

387. THE EMPLOYMENTS OF ANGELS IN HEAVEN.

It is impossible to enumerate the employments in the heavens, still less to describe them in detail, but something may be said about them in a general way; for they are numberless, and vary in accordance with the functions of the societies. Each society has its peculiar function, for as societies are distinct in accordance with goods (see above, number 41), so they are distinct in accordance with uses, because with all in the heavens goods are goods in act, which are uses. Everyone there performs a use, for the Lord's kingdom is a kingdom of uses.[1]

[1] The Lord's kingdom is a kingdom of uses (see numbers 454, 696, 1103, 3645, 4054, 7038).

Performing uses is serving the Lord (see number 7038).

In the other life all must perform uses (see number 1103); even the wicked and infernal, but in what manner (see number 696).

All are such as are the uses they perform (see numbers 4054, 6815); illustrated (see number 7038).

Angelic blessedness consists in the goods of charity, that is, in performing uses (see number 454).

388. In the heavens as on the earth there are many forms of service, for there are ecclesiastical affairs, there are civil affairs, and there are domestic affairs. That there are ecclesiastical affairs is evident from what has been said and shown above, where Divine worship is treated of (numbers 221-227); civil affairs, where governments in heaven are treated of (numbers 213-220); and domestic affairs, where the dwellings and homes of angels are treated of (numbers 183-190); and marriages in heaven (numbers 366-368); all of which show that in every heavenly society there are many employments and services.

389. All things in the heavens are organized in accordance with Divine order, which is everywhere guarded by the services performed by angels, those things that pertain to the general good or use by the wiser angels, those that pertain to particular uses by the less wise, and so on. They are subordinated just as uses are subordinated in the Divine order; and for this reason a dignity is connected with every function according to the dignity of the use. Nevertheless, an angel does not claim dignity to himself, but ascribes all dignity to the use; and as the use is the good that he accomplishes, and all good is from the Lord, so he ascribes all dignity to the Lord. Therefore he that thinks of honor for himself and subsequently for the use, and not for the use and subsequently for himself, can perform no function in heaven, because this is looking away backwards from the Lord, and putting self in the first place and use in the second. When use is spoken of the Lord also is meant, because, as has just been said, use is good, and good is from the Lord.

390. From this it may be inferred what subordinations in the heavens are, namely, that as any one loves, esteems, and honors the use he also loves, esteems, and honors the person with whom the use is connected; also that the person is loved, esteemed and honored in the measure in which he ascribes the use to the Lord and not to himself; for to that extent he is wise, and the uses he performs he performs from good. Spiritual love, esteem, and honor are nothing else than the love, esteem, and honor of the use in the person, together with the honor to the person because of the use, and not honor to the use because of the person. This is the way, moreover, in which men are regarded when they are regarded from spiritual truth, for one man is then seen to be like another, whether he be in great or in little dignity, the only perceptible difference being a

difference in wisdom; and wisdom is loving use, that is, loving the good of a fellow citizen, of society, of one's country, and of the church. It is this that constitutes love to the Lord, because every good that is a good of use is from the Lord; and it constitutes also love towards the neighbor, because the neighbor means the good that is to be loved in a fellow citizen, in society, in one's country, and in the church, and that is to be done in their behalf.[1]

[1] Loving the neighbor is not loving the person, but loving that which is in him and which constitutes him (see numbers 5025, 10336).

Those who love the person, and not that which is in him, and which constitutes him, love equally an evil man and a good man (see number 3820); and do good alike to the evil and to the good; and yet to do good to the evil is to do evil to the good and that is not loving the neighbor (see numbers 3820, 6703, 8120).

The judge who punishes the evil that they may be reformed, and may not contaminate or injure the good, loves his neighbor (see numbers 3820, 8120, 8121).

Every individual and every community also one's country and the church, and in the most general sense the kingdom of the Lord, are the neighbor, and to do good to these from a love of good in accord with the quality of their state, is loving the neighbor; that is, the neighbor is their good, which is to be consulted (numbers 6818-6824, 8123).

