

Vol. I.

No. 5.

JUNE, 1900.

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THE  
INDEPENDENT  
THINKER

HENRY FRANK, Editor.

Be NOBLE! and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own;  
Then wilt thou see it gleam in many eyes,  
Then will pure light around thy path be shed,  
And thou wilt nevermore be sad and lone.

LOWELL.

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NEW YORK.

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Jesus was wise enough to know that he could not run the Roman Government. But his followers have never since, in this respect, imitated his modesty. As a rule there has been nothing from the creation of the universe to the reformation of corrupt political organization which ministers of Jesus have not thought they were better fitted to accomplish than anybody else.

In defiance of the modest Jesus, priests and prelates in the middle-ages actually ran the existing governments and it cannot easily be forgotten that at no other period of history were there more infamous and atrocious wars, more social degeneracy and political corruption, than during the reign of the religious hierarchy.

Likewise have ministers undertaken to publish the world's literature and exercise a censorship over its general reading. And again we are forced to point to that period as the one especially marked by the prevalence of popular ignorance, the defeat of science and the dissemination of absurd philosophy and benighting theology.

Recently we were made the forced witnesses of a modest preacher's experiment to show modern editors how to run a newspaper according to the methods of Jesus. Were not the experiment so stupendously serious it would be hugely ridiculous. Why a preacher, ensconced in a country village, surrounded by the narrow environment of a rural parish, delivering from Sabbath to Sabbath the commonplace parlance of the usual sermon such village-mongers would expect, should be peculiarly endowed for the journalistic duties he assumes, is, of course, beyond the understanding of any unsanctified philosopher.

It is unfortunate that in this particular case the preacher, who assumes to teach his unregenerate journalistic brethren the Christian

manner of conducting a modern newspaper, is not a gentleman of uncommon literary qualifications. He published a little book whose enormous circulation is rather a reflection upon the intellectual poverty of the age than a compliment to his genius.

I tried the book ; and although I braced myself up with all manner of mental stimulants during the experiment, I failed to find sufficient interest in it to keep me awake. *As a soporific substitute for " Sapho-istic " and " Yellow " fiction it is a marked success.* If preacher Sheldon succeeds in getting the entire Newspaper world to imitate his methods, in publishing a paper, we shall be forced to conclude that, judging from his efforts in fiction, newspapers will cease to be the appetite-whetters they now are, and will grow as dry-as-dust as the ordinary country sermon.

I do not mean to be uncharitable ; but the issue for one week of the " Sheldon Topeka Capital," which is now before me, easily sustains my discouraging prophecy. Let us examine the first issue. The editor makes a prayer the leading item of news. Now if Mark Twain had done this we would all consider it a master-stroke of humor. Seeing that this is a Christian paper, edited for the edification of its Christian readers, it really looks either like humor or effrontery to publish a prayer as a prominent item of news.

But the prayer itself is most unfortunate as a business item. And the manager of a Christian newspaper will be compelled to watch the office receipts, if he expects finally to succeed. His prayer is singularly theological and offensively partisan in its wording. That prayer alone would cut off thousands from the circulation list, as it would offend every Jew who worships his God as devoutly as any Christian. It would shut off millions of earnest religious people who are liberal in their beliefs, and worship the Deity according to their enlightened interpretation ; but refuse to proclaim their mental idiocy or their moral obliquity by insisting that they cannot live " a sincere and serene life in their own strength, or even, with a hope of success, attempt it."

Another policy is subject to serious criticism. Mr. Sheldon will advertise no patent medicines in his Christian paper. In this decision Mr. Sheldon proves himself to be neither a Christian nor a Scientist. Patent medicines may be fraudulent and consist of utterly worthless compounds, but the fact cannot be denied that these same medicines have cured millions of patients, although the cure may have been the result of the

“suggestion” of the medicine and not of the curative qualities of the compound.

