohol, and continue our somnambulism. Then we are awoken by a noise, start up, rush about, weep, and then go to sleep again. At last sleep is banished once for all, and we wake never to sleep any more. Once we are well awake no opiates are of avail.

Then we discover the whole cheat. We see where we are, and what our past, which seemed so real, was. The comparatively wise man then turns away from the phantoms and shadows of reality in order to seek the other, the true, the actual Real. Then the state is seen to be a prison; the defenders of the fatherland are body-snatchers; society is a madhouse, whose warders are the officials and police; family life is concubinage; capitalists are usurers; the fine arts are superfluities; literature is printed nonsense; industry feeds unnecessary luxury; railways are instruments of torture; the electric light ruins the eyes; all the blessings of civilisation are either curses or superfluous.

When we have seen this, we turn our backs on all and seek the only thing that holds, that gives a real answer, that fulfils what it promises. But this super-real fools call a phantom.

**Hegel's Christianity.**--There are two Voltaires: one, the mocker at all definite religion, who is revered by the godless; the other, the fanatical champion of God who is ridiculed by the atheists because he believed in God as naively as a child. Voltaire recovered his reason before he died, as lunatics are wont to do; when he died he was definitely religious and took the sacrament. There are also two Hegels. But they are more complicated than Voltaire, who was as simple as a feuilletonist. Hegel discovered with his logic that what exists has a right to exist; he defends the *status quo*, society, state, religion with all their corollaries, because they have proceeded from God; everything is right since it exists. "It belongs," he says, "to the essence of religion that it should realise itself in several historical religious forms. Of these, however, Christianity is the only one which suitably expresses the essence of religion. In her doctrine of the Trinity the Christian Church contains the nucleus of all philosophical speculation. For this signifies nothing less than that the Eternal God, enthroned in His majesty over the sphere of the finite, condescends and reconciles Himself to the finite, becomes man, suffers, dies, and returns to Himself as the Holy Spirit." That is well put; but every schoolchild knew it already from Luther's "little catechism." For what object then is this extraordinary accumulation of several thousand pages of incomprehensible philosophy? To what purpose? Hegel died of cholera in 1831, after traversing many devious ways, as a simple, believing Christian, without any philosophy, repeating the penitential psalms.

**"Men of God's Hand."**--That is King David's expression (Ps. xvii., 14) which he uses of the godless, to whom the Lord gave power over His people Israel when they behaved badly. Thereby is the knotty problem solved, why God gives the godless power, honour, and wealth, while He often chastises His servants.

The Pharaohs were idolaters and wizards, but God's chosen people had to be their slaves. The Philistines worshipped Baal and Astarte, but they were allowed to devastate Canaan and even to carry away the Ark of the Covenant. Nebuchadnezzar was no saint, quite the contrary, but he was permitted to carry the children of Israel into captivity. Good men are not adapted to be instruments of chastisement, and the office of executioner is not an enviable one. Everyone has his Egyptian armed with a rod, whether they are called superiors, employers, customers, the public, newspapers, or even public opinion.

All strive for an imaginary independence or so-called freedom, while there is no independence and no freedom. Therefore the effort is vain. Only one thing remains--to reconcile oneself to obedience to human authority for the Lord's sake, and to pay taxes where taxes are due. And where one earns one's bread, one must be polite. Vex not thyself that thy trade and thy position are difficult; God has so appointed it.

**Night Owls.**--The maggot in the apple doubtless imagines that the apple was grown for its sake, and that the world could not exist without apples. So we also imagine that science and art are certainly necessary. Swedenborg, in his description of another sphere, tells us how happy men can be without such luxuries. "They know nothing of sciences as we see them in our world, and wish to know nothing; they call them 'shadows,' and compare them with clouds which come between the sun and the spectator. This idea of the sciences they have derived from certain spirits who came from our earth and introduced themselves as those who had grown wise through science. These spirits from our earth who made this claim belonged to those who see wisdom in such things as are pure matters of memory, such as languages; in historical matters, which belong to the literary world; in bare experiences and terms, especially philosophical ones. Because these have not developed their faculty of reasoning through science, they have in their second life little power of perceiving the truth, for they see only in and by means of technical terms, which like hills and thick clouds obstruct the sight of reason. Those who have employed the sciences in order to destroy matters of faith have their reason so thoroughly unsettled that in pitch-darkness they take false for true, and evil for good, like night-owls."

The flag of the university also carries the sign of an owl, but they do not know what it means.

**Apotheosis.**--When a man who has been near to us dies, he begins to loom magnified through a kind of haze. All his less-pleasing characteristics are obliterated, as if they were part of that dust which is now dissolved. His better self, on the other hand, becomes larger and clearer. It is indeed possible that the liberated spirit becomes ennobled by death, and that therefore the survivor is right in forming a new conception of the personality of the deceased. He with whom the survivor now holds spiritual intercourse is perhaps what the survivor feels him to be, and has ceased to be what he was in life. It is almost invariably the case that the survivor torments himself with reproaches that he has been guilty of some neglect towards the dead, has done him slight injustices and spoken hard words. Even the coldest-hearted begs the dead secretly for forgiveness--forgiveness for all even when it was hardly ill-meant. All this seems to signify that the dead one is alive, and has need of kindly thoughts as a compensation for the reproaches he makes himself regarding those he has left behind.

**Painting Things Black.**--There are men who anticipate their troubles, hoping thereby to neutralise or to bribe destiny. But that is a mistaken calculation. I know of an author who saw a great calamity approaching and tried to *write* it away. He composed a drama on that theme, and hoped thereby to have escaped it. Soon afterwards, however, it arrived and the effect was as strong as though it had never been written about, perhaps even more.

Theosophists say that we can create thought-forms which assume life and reality. They mean that men can send from a distance evil suggestions which others carry out. Thus criminal romances have never deterred anyone from crime; they have on the contrary given scoundrels bright ideas for new pieces of rascality. I actually know of a society novel which criticised bank and joint-stock company frauds, with the result that such frauds increased. It is as though one let loose demons.

Therefore it is dangerous merely to think evil of men; one may do them harm thereby. But what a supernatural effort is necessary always to see good where so little is to be found! And when we try our best we find that we have played the hypocrite. It is almost hopeless to hold the balance level when it is a matter of judging men justly, for human nature is evil and cannot be altered.

