

THE SCIENTIFIC WORKS OF SWEDENBORG AND
THE WRITINGS.*

ALL Newchurchmen know that the works of Swedenborg usually classed as philosophic or scientific, cannot be placed in the same category with the Writings. The former treat of Nature and its laws, the latter of the spiritual world and the spiritual truths of the Word of God. The former are addressed to men of science and all interested in a deep study of natural laws; the latter speak to all men, especially to those who are to be formed into a New Church. The former are addressed to the natural understanding and the natural reason,—to a reason that is affirmative to spiritual light; the latter are addressed to the understanding of spiritual things and also to faith. The former the author presents as his own, and begs the reader to point out the error if he finds it, and modestly and humbly submits his views to the consideration of the learned world; the latter speak with authority given with the most solemn assertion that there is in them nothing of the writer's own, nothing except that which is from God out of heaven. The former make no claim to the title of revelation; the latter exhibit the claim of an immediate revelation from God. The former are the views of a highly enlightened philosopher, being unconsciously prepared to be the instrument of the Lord's coming; the latter stand forth as that very Coming itself to establish the New Church.

Since there are these striking distinctions between the two sets of works, both from the pen of the same man,—since the one is an immediate revelation from God¹ and the other is not,—and yet we are taught that the other is a system of natural truth²—and as such must be of great value to the New Church,—it would

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¹ *Heaven and Hell*, n. 1. ² *Influx*, n. 20.

seem therefore to be a matter of great importance to obtain a clear idea of the distinction between the first set of works and the second, and of the relation of the one to the other.

That the relation of natural truth to spiritual truth is one of subordination and service is plain; but let us endeavor to see, if we can, what this relation of subordination is, for if we minify or magnify that which in its nature is subordinate, in either case injury is done to that which is higher or supreme. To magnify natural truth beyond its place and sphere of use would be to injure the Revelation which it is intended to serve and illustrate; and to minify or undervalue it would tend to take away the foundations upon which spiritual truth rests with man. Such a foundation for spiritual things is the natural truth contained in the philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg.

In a broad sense all truth in the world among men is natural truth. This truth is the Word in its natural sense; for all truth, even natural truth, is in the Word and from the Word, even though men know it not. The Christian Church was introduced into this natural truth of the Word, and Swedenborg as a philosopher was led into the very center of it. He saw clearly where others saw dimly, because he more than others saw the God of the Word, the source and origin of all truth. With him we see the hand of Providence guiding and leading, saving and protecting him from the falsifications and perversions which marred the work of other men, lifting him above the materialism which saturated the work of the philosophers of the Christian world, giving his philosophy a value to the New Church surpassing that of any other man who ever wrote or wrought in the field of nature or of human life. What, then, is the place of this great philosophical system of Swedenborg?

First let it be observed that there are in general two kinds of revelation, two kinds of influx, two kinds of inspiration; one that is immediate from God, the other that is mediate through angels, spirits and men. God speaks immediately from Himself, and also mediately or through successive human instrumentalities. The former is what is usually termed Revelation, and is the infallible speech of God; the latter is also revelation, but is fallible because through fallible human instruments; for nothing is self-derived;

even falsity is not from man but through man from hell, as truth is not from man but through man from heaven.³

The Theology of the New Church is indeed given through the medium of a man, but not through the mediation of angels and spirits to this man; it came immediately from God to him and through him to the world.⁴ No angel wished nor spirit dared to speak to him and by him in the Revelation which was given. But this is not the case with the writings of men, nor with the writing of Swedenborg previous to the period of his spiritual illumination. All men who have written and taught, whether in the realm of spiritual or in that of natural truth, including Swedenborg, have done so from mediate inspiration, and what they have taught, so far as it is true, may be called mediate revelation, given through the mediation of angels and spirits, with whom the man is associated while writing, and by whom he is inspired. Such is the character of the teaching of the priesthood. No priest speaks by immediate inspiration from God, but he does speak by a kind of mediate inspiration; and what he speaks is according to the quality or kind of consociation in which he is as to his spirit in the other world; and what he utters by mouth or by pen is to be valued according to its truth, or according to its agreement with the standards of truth fixed and established by immediate Revelation. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them" (*Isaiah* viii., 20).

³ That revelation is also mediate may be seen from the following numbers: *Arcana Cælestia*, 5121, 8694, 8780, 10355, 10384. Compare also 9103, 9905.