Mr. Sheldon would do well to read up in the science of Hypnotism and Auto-suggestions, before he deprives his readers of the possible benefits of “fraudulent” patent medicines.

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But for a moment consider to what absurd results this logic might be carried by a narrow-minded and bigoted editor. Let us assume, for example, he were a strict follower of Christian Science, and concluded to edit a paper as Jesus would,—*a la* Mrs. Mary-Baker-Eddy! In such a paper no physician, however eminent or capable, could ever have a notice printed giving to the world the news of some scientific victory in medicine or surgery; for would not such news be pandering to popular ignorance and be an unwonted affront to the omniscient Mary-Baker-Eddy? The editor of such a paper, according to Mr. Sheldon's logic, would refuse to publish any news of the secular world whatsoever and would feed its readers exclusively upon the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's Great Discovery in Science and Health!

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The journalistic effort of Sheldon is certainly absurd in the extreme. It will only demonstrate to an already disbelieving age the utter futility of the dogmatic character of popular religion; the unreadability of the ordinary Sunday School novel; the lingering mediaeval qualities of the current ministerial mind; and the grace of God in saving the present generation from the domination of dominies. But above all things it will emphasize as never before that wise old Greek “saw”—“Shoemaker, stick to your last!”

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If Mr. Sheldon's experiment should arouse the Churches to establish a Christian daily, it would be the most gigantic financial failure that has been witnessed since the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. The people who want religion seek the churches for it. The people who want news will buy a newspaper, even though it be published by the most blasphemous and profane citizen of the age. They will simply expect him to keep the paper pure, however impure he may be himself. But as between a drowsy and newsless paper edited by a Christian minister, and a lively, spicy sheet edited by a man of the world, they will buy the latter, for it reflects the world as it is, and helps to make it better by showing how bad it has become.

I do not believe the editors of the metropolitan dailies will be inclined to sell out to a Christian syndicate as the result of Sheldon's experiment. Never before in the world's history have such great, such noble, such intelligent, such scientific, and such religious dailies existed as we enjoy in our day and generation. The daily newspapers today are as religious as the people are; indeed, I think more so. For I notice that religious news is usually dragged in by the ears, and the mass of readers, as a rule, skip the religious columns.

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Let the churches continue to make the people more religious, and the newspapers will reflect the religious development. But a strictly Christian and sermonic newspaper would be as out of place in the world of affairs as a full-winged angel on Wall Street, or a Salvation lassie swinging her tambourine and dancing like a religious Carmencita in Dr. Parkhurst's pulpit on a Sunday morning.

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Was Keeley, of Keeley-Motor fame, a fakir? Was the man who for a quarter of a century held a large portion of the intellectual and speculative world in awe, really only a fraud? Concerning the merits of this question there seems to be some just differences of opinion. Be that as it may, the elements of fraud seem to be so paramount in the strange and bewildering paraphernalia with which the silent wizard chose to surround himself, that the common sense of the future ages will, doubtless, award him the crown of the Prince-Fakir of the nineteenth century. But, whatever be the truth about Keeley's claims or pretensions, the upshot of his twenty-five years' of notoriety, during which he held the world in suspense of daily expecting some startling revelation, affords an opportunity to "point a moral" for the present age.

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Perhaps at no period since the Renaissance have mankind been so susceptible of and sensitive to, the illusionment of weird and uncanny powers as during the existing epoch. A mighty wave, of ghosts and "goblins damned" or otherwise, has swept over the race, beginning with the Rochester Rappings and ending with the influx of Orientalism in the Congress of All Religions at the World's Fair. I am free to say that not since the advent of Christianity have so many species of fraud, disguised in the livery of light, congregated on this planet and obfuscated the commonly clear brain of man. Had P. T. Barnum preferred to operate as a Spiritualistic fakir or a manipulator of "occult" forces,

he would have found, to the delight of his soul and the aggrandizement of his purse, that his famous adage was far truer than he had supposed, namely, "Men love nothing so much as to be humbugged." There is a vast amount of idle and unemployed wealth lying loosely around this globe which is ever timidly seeking opportunities of investment. Now, by some strange law, unemployed and timid money seems to drift to nothing else so naturally and smoothly as to the ever-open purse of the Spiritualistic pretender, who for a consideration will read your horoscope or foretell your fortune with such sycophantish praise and dazzling assurance as to make you willing to pay for his nerve, if not for his honesty.

