It is not the door of a house that is opened, but the  
mouth of a pit. As a good angel shuts it for a good  
purpose; so an evil angel opens it for an evil purpose.  
The good angel that shuts *descends* at his own will from  
heaven. The evil angel is *cast down* from it against his  
will.  
 To the prison below a liberator comes. Now to  
the interior of a prison none have access but the officers  
of a prison, or those employed by them. Here Satan  
enters not as a captive, but, standing without, by  
authority given, lets loose as many as he is permitted.  
He does not *break in* by force, but enters by authority  
bestowed. The exile from heaven *opens*, the dweller  
in heaven *shuts* the pit, both suitably. Satan is not *in*  
the pit, as many suppose. He descends *to* it.  
 But it is not simply “the key of the bottomless pit,”  
as our translators have it, but “the key *of the well* of  
the bottomless pit.” This gives us new information.  
It supposes a shaft, or well, or mine sunk through the  
crust of the earth, till we arrive at the entrance to the  
hollow interior of the globe, which is closed by gates.  
Of these the Scripture speaks more than once.  
 The Abyss, or bottomless pit, is a place of departed souls. “Who shall descend into the bottomless  
*pit?*1 (*That is, to bring up Christ again from the  
dead*”) (Rom. x. 7). It is a dungeon, and a place of  
punishment, as is manifested by the fear of the demons,  
lest they should be cast in thither. “And they besought  
Him that He would not command them to go away  
into *the bottomless pit*”2 (Luke viii. 28, 31). This  
afterwards appears from this very book; for into  
it Satan is cast, during the thousand years. xx. 3.  
 The dungeons of olden time were usually pits under  
ground. Gen. xl. 15; xli. 14; Jer. xxxviii. 6, 13.  
God’s prison is also situated beneath the earth.  
  
1 ’Άβυσσον. 2 Εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον ἀπελθεῖν.