

**GUARDIAN SPIRITS, A CASE OF
VISION INTO THE SPIRITUAL
WORLD, WITH PARALLELS
FROM EMANUEL SWEDENBORG**

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Guardian spirits, a case of vision into the spiritual world, with parallels from Emanuel Swedenborg by A. E. Ford

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A. E. FORD

**GUARDIAN SPIRITS, A CASE OF
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GUARDIAN SPIRITS,

A CASE OF VISION

INTO THE

SPIRITUAL WORLD,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

H. WERNER,

WITH PARALLELS FROM EMANUEL SWEDENBORG,

BY A. E. FORD.

ΣΩ. Ἄθροι δὲ περιεσπῶν, μή τις τῶν ἀμύμων στασιάζῃ εἰς δε εὐνοί, οἱ οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἰόμενοι εἶναι ἢ οὐδ' ἂν δύνανται ἀποῖξ' ταῖν χειρῶν λαθίσθαι, πρῆξις δὲ καὶ γενέσις καὶ πᾶν τὸ ἄβρατο γ' οὐκ ἀποδέχμενοι, ὡς ἐν οὐσίῳ μερεῖ.

OEAL. Καὶ μὲν εἶ, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐσθλῶτος γε λέγεις καὶ ἀνεπίστουσι ἀνθρώπων. ΣΩ. Εἰσὶ γὰρ, ὦ παῖ, μαλ' ἐὶ ἀρῶσι. ἄλλοι δὲ πολλοὶ κομψότεροι.

Plato. Theætetus.

NEW-YORK:

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1847.

Werner
= FR

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PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE following is the title-page in full of the work here translated in part from the original German. "Guardian Spirits, or Remarkable Cases of Vision by two Seeresses into the Spiritual World, as also the Wonderful Restoration by Animal Magnetism of a Female ten years dumb, and a Comparative View of all its Phenomena hitherto observed. By Henry Werner, Doctor of Philosophy, Stuttgart and Tübingen. Printed and published by J. G. Cotta, 1839."

Had it been the object of the translator to support the claims of animal magnetism, he could not have done it more effectually than by laying before the public a full translation of this volume. Summing up as it does, under various heads, the contributions made from time to time to this important science, it would have conveyed to many, very little aware of it, the fact, that able observers in different nations had written on the subject, and that their reports of facts were marked by the greatest harmony. It would also have afforded a proof that these facts are not only surprising by their novelty, but that they furnish to thinking minds, materials for constructing a deeper and more spiritual system of psychology, than any hitherto generally recognized. The Germans have proved themselves deeper thinkers on this subject than ourselves, or any of their European neighbors. France and England and America, have each its praise for the observations they have made in this department of knowledge, and the useful applications they have made of it for the cure of disease; but only Germany has produced a Stilling, an Eschenmayer, a Görres, and a Werner. But the object of the translator was

not to add another argument in favor of animal magnetism, but to make an authentic case of converse with the beings and scenes of the spiritual world support the claims of SWEDENBORG as the divinely authorized revelator of the things of that world for the use of the NEW JERUSALEM. He avows his object thus fully and openly, because he can conceive of no undertaking higher or nobler or more blessed, than to arouse the world, if it may be done, to the great fact so contradictory to its feelings, its maxims and its settled prejudices, that a divine messenger has again appeared in the world, and proclaimed truth from Heaven. The larger part of the work, consisting of the collected observations of others and speculations founded upon them, had no direct bearing on this end, and has therefore been omitted. The history of the remarkable case witnessed by Werner himself alone is given. It is proper however to say, that this is given without abridgment or alteration of any kind. So much of the preface to the original work as bears upon the case, is also prefixed.

It is hardly necessary to claim for this production the character of being an honest and genuine record of facts. The author religiously avers this to be the case, and he is entitled to belief, from his literary standing and his sacred character. He has accompanied his narrative with dates and names of places, and though he has suppressed all other names of persons but his own, they can be a secret only to the more distant public. He proffers additional information to those who seek it candidly, and guarantees that it shall be satisfactory. These things are vouchers of *honesty*, and the proof which his work affords of a mind at once acute and comprehensive, sets him above the suspicion of having been *deceived* by his subject. Indeed the internal character of the work bespeaks its truthfulness. He would be more than a De Foe in matters of clairvoyance, who could weave such a multitude of details relating to natural and spiritual life into such a likelihood of reality. It may then be taken as granted by all fair and open minds, that the work in question is composed with no guileful end, and is in the main a truthful record of actual phenomena. There are those indeed, who, simply on the ground that the alleged facts are not within the range of their own personal observation, and are in themselves incredible, would deny all these fair presumptions. The translator has often had to do

with such in private discussion, and learned their arguments to be only a perpetual iteration of the words imagination, collusion, deception, humbug, and knows well how unscrupulously they apply them to persons of the most unstained reputation for veracity, and the most acknowledged powers of observing and discriminating. The difficulty in these cases, he has come to the firm conclusion, lies sometimes in intellectual straitness, but more often in moral aversion to a subject which has high and spiritual bearings, or may overturn a favorite scheme of religion. These hopeless battles he is not disposed to fight over again on paper. Such persons must even be left to force their theories of collusion and deception where they fit neither with character nor circumstances, to stretch or truncate as suits them best, and enjoy their Procrustean glory to themselves.

