

Swedenborg's Philosophy as a Whole

III. Means Leading to the Divine End Obtained in Man.

436. Connection by "ends" of *The Principia* with Swedenborg's other philosophical works, especially with *The Infinite*. Swedenborg's philosophy as a connected whole is like a fabric composed of many threads. One of these threads that makes its reappearance many times is the philosophical principle of end, cause, and effect—a principle at least as old as Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle's. When a philosophy depends upon this principle it could well be described as a philosophy of ends. That Swedenborg's philosophy deserves that name can be illustrated by two statements of his, one very early in *The Principia* and the other in the final sentence of *The Five Senses* which is the last of Swedenborg's philosophical works. These two remarks, therefore, bracket Swedenborg's works written in the period 1734 to 1744.

On page 27 of *The Principia* (Clissold translation) there is this:

... there is a Providence respecting all things, which is infinite in the Infinite, or in the Being who is provident in the highest degree; and there follows from hence a connexion or series of consequents, according to which all circumstances are determined and arranged, by causes and the causes of causes, toward a certain end.

And the final sentence of *The Five Senses* referred to is:

From these things it follows that the primary end, that is the primary end of the understanding given to us, is that we may ascend by degrees from natural to moral life, and from moral into spiritual, and then finally to heavenly happiness, which is a continuation of spiritual life (*Senses*, p. 641).

Most general ends in Swedenborg's philosophy are Divine ends, ends in the universe, and ends in man. Ends in the universe will appear later in his philosophy. The "primary end" referred to above in the *Senses* is in man, whereas the "certain end" referred to in *The Principia* appears as the "divine end" in *The Infinite*; we are led up to the Divine end in the present set of notes, while its consideration in some detail is the subject of the next installment.

In the final paragraph of chapter 1 of *The Principia* (quoted in Note 430) there is a triad of gifts to man, "veneration, adoration, and love of the Deity" which in *The Infinite* becomes acknowledgement of, love to, and worship of God, thereby presenting a connection of *The Infinite* with *The Principia*.

The next three notes (437-439) will outline how "to acknowledge" and "to worship" are introduced in *The Infinite*, and note 440 shows how "to love" God is introduced.

437. Argument by reason to acknowledge the existence of the Infinite as the final cause. Since the argument requires twenty-nine pages I will indicate in a general way how it proceeds. Preliminary questions are first considered that lead up to the question "Ought we to reason about infinity?" The answer is given in the affirmative and questions of whether the infinite exists and when it originated follow.

To add the particulars would greatly extend the length of these notes, so to Swedenborg's conclusion:

By this line of reasoning I think that the human mind acknowledges God as infinite, and as the cause of the finite, and consequently of nature; and that it no longer rests in the primitive substance of nature, so as to make God and primitive nature one and the same; or to attribute all things to nature; but, on the contrary, sees that all are due to the Infinite, or in other words, to God (p. 29).

438. Argument from experience to acknowledge the existence of the Infinite as the Final Cause.

Having thus at last attained to confession of the infinite, so that, *nolens volens*, reason is obliged to admit a something that is utterly unknown . . . a being who is properly termed Infinite,—let us now take this confession and tacit admission, and proceed onwards, and see whether we can, by reason, attain to a still more distinct acknowledgment, that there is an infinite, or that God is infinite, and that God is the author and producer of nature (pp. 29-30).

There are things in this statement that might hold the mind from complete acknowledgment: "confession of the infinite" seems somewhat less than proof; "tacit" raises a question; and what is it "to attain a still more distinct acknowledgment"? There is enough, it seems, to deny a Q.E.D. to reason alone. So what can experience contribute? And what is its source?

Reasoning *a priori* we have found in the foregoing pages that this unknown being exists, or that there is an infinite: we will now enquire experimentally whether the same conclusion becomes irresistible when we reason *a posteriori* (p. 30).