**The Thorn in the Flesh.**--Whence come evil and ugly thoughts which start up in our most beautiful moments, in the hour of devotion, and even in prayer? We wish to ignore them; we have the impression that they come from without. But it is possible that they are born of the habit of letting evil thoughts have free course in silence and solitude. Still it is mysterious that the greater the height to which we have attained by striving, the deeper we fall. And I can testify from my own experience that it is at the very time of renunciation and self-discipline that one is most liable to unclean thoughts and imaginations. St. Anthony and other saints are examples of this.

A great sorrow, for instance, the longing for a lost child, is the quickest and best means of burning away the rubbish. But often, alas! on the sorrow there follows a boisterous joy which is not of the noblest kind. Immediately after our noblest moods, when we have been inspired by the most beautiful thoughts and purposes, it is possible in the next moment to feel like a coxcomb.

It is not strange that the ancients believed in demons who whisper into one's ear and suggest impure imaginations. Possibly this was St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, which pricked him so that he should not be too much uplifted.

**Despair and Grace.**--When in youth one sought to conquer evil desires, and even harmless ones, with the severest

scourge provided by religion, and then saw that one could not change one's vices, one let go of the reins and life went as it went. Work was the chief occupation of middle life, and there was no time to think of one's soul. Life itself moulded one's character, and one threw a bone to the dog--the flesh in order to be able to work in peace.

Then when in old age we come to reflect, and at sixty find that we have remained very much the same, we wish to begin our spiritual education, but with indifferent success. We had hoped that certain desires would disappear and certain virtues take their place by a kind of natural necessity, as we had believed when young. But, alas! that is not the case. When now we again resume the struggles of our youth the case is thus. We have raised our standard higher, and wish to root out all the weeds. What formerly seemed quite natural--envy of a fellow-worker, revenge on an enemy, pride in success, exultation at a foe's downfall, a small white lie--we now find hateful. And so we begin to struggle against the outward manifestations of these things. But when we find the inner evil just as strong as before, we finally regard ourselves as great hypocrites and are ready to despair.

Where is comfort to be found then? Religion only asserts that we are hypocrites, and our fellow-men regard it as a fact. Absolute despair seizes us. What follows then? Grace! It becomes clear to us that everything is grace, and from grace. And that we have been living on the bread of charity which we believed we had earned.

**The Last Act (From the life of a leader of the "Renaissance").**--The final act is the most important one in a drama, and a dramatist generally begins his work at the end. We sit out a long evening at the theatre in order to see the last act or "how it will go." But in the significant lives of certain men people like to ignore the last act, because it is uncomfortable and might show how the godless fare at last. He who wrote the operetta *Boccaccio* had to append the last act to it; the jovial Florentine became a priest and delivered lectures on Dante's *Hell*, though he only reached the seventeenth canto. Voltaire's last hours, when he took the sacrament, might furnish a subject for a tragedy like the second part of *Faust*. Heine announced his conversion, which took place in 1851, in the preface to the *Romancero*: "I have returned to God like the prodigal son, after I had fed swine with the Hegelians for a long time." This preface should be printed before every collection of Heine's poems. Hegel singing penitential psalms on his death-bed might form the subject of a fresco painting for the entrance-hall of Berlin University. But the most affecting final act is Oscar Wilde's description of his prison life in *De Profundis*. He was the so-called renaissance leader, who disinterred heathenism with its false worship of beauty, which contains the foulest of all. Kierkegaard<sup>[1]</sup> would have called him the aesthete, the Sybarite cold as cast iron, the egoist round whose petty "I" the whole world was to revolve in order to understand him alone. Many, led astray like him by the seducing spirits of his youth, remained fairly free from public punishment. Wilde seems to have been picked out to furnish a startling example, for his position, at any rate in his own country, was almost that of an idol.

What he wrote lacks originality; it is whipped-up foam; glazing which, when washed off, leaves no texture; it is as restless as cross-lights, or like a mirror in a public restaurant, in a labyrinthine hall with deceptive lines and false perspectives; it runs out of the hand like albumen or frog-spawn; it is perverse as in *Dorian Gray*, the hero of which should have lost his youth by nightly excesses, while on the contrary it is only his portrait which changes.

The last act was played, and that outdid all horror, was so horrible that Wilde himself could not describe its details, which, however, oral tradition has preserved in a Swedenborgian legend.

*De Profundis* arouses pity and fear, and one would gladly acquit the man who was perhaps the victim of his delusion; a worldly tribunal would not have judged him if he had not himself appealed to it, and that indeed for a wrong done him. It was what our renaissance-critic called a "piece of stupidity" when he made Wilde out to be a martyr of "hypocrisy," as he called justice. Wilde however seems to have taken another view of the matter to his impartial defender: "A day in prison on which one does not weep is a day on which one's heart is hard, not a day on which one's heart is happy. Once I had put into motion the forces of society, society turned on me and said: 'Have you been living all this time in defiance of my laws, and do you now appeal to those laws for protection? You shall have those laws exercised to the full.' A man's very highest moment, I have no doubt at all, is when he kneels in the dust and beats his breast and tells us all the sins of his life."

The "joy of life" whose perfume he had inhaled at Oxford through Pater's *Renaissance* now began to grow sour.

"Clergymen and people who use phrases without wisdom sometimes talk of suffering as a mystery. It is really a revelation.

"Behind joy and laughter there may be a temperament coarse, hard, and callous. Pain, unlike pleasure, wears no mask. There are times when sorrow seems to me to be the only truth. The secret of life is suffering."

Let us add that Wilde derived his most dangerous doctrine from Baudelaire and Shakespeare's sonnets. And let us close with the new view of the Renaissance which he attained to in prison: "To me one of the things in history the most to be regretted is that the Christ's own renaissance which has produced the Cathedral at Chartres, the Arthurian cycle

of legends, the life of St. Francis of Assisi, the art of Giotto, and Dante's *Divine Comedy*, was not allowed to develop on its own lines, but was interrupted and spoiled by the dreary classical Renaissance."

Danish theologian.

**Consequences of Learning.**--As soon as a man buries himself in books he gets black nails and dirty cuffs, forgets to wash, to comb his hair, and to shave. He neglects his duties towards life, society, and men; loses spiritual capacities, becomes absent-minded, short-sighted, wears glasses, and takes snuff in order to keep himself awake. He cannot follow a conversation with attention, cannot interest himself in other people's affairs, does not see the face of the earth by day nor the stars by night. Behind his desire to investigate lies the insidious ambition to master his material, to become an authority, to tyrannise, to make a career for himself, and to receive distinctions.

If men only reflected what tyrants they obey--these black magicians who are called professors; who settle what we are to think and believe; who test and examine, reject and choose; who form committees, write handbooks, deliver lectures, and bestow prizes on those who accept *their* hypotheses.

