

**POSTHUMOUS
TRACTS, NO.
I, PP. 1-96**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649435159

Posthumous Tracts, No. I, pp. 1-96 by Emanuel Swedenborg

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

**POSTHUMOUS
TRACTS, NO.
I, PP. 1-96**

No. I.

Eighteen-pence.

POSTHUMOUS TRACTS,

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG,

LATE MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF NOBLES IN THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF SWEDEN,
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL METALLIC COLLEGE AT SWEDEN,
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF UPSALA, AND OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
OF STOCKHOLM,
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF ST. PETERSBURG.

BY

JAMES JOHN GARTH WILKINSON,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON.

Reserve this wrapper

LONDON:

WILLIAM NEWBERY, 6, KING STREET, HOLBORN;

OTIS CLAPP, SCHOOL STREET, BOSTON, U. S.

1847.

Walter & Mitchell, Printers, 24, Harcourt Street.

265. i. 330.

THE WAY TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL.

The way to a knowledge of the Soul.

SEVERAL years have now elapsed since I first conceived the design of working out the problems of *rational psychology*, or what amounts to the same thing, of investigating the essence and faculties of the human soul and internal senses; but hitherto the extreme difficulty of the subject, coupled with the vast amount of preliminary knowledge which is requisite, have warned me against treading prematurely in this direction; for much must previously be reduced to a clear statement and a distinct order. Certain it is, that those who are but superficially informed in the elements of the sciences, or even well acquainted with one or two separate branches of knowledge, and who notwithstanding are rash enough to enter upon this field, in consequence of their ignorance of many and in some cases of the leading means, will but exert an unprofitable subtlety for the most part on empty questions, and only discuss ingenious trifles; and according to their natural endowments, and the manner in which these are cultivated and enlightened, or as it often happens, obscured by the few sciences which such persons possess, they will involve grave truths in thorny discussions, which can have no effect upon the brains, but to occasion differences and quarrels, which no judge is competent to settle, from the trivial nature of the matter upon which the acumen and subtlety are expended. The present subject, however, is too important to be so treated: it is no arena for foils, but for naked weapons. To complete the single science of the soul, all the sciences are required that the world has ever eliminated or developed. If any shall undertake the task with less than all, it must be with the certainty of dis-

covering in the end that he is destitute of the instruments, and unequal to the toils, of so vast a work. The points which he requires, but of which unhappily he is ignorant, he must perforce obtain from himself or coin from his own mind, that is to say, he must use the imagination to supply the place of real knowledge; and how prone to error the imagination is if left to its own guidance, without the continual advice of experience, and the precepts of a true philosophy, is perfectly well known to even the least instructed. Let the reader only make the attempt for a short distance, and he will soon find himself retreating with his standards, and obliged to bring up fresh forces, before he can profitably return to the field where the peculiar battle must be won.

If we wish to deserve success in the study, it will in the first place be necessary to spare no pains, but to exert the mind to the utmost, in clearing and winning those particulars which closely surround and are subordinate to the subject in hand. The anatomy of the body, the anatomy of animal bodies in general, and especially of the cerebrum, cerebellum, medulla oblongata and spinal marrow, and also of the nerves, must open the avenues which lead to it. Without a thorough command of these portals, it is in vain to hope to penetrate the recesses of nature's temple. It is impossible to divine what nature is in the invisible sphere, excepting from what she is in the visible; or what she is in causes, excepting from what she is in those effects which ultimately strike some one of the senses. Just so it is impossible to know the nature of the inner action of the mind, without examining the face of the mind, that is to say, without investigating the brains and marrows of the mind. And even then it will still be impossible to guess how the soul unfolds her powers, without having studied the relations and connexions of all the viscera of the body,* as well as the organs of the external senses, which contribute in their degree to enable those of the internal senses to undergo that development which will open them to the soul.

“Nature exists in totality in the smallest objects,” as Mal-

* Swedenborg does not regard the brain as a part of the body, but by the viscera of the body he means those of the chest and abdomen.—(Tr.)

pighi well observes in his Treatise on the Silkworm.* Whatever is presented to the eyes and to the organs of the other senses, consists of series of things beginning with the smallest, and multiplied through many degrees or stages, and which at length, after they attain to a certain considerable magnitude, appear to us as the least of things; in consequence of which it is usual at first to regard them as boundaries and causes, though far from being this, they but hide or mask real causes. For this reason, no further assistance is to be expected from them, than as supplying the mind with ultimate effects, from which it may pass to principles by an analysis of its own; besides which they are the only means that the mind can judge from *per nearum* or by relation. The path however is difficult and steep. If we confine ourselves to a few facts and phenomena, we form an idea of causes in conformity with these alone; though nothing is gained or proved, unless all the facts which surround the subject both nearly and remotely, are also in accordance, and give their consent to the same effect. And when the truth is found, consent is never absent, for truth wins the suffrage of all phenomena. All things in the world are connected, because all things spring from a single most universal principle. Hence the truth on no subject can be said to be declared, unless all things eagerly confirm it. And thus whatever results we are now to arrive at in treating of the brain, must be confirmed by all that depends upon the brain, that is to say, by the whole body, including all the viscera, organs, parts, solids and fluids; also by the records of disease, whether of the body or the mind; and furthermore by the details of experimental chemistry and physics, and the entire cohort of the other arts; inasmuch as animal nature in her domain passes in the most perfect manner through all the arts to obtain the effects that she desires. Such is the connexion of all the sciences requisite to explore the powers of the animal machine alone, that the absence of but one of them is sufficient to deprive the chain of the link which suspends it, or to leave it too feeble to bear any weight.

Nor is it enough to acquire a knowledge of all the sciences,

* "Cum enim tota in minutis existat natura, si alicubi, magis equidem in *insectorum* moleculis id deprehendi par fuerit." *De Bombyce*, p. 1, fol., Londin., 1687.—(Tr.)

or even of rational philosophy in its various departments, unless we can reduce all things to higher and higher generalizations; or of all the sciences form one science, sufficiently comprehensive to embrace all. The one science to which we allude, and which we denominate the Mathematical Philosophy of Universals, although hitherto unknown to the world, is still of possible attainment: and it is our wish, if ease and tranquillity of mind be granted, ourselves to lay its foundations. Without its assistance, it is idle to hope to arrive at a knowledge of the soul; for this science is the philosophy, not of the mind, but of the soul (the mind is to be developed up to the soul, which latter admits of no development); in other words, it is the analysis whereby the soul comprehends its own objects. As however this science, as we said before, is altogether unknown, and it will therefore perhaps be thought fruitless to endeavor to acquire it, so before we give a statement of its principles, we shall by no means venture dogmatically to declare its use; but shall be content with observing, that without its help it will be easier to reach the moon than to explore the soul.

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS.