

The New Philosophy.

A Journal devoted to the exposition of the philosophy presented in the scientific, philosophical and theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Vol. 1.

URBANA, OHIO, APRIL, 1878.

No. 2.

THREE VIEWS OF CREATION.

Two general positions are held in regard to the origin of nature. One is that God created nature, and the other is that matter is eternal. The doctrine of Creation by God, as usually held, is that which has been deduced from the Mosaic account in Genesis. This teaches that God created the universe and all things therein out of nothing, by simply saying, let it be, and it came into existence. Still, Moses never says that they were created out of nothing. This view is tersely put in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, as follows: "The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, *make of nothing*, the world and all things therein for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good." This view of creation rests on the blind faith in the infinite power of God, without any idea of the manner of creation. It simply asserts as a fact that God made the world and all things therein out of nothing in six days. So long as men accepted theological tenets without distinct thought concerning them, this doctrine was generally received throughout the Christian Church. At that time any suggested difficulty was swept aside by the saying that "to God all things are possible," or that "we must keep our understanding under obedience to faith." These replies were sufficient to silence any queries that asked how something could be made out of nothing; or that suggested that out of nothing nothing could be made; or that brought up any apparent inconsistencies in the Mosaic account.

During the latter half of the last century and the present one men have laid aside the fear of ecclesiastical censure, and have begun to examine these questions in the light of their natural reason. By means of the facts of science, especially of astronomy and geology, they have been led to reject one thing after another of this theory of the origin of nature. First, geology showed that the earth had been formed, not six thousand years ago, but millions of years ago. Archeology showed that man had existed on the earth for much more than six thousand years. Geology also showed that instead of the world being created in six days of twenty-

four hours each, it took ~~millions of~~ years to bring it into condition to be inhabited by man.

When men began to realize the force of the vast array of facts gathered by the researches of geologists, they saw, also, that creation in six days of twenty-four hours each was not true. The literal accuracy of the Mosaic account of creation was thus rejected. It was also seen that in the production of the effects seen in nature the law of cause and effect universally prevails. Means are used to accomplish ends. The power that produces the result works by tangible means, and thence came the belief that the things of the world did not spring into existence in a moment, out of nothing. These and similar ideas, born from modern sciences, have completely destroyed the old view of creation out of nothing in six days. Now the theologians believe the six days were six geological periods of immense duration; but they have not yet found a substitute for the "nothing" out of which the universe was made.

The human mind needs some explanation of the origin of the universe to satisfy its higher rational and spiritual faculties. This is shown by many things. Every religion, whatever be its quality, makes some attempt to solve this problem. Philosophers in all ages have given it much of their attention. Now that scientists have destroyed a faith in the old statement, they are not content without setting forth a new solution to this problem.

Let us examine the position which is now taken as the alternative to that of the old theology. One great advance over the old view that scientists have now made is that effects in nature are traced to causes, and these again to their causes, in a continued series. Thus the rational mind now enters into the consideration of the subject, and endeavors by a course of reasoning to find out the first cause or origin of all things. It is still a question whether science has offered a rational solution or not. Geology traces back the history of the earth, showing that as we go back in long ages of time the higher forms of life disappear, and then the lower, until at length no forms of life existed.

Astronomy takes up the problem, and, in theory at least, supposes that in the remote past the earth—yea, the sun and entire system—existed as a vast nebulous mass of matter, from which, by the operation of natural laws, all the complicated and wonderful forms of matter, living and dead, have in course of time been evolved.

