

reunion of Christendom can be brought about, *at any time churchmen want it to be*, on the simplicities of Christianity,—that is, upon the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel.

#### 4. The "Mystical Experience"

Both *revelation* and *demonstration* came to an end with the apostolic age, with the formation of the New Testament canon as a permanent Rule of Faith and Practice for the Spirit's administration of the Church of Christ.

Naturally, what is called the "mystical experience," on the human side, was a concomitant of inspiration and revelation on the Divine side, throughout the entire development of the Plan of Redemption in human experience and history. Theophanies and visions, as described throughout the Scriptures, were invariably attended by revelations of Truth from God; as a matter of fact, Divine revelation was the occasion for the occurrence of such phenomena. Cf. for example, the intercourse between Jehovah and the patriarchs, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Jacob's vision at Beth-el, and his experience at Peniel; the dream-mysticism of Joseph; Moses at the burning bush, his forty days and nights of communion with God in the holy mount, and his view of the Land of Canaan from the summit of Piegah; Joshua's vision of the Prince of Jehovah's Host, before the walls of Jericho (Josh. 5:13-15); Samuel's vision and prophetic call (1 Sam. 3:1-14); the mystical experience of Elijah and Elisha (cf. 1 Ki. 19:1-18); Isaiah's vision of the Lord sitting upon His Throne (Isa. 6:1-13); the numerous visions of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, and Zechariah: all of these are described in the Old Testament. Cf. in the New Testament: Joseph's dream-vision of the angel announcing to him the fact of the Incarnation (Matt. 1:18-25); John the Baptizer's open vision of the Holy Spirit's descent upon Jesus after the latter's baptism in the Jordan (John 1:32-34); the experience of Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8); Ananias' vision at Damascus, of the Lord giving him instructions regarding Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:10-16); Peter's vision on the housetop at Joppa (Acts 10:9-16); Paul's period of seclusion and meditation in Arabia (Gal. 1:11-17); Paul's night-vision of the man from Macedonia calling for spiritual

help (Acts 16:9); and John's apocalyptic visions on the isle of Patmos, as recorded in the book of Revelation. In addition to visions, numerous personal appearances of Divine messengers to human instrumentalities, for the purpose of communicating Truth from God, are described in the Scriptures: appearances (1) of the pre-incarnate Logos, "the Angel of Jehovah"; (2) of angels of God, such as, e.g., to Zacharias, at the altar of incense (Luke 1:11), to the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-37), to the women at the Empty Tomb on the Resurrection morn (Matt. 28:1-7, Luke 24:1-8), to Philip the evangelist (Acts 8:26), to Cornelius (Acts 10:1-6), to Peter in prison (Acts 12:7-10), etc. Such theophanies, angelic visitations, trances, dreams, visions, etc., were invariably for purposes connected with the working out of the Plan of God in the world and the inditing of the permanent record of this Divine Revelation. These phenomena occurred from the beginning to the end of the progressive development of the Plan of Redemption.

However, if *revelation* and *demonstration* came to an end with the Apostles, as the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that they did (continued miraculous attestation of truth already revealed, and revealed and attested once for all time, would be an incongruity, as we have already seen; in fact it would cease to be attestation at all), then it naturally follows that the mystical experience *as the medium of revelation* came to an end at the same time. For this reason, we must flatly reject all subsequent alleged "new" or "special" revelations.