The personal columns of the daily papers are full of advertisements of these "seventh-daughters-of-a-seventh daughter" miracle-mongers, who could easily put to shame a Simon Magus or an Apollonius. Aaron's little effort at the court of Pharaoh, when he twisted a stick into a snake and made it crawl, and Moses' magic feat on the banks of the Red Sea, whose waters he piled up like walls of glass and kept them there till his people passed over dry-shod, are mere by-plays for these modern artists. The raising of Jairus' daughter is a but trifle; and as for the resurrection of Lazarus, why, that was a simple feat, for was he not in the grave only four days? Well, "in India we leave them there for forty days if we wish to, and then bring them back bright and fresh as ever!" Ah, India! India! I say of thee as Madam Roland said of Liberty, "How many crimes have been committed in thy name?" I think henceforth it will be inaccurate to speak of the Christianization of heathendom, and we shall have to emphasize the Indianization of christendom. It is the misfortune of this Oriental influx that we have so few Max Mullers and Monier Williams and so many Adepts and Mahatmas who swoop down upon us straight from Thibetan summits!

Nothing curses an age of science so much as the omniverous smatterer and the deft and devious dabbler. How thankful should we be to-day that we have a Christian Scientist in every household and a Theosophist in every Kindergarten! Woe be unto him who cannot grasp the maunderings of pretentious metaphysicians or the mystification of imitative Orientalists; who does not yield to the seductions of the seance-room and refuses to find his lost wife re-materialized in every wrinkled old medium who confronts him; who rejects the dietary of saw-dust cereals and still delights in the meat of lambs and bullocks;

who prefers Milton to the Mahabharata or Shakespeare to the Bagavad-Ghita! Woe be unto him who refuses to join the secret order of the Rosy Cross, or the White Rose or the Red Rose (it's always a rose, you know); who cannot trace his spiritual ancestry to the continent of the lost Atlanteans and who does not in his dreams every night commune with some long whiskered Arabian or swarthy Indian, who teaches him the mysteries of life! Is it any wonder that with such pretensions among the lay-people there should be amazing frauds among the professionals!

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There is doubtless much truth in Spiritualism and I am inclined to believe that, after all the chaff and dirt are winnowed out of it, it will present the data for the science of the future. But the Spiritualism that at present disports itself before the world, I regret to say, is so saturated with fraud and filth that it can but disgust the wise and delight the groundlings. Christian Science (under which generic term I include all the variations of the common idea), doubtless rests on a law in Nature of which a few at present have a clear glimpse and which some can, even now, satisfactorily utilize, but which has been so steeped in passive servility to a single personage as to spawn with brainless bigots and hypocritical pretenders who, like Sampson, will some day, when ordered from the temple, pull the structure down over their heads and those of their innocent associates. I do not here refer to those who honestly and conscientiously use their spiritual powers and mental forces for the bettering of their friends. But I refer to those who, in the surplice of the priest and the gown of the student, assume to peddle jargon for science and lunacy for religion.

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I am the firm friend of all advanced knowledge and I snap my fingers at authority and conventionality. But I do not assume to play tricks on Nature or to try to make her, by any indirection, play the fool. What this age needs more than any other is FREEDOM FROM FADDISM! We have become the easy dupes of dabblers and the playthings of pretenders. I hate a fraud as I hate hell. I had rather take my chances with the devil than with a modern fakir! What I hope in my humble way to accomplish is to direct the earnestness of the age away from all this pretentious hypocrisy to the sincere study of those truths which have so long been unheeded by the scientific world, because they have been fathered by frauds and nursed by nincompoops. Let us not fear



to admit our ignorance till we have acquired positive knowledge. I honor a sincere Agnostic.