When we push back our inquiries farther, and ask, whence came all this vast quantity of matter? Whence came the energy stored up in it? Did it possess all the energy manifested in the universe from that time to this? We elicit the reply that matter is eternal. That is, it never was created. The original nebula, also, must have possessed a much greater quantity of energy than now exists in our system, for it has lost much owing to radiation. But how this energy originated cannot be explained. Another important question in regard to this eternal matter is, did it possess life, intelligence, wisdom, and a mind to plan, reason, and adapt means to an end? To this a negative answer must be given. Thence we see that dead matter with no power to think, reason, adapt means to an end, by mere physical and chemical properties, chanced to produce, not only the complicated and wonderful varieties of substances in nature, with their laws of inter-relation; but also all living things, and in man the qualities of intellect and will, with all that they involve. Thus life was created by death, intellect and wisdom by a condition worse than idiocy and stupidity, by even their absence. Affection, love, thought, knowledge, friendship, yea, all moral and spiritual qualities were created by dead matter. Thus, whilst criticising the old cosmogony for teaching that an infinite and omnipotent God created the world out of nothing, scientists make dead matter, possessing neither wisdom, intelligence nor will power, the creator of qualities that did not previously exist either in or out of itself; which is practically the same doctrine held by the theologians of the creation of something from nothing. Science as a destroyer of irrational doctrines has shown itself a veritable giant; but as a builder of a system of doctrine which explains the origin of the universe in a satisfactory manner, it makes a complete failure, falling into the same error as its antagonist; yea, descending to more absurd propositions by affirming that a dead cause produced all things, including living and intelligent agents.

If these two explanations of creation were the only ones available for the cultivation of the rational power of the race, its mental food would indeed be as nourishing to the mind as inorganic matter would be to its body. The New Philosophy of Swedenborg, however, supplies that which is lacking in both the former systems. Let us,

then, compare this system with the other two. The Old Theology, indeed, begins with a living omnipotent God, but it separates him from the created universe by a gulf which the rational mind cannot pass. Science in general, in its theories, eliminates God from creation. Some scientists, indeed, acknowledge God as Creator. Still, there remains with them the same impassable gulf which the rational mind cannot cross. The New Philosophy, however, makes the connection which can be appreciated by reason, and which is in harmony with revelation and with the facts of science. The Old Theology begins with the Creator, at the top of the ladder of causation; but it does not possess the rounds of the ladder which connect it with nature. Hence, in endeavoring to descend, it falls down headlong. Science begins at the bottom of the ladder and endeavors to ascend to the first cause; but because it does not possess these intermediate steps of the ladder of causation, it remains on the lowest round of the ladder, and seeks for all causes in the region of dead matter.

Swedenborg, as a scientist and philosopher, began on the lowest round of the ladder by investigating the properties and laws of matter. He recognized God as the highest, the origin of all things, and he searched diligently for the intermediate rounds of the ladder which make the connection between God and nature. By searching, he discovered, as a philosopher, the degrees of ascent that exist in nature; and, as a theologian, the degrees of ascent above nature were revealed to him; by the union of which a connected series of steps of ascent exists, which connects God, the Most High, with the lowest things of earth, His footstool. The minds of men and of angels can rationally perceive by these steps how all things, from highest to lowest, are connected in a series of end cause and effect.

As a philosopher, Swedenborg laid down, or rather discovered, the principles by which this ascent from lowest to highest can be made. In his work on the Animal Kingdom he says:

“I intend to examine physically and philosophically the whole anatomy of the body. . . I purpose afterwards to give an introduction to Rational Psychology, consisting of *certain new doctrines*, through the assistance of which we may be conducted, from the material organism of the body, to a knowledge of the soul, which is immaterial. These are the Doctrine of Forms; the Doctrine of Order and Degrees; also, the Doctrine of Series and Society; the Doctrine of Influx; the Doctrine of Correspondence and Representation; lastly, the Doctrine of Modification.”—n. 14.

By these doctrines, which we expect to treat of more fully and distinctly at another time, Sweden-

borg, in the doctrine of series, gives the law and order of successive production from the first to the last of each thing. He shows that all things are connected in order from first to last, and the first proceeds according to order, through intermediates, to the last. This can be shown by illustrations throughout nature. The sun acts into all things of the solar system, but it acts through the intermediate atmospheres, and it can produce no effect directly on the lowest, all its powers are communicated by the vibratory motions of the atmospheres. Remove these intermediate means, and the sun would cease to produce any effect in the universe; gravitation itself would cease, according to his philosophy.