I reject all alleged "special revelations" since the apostolic age, not only because such phenomena are contrary to the plain teaching of the Scriptures, but for other reasons as well. In the first place, all so-called special revelations, from Montanus to Mrs. Eddy, are conflicting in their character and in their teaching; as a matter of fact, no two of them are in general agreement. Just call the roll of some of the more modern systems founded on alleged "special revelations"—Swedenborg and "the Church of the New Jerusalem," Joseph Smith and Mormonism, William Miller and Adventism, Mrs. Ellen G. White and Seventh-Day Adventism, John Alexander Dowie and Zionism, Mary Baker Eddy and "Christian Science"—and anyone can see at a glance that there is very little

similarity of teaching among these systems. Now it is utterly inconceivable—in fact, ridiculous—that God, through His Holy Spirit, should have given to men so many different and actually conflicting revelations. God is the God of order, not of confusion; hence His genuine progressive revelation recorded in Scripture is a harmony, a unity, from beginning to end. *The Spirit of God is no more responsible for these conflicting "revelations" than He is responsible for the conflicting theologies and isms which men have devised.* Of course, any system that is all error would hardly last over night; hence in each of these systems there is a certain amount of truth. But the truth that is in it is derived from the Bible itself, not from the "revelation" which is superimposed upon the Bible. Unfortunately, the truth, derived from Scripture, that is in each of these systems is intermingled therein with a great amount of falsity which derives, obviously, from the "revelation." And it is the falsity in these systems that causes them all to be in conflict one with another. The same is quite generally true of creeds and confessions of faith written by men. If a creed contains more than the Bible, it contains too much; if it contains less than the Bible, it does not contain enough; and if it contains the same teaching as the Bible, it is not needed, because we have the Bible. Truth is never in conflict with itself; when two people disagree on any matter, one of them has to be in error. And because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, it is sheer profanity to attribute to Him the conflicting cults and isms of men.

In the second place, the falsity of many of these cults based on "special revelations" has already been demonstrated, —by old remorseless Time himself. Think of the number of actual dates set by William Miller and Mrs. Ellen G White—in the manner of many other "time-setters" in earlier ages—for the Second Coming of our Lord! But old Father Time marched relentlessly on, every time, and thus demonstrated their prognostications to be completely without foundation. It has always been a mystery to me that anyone should presume to set the date for the Second Coming of our Lord, in view of the fact that He said Himself, explicitly: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36; cf. Acts 1:7).

In the third place, the world has a perfect right to demand that the recipients of revelations from God be individuals of great unselfishness and nobility of character. But this can hardly be claimed for the self-announced recipients of "special revelations" since the time of the Apostles; as a matter of fact, there is reasonable ground for suspecting that most of these founders of special cults were not—to speak mildly—immune to cupidity, and even to the "weakness" of the flesh. Their proneness to rush into print is evident from the number of volumes, and editions of volumes, with which they and their followers have flooded the literary markets of the world. The Apostle Paul says, 2 Cor. 12:2-4 (alluding probably to an experience of his own at Lystra; cf. Acts 14:19): "I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not: God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not: God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." Certainly the modesty of this person, whoever it may have been, and that of the Apostle who reports the experience, is in striking contrast to the verbosity of Swedenborg, for example, who claimed to enjoy continual intercourse with the world of spirits, and did not hesitate to rush into print with descriptions of that world, its inhabitants, and its levels of being, etc. As a matter of fact, it is exceedingly doubtful that any human being so fortunate as to enjoy, while yet in the flesh, a glimpse of that world inhabited by God and the angels, would be able to find words in the languages of men adequate to disclose its beauties and joys to the human understanding. Even the Bible writers to whom such visions were vouchsafed, such as Isaiah, Daniel, and John the Revelator, had to resort to poetic imagery in attempting to describe the wonders which they had seen. And the uniform testimony of mysticism in general is that the apprehension of the Divine is an experience which is indescribable in human language. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the imagination of man, to conceive of the things which God has prepared for them that love Him; and if such realities cannot be conceived by the human imagination, certainly there is no language known to

man by which they can be described in print. Think, however, of the number of copies of Swedenborg's works which have been sold. Think of the number of editions of the "Book of Mormon," of the Mohammedan "Koran," and of Mrs. Eddy's "Science and Health" which have been issued, and copies sold, at so much per copy of course! It is well known that many of the founders of these cults, notably Mrs. Eddy, became extremely wealthy as a result of their psuedo-religious activities. Jesus, on the other hand, was born in a manger, died penniless, and was buried, through the charity of a friend, in a borrowed grave; otherwise His corpse would have gone to the potter's field. And throughout His life He was so poor in this world's goods that He could say: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heavens have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). The original Apostles, too, were men from the ordinary walks of life, with little or nothing in the form of material goods; and the Apostle Paul frequently resorted to his craft of tent-making to support himself while he preached (Acts 18:1-3). The correspondence in character and life of Jesus and the Apostles with the teaching which they left in the world can hardly be said to have been duplicated in the various cases of these recipients of "special revelations."