The apparent weakness of "confession" as compared with a proof will disappear when the nature of God as author and producer of nature is explored by a study of nature itself. Instead of addressing philosophers in general, there is an appeal to what worshippers of nature can tell us. In introducing the worshippers of nature Swedenborg wrote,

Let us confine our attention still to the first and smallest natural principle, (that is, the first finite) so that we may not disturb the worshippers of nature in their circles and spheres, but may keep them constantly attentive to their own principles, and allow no foreign considerations to interfere between their minds and the conclusion (p. 30).

It is not however, that Swedenborg wants to construct a special reasoned proof directed to the worshippers of nature only. The reasoned *a priori* conclusion is as much for the worshippers of nature as for others.

It is granted then that the least natural entity derived its origin from the infinite, for we have seen that no other origin of it was possible... (p. 30).

Why then refer to the worshippers of nature? The answer begins,

Here I will answer agreeably and in conformity with the principles of those I am reasoning with, that it (that is, the first and smallest natural principle) has in it every primitive quality that there is in nature, and every simple also; that consequently it is the seed of all natural things; that it is their principle; that it is that out of which, by degrees and moments, ultimate nature is unfolded: in a word, that there is in it, a primitive entity, everything whatever that we can possibly conceive as existing in nature; and that thus in this prime, or in an indefinite number of those primes or leasts, nature exists in her very seed; out of which, whether considered as one or many, she ultimately issues forth in all her divinity, in all her manifoldness, with all her distinct and abundant series... (pp. 30-31).

It seems to me that Swedenborg is over-optimistic that the worshippers of nature will be convinced by the *a priori* argument. But persuasion of them is not critical; what is important is that the worshipper of nature is available for knowledge about nature.

Be it then according to the opinion of those who hold that all things issued in natural order from the first entity, simple, seed, least, or primitive. I am now anxious not to disturb them in their newborn acknowledgment of infinity and God, and therefore I shall not attribute anything to God immediately that they themselves think, or can think, should in right reason be attributed to nature (p. 31).

Swedenborg, to repeat, is not referring to the worshippers of nature as the subjects to be persuaded, but is consulting them to show from experience how there is relation between things of nature, even to the smallest natural principle. Nevertheless Swedenborg's optimism continues,

For I am willing to make concessions, in order to secure a kindlier and more cordial unanimity between us in our arguments. Nor is there any harm in taking their side of the question, inasmuch as they now acknowledge nature to be not the first cause of the world, but the second, and the second cause to be not self-active, save insofar as it has received, and perpetually receives its activities from the first cause, that is, from the Infinite (pp. 31-32).

The argument continues over the next thirty-eight pages under thirteen headings which, if justice were done to them, would add considerably to these notes. But we must pass over them to the conclusion:

Thus by effects and the senses, and by visible or sensible nature, we are better and more clearly led to acknowledgment of the infinite, than by the other reasons or methods of the soul. And indeed senses were given us, and a rational soul superadded to them, precisely that, in the natural state, we might be conducted sensually to an acknowledgment of deity in the infinite (p. 71).

A large part of the argument depends upon introduction to the structure of the body (pp. 46-70), leading to Swedenborg's remark "All parts of the body tend to their own proper ends." This draws

our attention to his extensive use of anatomy, a feature well-known to all who have studied and written about his philosophy. Indeed, so much space is devoted to anatomy that in speaking of anatomy and physiology some seem to make those subjects almost, if not actually, synonymous with philosophy. That anatomy is enormously important to Swedenborg's philosophy cannot be denied. When anatomy takes its place as effects in the process of the formation of man's body, which effects are governed by the principle of end, cause, and effect, then the true part played by it appears in philosophy.

439. Now to the role of "tacit admission" "Tacit" refers to what words do not describe. And because words have their origin in what is sensed, therefore tacit must refer to a source of ideas beyond what the bodily senses bring to man.