That mediate influx is influx by angels and spirits see *Heaven and Hell*, n. 297, 600; *Arcana*, 6063, 6307, 9682, 9683; *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 249.

That this is what is meant by the illustration of the Holy Spirit, see *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 150; *Arcana*, n. 9818.

That there is mediate inspiration, or inspiration by good spirits and angels, see *Arcana*, 50, 904; *Heaven and Hell*, n. 391. That men are also inspired by evil spirits, see *Arcana*, n. 2338, 10309.

That the Lord inspires every man, see *Arcana*, n. 5952, 8354, 10182; *True Christian Religion*, n. 457, 539; *Apocalypse Explained*, n. 825; *Heaven and Hell*, n. 517.

⁴ *Divine Providence*, n. 135; *True Christian Religion*, 779; *Apoc. Explained*, 1183; *Heaven and Hell*, 1.

What then is the differentiation, if differentiation there be, between the previous or early work of Swedenborg and that of other men? The differentiation is to be found in the general fact of his preparation by the Lord from his youth for the office of Revelator, and by virtue of this fact, in his more intimate consociation with the angels of heaven than other men whereby he could be made the medium of a system of natural truth such as was not possible with men who were not in the line of such preparation, and who could therefore have no such interior angelic consociation. For every man is what he is by virtue of his spiritual consociation, and is prepared by the Lord for his use, by the angels or spirits who are with him, and the greater the use to be performed the more intimate and complete will be the consociation, in the work itself and in the preparation for the work. This consideration alone, while it does not divest the philosophy of Swedenborg of its mediate character, is still sufficient to differentiate it from the work of other men; and the Newchurchman, with such a thought in his mind, will expect to find in Swedenborg's philosophy a system of natural truth superior to that which has come from the pen of any other man.

This is not a matter of theory but of experience, and I invite any Newchurchman who has not done so, to enter with an open mind into an examination of this great system; and I predict that he will find what is here said, to be fully substantiated; and he will be amazed,—perhaps at the commanding genius of the man, or perhaps at the wonderful Providence that was guiding and leading him.

Preparation is introduction into societies in the spiritual world, in order that man may become inspired for the use which he is to perform; and the greater the use the more intimate is the introduction and the consociation resulting therefrom. That Swedenborg had a more intimate consociation with the angels than other men, long before the actual opening of his spiritual sight, cannot well be doubted by Newchurchmen; nor can it be doubted that this was necessary for the sake of his preparation for the great work which was to come. But let us consider more fully the subject of his preparation.

In the last number of the work on *Influx* we have the following teaching:—

I was once asked how from being a philosopher I became a theologian. I answered, In the same manner as that in which fishermen were made disciples and apostles by the Lord; and that I also from my earliest youth have been a spiritual fisherman. This being heard it was asked, What is a spiritual fisherman? I replied that a fisherman, in the Word in its spiritual sense, signifies a man who investigates and teaches natural truths, and afterwards spiritual truths in a rational manner. . . . On hearing these things my questioner raised his voice and said, Now I am able to understand why the Lord called and chose fishermen to be His disciples, and therefore I do not wonder that He has also chosen you, since, as you have said, you have been from early youth a fisherman, in the spiritual sense, that is, an investigator of natural truths; that you have become an investigator of spiritual truths is because these are founded on the former. . . . Besides, what theologian among Christians does not study philosophy before he is inaugurated a theologian? Whence does he otherwise have intelligence? (*Influx* 20.)

From this number we learn in general that the study of philosophy is the true preparation for the study of theology; that for this reason Swedenborg was a philosopher before he became a theologian; that philosophy is natural truth upon which spiritual truth is founded, and that therefore Swedenborg was led even from his early youth to the study of philosophy or natural truth; that he was not only a student but a teacher of it; that a true spiritual fisherman has a two-fold office, he is first a student and teacher of natural truth, and thereby he is prepared to become a student and teacher of spiritual truth; that the teaching of natural truth and the teaching of spiritual truth are so closely related that they are put under one idea in the term "spiritual fisherman," and are represented by the single term "fisherman" in the Word, and are also represented in the fact that the disciples of the Lord were fishermen before they were chosen to be His apostles. We learn also in general from the teaching in this number, that true philosophy is the means to spiritual intelligence; and finally that the truth of Swedenborg's theology, or the truth of Revelation in the Writings, is founded upon the truth of his philosophy, or upon the natural truth which he acquired as a student of the laws of nature. And therefore the conclusion is as it were forced upon us, that Swedenborg's philosophy is a system of natural truth, essential to his own preparation for the office of Revelator, assuming thus a position of momentous import to the spiritual fishermen of the New Church, outlining to them the means by which they are to be prepared to become true fishers of men.