And has it ever occurred to a student to criticise his teacher? No; he swallows everything uncritically. But if he goes into a church where he hears God's own word revealed by way of intuition to the prophets, then he begins to exercise his critical faculty; then he finds it very difficult to comprehend the simplest things; then he wants mathematical certainty, which he considers the highest while it is really the lowest.

Swedenborg says in one place: "Though goodness and truth are sent down through the heavens, when they reach the hells they are changed into evil and falsity; the brilliant light of the sun changes into ugly colours and its warmth becomes an evil odour."

**Rousseau.**--In my youth I read of an Englishman who shot himself because life was so wearisome. He had counted the buttons which he had to unbutton and button up every day--in his under-clothing half a dozen, in his day-shirt half a dozen, in his collar and cuffs half a dozen, in his waistcoat, trousers, and coat a dozen, in his boots, gaiters, and gloves two dozen. When he wanted to ride out he had to change, as he had also to do for dinner and the evening.

This story, though absurd, reveals the naked truth. Life has become so burdensome, and half the day is spent in useless occupations: unnecessary visits, telephoning, writing letters about nothing, reading the papers; especially in making one's toilette which formerly consisted of a becoming mantle fastened with a single cord, but has now developed into a whole set of things with buttons, hooks, eyes, strings, ribbons, needles, buckles. Our toilettes are a miniature picture of our civilisation with all its time-wasting fussiness, most of which is useless nonsense. The man who lives in the country and cultivates the ground needs neither art, science, nor literature. He who has nature needs no art, and religion is more than science and literature. There are churches everywhere, but museums, theatres, book-shops, and clubs only in the towns. Whether they are necessary is another question.

That is Rousseau!

**Rousseau Again.**--In Southern France I once saw some half-wild Arab horses running loose in a meadow. They still had their long tails to hide what is not beautiful and to protect them against the stings of insects. They seemed well adapted to their purpose, but they were more than useful: they were beautiful. And when I contemplated the lines in these beautiful creatures' bodies--the curve of the withers such as is not found in geometry, its continuation along the back and loins; the noble construction and movements of the hind-legs; the proportions of the shank below the knee tapering down to the hoof, which leaves on the sand graceful prints like Moorish arches--and when the proud creatures sped over the meadow in full gallop with movements like that of a sailing-boat on the waves, then the curves played into new harmonies and changed their form, tail, mane, and forelock floated like draperies about the body, and I thought "All that is certainly adapted for running, but it is much more, it is beautiful; it has not come to be of itself, but it is created by a Contriver, a wise and great Artist." It is, however, more than a work of art, for it has life and individuality, and no two horses are exactly alike. Then I thought of the attempts of men to "improve" this masterpiece, of the English race-horses--those machines! In this process of selection they have chosen the ugliest, docked their tails, robbed them of their fairest ornament, placed an apelike jockey on their backs in order to make money by racing. To this caricature men have degraded the beautiful gift of God.

Anyone who has learnt at school to draw a horse knows how difficult it is to make these lines harmonise, and fall and rise in the right places; to draw the head not too large and not too small, but exactly proportioned; to bring the forepart and the loins into symmetrical relations with each other; to make the neck slope gently into the fine curve of the back. It was the work of many days merely to copy the outline correctly. Raphael could not draw a horse; his Attila rides on a rocking-horse. One is often inclined to agree with Rousseau when he says everything which comes from the hand of

the Creator is perfect, but when it falls into the hands of man it is spoiled.

**Materialised Apparitions.**--I have never seen it, but it is said to be a fact that in hypnotic seances those who are present produce from the half-etherialised substance of the medium a kind of being which is visible and leads an apparitional life, so long as the circle keeps together. Such among others was Professor Crookes' "Katie King."

But what causes me to believe this is a matter of everyday experience. Men create their idols out of nothing, and by means of their imagination fashion their fellow-men, both living and dead, into something quite different to what they really are. These creations naturally partake of their own substance and are after their own likeness. Sometimes they create something really great, sometimes a monster, a demigod, or a devil.

We often see that hatred against one person is, so to speak, polarised and converted into love towards his antagonist. A great unpopularity is, in the person of another, changed into a great popularity. The reward which should have been given to the worthiest is given to the unworthy, in order to crush the deserving.

At the award of a famous prize one who was uninitiated lately asked: "Why did not X get the prize?"

"Because Y was to have it," was the answer.

Fifteen years ago a very remarkable book of 650 pages was published. It obtained no notice in the press. But at the same time a wretched pamphlet received all the praise which the large book ought to have had. When I read the reviews of the paltry pamphlet I thought I was reading those of the book, for the subject-matter was the same.

Recently an important post was filled up, connected, let us say, with road-making and hydraulic structures. The person who received it was a very remarkable man. Public opinion (though not private) regarded him as the most deserving and suitable candidate. He passed for a distinguished engineer, thoroughly up in his profession, was said to be well off, an able organiser, diligent and considerate towards his subordinates.

Now it is to be remarked that the man was nothing of all that; he had never made roads or constructed hydraulic works, but left that to his skilful assistants; he did not know his profession; he neglected what he had in hand; he was not to be found in his office, for he played cards and spent the nights in carousing. He was hard towards his employees, managed so badly that he never knew the state of his affairs, and was careless in money matters.

How then had he come to be elected? Some said he had been chosen in order to punish and humble the conceited engineers who had become unpopular. Others thought that the intention was that he should come to grief and be ruined because he was feared and hated.

However that may be, he was a materialised apparition created by the hate, envy, and malignity of the crowd; he had become an idea, a lucky rascal, a ruthless man whose elevation was necessary in order to still the tumult. He was like a crude mass of ore which stood for four hundred years in the market-place and was supposed to represent Justice, but was really the counterfeit presentment of a thievish alderman foisted in by the burgomaster.

**The Art of Dying.**--The wish for power is said to be a fundamental condition of the existence of the ego, without which a man would perish, as he could not resist the pressure of others. So we were taught by the seducing spirits of our youth. But Swedenborg says the thirst for power comes from hell, and Balzac speaks of the galley-slaves of ambition who can never rest. Dante has a fine verse regarding the fate of the great painters: one must retire in order to make place for another; he passes into the shadow and is forgotten.