In the fourth place, I reject all alleged "special revelations," on the ground of their lack of attesting miracles, that is to say, of miracles performed in the manner in which Bible miracles were performed,—by the power of the Spirit, through the instrumentality of the spoken Word. Of course, I do not question the facts of suggestion and auto-suggestion, nor the many healings which have been effected in all ages by the use of such subliminal powers. There are occasional intimations even in Scripture of the working of such powers of the subconscious in man, in connection with physical and mental healing. For example, in Acts 5:14-16, we read that, following the strring scenes of Pentecost and after, in Jerusalem, "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them. And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and

them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Again, we read, in Acts 19:11-12, that "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: inso-much that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out." Now we can hardly think there was any magic in Peter's shadow or in Paul's handkerchiefs; therefore, in these cases suggestion and auto-suggestion on the part of the subjects must have contributed tremendously to their own healing. *Suggestibility becomes exceedingly potent in such mass movements.* The Scriptures make it clear, however, that in the vast majority of cases miracles were wrought in New Testament times, especially by those who possessed the Spirit in great measure, by the instrumentality of the spoken Word. Moreover, when the Word was spoken, the miracles was wrought *immediately*: there was no delay, no second treatment, no "treatments" at all. There is no instance on record of any modern "miracle-worker's" having wrought a miracle of healing, much less of raising the dead, by simply uttering a command, as Jesus and the Apostles did. If such an event should take place, it would be reported in the blackest type on the front page of every newspaper in the world. We may certainly conclude, therefore, that genuine miracles, miracles of the Bible kind, terminated with the Apostles and their co-laborers. And all so-called "new revelation" or "new truth," from Montanus to "Father Divine," proves its own falsity by its very lack of attesting miracles.

In an Introduction to one of Swedenborg's works, Mr. J. Howard Spalding makes this statement: "All human things have their youth, maturity and decline; and divine institutions, so far as they depend for their maintenance and integrity on human free-will, may have a like fate."<sup>1</sup> There is an element of truth in this statement, undoubtedly. But the Church of the living God does not depend exclusively upon human free-will for her permanence and power in the world. The Church depends upon the living Word of God, and is administered by the Spirit of God through the living Word. Of course the time conceivably might come when no human being anywhere in the world would be willing to proclaim the Word of God,

1. J. Howard Spalding, Introduction to Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell*, Everyman's Library Edition, viii.

when the testimony of the Gospel might thus be silenced altogether. In that case, however, undoubtedly the Lord would come again and take matters into His own hands. Indeed Jesus Himself intimates that something approximating this very state of affairs may develop at the end of the present Dispensation, immediately preceding His Second Coming. He says, Matt. 24:37-39: "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." Cf. Luke 17:26, 27— "And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." These words surely indicate that widespread rejection of Christ, and general irreligiousness (in our day, it would properly be described as eating and drinking and sex-indulgence) will characterize the period immediately prior to His Second Coming. Be that as it may, special revelations are no guarantee of either the perpetuity or the purity of the Church. *History proves that so-called "special revelation" have never done anything more than to create and foster new sects, and thus to add to the great number of sects and cults already existing.*