391. As all the societies in the heavens are distinct in accordance with their goods (as said above, n. 41, seq.) so they are distinct in accordance with their uses, goods being goods in act, that is, goods of charity which are uses. Some societies are employed in taking care of little children; others in teaching and training them as they grow up; others in teaching and training in like manner the boys and girls that have acquired a good disposition from their education in the world, and in consequence have come into heaven. There are other societies that teach the simple good from the Christian world, and lead them into the way to heaven; there are others that in like manner teach and lead the various heathen nations. There are some societies that defend from infestations by evil spirits the newly arrived spirits that have just come from the world; there are some that attend upon the spirits that are in the lower earth; also some that attend upon spirits that are in the hells, and restrain them from tormenting each other beyond prescribed limits; and there are some that attend upon those who are being raised from the dead. In general, angels from each society are sent to men to watch over them and to lead them away from evil affections and consequent thoughts, and to inspire them with good affections so far as they will receive them in freedom; and by means of these they also direct the deeds or works of men by removing as far as possible evil intentions. When angels are with men they dwell as it were in their affections; and they are near to man just in the degree in which he is in good from truths, and are distant from him just in the degree in which his life is distant from good.[1] But all these employments of angels are employments of the Lord through the angels, for the angels perform them from the Lord and not from themselves. For this reason, in the Word in its internal sense "angels" mean, not angels, but something belonging to the Lord; and for the same reason angels are called "gods" in the Word.[2]

[1] Of the angels that are with little children and afterwards with boys, and thus in succession (see number 2303).

Man is raised from the dead by means of angels; from experiences (numbers 168-189).

Angels are sent to those who are in hell to prevent their tormenting each other beyond measure (see number 967).

Of the services rendered by the angels to men on their coming into the other life (see number 2131).

There are spirits and angels with all men and man is led by the Lord by means of spirits and angels (see numbers 50, 697, 2796, 2887, 2888, 5846-5866, 5976-5993, 6209).

Angels have dominion over evil spirits (see number 1755).

[2] In the Word by angels something Divine from the Lord is signified (see numbers 1925, 2821, 3039, 4085, 6280, 8192).

In the Word angels are called "gods," because of their reception of Divine truth and good from the Lord (see numbers 4295, 4402, 8192, 8301).

392. These employments of the angels are their general employments; but each one has his particular charge; for every general use is composed of innumerable uses which are called mediate, ministering, and subservient uses, all and each coordinated and subordinated in accordance with Divine order, and taken together constituting and perfecting the general use, which is the general good.

393. Those are concerned with ecclesiastical affairs in heaven who in the world loved the Word and eagerly sought in it for truths, not with honor or gain as an end, but uses of life both for themselves and for others. These in heaven are in enlightenment and in the light of wisdom in the measure of their love and desire for use; and this light of wisdom they receive from the Word in heaven, which is not a natural Word, as it is in the world, but a spiritual Word (see above, n. 259.) These minister in the preaching office; and in accordance with Divine order those are in higher positions who from enlightenment excel others in wisdom. [2] Those are concerned with civil affairs who in the world loved their country, and loved its general good more than their own, and did what is just and right from a love for what is just and right. So far as these from the eagerness of love have investigated the laws of justice and have thereby become intelligent, they have the ability to perform such functions in heaven, and they perform these in that position or degree that accords with their intelligence, their intelligence being in equal degree with their love of use for the general good. [3] Furthermore, there are in heaven more functions and services and occupations than can be enumerated; while in the world there are few in comparison. But however many there may be that are so employed, they are all in the delight of their work and labor from a love of use, and no one from a love of self or of gain; and as all the necessities of life are furnished them gratuitously they have no love of gain for the sake of a living. They are housed gratuitously, clothed gratuitously, and fed gratuitously. Evidently, then, those that have loved themselves and the world more than use have no lot in heaven; for his love or affection remains with everyone after his life in the world, and is not extirpated to eternity (see above, number 563).

394. In heaven everyone comes into his own occupation in accordance with correspondence, and the correspondence is not with the occupation but with the use of each occupation (see above, number 112); for there is a correspondence of all things (see number 106). He that in heaven comes into the employment or occupation corresponding to his use is in much the same condition of life as when he was in the world; since what is spiritual and what is natural make one by correspondences; yet there is this difference, that he then comes into an interior delight, because into spiritual life, which is an interior life, and therefore more receptive of heavenly blessedness.