Even when it is unjust, as it often is, one must acquiesce in being relegated to the back-ground, for men get tired even of the best and desire change. A great name becomes oppressive, is felt as a tyranny, and hinders others from also making great names for themselves. Napoleon and Bismarck saw this clearly, for both said beforehand that the world would give a sigh of relief when they were gone. But, in order to depart content, we require religious resignation, complete irrevocable withdrawal from the world. Such as Charles the Fifth's retirement into a monastery. To receive a "benefit" on one's retirement and then to reappear on the stage is not becoming. If one considers oneself dead to the world and takes no notice of it, then a new life begins, but on the other side; it is a much more peaceful one, for it is the resurrection from the dead already here! Beethoven was vexed that the Viennese were ungrateful and forgetful when Rossini appeared and brought again in fashion the Italian opera, which Beethoven, had devoted his life to extirpate. Beethoven however, was a hard, selfish, and very proud man, who was accordingly literally tormented out of life, in great matters and in small. Increasing deafness, a disagreeable lawsuit, a mad young relative, domestic scandal, illnesses troubled his last years; he had even to be exposed to the undeserved ridicule of underlings. Thus, well prepared, he turned his back on life, and departed from all without missing anything.

So it should be, in order that nothing should bind one either with longing or with hope, in order that on the other side of the river one may not look back but go straight forward.

The object of the trials of old age is to adjust accounts, to finish up unsettled affairs, to see through the cheat of life, and to become weary of the incomplete, so that no backward longings may disturb the repose of the grave.

**Can Philosophy Bring any Blessing to Mankind?**--Such was the title of a pamphlet written in the 'sixties by a teacher of philosophy, Pontus Wikner. The question was justified; how it was answered I do not remember, but the answer must have been evasive, for the writer of the pamphlet was a professor. If he had said that all philosophy, especially systematic philosophy, was rubbish, his career would have been at an end.

When, in 1870 at the university, I wished to study aesthetics, the professor of the subject sent me to the lecturer in order to take lessons. As he sat there and talked for hours by the light of a composite candle, I tried to decipher the furrowed brow of the pale man and to ascertain whether he really understood what he taught, or whether he only taught by rote. But I could not see through him and I despaired, for I understood nothing, and I cannot learn by heart what I do not understand. That would be humbug.

About forty years later I met the professor who was now pensioned, and consequently no longer a member of the college of augurs. Then I asked him whether he had ever mastered aesthetics?

"Good gracious, no! That is why I sent you to the lecturer."

"Did he understand them then?"

"I don't think so. But he had a good memory."

Then after all it was not my fault, and I was not more stupid than the rest.

Anyone who reads a short history of philosophy, and observes how one system replaces and refutes another, must be inclined to say, "Surely it is time to make an end of this drivell!" For the whole history of philosophy proves that thought cannot solve these problems, or that they cannot be solved by constructing a system of philosophy. The few philosophers, on the other hand, who have limited themselves to reflections on the variegated medley of life as seen in man, politics, and nature, have been of some use, but they are hardly counted philosophers. One can read fragments of Plato with interest, and also the unappreciated Schopenhauer, especially in his least-valued work *Parerga and Paralipomena*, but not in his systematic treatise *The World as Will and Idea*. Kierkegaard is not regarded as a philosopher, nor are Feuerbach and his pupil Nietzsche, but they are extraordinarily instructive. All who construct an empty system with facts are fools. Such is Bostrom, who tries to subtilise conceptions, analyse ideas, and classify and arrange God, man, and human life under heads.

The history of philosophy is the history of errors, the history of lying, for nearly all philosophers are disguised rebels against God and opponents of religion. Philosophy is a history of falsehood, and since it has demonstrated its own absurdity, all professorships of philosophy should be abolished. For a Christian state frustrates its own aims and is foolish if it supports a teacher of error and falsehood.

If for once in a way a philosopher is religious, people give him the contemptuous name of "mystic," although very few know what mysticism is.

In one professorial chair sits an Hegelian and preaches Hegel's pantheism as the truth, and in another sits a Bostromian and pulls Hegel to pieces. But the student must be examined by both, and give his adherence to both systems together. That is the higher education, academic culture, and learning in its glory!

The mass of people believe that all which is difficult to understand is deep, but it is not so. What is difficult to understand is immature, vague, and often false. The highest wisdom is simple, clear, and goes through the brain straight into the heart. Set a philosopher on the grave where his earthly hopes lie buried, and let him discourse of Herbert Spencer and the blastoderm! Place a philosopher in the Privy Council, and let him have a share in the conduct of the state! Ask a philosopher to write a drama, to paint a picture, or even to teach school-children, and he is useless. "Philosopher" is synonymous with superannuated donkey! Away with him!

**Goethe on the Bible.**--Eckermann had bought an English Bible, and when he complained that the Apocryphal books were missing, Goethe said among other things: "It is superfluous to raise the question of authentic or unauthentic in matters of the Bible. I regard the four gospels as completely genuine, for in them shines the reflected splendour of the lofty personality of Christ, as divine as anything which has appeared on earth. If any one asks me whether I find it possible to pay him worship and reverence, I answer, 'Certainly!'"

Then there follows some Voltairian talk about the sun and religious relics, about priestcraft and bishops' incomes, which belonged to the bad tone of the time. These stupid free-thinkers could not imagine how three could be equivalent to one, and therefore they stumbled at the doctrine of the Trinity. Did they not know that three thirds are equivalent to one, and that one is equivalent to three thirds? Or was their reason so darkened by pride? Or did they not

know that spiritual things must be spiritually judged; that the Highest cannot be reached by the highest mathematics? For neither Laplace nor Poincare, who busied themselves with the "Mecanique celeste," reached heaven, much less God.

**"Now we Can Fly too! Hurrah!"**--A friend of my youth, who two weeks ago died in a distant place, wrote on his last postcard to me these words, "Now we can fly too! Hurrah!" He was a pagan, *i.e.* an atheist, and this last word "Hurrah!" was an expression of scorn and a threat against heaven.

Every gift of God is regarded by the pagans as a victory over God. They always think that *they* have made the discovery, and they still build at the Tower of Babel, the truth of whose story they deny, for they are lying spirits.

When the pious Franklin drew down lightning with his damp twine, he trembled and thanked God that He had not killed him. But when the godless physicists imitated Franklin, and wished to store the lightning in laboratory bottles, they were slain. People do indeed make lightning-conductors nowadays, but they are not always efficacious even when the conduction is right. Only imagine!--a man receives a gift, and as a mark of gratitude puts out his tongue! Every time that God gives something, irreligious science celebrates a triumph--that is, puts out its tongue!