The Apostle Paul, as we have seen, states clearly that the righteousness which is of faith does not depend upon miracles of calling Christ down from Heaven or bringing Him back from the dead, but that it depends upon the Word of God: "the word which is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach" (Rom. 10:6-10). And Jesus emphasizes the same fundamental truth in the well known story of Lazarus and the Rich Man. Here we are given a fleeting glimpse of the world that lies just beyond the grave (maybe, some sort of an "intermediate" state, under the Old Covenant). We hear the Rich Man, now in torment, beseeching Father Abraham to send Lazarus back from the dead to warn his five brothers who are still living on the earth, and living for themselves alone, "lest they also come into this place of torment." But Abraham answers, "They

have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them"; that is to say, they have the Word of God; let them hearken to it, and obey it. "Nay, Father Abraham," cries the Rich Man, "but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent." To this plea, Abraham replies with the following pointed and far-reaching statement: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead" (Luke 16:27-31). God does not perpetuate His Church by miracles or visions or visitations from Heaven or spiritualistic seances, but by the preaching of the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel, for the obedience of faith. Nor does He perpetuate His Church by special revelations. Were He to use such *extraordinary* means to convict sinners and to strengthen the faith of saints, He would be a respecter of persons, which definitely He is not. Rom. 2:11—"There is no respect of persons with God" (cf. Deut. 10:17, Acts 10:34, Eph. 6:9, Col. 3:25, 1 Pet. 1:17, etc.). On the contrary, God endowed man at creation with the power to think, desire, love, weigh, and choose his course of action in this world. He endowed him with freedom of will. And He respects man's freedom of will in all things; there is no evidence that He overrides it either in regeneration or in sanctification. (Do not our free choices constitute His foreknowledge?) He has therefore concluded all men under sin, and offers *all alike* salvation on the specific terms of the message of the Gospel. In a word, the Gospel is a Divine amnesty proclamation to all men, upon clearly-stated conditions with which men are fully able to comply of their own free will. To illustrate from history: At the close of the American Civil War, radicals throughout the North, and in Congress, insisted that the people of the South be severely punished for their secession. But President Lincoln would have none of it. Instead, he issued a general proclamation of amnesty, offering full pardon, including restoration of citizenship, to the people of the Southern states, on certain conditions. Those conditions were—if I remember correctly—that they were to lay down their arms and take an oath of allegiance to the government of the United States. The Gospel of the grace of God is precisely such an amnesty proclamation to all accountable human beings: the sole condition of full and free pardon is personal life with the Holy Spirit; the prerequisite of life with the Holy Spirit is union



with Christ; and union with Christ takes place, in turn, in the baptism of the penitent believer into Christ (Rom. 10:9-10, Acts 2:38, Gal. 3:27). The Gospel invitation is universal, and clear and simple: "He that is athirst, let him come; and *he that will*, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Cf. John 3:5—"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." There is neither place nor purpose for special revelations in such a universal plan as the Plan of God which is embodied in the Gospel. Jesus died for our sins and was buried and raised up from the dead, once for all time and for all men (1 Cor. 15:1-4, Heb. 9:24-28, Rom. 5:17-19), and men either accept these facts and conform their lives to the Mind of Christ, thereby ultimately attaining Beatitude; or they reject these facts, and live in disobedience, only to suffer, at the end of their earthly lives, eternal separation from "the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thess. 1:9). Hence, I repeat that the mystical experience as a *medium of revelation* came to an end, along with revelation and demonstration themselves, with the Apostles and their co-laborers.

Nor, as we shall see later, is there any Scripture support for the notion that a special mystical experience accompanies the conversion of the sinner. God has purposed eternally to call men unto Himself through the Gospel. Rom. 8:29, 30—"For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained [in His Eternal Purpose] to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (*i.e.*, firstborn from the dead, Col. 1:18); "and whom he foreordained" (*i.e.*, in His Eternal Purpose, to be conformed to the image of His Son, or clothed in glory and honor and incorruption), "them he also called: and whom he called (in His Eternal Purpose), them he also justified; and whom he justified, (*etc.*) them he also glorified." 2 Thess. 2:13-14—"God chose you from the beginning *unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you through our gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." God has specified, in the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the terms upon which He will receive men back into covenant relationship with

