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THE ONWARD MOVEMENT

Of the present age cannot be easily mistaken. Wider liberty, freer toleration of all opinions—a more unhesitating reliance upon pure reason as the basis of all human opinions and actions—such are the tendencies of the times.

In one direction we observe the absolute authority of Rome, the centre of pure despotism—in the other, we observe the growing democracy of America—the conception of the rights of man, becoming every year bolder, clearer, and more philosophical: that the world is moving from the former to the latter, is apparent now to the most careless observer. Let us observe the breadth and scope of this movement. At the close of the eighteenth century, according to Carey, the number of millions in the Christian churches were as follows: Romanists, 100; Protestants, 44; Greek and Armenians, 30; According to a recent estimate of the Christian Review, they now stand—Romanists, 165; Protestants, 100; Greeks and Armenians, 65; while in political sway Protestantism has risen from a feeble minority to over two hundred millions, an extent greatly exceeding that of Catholicism. But as Protestantism is gaining the ascendancy over Romanism, it is becoming itself more subdivided by contending sects, losing its moral strength, and presenting new denominations, in which the principle of free private judgment is carried to still greater lengths; while in the language of the Review, “infidelity prevails in all Christian countries.”

It is true, that in the United States an immense emmigration has given a factitious growth to Romanism—six-sevenths of the priesthood, and a very large proportion of the congregations being of foreign birth—but as Catholics themselves claim less than two millions, (1,980,000,) and the remaining eighteen millions may be set down as Protestant or anti-Catholic, they have little cause to rejoice.

in the estimate, since the legitimate consequences of Catholic emigration to the United States, and the natural increase of the Catholic population, would have made them number nearly four millions. Instead of increasing in the United States, the Romanists have really declined more rapidly here than anywhere else. Instead of the 3,970,000 who ought to be Catholics, had all the Catholic emigrants and their descendants been faithful to their church, there are but 1,800,000; or in other words, 1,990,000 have lost their Catholicism, notwithstanding the zeal of their clergy. Rev. Mr. McMullen, a Catholic clergyman of Ireland, says that there is not "a more apostolic, prudent, zealous, self-sacrificing body than the American Bishops. It is not their fault that *the faith died out in so many millions.*" He estimates that of Irish Catholics emigrating to the United States, "*one-third at least were lost to the Roman Catholic church,*" and earnestly recommends to the Irish clergy that "the people be kept at home, and millions saved from spiritual destruction." Mr. M. was a missionary to the United States in behalf of the Catholic University, and is doubtless very good authority upon the subject. Our national census tells a still more unfavorable story for Romanism.

At a meeting lately held at the Congregational Library, London, Dr. D'Aubigne expressed himself as follows:

"On the Continent there is no rest—there is no security. There is trouble, revolution, struggle. There are on the Continent two principles, both bad, warring the one with the other. There is the revolutionary principle—there is infidelity—there is Communism and Socialism on one side, and on the other the reactionary principles of despotism. These two principles—despotism on one side, and the revolutionary on the other, are struggling to overcome each other, and there is no peace. The reactionary principle has at present the upper hand; and at times there is peace for a moment, and but for a moment—we do not know how long. Many Germans with whom I have recently spoken, are of opinion that they will have a new revolution—a more terrible one than that which occurred three years ago. It is impossible to look at the Continent and not see that there is a deadly struggle everywhere prevalent. The generality of the people are infidels.

"But not only does infidelity prevail—you may find pantheism in many places, which is not a religion, for they believe that all is God, and that, in fact, they themselves are a part of God. There are many learned doctors in Germany who teach atheism openly, and the people are often seduced by their teachings.

"In France there is not, perhaps, one man in twenty who has any religion. They are infidels. The poor people in the country say, 'Our priests have left us and our children in ignorance, and we will have nothing to do with them—they are no good.' It is natural they should speak thus. They see the priestly rapacity, and their general ill conduct disgusts the masses with religion. The

natural consequence of this is, the majority of the people have no religion at all. They sometimes, however, seem to see the necessity of having some religion, for the sake of their children. Some of them actually make a god of Napoleon Bonaparte. Others worship the sun. There was a parish I knew, which was entirely without the celebration of Divine worship of any kind whatever for the space of one year. They would have nothing to do with the priest or anything of the kind. At length, however, they came to the conclusion that they must have a religion of some kind.

