

The
**INDEPENDENT
THINKER**

HENRY FRANK *Editor*

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"Smile" (A Poem)	
"The Blues."	
"The Shrine of Silence."	
"The Eternal 'I Am.'"	Lecture
Literary Comment.	
Chats Vis-a-Vis.	

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The Independent Thinker.

HENRY FRANK, EDITOR.

Vol. II.

JANUARY, 1901.

No. 1

“SMILE.”

Smile thou till rippling laughter dawns upon
Thy lips, and drives dull clouds of care away.
Smile and laugh in spite of pain or prod,
Whatever fate befall, whatever foe.
If thou but smile, the grim grimaces of
Foreboding fear will change to forms of light ;
Whoe'er beholds thee will exchange for smiles
Their sorry visages, and swell the song
Harmonious of those who conquer fate.
When slender fingers of the morn awake
Thy slumbering lids let thy dim balls
Behold but images of cheer ; let thoughts
Of happiness arouse, and kisses of
The dawn thy lips delight with radiant joy !

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Printers are good fellows, but very slow to “toe the line.” My two books, “The Shrine of Silence” and “The Doom of Dogma,” should both have been off the press by this time.

But several things have prevented.

The IDEAL PRESS has been putting in new machinery, which seriously interfered with rapid progress.

But it will certainly be out now in the next thirty days.

The ABBEY PRESS is working with all its force to hurry up “The Shrine of Silence.”

But when a book is figured out on the basis of 125 pages which expands to some 300 pages—it frustrates all calculations.

But it will be the cheapest and prettiest book put on the market in many a day.

Be patient, friends, and you will get more than your money's worth.

"THE BLUES."

Of all kinds of sickness the silliest is the "dumps." It is conceived in nonsense and brought forth in folly. It is the child of unholy wedlock, fathered by fear and nursed by worry. There is no more excuse for the "blues" than there is for a house-cat to curve its back and spit at a toy puppy. We get the blues simply because we want them; if we did not enjoy misery we would never submit to its association. Of all diseases the most easily conquered by the mind is this ailment of which I am writing.

One good, strong resolution; one positive affirmation of peace, restfulness and buoyancy, will drive away the murky curtain of the blues as the mist of morning flies before the rising sun and downy zephyrs of the dawn.

Melancholy wins because of the silly conception of our ignorance.

If aught occurs to bedim the glory of our self-appreciation, or of the world's adoration, we sink in gloom and grime, hug the dark baby of misery to our bosoms, and swallow our salt tears as if they were the purple nectar of the gods.

Melancholy is so delicious,—to feel that the world hates us,—that every friend has deserted us, and that the fates are slowly unwinding the threads of Misfortune's sinister web,—this is luxury.

To bury one's self in some dark corner, sink within the soft folds of a downy couch, imbed one's moistened cheek in a pillow, and there solemnly pine and groan, weep and wail till the body is exhausted,—this is delirious joy,—delicious agony!

There is, however, a way out of this and but one way—realise that you are a fool and quit your nonsense.

Laugh through your tears, smile though it pain you, hope, hope in spite of the glaring eye balls of despair, and see the sun till shining through the clouds be as the night.

Go out into the fresh air, take one long deep breath till you feel your very toes tingling with new life and action, then look up to the clear sky, recognise your soul as clear and clean as yon blue curtain, your path as bright and cheerful, your prospect as refreshing,—then before the breath has escaped from your lungs *assert* your superiority

over all conditions, your self-sufficiency and unconquerable strength, till you feel that you could challenge the gods to a contest, and push the stars from their course if they oppose you!

Rise on the wings of fancy and *believe* yourself rejoicing though your eyes are moist with suffering,—*conceive* yourself floating in the clouds though your body feel like lead,—*see* yourself triumphing over all obstacles though prisons enclose you and guards watch at every exit; realize in *thought* that you are *free, free, free*, though circumstance mock at courage and experience laugh at resolution.

