

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, SEPTEMBER, 1898.

No. 7.

THREE DISCRETE KINDS OF SUBSTANCE.

IN OUR August number we showed that matter derives its origin from spiritual substance, and this again is produced by the Divine from itself. Thus, matter and all things composed of matter are the lowest round of the ladder of causation. Spirit or spiritual substance is the middle round, and Divine Substance is the Highest or First. The Divine is Substance Itself, the origin of all other things. It is Itself Eternal and Infinite, Uncreate, that which Is, Was, and Will Be, which is expressed in the Hebrew name Jehovah, which is derived from the verb to be.

Some one has said that this subject is too deep for his mind ; but we ask, does not everyone speak of God, of angels, and of men? If men speak of these, and profess belief in them, is it as a verbal existence, or as a real existence? Does God exist? Is he a real Being? Has he a Form, and if a Form, is it Substantial? Millions every week profess a belief in God. They pray to Him. They profess to believe that He can grant their petitions, because He is Almighty. If He is not a Substantial Being in a Substantial Form, He is not anything ; and we defy anyone to conceive or think of a Being, or to believe in Him, unless they at the same time think or conceive of Him in a Form and as Substantial. If God exists He is a Substantial Form or He is nothing. In the first view religion and worship are real things, because they express a relationship between real existences ; but in the other case they are nothing and vanity, because they are attempts to establish a relationship between something and nothing, which is impossible. If God is not Substantial, religion is not anything, neither is worship anything. By this supposition the highest and best things of life are reduced to an idle dream. Thus we may see that the very first principle, the foundation stone of theology and religion, is the Substantiality of God. All depends upon this. It decides whether we are deists or atheists. We must think, we cannot

avoid thinking about this foundation stone of theistical philosophy ; every man, woman or child, consciously or unconsciously, forms some idea of it.

Spirit, soul, angel, are they substantial or not? Are they organized Substances in forms or not? If they are substantial forms they are something, they are real ; if they are not they are nothing. If they are substantial forms, then the religions, philosophies and aspirations of all ages and nations, together with the highest things of their literature and art, are founded at least on a solid reality ; on a real thing. But if spirit, angel, soul, spiritual world are not real, not substantial, not organized forms, then all these things are visionary and idle dreams. They are nothing and vanity.

God, Spirit and Matter are a trine of existences. If we deny the first and second, we ascribe the properties of God and of Spirit to Matter alone, and thence introduce inextricable confusion and absurdities into philosophy. If we deny the first and admit the second and third, we ascribe infinite, eternal and omnipotent qualities to finite things. If we deny the third and admit the first or second, we take away the foundation and introduce disturbing elements into our philosophy.

No system of philosophy can harmonize the facts of nature, of human experience and human aspiration, unless it acknowledge three substantials, the Divine Substantial in a Divine Human Form ; Spiritual Substance, the highest form of which is human made in the likeness and image of God ; and material substance, the highest form of which is the human body, which also in its orderly state is in the likeness and image of God. No man can think at all without thinking of one or other of these discrete substances, and no man can think clearly on *all* subjects, without gaining a clear conception of these three discrete kinds of substances as the very fundamental principles of all existences.