We have now to show in conclusion, that the infinite is the cause of the finite, and the infinite God, the Builder of the universe. This comes in the last place, because it appeals partly on self-evidence, or springs from the human soul, and comes partly as a consequence from the arguments adduced above. There is in fact a tacit consent, or a tacit conclusion of the soul (*tacita conclusio animae*), to the being as well as to the infinity of God. This is dictated, I say, partly by the soul in its own free essence, partly by the soul as instructed and advised by the diverse innumerable effects present in the world (71-72).¹

The first two sentences tell us that neither reason (Note 437) nor experience (Note 438) nor both together provide a complete argument that leads to the acknowledgment that the infinite God is the Builder of the universe. The next two sentences add "tacit consent" or "tacit conclusion" that has a twofold nature: 1. As to the being of God, it is dictated by the soul "in its own free essence." 2. As to the infinity of God, it is dictated not only by what from the soul alone, but also by what is from the soul "as instructed and advised by the diverse innumerable effects presented in the world."

Swedenborg gives three illustrations of tacit consent: 1. "The acknowledgment of the existence of reason which is beyond examples of reason. When we call upon reason it is something like tacit

¹ The use of "dictated" recalls that the same word appears in the internal sense of "grace," "justice," and "fear." In the previous set of notes (NP Oct-Dec 1985) it was shown that in the story of Noah each of these terms leads to conscience which the spiritual man has, and conscience is an internal dictate (see e.g. AC 608, 895e).

consent because we accept the voice of reason. 2. Another thing that is like tacit consent is the acknowledgment that we have involuntary and congenital actions in our body "which proceed spontaneously without the body being aware of them; such for instance as the innumerable internal motions of the frame, of the senses, the muscles, the heart, the fluids . . . 3". There are many other phenomena, that may be compared with tacit consent, for example, the existence of the feeling for harmonies that surprise us, cause praise in us, raise smiles of delight. And we notice the introduction of "spontaneous":

...many things, therefore, which seem to happen spontaneously. And so also it may be with that tacit consent and feeling of our souls, which dictates to us the existence and infinity of God (p. 73).

Spontaneous here means what has cause, but the cause is not known. It does not mean by chance.

The sentence from p. 73 that begins "And so also... "is important as a conclusion to the long argument that began in reason, and continued by way of experience, and now at long last reaches full acknowledgment when tacit consent is added that "dictates to us the existence and infinity of God." And yet there is still a moment of doubt over the use of spontaneity:

But it is scarcely philosophical to derive from the soul a spontaneity corresponding in character with the involuntary power in the body, or with the harmony of perfection existing in things and proportions (p. 73).²

² It is the effort of the notes to present the argument for the existence of the Infinite as the cause of finite things as given in *The Infinite*. Because "proofs" of the existence of God are so important in Christian philosophy there is a strong temptation to bring in some of the arguments from that thought which have resemblance to Swedenborg's argument, of which there are many examples, especially in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. However, a comparison between Swedenborg and Thomas is a subject in itself which can be made only after the two philosophies themselves are well understood. Nevertheless, it is interesting to point out that following the introduction of what is "tacit," that is, without words, and "spontaneous" with regard to reason, there was a hesitancy expressed by Swedenborg that began, "But it is scarcely philosophical to derive from the soul a spontaneity corresponding in character with the involuntary power of the body,..." and even though the hesitancy was dispelled, the wonder may remain whether there is something peculiar with regard to Swedenborg when he uses such

Section VI from which the above quotation is drawn, is dedicated to showing that "There is a tacit consent... as to the existence of an infinite God"; and it is barely half through when the above conclusion is given. The possible hesitancy (implied in "it is scarcely philosophical ...") over what is spontaneous is answered by again calling upon the worshippers of nature. And Swedenborg resumes his accommodation to them!

And yet it cannot be denied, that there is in man as man, provided he enjoy the use of reason, [that] which acknowledges an omnipotent God, an omnipresent and all-provident Deity; it seems therefore to be innate, and to be a power or action of reason, when not on the one hand troubled too much by its own ideas, nor on the other hand too destitute of all cultivation and development [But] we will for a time relinquish the point, and agree with those who declare that the acknowledgment of God is not spontaneous, but is an effect of the soul admiring the universe, or amazed at the wonders of nature [see for example many uses of "admiration," "astonishment" "amazement" leading to "wonder" and "worship" pp. 35-39]; or [who are] perhaps ignorant of the source from which they spring. Still the end is the same; for still we admit a tacit consent of human souls to the existence of God (pp. 73-74).

