

The New Philosophy.

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The Use of Swedenborg's Science and Philosophy.

WE give most of our space in this number to the proceedings of the meeting to organize "The Swedenborg Scientific Association." The organization of this body will be a great benefit to the organized New Church, if it succeeds in stimulating a love for and a knowledge of the science and philosophy contained in the scientific and philosophical works of Swedenborg. This organization also promises to perform a great use by making these works accessible to scientists and others, and by imparting to them a knowledge of their importance and value in solving many of the most important problems of the day.

Nature is the product of God in which are ultimate His nature and quality. The very forms, laws, and operations, the substances and organisms of nature, not only embody and show forth the laws of order in nature, but they also are correspondences of the wisdom and love of God Himself. Hence, we may see that a true knowledge of the facts embodied in nature is the foundation on which all higher wisdom rests. The understanding of the causes which enter into and govern these facts makes rational science and philosophy. This, again, is the foundation on which a true theology must rest. God, as the origin and sustainer of all things, bears an indissoluble and intimate relationship with each and everything of His creation, by which He continually preserves it in its order, form and use. Carefully observed facts, rationally and systematically arranged, by which causes are deduced, indeed make a foundation and basis for higher principles, and, in doing this kind of work, Swedenborg manifested a remarkable genius, never excelled, and rarely, if ever, equalled. Nevertheless, it is impossible to produce a complete and true philosophy based solely on facts and human reasoning thereon. The science of today manifests this in its attempts to solve many of the problems dealing with the origin of life, of force, and of nature. Swedenborg, in his scientific works, whilst acknowledging the Divine Being and Power in everything, by reasoning alone was unable to evolve some principles necessary to complete and perfect his philosophical system. Wonderful as was his genius in the perception of interior causes

in nature, by natural genius alone he could not ascend to the perception of the origin of life and of force itself. A new element in his philosophy was still needed, which, when supplied, modifies, qualifies and perfects all his previous productions; and this element is nothing less than the Divine Revelation of the Spiritual World and of the Divine Being Himself, together with their connection and relation to human souls and lives, and to nature itself. Without the knowledge thus obtained by revelation, he says that "no one can obtain for himself a just idea concerning the creation of the universe," "for, without them the human mind, from mere ignorance concerning them, may easily fall into the idea of the creation of the universe by nature, and say, only from the authority of the church, that nature was created by God; but, because it knows not how, if it inquires into it more interiorly, it falls headlong into naturalism, which denies God," T. C. R. 75.

The science of the present day is beset with this danger of falling into naturalism, because it investigates the origin of life, of force, and of the forms in nature merely from the side of nature. The old theology does not possess the knowledge necessary to elevate the mind to see interior spiritual and divine causes. In fact, there is no source whence this knowledge may be derived, except in the theological writings given to the world through Swedenborg. Whilst these writings are theological, they are philosophical and scientific, in that they give the interior view of the causes of all natural forces and phenomena.

It is well that the Swedenborg Scientific Association, whilst applying itself to the publication of Swedenborg's scientific works, also includes in its purpose the study of the theological works in their bearing on the discussion of questions of science and philosophy. The principles contained therein will be found to embrace the very soul and life of all questions that enter deeply in philosophical and scientific investigation, and this Association, by following the course it has mapped out, will develop principles which will eventually revolutionize the ideas of the world on these important subjects.