395. HEAVENLY JOY AND HAPPINESS.

Hardly any one at present knows what heaven is or what heavenly joy is. Those who have given any thought to these subjects have had so general and so gross an idea about them as scarcely to amount to anything. From spirits that have come from the world into the other life I have been able to learn fully what idea they had of heaven and heavenly joy; for when left to themselves, as they were in the world, they think as they then did. There is this ignorance about heavenly joy for the reason that those who have thought about it have formed their opinion from the outward joys pertaining to the natural man, and have not known what the inner and spiritual man is, nor in consequence the nature of his delight and blessedness; and therefore even if they had been told by those who are in spiritual or inward delight what heavenly joy is, would have had no comprehension of it, for it could have fallen only into an idea not yet recognized, thus into no perception; and would therefore have been among the things that the natural man rejects. Yet everyone can understand that when a man leaves his outer or natural man he comes into the inner or spiritual man, and consequently can see that heavenly delight is internal and spiritual, not external and natural; and being internal and spiritual, it is more pure and exquisite, and affects the interiors of man which pertain to his soul or spirit. From these things alone everyone may conclude that his delight is such as the delight of his spirit has previously been and that the delight of the body, which is called the delight of the flesh, is in comparison not heavenly; also that whatever is in the spirit of man when he leaves the body remains after death, since he then lives a man-spirit.

396. All delights flow forth from love, for that which a man loves he feels to be delightful. No one has any delight from any other source. From this it follows that such as the love is such is the delight. The delights of the body or of the flesh all flow forth from the love of self and love of the world; consequently they are lusts and their pleasures; while the delights of the soul or spirit all flow forth from love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor, consequently they are affections for good and truth and interior satisfactions. These loves with their delights flow in out of heaven from the Lord by an inner way, that is, from above, and affect the interiors; while the former loves with their delights flow in from the flesh and from the world by an external way, that is, from beneath, and affect the exteriors. Therefore as far as the two loves of heaven are received and make themselves felt, the interiors of man, which belong to his soul or spirit and which look from the world heavenwards, are opened, while so far as the two loves of the world are received and make themselves felt, his exteriors, which belong to the body or flesh and look away from heaven towards the world, are opened. As loves flow in and are received their delights also flow in, the delights of heaven into the interiors and the delights of the world into the exteriors, since all delight, as has just been said above, belongs to love.

397. Heaven in itself is so full of delights that viewed in itself it is nothing else than blessedness and delight; for the Divine good that flows forth from the Lord's Divine love is what makes heaven in general and in particular with everyone there, and the Divine love is a longing for the salvation of all and the happiness of all from inmosts and in fullness. Thus whether you say heaven or heavenly joy it is the same thing.

398. The delights of heaven are both ineffable and innumerable; but he that is in the mere delight of the body or of the flesh can have no

knowledge of or belief in a single one of these innumerable delights; for his interiors, as has just been said, look away from heaven towards the world, thus backwards. For he that is wholly in the delight of the body or of the flesh, or what is the same, in the love of self and of the world, has no sense of delight except in honor, in gain, and in the pleasures of the body and the senses; and these so extinguish and suffocate the interior delights that belong to heaven as to destroy all belief in them; consequently he would be greatly astonished if he were told that when the delights of honor and of gain are set aside other delights are given, and still more if he were told that the delights of heaven that take the place of these are innumerable, and are such as cannot be compared with the delights of the body and the flesh, which are chiefly the delights of honor and of gain. All this makes clear why it is not known what heavenly joy is.

399. One can see how great the delight of heaven must be from the fact that it is the delight of everyone in heaven to share his delights and blessings with others; and as such is the character of all that are in the heavens it is clear how immeasurable is the delight of heaven. It has been shown above (see number 268), that in the heavens there is a sharing of all with each and of each with all. Such sharing goes forth from the two loves of heaven, which are, as has been said, love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor; and to share their delights is the very nature of these loves. Love to the Lord is such because the Lord's love is a love of sharing everything it has with all, since it wills the happiness of all. There is a like love in everyone of those who love the Lord, because the Lord is in them; and from this comes the mutual sharing of the delights of angels with one another. Love towards the neighbor is of such a nature, as will be seen in what follows. All this shows that it is the nature of these loves to share their delights. It is otherwise with the loves of self and of the world. The love of self takes away from others and robs others of all delight, and directs it to itself, for it wishes well to itself alone; while the love of the world wishes to have as its own what belongs to the neighbor. Therefore these loves are destructive of the delights of others; or if there is any disposition to share, it is for the sake of themselves and not for the sake of others. Thus in respect to others it is the nature of those loves not to share but to take away, except so far as the delights of others have some relation to self. That the loves of self and of the world, when they rule, are such I have often been permitted to perceive by living experience. Whenever the spirits that were in these loves during their life as men in the world drew near, my delight receded and vanished; and I was told that at the mere approach of such to any heavenly society the delight of those in the society diminished just in the degree of their proximity; and what is wonderful, the evil spirits are then in their delight. All this indicates the state of the spirit of such a man while he is in the body, since it is the same as it is after it is separated from the body, namely, that it longs for or lusts after the delights or goods of another, and finds delight so far as it secures them. All this makes clear that the loves of self and of the world tend to destroy the joys of heaven, and are thus direct opposites of heavenly loves, which desire to share.

