

## TEN REFERENCES TO RATIONAL PHILOSOPHY BY NAME IN SWEDENBORG'S PHILOSOPHY

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### Introduction

Fragments of evidence indicate that as far back as 600 B.C. there were men who wondered about causes. Aristotle describes the situation in this way:

For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize; they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e.g. about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and of the stars, and about the genesis of the universe (*Metaphysics* 982b/12).

Aristotle distinguished between two kinds of men with regard to wisdom. There are those who are wise because they invent and make useful things and those who are wiser for "having...theory for themselves and knowing causes" (*ibid.*, 982b 15). Because of the practical projects in which he was engaged and his activity with inventions, Swedenborg belonged to the first class. But by publishing *The Principia* he also became a member of the second class. Nevertheless, as early as 1717 he wrote a few pages on "The Causes of Things." By 1734 when he published *The Principia*, he had written but not published a number of essays that indicate a strong philosophical tendency. So although he was beginning to write as early as 1723 on iron and copper, when *The Principia* was published in 1734, it was as volume I of a series, with *Iron* and *Copper* as volume II and III respectively. As Aristotle might have said, Swedenborg began to wonder about the origins of the metals—even "about the genesis of the universe." In spite of the order in which the volumes appear, we know that Swedenborg's state of mind had changed when we compare what he said in the preface to *Iron* and in *The Principia*. The preface to *Iron* begins,

I here present the benevolent reader with the first Part of my Mineral Kingdom, in which *Iron* is the subject treated of; it being

my intention to treat in the same way not only of the other metals, but also of the various salts and stones...[The preface is in *Principia* II, p. 369, all *Principia* references are to the Clissold edition].

whereas in *The Principia* itself, he wrote,

By philosophy is here understood the knowledge of the mechanism of our world, or of whatever in the world is subject to the laws of geometry...Under the jurisdiction of geometry are the *three kingdoms, the MINERAL, the VEGETABLE, and the ANIMAL*, and if it be permitted to call it a fourth, the ELEMENTAL (p. 2.).

"Elemental kingdom" in that place or "Elementary World" on the title page refer to the three kinds of things in the *Principia* theory: "finites," "actives of the finites," and compounds of the finites and actives called "auras," or sometimes "elementaries" or "atmospheres."

### **"Rational Philosophy" Detected in *The Principia* and Applied in *The Principia* Theory**

The elemental kingdom, specifically its origin and formation, is a cosmogony, that is, a philosophy, rather than cosmology which is a science. *The Principia* opens with these words:

If the mind [*animus*] be well connected with the organs of the senses...the soul is in the desire of being instructed by the senses...the desire after wisdom becomes the peculiar mark and characteristic of man...The sign that we are willing to be [i.e. actively will to be] wise, is the desire to know causes of things, and to investigate the secret and unknown operations of nature (p. 1).

The discussion that follows leads to what are often referred to as the three means leading to true philosophy: Experience, Geometry, and The Faculty of Reason. Stripped of its contents this list gives Swedenborg's

philosophy a naive nature. It deprives one who hears it alone of knowing that "the means leading to true philosophy" is a continuing subject of philosophy itself. Philosophy is a human effort in process.

In this place it is written by a writer of books on *Iron* and *Copper*, that is, a mineralogist-becoming-philosopher. A mineralogist as well as a philosopher requires experience, geometry, and reason. It ought to be obvious, it seems, that to be led to true philosophy requires philosophical experience, not only experience with metals. In the pages that follow (pp. 4-14) reason is used to examine experience, and instead of being experience with metals it is concerned with "causes" involving "rational investigation," reaching, even as did Aristotle, to "wisdom:"

He who is possessed of scientific knowledge, and is merely skilled in experiment, has taken only the first step to wisdom; for such a person is only acquainted with what is posterior, and is ignorant of what is prior; thus his wisdom does not extend beyond the organs of the senses, and is unconnected with reason; when nevertheless true wisdom embraces both (p. 13).