"The conversions from Popery to Protestantism in France are numerous—far more numerous than the perversions from Protestantism to Catholicism."

In a late number of the *New York Independent*, edited by Henry Ward Beecher, the following description is given of the change in America :

"We believe that a great change is preparing in religious opinion, of which many of our best men know almost nothing. To those who are thrown into the currents of life, it is evident that men's minds are in unusual working, and that the very foundations of religious belief are rotten and shaking. Among all the earnest-minded young men who are at this moment leading in thought and action in America, we venture to say that four-fifths are skeptical even of the great historical facts of Christianity.

"What is told as Christian doctrine by the churches, is not even considered by them. And furthermore, there is among them a general ill-concealed distrust of the clerical body as a class, and an utter disgust with the very aspect of modern Christianity and of church worship. This skepticism is not flippant; little is said about it. It is not a peculiarity alone of the radicals and fanatics; many of them are men of calm and even balance of mind, and belong to no class of ultraists. It is not worldly and selfish. The doubters lead in the bravest and most self-denying enterprises of the day. It is not an unbelief to be laughed or hooted at, or hunted down. It is calm, abiding, earnest, sorrowful.

"Not much is known of it above; but it underlies now all the strongest external movement.

"There are, however, glimpses of it. You see it in the daily diminishing influence of the pulpit, and the increasing influence of the press; in the lessening number of strong and original minds who take hold of theology, and the tone of the men who are leading American thought. It speaks in these strange longings for new revelations, and in the occasional denunciations of the old."

Thus while Ireland is fast becoming protestantized—while Italy is nursing a detestation of Romanism, America is becoming tired even of Protestantism. China appears, by the latest news, to be advancing from her mystical superstitions toward Christianity, which seems to be in favor with the revolutionists. In Turkey, Christianity is gaining ground upon Mahometanism. In Germany, what is called Rationalism appears to have undermined the strength of the churches.

In France, since the Revolution, Christianity has never had much vital power in the minds of the leading classes—her religion is mainly a machine of state policy. In England, the established religion is cherished as a protection against Popery; but the hollowness of the whole system is beginning to be perceived by the people, and its ultimate downfall is certain.

Who cannot see through the future the downfall of Heathenism in China, of Mahometanism in Turkey, of Popery in Italy, Germany, France and Ireland—of state religion in England—of sectarianism in America? and who can predict the form of spiritual life which may in America encroach on the sphere of Protestantism,—whether it will be a decline of the religious element of character and a substitution of the scientific? or whether it shall be an exaltation and purification of the spiritual nature, reviving that vital spirit of Christianity which has lain dead under forms and creeds and self-righteous bigotry? Whatever the future may have in store, it is certain not only that the numerical preponderance is changing in favor of progressively liberal ideas, but that under all nominal classifications, the ideas and associations of bigotry are declining. The Catholic of America is as different from the Catholic of Europe fifty years ago, as the Presbyterian of the present day from those who hung Quakers and witches in New England.

The principal reasons for these changes are doubtless to be found in the growing humanity and scientific intelligence of the age. A nation pervaded by a spirit of republicanism, cannot be in harmony with the Romish church, the representative of persecution and despotism; nor can those who cultivate sentiments of humanity and philanthropy, bring themselves to delight in the gloomy horrors with which many have enshrouded the Divine character. All good men entertain naturally the same sentiments which prompted Jefferson in 1823 to write to Adams, "I never can join Calvin in addressing his God. He was indeed an Atheist, which I can never be; or rather, his religion was demonism. If ever man worshipped a false God, he did. The being described in his five points, is not the God whom you and I acknowledge and adore, the Creator and benevolent Governor of the world, but a demon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all than to blaspheme him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin. * * * So much for your quotation of Calvin's '*Mon Dieu ! jusqu'à quand !*' in which, when addressed to the Lord Jesus and our God, I join you cordially, and await his time and will." Good men can lose these benevolent sentiments only by the force of constant impression and early education; and in proportion as they outgrow such impressions, they acquire more benevolent and worthy conceptions of the Deity. To these conceptions Protestant churches will gradually yield, and while still nominally the same in their faith, its infernalism will disappear, and the idea of future punishment will become a rational instead of a diabolical picture of Divine justice