400. But it must be understood that the delight of those who are in the loves of self and of the world, when they draw near to any heavenly society, is the delight of their lust, and thus is directly opposite to the delight of heaven. And such enter into this delight of their lust in consequence of their taking away and dispelling heavenly delight in those

that are in such delight. When the heavenly delight is not taken away or dispelled it is different, for they are then unable to draw near; for so far as they draw near they bring upon themselves anguish and pain; and for this reason they do not often venture to come near. This also I have been permitted to learn by repeated experience, something of which I would like to add. [2] Spirits who go from this world into the other life desire more than any thing else to get into heaven. Nearly all seek to enter, supposing that heaven consists solely in being admitted and received. Because of this desire they are brought to some society of the lowest heaven. But as soon as those who are in the love of self and of the world draw near the first threshold of that heaven they begin to be distressed and so tortured inwardly as to feel hell rather than heaven to be in them; and in consequence they cast themselves down headlong therefrom, and do not rest until they come into the hells among their like. [3] It has also frequently occurred that such spirits have wished to know what heavenly joy is, and having heard that it is in the interiors of angels, they have wished to share in it. This therefore was granted; for whatever a spirit who is not yet in heaven or hell wishes is granted if it will benefit him. But as soon as that joy was communicated they began to be so tortured as not to know how to twist or turn because of the pain. I saw them thrust their heads down to their feet and cast themselves upon the ground, and there writhe into coils like serpents, and this in consequence of their interior agony. Such was the effect produced by heavenly delight upon those who are in the delights of the love of self and of the world; and for the reason that these loves are directly opposite to heavenly loves, and when opposite acts against opposite such pain results. And since heavenly delight enters by an inward way and flows into the contrary delight, the interiors which are in the contrary delight are twisted backwards, thus into the opposite direction, and the result is such tortures. [4] They are opposite for the reason given above, that love to the Lord and love to the neighbor wish to share with others all that is their own, for this is their delight, while the loves of self and of the world wish to take away from others what they have, and take it to themselves; and just to the extent that they are able to do this they are in their delight. From this, too, one can see what it is that separates hell from heaven; for all that are in hell were, while they were living in the world, in the mere delights of the body and of the flesh from the love of self and of the world; while all that are in the heavens were, while they lived in the world, in the delights of the soul and spirit from love to the Lord and love to the neighbor; and as these are opposite loves, so the hells and the heavens are entirely separated, and indeed so separated that a spirit in hell does not venture even to put forth a finger from it or raise the crown of his head, for if he does this in the least he is racked with pain and tormented. This, too, I have frequently seen.

401. One who is in the love of self and love of the world perceives while he lives in the body a sense of delight from these loves and also in the particular pleasures derived from these loves. But one who is in love to God and in love towards the neighbor does not perceive while he lives in the body any distinct sense of delight from these loves or from the good affections derived from them, but only a blessedness that is hardly perceptible, because it is hidden away in his interiors and veiled by the exteriors pertaining to the body and dulled by the cares of the world. But after death these states are entirely changed. The delights of love of self and of the world are then turned into what is painful and direful, because into such things as are called infernal fire, and by turns into things defiled and filthy corresponding to their unclean

pleasures, and these, wonderful to tell, are then delightful to them. But the obscure delight and almost imperceptible blessedness of those that had been while in the world in love to God and in love to the neighbor are then turned into the delight of heaven, and become in every way perceived and felt, for the blessedness that lay hidden and unrecognized in their interiors while they lived in the world is then revealed and brought forth into evident sensation, because such had been the delight of their spirit, and they are then in the spirit.