What appears in that examination (on pp. 4-14) is not geometry about minerals, still less about elementals. The subject is the nature of experience itself in relation to thought.

If we consider geometry as a form of thought rather than as only a study of static figures, then in philosophy it is given a companion called "rational investigation." And that rational investigation as a form of thought is given the name RATIONAL PHILOSOPHY. Instead of having geometry stand alone as the second of the three means leading to true philosophy, rational philosophy being detected the philosopher not as mineralogist now wrote,

The second medium leading to wisdom, by which the arcana of nature may be unlocked or revealed, is geometry and rational philosophy (p. 14).

Rational philosophy is detected as the natural (*indoles not naturum*) way of speaking in order to carry forward the examination of Experience. That is the first explicit use of "rational philosophy." The second time it appears explicitly is when the examination turns from Experience to

Geometry and Rational Philosophy, the second of the three means leading to true philosophy, as just corrected. Rational philosophy turns attention upon itself as a subject. This leads to a description of what is called "a subsequent rational principle."

That principle is more encompassing than rational philosophy, because it includes rational philosophy as one of its parts. It is said about the rational principle, that in it

all the sciences must cooperate with reason as geometry, mechanics, rational philosophy and abundant experience (p. 29).

The third explicit appearance of "rational philosophy" occurs at the beginning of Chapter II of *The Principia* where the Principia theory itself begins.

No rational and intelligent philosopher can deny that the first *ens* was produced from the Infinite, as well as the rest in succession or all the parts of which the world is composed...In a word, that the first *ens*, as also all other entities in successive derivation from it, of which the world is composed, and by which it is connected together, were produced by and from the Infinite, is almost evident from rational philosophy, from the light of nature and the intelligent soul, as well as from the Sacred Scriptures (p. 46-47).

Just as in Chapter I where rational philosophy was joined first with geometry to make the second of three means leading to true philosophy, then joined not only with geometry but also with mechanics and abundant experience to make the rational principle, now rational philosophy is included in a still larger encompassment. To continue with this reference to rational philosophy:

Rational philosophy itself acknowledges a certain connection and succession, as well as the existence of things...(p. 47).

"Rational philosophy" continues to be repeated a number of times while "geometry" as its companion develops an analogy with the "point" of

geometry to introduce what is called "the Natural Point" but more often called "first natural point or the first ens" (pp. 46-48).

Rational Philosophy is Accommodated to the Mark of the Philosophical Temper

While *The Principia* was being printed, rational philosophy received its fourth explicit reference in the first subject heading of *The Infinite The Final Cause of Creation*: "Rational Philosophy—What."

In treating of this question Swedenborg acknowledges and accommodates to the philosophers with whom,

the distinctive mark and character of the philosophical temper... [is such that] a disposition of this kind will not be withheld from sacred subjects by the dictum that they are revealed...I am speaking of things as they are, not as they ought to be; *de factis*, not *de jure*.

Why, we must ask, did Swedenborg make that accommodation to the way of the philosophers? And what was the effect upon his own philosophy?

There can be no doubt that as *The Principia* was sent to press there was a concern in his mind about the first ens called first natural point, because while describing it there arises a serious confrontation:

It may be compared to Janus with two faces...On one side is the pure Infinite into which no human mind is able to penetrate.. on the other side is the mere finite, to which we may have access...(p. 54).

There can be no doubt Swedenborg had this in mind when he wrote as the second subject heading in *The Infinite*, "The infinite is the difficulty of philosophy."

Instead of being detected as a form of thought, rational philosophy now becomes a conscious demand as accommodated to the philosophers who are "not to be withheld from sacred subjects by the dictum they are revealed." The rest of the first hundred pages of *The Infinite* (of its total of one hundred thirty-nine pages) is a reasoned argument that

the Infinite exists and that it is the Final Cause, and further that there is in it a nexus that connects that Infinite with the finite. To argue those existences by reason is not to be withheld from sacred subjects, because: To that three-fold argument (for the existence of the Infinite, for its being the Final Cause, and for its containing a nexus connecting the Infinite and the finite) there is added,

let us see, whether there be any source besides mere reasoning ["mere," not something less than but pure or only reason, i.e. reason alone], from which we can know the existence of the nexus.

