

The End of Creation

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG was one of the most remarkable men that the centuries have produced. Long before he directed his attention to the profounder problems that concern the existence of man and his destiny he had won a lasting fame for himself as a scientist. He anticipated many modern inventions. He has been called the Swedish Aristotle. He propounded the nebular hypothesis long before Laplace. He had written extensively on scientific subjects before the faculties dawning in him led him to investigate the realms of religious speculation to which he was destined to make so many important contributions.

He travelled much and was a keen observer. In France, though he was tolerant of the Catholic Church and commented favorably upon the piety of some of the clergy, he was struck by the contrast of the wealth of the church and the wretchedness of the people. He attributes the poverty he sees to the revenue system of France and the vast properties monopolized by the religious orders. He says definitely "the country will be ruined if this goes on much longer." This was in 1736.

Henry George has spoken of "the truth which is the core and the heart of all religions." It is interesting to note that many of the earnest minded philosophers and religious teachers apprehended the truth of man's relation to the earth. Swedenborg was one of them, and the following article from the pen of John Filmer, a convinced Swedenborgian and an old Single Taxer, is an exposition of the Swedish philosopher's position which ranges him with those of gifted vision who have been able to see the meaning of the universe to man and his relation to the earth he inhabits.—EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM.

(The following being addressed primarily to followers of Swedenborg, some explanation of his terminology may be needed for those who are unfamiliar with his writings, for instance, the word *end*, as in the above title, has a very different meaning from all it conveys in ordinary speech—as the end of a rope or the end of a road.

The End of creation is the purpose for which all things were created, to which Swedenborg applies the term—*mediate ends*—that is, the means by which the end or purpose is attained. He also applies that term to the things produced by man from the created universe. Again, he applies to both the former and the latter the term—*uses*; hence all things produced by man, the product of human labor, are by derivation, forms of use, that is, of use to man in promoting the end or purpose of creation. Everything created being for the *use* of man and not for his *ownership*.—J. F.)

Various are the views, no doubt, regarding "the end of creation," and also of the ways of attaining it. Our present purpose is to consider only the view on that subject as set forth by Emanuel Swedenborg in his work "Divine Love and Wisdom" from which we quote:

"The end of the creation of the universe clearly shows what use is. The end of the creation of the universe is the existence of the angelic heaven; and as the angelic heaven is the end, man also, or the human race, is the end,

since heaven is from that. Thence it follows that all things created are mediate ends, and that they are uses in the order, degree and respect that they have relation to man, and through man to the Lord * * * viz.—as to his body, his rational and his spiritual. For man cannot be conjoined to the Lord unless he be rational, nor can he be rational unless his body be in a sound state. These are as a house, the body as the foundation, the rational as the superstructure, the spiritual as the things that are in the house, and dwelling in it is conjunction with the Lord. From this may be seen in what order, degree and respect, uses, which are the mediate ends of creation, have relation to man." "Uses for the sustenance of the body, relate to its nourishment, its clothing, its habitation, recreation and delight, its protection and conservation of state" which, he says, are too well known and too numerous to be mentioned.

"Uses of perfecting the rational (faculties) are all things that teach the sciences, natural, economic and moral, which may be learned from parents and teachers and with conversation with them and from books."

"Uses for the reception of the spiritual from the Lord, are all such things as pertain to religion, hence to worship: that teach the acknowledgement and knowledge of God; of good and truth and thus of eternal life, which may be learned as are the things pertaining to the perfection of the rational and more especially by the application of the things learned, to life."

But it is to be noted, that there is a marked distinction between "the material universe" as *mediate ends*, to the end of creation, and the infinite variety and number of things produced from it, as mediate ends of use to man in attaining *the end*, as the former are the work of God, the Creator, while the latter are the work of man—the products of human labor, the fruits of the use of the earth, all of which are promotive of man's material and spiritual welfare, or well being, hence are properly termed.