Another principle brought forth by Swedenborg is the doctrine of degrees. There are two kinds of degrees, namely, degrees of altitude and degrees of latitude. The nature of degrees of latitude is shown where there is more or less of the same kind, as, for instance, the air in its ascent becomes rarer, but it is still air, possessing the same qualities. The nature of degrees of altitude may be illustrated by the difference between air and ether. In this case air is on a lower plane. Air, be it ever so rarified, never becomes ether. It is distinctly different, and thence we say there is a discrete degree between them. Now, in the ascent toward real causes, there must be an ascent through discrete degrees. As we ascend in degree we come to more sublime and powerful forces and causes. In the lowest atmosphere, by its motions, we find wind and sound, and by its pressure are produced various effects. If we ascend into the ether we come to more subtle forces and to superior powers. These could not be exerted unless the ether were a substantial medium, but yet its presence is not manifest except by its effects, so that it is even yet regarded as a theoretical entity, because it cannot be weighed, measured or investigated by the senses. Yet in and by this intangible medium we see manifested the forces of the sun in the form of heat, light and electricity.

Subtle and intangible as is the ether, Swedenborg teaches that there is a still more subtle medium, a higher degree of matter, a round still higher in the ladder of causation, an atmosphere which he calls the aura. This atmosphere, being still purer, is the seat of higher powers. The forces of the sun flow immediately into this atmosphere, and are

communicated through it to the lower. It is also the medium by which magnetism and gravitation act. It also has numerous functions connected with the interior structures of the human body, and especially in the operation of the brain.

We mention these things to show in a general way an ascent in perfection by discrete degrees. Without a knowledge of these degrees no one can gain a true conception of the real causes of things, for by them we can ascend, step by step, to perceive the seat and origin of the forces of nature.

These atmospheres, however, are only media. The force itself is in the sun. All material forces are derived from this origin. The natural sun, however, derives all its powers from the spiritual sun. In the spiritual world, likewise, there are three discrete degrees of ascent in altitude and in perfection, by which an ascent is made to the spiritual sun, which is the first emanation or production from God. Briefly stated, therefore, Swedenborg's philosophy begins at the Centre, an infinite and omnipotent Divine Man, possessing infinite love, wisdom and power. By emanation from Him were produced all lower substances in the spiritual world, and all materials in the natural world. By successive mediations through atmospheres in both worlds, He communicates all the forces and powers that exists in them, and He continually operates into and sustains all things in the order in which they were created. Swedenborg, therefore, shows to us in a philosophical form the ladder of connection between God and man, which was representatively shown in Jacob's dream, when he saw "a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and behold the Lord stood above it."—Genesis, xxviii:12,13.

In the three philosophical systems that we have mentioned, the first takes an arbitrary God, working in an arbitrary way, as the Creator of the universe; the second takes a mechanical thing, working in a mechanical way, as the creator of all things; but the third shows an intelligent Being, working through a connected series of causes and effects, from first to last, through degrees of substances as media, to produce the results in visible and invisible nature. Which is the most reasonable and worthy of belief?

Darwin's Facts Illustrating Swedenborg's Philosophy.

An exceedingly interesting illustration of Swedenborg's philosophy is afforded by the researches of Darwin into the growth of plants.

In his work on "The Power of Movement in

Plants" he published the results of his characteristically careful observations on a number of plants, the sum total of which was, that every plant-organ is continually moving in a spiral. Others had ob-

served this movement before him, and had called it "revolving nutation." But he substituted the more convenient term "circumnutation."

"All the parts or organs in every plant, whilst they continue to grow, and some parts which are provided with pulvini after they have ceased to grow, are continually circumnutating. This movement commences even before the young seedling has broken through the ground."

Rootlets under ground describe this movement, as well as parts above ground. "If we look, for instance, at the great acacia tree, we may feel assured that every one of the innumerable growing shoots is constantly describing small ellipses, as in each petiole, sub-petiole and leaflet. The latter, as well as ordinary leaves, generally move up and down in nearly the same vertical plane, so that they describe very narrow ellipses. The flower-peduncles are likewise circumnutating. If we could look beneath the ground, and our eyes had the power of the microscope, we should see the tip of each rootlet endeavoring to sweep in small ellipses or circles, as far as pressure of the surrounding earth permitted. All this astonishing amount of movement has been going on, year after year, since the time when, as a seedling, the tree first emerged from the ground."

This interesting movement in plants is so closely associated with their growth that this may be said to depend upon it. The cause for the movement has been sought in vain. It is of interest to reproduce what Darwin himself says about it:

"Until recently the cause of all such bending movements was believed to be due to the increased growth of the side, which becomes for a time convex; that this side does temporarily grow more quickly than the concave side has been well established; but De Vries has lately shown that such increased growth follows a previously increased state of turgescence on the convex side. In the case of parts provided with a so-called joint, cushion or pulvinus, which consists of an aggregate of small cells that have ceased to increase in size from a very early age, we meet with similar movements; and here, as Pfeffer has shown and as we shall see in the course of this work, the increased turgescence of the cells on opposite sides is not followed by increased growth. Wiesner denies in certain cases the accuracy of De Vries' conclusion about turgescence, and maintains that the increased extensibility of the cell-walls is the more important element. That such extensibility must accompany increased turgescence, in order that the part may bend, is manifest, and this has been insisted on by several botanists; but in the case of unicellular plants it can hardly fail to be the more important element. On the whole, we may at present con-

clude that increased growth, first on one side and then on another, is a secondary effect, and that the increased turgescence of the cells, together with the extensibility of their walls, is the primary cause of the movement of circumnutation."

"Why every part of a plant whilst it is growing, and in some cases after growth has ceased, should have its cells rendered more turgescient and its cell-walls more extensile first on one side and then on another, thus inducing circumnutation, is not known."—(Darwin: *The Power of Movement in Plants*, pp. 2, 3, 546.)

This frank avowal on the part of Darwin is in reality an acknowledgment that the real and primary cause of circumnutation has not been discovered. Indeed, to one who has read Swedenborg's all-embracing philosophy concerning the causes and forces of life, Darwin would appear to have mistaken effect for cause. The turgescence can be considered merely in the light of a contributing cause, a means,—indeed as a first effect of the real cause, and not itself the real cause of the circumnutation.

In the angelic philosophy revealed to the New Church it is made known that the forces that fashion the forms of plants, and therefore that produce the movement of their growth, are to be found in the conatus, flow and motion of the least forms that make up the more subtle atmospheres called the ethers. This conatus, however, does not originate in the ethers themselves, but is traceable back to the spiritual forces, or atmospheres that proceed from the sun of the spiritual world. The determination of these spiritual forces and their continual operation into the natural forces or ethers, and through them into the matters of the earth, of which the plants are composed, causes the growth-movement of plants and fashions and molds their forms.—(See *Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1209.)

The flow of the natural forces, or ethers, is shown in Swedenborg's "Principia," in a most exhaustive treatment of the subject, to be spiral. This spiral flow of the ethers, operating into the matters of the earth, as these are being absorbed by the plant, inevitably carries them into the sweep of the spiral movement, so beautifully described in Darwin's work.

A crude picture of this plastic power of the ethers is presented in the lower forces of nature, air and water. Look, for example, at the action of the swirl of waters excavating such "pot-holes" as are frequently seen in the tracks of mountain torrents, or of glaciers, where the spiral grinding of rock on rock, by the water's force, evidences its inherent, peculiar and irresistible motion. Or, regard the twistings of splintered wood and iron left after the cyclone's visitation. These violent forces,

exerted by water and air, mirror forth the subtler forces of the ethers, that fashion the pliant, tender substance of the growing plant, and imperceptibly carry it around in their spiral currents.