But in Catholic organizations the present and the past are more closely linked together, by the chain of infallibility ; and hence, even now, and in our own republic, the Catholic principle of despotism stands forth in all its enormity. The Shepherd of the Valley, (at St. Louis.) instead of being repudiated by Catholic authorities for its frankness, has received the express sanction of the Bishop as a faithful organ, after publishing and insisting on the following declarations :

"The Church, we admit, is of necessity intolerant ; that is, she does everything in her power to check as effectually as circumstances will admit, the progress of crime and error. Her intolerance follows necessarily from her infallibility ; she alone has the right to be intolerant. Heresy she inserts in her catalogue of mortal sins ; she endures it when and where she must ; but she hates it, and directs all her energy to effect its destruction. If the Catholics ever gain, which they surely will do, though at a distant day, an immense numerical majority, *religious freedom is at an end. So say our enemies—so we believe.*

"We gain nothing by declaring so earnestly against the doctrine of the civil punishment of spiritual crime. Our enemies will not believe that we are better than our church, and—for her—her history is before them ; they know what she sanctioned during the middle ages, what she did then, and does now where she can. * * We say that the temporal punishment of heresy is a mere question of expediency ; that Protestants do not persecute us here, simply because they have not the power ; and that where we abstain from persecuting them, they are well aware that it is merely because we cannot do so, or think that by doing so we should injure the cause that we wish to serve."

A Roman Catholic paper, called the Rambler, says :

"Religious liberty, in the sense of liberty possessed by every man to choose his religion, is one of the most wicked delusions ever foisted upon this age by the father of all deceit. *The very name of liberty—except to do certain acts—ought to be banished from the domain of religion.* It is neither more nor less than a bare falsehood. *No man has a right to choose his own religion.* None but an atheist can uphold the principles of religious liberty. Shall I therefore fall in with this abominable delusion ? Shall I foster that *damnable* doctrine, that Socinianism, and Calvinism, and Anglicanism, are not every one of them mortal sins, like murder and adultery ? Shall I hold hopes to my erring Protestant brother that I will not meddle with his creed if he will not meddle with mine ? Shall I tempt him to forget that he has no more right to his religious views than he has to my *parse, my house, or my life blood* ! No ! *Catholicism is the most intolerant of creeds.* It is not intolerance in itself, for it is truth itself. We might as rationally maintain that a sane man has a right to believe that two and two do not make four, as this

theory of religious liberty. Its impiety is only equalled by its absurdity."

As the same ideas were distinctly set forth in the Pope's late allocation to the Republic of New Grenada, there can be no doubt of the entire cordiality with which they are entertained.

In this position the battlements of Romanism must stand, while an enlightened age sweeps by, in its onward march, and smiles at the old Gothic ruin.

During the remaining half of the present century, two questions will be kept prominently before the religious thinkers of our country—the necessity and propriety of maintaining a priesthood, and the religious propriety of maintaining by public opinion and by law, the strict Sabbatical observance of the first day of the week, which has been insisted upon by Puritan Christians. The Rev. George Bush, one of the most learned and talented divines of America, expresses himself as follows in his monthly periodical, the *New Church Repository* :

"There is no point in regard to which we are more anxious to have our views distinctly apprehended, than that which respects the existence of a priesthood in the church. It is not the *fact* of a priesthood, but the *kind*, which is a matter of debate with us. We fully admit the existence of the institution, but we deny that it consists of a distinct order of men, standing out in relief from the body of the church, exclusively devoted to sacerdotal functions, and receiving temporal support therefrom as did the Jewish priests from the altar which they served. It is this particular feature of the prevailing theory of priesthood to which we object. We recognize no such distinction as now everywhere obtains between clergy and laity. We would retain everything that is essential in the order, and reject everything that is factitious. * * *

"To our own mind the proof, whether from the Word or the writings of the New Church, is utterly wanting of the intended existence of any such class of men in the Christian Church, and we do not therefore hesitate to consider the whole sacerdotal order, as at present established, both in the Old Church and the New, as a stupendous falsity, replete with the tendencies of the most pernicious character to the interests of the Lord's kingdom. We are constrained by what we consider the strictest logical necessity, to deny the validity of the claims set up in behalf of a separate clerical caste, while, at the same time, we leave intact a leading or teaching function in the church, and one, too, that is to be exercised by the men of the church. There is a true ministry—not clergy—in the Lord's church on the earth, consisting of those who, in accordance with the representative character of the ancient Levites, are possessed of the endowments of spiritual love, enlightened intelligence, and active charity, which shall enable them to exercise a kindly pastoral office towards the lambs of the flock that naturally turn to their feeding hand. Every other form of priest-

