

# The New Philosophy.

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

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## PSYCHOLOGY WITHOUT A PSYCHE.

THE science of psychology, by many authors, is treated as a merely natural science; the soul itself, as a distinct existence above the physical, being either denied altogether, or treated problematically. The effort is made to explain all the phenomena of the mind and soul as due to physical causes. Psychology is the science of the soul; and psychology which treats of the soul as non-existent is a psychology without a psyche. If soul phenomena are treated as physiological effects, to be explained merely as the result of brain tissue vibration and action, the science is brought down to a description of mere states and conditions of the brain, and it becomes a branch of physiology. Moreover psychology under such conditions is measured by and subjected to physical laws alone. The attempt to treat psychology as a natural science, inevitably leads to this result, so that the soul as a distinct entity is ignored or denied.

It is recognized in other branches of science, that the general position from which the facts of the science are viewed, produces a true or a false science, according as the general position is true or false. For instance, it was formerly believed that the earth was the centre around which sun, moon, stars and planets revolved. All the apparent movements of these bodies in the heavens were explained on this supposition, until the system broke down from its own inconsistencies. The fundamental supposition was wrong, the facts of observation were placed in a false position, and a false science resulted; but when the sun was found to be the centre, and the facts were viewed from this new position, they were found to be in complete harmony with the system. Thus a false science resulted from viewing the facts from a false centre, but a true science from a true centre.

It must be the same in any science. Thus in psychology, if the soul is a distinct existence above the physical, organized in the human form, of substances of a higher order than the physical, and subject to higher or spiritual laws, whilst based on the physical and flowing into it, we must view all the manifestation of soul and mind activities in the

light of this truth, and from the nature of those spiritual substances and laws. Otherwise we shall fail to see the true interpretation of the phenomena of psychology. There seems to be a very strong inclination among many scientific men against the admission of any thought which favors the existences of the soul as a spiritual organism on its own plane. They regard all existence and all substance as confined to the material plane of nature. Thence they are forced, by this attitude, to ascribe all phenomena to material causes, including the manifestations of life and of mind. Thought, feeling and affection are thus regarded as the result of changes in brain tissue. Memory, will, consciousness are explained on physiological grounds alone, by which the distinction of degree between mind and matter is destroyed, and the degrees of the mind itself are lost sight of. Explanations of mind operations, of the processes of mind formation, and of the laws governing it, when made from such a materialistic theory, must of necessity be worthless, and they must bring into the subject a confusion and obscurity as great as that which the Ptolomaic theory of the solar system brought into astronomy.

Swedenborg's doctrine of degrees, in application to this subject of psychology, and of the existence of a spiritual world in which the soul or mind dwells as an organized human form, seems to have made a strong impress on modern theological thought, at least in some directions, the resurrection of the material body being almost abandoned by intelligent men. But his treatment of the soul, its nature, degrees, laws, modes of development, and its relation to the physical body, brain, nerve tissue, etc., needs to be more fully brought to the attention of the world.

In the growth, formation, and development of the mind, it seems as if it were built up altogether from the results of sense perception and experience. Science in a large measure follows this appearance in treating of the subject, and yet, whilst the materials of growth are thus furnished from without, Swedenborg reveals to us the other side of the subject, and shows that the soul is an organ-

ism receptive of life from God, which flows in by an internal way. The soul is the active, living, and substantial organism using the body as an instrumental means for acquiring a knowledge of external things extant in nature. These knowledges so acquired are not a mere unorganized mass, but by this inflowing life are systematized, arranged, and incorporated into the organism of the mind, being used to further and promote its development in a manner corresponding with the reception and appropriation of food by the body.

The Word itself is a Divine psychology when viewed as to its internal sense as unfolded in the Writings of Swedenborg. Here we learn the true nature of the human mind, of its formation and development from earliest infancy to the last of life on earth, and further of its state after death. Here we may learn of the laws of human development, and of the things which are appropriate and useful as food for the mind in its various ages. Moreover we also learn of the things which are injurious to its life and growth, and which must be eliminated from its structure in order to attain to a full realization of the Lord's design and purpose in creating man. No treatment of the subject of psychology is worthy of so exalted and noble a subject which is not directed by a knowledge of discrete degrees ;

for this doctrine is as it were the ladder of ascent by which we can be elevated to the plane of the soul itself, and perceive it in its relationship to the things of nature.

It is not our purpose to speak disparagingly of the labors of men of science in this field of work. They are doing a great and important work in the accumulation of facts bearing on this subject ; but at present these facts are arranged in systems and theories which do not agree with truth itself, and before they can be seen in their true light, they must be viewed from the acknowledgement that the soul is the real man, existing in a sphere higher than the material world, with its conditions of time and space. In this view the body is an instrumental means by which the soul can be present and operate in nature without at the same time being subject to and limited by its laws. Psychology is not a branch of physiology, even as the soul is not a part of the body ; but yet the body, as being the perfect instrument through which the soul operates, serves as a representative of the soul and its organism ; but when the science of psychology is reduced to a mass of experimental facts and observations arrayed under a materialistic theory of nerve and brain action alone, it is a body without a soul.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

### II.—The Word of God in Education.

IN THE NEW PHILOSOPHY, Discrete Degrees have been treated of, showing that there are discrete degrees of substances in a descending series, from God to the lowest things of nature. Man also is organized of these substances, his body, bone, muscle, nerve tissue, etc., from the materials of nature, and his mind, spirit or soul of the substances of the spiritual world, which is a discrete degree above nature. These substances of the mind are in a human form, but more perfect than the body, and subject to higher or spiritual laws. The human mind is therefore a complex organism, and for its correct formation a knowledge of its degrees and nature is necessary. As educators are engaged in the work of upbuilding the mind, in order to do this work intelligently, it is necessary to know both the nature of the mind, and also the things that will build it aright, before the work of education can be carried on successfully. In the philosophy of Swedenborg we shall find that broad and comprehensive knowledge which will serve as a guiding star through this vast field of human activity and knowledge. In general the development of the human mind and life is briefly shown

in the following passage from the *Arcana Celestia* :

“ With every man there are two parts, the will and the understanding—the will is the primary part, the understanding is the secondary. . . . The will with man is formed by the Lord from infancy to boyhood, which is effected by the implantation of innocence and charity toward parents, nurses, infants of similar age, and by many things which man does not know, which are celestial things. Unless those celestial things were first insinuated in man whilst he is an infant and a boy, he could never become a man. *Thus is formed the first plane.* But because man is not man, unless he is also endowed with understanding, the will alone does not make man, but the understanding with the will, and the understanding cannot be formed except by knowledges and cognitions, wherefore he is to be imbued with these from boyhood, *thus is formed the second plane.* When the intellectual part is instructed in knowledges and cognitions, especially in the cognitions of truth and good, then first man can be regenerated ; and when he is being regenerated, truths and goods are implanted by the Lord by means of cognitions in-