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## VARIETY

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If one reads Swedenborg's philosophical works in their chronological sequence, he will notice a remarkable unity in them which is defined by the author's intenions. This unity begins in Chapter One of the *Principia* and ends in the final paragraph of the *Rational Psychology*. I shall call this unity the path of the *Economy* series.

Of what does the *Economy* series consist? It includes the *Principia, The Infinite, The Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body, The Economy of the Animal Kingdom,* and finally *Rational Psychology*. As we trace the development of Swedenborg's thought through this enormous quantity of writing, we follow a path consisting of two ways. One is the way down; the other is the way up.

The way down is shown in the *Principia* through its description of the creation of the world, beginning with a finition of what is Infinite and then progressing downward by stages or steps of a ladder or degrees to the most ultimate things in nature—the water particle and the solar system.

The way up is described in the three volumes of *The Economy of the Animal Kingdom,* the main sections of which introduce us to rational psychology, to descriptions of blood vessels and their fluids, to a discussion of the human soul, and finally to a discussion of forms in the volume known as *The Fibre*. The purpose of the way up, as expressed by Swedenborg, is what is called "the search for the soul."

But what is the place of the other two works in this series, *The Infinite* and *The Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body*? They stand at a turning point in Swedenborg's

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studies. How Swedenborg turns from the downward path leading from the Infinite to the most ultimate things of nature, to climb the ladder of psychology (as he calls it) in the search for the soul, is interesting enough to spend some time investigating. Because of the occasion today, it will be appropriate to begin by bringing out something of Swedenborg's personality. In the process we will also discover the main topic of these remarks.

### SWEDENBORG'S SPIRIT IN HIS STUDIES

In the two small works, *The Infinite* and *The Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body*, we may feel something of the spirit with which Swedenborg pursued his studies, and we may also sense the turning from the way down in explaining creation toward the way up in the search for the soul.

The spirit in which he pursued his research is reflected in his reactions to the ideas of the philosophers. Instead of being in the least discouraged by their failures, he offers a brief criticism in each case and then proceeds affirmatively to plot a new path for himself. His reactions are various. In one case his judgment is that the philosopher has made an "incompetent statement." (*The Infinite* p. 61)[1]

One school of thought, which had allowed reason to pattern the nature of God after a geometrical model, he criticizes severely, saying,

> "All enquirers then of all descriptions who have suffered their reason to seduce them, have tried to search out God by comparisons derived from the finite sphere, and so have fallen into error, and formed one idol or another to represent their Deity; and have all in this way become idolators." (*Ibid.* p. 62)

Of another group of philosophers he speaks more leniently, saying, ". . . these philosophers also are deceived, though not so grossly as the others. . . ." (*Ibid.* p. 63)

In the case of a third group he follows his criticism with a suggestion for improving their theory. He says that after this improvement "they would not have been far from the truth." (*Ibid.* p. 61)

His affirmative spirit, mentioned above, is evident in the preface to *The Infinite*, where, commenting on how reason had failed the

[1] The edition of the *Infinite* used here was published by the Swedenborg Society, London, in 1915.

philosophers, he says, "The very mysteries that are above reason, cannot be contrary to reason, although reason is unable to explain their grounds, but of these subjects we shall speak in the following work." (*Ibid.* p. 6)

In judging his attitude, one must realize that at this time the Writings had not yet been written. The opinions of the learned, the failure of reason, and other things as well, did not deter this insistent man, however.

Assuming personal responsibility for pursuing his ends, and setting aside still another possible obstructor of his task, he writes in *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body*:

"But probably there are some readers who will not allow this, but will persevere in their own unbelieving imaginations, and require to perceive the soul as they perceive the objects of sight and hearing, and to comprehend truth by sense, and will not be even then satisfied unless they can thrust their hands into the prints of the nails. My end, therefore, at present is specially to demonstrate, to the best of my ability, the nature and properties of the soul, and then to show from these endowments that it can never die without all nature being annihilated: and such being my end, I do not see how anyone, unless indeed some singularly obtuse priestling, can disapprove of the undertaking." (*The Infinite* p. 132)

Here Swedenborg writes as a man only, not yet as "the servant of the Lord." Had he not been optimistic, had he not persevered, had he not chosen to view mysteries above reason as not contrary to reason, had he sided with the skeptics, had he been persuaded by those stubborn people who dissapproved of his undertaking, he would not have pursued his search. He would not have written the philosophical works that followed. Thus the preparation for his mission as revelator would have been cut short. This preparation itself is important, whatever individuals might think of his success or lack of sucess in his search for the soul.