Himself ("the keys of the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 16:19) and confer upon them the gifts of justification, sanctification and glorification—eternal life. But these gifts are of no value to men until they are accepted and utilized by the recipients. Moreover, the acceptance must be voluntary on man's part; God does not, and in the very nature of the case *could not*, consistently, force them upon him. If salvation depends upon God's working a "miracle" in each instance of conversion, then undoubtedly all men will ultimately be saved: Universalism is the necessary consequence; for the simple reason that God is no respecter of persons. But if salvation depends upon man's working with God, according to God's plan, in that case multitudes will never enjoy salvation and eternal life, because they themselves refuse to accept these Divine gifts which are offered them and refuse to meet the conditions upon which they are bestowed. As Jesus said to the Jews on one occasion: "Ye *will not* come to me, that ye may have life" (John 5:40). The begetting of faith in the human heart is not accomplished by a special unexplainable operation of the Spirit apart from, or in addition to, the Word of Truth, but is accomplished by the operation of the Spirit *through the instrumentality of the Word of Truth*. There can never be anything but confusion in the Christian world as long as men depend upon mystical "experiences"—a dream, a vision, the singing of a choir invisible, a voice, the appearance of an angel, a phantasm of the dead, a peculiar feeling of ecstasy, or something of the kind—for evidence of God's pardon, instead of depending upon the specific promises of the Word of Christ. The promises of God, as set down in the Scriptures, are sure and steadfast. God always keeps His Word. And though heaven and earth pass away, we are told, the Word of Christ shall never pass away, nor shall it ever fail to be fulfilled. For reliability, the Divine promises are as far above mysterious feelings and ecstasies as the heavens are high above the earth.

This notion of "miraculous conversion" derives immediately from paganism. Plutarch, for instance, taught that God is attainable only through a sudden illumination or ecstasy, and not intellectually by a distinct and ever-growing faith ripening into knowledge. Plutarch derived the notion, of course, from Plato, and Plato, in turn from Pythagoras, who, in all prob-

ability, acquired it from Oriental mysticism. This type of mysticism has characterized practically all pagan "natural religions" from the beginning of history. Usually it expressed itself in ancient times in the wildest orgies, such as those described by Euripides in the *Bacchae*, or in the so-called "mysteries," such as the rites which were performed periodically at Eleusis, near Athens. Frequently, as among Orientals especially, it found expression in various types of asceticism,—torture of the flesh, withdrawal from the world, monkishness, and the like. Orthodox primitive Christianity repudiated all such practices, although some of them did finally make their way into the Church in the Middle Ages. Such types of "religious experiences" are certainly products of the human *psyche* exclusively; they give no evidence, whatever, of having any basis in objective reality, authority or revelation. As a matter of fact, mysticism in general (that is, outside Biblical revelation) is of such a character that it is impossible to determine whether it has any foundation at all in objective reality, or whether it is, on the other hand, just the "backwash" of the subconscious in man himself. Such matters will have to be left to the Judge of the Universe to determine. The fact remains, however, that faith in a Savior who once actually lived *in this world*, died *in this world*, and was raised up *in this world* and manifested in His resurrection body to competent eye-witnesses *in this world*; faith which is a conviction with regard to these facts, facts which are in themselves essentially historical, events which occurred in time and in a definite locale on this earth; faith which is a conviction, based on these historical facts, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; *certainly such a faith is infinitely better than groping about in the blind alleys of human mysticism*. This is the faith which is offered to the world by the Spirit of God, in the New Testament. The Gospel of a rational presentation of certain facts respecting a Person, Jesus of Nazareth; and the Christian faith is personal faith in Him, which is the result of an intelligent consideration and acceptance of these facts. The whole process of Christian conversion is in perfect harmony with the constitution of the human mind.

We repeat what we have said heretofore that Jesus Himself stated the issue most clearly in two basic questions: "What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42, cf.