It is important to recall that admiration, astonishment and wonder (see also Note 440 below) are not emotions but constitute *experience* that there is a "source from which they spring," the source being the soul. The section concludes,

language. But then let us hear what the Thomist, Jacques Maritain has to say with regard to an experience he had in what is called "intuition": Precisely speaking, this primordial intuition is both the intuition of *my* existence and of the existence of things ... (A) prompt, spontaneous reasoning, as natural as this intuition (and as a matter of fact more or less involved in it), immediately springs forth as the necessary fruit of such a primordial apperception, and as enforced by and under its light. It is a reasoning without words, which cannot be expressed in articulate fashion without sacrificing its vital concentration and the rapidity with which it takes place (*Approaches to God* pp. 4-6).

From our admiration of the parts and the whole, and from our amazement at everything that sense perceives, and that reason, knowing not the cause, yet unknowing admires, the soul deduces and concludes, whether by its own action, and tacitly, or by reasoning, and not tacitly, that a Divinity exists. After which it follows spontaneously, if we conclude in favor of this divine principle, that at least it has the power to bring this, as well as that, to pass; and thus worship exists (pp. 74-75).

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In summary, then, Note 437 is devoted to showing that *by reason* there is acknowledgment of God as infinite, to which all things are due, and closes with the conclusion from page 29 that begins, "By this line of reasoning. . . ." Note 438 is devoted to showing the same, but *by experience*, and closes with the conclusion from page 71 that begins "Thus by effects and the senses

" Finally, in the present note there is the conclusion from page 73 that begins, "And so also it may be with that tacit consent" So all three conclusions, by reason, by experience, and by tacit consent, concur that there is acknowledgment that the infinite God is the Creator of all finite things.³

³ Now that a summation has been given of Swedenborg's argument for the existence of the infinite God as the Creator, a few remarks are proper in reference to Swedenborg in 1734 as a Christian philosopher. Although readers of the Writings might welcome a careful comparison of the purpose and creation of man as given in *The Infinite* with that in the Writings, nevertheless a comparison of his philosophy with that of other Christian philosophers would be of interest to those concerned with the history of philosophy. But then the former might also be interested for the reason that when regarded as a part of Swedenborg's "preparation" it must be admitted that the preparation took place within the influence of the history of philosophy, not under the conscious influence of the Writings, which we can have but Swedenborg did not. His consciousness was with the philosophers and in places with the worshippers of nature. If one has read into the history of Christian philosophy, I believe he will fairly well agree that Swedenborg is close to Thomas Aquinas. In the notes above both on the use of experience and reason, the argument was not given, only readings from it (notes 437, 438). As a first thought in a comparison of Swedenborg and Thomas, here are a few words on Thomas' proofs of the existence of God.

There are five such proofs. Very briefly they are as follows: Proof 1, "starting from movement and becoming" and following an argument,

440. Introduction of "to love God," by way of delights. Of the triad to acknowledge, love and worship I left "love" for the last because it does not enter *The Infinite* explicitly until all three concur in explaining why man was born with a soul that could acknowledge, love and worship God. (Infinite, pp. 111-112, see Notes 441 and 442).

Expressions of pleasures of the mind are common through many pages of *The Infinite* (p. 35), for example: "amazement is increased almost to infinity," "wonder is felt when we declare that the first cause of [the] distinct least principle lies in the infinite," "the mind ... would be infinitely wrapt in amazement, at finding that in the least principle there lay a cause... for the production of so grand a result," "that in the first entity or principle we wonder at the infinite most," etc. Then later, "For the greater adorers and worshippers of nature we are, the more we go back to the cause and primitives of nature — " And so also for "astonishment" and "admiration" that lead to acknowledgment and worship (see e.g. pp. 35-38). This might cause one to impute to Swedenborg's philosophy an emotive nature.