Let us now pass from the manifest determination and lack of skepticism in Swedenborg to the turning point from the way down to the way up. It was noted above that there are two main paths in Swedenborg's philosophical studies. There is the downward path of creation in the *Principia*, and the upward path in the search for the soul in *The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*. How is the turning from one path to the other apparent in Swedenborg's works?

The answer appears in *The Mechanism of the Intercourse between*

*the Soul and the Body*. From its very title it is evident that in this work Swedenborg is still influenced by the geometry and mechanics of the *Principia*. But about halfway through there is an interesting paragraph. At the beginning, he speaks of "compression" and "dilatation" and of "rest" and "motion," which are terms from mechanics. But then the words "passion" and "action" slip in, of which he says ". . . in fact constitutes them so to speak the life of the universe. . . ." Inf. p. 146) (you will find many places where he contrasts action as being in man with motion as being in nature.)

And now instead of a descent, he says,

". . . and in ascending the scale of finer and finer entities, stopping in the finest of all as the center; that in this upward course, it becomes more and more sensible, more and more distinct, as we said of the corresponding motion in the elements; that it becomes more and more nicely fitted to receive all kinds of varieties. . . ." (*Ibid.* pp. 146-7)

Here we find explicit reference to "varieties," which will be the leading term in these remarks—but to continue with the turning point from the way down in describing the creation of nature, to the way up or the search for the human soul: ". . . human life seems to follow the pattern of the elements, and to take similitude therefrom." (*Ibid.* p. 147)

Notice that in the way down in the *Principia* although the elements are created, human life is not. And yet he says, probably referring to the *Principia*, in closing the paragraph, "On this ground it is, that the theory of the elements requires to be delivered before we can labour with the least effect toward a knowledge of the operations in human life." (*Ibid.*)

In the paragraph referred to in *The Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body*, Swedenborg turns from "life of the universe" as he calls it, to "human life." He does not, however, set aside the results of the *Principia*. Often, in his anatomical descriptions, there are direct references to the elements and atmospheres of the *Principia*. But from now on he is to describe the ladder by ascent rather than descent. The end he assigns himself now is the search for the soul.

To describe the way down and the way up in some detail would require too much time for these remarks. Yet it struck me that in this important paragraph in which the turning is noted, there was a significant and interesting aspect to which we might

confine our attention this evening. As noted earlier, this is the introduction of the term "varieties."

In the ascending scale of finer and finer entities, Swedenborg says, the elements that have already been described in the *Principia* "become more and more nicely fitted to receive all kinds of varieties."

Let us review the way down and the way up, and to some extent what Swedenborg wrote later after the *Economy* series (both in the philosophical works and in the Writings) and select some statements on varieties. The process of selection must omit much. A casual glance through the Potts *Concordance* shows that this is also too big a subject for a single talk even if we leave out many things such as the doctrine of series and degrees, the doctrine of correspondence, and the doctrine of influx.

I thought it would be useful to outline varieties as they occur in two places on the ladder of creation, first on the way down and second on the way up—especially since it appears that others in treating of this subject often spoke of its occurrence in one of these places to the exclusion of the other.

The first of these two places is in the *Principia* and has to do with the variety in nature. The second deals with variety above nature—the variety in the soul of man. Some remarks will be included concerning the other series in Swedenborg's philosophical period, namely, the *Animal Kingdom* series.

In the *Principia* we find the remarkable statement that "Variety is the perfection of the world." (*Principia*, vol. II, p. 242)[2] Great variety appears manifest in ultimates. As the chain of finites and of atmospheres becomes longer in proceeding downward from the Infinite, the possibility of variety becomes greater. Take colors and other manifestations of light, for example. No such variety would exist if creation had stopped short of the ether and the ether did not exist.