And in Swedenborg the Christian-becoming-philosopher, even as when earlier he wrote as mineralogist-becoming-philosopher, philosophy is now taking its place mediate between science and revelation. Also added to or along with reason there is faith.

Let us now see whether God Himself, or the Infinite, has not been pleased to reveal to us this very thing [i.e. the nexus]; 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...(pp. 100-104).

A suggestion has been made that this takes the place of the three-fold reasoned argument. But, there is added, "thus then we have an agreement with reasoning" (p. 101).

An agreement exists between two things, not when one takes the place of another.

Why the accommodation to the philosophers whereby now, like them, Swedenborg assumes "the mark of the philosophical temper...[that] will not be withheld from sacred subjects"? Not only is there this agreement as part of the answer, but also within the long argument itself for the existence of the Infinite, etc., acknowledgment occurs, together with love and worship of the Infinite God. So the final part of *The Infinite* is devoted to: "Man is the ultimate effect in the world through which the divine end can be obtained" (p. 103) and consequences and requirements of that with regard to those who cannot acknowledge love and worship of God as according to the

argument. Nevertheless by reference to "foresight and providence" in God two subjects are treated: "**How the end may be obtained in the Gentiles**" (p. 125), and "**There are many secondary ends**" (p. 128. See "Philosophical Notes," *The New Philosophy*, Oct.-Dec. 1980).

The section of *The Infinite* marked "CONCLUSION" opens, "Let us now define the meaning of the term *natural* and *divine*...

And in that effort the stated difficulty of philosophy, namely, the infinite, returns, and an analogy is proposed: Permit me to express the analogy symbolically, as an equation:

$$a:b::c:d$$

$$a/b = c/d$$

where: a stands for the Infinite  
 b stands for the finite  
 c stands for the human soul  
 d stands for the human body  
 :: (or equals) stands for analogy

But Swedenborg says analogy is something less than demonstration:

Analogical instances illustrate, although they cannot demonstrate. Thus by the comparison of the soul and body it seems possible to gain some little light respecting the connection of the Infinite with the world (p. 137).

"In order to obtain a little light" on the "connection of the Infinite with the world"—that is what the philosopher, as philosopher, accommodates to now. And as a companion work, bound together with *The Infinite* is *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body* (hereinafter MISB), that consists of three principal parts:

1. Nine questions on what is proper philosophically with regard to the soul.
2. An introductory argument to the affirmative of the ninth question "Is the soul immortal?"
3. Thirteen general propositions to be explored, if the relation of the soul to the body is to be pursued, concluded by this promise:

The main end of these our labors will be, to demonstrate the immortality of the soul to the very senses.

It must be obvious that that promise is more encompassing than the words in the title of the work *Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body*. But thereby there is given meaning to the descriptive words of *The Infinite* and *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body* on their title page: "FORERUNNER OF A REASONED PHILOSOPHY." We can see that the essence of Swedenborg's philosophy consists of three parts, each as philosophy as a human endeavor:

1. To seek the origin of the natural universe in *The Principia—a cosmogony*
2. To turn from that by an analogy and to plan to pursue the analogy by exploring thirteen general propositions in *The Infinite* and *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body*
3. Finally "to demonstrate the immortality of the soul—which is a rational psychology in *Economy of the Animal Kingdom, Animal Kingdom, and Five Senses.*"

#### Review of the First Four Explicit References to "Rational Philosophy"

Four references have been given, three in *The Principia* and the fourth in *The Infinite*, which was given at more length because in that work and MISB, rational philosophy was accommodated as explained, and from now on it is rational psychology rather than cosmogony to which rational philosophy is applied. Six of the ten explicit references to "rational philosophy" remain. In what follows they will be considered as explained in the next two principal headings.