Rather than assign to turgescence the rôle of cause for the bending of the tender plant substance, we should view it as the effect of the bending by the ethers, the cells accumulating on the outer side by a constant law in the economy of nature to fix the curve so drawn.

The tendency of the ethers themselves is to a perfect spiral, but this is necessarily modified by the fixed fulcra of the plant-organs, and by many particular circumstances, described in Darwin's book.

The beautiful spirals are a familiar sight in the case of climbing plants. Darwin says: "Climbing plants, whilst young, circumnate in the ordinary manner, but as soon as the stem has grown to a certain height, which is different for different species, it elongates rapidly, and now the amplitude of the circumnutating movement is immensely increased, evidently to favour the stem catching hold of a support. The stem also circumnutates rather

more equally to all sides than in the case of non-climbing plants. This is conspicuously the case with those tendrils which consist of modified leaves, as these sweep wide circles, whilst ordinary leaves usually circumnate nearly in the same vertical plane. Flower-peduncles, when converted into tendrils, have their circumnutating movement in like manner greatly increased."—(Page 559.)

Here are instances that can easily be watched by old and young. Those who desire to make observations on other plants, where the movement is so minute as to be unnoticed, will find in Darwin's book a complete description of his very simple but effective devices for noting such movements. The book consists, for the most part, of a wealth of detailed information of his experiments in the case of a great variety of plants, and the diagrams alone are worth studying, as completely confirmatory of the doctrine of the New Church concerning the motion of the forces of nature, as ultimations of the spiritual forces above nature.

EUGENE J. E. SCHRECK.

Detroit, Mich.

The Publication of Swedenborg's Scientific Works.

THE NEW EDITION OF THE PRINCIPIA.

The Convention's Committee on the New Edition of the Principia will have substantial progress to report at the coming meeting of the Convention. The work attempted this year has been wholly preparatory in sounding the current feeling and knowledge in scientific and educational circles generally regarding the work, to learn how far the work is at present known to leading scientists and institutions of learning, and how ready a welcome they would give to a new edition—the object of the movement being not merely to print the work, but to get it actually into the hands of scholars and scientific workers everywhere. This preliminary correspondence with a view to rousing an interest in Swedenborg's scientific hypothesis as having a direct bearing on present day problems, has seemed an important step, aside from the matter of obtaining subscriptions in advance. The replies from learned institutions and individuals in this country have thus far been quite satisfactory, and those from England and Scotland are just beginning to come in. An important question for the committee to consider at its next meeting will be that of the avenue of publication and the new editorship; how far the work had better undergo modifications in translation, and be furnished with illustrative notes relating to modern science. In so important

a work it is better to go slowly, and to have in mind accomplishing the widest and most important use.

Washington, D. C.

FRANK SEWALL,
Chairman Com.

THE REPUBLICATION OF SWEDENBORG'S PRINCIPIA.

The following circular has been issued by the Committee of the Convention. This circular contains the contents of the Principia, and some opinions of scientific men given below:

That portion of Swedenborg's Opera Philosophica et Mineralia entitled Principia Rerum Naturalium, published originally in Leipzig, in 1734, and in English translation in London, 1845, "being new attempts toward a philosophical explanation of the elementary world," a work which, besides anticipating the Nebular theory generally attributed to Kant and Laplace (see article, by M. Nyrén, in Vierteljahrschrift der Astron. Gesellschaft, 1879, p. 81), contains the treatises on magnetism and on the evolution of motions and forms, which have elicited the admiration of many eminent scholars and philosophers, being now out of print, a committee of gentlemen, having in view the republication of the work, respectfully ask for the following items of information:

I. Does your own library or that of the insti-

tution with which you are connected contain a copy of the Principia of Swedenborg in either Latin or English?