Swedenborg is inspired in his language by the variety in the mineral kingdom, in the vegetable kingdom, and in the animal kingdom. He says,

". . . we never find in the course of our passage any one thing absolutely similar to another; we are always meeting with something new, something different; and every new and different substance is only an indication of some different change." (*Ibid.* p. 243).

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[2] Rev. Augustus Clissold's translation, W. Newbery, London, 1846.

Variety results from change. The whole of the *Principia* is a dynamic cosmology. The conatus in the first natural point becomes manifest motion as nature appears. He says,

". . . the perfection of the world consists in its varieties; and inasmuch as variety cannot exist except by means of changes, it follows, that the world is brought progressively to its perfection by means of various changes, contingents, modifications, series of things, and their several connections." (*Ibid.* pp. 243–244)

The variety of which Swedenborg here writes is a variety that occurs in the nature of each new step or degree in the ladder of creation. He explains the origin of this kind of variety:

"Suppose the world went through a thousand changes before arriving at its perfection; (that it actually passed through many a thousand will be demonstrated in the sequel;) now if, in one among these thousand changes, there existed even but a single variety, it would from this time progress to a kind of perfection different from what it otherwise would; for this variety would give rise to another series of things, different from the one otherwise existing." (*Ibid* p. 245)

So he looks to the immensity of the heavens and to the many places there where such a variety of series may begin. If there be ether or air, perhaps their tremulations would differ. There would be different animals, and even

"Machines of every kind might there, perhaps, be constructed by different rules and by a different application of mechanical powers. The magniloquent Archimedes, who talked of moving by his mechanism the world out of its place, were he translated to another system and earth, might perhaps somewhat lower his tone, when he found in those worlds all his skill and ingenuity disappear, and himself at loss how to apply the common powers of mechanism; for, if he there wished to make any experiments, he would have first to learn the very first principles and rudiments of mechanism; which could be deduced only from the phenomena peculiar to that earth." (*Ibid.* p. 246)

Is Swedenborg's mind wandering? Yes it is. It is wandering over the magnificent field of possible varieties in creation. How much more would he be impressed with these possibilities, how much more would he impress us with these possibilities, if he were writing today? Space-time curvature of relativity, is it the same throughout the universe? And what do we know of the phenomena that are basic to mechanics on this our earth? Are these mechanical principles always the same, according to the same formulas? How does it happen that to get man to the moon the

projectile that must escape from the earth must follow trajectories that obey laws of Newtonian mechanics? How does it happen that we can explain how cosmic ray particles improve their half-lives so remarkably as they penetrate the earth's atmosphere from space only if they obey dynamical laws following Einstein's relativity? And how does it happen that people assume today without a blush that there may be, somewhere in the universe, worlds built of antiparticles instead of the particles of physics known on our earth?

## VARIETY IN *The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*

At the outset when we spoke of the two ladders or series of creation and of psychology, we said that at the bottom of the one there is the water particle, at the top of the other the soul. These are grand schemes in a good meaning of that word. They are too grand for the mind to be able to understand all that they include. In each case the ladder reaches beyond what the mind itself can understand. But let us try nevertheless to follow Swedenborg.

Why does Swedenborg call the first aura in the *Principia* theory the universal aura? He later made a clear distinction between the use of "universal" and "general." I cannot go into this here. I must stay with the word "universal" only. Does he call the universal aura by that name because it is everywhere? Perhaps. But as his philosophy develops there appears a deeper meaning of the term. It comes to mean that which is within, that which is interior, that which is a component of a substance on a certain plane and yet is itself a substance on a higher or more interior plane. "Universal" takes on a substantial or a cosmological rather than a linguistic meaning. Within each substance in each degree of a series, there is a higher substance that is the substance of the degree highest in the series. That substance is the universal principle of the series.

At the top of the psychological ladder is the soul. It is in the soul that Swedenborg places the universal aura—and yet not most significantly. What he places there is what he calls the "richest progeny of the said aura." This he calls the spirituous fluid.