#### Three References to "Rational Philosophy" With Regard to "the truth of what is said"

The first of these occurs when the *Doctrine of Series and Degrees* is premised.

But whereas all things in succeeding each other follow one another in order, and whereas in the whole circle of things, from

first to last, there is not a single one which is altogether unconnected or detached from the rest; I am therefore compelled, as I said, previous to developing the subject of Rational Psychology, to take into consideration this doctrine concerning order and connection, so remarkably conspicuous in the animal kingdom (EAK I, ch. VIII, n. 579).

The number concludes with a four part criterion of the truth of what has been said and what will be said about developing rational psychology as a subject, in which "rational philosophy" plays a part.

In the mean while, whether there be truth in what has been said, and what remains to be said, may be easily ascertained from the four following considerations: *First*, In case the truth spontaneously manifests itself, and as it were establishes a belief in its presence, without requiring any support from far-fetched arguments; for we often by a common notion, and, as it were, by a rational instinct, comprehend a thing to be true, which afterwards, by a multiplicity of reasonings drawn from a confused perception of particulars unarranged and unconnected with others which are more remote from our notice, is brought into obscurity, called in question, and at last denied. *Secondly*, In case all experience, both particular and general, spontaneously favors it. *Thirdly*, In case the rules and maxims of rational philosophy do the same. *Lastly*, In case the proposed views make the different hypotheses, which have been advanced on the subject, to coincide, supplying us with the proper condition, or common principle, which brings them into order and connection, so that, contemplated in this manner, they are agreeable to the truth. We may remark that a system constructed on the ground of such an agreement, merits the title of ESTABLISHED HARMONY. But to proceed to the Doctrine of Series and Degrees (n. 579).

The second time "rational philosophy" is referred to by name is in the chapter "The Cortical Substance of the Brain" (EAK II, ch. II)—not forgetting, however, that all the while rational philosophy is in continuous operation. After the question "what is a gland?" is answered

and discussed in that chapter (see nos. 184-189), "rational philosophy" appears in n. 190, quoted in full:

190. Hence the cortical substance is not only a gland by eminence, and a muscle and a heart, but we may also justly attribute to it every denomination of substance that performs any kind of general office in the whole of its kingdom. Thus it may be called a *lung* by eminence, coinciding by its rising and falling with the respiration of the lungs: also a *womb* or *matrix*, because in an eminent manner it conceives and excludes the only living fluid: also a *stomach*, because it is by reason of it especially, in order that the fibres may be nourished, that we hunger and thirst; &c. Hence *by eminence a microcosm, when the entire body is regarded as a macrocosm*. For it contains in a manner the universals of its body, which, according to the rules of rational philosophy, enter in successive order into all specifics and particulars whatever, that is, into all lower things.

I assume that "rules of rational philosophy" refers to the doctrine of series and degrees, the criterion of truth, and the following:

In order then to ascertain and to know what that is in a superior degree which corresponds to its proper inferior, rules must be discovered to guide us in pointing it out, which we are enabled to do under any of the following circumstances. 1. In case in the several things, which are beneath any given one, and not only in the one proximately beneath, but in all which follow, it be found to be the common and universal reigning principle. 2. In case it be so distinct from the superior that it subsists by itself; or is able not only to subsist together with the other, but separately by itself without it. 3. In case it be unknown whether it be its superior correspondent, except by way of analogy and eminence; and we are ignorant of its quality except by reflection, or by the knowledge of inferior things, as in a mirror. 4. Hence in case it has to be marked by an entirely different name. 5. In case there be a connection between the two, otherwise the superior and inferior entity of that series would have no dependence on each other, or mutual relation (EAK I, n. 648).

Incidental to our purpose, thirteen examples of the application of those rules are given by title only in what immediately follows (n. 649) in which the doctrine of correspondence is implied. The rules are also repeated later in the chapter on "The Human Soul" and then applied *in extensio* to the series: senses of the body, animus, rational mind and soul (EAK II, ns. 281-287).