I have respect for an honest Spiritualist. I bow to the studious Theosophist, who makes of Truth his highest religion. But I pity the emotionalist who seeks a spook in every spark; the Theosophist whose eyes are set on the apparition of a Mahatma; the Christian Scientist whose ignorance is matched only by his audacity, and the Agnostic whose eyes are shut to all the revelations of Nature save those which have been vouchsafed to his own omniscient soul. This age needs three gods: Earnestness, Sincerity and Truth. These worshipped, mankind will acquire a noble science and a beautiful religion. The fate of the Faddist is the fortune of the Fakir. We need fear nothing that emanates from the truth; but as you love peace and prosperity, shun that which on its face is false and in its heart is cursed.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

Can the readers of THE INDEPENDENT THINKER imagine the great joy which overwhelmed the Editor one recent day in May, when, ruminating in his library, he was suddenly presented with a magnificent leather-seated revolving chair, accompanied by the following tell-tale letter:

"We, the undersigned members of the Rev. Henry Frank's first class in Metaphysics, contribute this for a testimonial to be presented to him as a token of our appreciation of his learning and skill in teaching the profound principles and practical application of the Science of Life and the New Psychology; and this gift is accompanied by our gratitude for the lasting benefits each of us has received, and our desire for his future well-being and success in the triumphant establishment of Scientific Religion.

Signed,

Abraham Riggs,  
 Jno. W. Millard,  
 Harding Weston,  
 Hattie F. Whipple,  
 T. D. Clarke,  
 G. L. Eckert,  
 Mrs. S. Jones,  
 Mrs. Rosa Reichle,  
 Mrs. Cassius McDonald,  
 Wm. M. Semnacher,  
 Joseph B. Knipe.

Earnestly did my pen indite the following sincere acknowledgment, which was mailed to each member of this class:

New York, May 17th, 1900.

Dear Friend :

Nothing could have more genuinely surprised or pleased me than the receipt at this very moment of the handsome and comfortable revolving chair, which from the accompanying letter I am informed is the gift of the members of my recent class in metaphysics.

I write to you as one of the members of that class, to thank you heartily, sincerely and cordially for such a substantial evidence of your appreciation of the efforts I put forth to teach you what I knew of the principles of the science of life.

I can assure you I shall never occupy the chair, engrossed in my literary labors, but I shall instinctively recall the countenance of each member of that class, and the very place he or she occupied while I instructed.

It will always be a genuine source of inspiration to me, coming as it does from the first class which I organized and taught in the city of New York, and which indicates that that effort is a hopeful earnest of victories yet to be won.

I cannot tell you how much I rejoice in the sympathetic association with me of such enthusiastic and earnest souls as you all are, and as, indeed, the vaster number is that assembles with us from Sunday to Sunday. I profoundly believe that there are great things in store for us, and that your wish, so eloquently expressed in your letter, will be fulfilled, namely, "the triumphant establishment of scientific religion."

Believe me ever sincerely and devotedly, your teacher and fellow-worker,

HENRY FRANK.

DR. PAUL GIBIER.

As we go to press, we are shocked and saddened by the news of the sudden death of Dr. Paul Gibier, of the Pasteur Institute, who died from injuries received in a runaway accident near his home in Suffern, N. Y., Saturday evening, June 9th. Never has the saying, "Death loves a shining mark," been better illustrated. Honored by two governments, recognized as the highest authority on bacteriology in America, scholar,

philosopher, author and philanthropist,—in the prime of life and at the height of his fame, he was just entering upon a new field of scientific and psychical investigation, which promised fuller, more congenial and fascinating results than were accomplished by his previous labors.