concludes, "Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other, and this everyone understands to be God." Proof 2, "starting from the fact that there are new *beings* in the world" and following an argument, reaches the conclusion, "Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause to which everyone gives the name God." Proof 3, "starting from the fact that in the world there are beings who cease to exist" and following an argument, concludes, "Therefore we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God." Proof 4, "starting from the fact that there is in things a diversity of being and perfection, and various degrees of perfection, that is to say various degrees of being" and following an argument, "Therefore there must be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God. Proof 5, "starting from the order of the world, that is, from a multiplicity of beings with opposing inclinations which nevertheless cooperate toward a single end—that of their mutual preservation and the good of the whole," then following argument, the conclusion, "Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God." The first statement in each of the five cases above is by Jacques Maritain so worded as to bring forward the fact that all proofs begin with what can be observed in the world. The second statement or conclusion in each case that follows the arguments of the five proofs are in the words of Thomas as collected in an "Appendix, Texts Without Comment" by Maritain from Thomas' *Summa Theologica*. (See *Approaches to God* pp. 116-120.)

But although not usually regarded as data for science, they are experiences of the mind that keep scientists going as scientists. And so such experiences may provide experiential data for reasoning. For example,

If therefore we now direct our attention to the human body, and its parts, and their parts, and at the same time to its first substance in the ovum, and submit both to the operation of the mind, we shall in that case more greatly wonder at the ovum, least, or natural primitive of the body, than at the body itself. The greater case of admiration puts out the lesser. What we wonder at on a great scale, in large objects, we wonder at still more as able to exist on the minutest scale, in the least of things. Admiration and astonishment are concentrated on that least sphere, wondering how it could involve the power to produce the whole system, and such a system! When we say that in this least lies the cause of the whole, we are struck with admiration of the cause. If I say that this has its cause, admiration rises to higher powers in contemplating that cause (p. 35).

As another example involving "admiration" and "deeper wonder" and one which shows that there is a relation between worship of nature and worship of the Deity:

I am anxious therefore that the reasoner should center all his admiration in that first or least principle with which he supplies me; for by this means will it not all end in the cause of that principle, that is, in the infinite, as having produced the principle? Therefore in proportion as we worship nature, and believe in her as the origin of natural things, in the same proportion we may become worshippers of the Deity; because, out of the entirely perfect succession of things, modes, causes, contingents, we may experience deeper wonder over primitives, than others can do in contemplating the whole field of derivatives (p. 38).

Delight leads to love, therefore delight as an experience should be added to the list above. Delight arises in a series that begins in the first natural primitive, which itself must have a cause, for

... if the natural primitive arose by accident [chance], and were such as accident could make it, how could all its derivatives and subsequent issues be of such distinguished harmony... (pp. 24-25).⁴

From the first thing of creation we are led to harmony in the series. Although there is harmony in the other senses, especially in sight, harmony quite naturally leads us to think of sound; and Swedenborg includes considerable detail, over ten pages, to the anatomy of the ear, explaining how it can receive sound (pp. 56-67).

We see from the foregoing description what a peculiar mechanism of nature there is for the simple purpose of conveying inwards the vibrations of the air, and of proffering them to the soul when aught that is rational is involved in the sound; such involution being effected by the articulation and vocal expressions of speech, and the higher forms of rationality being produced or expressed by new combinations of the same. We see, I repeat, not only the mechanism itself, but all its numerous parts tending to one and the same end, to enable man to hear, to perceive the delights of this world in a reasonable manner, so as to teach him that his soul is his living part, that he may have the wisdom to mingle the delights of the world with the delights of the soul; and the delights of the soul with other delights from a purer, finer or subtler world; and at last, with God, in whom, as the one only end, all must therefore terminate (pp. 66-67).

Much more is said about love in *The Infinite* after the triad of "to acknowledge, to love and to worship God" is introduced, the abilities included in this triad being given to man in order that the divine end may be obtained in him. "Astonishment," "amazement," "admiration," "wonder" and "delights" are enjoyments of the mind. Each of these has a use which in ordinary language and experience makes life worth living. Yet each when not for the sake of itself only can be a secondary end that contributes to how in man the primary or divine end can be obtained.