The third time rational philosophy is mentioned with regard to what is said is at the end of the chapter on cortical substances of the brain.

205. That the soul is the universal force and substance, diffused, that is to say, through the whole of its corporeal system, everywhere most present, the all in every part, the only substance that lives, and the first in its series, see Part I., Chapter III; and I shall also proceed to demonstrate it in the next Chapter...

The spirituous fluid is the universal substance reigning in every living system, and even in the red blood. The medullary or simplest nervous fibre in which the said fluid dwells, is the universal vessel both in the nerves and in the blood-vessels, and consequently in the whole body...

206. But it is in vain to attempt to search out the stupendous and to our minds almost inaccessible properties of the parts of this fluid, unless we instruct ourselves in the doctrine of series and degrees, and perfect it by means of the mathematical philosophy of universals, by its mute terms and technic signs infinitely more loquacious than rational philosophy by its ideal prattling and indeterminate forms. (Part I., Chapter VIII.) For when proceeding from effects we ascend to causes, and can hardly recognize how they enter effects; for they seem in these as it were to pass into properties, which have to be resolved by abstraction into unknown properties, higher and more universal, such as the mind, unless left to itself, that is to say, unless free from the continual and gross trickery which the inferior senses practice here, can scarcely acknowledge to be involved.

207. We have advanced so far that at the present day we have skill enough to exalt the sensations of the ear and eye far above themselves, or above their natural acumen, by artificial organs or instruments: it now remains for us correspondingly to exalt the mind, or the rational hearing and sight. But the only way to

accomplish this, is by the philosophy we have pointed out. This philosophy, however, must be deduced from a perpetual intuition of causes in causes and effects; a work truly requiring an immense exercise of the rational faculty, and a profound abstraction from those things that, as superinduced, affect the lower faculties. Indeed I do not recommend, when it is commenced, that anything should be finally committed to it until it be in fact matured. For unripe investigations, which have not been brought to an end, and evidently involve consequents and conclusions in antecedents, cannot fail to attach themselves to the grosser notions of things perceived by sense, and which, as being proper to generals or compounds, require to be abstracted; the want of which has given birth to error, confusion, verbal disputes, and the wranglings and dust of the schools on all high subjects.

### **Three Successive Steps Leading to "Rational Philosophy" Declaring its Own Limit**

These all occur in "The Human Soul." The first is in Swedenborg's first progress report on his search for the soul (EAK II, ch. III):

217. We may consider it as an established fact, that when any one attains the truth, all experience, both general and particular, will be in his favor, and give him its suffrage; and that all the rules and decisions of rational philosophy will naturally and spontaneously do the same; and that various systems will so come into agreement and unity with each other, that each will be confirmed thereby; for there is no system but is built upon ascertained phenomena, and upon such principles as will enable us to reconcile the higher sphere with the lower, and the spiritual with the corporeal.

By that statement it is already stated that "rational philosophy" is given its place to verify what is said. Now, however, there are some "buts." The first occurs if "one's mind remains in the lower sphere of thought." The second is that the power of reconciling lower and higher spheres is not available to all.

When truth herself walks forth to the light, and comes upon the stage, then conjectures disappear, and the spectres seen and imagined in the dark are dissipated. There is no difficulty that she does not remove; no mortal that she fears; no rock on which she founders. To her it is given to look into the holy of holies, though not to enter it; for the truth of nature, and the truth of revelation, however separate, are never at variance. But in order that the truth may be brought to light,—a consummation which we all devoutly wish,—I would observe that its habitation is so inward and exalted, that it will not permit itself to be revealed to any who are still lingering in the last and lowest sphere, but to those only who have brought their minds into the habit of thinking, who can extend, and apply, their mental vision throughout the whole order of confirmatory facts; and, in the perception of consequences, remove it far from the senses and the lower affections. But this power is not granted to all, for Cicero says: "The divine mind...has taken account for those only whom it has endowed with right reason" (*De Naturd Deorum*, lib. iii., § 27); and its exercise would at once deprive the lower faculties of their pleasant and desirable ease;—and hence may stubbornly refuse to stir a step beyond visible phenomena for the sake of the truth; and others prefer to drown their ideas in the occult at the very outset. To these two classes our demonstration may not be acceptable. For, in regard to the former, it asserts, that the truth is to be sought far beyond the range of the eye; and, in regard to the latter, that in all the nature of things there is no such thing as an occult quality; in fact there is nothing but is either already the subject of demonstration, or capable of becoming so (n. 217).