A strong argument in favor of Swedenborg, arises from comparing his account of the spiritual world with those furnished from this source. The translator has endeavored in the present work to set out this argument, by citing as briefly as possible those passages in which Swedenborg exhibits such a coincidence. The number of such passages must be deemed remarkable, and yet this by no means adequately represents the harmony intended to be brought out; for this lies as well in the general representation, as in particulars. Some have been purposely left out, not to swell the volume, and others doubtless have been overlooked; and it may be added, there is scarcely one point on which the two even seem to clash.

With regard to this agreement, two remarks may be made. The first is, that it extends to a vast variety of particulars. The disclosures of the seeress relate to the nature of the soul and its constitution in three parts, whereof the highest has a peculiar relation to the Divine—to its connection with the body—to its separation from it in a manner which is not death, and the independent exercise of its powers in that state—to its abode for some time after death, in an intermediate state—to its being received by angels at death, and being subsequently instructed by them—to the human race as inhabiting not only this world, but others—to the condition of things in the spiritual world of the Moon, of the Sun and of the planet Venus—to the human race as inhabiting all material worlds, and forming after death a

heaven in common—to angels, their ranks, their employments, their speech, their writings, and their exemption from the laws of space and time—to the external scenery of heaven, as containing every thing that enters into an earthly landscape—and to a large number of miscellaneous particulars besides. The details under these general heads are in many cases quite numerous. Throughout this whole account of invisible things, there is an agreement with Swedenborg; and this agreement, therefore, is striking for its extent. It is also—and this constitutes our second remark—striking for its nice, incidental and obviously undesigned character. The two reports from the land of secrets are by independent observers, each with a different mode of looking at and describing what is subjected to the view—the one looking at the surface and describing from it, the other diving deeper and developing laws. And they agree accordingly sometimes almost in expression; at others, in substance; and at others, implying, the one in a mere hint, what the other dwells upon and amplifies. This last species of coincidence has always been held a proof of veracity which the utmost efforts of contrivance cannot compass. Instances of it, it is almost needless to observe, abound in the following pages.

Now, before the reader is asked for his inference from all this, let him be further informed, that Swedenborg knew nothing of what is popularly called clairvoyance or animal magnetism. It was ten years after Swedenborg's death, and forty after he began those writings in which he embodied his accounts of unseen things, before the attention of the world was called to the general subject by Mesmer. Clairvoyance was observed for the first time subsequently to Mesmer's own period, and *spiritual* vision still later. Swedenborg had no light then, such as one might have in these times, for drafting his plan of the spiritual world. If not drawn from a real intromission into its wonders, it must of course have been the pure production of his own brain, excogitated under the impulses of fraud or of enthusiasm. Such is the view which the world, contenting itself with hearing and not reading, have in effect quietly adopted. It is of course a view highly disputable, on such grounds, as the great and sound and sober mind of its author, his solemn affirmations of his mission, and the consistency that reigns throughout the

vast extent of a scheme that embraces, heaven, earth, hell, nature, spirit, and the Word. But setting these aside, what is to be said of this view, when such a case as the present comes up? Are not its maintainers called upon to show *how* Swedenborg could have raved or invented, in such admirable harmony with subsequent and independent disclosures through the medium of clairvoyance? A traveller professes to have visited a distant land, but brings back such statements about its climate, productions and people, that he gains the character of retelling mere fables which he had put together without having quit his study. Some half century after his death, one who scarcely ever heard his name, makes a similar report of the same things. A check is instantly given to the opinions taken up concerning the first traveller; and he is re-instated in his good name, just in proportion, as it is certain that the second traveller did not copy from him. If this single point be ascertained, they then corroborate one another; and granting that neither was credible, *per se*, they are credible conjointly. Let Swedenborg have the benefit of this just mode of reasoning. Call his splendidly consistent fabric, in which the Bible, the truths of history, of science, and of human nature are woven into beautiful order, if you have so little perception of internal evidences, mere dream and vagary; call it so, while it stands *alone*—but when witnesses arise in after times, who know him not, or hold him as you do, and yet corroborate him—then pause, and ask yourself, whether God may not be vindicating, in the wonderful ways of his Providence, a servant whom He sent with heavenly wisdom in his lips, after an insane and blinded world for generations has called him mad.

But after all, this book is prepared and wished to operate, not as a positive, still less as a conclusive argument for Swedenborg's divine mission. That has other, higher, and more appropriate grounds, as the final basis of conviction. It is offered only as a *presumptive* argument, that he may possibly be true, and that the matter ought to be looked into. It is addressed to that desperate prejudice, having no better foundation than a saying passed round from mouth to mouth, or copied one from another into theological and biographical dictionaries, that Swedenborg was a dreamer. It merely wishes to suggest that this judgment was perhaps pronounced without trial had, or at least by judges