402. In uses all the delights of heaven are brought together and are present, because uses are the goods of love and charity in which angels are; therefore everyone has delights that are in accord with his uses, and in the degree of his affection for use. That all the delights of heaven are delights of use can be seen by a comparison with the five bodily senses of man. There is given to each sense a delight in accordance with its use; to the sight, the hearing, the smell, the taste, and the touch, each its own delight; to the sight a delight from beauty and from forms, to the hearing from harmonious sounds, to the smell from pleasing odors, to taste from fine flavors. These uses which the senses severally perform are known to those who study them, and more fully to those who are acquainted with correspondences. Sight has such a delight because of the use it performs to the understanding, which is the inner sight; the hearing has such a delight because of the use it performs both to the understanding and to the will through giving attention; the smell has such a delight because of the use it performs to the brain, and also to the lungs; the taste has such a delight because of the use it performs to the stomach, and thus to the whole body by nourishing it. The delight of marriage, which is a purer and more exquisite delight of touch, transcends all the rest because of its use, which is the procreation of the human race and thereby of angels of heaven. These delights are in these sensories by an influx of heaven, where every delight pertains to use and is in accordance with use.

403. There were some spirits who believed from an opinion adopted in the world that heavenly happiness consists in an idle life in which they would be served by others; but they were told that happiness never consists in abstaining from work and getting satisfaction therefrom. This would mean everyone's desiring the happiness of others for himself, and what everyone wished for no one would have. Such a life would be an idle not an active life, and would stupefy all the powers of life; and everyone ought to know that without activity of life there can be no happiness of life, and that rest from this activity should be only for the sake of recreation, that one may return with more vigor to the activity of his life. They were then shown by many evidences that angelic life consists in performing the good works of charity, which are uses, and that the angels find all their happiness in use, from use, and in accordance with use. To those that held the opinion that heavenly joy consists in living an idle life and drawing breaths of eternal joy in idleness, a perception was given of what such a life is, that they might become ashamed of the idea; and they saw that such a life is extremely sad, and that all joy thus perishing they would in a little while feel only loathing and disgust for it.

404. There were some spirits who thought themselves better instructed than others, and who said that they had believed in the world that heavenly joy would consist solely in praising and giving glory to God, and that this would be an active life. But these were told that praising and giving glory to God is not a proper active life, also that God has no

need of praises and glorification, but it is His will that they should perform uses, and thus the good works that are called goods of charity. But they were unable to associate with goods of charity any idea of heavenly joy, but only of servitude, although the angels testified that this joy is most free because it comes from an interior affection and is conjoined with ineffable delight.

405. Almost all who enter the other life think that hell is the same to everyone, and heaven the same; and yet in both there are infinite varieties and diversities, and in no case is hell or heaven wholly the same to one as to another; as it is impossible that any one man, spirit or angel should ever be wholly like another even as to the face. At my mere thought of two being just alike or equal the angels expressed horror, saying that everyone thing is formed out of the harmonious concurrence of many things, and that the one thing is such as that concurrence is; and that it is thus that a whole society in heaven becomes a one, and that all the societies of heaven together become a one, and this from the Lord alone by means of love.[1] Uses in the heavens are likewise in all variety and diversity, and in no case is the use of one wholly the same as and identical with the use of another; so neither is the happiness of one the same as and identical with the happiness of another. Furthermore, the delights of each use are innumerable, and these innumerable delights are likewise various, and yet conjoined in such order that they mutually regard each other, like the uses of each member, organ, and viscus, in the body, and still more like the uses of each vessel and fiber in each member, organ and viscus; each and all of which are so affiliated as to have regard to another's good in their own good, and thus each in all, and all in each. From this universal and individual aspect they act as one.

[1] One thing consists of various things, and receives thereby its form and quality and perfection in accordance with the quality of the harmony and concurrence (see numbers 457, 3241, 8003).

There is an infinite variety and never any one thing the same as another (see numbers 7236, 9002).

It is the same in the heavens (see numbers 3744, 4005, 7236, 7833, 7836, 9002).

In consequence all the societies in the heavens and all the angels in a society are distinct from each other because they are in different goods and uses (see numbers 690, 3241, 3519, 3804, 3986, 4067, 4149, 4263, 7236, 7833).

The Lord's Divine love arranges all into a heavenly form, and so conjoins them that they are as a single man (see numbers 457, 3986, 5598).