II. Would a copy of the new edition be desired?

III. Are you already familiar to any extent with the contents of the work?

IV. If so, what importance do you attach to it, historically, or as bearing upon the sciences of today?

For the committee,

JOHN R. SWANTON, Cor. Sec.

1 Regent Street, Roxbury, Mass.

CONTENTS OF THE PRINCIPIA.

Part I.—Chapters I. On the means which conduce to true philosophy, and on the true philosopher;—II. A philosophical argument concerning the first simple from which the world, with its natural things, originated; that is, concerning the first natural point, and its existence from the Infinite;—III. A philosophical argument on the First or Simple Finite, and its origin from points;—IV. A philosophical enquiry concerning the Second Finite, and the manner in which it derives its origin successively from the Simple Finite. Also, general observations on its coexistent which we have denominated the Active of the First Finite; and on the manner in which it is geometrically derived from the First and Simple Finite;—V. Observations specifically on the Active of the First Finite; on its origin from the First Simple Finite; on its motion, figure, state, and other attributes and modifications; showing that this Active is one, and constitutes the sun of our system; that, in like manner it forms the first elementary particles;—VI. On the first and most universal element of the mundane system, or the first elementary particle compounded of Finites and Actives; of its motion, figure, attributes, and modes; of its origin and composition from the Second Finite and the Active of the First Finite; of its constituting the solar and stellar vortices;—VII. On the Actives of the Second and Third Finites; VIII. On the Third Finite or substantial;—IX. On the second or magnetic element of the world; that is, of the next elementary particle composed of Third Finites and of the Actives of the Second and First Finites. Of its motion, figure, attributes, and modes. That this element, together with the former, constitutes the solar vortex and is the one which principally contributes to the phenomena of the magnet;—X. On the existence of the sun and the formation of the solar vortex.

Part II.—Chapters I. On the causes and mechanism of the magnetic forces; II. On the attrac-

tive forces of two or more magnets, and the ratio of the forces to the distances;—III. On the attractive forces of two magnets when their poles are alternated;—IV. On the attractive forces of two magnets when their axes are parallel, or when the equinoctial of the one lies upon the equinoctial of the other;—V. On the disjunctive and repulsive forces of two or more magnets when the cognominal or inimical poles are applied to each other;—VI. On the attractive forces of the magnet and of iron;—VII. On the influence of the magnet upon ignited iron;—VIII. On the quantity of exhalations from the magnet, and their penetration through hard bodies, etc.;—IX. On the various modes of destroying the power of the magnet; and on the chemical experiments made with it;—X. On the friction of the magnet against iron, and on the force communicated from the former to the latter;—XI. On the conjunctive force of the magnet, as exercised upon several pieces of iron;—XII. On the operation of iron and of the magnet, upon the mariner's needle; and on the reciprocal operation of one needle upon another;—XIII. On other methods of making iron magnetic;—XIV. The declination of the magnet, calculated upon the foregoing principles;—XV. On the causes of the magnetic declination;—XVI. Calculation of the declination of the magnet for the year 1722, at London.

Part III.—Chapters I. Comparison of the sidereal heaven with the magnetic sphere;—II. On the diversities of worlds;—III. The philosophical argument resumed concerning the Fourth Finite, and its origin from the second elementary particle;—IV. Of the universal solar and planetary chaos, and its separation into planets and satellites;—V. On the ether or third element of the world;—VI. On the Fifth Finite;—VII. On the air or fourth element of our system;—VIII. On fire, or the Actives of the Fourth, Fifth, and following Finites;—IX. On water or the purely material Finite;—X. On aqueous vapor or the fifth element of the world;—XI. On the vortex surrounding the earth, and the earth's progression from the sun to the circle of its orbit;—XII. On the paradise formed upon our earth, and on the first man; Appendix;—Preface to the Treatise on Iron, in Swedenborg's "Mineral Kingdom;" Preface to the Treatise on Copper, in Swedenborg's "Mineral Kingdom."

