

HEAVEN AND ITS WONDERS

DESCRIBED;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

H E L L:

FROM

ACTUAL INFORMATION AND OBSERVATION.

BY

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG,

SERVANT OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS is the third English Translation of this most important Work.

The first Translation was the joint production of Mr. William Cookworthy, formerly an eminent person among the Quakers*, and of the Rev. Thomas Hartley, Rector of Winwick, in Northamptonshire; the whole being revised, and put into the form in which it appeared, by Mr. Hartley. It was first printed in the year 1778, and passed through five editions. It was what is called a free translation; the object of the Translator appearing to be, rather to give a general view of the subjects treated of, in a manner adapted to common apprehensions, than to convey a full and exact knowledge of all the particular ideas intended to be conveyed by the original Work. It has the merit, somewhat rare in translations, of being composed, generally speaking, in a purely English style; in consequence of which, though Mr. Hartley's style in original composition was somewhat diffused and careless, it has always been perused with pleasure by the English reader.

As, however, this Translation certainly did not convey, with precision, all the ideas of the original, especially the more abstruse, the late Rev. John Clowes, Rector of St. John's, Manchester,—the author of the translation of the *Arcana Cœlestia*, and of several other of the Works of the heaven-illuminated Swedenborg,—translated this Work anew. This version was first published in the year 1817, and a second edition of it, in 18mo., has since been printed. On the ground of fidelity to the original, no serious objection can be raised against this translation. Generally speaking (for there are occasional exceptions), it follows the original,

* See a biographical account of him in the *Intellectual Repository* for April, 1825, p. 439.

word by word. It introduces no foreign ideas whatever; and where, to complete the sense or construction in English, an additional word or two was unavoidable, they are marked as additions by being enclosed in brackets. The construction of the sentences is thus, for the most part, the same as in the original Latin; the consequence of which is, that though the words are usually English, the style, sometimes, can scarcely be said to be so. Another consequence of this exact representation of the Author's words is, that the meaning of them, collectively, is not always very plain to the English reader: and the style being so different from any to which an English reader is accustomed, the work has not been so popular in this garb, as it was in the more flowing, though not very elegant robes, in which it had been presented by Mr. Hartley.

The earnest endeavour of the present Translator has been, to combine the merits, and to shun the defects, of both his predecessors. Strict fidelity to the sense of the original is an object, for the absence of which, in his opinion, no other excellences can atone: but he is aware, that the sense of the original is not always best represented by adhering quite slavishly to its words. Whenever, therefore, a word or two fewer would suffice, or a word or two more were required, clearly and fully to convey the Author's meaning, the omission or the addition has been made. But the present Translator has especially laboured to render the perusal of the work more agreeable to the English reader, by breaking and modelling the sentences into a purely English form; so that a euphonious, a simple, yet a not undignified, English style, should be (generally at least) the character of the whole. He hopes that the result will be, that the exact sense of the enlightened Author, without addition or diminution, will, in this Translation, be more readily and distinctly apprehended by the reader, than was practicable from either of the former versions. In short, to make the work at once agreeably readable, and clearly intelligible, has been his great desire.

These are the objects at which the present Translator has aimed: how far he has succeeded, or has failed, in his attempt, it is for the reader to judge. He is aware of many imperfections; and, were he to go over his work again, could perhaps make it better.

All former editions were accompanied by numerous notes from the pen

of Mr. Hartley. Many of these notes, as containing valuable and edifying observations, the present Editor has felt reluctant to omit: but there being a general feeling, that the translations of the works of Swedenborg ought not *now* to be accompanied with any notes beyond what may be necessary to prevent misapprehension, none of the old notes, except a few of a purely exegetical character, have been retained. A few of a similar kind,—or to supply, from the Author's other works, such explanations as are necessary for the correct apprehension of some of his statements in this,—have been added by the present Translator. Those of Mr. Hartley are, in this edition, marked, at the close, with an *H.*;—those of the present Translator, with an *N.* The notes without any mark are the Author's own: they solely consist of references, removed, for convenience, to the foot of the page. The Author's notes, consisting of references to the *Arcana Cælestia*, are given as an Appendix.

Both from a sense of the respect due to its Author, and for its intrinsic merits, Mr. Hartley's Preface has not been discarded with his notes. Mr. Hartley was a truly pious divine of the Church of England, and was one of the earliest lovers of genuine truth in this country who were led to look for it in the writings of Swedenborg. Having there found it, to his inexpressible satisfaction, he was the first who laboured, successfully, to promote its reception, by translating some of those writings, and by bearing a noble testimony, founded on personal knowledge, in behalf of the general elevation of character, and unimpeachable veracity, of their enlightened Author. This testimony is given in his Preface to the work *On the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body*,—in a Letter to the Translator of the *True Christian Religion*, prefixed to that work,—and in his Preface to the following Work. This Preface has always been highly esteemed by persons commencing the perusal of Swedenborg's Writings, as most engagingly, and with great force of argument, preparing the mind for the important discoveries made in the Work itself.

An Index to the passages of Scripture illustrated in the Work, prepared by a friend, has now first been added.