Thus does rational philosophy play its part in Swedenborg's philosophy, but with these "buts" there is a warning if the power to reconcile lower things with higher is not given to one: Reasons follow why the human mind can see that we have a soul. One of these is the extended treatment of what is introduced in section VI of "The Human Soul," the induction number of which begins,

*There are, then, two distinct principles that determine this spirituous fluid assumed as the soul; the one, natural, by which it is enabled to exist and be moved in the world; the other, spiritual, by which it is enabled to live and be wise: of these a third, a properly its own, is compounded; namely, the principle of determining itself into acts suitably to the ends of the universe...(269-271).*

This is followed by a description in descending order from the soul to the intellectual mind, then to the animus, and finally to the organs of the five senses (nos. 275-280). But there is the condition in the heading of n. 276 with reference to the spirituous fluid as the soul.

*And as it is the soul, it is seated so high above all the other faculties, that is their order, truth, rule, law, science, art...*

It is in treatment of that that the second step occurs in which rational philosophy declares its own limit:

In a word, unless the soul were science itself, there could be no sensation, no volition, that is, no affection. That we possess a soul with more knowledge than we believe, is obvious from the very nature of the mind, in which a kind of highly rational philosophy and a peculiar logic appears as it were connate from the first beginning of our sensations, and which is perfected in proportion to the growth of the understanding (n. 276).

By that reference to "rational philosophy" there is an important condition imposed on us who would wish to understand Swedenborg's philosophy. We must think with him, become a philosopher with him. All the books in the world and the best teachers cannot instruct us. There is that "if," the if so important in the way of "if...then...," so prominent explicitly in mathematics, specifically in geometry as a companion with rational philosophy as a form of thought:

If we would acquire these sciences, and cast them into the mould of learning, we must enter into ourselves, and diligently reflect upon all the operations of our mind: then the more deeply we reflect, the higher we shall penetrate into their secrets. Thus the

more we are instructed out of ourselves, the wiser philosophers do we become.

What nonsense would result if we confuse "instructed out of ourselves" in order to make with Swedenborg his explanation of the intercourse between the soul and the body, with ourselves as the source of truth, two very different things. What better source for knowing what sensation in general means than by knowing that the bodily senses are exterior senses, imagination is interior sensation and that one of the aspects of understanding is inmost sensation (see title of epilogue to *The Five Senses*) which leads to when the soul concurs (see *The Infinite* p. 96). Even if we ourselves are deficient in the ability to do so, we can learn from others if they have done so—Swedenborg for example, when we acknowledge his philosophy as a case history of lived philosophy. It is by that means that he wrote the induction number to section VII of "The Human Soul."

288. The genuine progression in descending and ascending appears to be in this wise. As the forms of the modulations or sounds of the air in the ear are to the forms of modifications or images of the ether in the eye, or in the animus; so are the latter to the forms of the superior modifications in the mind, which forms are termed intellectual and rational ideas, in so far as they are illuminated by the light of the soul; and so again are these forms of the mind to similar supreme forms, inexpressible by words, in the soul, which forms are termed intuitive ideas of ends, in so far as they are illuminated by the life of the first cause.

Let this be represented by:

a:b::b:c::c:d::[d:e]

The final ratio is not referred to in n. 288. That comes later. For now let:

"a" represent "forms of mutations of the air in the ear;"

"b" represent "images of the ether in the eye," or in the animus;

"c" represent "superior modifications in the mind, which forms are termed intellectual and rational ideas, in so far as they are illuminated by the light of the soul;"

"d" represent forms of the soul, "similar supreme forms, inexpressible by words in the soul, which forms are termed intuitive ideas of ends, in so far as they are illuminated by the life of the first cause."