hood we are forced to regard not only as an anti-Christian usurpation, but as having the effect of an organic hypertrophy in the Lord's mystical body. By attracting to itself an over-measure of vital influx, it will rob the other portions of the system of their due share of spiritual innervation, and a paralysis of the members will be very certain to ensue. How much of enlightened discernment, indeed, is even now requisite in order to perceive that the broad line of distinction held to exist between the clergy and laity, acts disastrously upon the interior life of the church by discharging the great mass of its members from that degree of responsibility which properly pertains to every one without exception? What is more evident than that the fact of having an individual salaried and set apart to preside over the spiritual interests of a society, operates as a release to the bulk of the members from any duty but that of punctually paying their subscription and sitting devoutly in their seats from Sabbath to Sabbath, receiving with quiet assent whatever is dealt out to them. The practical working of the system is precisely such as to confirm the drift of our theoretical objections. It goes all along on the assumption that the actual *work* essential to the building up of the church, is to be performed, not by the body collectively, but by a particular class acting as proxies for the rest. If we make the analogy of the human body the criterion in this matter, it would be as if all the organs and viscera of the trunk should unite in feeing the brain to perform their functions for them, while they should enjoy an exemption from their appropriate work.

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"It is doubtless much more consonant to the dictates of the natural man to purchase exemption from self-denying duties at the price of one's annual subscription to the support of a substitute, than to go forward and discharge them in person, especially when their discharge implies, in order to the best effect, that a prevailing spiritual state of mind should be sedulously cultivated. Accordingly, nothing is more obvious than the air of easy unconcern with which the mass of Christians occupy their seats in the sanctuary on the Sabbath, and pass on through the week, devolving all care of the interests of the church on the spiritual stipendiary who takes them in trust. This is undoubtedly a necessary result of the system in vogue, and therefore we do not speak of it reproachfully in reference to any to whom our remarks may apply. They have been educated and have grown up under the system, and a thousand influences have been operating to prevent the suspicion of a wrong in it. They accordingly act as is most natural under the circumstances. While an external priesthood is recognized in the church it will not do to have the office remain a sinecure. The people pay the priests for assuming the care of their souls, and why should they do themselves the work which they bargain with another to do in their stead? The fact is, the evil can never be reached but by striking at the fundamental falsity on which the whole rests, to wit,

a distinct priestly or clerical order. This is an institution which, in its present form, is to be traced back to the corruptions of the Roman Catholic Church, where the spirit of hierarchy is the animating soul of that vast corporation. That the great reformer, Luther, had a very clear perception of this, is evident from the following passage in his "Letter on Ordination, addressed to the Bohemian brethren.

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"He saw then what we now see, that the priesthood of the Roman Church is the grand element of its power, and that its power in spiritual things is the breath of its nostrils. And though the institution exists in all Protestant churches in a greatly modified and mitigated form, yet it is to this source that its origin is to be traced, and it is next to impossible to divest it altogether of its inherent tendencies towards the evils of hierarchy and the other forms of abuse to which we have adverted.

"While frankly enouncing these sentiments, we are perfectly aware of the light in which they will be viewed by the majority of the men of the church. They will look upon it as requiring nearly as much hardihood to deny a visible clergy in the church, as to deny the existence of the church itself. They will feel that a sad havoc is made in all their traditionary and cherished associations relative to the church, the ministry, the Sabbath, the worship of God, and indeed everything sacred; and they will be prompted to put the question, whether we really mean *quite* so much as our words would seem to import. Assuredly we do; and we will thank any man to designate the point at which we can *consistently* stop short of our present position, provided our premises are sound.

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"We hold that it is *never too early to give utterance to reformatory ideas*. Though not at once acted upon, they are still acting as a secret leaven in the minds of men, and in due time will bring forth their proper fruits. This position, we are persuaded, can not be logically controverted; and yet the man who ventures to act upon it, must make up his mind to do it at his peril. He will not henceforth be regarded as a perfectly sane or safe man. In his reputation he must calculate to pay the penalty always visited upon the disturbers of old notions. 'The last offence,' says a French author, 'forgiven to men, is the introduction of a new idea.' We write under the full force of this conviction. The broaching of such ideas, however, though somewhat startling at the outset, is less so upon reflection, and as they become familiarized to the thought, they assume new aspects, and gradually convert themselves to powerful elements of action.