The Mind is the artist of life, shapes its plan and builds its structure. Hold the Ideal perfect as thought can conceive, and sometime, if the heart fail not, the dream form will come forth, clothed with reality and radiant with triumph.

You ARE *free*—the earth has no devils can conquer you, if you but dare to be as bold as Luther and hurl the inkstand of defiance at every mother's son of them that bobs up in your presence.

“THE SHRINE OF SILENCE.”

Just received word, at this writing, from the publishers that they have decided to raise the price of the “Shrine of Silence” to \$1.50 per copy. This they do because of the increased size and the extraordinary mechanical quality of the book—done in red and black, artistic initial letters, on 100-pound wood-cut paper. Out, sure, February 1st.

But we will make this special premium offer: All who send in one dollar to us before March 15th, will receive this sumptuous book at the original low rate. After that date everybody must pay \$1.50.

“THE ETERNAL I AM.”*

In all ages man has conceived himself as a larger being than his commonplace conditions and ordinary career would suggest. This thought may have emanated from the native hope which “springs eternal in the human breast,” or may have been the product of pure imagination; or, again, it may have sprung from the soul's instinctive

*A lecture delivered by MR. HENRY FRANK at Carnegie Lyceum.

yearning after subtle things and its conception of intimate union with whatsoever is highest and best in Nature.

Whatever be the source of this notion, none can deny that it has constituted a prominent feature in the great religions of the past. Perhaps it has been given its most figurative and suggestive expression in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, where it is peculiarly denominated the "I am." In the ordinary vernacular that expression becomes almost absurd if its meaning is extended beyond the present tense. It has, however, been—shall I say perverted—or, if not perverted, certainly transformed from its original meaning till in a certain esoteric school of religion it has come to indicate a larger scope and purpose in life than what is compassed by the career of an ordinary mortal.

We read in the Old Testament that when the chosen leader of the Jews confronted Jehovah in the burning bush he was told that the God who revealed himself was to be known as the I AM. "Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

This statement runs through various passages of the Old Testament, seemingly with no more meaning than that "I can give you no possible interpretation of myself that would appeal to the limited capacity of the human mind; therefore, I can only say that I am that I am, because you cannot understand what I am."

But Jesus takes up the statement, it would seem, and makes a more universal application, when he says, "Before Abraham was I am." This assertion of Jesus in the orthodox interpretation means that he was the "I Am" who spoke to Moses in the mantle of the flaming bush. But whether we agree or disagree with this exegesis, another and at once more rational and inspiring interpretation is this: When Jesus pronounced himself the "I Am" in imitation of the ancient tribal god, he was presenting himself as the symbolic representation of the whole human race, and the large sentiment he expressed was prophetic of its possibilities and achievements. A similar idea was symbolized in the mythical leaders of other religions. When Brahma, the Hindoo lord of heaven and earth, as conceived in the ancient Vedas, confronted the heroic leader of the battle-field who was seeking the true meaning of life and existence, he delivers a message, in sentiment,

quite like that of Jesus, only clothed in the garb of metaphysical expression. He says, in substance, that before all beginnings he was. He was the beginningless beginning, and there was to be found in him the only creation, through whom, indeed, creation was, and yet in whom there is no creation.*

You will find this thought generally expressed in all the religions of the world, or in such religions as have been embodied in idealistic theories of life and sought to exalt man from grossness to spiritual realization. While I cannot altogether agree with the deductions of religious commentators I can see how the idea so vaguely expressed in the ancient writings may be made to avail in the practical realities of earth.

Our own Emerson sang of the Great Over-soul; which, discerning through spiritual perception, he felt absorbed the Universe—the one supreme, all-pervasive and all-essential Presence. This conception inspired his song with poetic grandeur, thrilling his hearers or readers with new hope, because he himself was kindled to new life with the vision of universal harmony which compassed Nature, and taught him the interdependence of all upon the One Essence which permeated, controlled and ordered the constant transformations of existence.