He describes in great detail how the spirituous fluid in its fibre is a receptacle which in turn is related to what is above it. And this appears as a light, a light that is above the soul. He explains

how this light represents the light of wisdom as well as of life from the Lord. The influx of this light is received according to the state of the soul. As early as in the *Economy* Swedenborg speaks of changes of state. These changes are given substantial foundations, or as he calls them, mutations in the soul. What causes these mutations? There is influx into the soul from above. There is influx into the soul from below. The former causes what he calls *accidental mutations*. The latter causes what he calls *superior essential mutations*.

Life comes from above. Life comes from God. Yet in every stage of Swedenborg's philosophy there is a distinction between what is man and what is God. The influx which is life has two effects in the soul. One of these preserves inviolate the character of the soul, so that it can not be destroyed from below. The other contributes to the character of the soul, so that each soul has an individuality or a distinctness of its own. These characterizations of the soul caused by influx from above, operate to create a special mutation among an infinite number of possibilities. This special character in the soul is called an *accidental mutation*, Swedenborg using an Aristotelian term.

In the ascent on the psychological ladder there are also effects upon the soul from below. Some originate as far below as the senses whose effects upon the lower degree of man, the animus, are then in turn regarded by the mind. In man there is a degree between the animus and the soul. After due process, described in detail, the mind concludes, and this concluding Swedenborg here calls willing. And it is that will that follows thought and judgment, going into act, that affects even the soul. This will that goes into act (sometimes called an administrative will by Swedenborg) is on a different plane from what is sometimes called will, which is better named desire, or lust, or passion. As a result of act following will there occurs in the soul what Swedenborg calls a *superior essential mutation*.

Of all the manifold, yes, as he says, infinite variety of possible mutations in the soul there are those caused by influx from above and by influx or communication from below. It is a wonderful part of a larger description of what in man is substantial in nature. Later this forms a basis for many things in the Writings. When we feel the wonder of it we might suppose that even in his philo-

sophical period Swedenborg had a guidance that directed him in his preparation to an extent he himself did not realize.

But what about man's soul receiving influx from above—causing mutations in the soul, and about that from below also causing mutations in the soul? Some have felt uneasy about the mechanical nature of much that is described in the philosophical works.

Swedenborg's materialism is a materialism of the material world. But along with this materialism there is also a spiritualism. This is a spiritualism of the spiritual world. And in Swedenborg's philosophy and the Writings there is a relation between that materialism and spiritualism. In the period of the *Animal Kingdom* to which I will refer briefly later, Swedenborg suggested that the natural world is a representative of the spiritual world.

Swedenborg, in describing the natural world, described its material nature in terms of geometry and mechanics. But he did not suggest that this is the whole explanation.

In the first chapter of his *Principia,* preparatory to explaining the geometry and mechanics of the finites and atmospheres, Swedenborg says,

"As nature is the first beginning of the changes that occur in the world or mundane system, or as nature is the motive or active force, or collection of forces, by which those changes are occasioned, it follows that the world is dependent on nature and inseparable from it; and that the world is nothing without nature and nature is nothing without the world." (*Principia*, p. 36).

This appearance occurs after creation has taken place, and it is allowable to see in nature the causes of things. And yet as he points out, when viewed from the overall relation in the ladder of creation,

". . . they, therefore, are mere children, and have reached scarcely the first threshold of true philosophy, who ascribe to nature the origin of all things to the exclusion of the Infinite; or who confound the Infinite and nature together; when yet the latter is only an effect, a *causate* or thing caused, the Infinite being its efficient and cause." (*Ibid.*)

"Nature is only a word which expresses all the motive forces proceeding from the first motion of the Infinite till the world is completed." (*Ibid*).

Note that the above quotation occurs at the beginning of Swedenborg's first major philosophical work, the *Principia*, where, it must be emphasized, the processes described are according to

geometry and mechanics. Thus already in this early place in his philosophy, where the discussion of the means to true philosophy emphasizes the place of science, geometry, and reason, he nevertheless carefully states "There are . . . many things which occur in the world that cannot be geometrical. . . ." Love and the soul are given as examples.