SOME OPINIONS OF SCIENTIFIC MEN AND SCHOLARS.

"The work of Swedenborg [the Principia] which you were so kind as to put into my hands, is an extraordinary production of one of the most extraordinary men certainly that has ever lived. . . . This much I can truly say, that the air of

mysticism which is generally thought to pervade Baron Swedenborg's ethical and theological writings has prevented philosophers from paying that attention to his physical productions, of which I now see they are worthy. Many of the experiments and observations on magnetism presented in this work are believed to be of much more modern date and are unjustly ascribed to much more recent writers."—Professor Patterson, of the University of Pennsylvania, in a letter to Dr. Atlee.

"The immense essay which fills the first volume of the *Opera Philosophica et Mineralia* [that is, the *Principia*], excited only a sort of stupid wonder, but the practical utility of the two other volumes was at once recognized by the learned. 'We should never be able to finish,' says a good judge, professor Schleiden, 'if we should attempt to enumerate all the improvements which Swedenborg introduced in the working of the mines of his native country, and it would be impossible to say how great were his merits in promoting the industry and the arts of Sweden.'"—M. Matter, Honorary Counsellor of the University of Paris, *Vie de Swedenborg*.

"I shall content myself with saying that in the whole of the work [*Opera Philosophica et Mineralia*, of which the *Principia* forms the first part] there is such an abundance of new truths, and of physical, mathematical, chemical, and mineralogical knowledge, as would be more than sufficient to establish the reputation of several different writers."—Marquis de Thomé, *Journal Encyclopédique*, Sept. 1, 1785, Vol. VI., Part 2.

"When first we proposed to ourselves a thorough and systematic study of the *Principia*, we were little prepared to find that the fundamental facts and principles forming the nucleus of each of the sciences of sidereal astronomy, cosmogony, terrestrial magnetism, and others, discovered and elaborated since his time, are to be found in this single work fully, clearly and explicitly stated."—Samuel Beswick, Commentator of Swedenborg, *Intellectual Repository* of 1850, page 212.

"It cannot be disputed that the real germ of the nebular hypothesis, namely, that the entire solar system has formed itself out of a single chaotic mass which rolled itself at first into a colossal sphere and afterwards threw off a ring which then through continued rotation at length broke into parts, these finally contracting into balls, planets—that to this idea Swedenborg was the first to give utterance."—Swedenborg and the Nebular Hypothesis, Magnus Nyrén, Ph. D., Astronomer at the Observatory of Pulkowa, Russia. Translated from the *Vierteljahrsschrift der Astronomischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig, 1879, p. 81, by Rev. Frank Sewall.

Proposition to Form a "Swedenborg Scientific Association."

The following communication, with the heading given above, appeared in the *New Church Messenger* of March 9th :

The measures adopted at the last meeting of the Convention looking to the republication of Swedenborg's "*Principia*" is only one of the numerous indications of a reawakened interest, in many quarters in and out of the Church, in the scientific and philosophic writings of Swedenborg, and of a desire to have those which are now out of print republished, and those which have never been published now translated and given to the world.

The extraordinary value of these writings and their important bearing on the science of today and of the future have been attested by high scientific authority from the time of the "*Acta Eruditorum*," published in Swedenborg's time, to the present day, and far from being left behind in the rapid strides of scientific discovery, it would appear that the principles they contain are more applicable to the researches of science at present than at any former time. The *American Journal of Science*, Vol. V, in the number of February, 1898, in an article on "Kant as a Natural Philosopher," mentions the endorsement by the astronomers Nyrén and Holden of Swedenborg's claim to priority in the discovery of the Nebular Hypothesis of the formation of the universe, and refers to the translation of M. Nyrén's article in the *New-Church Review*. The editor of the "*Bibliography of Chemistry*," published by the Smithsonian Institution, in 1893, adds this note to the title of the "*Principles of Chemistry*," by Emanuel Swedenborg: "Swedenborg attempts in this work to explain the phenomena of chemistry and physics on geometrical principles anticipating modern stereochemistry." In the series of "*Kantstudien*," edited by Prof. H. Vailinger, of the University of Halle, in Germany, there is promised as soon to appear a contribution by Prof. Doering, of Berlin, on "Swedenborg's Significance in the Idealistic Tendency of Kant," and also other articles on Kant's indebtedness to Swedenborg. Among New Churchmen there is also a growing conviction of the need of a more thorough acquaintance with Swedenborg's own science and philosophy, in order to truly understand the meaning of the terms he uses in his theology, and also of the great service to be rendered to the science and philosophy of today by a clear showing of the harmonious relations that must exist between a true science and a true theology, in accordance with Swedenborg's statement in the work on "*Influx*," that from a philosopher he became a theologian, even as the apostles were taken