From that point of view, I shall undertake to interpret the meaning of what, in these religions, has been called the "I Am;" and we will see if it is as ridiculous as it seems at first to be, when applied as we have seen, and whether there does not lie at its base a truly scientific and philosophical conception.

* "Being even birthless, exhaustless in essence, and being even the Lord of all creatures, I am born through my inscrutable power and controlling nature."—Bhagavad Gita, IV., 6.

"O, Son of Kunti, I am the taste in water, the splendor of sun and moon, the sound in space, humanity in men.

"O, conqueror of wealth, there is nothing superior to Me; all this is threaded by Me as gem-beads by string.

"I am the Wisdom of the wise, and the Power of the powerful.

"I am the sacred smell in the earth, and the brilliance in the fire, the life in all creatures and the power of concentration in those whose minds are concentrated in the Spirit.

"They are in Me, but I am not in them."—Bhagavad Gita, VII., 6-12.

Examined in the light which I propose, the expression "I Am" awakens in one a realization of the grandeur of individuality. I pause a moment at the mere expression—"I Am." If "I Am," then I must needs be a distinctive unit, evolved amid the complicated energies of the world; an individualized product, as it were, of the disintegrating and organizing forces of Nature; the realization of which enables me to discern in myself something distinct from all things else that exist, —*sui generis*, absolutely separated, as it were, from everything else.

If we pause long enough upon this meaning of the expression "I Am," we see how it stands forth as the symbol of the Individual; the Individual, that is, who has become the composite expression, in concrete form, of diversified forces, which in themselves have no consciousness of their relation, but find in Man that correlation which establishes his consciousness. This then is the "I Am"—the self—the individuated unity of consciousness—the realized embodiment of that ever outworking tendency of the unexpressed Absolute to reveal itself in concrete relations. If one will stop long enough to realize the meaning of this, one will see that in some respects it is the most startling idea that can confront the human mind.

Now, as a matter of fact, I deny this reality; that is, I deny that this conception of the "I Am" is ever realizable, and that what we call the Absolute in Nature has a real existence, or at least, such an existence as is amendable to human knowledge. This statement of mine may seem to be inconsistent with and contradictory of what I propose afterwards to demonstrate, but I think on careful study one will discern the unity of the thought I express, and the philosophical truth which it involves. In point of fact, I deny "I Am," or that "You Are," in any such absolute, separate and segregated sense as the interpretation of the individual above given would imply. I insist that the Absolute is unsolvable to the human mind, at least it is not deducible in terms of logic. If the Absolute is that which is absolved from everything else, it stands wholly apart and separate from every other entity, devoid of all conceivable relation. The moment we conceive things to be related, they occupy a juxtaposition in our thoughts, and become not only related to themselves but related to us, for we know all things only in thought, and thought is ourselves.

If therefore I conceive of the Absolute as a some-what or a some-one, wholly separated from, and unrelated to, all things else, then I am conceiving of some one who can hold no possible relation to myself; but the fact that I conceive of Him, at once establishes a relation between him and me. In the very act therefore of thinking of the Absolute, I destroy the Absolute; for the moment it becomes related to me, it ceases of course to become unrelated, and therefore ceases to be Absolute. For having conceived the Absolute, the relation in thought has been established between us; and the instant a relation is established between the Absolute and aught else, that moment it ceases to exist as the Absolute, and becomes a related idea, or energy, or personality, in the universe. In short, you will understand from this that your only possible interpretation of the universe lies in your interpretation of yourself. No one can conceive of anything existing save in the expression of his own consciousness, for he can never live outside of himself, and all he knows of the universe is himself. Therefore, each individual unit of the universe is the composite expression of all relations, and the human being is to that extent the complete expression as his experiences widen and his relations multiply.