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"A change in this respect, in the conduct of public worship, will draw after it a change in the external arrangements which the present method has called into requisition. Pulpit and priesthood

are inseparable ideas ; and pulpit and pews are related to each other just as are clergy and laity. It is vain to think of abolishing the distinction in the one case and retaining it in the other. The architectural structure of churches is but an ultimatum of the falsities which we have thus far endeavored to expose. The proverbial sanctity of the pulpit must fall before the correction of the errors in which it has originated, as when the fancied 'messenger of heaven and legate of the skies' has disappeared, his consecrated standing-place may as well vanish with him.

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"Whatever, then, goes to make the worship on earth most akin to the worship in heaven, ought to be the object aimed at by the Lord's people in conducting their Sabbath services. For ourselves, we are firmly of the opinion, that the plan of mutual instruction, on a perfectly voluntary basis, is far better adapted to accomplish this end than the present system, in which a single individual is *instar omnium*, or a kind of spiritual *fac-totum* to the congregation.

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"The press is the great executive ministry of the present age. It is by its instrumentality that the furtherance of the Lord's kingdom on the earth is mainly to be effected. Here, then, is the channel through which New Church efforts are to be made to tell upon the progress of truth and righteousness. The press we deem a vastly more important agency of the church than an ordained clergy; and could the large sums annually expended in paying salaries and building churches, be laid out in publishing and circulating the writings of the church, we are satisfied that a far more substantive use would be accomplished."

The agitation of this question will probably result in the practical benefit of rendering the clergy a more useful class to the community, by turning their attention from metaphysical disquisitions and theological denunciations, to the true cultivation of the moral and religious sentiments in their congregations, the benefit of which would be apparent and satisfactory to all.

The question of Sabbatical observance has of late been vigorously treated. The best argument by far upon this subject which I have seen, is that of Dr. Elder, in the *National Era*, who undertakes to show a natural foundation for a Sabbatical institution in the periodicity of nature and the tendency of the human constitution to alternations in determinate periods of seven days. As to the propriety and convenience of such periods of rest, there will probably be little dispute ; but as to the propriety of employing legal restraint upon the mode in which the people shall spend their day of rest, there is room for much debate. To those who are interested in this question, in its scriptural and moral bearings, it will be interesting to peruse a pamphlet published by Bela Marsh,

Boston, entitled "*Christ and the Pharisees upon the Sabbath*,"* the following extracts from which will show that (although somewhat Carlyle-ish in style) it is well worth reading :

"If there is one thing which particularly characterizes the teachings of the Saviour, it is the language of abhorrence, of indignant and withering rebuke, with which he speaks of mere formulas and formalists. Towards humble and ingenuous offenders, towards those who were perhaps more sinned against than sinning, his words and manner are always full of the utmost mildness and affection. Witness the following : 'And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter ;—and to the woman taken in adultery, Neither do I condemn thee : Go, and sin no more ;'—also the story of the prodigal. But when he came to speak of those who were righteous in their own eyes, of those who had a name to live and are yet dead, of those who make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, of those who insult man and mock God, 'for a pretence making long prayers,' his word is with power, and terrible, scathing like the lightning : Hypocrites ! well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye pay tithes of mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over Justice and the Love of God. Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

"But our Lord also teaches positively and distinctly the little value of forms and ceremonies, that they are not to be regarded as essential ; that they are by no means to be regarded in comparison with the vital matters of Purity, Justice, and Love : To the woman of Samaria he said, The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth. And upon another occasion : Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him, how he entered into the house of God and did eat the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him ; but only for the priests ? Or have ye not read in the law how that on the Sabbath days the priests violate the Sabbath and are blameless ? There is one God, and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor

* "*Christ and the Pharisees upon the Sabbath ; with a Consideration of the Clergy and the Church. By a student of Divinity, sometimes student of Law. Boston, Published by Bela Marsh, No. 25 Cornhill.*" pp. 71, Price 25 cents.

as himself, is better than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And again he exclaims triumphantly, If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. This is one of the most comprehensive of all the sublime declarations of our Lord. It is a quotation from one of the later prophets, and in it he rebukes the Pharisees in the gravest manner for their punctilious stickling for the letter of the law, while they did not concern themselves at all to obey its spirit, and were even ignorant of it. Here is taught in the clearest manner the entire superiority of "mercy," of justice, goodness, which I apprehend would be a more correct and complete interpretation from the Hebrew, of right conduct, of a just life, over all formalities, though never so strictly observed. - And this is a favorite quotation with our Lord, with which he ever rebukes the time-serving and form-observing Pharisees, and justifies his own conduct in preferring the constant exercise of a humane and fraternal spirit in the active discharge of duty to his fellow men, to all their grimace and mawkish formalism, impious before the Most High God.