That is the nature of science! And it seems as though it were still at present forbidden to touch the tree of knowledge, for the transgression of the prohibition is always accompanied by ingratitude and a curse.

**The Fall and Original Sin.**--In these times when the ape-morality rules, it is considered up-to-date to change the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction for that of heredity. The blame for our faults is put on our parents, especially, as might be expected, on the father. But when the father was alive, he put the blame on his father, and so on till we come to our first parents. That is indeed just like what the Bible teaches about the Fall and original sin, and ought to confirm the teaching of religion, but of course that cannot be!

That is the doctrine of heredity. But whence comes it? Where is the starting-point? Since everyone nowadays feels burdened with evil impulses and disease germs which he has inherited, and all our predecessors have felt the same, the only thing left is to lay the blame on our first parents.

How then is one to get rid of guilt--the consciousness of guilt and the evil impulses?

Christ answers more simply than the theologians who represent the work of grace as an examination course. "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," He said to the thief who confessed that he suffered for his evil deeds; but He did not say so to the other who reviled Him.

Generally speaking, one should take one's doctrine straight from the Gospels, which are simpler, greater, diviner than other writings. Devotional books are like the higher mathematics, mixed, complicated, and affected with human weaknesses.

**The Gospel.**--All boast of the "Gospel," but they mean this joyful message--the abrogation of civic laws and the opening of the jails; in a word, immunity from punishment for themselves and more stringent regulations for others. That was the Renaissance morality preached at the conclusion of the Middle Ages as at the end of our century. They wished to enlighten mankind by proclaiming that everything is lawful (against others), and that if one only "understood" men, one would forgive them. "He does not understand," was the formula in common use. Were I now to enumerate all the victims of this gospel, which we had to learn, people would cry "Scandal!" Then they would proceed to explain the tragedies on natural grounds, such as neurasthenia, infection, heredity (but not from our first parents); the unfortunate Englishman,<sup>[1]</sup> they say, was wrongfully imprisoned, because society consists of hypocrites; not because of his own sin, for it was not his own sin: there is no sin.

Every suggestion that there are misdemeanours which draw down the unpleasant consequences, which are called punishments, is taken ill.

Five years ago I heard one of these evangelists exclaim, "Morality! that is a word which I cannot take in my mouth." This saying was often quoted.

But shortly afterwards the same gentleman set heaven and hell in motion because a pupil had used a statement in one of his lectures to base a treatise on. This innocent proceeding the "evangelist" stigmatised as theft, and he wished to annihilate the thief.

The young man answered quite rightly that in that case people ought to be punished for "stealing" their knowledge out of manuals without acknowledgment, or that if they gave chapter and verse for every statement, a treatise would look like this: "Sum, 'I am' (Rabe's Grammar, 6th edition, Stockholm, 1858), called an auxiliary verb (*Sundelin*

*Schwedische Sprachlehre*, Orebro, 1901), which indicates the passive voice (Sjoberg, *Logic*, Upsala, 1895)," and so on. This gentleman was a very severe moralist, although he could not take the word morality in his mouth.

Oscar Wilde.

**Religious Heathen.**--Hardly anywhere are there such religious men as the Orientals. Five times a day the *muezzin* calls from each minaret in eastern lands: "God is great! I bear witness that there is no God but God! I bear witness that Muhammed is the Apostle of God! Come to prayer! Come to salvation! God is great! There is no God but God!" Early in the morning they cry in addition, "Prayer is better than sleep." On the streets and market-places, in the shops and inns, everywhere one is summoned to prayer.

Is it not impressive to see a whole people, of whom not one is ashamed of his God--not one! A people among whom, five times a day, this joyful message comes from the Lord, the All-Merciful, who "has not forsaken and has not repulsed thee!" And is it not uplifting in the midst of the severe and squalid tasks of every day to hear a voice from above witnessing, without attempting to convince, that God is God? Anything so perverse and stupid as free-thinking and atheism does not exist in the Orient. If anyone attempted to assert such an abominable tenet as the non-existence of God, he would be imprisoned or put to death. And if anyone came and tried to close the mosques ... but no one comes, for the mosques are never empty:

"By the splendour of the day,  
By the darkness of the night,  
Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee,  
Neither hath He repelled thee."--*Koran*.

That is the implicit and childlike faith which Christian heathen called "intolerance," "fanaticism," and so on.

**The Pleasure-Garden.**--If the inexperienced man knew how much suffering a separation between a married pair involves, he would reflect before taking such a step. The two souls have so grown into each other, that the dissolution of the duplex personality which they form is the most painful operation possible. It is a kind of death.

When one uproots the weeds round a flower, the flower fades away--partly because its roots are injured, partly because it has been deprived of shade, moisture, and support, or perhaps merely companionship.

The sorrow in this case resembles that which follows on a death, but is not so uplifting and ennobling. The image of the separated wife is always present to one's eyes, and becomes idealised in memory; ugly traits are obliterated, one begins to reproach oneself, there is a painful emptiness and longing; one's soul is tom in pieces by her departure; she has carried off its finest-fibred roots, and one feels as though bleeding to death. One can no more exchange common recollections. The loss of the illusions of the first springtide of love shatters one's faith in everything. A cry of mourning rings through the universe as though an irreparable crime had been committed, such as the sin against the Holy Ghost. Love, God's creative power, the sun's warmth that fills the heavens, the origin of life has ceased to exist. Chaos and darkness resume their reign. It is a spiritual death, without comfort and without hope.

Nevertheless something remains, if there ever was something there. And though both may marry again, there is a recollection of the former tie. It cannot be as though it had not been, nor be forgotten. However unpleasant the relationship may have been, still in its best hours it resembled something which is not to be found on earth. In its glorious beginning it was a Garden of Eden, such a heightening of existence that one felt nearer God. That was no optical delusion, but a higher reality. Then came the Fall and the expulsion. But the memory of the first joy remains, and it is true that a real love never ends.

People ask whether it continues on the other side even when inclination has "changed its object." Probably some of it remains, but in an incomprehensible way, even if one were to suppose that the personality is resolved into several "monads," of which one seeks a similar one, and another another; and what is called love can here become friendship.

According to Plato's doctrine of reminiscence and the reincarnation theory of the theosophists, one might believe that when two fall in love it is only a meeting again. And all the beauty which they then see round them is the reflection of the memories of some far beautiful land where they have met before, but which they now remember for the first time. The continual illusions of love would then be connected with experiences on the other side, which now come up in memory from the side where all is completion and beauty. Therefore we have such a terrible awakening from our dreams of happiness when we find that everything down here is distorted, everything a caricature, even love itself.