⁴ It should be known that "delight," "love" and "worship" form parts of the essay in *The Principia* to which Alfred Acton gave the title "Philosophy and the Veneration of the Deity" (*Principia* pp. 43-45). (The headings assigned by Acton in the *New Philosophy*, 1917, are given in *Philos. Note* 429.)

There is much more in the closing pages of *The Infinite*, just before its Conclusion that relates "delight" "love," and "worship" and these all to the "divine end." (See pp. 128-134, some of which properly belong in the next set of notes.)

441. The Nexus and Connection Between the Infinite and First Finite. Having acknowledged the existence of the Infinite as the First Cause,

The mind being disembarassed of this quest, it is not surprising that it now desires to go further, and to enquire into the *nexus* or connection between the Infinite and the finite... (p. 90).

Three possibilities about the nexus are considered: whether the nexus is infinite and distinct from the first finite, or it be finite but distinct from the first finite, or of a double nature partaking of both the Infinite and finite. Each is rejected, and so

... the conclusion follows, that the Infinite is the immediate cause of the first simple (p. 93).

The principle of end, cause, and effect governs the reasoning process that justifies this. Although we do not know the nature of the nexus "whatever that may be," nevertheless "the nexus exists." A conclusion results:

The final cause cannot be primarily for the finite. Were it so, then all effects would be simply for the same, and the efficient cause would have no end to exist for Therefore the final or impelling cause cannot be in the means, but only in the end itself; nor can it terminate in the finite sphere, but only in the Infinite (pp. 95-96).

When there is acknowledgment of the final cause in the Infinite, the acknowledgment itself takes place in the finite sphere because the mind that acknowledges is finite. But since as said, the end that is in the final cause, hence in the Infinite, cannot "terminate in the finite sphere, but only in the Infinite," there is dictated a way of ends that is a circle that originates in an end in the Infinite, descending by ends to man, and in man turns and ascends back to the Infinite by ends (see Note 445).

442. The Nexus and the Only Begotten. Referring to the final sentence of the final paragraph of Chapter I of *The Principia*,

It is therefore agreeable to reason to conclude, that there would have been no love in God towards man in his unconnected and discontinuous state, but only justice, had not the Infinite and Only Begotten for this cause been made man, that in Himself as a man, and consequently through a certain connexion with Himself, He might restore a connexion with the Infinite in those who are like Him (*Principia* p. 45).

The introduction of the Only Begotten is the third condition in that paragraph whereby the broken connection between man and the Infinite and the world, described in that chapter, may be restored. While by the use of reason Swedenborg was showing that there is a nexus between the Infinite and the finite, and that the Nexus is in the Infinite (Note 441), the continuity of that reasoned argument was interrupted as follows,

First, however, let us see whether there be any source besides mere reasoning, from which we can know the existence of the nexus. To illustrate what we mean, let us suppose that some other person now tells us the same thing that we ourselves had discovered by reason; in this case we shall be bound to think that he too has discovered it by the same process. And if any one told me the same, but gave additional particulars coinciding with it, which went still more to confirm it, then it would be fair to believe, that he had reasoned more deeply, distinctly and acutely than myself; since he not only sees all that I do, and draws my conclusion, but superadds new results, of which I knew nothing, yet which are nowise at variance with mine, and therefore I have every reason to believe them. And hence the mind that would not be deceived, lays hold both of that which is concurrent with its own reasoning, and of that which other minds superadd, and which appears to be not at variance with the former (pp. 99-100).

From which he continues,

But perhaps the reader may be curious to know my drift in these remarks, and he may ask what greater degree of affirmation I want on the subject. I wish then only to draw this conclusion, that if any one tells me the same thing that I myself have arrived at, I am bound to believe him on the simple ground that I believe myself (p. 100).