"And if we observe, we shall find the whole life of Christ a constant and energetic protest against the empty forms to which the men of his time were so much devoted. This we should have expected from his doctrines, as his practice always accorded with his precept; but it is also to be particularly remarked, as the truth is to be gathered not only from his recorded words, but also from his divine example. He consorted and ate with publicans and sinners; he and his disciples disregarded the heathenish traditions of the Jews with respect to the washing of hands before meat; he healed the sick upon the Sabbath day: And when the Pharisees murmured he replied, Go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

"In accordance with these teachings of our Saviour are those of his Apostles."

"Even the later Jewish prophets came to see the absolute folly, nay, the monstrous impiety, and impious mockery, of forms and ceremonies after they had lost their vitality, and were become but solemn hypocrisies. They seem to have looked upon them very much as did the Saviour after them. Their observance in comparison with a life of Justice and Goodness they again and again taught was without value in the sight of God, yea, was an offence to Him, 'a stench in his nostrils.'"

HUMBUG AND DELUSION.

It is easy to put on an air of wisdom and denounce every new and marvellous fact. We have not a few editors in our country who assume an air of superior wisdom, in consequence of their

freedom in denouncing the interesting facts of Phrenology, Mesmerism, and Spiritualism. These denunciations arise from narrowness of mind, or from a corrupt disposition to pander to popular prejudice. The absurdity of the pretensions of such gentlemen to superior wisdom, is of often shown by their credulous reception of the most egregious humbugs, in reference to subjects upon which no popular prejudice has been elicited. The story of Phillips' Fire Annihilator, which was to perform chemical impossibilities in the suppression of fires, was received and swallowed with open mouth, by the entire tribe of conservative editors, who sometimes speak of Spiritualism as a monomania.

Mr. Phillips has recently been compelled by a judicial tribunal of Paris, to refund a considerable sum of damages to those who have been deceived by his pretensions, and induced to advance a large sum for his patent. It is the same limited knowledge and and inaccurate conception of the laws of nature, that causes half taught public writers, on the one hand to denounce incontestible facts, and on the other to swallow the most palpable absurdities. Phillips' Fire Annihilator is not the only instance. A paragraph not long ago went the rounds of the American press, stating that Dr. Dewar, of Scotland, had invented a reporting machine which would take in the reporter's notes at one end, and bring out a full written speech at the other end! There was no expression of doubt—no intimation of humbug in this instance.

The most common and imposing humbugs in our country, are the meagre and worthless documents and doctrines, sometimes set forth by persons in high positions, and received with a great deal of honor, simply on account of their station; while far more valuable productions, from humbler sources, pass unnoticed. In medical science, Sir Charles Bell and Dr. Marshall Hall have attracted a vast amount of attention to doctrines and speculations of a very insignificant and worthless character. Our own Smithsonian Institute recently employed Dr. Hall to deliver a lecture in which common-place physiological speculations were set forth with the dignity of demonstrated science.

Public societies and institutions, with a list of honorable names, are frequently the most flagrant humbugs. A single able and zealous student of nature is worth more to mankind than any of our learned societies.

The editor of the Ohio Cultivator has some very good remarks in his last number on this subject: "*The Agricultural Department of the U. S. Patent Office* has been used as a soothing opiate to stop the clamors of a class of society, who from their number and importance suppose themselves entitled to some recognition in the general government. This department has fully demonstrated that it is both inadequate and inefficient to the avowed object of its existence, and unless largely remodelled, may as well be locked up, and have the word, humbug, chalked upon its door.

"*The Smithsonian Institution* is a more imposing establishment in more ways than one! Endowed with a princely munificence it has reposed in the grandeur of a *Lying in State*, instead of going forth in an active discharge of its duty, in the intent of its philanthropic founder, by "the diffusion of useful knowledge among men." There is hardly a county newspaper in the nation, which has not in the same number of years done more for this object than the Smithsonian Institution, with all its wealth of wisdom. This like the Patent office, we fear, is to be little better than a political hospital for the hungry pensioners of government.