**The Happiness of Love.**--Even though earthly love be a caricature or bad copy of the heavenly it has some traits of resemblance to its prototype. In the first spring-days of love there are elevated moments, in which one compassionates

other mortals who are not so happy. We tremble for our blessedness, finding it not quite just; yet it is possible even to wish for a misfortune to rectify the balance.

There was a dramatist who became engaged, and at the same time had just celebrated his greatest triumph on the stage. The ground seemed to sway under his feet, the air caressed his face, men paid him homage on the streets; he felt hardly on earth, as he was beloved by the woman whom he loved.

Then there came the crash of a failure! All his former merits were forgotten; he was called a noodle and a charlatan. But he was so happy in his love that he did not feel the blow. He felt, on the contrary, an inner joy that misfortune had drawn him and his fiancée closer together; he was so high that he did not grudge men the joy of pulling him down a little. His fame had begun to bore them; now that he was down, he found sympathy, while formerly he had been the object of envy.

That was the miracle of love! It made him so little self-seeking, that on behalf of men he suffered under his oppressive fame and his great happiness.

**Our Best Feelings.**--Life is not beautiful; on its animal, domestic, and business sides it brings us into so many ugly situations. Life is cynical since it ridicules our nobler feelings and flings scorn on our faith. Therefore it is difficult to use fine words in the stress of every-day; one hides one's better feelings in order not to expose them to ridicule. One might therefore say that men are partly better than they appear to be. One is forced to play the sceptic in order not to perish, and one is made cynical by the cynicism of life. It is therefore unjust to call men hypocrites in a bad sense, for most men, on the contrary, make themselves out worse than they are.

When a man writes a letter to an intimate friend, or to the woman he loves, he puts on his festive dress; that is befitting. And in the quiet letter, on the white paper, he expresses his best feelings. The tongue and the spoken word are so vulgarised by everyday use, that they cannot say aloud the beautiful things which the pen says silently.

It is not posing or attitudinising, it is not falsity when one exhibits in correspondence a better soul than in everyday life. The lover is not untrue in his love-letters. He does not make himself out better than he is; he becomes better, and *is* so for the passing moment. He is true at such moments, the greatest which life grants us!

**Blood-Fraternity.**--Blood-fraternity used to be sealed with a sacred ceremonial--the mingling of blood. "The life of the soul is in the blood," says the Old Testament; and it is probable that there was something mysterious in it which we do not understand, as in all sacraments, which we understand as little.

An old saga tells us that Torger and Tormod had mingled their blood and had fought battles and won victories together. But one day, when Torger was intoxicated by success, he carelessly remarked to his brother, "Which of us, do you think, would prove the better man if we ventured on a conflict?"

"I don't know," answered his brother, "but I know that your question makes an end of our living together. I will not remain with you any more."

"I did not seriously mean that we should try our strength on one another."

"But it came into your mind, since you said it." He departed, and their tie of brotherhood was at an end. The narrator adds, "The bond of their friendship was so fragile, that it could not bear the touch of an over-hasty thought."

Marriage is a blood-bond and more--it is a sacred transaction. It is so tender and so fragile, that a hasty word--a joke, as one calls it--can make an end of it for the whole of life. It is no use afterwards to say, "It was only a jest." We have the answer of the mediaeval Norse poet Tormod, "It came into your mind." "Long years must pay for the wrong of a second."

And then, "Which of us two do you think would prove the master?" As soon as a married pair conceive their relation as a struggle for power, while it is just the contrary, hell comes into the house. The woman has an inclination to rule. But if, in her defence, I say that this inclination is her way of reacting against the suppressing, not oppressive, man (for such a one I have never seen), I hope I shall not have to repent it.

"If we ventured on a conflict!" Yes, then it is as if one drew a weapon on oneself, or as if a kingdom were divided. Every blow which one deals, strikes one's own heart.

Cicero says that friendship is only possible between friendly equals. Swedenborg says that marriage is impossible between godless people. I am convinced of it; for without contact with God, who is the Fountain-head of love, no stream of illumination can flow from the Eternal. I have described the marriage of godless people. I have suffered for doing so, but I do not regret it, and do not recall a word. It is as I said. The devout do not describe their marriages, and they write neither dramas nor romances; literary history which mostly deals with irreligious books, should take notice

of that.

**The Power of Love.**--In France there lives a marquis who is an occultist. Endowed by nature with a sensitive type of soul, refined by education, protected by wealth against the brutality of life, purified by suffering and renunciation, he entered into contact with the higher forms of existence, which the theosophists call "the astral plane." His sensitiveness was elaborated to such a pitch, that he became a medium, and could enter into touch with friends at a distance.

Then he met a woman belonging to the same spiritual sphere, a transparent airy figure, whose steps were inaudible, whose words were rather to be apprehended than heard.

This married pair were so united, that each was, as it were, born in the other. He carried her heart about in him literally. When, on a journey to some relatives, she was frightened by a shying horse and had a fit of palpitations, he felt it in his breast, and his heart stood still for a moment when she fainted. Similarly, when he once pricked himself with a needle, she felt it. They lived in each other, were each other's children and each other's parents.

Then she died. He nearly died too, did die perhaps, and rose again. And now he speaks with her, hears her voice in his heart, literally, not in a figure.

I do not doubt it at all, for I have had a similar experience, and much, much more.

**The Box on the Ear.**--I was thirty years old, and life was mine for the first time after I had lain in the potato-cellar and shot out white rootlets instead of growing. I had secured a home, wife, and child, and was my own master. After I had done the day's task I used to invite friends in; I call them "friends" because they got on well with me and I with them. We did no harm; we played like children with words and sounds; we disguised ourselves in order to look more fine; we composed and delivered speeches. I think no one would grudge me these hours.

But soon there was something of satiety in it; we had wounded the dignity of sacred sleep; the wine turned sour in the glasses. One night towards morning, in a cheerful circle, at a full table, my high spirits broke bounds, since fortune had given me everything at once, and I uttered a word which a married man should not utter. I immediately received a box on the ear from a strong hand. I found it quite natural, and continued what I was saying, but in another and better tone. No one took notice of what had happened; all went on as before; and we all parted as friends.

He who gave me the buffet was a bachelor of not superfine morals. If he had disapproved my point of view, it must have been a very low one.

For several days I had a blue mark on my cheek. My wife said nothing, only one of my friends let fall a remark, "How could you put up with that?"

"I must have felt that I deserved it! Otherwise I cannot explain it."