406. I have talked at times with spirits that had recently come from the world about the state of eternal life, saying that it is important to know who the Lord of the kingdom is, and what kind and what form of government it has. As nothing is more important for those entering another kingdom in the world than to know who and what the king is, and what the government is, and other particulars in regard to the kingdom, so is it of still greater consequence in regard to this kingdom in which they are to live to eternity. Therefore they should know that it is the Lord who governs both heaven and the universe, for He who governs the one governs the other; thus that the kingdom in which they now are is the Lord's; and that the laws of this kingdom are eternal truths, all of which rest upon the law that the Lord must be loved above all things and the neighbor as themselves; and even more than this, if they would be like the angels they must love the neighbor more than themselves. On hearing this they could make no reply, for the reason that although they



had heard in the life of the body something like this they had not believed it, wondering how there could be such love in heaven, and how it could be possible for any one to love his neighbor more than himself. But they were told that every good increases immeasurably in the other life, and that while they cannot go further in the life of the body than to love the neighbor as themselves, because they are immersed in what concerns the body, yet when this is set aside their love becomes more pure, and finally becomes angelic, which is to love the neighbor more than themselves. For in the heavens there is joy in doing good to another, but no joy in doing good to self unless with a view to its becoming another's, and thus for another's sake. This is loving the neighbor more than oneself. They were told that the possibility of such a love is shown in the world in the marriage love of some who have suffered death to protect a consort from injury, in the love of parents for their children, as in a mother's preferring to go hungry rather than see her child go hungry; in sincere friendship, in which one friend will expose himself to danger for another; and even in polite and pretended friendship that wishes to emulate sincere friendship, in offering the better things to those to whom it professes to wish well, and bearing such good will on the lips though not in the heart; finally, in the nature of love, which is such that its joy is to serve others, not for its own sake but for theirs. But all this was incomprehensible to those who loved themselves more than others, and in the life of the body had been greedy of gain; most of all to the avaricious.

407. There was one who in the life of the body had exercised power over others, and who had retained in the other life the desire to rule; but he was told that he was now in another kingdom, which is eternal, and that his rule on earth had perished, and that he was now where no one is esteemed except in accordance with his goodness and truth, and that measure of the Lord's mercy which he enjoyed by virtue of his life in the world; also that the same is true in this kingdom as on the earth, where men are esteemed for their wealth and for their favor with the prince, wealth here being good and truth, and favor with the prince the mercy bestowed on man by the Lord in accordance with his life in the world. Any wish to rule otherwise would make him a rebel, since he is in another's kingdom. On hearing these things he was ashamed.

408. I have talked with spirits who believed heaven and heavenly joy to consist in their being great; but such were told that in heaven he that is least is greatest, since he is called least who has, and wishes to have, no power or wisdom from himself, but only from the Lord, he that is least in that sense having the greatest happiness, and as he has the greatest happiness, it follows that he is greatest; for he has thereby from the Lord all power and excels all in wisdom. What is it to be the greatest unless to be the most happy? For to be the most happy is what the powerful seek through power and the rich through riches. It was further said that heaven does not consist in a desire to be least for the purpose of being greatest, for that would be aspiring and longing to be the greatest; but it consists in desiring from the heart the good of others more than one's own, and in serving others with a view to their happiness, not with recompense as an end, but from love.

409. Heavenly joy itself, such as it is in its essence, cannot be described, because it is in the inmost of the life of angels and therefrom in everything of their thought and affection, and from this in every particular of their speech and action. It is as if the interiors were fully opened and unloosed to receive delight and blessedness, which

are distributed to every least fiber and thus through the whole. Thus the perception and sensation of this joy is so great as to be beyond description, for that which starts from the inmosts flows into every particular derived from the inmosts, propagating itself away with increase towards the exteriors. Good spirits who are not yet in that joy, because not yet raised up into heaven, when they perceive a sense of that joy from an angel from the sphere of his love, are filled with such delight that they come as it were into a delicious trance. This sometimes happens with those who desire to know what heavenly joy is.

410. When certain spirits wished to know what heavenly joy is they were allowed to feel it to such a degree that they could no longer bear it; and yet it was not angelic joy; it was scarcely in the least degree angelic, as I was permitted to perceive by sharing it, but was so slight as to be almost frigid; nevertheless they called it most heavenly, because to them it was an inmost joy. From this it was evident, not only that there are degrees of the joys of heaven, but also that the inmost joy of one scarcely reaches to the outmost or middle joy of another; also that when any one receives his own inmost joy he is in his heavenly joy, and cannot endure what is still more interior, for such a joy becomes painful to him.