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The following quotation from the *Herald* of June 12, will explain :

“From researches in hypnotism, hypno-magnetism and psychic experiment, he reached the conclusion that in their manifestations are found absolute proofs of immortality, in that they prove, as he held, that intelligence exists apart from matter. His views on this subject attracted considerable stir in the scientific world.”

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Not only has that portion of humanity, yearning and pleading for a true and scientific sign of the future life, lost an earnest and indefatigable guide and teacher, in the death of Dr. Gibier, but the Editor of this journal has sustained a personal loss, grievous to be borne. Only a few days ago was the following circular, at Dr. Gibier's request, sent to many of the friends of Scientific Religion :

It is with much pleasure that I am enabled to announce to those interested that an unusual opportunity will be presented for the cautious and scientific investigation of psychical phenomena under the auspices of Dr. Paul Gibier of the Pasteur Institute.

Dr. Gibier is the representative on this Western Hemisphere of a new organization of European Psychologists, the headquarters of which are located in Paris, France, whose especial purpose it will be to investigate from the scientific point of view the more advanced and less understood phases of psychic manifestations ; which we may hope will result in the discovery of many as yet unknown laws in the psychic realm.

Dr. Gibier, who for over fifteen years has investigated psychic phenomena, is to attend the conference of psychologists which holds its sessions during the World's Exposition in Paris this summer, and will read a paper on the results of his personal investigations before this congress. He will return to this country in the early fall, and it is his desire at that time to congregate a number of people who are earnestly interested in this subject. At the sessions of this conference Dr. Gibier will reproduce a paper which he will then have read before the Paris conference ; and he will likewise give a resume of the discussions which will have occurred at this gathering.

It is hoped that the result of this first session will be the establishment of a conference for psychic study and investigation, which will become

the nucleus for the organization of a permanent branch of the International Psychological Association on this continent.

Signed,

HENRY FRANK, General Secretary,  
Psychic Study Society."

This little leaflet contained just a hint, and was intended to be a forerunner of a grand and glorious work along psychical lines, to be begun in September and carried to successful fruition, with the aid and co-operation of the French Society of which Dr. Gibier was Secretary. But if a glorified Elijah has begun his novitiate in a world of whose wondrous and eternal possibilities we now dream, we can but hope that his mantle will fall on a successor worthy, by capability and attainment, to carry Dr. Gibier's chosen life-work to a successful and glorious completion. To his wife and family we extend our deepest sympathy.

(THE USES OF LIFE.)

How few in all the world appreciate the legitimate uses of life! What are we here for? Why do we live? Why do we toil, sweat, suffer, and expire? Is life worth the living? is the victory worth the struggle? After all is won in this life what priceless trophy do we possess? Our joy is commensurate with our aim. If we live in externals we shall be disappointed in the evanishment of our ideals. Wealth, fortune, pleasure, position, honor: what are these? Momentary illusions in a dream-world of mockery and deception! Gilded palaces: what are these but iridescent bubbles, which the first blast of misfortune dissipates into thin air? Honor, position—what are these but mawkish distinction conferred by sycophants and hypocrites? A fool may wear a crown; lickspittles may create a king; but only God can make a wise man. What pleasure can this world afford to him who seeks but pleasure? The maddest scenes of revelry pall on the senses; *ennui* dulls the edge of anticipation, till the keenest and most pungent temptation nauseates and disgusts. For the blasé voluptuary there remains but one more scene to enact on the stage of life—the act of suicide. He has drank the contents of every chalice of delight, and like the insatiable bee sucked the juice of every flower that blossoms in the gardens of pleasure, till, inebriated by sensuous indulgence, he awakes from delirium with disappointment, and emptying the liquor of his veins in libation to Momus, expires with disgust upon his lips! And yet, despair not, Earnest Soul, for life is full of promise and priceless joy for thee. So to live that we become useful in thought, in labor and in sympathy, to those who need

our help—this is pleasure inexhaustible. So to live that we shall add something to the universal fund of information ; so to live that we shall uplift the downfallen and despairing and lead their palsied limbs to the temple of hope and reassurance ; so to live that we shall alter the habits of men from vice to virtue, from selfishness to sympathy ; so to live that we shall remove the impassable boulders from the paths of earth's Sisyphean toilers, and give them opportunity to extract from life the wine of joy, whereas now they suck the bitter herbs of pain ; this is ambition worthy of the gods, whose triumph crowns the victor with immortal bays of honor. Such triumph thrills humanity with faith in man, and writes within the book of life the prophecy of final and indefeasible ennoblement. Amen.