Now, when I am sixty years old, I wish that I had received several such boxes on the ear, for the first was no use. Recognising that, I feel that it was a great piece of good-fortune that I was able to confess it. And now I should like to live twenty years more, in order to forget my slowness to learn, with its sad consequences.

**Saul, Afterwards Called Paul.**--Saul was standing by when Stephen was stoned, or, at any rate, kept the clothes of those who stoned him. He also persecuted Christ and the Christians. The question is often, almost constantly asked, "Had he a right, later on, to be severe against those who threw the stones?" One can only answer with an unconditional "Yes," for he wished to make good the wrong he had done; and it was his duty to speak with his new tongue. But he is honourable and courageous enough to remind his hearers that he does not regard himself as an exception. He calls himself "the chief of sinners," and says, "I thank Him who has enabled me, who was formerly a blasphemer, and persecutor, and evil doer; but mercy was shown to me because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

How entirely Paul felt himself to be quite a different person to the dead Saul one sees from his tremendous severity against the two blasphemers, Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom he delivered over to Satan, "that they might learn not to blaspheme."

What is to be understood by these terrible words, I have explained in the *Inferno*. He who has not understood it there, can obtain a clearer explanation in the asylums, where there is no rest, no peace, only terror and despair. These cannot be cured by cold or by warm water baths, for it is a sickness of the soul, often called Paranoia, because the senses see what is not to be seen every day.

**A Scene from Hell.**--The man who had been separated from his wife went one day to fetch his little six-year-old

daughter from her mother. They meant to go for a walk, look at the shop-windows, and buy toys only for an hour. They were to meet before the mother's house. The little one came, half-sad, half-joyful, with a slightly roguish look.

This street, this street, this house, these stairs which only a short time ago he had hurried up with his hands full of presents in order for an hour long to see his beautiful home, and the best which life has to show--the young maidenly mother putting her child to bed! The two together! One still more beautiful than the other! And made more beautiful by love, or a friendship which has sprung up in painful solitude.

He took the little girl's hand, and they went down the now darkened street. Then the child turned round, and said aloud, "Mamma is coming behind us."

Why did he not turn round, but went on still faster, drawing the child with him?

Ask the pains of seven long years, which had robbed him of his self-esteem so that he no longer believed he possessed the poor solitary heart that followed him contritely and longed for reconciliation.

The child turned round yet again, and several times, as though it were a plot laid in all friendliness, and the man felt by the throbbing of the little hand how its heart beat in hope and expectation.

But he went straight forward, for he did not believe any more in the possibility of a return, and he did not dare to encounter a scornful smile, or a proud, sharp word. He turned down side-streets, but he felt that she followed. Who suffered most during this five minutes in hell, in this interplay of feelings? The child with her beautiful hopes which were disappointed; the mother with her injured self-esteem, as she sought on the street what she had thrown away; or the man with uncertainty and doubt in one half of his heart, and in the other the immeasurable grief of being obliged to hurt the innocent little child-heart? But while it was actually going on, he felt almost nothing, for he was stunned by the shock. Not till the next day did he feel the pain in his heart, and the longer the time that elapsed, the more that pain increased.

**The Jewel-casket or his Better Half.**--When a man during the first days of love has deposited the best and fairest part of his soul with the woman he loves, he has laid up a treasure with her. If then he sinks below the heavy burdens of everyday life and loses his ornaments, he generally finds them again with her; she has kept and guarded them (not always, however).

At such moments he calls her his better half, and such she is. She can, at the right time, return to him a beautiful thought or word, which he has given her once; then he is ashamed and laments over his fall. And when he sees his earlier better self in her, he realises how low he has sunk, while she still stands on the clear cliff. Then he looks up to her, cries out for help, and when she reaches him her hand, he is raised, and he thanks her for having saved him.

Paul explains this relation between man and wife, which is so often misunderstood and really difficult to understand. "For in the Lord, neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man; for as the woman is from the man, so also is the man by the woman, but all is of God."

Therefore in a true marriage neither the husband nor the wife appear separate, but both regard themselves, and are regarded by others, as one being. If one receives any good from the other, the recipient should thank, and the giver also because he was able to give. They thank each other because they are one being, and the interchange of gifts is continuous and unceasing, so that they cannot distinguish between giving and taking.

Therefore a true marriage is indissoluble; it cannot suffer severance, for what it possesses is not alienable, it is common; it is a spiritual property which cannot be sold or bought.

But in the rough tumult of life the man loses his ideal part sooner than the woman, who sits sheltered by the warm hearth of the well-protected home. There she can guard his jewel-casket for him, and if she does it faithfully, he will always look up to her, as to his better self.

**The Mummy-Coffin.**--Seven years of marriage had passed; they had not tended their lamp, but it smoked so that everything in the beautiful home was blackened. Now each sits in their own comer of the dwelling, because they cannot look each other in the eyes. They lament each other as dead, and miss each other like lost children.

Then he opens a drawer and takes out a little box. A scent of fresh roses streams into the room, although it comes from dry rose-leaves pressed between sheets of paper.

Those are her letters which she wrote during her engagement seven years ago. How beautiful it all is: the paper with its fine, still unbleached lavender tint and gold borders, just like the wedding-breakfast glasses; the envelopes carefully folded like the embroidered cushion-cover of the cradle; the letters themselves in beautiful rows of gentle words from beautiful lips which smile gracefully.

Beauty and love in thoughts and feelings--there he had found her again in the little box embalmed with rose-leaves and violets.

But now she is dead, and he weeps!

And at the other end of the house she sits over her little mummy-coffin and speaks with her beloved dead, and weeps.

Lost for ever! For ever!

**In the Attic.**--Only three years had passed since his marriage, and now the storm had carried away all--his wife and child. He had occasion to go up to the attic to fetch something which had been put away there. So he came up to this room, where it always rustled and creaked, and cats slunk about, and the viscera of the house, so to speak, were visible in beams and chimney, where there were rust and soot and hanging cobwebs. He unfastened the padlock. There lay all the flotsam and jetsam after the wreck. It was too late to turn back, and he remained. There was the canopy of their marriage-bed, with green silk and gilt-brass ornaments. There was the cradle of the little one, and the six milk-bottles which the mother always used to wash with her small hands in the ice-cold water; all the flower-vases and glasses which came into the house on the wedding evening, when the table was laid in the hall.

There stood the basket once filled with roses, which she had received on her engagement, which had afterwards become a work-basket. There were withered bouquets, laurel-wreaths, and even books, presents from him at Christmas and on birthdays, with beautiful inscriptions....