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REV. JOHN WHITEHEAD, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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A number of persons who appreciate the use we propose to perform have subscribed for a number of copies, and have placed them at our disposal. We have already several hundred copies paid for, which can be sent to public libraries, scientists and educators. We invite our readers to aid us in the selection of names to whom copies of *The New Philosophy* will be acceptable, if sent. If the members of the Church will contribute to this particular work, a knowledge of Swedenborg's scientific principles may be widely extended at a comparatively small outlay. Who will give to this use?

from fishermen, "since a fisherman spiritually is one who investigates and teaches natural truths and afterwards spiritual truths in a rational manner."

Recognizing the fact that it is unworthy of a true appreciation of Swedenborg's teachings to allow his great philosophic and scientific writings to remain unpublished or to pass out of print, a number of persons, both of the ministry and the laity, including scientific scholars and professors, and connected with both the Academy of the New Church and the General Convention, have expressed the wish that there might be organized independently of nationality of any of the existing ecclesiastical bodies of the Church, a "Swedenborg Scientific Association," having for its object "The Translation and Publication of the Scientific and Philosophic Writings of Swedenborg and the Study and Discussion of the Principles Laid Down Therein." It is thought that upon the broad basis of this important use many will gladly unite in cordial co-operation who have for various reasons acted apart in their ecclesiastical affiliations, that our brethren in England will respond, and that the Church in every section will feel the benefit of this

reunion, and will rejoice in the work it may be enabled to perform.

It has been thought that it would be well to call at an early day and at a convenient place a meeting for the forming of such an Association and the adoption of the necessary rules and the arranging of a plan of work. Before doing so, however, it is desirable that opportunity should be offered to all interested in the movement for a free expression, either to the undersigned or through the columns of the several journals where this preliminary proposition appears, as to the usefulness of such a body as is proposed, the form it had better assume, and the best plan of proceeding in effecting the organization, together with suggestions as to the most convenient time and place, whether in connection with the annual meetings of any of the larger bodies of the Church, or at a time and place apart. All responses and suggestions should be published and sent to the undersigned before the first of May next. This late day is named in order that opportunity may be allowed for a wide publication of this notice, and to enable our friends in foreign countries to be heard from. In behalf of many interested and at their request I have submitted this proposition.

FRANK SEWALL.

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Some Opinions of The New Philosophy.

"I will cheerfully do all I can to get subscribers, and the more readily because I regard it as one of the best movements ever adopted to reach the scientific mind with the truths of the "New Dispensation."

"Allow me to congratulate you on the first number of *THE NEW PHILOSOPHY*. It opens the volume very auspiciously. It is full of meat, and cannot fail to have an effect, especially at the present time, when the church seems to be more awake to Swedenborg's science than for a long time past."

"I have read with deep interest the first number of *THE NEW PHILOSOPHY*, and congratulate you on having made so excellent a beginning. The form and general style is very appropriate, and the prospectus you offer is an attractive one."

"It is very interesting to see this revival of the study of Swedenborg's Scientific System taking shape simultaneously in widely separated localities. It seems to me that the time is ripe for the movement, and that it will succeed and prosper."