#### OUR EXCHANGES.

Our Exchange Table is in receipt of some excellent literature this month. One is amazed at the number of superior journals which are appearing along the line of advanced thought. Here, for instance, is :

"The Sphinx," which may indeed, without egotism or arrogance, proclaim itself "The Foremost Astrological Journal in the World." Typographically it is a delight to the eye. As to subject matter : Well ! If it does not present a new and untried field of investigation, then none exists. Untried, I mean, in the journalistic sense—for Astrology, as a claimant for scientific recognition, is as old as the ages.

Mrs. Catherine Thompson, the projector and editor of this scheme, is to be congratulated both upon her business tact and her luminous intelligence, as it shines forth from every page of her magazine. Whoever desires to learn anything about Astrology, and all that can be known, would do well to subscribe at once for "The Sphinx." Boston, Mass.

Then, there is "Motherhood," projected by my esteemed friend, Mrs. Almon Hensley, President of the Society for the Study of Life. The delicate design of the cover alone is enough to captivate every lover of the beautiful. This, also, is something new in the journalistic world. It contains, in this initial number, special articles from prominent writers. There are permanent departments as follows : "Moral Department," Jennie Fowler-Willing, superintendent, "Mental Department," "Physical Department," "Economic Department," etc. All the articles are able and up to date. This magazine should enter every household in the land and be carefully studied by all parents, teachers, as well as

students of psychology and economic progress. (The Womanhood Publishing Company, No. 170 Fifth Avenue, New York).

From England comes the "Herald of the Golden Age," the official organ of the Golden Age, "founded to Proclaim a Message of Peace and Happiness, Health and Purity, Life and Power." This is really an excellently edited periodical, containing many able articles. It is always welcome to our desk. It circulates in twenty-two countries and colonies. Edited by Josiah Oldfield. The Beacon, Ilfracombe, England.

"The Reasoner" (San Luis Obispo, California) is an excellently edited weekly, which discusses without reserve the living issues of the day; believes in the New Conscience and the New Thought, and labors for the Co-operative Commonwealth and the Brotherhood of Man. I like it much. It is full of readable matter of varied interest.

"Unity" (Kansas City) is a new arrival on our table, and is cordially welcomed. It contains much lofty and inspiring thought, which the judicious will appropriate and the wise discern. It is strong meat.

"The Light of Truth" is, without doubt, among Spiritualistic journals, one of the most intelligently and honestly edited. Friend Hull is a gentleman and a scholar, howbeit a self-made man. He is in his element.

## IMPORTANT.

### TWO NEW BOOKS, by Henry Frank.

(TO APPEAR IN THE EARLY FALL.)

#### "The Doom of Dogma and the Dawn of Truth."

250 Pages, Cloth Binding, \$1.50.

#### "MEDITATIONS AT THE SHRINE OF SILENCE."

100 pages. Ornamental Illustrations, superb edition, \$1.25.

NOTICE.—In order to determine the size of the first edition advance orders are requested. Send all orders direct to Henry Frank, 32 West 27th Street, N. Y. City. Those who order before the books are issued will receive the "Doom" for \$1.25 and "Meditations" for \$1.00. No money need be sent till the books are issued.

## WHAT IS MATTER? NATURE ANALYZED.

[Concluded from the May Number.]