In Swedenborg's letter to Oetinger the same line of instruction is given, as follows:—

Query: Why from being a philosopher I have been chosen? Answer: The cause of this has been that the spiritual things which have been revealed at the present day may be taught and understood naturally and rationally; for spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths, because in these they terminate and upon these they rest. . . . For this reason I was introduced by the Lord first into the natural sciences, and thus prepared; and indeed from the year 1710 to 1744, when heaven was opened to me. Every one also is led by means of natural things to spiritual things; for man is born natural, by education he is made moral, and afterwards by regeneration from the Lord he becomes spiritual. The Lord has granted me besides to love truths in a spiritual manner, that is, to love them not for the sake of honor nor for the sake of gain, but for the sake of the truths themselves; for he who loves truths for the sake of truth, sees them from the Lord, because the Lord is the Way and the Truth (*John* xiv., 6); but he who loves them for the sake of honor and gain, sees them from himself; and seeing from one's self is equivalent to seeing falsities. (*Document* 232.)

From this letter we learn that he, a philosopher, and teacher of natural truth, was chosen in order that the things revealed might be taught and understood naturally and rationally, that is, because natural and rational truth, which is the same as philosophic truth, is necessary to prepare the understanding to receive spiritual truth, since in the New Church the understanding is to be admitted into the mysteries of faith; it was therefore necessary that a man should be prepared with a well-formed understanding, an understanding formed by natural and rational truths, or philosophic truth, in order that the spiritual truth of revelation might be accommodated to the thought of men, and also because as he says, "spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths, because in these they terminate and upon these they rest." And we learn that the Lord Himself was leading him from his early youth, and preparing him; for he says, "For this reason," that is, in order that spiritual truths may be taught and understood naturally and rationally; and because spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths—"For this reason I was introduced by the Lord into the natural sciences, and thus prepared." We learn also from this letter that every man is led by things natural and moral to spiritual things, which suggests the remark that Swedenborg was not only led by them, as every man, but was also led to teach them, in order that he might be fully prepared; that is, he was led to study and teach, not only natural

philosophy but also mental and moral philosophy in the course of his preparation. He was led first to study and teach the laws of nature in general, then those laws as exhibited in the human body; and after this, in the work on *The Soul*, he writes a treatise on mental and moral philosophy; and finally he expounds the spiritual-natural sense of the Word of God—beginning in the *Worship and Love of God* and concluding in the *Adversaria*. When the *Adversaria* was completed he was then as a vessel ready to receive immediate Revelation from God. But let us return for a moment to the letter.

He discloses to Oetinger another feature of his preparation that is most important, "The Lord has granted me to love truths in a spiritual manner, that is, to love them not for the sake of honor nor for the sake of gain, but for the sake of truths themselves." This unselfish love of truth is manifest throughout his scientific works, and no one in reading them can fail to notice it. This exhibits an element in his preparation even more essential than the formation of a right understanding by means of natural or philosophic truth; or rather, a right understanding, and thus a true preparation could not have been formed and made without this most essential quality, the love of truth for the sake of truth. "For," as he says, "he who loves truths for the sake of truth, sees them from the Lord . . . but he who loves them for the sake of honor and gain, sees them from himself; and seeing from one's self is equivalent to seeing falsities." Now Swedenborg in writing the works that preceded the opening of his spiritual sight, either saw truths from himself or he saw them from the Lord. If he saw them from himself then they are insidiously false, and lead to evil; but if he saw them from the Lord, then he saw truths which led and prepared him to see and know the Lord. If he saw truths from himself, he falsified those truths, and therefore he was not *prepared*. But this leads to absurdity, and in fact the question answers itself, or Swedenborg himself answers it, when we learn from him that he was led even from his early youth to see truths from the Lord, and that he who sees truths from himself sees falsities, that is, falsifies the truths. All this means as plainly as words can express it, that there is no essential error in Swedenborg's philosophic system, and that he who sees such error there sees it from an error in his own mind, which prevents him from entering interiorly into the thought of Swedenborg. Or per-

haps we should say that the "errors" are not errors but limitations, either in Swedenborg or in the reader,—most probably the latter. Concerning the limitations of Swedenborg as a teacher of natural truth, I have spoken in a former paper. An "error," as that term has been applied in this Club, means a falsity that leads to harm, injury or evil, if adopted and applied; such errors are supposed to be in Swedenborg's system of philosophy; when yet the fact is, if error be removed from the mind of the reader, he will then not see error in Swedenborg's philosophy, but occasionally perhaps a shadow, that disappears as a dissolving view when looked at in the light of his general principles.