[A mathematical equation is not a mathematical philosophy of universals, but points to the idea of a mathematical philosophy of universals. At least it is a symbol and as to its representation is "loquacious" (see EAK II, n. 206).]

All of what is said in *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* with relation to that progression, of analogies as represented by equations, and what will be said up to the induction number of section IX in "The Human Soul," is referred to in the first clause of that number;

*From the foregoing consideration we may infer the nature of the intercourse between the soul and the body...(301a, 301.)*

And it is in the section so introduced that the tenth and final appearance of "rational philosophy" occurs by name although rational philosophy continues to exist by use up to the very end of Swedenborg's philosophy. If we examine the representation of a, b, and c in the above equations we can understand the second sentences of n. 309, the number where "rational philosophy" occurs:

The mere senses, as hearing and sight, considered in themselves, partake in no respect of understanding or reason...

The term "intuitive" begins to play an important part in the series from body to soul. See for example in the induction number to section VII quoted above: "intuitive ideas of ends." Following what has been just quoted from n. 309:

Thus the sound of the ear, or the image of the eye, is so ordered, as to fall under the intuition of the soul, and to ascend from

degree to degree, as it were up the steps of a ladder. If we duly ponder and penetrate these facts, we shall see clearly, that the form induced on sounds and images by distinct articulations, is in reality different from sense considered in itself; and that it is as it were a sense in a sense, not inherent in sense, but additional to it, and which can exist either conjointly with it, or separately, and without it; or that material sense performs as it were the part of an instrument and vehicle.

We are brought to the point of knowing this about the soul:

Now when this intuitive faculty of the human soul is carried to still higher degrees, the very form of words, from which the soul has drawn and sublimed a sense and essence, must be viewed as a simple idea, and again must be copulated with numerous other forms, as so many quasi-simple ideas, so as to result in a certain sublimer form, which ascends and penetrates still higher, and nearer to the intuition of the soul. From these compound forms, again regarded as simple, and associated with other similar forms, as still sublimer form is produced; and so on; until in fact forms of words can no longer be furnished by any of the devices or periphrases of speech; for in this way ideas climb above the sphere of the mind, and approach to the representations and intuitions of the soul. This is the reason why the soul itself, beholding things at once most singularly and universally, cannot descend pure, or without the aid of a mind, into speech, or forms of words.

So now for the purpose of these remarks on the explicit reference to "rational philosophy" the tenth and final one is this:

Thus if any enunciation proper to the soul itself, were produced before the mind's understanding, not a single formula of such enunciation would be understood, because every one of them would climb above the terms of rational philosophy: and still less would a series of such formulae be understood. Wherefore the speech of the soul is really angelic speech, and the mind

cannot represent it to itself except by a kind of mathematical doctrine of universals, of which we have spoken above.

From being detected in *The Principia*, applied in *The Principia* theory and then in the chapters on "The Cortical Substance of the Brain and the Human Soul," rational philosophy bows out with what is proper to the soul itself as to its nature or quality. Ever since the promise was made near the end of *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body* "to demonstrate the immortality of the soul to the very senses," the subject has been "The Reasoned Philosophy" referred to on the title page of *The Infinite* and *The Mechanism of the Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body*. That subject is Rational Psychology. At this point in "The Human Soul" Swedenborg's philosophy is only half way through rational psychology, in so far as he was permitted to pursue it—interrupted by the call to become revelator.