If it is asserted that there is no such thing as matter, then we are asserting something concerning which it is impossible for us to make any assertion. Because I have shown you that, in the last analysis, what we call matter is reducible to the invisible, the immaterial, as we understand those terms; I have not, at the same time, shown that I have reduced matter into non-existence. I have not shown that this platform upon which I am standing does not exist.

And yet, we all have the same experience that old Dr. Samuel Johnson had, when he was talking to Berkeley on this subject. You will recall the story. He lifted up that big fist of his, and struck it on the table, exclaiming, "I feel it; it is there, and you can't make me believe that it is not." That is the exact misconstruction that people who have been falsely educated in this philosophy are constantly putting upon it.

Now, Dr. Johnson knew, when he struck that table, that it was there; but what did he know was there? He knew only that a sensation was there; that he felt within himself a certain tingling at the end of his fist, and that that had been caused by what he believed to be a resistance and that resistance and that sensation he called a table. All that he knew in the end was the existence of his own sensations.

This is by no means a difference without a distinction. To continue asserting the non-existence of matter is senseless, injudicious, and unphilosophical for the simple reason that we know there does exist in nature that which causes within us the consciousness of what we call the objective or material world.

We know that something exists; but what is it that exists? I know very well that I apprehend that "something" only in the experiences of my consciousness; nevertheless, it is unscientific for me to assert that that, whatever it may be, with which I came into apparent contact in my sensations and states of consciousness, has no actual existence outside of those experiences.

The conclusion I reach, in the last analysis, is that I am not in a phantom world, not in a world of dreams and imaginings, illusions and delusions; but I am in a world of sensations, and perceptions, and discernments and states of consciousness, which are produced by "some-

thing," the true knowledge of which is apparently an impossibility to me. Nevertheless to attain the true knowledge of myself it is proper that I regard the phenomenal world as if it were the realm of illusion, dependence upon which will result in disappointment and delusion.

Imagine a man who had never seen anything of this world (this is purely a fictitious case) and yet he had eyes to see, organs to perceive. This man, let us suppose, is placed in a glass house, or rather, in a house of mirrors; and those mirrors are adjusted in angles all about him. For the first time he begins to observe the objective world. What will the man see? He will see myriads of misty figures and human faces. He will apparently live in a world of people constantly surrounding him; who bear resemblance to himself, but of which fact he stands in total ignorance, for he never saw himself before; and he will see a resemblance between all of those people, but in no case exact identity, for each face represents his own from a different angle of incidence. Consequently, he will see a maze of human beings, and, so far as his consciousness goes, he believes they are moving objects. He talks and they all talk at once, but they say nothing, or, at least, nothing which he can hear. He sees objects moving as wax figures, and yet he does not know at all what they are, or know the purpose of their movements.

He realizes that, when he moves this way or that, all move in a fantastic manner about him, till a phantasmagoria of illusive objects surrounds him. He realizes that those things are apparently outside of himself, but he cannot explain the nature of their existence.

What is it he is observing? Himself. Nothing more. Simply his own sensations and perceptions. He thinks this is an actual world in which he lives. Like the pseudo-philosophers of whom I spoke a few minutes ago, he is partly right, and also partly wrong. To his inner and his physical consciousness there actually exists a vast population which surrounds him. But in reality no such population exists. It is phenomenal—apparent. Yet to his consciousness this population exists as an undisputed reality.

This is an illustration of our relation to the universe in which we live. This universe is reflected in our own experiences and states of consciousness, and we can by no possibility get outside of those experiences. We can by no possibility understand this world as anybody else understands it; but we must, perforce, always and forever, understand it according to our internal conditions of consciousness; according to our internal experiences.



When we have reached such a conclusion, what is the finale of it all? Simply this:

To talk about the non-existence of matter, is to talk nonsense. To speak about the universality of spirit, in contradiction of the existence of matter, is nonsense. But, to assert that there exists what we may call a universal or ultimate substance, whether we regard it as spirit or whatever else, an invisible or imperceptible origin of the universe, which exists in and is manifest through all things, the consciousness of which in sentient subjects seems to divide the world into an objective and subjective state, mutually consistent, though separate, while in reality the universe is one and indivisible, our senses to the contrary notwithstanding—to assert this is not repugnant to science or to truth.