Swedenborg tells us in a number of places that he was prepared by the Lord from his early youth for his great office. In the *Adversaria* he says:—

What the acts of my life have involved I have been taught afterwards as to some of them, yea, as to many of them, from which I could at length clearly see that the tenor of the Divine Providence has ruled the acts of my life from youth itself, and thus has governed, so that I have at length arrived at this end, [namely] that I could thus understand through the knowledges of natural things, and could thus, of the Divine Mercy of God Messiah, serve as an instrument for opening the things which lie inmostly concealed in the Word of God Messiah. (*Adv.* II., 839.)

In this passage we learn that not only did the Divine Providence rule the acts of his life from his youth, but that this was in order that he might be prepared through the *knowledges of natural things* to serve as an instrument for opening the inmost things of the Word of God. He had now come to see and acknowledge what was the Divine purpose in his studies of natural things, in his work as a teacher of natural truth, namely, that by means of the knowledges of natural truth he might be prepared to serve as an instrument in laying open the spiritual truth of the Divine Word.

To the Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt he writes:—

The Lord our Savior foretold that He would come again into the world and institute a New Church. He predicted this in *Revelation* xxi. and xxii., and also in several places in the Gospels. But as He can not come again into the world in person it was necessary that He should do it by means of a man, who should not only receive the doctrine of that Church by his understanding but also publish it by means of the press; and as the Lord had prepared me for this from my childhood He manifested Himself in person before me, His servant, and sent me to do this work. (*Document* 246.)

We have also the following teaching in the Writings:—"All

things of my past life have been governed by the Lord." (*S. D.*, 3177.)

Again:—

For this reason it has pleased the Lord to prepare me from my earliest youth to perceive the Word; and He introduced me into the spiritual world, and illustrated me more nearly with the light of His Word. Hence it is evident that this is more than all miracles (*Invitation to the New Church*, n. 55). [The reason given is that he might be prepared to teach the truths of the Church from the Word.]

Some evil spirits once ascended from below and addressed him in a grave tone, saying—

Why did your Lord reveal these secrets which you have just enumerated, in a long series, to you who are a layman, and not to some of the clergy? To which I answered that this was according to the good pleasure of the Lord, who prepared me for this office from my earliest youth. But yet I will ask you in return, Why did the Lord, when He was in the world, choose fishermen for His disciples, and not some of the lawyers, scribes, priests, or rabbis? Discuss this among yourselves and conclude from judgment, and you will discover the reason. On hearing these words a murmur was made, and after this, silence" (*True Christian Religion*, n. 850).

Even while writing his scientific works Swedenborg was led to see that the work he was doing was but a preparation for a greater work which was to come, as we see from a statement quoted by Dr. R. L. Tafel, who in introducing it says: "That Swedenborg's philosophical studies were one of the principal means by which he was prepared for the perception of spiritual truths is stated in Part III. of the *Regnum Animale*, which he was then, September 30, 1744, seeing through the press." (*Document*, 208, II., 140.) Dr. Tafel then quotes the passage as follows:—

This signified that what I had written there with God's help was of such a nature that it would lead me on still further, and that I should see still more glorious things [See also *Document* 209, p. 208. This was the signification of a dream in which some one appeared to him and said, "I do not know where you live"].

In fact before his spiritual sight was opened, while he was still writing his scientific works, he received constant intimations of his preparation for a great work to come, by means of a remarkable series of visions and dreams, concerning which we have a full record in Tafel's *Documents*. He speaks of these dreams in *Spiritual Diary*, n. 2951, as follows:—

Before my mind was opened so that I could converse with spirits, I had

dreams during several years, by which I was informed of the things concerning which I was writing. [Conf. *Spiritual Diary*, n. 3177.]

In the same work he says: "What I have learned from representations and visions is from the Lord alone." (*S. D.*, 1647; Conf. Doc., 209, p. 189, n. 116.)