The first reference to what is proper to the soul itself says:

Now if any one enter into the operations of his mind by somewhat of sublimer thought (which we may do inasmuch as we possess a soul that is above the mind), he will not obscurely observe, that an inferior rational sight flows into every single word, and into every single form of words. For we represent to ourselves articulate sounds under an image not unlike that which enters by way of the eye: wherefore this conception of words is called imagination, and is in the degree next above hearing; as the visual image is above sounds, or the ether above the air. Again, by farther reflection we observe, that into these images, or objects of the imagination, which are the same as the objects of memory, there flows from a still higher source a higher intellectual light, by which the things imagined or comprehended under a limited form, are perceived still more highly and abstractedly: this is the origin of thought, which is a faculty of the mind, so distinct from imagination, which is a faculty of the animus, that the two can exist either conjointly or separately. By the faculty of thought we approach still nearer to the supreme intuitions of the soul, although to its very general intuitions. In fact, neither this faculty nor thought can exist and subsist unless a certain light flows from the soul into the sphere of its thoughts,

namely, into that of the mind: a subject of which we have spoken above.

Now if we consider how the intellectual light of the soul flows in (for the light of the soul is twofold, as regarding both the mind and the animus, in which respect it is distinguished by degrees of universality), it will be seen from the causes above explored, that this light travels by the same path as every sensation viewed in itself. For it inflows in one only manner, but according to the accommodate disposition of the parts constituting the fibres; or according to the fibres themselves, and their degrees and forms: also according to the more perfect or imperfect state induced upon them by habit and nature. This is the reason why we are conscious of those things that we think and imagine. Thus then according to our proposition, the intercourse between the soul and body may be ascertained by a diligent and rational anatomical investigation combined with psychological experience (309.).

The second refers to the relation "d/e" added to the series of equations representing analogies in the induction number 288 to section V. Let us read the final sentence of section V.

Whether, therefore in the very beginning, or at the creation of things, there may have been an essential union of the spirit of God with created subjects, as in the first man; and afterwards an influxion of virtue, so that things created might thus conspire most perfectly to the end of the universe; is a question too lofty for the understanding, and it would therefore be more prudent and proper to entertain no determinate thoughts upon the subject (n. 268).

In the relation of "d/e" where "d" as before stands for "inexpressible by words, in the soul..." and "e" is now given "the spirit of God with created subjects" as in n. 268, the relation of "d/e" would seem to be impossible to consider philosophically. Yet Swedenborg's philosophy in passing from n. 309 to n. 310 has arrived at the acknowledgment in its first sentence,

If this spirituous fluid does not live its own life, and still less is wise with its own wisdom; but with His who alone is life and wisdom, we shall look in vain in ourselves for a self intelligent soul. To find this we must go beyond and above created nature... (310)

Efforts to do so from history are referred to, but each on its part arrived at a difficulty. Yet Swedenborg wrote,

All these opinions combine to form a perfect unity, when we gain a clear perception of life or wisdom as distinct from nature, and *vice versa*; also when we acknowledge the omnipresence and universal influx of God in all created things according to the modified character and capacity of each (part II, ch. III, sec. V; and ns. 270, 271.).

We should recall that the analogy proposed in the conclusion to *The Infinite*, was done *cum moderamine*,

Thus by a comparison of the soul and body it seems possible to gain some little light respecting the connection of the Infinite with the world (p. 137.).

### **Two References to "Rational Philosophy" From Two Different Translations of *Spiritual Diary***

In the 1885 edition, we read,

As concerns philosophy, its every department has had no other effect than to darken men's minds, and thus to close the way to the intuition of interior things, at the same time also of universal [truths], for it stops short (*consistit*) in mere terms, and in disputes concerning them; besides rational philosophy [so called], which so confines the ideas (*alios*) that the mind cleaves only to materialisms (*particularibus*—note, n. 295); thus to mere dust.

The reading in the 1965 edition is,

As regards philosophy, every phase of this subject has hitherto done nothing else than to darken minds, and so has closed the way to the intuition of interior things and also of universals, for it consists of terms alone, and of disputes concerning them. Contrary to a rational philosophy, it so constrains ideas that the mind sticks fast only in particulars, and thus in dust.

There is much difference between "besides rational philosophy [so called]" and "contrary to a rational philosophy."