Did you ever see yourself? No. And you never will see yourself; you never can see yourself. What you see is simply your consciousness of yourself. After you have built up your consciousness of yourself, where are you? What are you? You are body; you are bones; you are flesh; you are muscle; you are tissue, cells, eyes, ears, hands, feet, what not. You are all these things; and you are much more. You are thought; you are memory; you are imagination; you are fancy; you are intellect; you are spirituality, aspiration. You are what you choose to call yourself. Is that you?

You have written books—great books; you painted noble pictures; you have carved heroic statues; you have sung songs wonderfully; you have composed magnificent music; you have builded mighty edifices. Is that you? Is any or all of that great work you? No.

Where are you? You do not know. You never will know. You are lost; and you never will find yourself.

Because you stand back of it all, and always look upon yourself as something that is not yourself. In short, I myself am always back of myself. I always stand behind myself, and say, "See; this is I!" As a fact, I have never seen myself; and nobody has ever seen me. I never will see myself but in the phases of mental consciousness.

Can a man ever see himself? He will always see "at" himself; he will always think of himself; will always experience himself; will always have sensations relating to himself. But, all that time, he is back of himself and looking on the whole scenery as a beautiful stage play, consciousness sweeping the scenery back and forth.

Did you ever find yourself? Try it, and you will be like Socrates, who, asked by his executioners whether he preferred to be burned or

buried after death, replied with a wisdom they could not understand, "First, catch me if you can." Herein lies the secret of this philosophy. It is that, in the last, we come up against a universal consciousness which is beyond the pale of our present apprehension. It is a mirage, ever and forever moving onward; we rush on and cry, "Oh, see! This is I! This is I!" We try to throw ourselves upon the scene and realize that we are there. We say we are home; we are at our own firesides, and the bright flames are dancing toward the chimney; the beautiful, flickering shadows are playing around the hearth and on the walls; and all seems real and complete; but we look again, and alas! it is but a mirage. And, though we dream forever that we are home, we never find our home. We are always wanderers and ever will be.

This leads me to the dream, my friends, that that which we have called God, the spirit, the universal, is somehow this inscrutable, unrealizable mirage, that is forever moving beyond us, ever causing us to believe that we have reached it and conquered and achieved; and yet, ever when we reach it, apparently dissolves, leaving us in darkness and ignorance. Somehow, I dream of myself. I say I know myself; and yet I never realize myself nor understand myself. Because I myself am over there, and yet I am here. I am always beyond myself; I am always the other self.

That being so, it would seem as though there must somewhere abide that that we call the Over Soul, a universal Self, an ultimate consciousness, a supreme combination of all the finite and separate states of individual consciousness which exist in the myriad phases of organized life, brought together at last as the infinite rays of the sunlight are gathered in the flaming orb of heaven; and in that universal consciousness—in that combination of all the separate individualities, it may be that we shall reach the Consciousness of the Eternal;—the consciousness of the Ultimate, the consciousness of the everlasting verities. Hence I conclude that there exists no conflict between matter and spirit; there is no contradiction between the objective and the subjective; the dream world and the real world are not opposed; there is no irrepressible conflict between the world of illusion and the world of reality.

But we are simply conscious of a world of temporal perceptions; and when in the long procession of the ages, we shall pass above the formal, the temporal and illusory, and reach at last the consciousness of Unity, in which we shall apprehend the All as One; the sense of space and time no more; the Universe and the Individual coequal; without limitation, separation, or conceivable contradiction, we shall then reach, methinks, our first realizable consciousness of ourselves; and, having attained that consciousness of the ultimate self, we shall perchance in the presence of the eternal, exclaim, "Behold, I see God; for I have become Him whom for these ages I have sought!"



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