411. Certain spirits, not evil, sinking into a quiescence like sleep, were taken up into heaven in respect to the interiors of their minds; for before their interiors are opened spirits can be taken up into heaven and be taught about the happiness of those there. I saw them in the quiescent state for about half an hour, and afterwards they relapsed into their exteriors in which they were before, and also into a recollection of what they had seen. They said that they had been among the angels in heaven, and had there seen and perceived amazing things, all of which were resplendent as if made of gold, silver, and precious stones, in exquisite forms and in wonderful variety; also that angels are not delighted with the outward things themselves, but with the things they represented, which were Divine, ineffable, and of infinite wisdom, and that these were their joy; with innumerable other things that could not be described in human language even as to a ten-thousandth part, or fall into ideas which partake of any thing material.

412. Scarcely any who enter the other life know what heavenly blessedness and happiness are, because they do not know what internal joy is, deriving their perception of it solely from bodily and worldly gladness and joy; and in consequence what they are ignorant of they suppose to be nothing, when in fact bodily and worldly joys are of no account in comparison. In order, therefore, that the well disposed, who do not know what heavenly joy is, may know and realize what it is, they are taken first to paradisaal scenes that transcend every conception of the imagination. They then think that they have come into the heavenly paradise; but they are taught that this is not true heavenly happiness; and they are permitted to realize such interior states of joy as are perceptible to their inmost. They are then brought into a state of peace even to their inmost, when they confess that nothing of it is in the least expressible or conceivable. Finally they are brought into a state of innocence even to their inmost sense. Thus they are permitted to learn what true spiritual and heavenly good is.

413. But that I might learn the nature of heaven and heavenly joy I have frequently and for a long time been permitted by the Lord to perceive the delights of heavenly joys; but while I have been enabled to know by

living experience what they are I am not at all able to describe them. Nevertheless, that some idea of them may be formed, something shall be said about them. Heavenly joy is an affection of innumerable delights and joys, which together present something general, and in this general, that is, this general affection, are harmonies of innumerable affections that come to perception obscurely, and not distinctly, because the perception is most general. Nevertheless I was permitted to perceive that there are innumerable things in it, in such order as cannot be at all described, those innumerable things being such as flow from the order of heaven. The order in the particulars of the affection even to the least, is such that these particulars are presented and perceived only as a most general whole, in accordance with the capacity of him who is the subject. In a word, each general affection contains infinite affections arranged in a most orderly form, with nothing therein that is not alive, and that does not affect all of them from the inmosts; for heavenly joys go forth from inmosts. I perceived also that the joy and ecstasy came as from the heart, diffusing most softly through all the inmost fibers, and from these into the bundles of fibers, with such an inmost sense of delight that the fiber seemed to be nothing but joy and ecstasy, and everything perceptive and sensitive therefrom seemed in like manner to be alive with happiness. Compared with these joys the joy of bodily pleasures is like a gross and pungent dust compared with a pure and most gentle aura. I have noticed that when I wished to transfer all my delight to another, a more interior and fuller delight continually flowed in in its place, and the more I wished this, the more flowed in; and this was perceived to be from the Lord.

414. Those that are in heaven are continually advancing towards the spring of life, with a greater advance towards a more joyful and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this to eternity, with increase according to the growth and degree of their love, charity, and faith. Women who have died old and worn out with age, if they have lived in faith in the Lord, in charity to the neighbor, and in happy marriage love with a husband, advance with the succession of years more and more into the flower of youth and early womanhood, and into a beauty that transcends every conception of any such beauty as is seen on the earth. Goodness and charity are what give this form and thus manifest their own likeness, causing the joy and beauty of charity to shine forth from every least particular of the face, and causing them to be the very forms of charity. Some who beheld this were struck with amazement. The form of charity that is seen in a living way in heaven, is such that it is charity itself that both forms and is formed; and this in such a manner that the whole angel is a charity, as it were, especially the face; and this is both clearly seen and felt. When this form is beheld it is beauty unspeakable, affecting with charity the very inmost life of the mind. In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young. Such forms or such beauties do those become in the other life who have lived in love to the Lord and in charity towards the neighbor. All angels are such forms in endless variety; and of these heaven is constituted.