

EDITORIAL REMARKS

Why "The New Philosophy"?

This being the first number of a new volume of the journal, I found myself curious about the origin of its name. This led me to volume 1 number 1, where, on the first page under the head "Prospectus" the editor wrote:

The New Philosophy is intended as a medium for bringing before the public the philosophical System of Emanuel Swedenborg. This system in its full extent embraces three divisions, namely, (1) a knowledge of the inanimate world based on observation, and on reasoning from the facts gained thereby; (2) a knowledge of living forms gained by observation and rational deductions; (3) a knowledge of the soul and life of these living forms, and of the interior spiritual substances from which all natural substances derive their origin, which knowledge is gained by revelation from the Lord. These three are one like soul, rational mind, and body; nor can they be divided without injury to the system.

There is a close resemblance between the kinds of thought that it is hoped will find expression in the journal, as given above, and the modes of thought described in *Divine Providence* (3) presented in the Editorial Remarks of the last issue for 1985. Clearly, in the past eighty-seven years the identity of the journal, as defined by the original purposes, has been preserved.

Although this original statement does not include specific reference to the journal's name, it is clear from the rest of it that the founding members of the association believed that a new science would develop out of the application of Swedenborgian thought to the study of the universe.

At first encounter, this idea may sound far-fetched. However, there is precedent for the idea of development of a "new science"; for this is the very appellation applied by late sixteenth and seventeenth century natural philosophers (scientists) to the then developing experimental science, as Bernard Cohen points out in his new book *Revolutions in Science* (Harvard University Press, 1985). For example, Galileo named his dialogue on physics published in 1638 "Dialogue Concerning the Two New Sciences." Why should not something new emerge from the application of a new philosophy to consideration of the universe now, as application of the new experimental philosophy did then?

The suitability, therefore, of the journal's name is manifest for two reasons. First, although of necessity Swedenborg's philosophy had antecedents, his system has original elements, and hence is "new." Second, and more significantly, when a new revelation as represented by Swedenborg's theological works is used (together with experience) as a basis for ideas, then it is appropriate that the expression "new philosophy" be applied to the thought thence derived.

In This Issue

Continuing his series of notes on Swedenborg's philosophy as a whole, Edward F. Allen focuses particularly on Swedenborg's arguments for the existence of a final cause of creation, thus of God. In so doing he brings us to reflect on one of the traditional questions of philosophy, a question that each of us must sooner or later confront.

In Swedenborg's argument for the existence of God, he often speaks of amazement and wonder when he reflects on nature, as Prof. Allen's notes make clear. So, too, in Walter E. Orthwein's second installment of his series on order we find reference to the wonders with which we are constantly confronted in nature, which display an interconnected, ordered fabric that testifies to the Divine cause of it all

The third contribution, under my name, centers on one particular miracle in nature, photosynthesis, and offers some suggestions as to the correspondence of it in reference to the growth of the mind, the mind which all of nature images. It is part of the "new philosophy" to explore in detail the causal connections between the spiritual and the natural planes, a necessary connection that exists by influx and correspondence.

A New Journal

The editorial board congratulates the Swedenborg Foundation for the publication of its new journal *Chrysalis*, an introductory issue of which is now in circulation, dated Winter 1985. In the "Publisher's Statement" we read:

Welcome to the pages of *Chrysalis*, a journal of ideas for readers interested in Swedenborgian perspectives on basic questions of our times. These pages are addressed to those who are looking for creative approaches to the spiritual dimensions of life as well as to those who want to know more about Emanuel Swedenborg's contributions.

In addition, Editor-in-Chief Carol S. Lawson says:

To appeal to a wide, non-denominational, audience of intellectually curious people, we want to offer a wide selection of materials. Each issue will have a central theme. This issue, for example, is on the search for the soul (p. 76).

Several of the fine articles in this issue are illustrated with exceptionally good diagrams, or with excellent reproductions from various sources. We commend the journal to our readers, and believe that it would make an important addition to the periodical collections of college, university and public libraries. Apply to The Swedenborg Foundation, 139 East 23rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.

A New Department

Beginning in this issue we have the first contribution to a new department in the journal, tentatively titled "Notes and Comments." The purpose of the department is to encourage reflection, that mental activity to which Swedenborg assigned such importance. In *The Spiritual Diary* (733) he states that "I have been in conversation with spirits and angels respecting reflection, to which I do not know whether men sufficiently attend; but if they do attend to it, they will find more *arcana* in the doctrine of reflection than in any other whatever." Although this seems like an astounding claim, a little reflection leads to the recognition of its importance even if we think of it as the careful consideration of something, be it a sense impression or a lofty ideal. And just as clearly, reflection has played a part in the development of the whole of our cultural heritage.

There is, however, another connotation of the word reflection. In New Church philosophic thought, there is only one source of truth with its enfolded good, namely, the Lord. So when we say we see "the truth," we are in fact seeing the truth as reflected in knowledges; and we sense the good of this truth when we recognize the application of it in life, in the life of serving our fellow man in useful ways. This is a foundation of New Church epistemology as expressed, for example, in Bishop Willard D. Pendleton's recent work *Education for Use* (A.N.C. Publ. Comm. 1985; for example, see p. 156).

Returning to the new department, we would like it to be the place where we can publish over an author's name short commentaries which do not have to represent the end-product of considerable scholarly study, but are simply thoughtful remarks of a philosophic

nature on any topic. These will be referred in the manner applied to other contributions. We invite readers to submit material for this department, hoping that we will have enough response to include it in each issue.

Price Changes in Our Publications

Readers are referred to the new price list for books and pamphlets published by the Association that appears at the back of this issue. The Board has approved a 20% discount to buyers such as teachers, ministers and scholars pursuing some enquiry related to Swedenborg, who could make use of these publications in their work.

E.J.B.

ON THE COVER

The composite on the cover was prepared by Miss Lisa Alfelt from plates in the original 1722 edition of Swedenborg's *Miscellanea Orlservata* published in Leipzig. The "petrified plant" specimens were "collected by myself and my travelling companion. Dr. John Hessel, physician to the province of West Gothland, and well skilled in the botany and fossils of Sweden" (*Miscellaneous Observations*, Strutt translation, London, 1847, p. 10). The collection site was "at Liège, in one of the strata of a mountain situated near the monastery of the Chartreux" (*ibid.*). The animal fossils were collected from "the high mountain of Lousberg, situated near Aix-la-Chapelle" (*ibid.*, p. 11).