But there were also prehistoric articles: pieces of furniture belonging to her girlhood which she had brought into the new home--a Japanese umbrella adorned with chrysanthemums and golden pheasants, a small carpet, a flower-stand....

But why did all these relics lie here in the dust and soot, and not downstairs with him who cherished those memories? Was it that he did not dare to see them every day, or did not wish to?

Then his eyes fell on a little toy cupboard, which lay in a paper-basket. There occurred to his mind the faint recollection of a moment like a Christmas evening, a child's eyes, little white milk teeth, the first musical-box which the little one played to the Christmas-tree, the rocking-horse, and her dolls Rosa and Brita.

He opened the toy cupboard; it contained no musical-box, but a phonograph, very small and simple, a toy which could only utter a single word! He did not remember which. The key lay close by; he wound it up and set it going. At first it hummed like a bee; it did not sting, however, but whispered the only word it could, "Darling!"

And in her voice! Yes, she had spoken it into the phonograph, though he had forgotten it.

"Darling!"

Then he cried to God, then he raged against fate, and then he fell to the ground! And as he lay there he could only lament, "If they were at least only dead! If...."

For they were not dead. They lived.

That was the thing which could not be altered nor atoned for, and all these things were not relics; they were the flotsam and jetsam of a wreck.

**The Sculptor.**--Even when a man has found a masterpiece of creation in his wife, he still tries to improve away little faults in design and colour, in order to make his work of art as free from faults as possible. His little wife does not always understand that, and often becomes irritable.

"You only see faults in me."

"On the contrary, you are for me the most beautiful that exists, but I want to have you perfect. You should, for example, never be angry, for then your beautiful eyes grow ugly, and I suffer. You must not dress in verdigris-colour, for that does not suit you, and you look poisonous, so that I turn my looks away." And so on.

Eating is not beautiful, and to watch one's darling stowing away food in her beautiful mouth, which ought to speak beautiful words, smile bewitchingly, and purse up her tender lips to a kind of flower-bud which one inhales in a kiss--that may be downright repugnant! Therefore one is accustomed to hide this unseemly function under light conversation, and forgets what the beautiful mouth is occupied with.

"You are always finding fault! Say something nice for once."

"Can you not read in my eyes that I admire you; I do not generally say it first with my lips. But I want you to be perfect. That is the whole matter!"

**On the Threshold at Five Years of Age.**--A certain Dr. Ogle states in his statistics that in six-and-twenty years four cases of suicide have taken place among children between five and ten years old. When I read that, "between five and ten years old," I thought, "No! between five and ten! Is that possible? And the reason of it?" I could not think more, but I saw one scene, two scenes, three scenes....

The little girl was five years old; she was playing in the room near her mother; children must have something to do, but the mother was nervous, because she had been going into gaiety and flirting beyond measure.

"Don't rock the horse; it makes mamma's head ache."

The little one took the cat, and pinched it, so that it mewed.

"Don't do that, child; mamma is ill."

The child was good, and did not wish to be troublesome. She sat down at the table, and was silent in order not to irritate mamma.

But a child's little body cannot be still; nor ought it indeed; it moves of itself. Probably the child must have been singing a song to itself, for the little unruly feet beat time against the legs of the chair.

The mother started up, "Go to Ellen in the kitchen, disobedient child!"

The child was not disobedient; doubly wounded in her little heart, she went into the kitchen, good and obedient. But immediately afterwards she reappeared in the doorway, "Ellen was washing up."

There stood the child on the threshold, turned out and repulsed from both sides, and could not go anywhere. She looked like a despairing child, tearless, but with all the terror of the lonely in her face. Dumb, turned to stone, as though in the whole world there were no place for her, as though no one would have her, and she knew not why. At this moment she really stood on the threshold of life, for she suddenly brightened up, and approached the open window, which was high above the ground.

To the honour of the mother, I must confess that she has described this scene to me with the greatest remorse; it ended by her springing up, taking the child in her arms, and playing with her till the sun went down.

"If anything had happened to the child, I should have lived in a hell of self-reproach! And now I think; for every moment which I had not devoted to my child, for every little joy which I had denied her, I would, if it had departed, weep my soul out of my body; I would plunge into space and seek the child under the stars in order to beg her forgiveness, if I could be forgiven...."

To think of it! At five years old, on the threshold of life!

**Goethe on Christianity and Science.**--As I waded in Professor Delitzsch's dung-heap,<sup>[1]</sup> I reached at last his third lecture. In the last lines of the last page I found a pearl, which I will set, in order to show it to those who misuse poor Goethe's name for their heathenish propaganda. In a conversation with Eckermann, on March 11, 1832, that is, eleven days before his death, Goethe spoke these ever memorable words: "Let mental culture go on advancing, let the natural sciences go on gaining in depth and breadth, and the human mind expand as it may, it will never go beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it shines in the Gospel."

That was the fruit of a life of eighty years spent in seeking God and His Son. After long useless detours, Goethe found it again at the end of his life, as is apparent from the conclusion of the second part of *Faust*. I will only add some words of Goethe's on superstition, as it is not comprehended by the apelings: "Superstition is an inheritance of powerful, earnest, progressive natures; unbelief is peculiarly characteristic of weak, petty, retrogressive men." Such is unbelief as Goethe said in 1808.

The work entitled *Babel und Bibel*.

**Summa Summarum.**--Since destructive science has proved itself so hollow, consisting as it does of guesses, false inferences, self-deceit, hair-splittings, why does the State support these armies of conjecturers and soothsayers?

Rousseau's first prize-essay regarding the curse of culture and learning should be repondered.

A Descartes ought to return and teach men to doubt the untruths of the sciences.

Another Kant might write a new *Critique of Pure Reason* and re-establish the doctrine of the Categorical Imperative and Postulate, which, however, is already to be found in the Ten Commandments and the Gospels.

And a prophet must be born to teach men the simple meaning of life in a few words, though it has been already so well summed up: "Fear God, and keep His commandments," or "Pray and work."

All the errors and mistakes which we have made should serve to instil into us a lively hatred of evil, and to impart to us fresh impulses to good; these we can take with us to the other side, where they can first bloom and bear fruit.

That is the true meaning of life, at which the obstinate and impenitent cavil in order to escape trouble.

Pray, *but* work; suffer, *but* hope; keeping both the earth and the stars in view. Do not try and settle permanently, for it is a place of pilgrimage; not a home, but a halting-place. Seek truth, for it is to be found, but only in one place, with Him who Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

**THE END**