As I understand it, "I believe myself" is an expression of faith in one's own ability to reason (see reason compared with tacit consent Note 439). This is present in everyone, and is present even when one takes a negative position with regard to reason itself. The valid question about reason arises in how one reasons, not that he reasons. Swedenborg's position here is not as against, nor even instead of reason, but as he wrote, "besides mere reasoning." "*Vidaemustamen prius, an aliude etiam liceat scire, quod nexus sit quam pure ex rationatione. . .*" In continuation from "that I believe myself,"

Let us now see whether God Himself, or the Infinite, has not been pleased to reveal to us this very thing; for He tells us that He had from eternity an only-begotten Son, and that this only-begotten Son is the infinite, and is God, and that the connection between the finite and the Infinite is effected by the only-begotten infinite and God; and that the Father and the Son are one God; both infinite; both the Creator of the finite universe; that both concurred in the work of creation, yet that the two are so distinct, that the one is the Father, the other, the Son; the one the first Person, the other the second; wherefore in respect to the names of Father and Son, and in respect to the word Person, they are indeed two, but in infinity and divinity they are one and the same. In this way we have here something like what reason has dictated, to wit, the existence of a nexus between the finite and the Infinite; also the declaration that the final cause belongs to the Infinite, but through the above nexus; and that the connection between the Infinite and the finite is through the Son, and through nothing else. Thus then we have an agreement of revelation with reasoning (p. 101).

Then follows a discussion with regard to an objection that might be raised involving what is mediate or immediate in creation, to which there is this conclusion:

At any rate to whatever quarter you turn, or however forcibly you entreat your reason, you will never elicit anything more, than that the nexus is infinite, and that revelation therefore coincides in declaring, that the world came forth immediately through both the Father and the Son (p. 103).

443. "Man is the ultimate effect in the world through which the divine end can be obtained." Although divine end is referred to here in an important way for our present purpose, since divine end is a principle subject in all that follows in *The Infinite*, it deserves a set of notes of its own. As to the statement that heads this note, let remarks from *The Infinite* speak for themselves.

We said above that reason would avail us to the point of knowing that there is a God, and that He is infinite; but that it would not avail to that other point, of showing His nature, or the nature of the Infinite. We said also, that reason may see as a last result of induction that there is a nexus, and that the nexus is infinite; but that it cannot know what the nexus is, simply because it is infinite We said above that the primary final cause belongs to the Infinite, or exists for the Infinite, and is obtained by finite means. For if there is a final cause at all, one for which all things exist, (which presupposes an impelling cause,) there must then be ends, i.e. a first end and a last. Such an end as the first and the last, can only exist by means of a subject which has a first, a middle, and a last term. And as the final cause cannot be obtained but by ends, it follows that it cannot be obtained but by a peculiar subject which has ends; that is to say, by the finite, or by the world considered as finite. If it can be obtained only by ends and boundaries, then there must be two finite ends, a first and a last; to say nothing of middle terms, of which we shall speak at length in another place. With respect to the first natural end, we have said that it is the first created minimum, the smallest natural seed, or the simple principle of the world. We shall now leave the middle terms, and pass at once to the last natural end, through which the divine end must be obtained; which, as respects its first cause, is the Infinite; wherefore the final cause is infinite, and therefore the same in the first end as in the last; and so the first and last cause are at one in this, that they both exist for the Infinite (pp. 103-105).

Intermediates from the First Cause to whatever the final effect we are searching for are considered. They are the finites, their actives and the atmospheres of *The Principia* theory, and also fire, water and the kingdoms of the world. But

We see then that in the subjects we have mentioned, something is still wanting, that is to say, some ultimate effect. Now

therefore let us come to man, and let us see whether all things conspire to make him the ultimate effect, through which the said divine end can be realized. In him all other things concur as means: all the elements concur to his life, to his senses, to his reasoning power, etc. (pp. 106-107).