"*The United States Agricultural Society* was fanned into a kind of apocryphal, 'numerous' existence, not unlike the tail of a comet, through which even feeble stars could be seen by the naked eye. In the hands of its political managers we had no confidence in this organization. It pandered meanly to power, instead of standing up honestly in the unity and integrity of its own legitimate strength, and we despised it for this. Noble men there were who assisted in its inception, but as it now stands, they are powerless to direct its course. Political adventurers hold the reins which were so tamely yielded to their proffered grasp, and the falling out by the way, of some of the expectant beneficiaries, has served to reveal the selfishness which lay at the foundation of the enterprise. The first *Quarterly Journal* of this Society was issued a year ago, the second is yet to be announced! Some people are simple enough to ask what has become of their money—the two dollars a head for membership. Wait a little longer! Ohio had delegates at the last annual meeting, each of whom had an axe to grind, and it costs money to keep a grind-stone and a boy to turn.

"Very many of the marketable commodities called humbugs, are not so of themselves, but become so in the hands of gambling adventurers. Among these the *Potato Rot* has been a fruitful source of speculation, and the various specifics which have been hawked about, are not without their value. Chief among these is the *discovery* of Mr. Roberts, of Michigan. When this was disclosed to us last Spring, we promptly informed the agent that he had told us nothing new—that we had known the practice for twenty years, and it was not new then; and further, that though the *secret* was worth knowing as a fact in science, yet it could not be relied on as a precept of general application. This having potatoes "*in the natural way*" is not the course to be pursued in raising educated Spitzenburghs from native crabs. Mr. Roberts did not mean to be a humbug when he asserted that leaving the seed potatoes in the ground untouched over winter was a specific for the *rot*; but the hawking of this new discovery of an exploded idea, was both a nuisance and a humbug.

"Of a piece with this, is the discovery of *Terra Culture*, a fact open to all observers, since agriculture arose from its cradle. We should as soon apply, at this age, for a patent upon the discovery that temperance is conducive to health, as upon any of the pre-

tended discoveries of Terra Culture, which, though a salutary fact in itself, has been made the vehicle of a most impudent humbug.

"In connection with these, is a class of men who feel that they have a special mission as *humbug-killers*, who are wont to hack away to the right and left with as little discrimination as though wheat and tares never grew in the same field. These wise-acres are no less humbugs themselves, than the objects of their vengeance. Truth and Error often intermingle their branches, and the wise man will temper his judgment with charity, and his charity with judgment."

Miscellaneous Intelligence.

THOUGHT MACHINE OR MENTAL TELEGRAPH.—The Cleveland *Plain Dealer* contains the following remarkable story. That Mr. M. may be a remarkable clairvoyant is quite credible; but the Machine portion of the story has a very improbable appearance. However, without further explanation it is quite unintelligible.

"On the third of May last, a young man of about twenty two years stepped into the *Plain Dealer* Job Office, and asked for work. He was answered that no situations were then open, but nothing daunted he ventured to tell his story. He said that he had just left a Shaker settlement in the southern part of this State, where he had resided a number of years. This was evident from his dress, which was in the peculiar style of that sect. He had been the school teacher of the settlement, but from some cause he had left them. We presume his progressive and novel views did not correspond with the strict ideas of his brethren. He told his story in such an interesting manner, that Mr. SPEAR, (foreman of our Job Office,) felt quite an interest in him, immediately gave him employment, and afterwards found him to be a very useful and industrious printer.

He had been in the office scarcely a week, before he gave unmistakeable evidences of a strong mind, and of most undoubted talent. He occupied all his leisure time in study, and in solving difficult problems in mathematics. He evinced a wonderful memory, and logical powers that indicated not only natural but cultivated ability. He once made the remark that he could describe persons who were at a distance and whom he had never seen. He was put to the test, and proved most successfully that he was indeed gifted with such powers. He described most accurately a lady and child who were in New York. He told what had been the personal appearance of persons who were dead, and described remote localities with as much

precision as if they were spread out before his eyes. This power he did not ascribe to spiritualism or any supernatural cause, but pronounced it the resultant of certain laws of nature which are none the less true for being slightly understood.