How does Swedenborg introduce the existence of what he calls infinite variety? It exists, he says, in the universal aura. But a mutation induced only in an aura will soon disappear, and the aura will return to its natural state. The spirituous fluid (as noted above, the richest progeny of that aura) covered with a tunic, makes a receptacle.

How does it happen to have an *infinite* variety of possible mutations? Repeating some of the arguments in the *Principia*, Swedenborg refers to enormous ratios between the possible number of mutations in one aura and those in the one above it. He suggests certain huge numbers to take the place of the words "myriads and myriads."

He refers to the number of mutations in air, that is of sound, and the possible number of mutations in ether, that is of light, and he compares the ratio of these numbers, which is very large.

By repeating this again when going from the ether to the magnetic aura, and again from that aura to the universal aura, it appears how inadequate the imagination is in trying to picture the resulting number of possible mutations in the universal aura.

Parenthetically it should be noted that there appears at the same time an argument against the materialism some have charged him with. In the description using ratios, the ordinary properties of matter are left behind as one ascends. He mentions the gravitational effect, as one example.

In our day these arguments become stronger than they were in his day. Many light phenomena not known in his day are known now. Further, in ascending the scale of physical particles we might check on the effect of gravity as compared to other forces. I shall return to this later. Of course we cannot establish a one-to-one correspondence between the *Principia* and physics. But nevertheless we can refer to an illustration in physics.

Material masses affect each other by the forces of gravitation. Electrical charges also affect each other by forces peculiar to electricity. When we calculate the gravitational force between

the earth and the sun and also the possible electric forces between these two bodies, we find the electric force as nothing compared with the gravitational force. On the other hand similar calculations applied to forces within the atom show that the gravitational forces are very, very much less than the electric forces. Already in the atom we begin to lose track of materiality as represented in gravitation because the effect of gravity in the atom is as nothing as compared with the effect of electric forces.

And so, as we climb the psychological ladder from below in nature, variety increases in each degree as we approach the soul. How can this variety be illustrated, and how related to man's reception? Variety exists already at the bottom of the ladder. Is this materialism? It is in nature, true! And yet as we learned from the *Principia* it is there as a result of the successive stages of creation from the Infinite. And knowing this we can, as Swedenborg says, see causes in nature. Man begins to see his place on the ladder of creation. He becomes conscious of effects below himself which reflection indicates are from causes above him in the Infinite.

Thus, for example, from what we know of light today, take only color to illustrate variety. Note all the different ways color arises from light according to physical arrangements or forms of material substance. There is refraction, giving the colors in the rainbow, or the prism. Also there is diffraction, polarization, reflection, absorption, to mention only some aspects of light as it is in the visible part of the spectrum. Notice that the very expression "visible part" implies a region beyond reception, beyond color itself.

How does Swedenborg go on from here about variety in the lower end of the ladder, climbing somewhat by analogy? I say, somewhat; he has not yet come upon the doctrine of correspondence, although significantly in one place in the *Economy* he refers to a "somewhat correspondent." (Incidentally, Inge Jonsson has written a large volume on the development of the doctrine of Swedenborg's correspondences from the point of view of an outside scholar. An English translation of his *Summary* is republished in the NEW PHILOSOPHY, No. 2, April, 1970, pp. 299–327.

We read in the *Economy*: ". . . in order that sound with its variety may be received according to the form and state of the ear, the very variety that flows in must be formed from without, and

not in the ear itself." (2 Econ. 264) Notice the word "without." Here it refers to something in nature, to the air in which sound travels.

But let us go on with the question: "In order that light with its variety may be received according to the form and state of the eye, the very variety that flows in must be formed without, and not in the eye itself." (*Ibid.*) Notice the word "without" again. Here it refers still to something in nature, but to a higher degree in nature, the ether in which light travels. For the moment leave this quotation and take note of a significant experiment with respect to light that each of us can try for himself and that may illustrate the existence of discrete degrees.

Swedenborg takes an observation from St. Augustine. St. Augustine says, "When anything is seen with the *eyes*, straightway an image of it is formed in the spirit, but the formation of this image is not discovered unless the eyes are taken off from the object. . . ." (2 Econ. 282)

Here is an experiment anyone can perform. So thought Augustine. So thought Swedenborg. And in that tradition, so think I.

