

THE PROBLEM OF CREATION.

THE most remarkable characteristic of the system of thought given us through Swedenborg is what I may call its stupendous simplicity. The greater principles of nature do not appear in recon-dite and unfamiliar forms. We seem to have known them long before, and, indeed, to have absorbed them with our first vital breath. In the least we have a type of the greatest, and all the secrets of creation lie locked in a grain of sand upon the ocean shore. The macrocosm or greater universe is thus imaged in each microcosm, each least portion. But of only one species of microcosm, man, is this comparison in any way perfect, for in man is represented everything which exists throughout the created universe. If this be indeed true we can in no way better understand the creation of a universe or macrocosm than by studying that of the microcosm, man. Each step in the evolution of a human organism must be scientifically the same as a corresponding step in the evolution of that world of which this individual is but a part.

To the future Swedenborgian anatomists, physi-cists, and theologians must be left that delightful work of correlating these two creations and of un-locking that of the larger by means of the small and special creations which ever recur around us. My purpose at present is only to draw attention to one or two of the more salient features in both, showing how, consciously or unconsciously, this idea was embodied in Swedenborg's entire series of writings.

Man has a dual nature, and a dual origin. I am not here speaking of the birth from above and from beneath, which are births upon different planes, but of births from two parents upon the same plane. The dual *nature*, of which I speak, is the birth into will and into understanding, into a cerebellal and a cerebral kingdom. If this great principle be true in the creation of microcosms, it must, according to Swedenborg, hold good in the creation of macrocosms. This is exactly what Swedenborg's *Principia* teaches, and, with this in view, I must express my amazement that old New Church students can read that work and yet be "utterly unable to understand it." The dual origin of our universe was "from the Divine Love through the Divine Wisdom." These words are from the True Christian Religion. The *Principia* simply states "from God," who is, of course, Divine Love and Divine Wisdom, but in the succeeding stages the latter work carries down that principle of dualism with a scientific thoroughness not employed, because not needed, in the former. On the one side of this ladder of creation are "actives," on the other "passives," two varieties of offspring

which, in strict agreement with the births of sons and daughters to a married pair, take their natures from one or the other parent, or, in this case, from the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom. And, like the children of this world, those "actives" and "finites," or "passives," repeat the process implanted upon them by their Divine Parent, carrying the family of substance onward one generation after another. Six of these generations or "degrees," as Swedenborg calls them, were produced, ending on the "active" side in terrestrial fire, on the "passive" side in water. From these were built the seventh and closing degree, the angular or mineral. And God "rested on the seventh day." Yet even here that unity of two to form new creations takes place, and in the subsequent vegetable and animal kingdoms the same process recurs to infinity. Thus the *Principia* explains the creation of a macrocosm in terms of the microcosm, and reveals the duality of nature.

Of course Swedenborg does not teach a duality of gods. On the contrary, Divine Love and Divine Wisdom are a perfect one, just as in true marriage, the partners form a perfect one; for in them their souls are one, not poetically or symbolically, but absolutely. So it is with the Creator. This unity in duality is, however, best understood by studying the cerebrum and cerebellum of an individual man or woman. There the instinctive life and the reasoning life inspired thence are perfectly distinct and perfectly united. We might say that sons and daughters are human offspring; will and understanding the cerebral and cerebellal life — Divine offspring.

Next to the duality comes the trinity. In God this third, called Divine Power or the Holy Spirit, results from that perfect union of Love and Wisdom just described; nor is it any more separable from them than are they from each other. This we know from Swedenborg's theological writings, and we also learn there (D. L. & W.) that the atmospheres correspond to this Third. But the teaching was not new with him. Just as the dual system of creation is carried out, scientifically and rationally, in his *Principia*, so is its trinitarianism. The atmospheres, he there teaches, are found by a union of actives and passives, and in that combination the actives, following their true correspondence to the Divine Love, occupy the interior of each atmospheric particle, while the passives, with equal conformity, constitute its surface or form. This explanation of atmospheric particles is the same in Swedenborg's *Principia*, in his *Chemistry*, in his *Miscellaneous Observations*. Thus constituted the atmospheres are discreted into the same

number of degrees as are the actives and passives which form them.