When arriving at the animal kingdom there is hesitancy, but only temporarily, as it is admitted that man has an animal body:

... other animals too are ultimate effects, as their composition, sense, and mechanical organs appear to be similar to our own, and all the before-mentioned series concur to produce them, just as they concur to the corresponding parts and endowments in man. How then can it be said that man is the ultimate effect through which alone the end is realized, when by the showing of our very senses, the same ultimate effect is evidently presented in other living creatures also? But let us proceed a step further. The ultimate effect we are seeking must have more in it than a mere machine. And so in the ultimate mechanical or material effect of the world, there must be a power and a principle which if not active and causative, is at least admmissive or receptive, and by which the machine is enabled to acknowledge and to contemplate God. There must therefore be something that can comprehend the end, that can acknowledge the end, and acknowledge also, in the fullness of faith, that the end is infinite. Without such a power and endowment, an ultimate effect embodying the divine intention is inconceivable. But animals have not this power, nor can they have any comprehension of its object — There must be not only a body, but a soul; and not only a soul, but a conjunction between the soul and the body, and consequently a rational man. Hence rationality is given to man through the soul and body at once, that the divine end may be realized. We see therefore that man is the ultimate effect on our planet; the effect through which this grand result may be obtained (pp. 108-110).

444. "But hear now in what this divine or infinite prediction may consist." In the previous note it was explained that man is the ultimate effect in the world and now we are ready to know the why or the end of that effect. So Swedenborg goes on:

It is evident from the foregoing considerations, that man is the ultimate effect of nature, intended to realize the divine end for which the world was created But hear now in what this divine or infinite prediction may consist (pp. 110-111).

Certain possible answers that may be suggested are rejected, and then the following:

So far we find nothing divine in man. Where is that then which appears to be nowhere, and yet is necessary to realize the divine end? It ought to be present in the subject to be fairly predicated of it. We answer that in spite of any difficulties in the case, we may nevertheless learn through reason what this divine principle consists in; in short that it lies in the circumstance, that man can acknowledge, and does acknowledge, God; that he can believe, and doth believe, that God is infinite... that by that undoubting faith, he is sensible in love, or delight resulting from love, of a peculiar connection with the Infinite — Thus the true divinity in man, who is the ultimate effect in which the divine end dwells, is none other than an acknowledgment of the existence and infinity of God, and a sense of delight in the love of God (pp. 111-112).

445. The Circle of Creation and Formation. The circle represents the successive creation and formation of things according to *The Principia* theory, and thence of the three kingdoms of the world in descending order from the Infinite to man as the ultimate finite effect. When in man the divine end is obtained as developed in *The Infinite*, there is a turning from descending order to ascending order back to the Infinite.

According to the argument in *The Infinite*, as the succeeding intermediates in descending order are considered from the Infinite to man, either it is said there is nothing present in each case of a living and intelligent character (p. 106), or there is no evidence of something divine—and this last even in man as late as on page 111. But then it is explained how the divine end can be realized in man because he can acknowledge, he can love, and he can worship the Deity. To be simply created and formed, that is to be passive, but the abilities given to man make an active principle in him. Further conditions in man are spelled out:

Yet this divine principle could never be realized in man, unless his body had a soul given to it out of the purer and more perfect world, and unless reason were afforded as the fruit of the intercourse between the two with a power of concluding by self-contemplation, by the view of effects, and by everything in the world, that there is a God, and that He is infinite; although human reason cannot do this of itself, inasmuch as man, with all his parts and his very soul, is finite; notwithstanding which, he may be a fit recipient, and as he is in the finite sphere, he may concur to dispose himself for reception (p. 112).

Two things occur in that remark, other than divine principle, that point to the future of Swedenborg's philosophy. 1. *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body*, published with *The Infinite* contains things to say about the purer and more perfect world, a world beyond the world of the bodily senses. The more perfect world becomes more and more important as the search for the soul progresses. 2. Its active principle makes it possible, as is said, that man "may be a fit recipient... (and) may concur to dispose himself for reception." This is in anticipation of the subject of the spiritual man. Some particulars have appeared in earlier Notes (*New Philosophy*, Oct/Dec 1980 and July/Dec 1981).