Look at something, then close your eyes. Can you see an image? There is an image distinct from the image seen by the eye. There is an image on a higher plane than that on which the object seen with the eyes existed. There is an image, that is a modification unique among all the great variety of possible modifications in the mind, not in the eye or its parts. Further it can remain in the mind so as to be recalled. And that modification had its origin from without by means of the eye.

Now let us go back from this tangent to the quotation. Notice how the word "without" means two different things so far. The first is illustrated in the case of sound where "without" means in the air; in the case of light "without" means in the ether. For the second meaning read the quotation again, "In order that life with all its variety may be received according to the form and the state of the organ, the very variety must be formed without; that is, above and not in the organic substance itself." (2 Econ. 264)

What does "without" mean in this case? "Without" means from above. The cause of variety in creation is from above. And man as to his soul, his mind, his animus, his sensations is at an intermediate place on that ladder of creation, between the

Infinite and the ultimate things of nature. And so although all variety is from the Lord, man, because he is somewhere intermediate between the Infinite and the most ultimate things in creation, receives from without both from the infinite variety below and from the infinite variety above. The appearance of variety in creation in this case is by means of the eye.

In these remarks I remain within the context of the *Economy*. But as we read further descriptions of man and his relation to the ladder of creation, new aspects of man appear. The idea here expressed about influx and its relation to variety remains the same, however.

Let us refer to two examples of this. In the *Rational Psychology* Swedenborg analyzes man somewhat differently. One degree in man is called the Pure Intellect. Also the human intellect is analyzed into a number of faculties. Although the names of the steps of the ladder of psychology change, the principles illustrated by the ladder in the *Economy* are still the same.

We refer to the Writings for the second example. Man, as he is treated of in *general*, is regarded there as spiritual. And what is spiritual man? Spiritual man is man in freedom. Why in freedom? Because as to his spirit he is somewhere on the spiritual ladder with heaven above and hell below.

When man is a spirit he no longer receives from that which is in nature. The ordinary philosophical concepts of will, and free choice as defined in the *Economy* result from a variety of possible mutations in the soul responding to earthly existence. I state this simply as a fact from the *Economy* although if we had the time we might see how variety in the soul provides the basis for free choice.

But back to the spiritual man in freedom. Spiritually his freedom depends on good and truth from heaven and evil and falsity from below.

And so in the Writings the general principle that "influx is according to reception" takes on a meaning that depends upon two varieties: the available variety that is in the influx itself, and the uniqueness, the individuality, the personality of the soul that has been formed or chosen to be formed, from all the variety of possible forms that souls may take. Thus there is a two-fold variety.

But in these remarks I limit myself to the *Economy*, so we return to it—to man's choice as treated there.

You will recall earlier that the seat of that choice was in the soul in the infinite variety of possible mutations there. Many pages follow the numbers quoted above devoted to developing the meaning of free choice.

And near the end of volume II we read,

"We have sufficiently proved already, that this free power is the marriage portion of the human understanding, and that by its means the understanding can turn to any side, or in any direction, where it either sees that happiness is to be gained, or suspects that it can be heightened. Indeed, when we first escape from slavery to liberty, we clearly feel that liberty is the essence of human delight, and at once hail it as a golden gift. By mere liberty we are distinguished from the brutes, as by our use of liberty we are distinguished from our fellow-mortals." (2 Econ. 344)

And somewhat later it says,

"From whence the diversity of minds, except from the free power of thought? Whence the diversity of morals, except from the free execution of will? And whence the diversity of countenances, except from the bodying forth and the imprint of affections of the animus—the imprint derived from the state of the mind. Showing that the variety of subjects in all human society proceeds from the same source." (*Ibid.* p. 335)

And then later,

"Having once begun this chain of inference, we may pursue it to this further link, that without moral distinction and consequently without free choice, there could be no real distinction between souls; in short, the soul of each man could not lead its own life, or enjoy its own happiness: for on the ground of permanent general integrity, absolute similarity or equality would follow, not only in this life, but in the life to come." (*Ibid.*)

There are those today who seek to reduce man and his activities to relatively few classifications, sometimes as a mere matter of lazy convenience, sometimes from what they seem to feel is a practical need brought on by variety itself. We see it in building designs, in community structures, and in institutional planning. We see it in art and science. We see the loss of the individual as a person, although he remains as a statistic—he has a height, a weight, a color,—perhaps some other things like a college degree or some other status symbol; also he has a draft number, a social security number, an auto licence number, a house number. Yet he lacks a personal recognition for his use. To avoid an identity crisis he

will have to recognize himself for what he is through his own effort.