In the microcosm, atmospheres are not so readily recognized, yet they undoubtedly exist. From the surface of our bodies a vapor atmosphere constantly rises, which we call perspiration. This is like Swedenborg's aqueous atmosphere, or vapor of the greater world. Next, we each have an air of our own, appropriated especially through the lungs. We know, however, from the keen scent of animals, that our personal air extends much further, and, indeed, is the general air made over into a personal one. That a definitely organized ethereal sphere also exists about us we cannot doubt, though beyond the electrical phenomena exhibited it, such as the crackling when brushing the hair, little is known about it. But, beyond all, can we doubt the existence of still more subtle spheres? We speak of these when we call one "magnetic," or say that his "sphere" is agreeable or disagreeable, or when we talk of the "atmosphere" about him. Do not be deceived into thinking that such language is only metaphorical. As in many other cases, this metaphor simply states a scientific fact, which we cannot prove definitely by our senses, not because such atmospheres do not exist, but because our external senses are built from materials on planes too low or too gross to receive them—just as the ear takes up impressions from the air, and not from the ether. The recognition of microcosmic atmospheres should, I think, open the way to a scientific explanation of hypnotism and kindred phenomena.

These atmospheres also furnish the readiest introduction to a study of degrees or planes. From subtle to gross these are the celestial aura, the spiritual aura, and the spiritual natural aura in the world of spirit, the magnetic aura, the ether, air and aqueous vapor in the world of nature. Aqueous vapor is a sort of pseudo atmosphere, not altogether a true one. The degrees of actives and passives are, however, much more difficult to understand. Passives, Swedenborg shows, are formed by compression of particles from the several atmospheres, water being the lowest. In microcosms the essential character of water is indicated by the scientific definition of man as "a water engine run by solar energy." That is true, but it is only part of the truth. In the nerves, as receptacles delicate enough to contain them, Swedenborg shows the existence of subtler or "spirituous"

fluids rising in successive degrees above comparatively gross water. These constitute and form the organic substance of the planes of sense, memory, natural reason, rationality, spirituality, and the higher spiritual or "celestial." So, here again we have abstract terms which prove to be the names of real substances. How these same planes exist in the macrocosm cannot be explained here, but there is nothing in the three kingdoms of nature that is without them.

Actives are discreted in the same way as passives, but their varieties are more difficult to explain, because the world proper to actives is so very different from our own. Whereas, planets are the realms proper to passives, suns are the homes of actives. Actives, then, manifest themselves as fire and heat, and, since they resemble their active parent, the Divine Love, for this reason, and no other, Swedenborg, in his later writings, speaks of fire as "corresponding to" Divine Love. In accordance with this character, motion is especially predicable of actives.

Trinities of actives and passives, uniting into force or power, are found everywhere throughout nature. Just as man and woman unite into a third, which has the power to produce new generations of beings, so do corresponding substances act throughout nature, in her mineral, vegetable, animal, and atmospheric kingdoms. To make this more forcible, I will append a few of these trinities, with the great originating Trinity above them:

DIVINE LOVE.	DIVINE POWER.	DIVINE WISDOM.
Active	Atmosphere or Element	Passive
Sun	Solar system	Planetary bodies
Fire	Steam	Water
Centrifugal	Equilibrium	Centripetal
Man (vir)	Man (homo)	Woman
Will	Operation	Understanding
Cerebellum	Brain	Cerebrum
Motory nerves	Nervous system	Sensory nerves
Arteries	Circulatory system	Veins
Red corpuscles	Blood	White corpuscles
Alkali	Salt	Acid

The deeper we study, the more we see this, duality and trinity in unity, effigied throughout the entire universe, repeated again and again in every conceivable way, and in every conceivable form. If we then wish to know of creation, let us not resort to a blind reason, but study every image of that creation about us, watching it repeated and again repeated, yearly, in every species of the vegetable kingdom, and in varying cycles among animals and men.

JOHN SWANTON.

NOTES.

The *New Church Messenger*, of March 9th, refers to the successful surgical operation of removing

the stomach, recently performed in Switzerland, by Dr. Carl Schlatter, of the University of Zurich.