26:66 and Mark 14:64). One's answer to the first question *intelligently* depends on one's answer to the second. If He was just the son of Joseph and Mary by ordinary "natural" reproduction, then he was simply man and His death on the Cross was just a martyrdom; if, however, He was the Son of God by the "overshadowing" of the Virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit, as positively declared in Luke 1:26-35, then indeed He was the God-Man, Immanuel, as declared in Matt. 1:18-25, and *His perfect body* truly "bare our sins . . . upon the tree" 1 Pet. 2:24, and that *together with the shedding of His blood* as God's covering of Grace (Lev. 17:11, Eph. 1:7, 1 John 1:7, Eph. 2:8, Rom. 5:9, Col. 2:14, etc.) was not just a martyrdom, but *the Atonement* for the sins of mankind. Hence, the supremely important question for each of us is that which Jesus requires us to determine individually, "What *think ye* of the Christ? Whose son is he?"

It must be understood that there is, undoubtedly, a valid form of mysticism: *that*, I am not indicting here. I am indicting, however, that pseudo-mysticism which professes to give to the world conflicting "special revelations"; mystical experiences *not fulfilling* the Word of Christ, but occurring separate and apart from the Word (for the most part claimed by individuals who have never even obeyed the Gospel, Rom. 6:17, 10:16), in fact lying entirely outside Biblical revelation itself. I am indicting also that other form of pseudo-mysticism which would substitute emotions, feelings, ecstasies, dreams, visions, etc., for the plain teaching of the Word of God, as the proper evidence of Divine pardon and forgiveness.

I am not indicting, however, nor even questioning, the mystical experiences of those men of God whom the Holy Spirit used as instrumentalities for communicating to mankind God's progressive revelation of His Eternal Purpose. This revelation in its completeness—the revelation which was first unfolded in history, and the record of which the Holy Spirit has caused to be preserved for us in the Scriptures—is self-evidencing; it carries its own credentials, in the form of attestation by accompanying miracles and in its perfect adaptation to the needs of the human race; and it is, in its completed form, a self-evident unity. Nor am I attempting to indict the mystical *en rapportness* with God of many of the great saints of all ages. I see no reason for doubting that many of God's

saints, men and women of true holiness of life, have enjoyed on occasion fore-glimpses of the beauties and joys of Heaven; foretastes, so to speak, of ultimate Beatitude. Such a saint, no doubt, was the person of whom Paul writes as having been "caught up even to the third heaven," where he "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:2-4). Such an experience undoubtedly was that of Moses when God took him, in his old age, just before his death, to the summit of Pisgah, and showed him from that vantage-point all the land which He had promised unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deut. 34:1-5). Such an experience, too, was that of the martyr Stephen, who, about to die at the hands of a mob of fanatical ecclesiastics, "being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56). It must be remembered that the Canaan which Moses saw from the summit of Pisgah, by God's grace, was a type of the Heavenly Canaan which lies beyond the swelling of the Jordan of death, the heavenly land whose scenes the dying Stephen was actually allowed to glimpse in his hour of martyrdom. Therefore, may we not be justified in concluding, from these examples, that the true Christian will be sustained and comforted, in the eventide of life at least, and especially the nearer he approaches to his own crossing of the Jordan, with occasional glimpses of the Heavenly Home that lies on the other side—"the home over there"; with foretastes, so to speak, of the ultimate bliss which is to be his own, upon seeing God face to face? Mystical experiences of this kind were, and are, however, *personal* experiences; experiences which in the very nature of the case cannot be shared with those less advanced in holiness, nor indeed with any other human being, for the simple reason that such experiences are indescribable in human language. Such experiences, moreover, are not for purposes of conversion, sanctification, or special revelation: they are the perfectly natural consequences of the life lived in the Holy Spirit, the life of ever-growing closeness of communion and fellowship with God. No one, I think, would be so presumptuous as to deny the possibility of such genuine mystical experiences as these to the true saints of God.