It is a favorite pastime of some scholars to reduce the great philosophers to a status contemporary with themselves, for example, the great Greek, Plato. Instead of being regarded in a reference system composed of Greek thought, his *Republic* is sometimes understood today in terms of communism. Perhaps if Swedenborg were well enough known, some scholar would see in the variety of souls the doctrine of anarchy.

But tonight I have set aside Swedenborg the engineer, the scientist, the patriotic worker in the service of the King of Sweden, as well as most of his philosophical doctrines and many other things—I have also failed to develop with regard to his treatment of varieties the idea that the chosen mutations in the several degrees that make a given man to be the man he is, are held together by what Swedenborg calls coordination and subordination. Within each of the degrees, of man, for example, what finally makes man is not just a random sampling from all variety—but what is harmonious. Also in the Writings it is not just series and degrees, degrees of width and of height—but in particular the degrees of height in one man which are so related as to be called homogeneous degrees of height. (DLW 189 et seq.)

And so, just as with the other things that are set aside in these remarks so that variety itself might stand out in its importance, there remains also the question, What is it that brings these varieties together to form a unity, a one, yes, a *perfection because of varieties* in coordination, subordination, in harmony and homogeneity? To try to answer this question would greatly extend the length of these remarks.

## Variety in Swedenborg

There is one variety in Swedenborg's works that impressed me which I must tell you about in order to round out somewhat this review of Swedenborg's philosophical works, several of which are not included in the *Economy* series. It has to do with the period following the completion of the *Economy* series. In the Prologue to the *Animal Kingdom* he is reflecting on that series. He says of the *Economy*, "a work divided into distinct treatises,"

". . . but treating only of the blood, the arteries, and the heart, and of the motion of the brain, and the cortical substance thereof; and before traversing the whole field in detail, I made a rapid passage to the soul. . . . But on considering the matter more deeply, I found I had directed my course thither both too hastily and too fast—after having explored the blood only and its peculiar organs: . . . But as the soul acts in the supreme and innermost things, and does not come forth until all her swathings have been successively unfolded, I am, therefore, determined to allow myself no respite until I have run through the whole field to the very goal—until I have traversed the universal animal kingdom, to the soul." (AK 19) "But I know it will be whispered in my ear by many of the most accomplished philosophers of the day that it is vain and useless to enter the recesses and interiors of the human body. . . ." (AK 20)

Here is another turning! Do you recall earlier after the enormous work on the *Principia,* how during his writing of *The Mechanism of the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body,* he turned upward from a descent to an ascent reaching toward the soul in the *Economy*? You will recall he refused to be detained by what he called "some . . . obtuse priestling." And now on his new beginning he will not be detained by "the most accomplished philosophers of the day."

He will not be deterred by any *man.* Never skeptical, never discouraged even after all those volumes in the *Economy* series, he is beginning again with the *Animal Kingdom.* He will describe a variety in the human body that is truly without limit, to renew again his search for the soul. This new determination produced three large works of the new series called the *Animal Kingdom.* But Swedenborg did not finish this series. In worldly terms he was going to have a new job. But in a larger sense he was called to a new use.

Bishop Elmo Acton, in a class he is giving to theological students, assigned the *Prologue* to the *Animal Kingdom* for reading this past week. I asked one of the theological students in Bishop Acton's class what Swedenborg might have done had he not received the call as Servant. The answer was "he would still be writing on anatomy." There seems to be justification for this answer from the Writings for there is a number where we read, "Varieties in matters of doctrine and of worship are like the varieties of the senses and of the viscera in man,—which contribute to the perfection of the whole." (AC 1285)