WEALTH

The infinite and inexhaustible variety of things that constitute the material universe Swedenborg declares "are the gracious gift of God to man"—for his use; and by "man's" he says, is meant, not only one man, but, * * * society, less or greater—a Republic, Kingdom or Empire, that greatest society which includes all the inhabitants of the globe, for each of these is a man; which, being interpreted, means

"The Equal Right of All Men to the Use of the Earth, and to the Fruits of its Use." That all men being equally dependent upon the Earth, not only for the means of subsistence but for all else that they need to fulfill their mission while living upon it—common sense dictates, reason confirms and experience proves they have an equal right to the use of land—and further, that such right is the natural basis of a spiritually enlightened civilization. Yet

*See numbers 327-335 of that work.

the progress of the human race, the end of creation in fact, necessitates the exclusive possession and control of certain parts of the Earth's surface—Land—as we say. Such exclusive possession is a Privilege, granted by the Community, be it City, State or Nation, to certain of its members, which should exact of them an equivalent of the advantages attached to the Land they hold, which vary according to location and the use it can be put to, which advantages are the effect of, and are coincident with the extension of man's dominion over the Earth—or more correctly speaking "The dominion of Mind over Matter." The value of this Privilege is the natural or rightful income on the Community, as truly as the value of the labor expended in the production of wealth by its member's is their rightful income.

The Community by collecting its income and expending it for the benefit of all its members would not only insure the equitable distribution of wealth (Mediate Ends to the End of Creation) but would at the same time eliminate all expectation of profit or gain from withholding Land from use; thus, the inducement to do so would cease. Unused Land would then be equally free for all men to use, and each and every one would secure and enjoy his rightful share of the wealth produced through

FREEDOM OF EXCHANGE

and in no other way could they do so. For it is obvious that with the extension of Man's dominion over the Earth—industry continuously diversifies, and work, or labor specializes, so that the most simple thing—the product of human labor—is an embodiment of that of very many different workmen, far distant, it may be, one from another, not only in their own country, but also in that of others; so that no one can claim to have produced, unaided by others, this or that particular thing. And though each and every one is, or should be dependent on his one exertion, yet all are dependent on the energy expended by others who have cooperated in the production of the things they need. This interdependence and cooperation go hand in hand, and each and all live by exchange, giving an equivalent for what they receive.

All and singular, the products of human labor—the fruits of the use of the Earth, or as we say, Wealth—are

MEDIATE ENDS

to the material, intellectual and spiritual welfare of Man—the human race. Every human action involves the *use* of such Mediate Ends, whether it be expended in their production or in rendering service.

—JOHN FILMER.

"THE first thing to do for good homes, as well as permanent good times, would seem to be to increase the available supply of land through increased taxes on all sites worth owning, at the same time abolishing taxes on improvements."—PROFESSOR LEWIS J. JOHNSON.

The Why of Poverty

FAMILY incomes have been classified as sufficient for:

1. Existence;
2. Necessities plus savings;
3. Comfort plus savings;
4. Luxury plus savings.

Most every one will admit that families whose income is only sufficient to place them in the first group may be called poor. But some families in the second or third group may consider themselves poor because they cannot easily increase their income or reduce their expenditures enough to place them in the next higher group. So "Poverty," within limits, is a relative term.

Some writers have tried to show that the poverty of individuals or families is of two kinds: Voluntary Poverty and Involuntary Poverty. Voluntary Poverty exists where one or more members of a family suffer from some personal handicap. It may be a disease like alcoholism, or the result of some present or past infection; it may be a mental or physical deformity, or just laziness. This type of poverty is well known to social workers, and needs no further mention. In the second, or involuntary kind of poverty, there is no personal handicap for any individual member of the family—except of course, temporary or incidental handicaps. This group is typified by the farmer who has health, intelligence, and diligence, and yet, because of conditions over which he has no control, runs behind each year even after considering his inventories and depreciations. All his labor for the year may net him only ten cents an hour. Other illustrations of this type of poverty may be found in towns or cities when a man tries to go into business for himself in a small way and cannot succeed. The predominant disabling factor in these cases is economic.

What is this economic factor that makes itself felt in every state in the Union and even more in many foreign countries? Let us see if by chance it may not be connected with the system of taxation which we inherited from England three hundred years ago.

Anyone who has ever seen a tax bill knows the two magic words—Real Estate. These two words conceal at least four different qualities of value. Some Boards of Assessors attempt to divide the valuation into two parts, using the headings "Buildings" and "Land."

You can soon prove to yourself that these headings are not sufficient. Choose a piece of Real Estate that you own or would like to own and about which you know the details. Take a small pad of paper and write as many answers to the following question as you can think of—one answer on each sheet. Then do a little game of solitaire, sorting the slips into piles, as you might a pack of cards, two red and two blacks. Here is the question that has