From these passages we learn that the intimations he was receiving were from the Lord Himself, and had reference not only to the work which was to come, but to the work which he was then doing, that is, the work in which he was expounding the philosophy of nature. Concerning this he speaks further, in *Spiritual Diary*, n. 2951:—

Before my mind was opened so that I could converse with spirits, and thus be persuaded by living experience, there existed with me for several years such evidences that I now wonder I could remain all the while unconvinced of the Lord's government by the means of spirits. During several years not only had I dreams by which I was informed concerning those things which I was writing, but I experienced also while writing certain changes of state, there being a certain extraordinary light in the things which were written. Afterward I had many visions with closed eyes, and light was given me in a marvellous manner. There was also an influx from spirits, as manifest to the sense as if it had been into the senses of the body; there were infestations in various ways by evil spirits when I was in temptations; and afterwards when writing anything to which the spirits had an aversion I was almost possessed by them, so as to feel something like a tremor. Fiery lights were seen and conversations heard in the early mornings, beside many other things; until at last a spirit spoke a few words to me when I was greatly astonished at his perceiving my thoughts. I was afterwards greatly astonished that I could converse with spirits; as the spirits were that I should wonder. (*S. D.*, 2951.)

Now there are several things in this remarkable passage worthy of your serious attention, in connection with the subject that is before us,—the subject of the value to the New Church, of Swedenborg's philosophy. We note first the teaching that the Lord, even in this early period, was with him, governing and leading, but that it was at this time a *mediate* leading, that is, a leading through spirits, concerning which I have already spoken. This is shown in the heading of the article,—“That man is with difficulty persuaded that he is ruled through spirits;” and he wonders that he was not earlier convinced of the Lord's government through spirits; which evidently means that he now wonders that he did not see earlier that he was being led and prepared by the Lord through spirits for the work which was to follow. The spirits were evidently good spirits, and perhaps angels; for after saying that there

was an influx of spirits, he adds that there were also infestations from evil spirits. He also says that—"When writing anything to which the spirits had an aversion I was almost possessed by them so as to feel something like a tremor." You will note also that he speaks of seeing fiery lights, and that he heard spirits conversing together in the early morning, and that at last one spoke to him. Finally I would call your attention to the statement that there was a certain extraordinary light in the things which were written, and that "light was given me in a certain miraculous manner."

It is this "extraordinary light" in his scientific works that we have been endeavoring to set before you. Some of us have seen this light, and the light is good, and we would have others see it; and we humbly bow before this light, for we see in it the hand of Providence preparing this great man for his great work; we see in it the genuine laws of nature, given by the Lord to Swedenborg through the mediation of spirits and angels, such as could not be given save to this one man, but given to him and through him that the New Church might have a natural philosophy of its own, to save it from the materialism of modern science. Not only Swedenborg but all Newchurchmen are to have the benefit of this "extraordinary light."

Swedenborg wonders that he had not perceived earlier that he was being led by the Lord through spirits, for he could now look and see that evidences of it were abundant, had he been able to read them aright. Evidences appear in the number we have just quoted, and other evidences are spoken of elsewhere; one in particular is important in this connection, namely, the fact that he had internal respiration from his childhood. It is well known from the Doctrines that the existence of internal respiration is an evidence of intimate association with spirits and angels; and it is also evident that any one who has internal respiration is in superior light, for he respire with the angels, and his thought is in correspondence with their thought. Swedenborg having internal respiration from his childhood, must have had a spiritual-natural light in his mind; and we are prepared to understand why it is that what he wrote, even as a philosopher, shines with an "extraordinary light." But let us hear him on the subject of his internal respiration. In the *Spiritual Diary*, n. 3464, he says:—

I was first accustomed so to respire in early childhood, when saying my morning and evening prayers, and sometimes afterwards, when I was ex-

aming the concordance of the lungs and the heart; and especially when I was writing from my mind the things which have been published. For a number of years I continually observed that there was a tacit respiration, scarcely sensible, concerning which it was afterward given me to think, and then to write. Thus during many years, from my early childhood, I was introduced into such respiration, most especially through intense speculation, in which the respiration is quiescent; no otherwise is the intense speculation of truth possible. Afterward, when heaven was opened to me and I was able to speak with spirits, I sometimes scarcely breathed at all, for the space of an hour, only drawing in enough air to keep up the process of thinking. Thus I have been introduced by the Lord into interior respiration.

This passage in the *Spiritual Diary* bears the date of October 4th, 1748, about one year before the first volume of the *Arcana Cœlestia* was published. It is plain, therefore, that the reference in the number just quoted is to his scientific works, in the writing of which he says that he had internal respiration,—“when writing from my mind the things that have been published,”—and he mentions in particular his study of the heart and lungs. He adds that after heaven was opened to him he was able to enter more fully into the exercise of the faculty of internal respiration, into which he had been “introduced by the Lord” from his early childhood.

In connection with this passage from the *Diary* must be read what he says about his early childhood in a letter to Doctor Beyer:—

From my youth to my tenth year I was constantly engaged in thought upon God, salvation, and the spiritual ills (*passiones spirituales*) of men; and several times I revealed things at which my father and mother wondered, saying that angels must be speaking through me. From my sixth to my twelfth year I used to delight in conversing with clergymen about faith, saying that the life of faith is love, and that the love which imparts life is love to the neighbor; also that God gives faith to every one, but that those only receive it who practice that love. I knew of no other faith at that time, than that God is the Creator and Preserver of nature, that He imparts understanding and a good disposition to men, and several other things that follow thence. I knew nothing at that time of that learned faith which teaches that God the Father imputes the righteousness of His Son to whomsoever He will, and at such times as He chooses, even to those who have not repented and have not reformed their lives. And had I heard of such a faith it would have been then, as it is now, above my comprehension. (*Document* 243.)

The fact that he had internal respiration from his childhood, and that in this early period he was in constant thought on spiritual things, so that when he spoke it caused his parents to wonder and

think that angels must be speaking through his mouth, exhibits clearly to view that he was even from this early period of his life in intimate consociation with good spirits and angels, and that by their mediate operation and influence the Lord was imparting to him a spiritual-natural light, superior to that of other men, and a light that we should naturally expect the man to have who was to be prepared to be the instrument of the Lord's Second Coming into the world. How could it be otherwise?

And we may not doubt that the Divine Love was drawing ever nearer and nearer to this man, adapting and fitting his mind through the medium of spirits and angels, that it might finally manifest itself to him in the fulness of Divine Light and through him to all men, with saving efficacy and power.

Now what do all these things mean,—the internal respiration, the visions, the remarkable dreams, the signs, the fiery lights, and other things of a similar character taking place before his spiritual illumination? They certainly mean something. They do not mean a direct and immediate Revelation from God, for heaven was not yet actually opened to him, without which there is no immediate revelation. They do not mean that what he wrote in this earlier period is to be accepted as infallible, for there is no such claim in anything he has said in them or about them. They do not mean that his philosophy is to be accepted without understanding and viewed without the light of Revelation to see whether it agrees therewith,—for its agreement with Revelation is its characteristic feature. But they do mean that there is a light more than ordinary in what he wrote before, as he himself says; they mean that he was intimately associated with the source of light in the spiritual world, the heaven of angels, in which light and from it he was able to see a light in nature which could not be seen by others, except through his eyes.

But our judgment on this subject is not to be formed by visions and dreams, by miracles and signs; these are of use in the way of confirmation, in establishing the fact of an intimate consociation with angels and spirits, in proving the mediate character of his early teaching; but the truth of his system shines in its own light, and bears in its bosom its own evidence of verity to a mind enlightened by Revelation; and to this light we appeal with hope and confidence in the ultimate result, believing that the candid and

reflecting mind will upon investigation be satisfied and convinced of the exceeding great value of the philosophy of Swedenborg to the members of the New Church.

And now we would say a word on the relation between the natural science that appears in the Writings and the natural science of Swedenborg's scientific works. We would observe first that the natural science in the Writings,—considered as to its outward form or literal statement,—is not spiritual truth, is not Theology, but it is natural truth confirmatory of spiritual truth. This natural truth was selected by the Revelator from the science current in the world, with which he was familiar, or from the science of his own earlier works. The Revelator frequently quotes the generals of his own science to confirm the truth of Revelation. This establishes their truth; for natural truth being confirmatory of spiritual truth, is by virtue of that fact true on its own plane. Natural truth confirms spiritual truth because it is in correspondence with it; and that which corresponds is true because it corresponds. Such is the nature of the scientific truth quoted in the Writings; it is true because it confirms spiritual truth, and corresponds with it. The natural science which appears in the Writings is therefore authoritative to the New Church; for its use in the Writings gives it a Divine confirmation.