He stated that he could manufacture a machine by which he would bring about the same result. To this he was encouraged and assisted. For three years he had been theorising on the subject, and now, in a few days he produced a rather rough wooden box about one foot square, containing several cog-wheels and springs and a handle for turning. Several small magnetic batteries were also attached to it. The entire instrument cost about \$20. We shall not give a minute description of its workings, as we wish to do no injustice to its inventor, Mr. JAMES B. McALLISTER. Suffice it to say that the "MENTAL TELEGRAPH" performed wonders, and astonished the few who saw its operations more than any of the spiritual phenomena which have been esteemed so singular. He exhibited it to a number of persons in Ohio City and on this side, and it was uniformly and wonderfully successful.

The article we quoted from the *Gazette* contains several errors, which we wish to correct. Mr. Barnum was *not* applied to, nor was there any declination on his part. Mr. B. called at this office several times, for the purpose of examining into the wonder, but Mr. McALLISTER expressed a desire not to see him. His sole object is to perfect the machine, and have his name attached thereto. Money appears to be the farthest from his thoughts.

"Mr. BRAYTON is reported to have advanced \$10,000 to enable the inventor to carry out his idea." Such is not the case, although Mr. B. has taken considerable interest in the matter.

After working at the press in our office for about eight weeks, it was proposed to him to go to Oberlin College for the purpose of perfecting himself in certain branches of study. This was accepted by him with enthusiasm, and he is now attending that Institution, through the liberality of Mrs. Barber, of Ohio City, and Messrs. Spear and Denison, of this office. He will remain there a year or more, and then will doubtless apply his increased knowledge to the improvement of his wonderful "Mental Telegraph."

We shall take occasion to refer to this subject again."

A RIP VAN WINKLE.—The Rochester *Democrat* gives a detailed account of an extraordinary case of somnolence—that of Cornelius Broomer, who has slept for nearly five years, with only occasional intervals of wakefulness. The Cleveland *Herald* condenses the statement as follows:

"Mr. B. is a full grown man of five feet two, and about thirty-seven years of age, and fell into his first deep sleep in June, 1846, and since that time has been awake at different periods from a few hours to four months at a time. The fit comes on instantly, his eyes close, jaws are set, muscles contract, and his whole form is

rigid, so that when standing in this sleep—which he has done for days together—it is not easy to pull him down. A seton was at one time applied to his back, at another time cayenne pepper moistened with spirits of turpentine was put into his mouth, but all experiments of physicians and others to drive off this lethargy have been fruitless. He retains perfect health; pulse 80, and without variation; takes but little food, which is given to him by prying open his jaws. When he awakes, it is suddenly and with a voracious appetite; having no recollection of what has transpired during his nap."

THE AZTECS IN ENGLAND.—The Aztec children who attracted so much notice in this city, are creating quite a sensation in London. Both Dr. Latham and Professor Owen have critically examined them, and both have arrived in the main at similar conclusions. Professor Owen thinks the boy about twelve years old and the girl from seven to nine. He repudiates the idea that they are either a new species, or genuine types of any existing race of American Indians, but regards them as merely examples of impeded developments in individuals, belonging possibly to a mixed and degraded Indo-Spanish race. Dr. Latham coincides in these opinions, but goes even farther in his specifications. He considers that they are the children of parents of ordinary size, and not the off-spring of dwarfs like themselves. He thinks it probable, however, that in consequence of the degradation of the race from which they sprung, other individuals, more or less similar to them, exist in the same region. They are not Aztecs, he holds, but descendants of an older race. The popular account of their discovery, in an ancient city, untrodden heretofore by Europeans, gains no credence from either him or Professor Owen. It is the unanimous opinion of all the scientific men in London, who have examined the children, that no nation of people so low in intelligence could exist.—*Phila. Bul.*

AN OX THAT GIVES MILK.—Mr. James Thorn, of Clinton, has an ox that gives milk freely. He has a bag with four teats, each one of which yields milk like that of the cow. The bag is divided into four sections, but unlike the cow's it has to udder. Each quarter of the bag has a cavity which supplies its teat, independent of the others. When milked out it is readily supplied again, like that of the cow. Our informant states that the animal, a fine one, is worked every day on the farm of Mr. Thorn.—*Possible American.*

PERFECT HEALTH.—"Rufus Davis died in Edgartown, Mass., week, aged 87. He never had a sick day during his life, never lost a tooth until he was eighty years of age, when one fell out suddenly, and was replaced by another."