It would clearly follow, therefore, that the natural science in the Writings, considered as science, is not given as anything new, and is therefore not given, or intended to be given, as a new Revelation of scientific truth. It is not new, because Swedenborg had taught it before; some of it was known to men of science; and sometimes he introduces natural truth that is common and familiar to all. The end and object of the Writings is not to reveal scientific but spiritual truth; but for the sake of a clearer understanding of spiritual truth, natural truth, which was already known, is introduced to illustrate and confirm. Natural truth was so selected by the Revelator in the Divine Light in which he then was, and for this reason there can be no question of its truth. It is necessary to call attention to this, because the effort is made to show that the science of the Writings is something new, revealed from heaven by the Lord in His Second Coming, unknown before even to Swedenborg; when yet the fact is, he merely uses the natural truth he already knew to give form and body to the

spiritual truth of Revelation; and earlier in his life he was introduced by the Lord into the natural sciences, partly for the reason that he might have at hand an abundant store of the knowledges of natural things, for this purpose. The fact that he so uses scientific and philosophic truth in the Writings, does not make that truth a new revelation but merely establishes the fact that it is *natural truth*, corresponding with spiritual truth and therefore confirmatory of it.

To make a distinction between the science of the Writings—considered as science—and the science of Swedenborg's earlier works, is to make a distinction that does not exist, except the distinction between generals and their particulars. The generals are in the Writings; the particulars of those generals are to be found in the scientific works of Swedenborg. The generals include the particulars, and if the generals are true the particulars are also true; that is to say, if the science in the Writings is true, the science of Swedenborg's earlier works is also true; they stand or fall together. The distinction therefore between the science of the former and the science of the latter,—as if they were something separate and apart from each other,—is a distinction made without a knowledge of the facts.

With this view of the science taught in the Writings and its proper place and relation with the science Swedenborg taught before, there is no danger of exalting his science beyond its true position of subordination to spiritual truth, there is no danger of making it a new, an infallible, a Divine Revelation. But if the natural or scientific truth which appears in the Writings be regarded in its outward form as a Divine Revelation of natural truth hitherto unknown to Swedenborg and to the world, we are in reality driven to the necessity of regarding the natural truth of Swedenborg's scientific works as a part of the new Revelation, as a part of those works which are the Coming of the Lord to the world,—instead of being merely a preparation for that Coming. The science in the Writings and the science in Swedenborg's philosophy, is one, regarded as science; and the position that the former is a new revelation and the latter humanly self-derived, cannot be successfully maintained.

The philosophic and scientific truth which Swedenborg introduces into the Writings, therefore, is not to be regarded in and

by itself as an immediate Revelation from God, but is introduced for the sake of a clearer exposition and confirmation of the spiritual truth which is given by immediate Revelation, and by virtue of this use its truth is established, becoming thus on its plane an essential part of those works which are called by us the Writings of the New Church.

And now we present as a final conclusion, that Emanuel Swedenborg stands before us in a two-fold office, that of a Revelator and that of a teacher of natural truth. Both offices are for the New Church; the one for its spiritual faith and life, as the medium of an immediate Revelation from the Lord, as the instrument of His Second Coming into the world, the other office for its scientific thought, its higher education, as a preparation of the mind of our youth for the understanding of spiritual things, guarding them from the materialism of modern science, and as the means provided by which the wonderful discoveries of modern science are to be reduced into order for the New Church, the means by which the vessels of Egypt are to be made subservient to the uses of Israel.

Swedenborg was prepared for both these offices under the Divine auspices, under the leadings of Providence. For his first office he was prepared by means of the use which he performed for his native country as Assessor of Mines. To perfect himself for this office it was necessary for him to study the natural sciences, both in the writings of men and in the laboratory of nature. And the evidence is complete that he did this in a most satisfactory manner.

For his second,—his great office, he was prepared by means of the first, as he himself testifies. His second office is recognized in the New Church, for this recognition—with all that it carries with it—is that which makes a man a Newchurchman. His first office is as yet but partially recognized, for the immense value to the New Church of his scientific teaching is as yet but little seen or known. But the evidences are not lacking that a number in the New Church are beginning to see that Swedenborg as a man of science, as a philosopher, as a teacher of natural truth, occupies a place that is unique among men, and that the value and worth of his system of philosophic and scientific truth is unapproached and unapproachable by the teaching of any other man, from the dawn of history to the present time.

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