Hence, when I say "I am!"—again I repeat it—I say I am all that is. By which I mean that the world exists to me within myself. For the picture of this universe is only that which is portrayed upon the canvas of my own consciousness—the glory of the skies, the resplendent beauty of the rising and the setting sun, the brilliance of the nightly stars, the music of the rippling streams, the twittering of birds, the leafy discords of the trees—are all myself; because only as they are intoned upon the chords of my being, and respond to the consciousness of myself, do I hear them and see them and know them.

Therefore, I am; yea, I am you, and you are myself. For, in the last analysis, in the interior interpretation of individual life, we find out that all individuality is dissolved in universality, and the individual stands alone and supreme in the universe, because the individual to himself is the universe.

I ask again, then, what is the "I Am"? and I answer "I Am" is universal Being. "I Am" is universal essence and expression, the outward and the inward, subsistence and existence—all that is.

Do you know, my friends, we are unfortunately so deceived by our momentary situations, seemingly by our separate and delusive personalities, by our senses of feeling, sight, hearing, taste, and smell, that we pull ourselves apart, as it were, from the Universal, the one Whole, which, in fact, we constitute. If, however, we thoroughly study ourselves we shall find that the Individual is the Universal, and the Universal is expressed in the Individual.

I say, I am Being—I am Consciousness, I am Reality, I am All. And yet, I say, I am I. I look you in the eye, and I say, "Your eyes are not my eyes." When I clasp you by the hand, I know your hands are not mine; and yet, somehow, I know you as myself, and only as I know you *as myself* do I know you at all. You are the thoughts of my mind. You are the visions of my eye. You are the dreams which nightly inhabit my brain. You are all there is of me. And I am all there is of you. Because you can only know me in terms of your own consciousness, and I you in terms of my consciousness. For all of the universe which exists for us is expressed in ourselves. The universe is oneness, wholeness, totality, an indivisible solidarity. And the solidarity is expressed in the single consciousness of the Individual.

Thus when I say "I am," what profound meaning is involved! The other morning a strange dream—shall I call it a dream? a revelation? What shall I call it?—came to me just in the semi-waking hours, which seemed to symbolize a whole philosophy in itself. It did not come to me in a dream, because I saw no vision. It came to me as a thought. I heard a voice, and there seemed to be some one touching me. And the thought that came to me was clear and lucid. Thousands of times it had flitted vaguely across my consciousness, but never had it come with such vividness, with such force and conviction, as it did that morning, during that moment of waking sleep. It was this:

There seemed to stand all around me, enswathing me, an invisible presence which seemed to say, "I am All that exists, the One Infinite Spirit—Being—the Essence of Infinity and the Universe. There is nothing but Me; and You are Me, and I am You."

Then, in that strange—I might almost call it—transfiguration of myself—there came that other thought, which I have suggested this

morning. I said, "Then, if you are I, and I am you, what am I? What is my soul? Where am I? Where do I dwell?"

And then came this marvelous utterance, which was almost like a revelation when it said: "Your soul is no more to you than is your body. Each is but a reflection of the Infinite All, and you stand over against Me (who am but yourself), as my momentary reflection in the changing experiences of your individual life. You have always been; you always will be, because I Am forever from the beginning of beginnings unto the end of ends."

As yonder Moon casts the gleam of her golden beams upon the rippling streams of evening, though those rippling shafts have no actual existence and are wholly dependent upon the yellow beams of the moon, yet seem to be separate formations; so my soul is not that which shall live forever, at least as I now know that soul; but it is the transitory reflection of that infinite and all-enswathing Being which plays upon the temporary organism of my body, as the yellow beams play upon the waters of the stream. The soul is temporary as the body is temporary; because both are momentary or fleeting manifestations of the All-Infinite.

The only way we rise into the consciousness of the Infinite,—of the All,—is when we realize that there is nothing separate or discrete; nothing which stands alone; no unit in fact separable from the infinite unit. Then do we know that what we call the body and what we call the soul are but momentary reflections of our real selves, which come with us into this life, and pass with us out of this life, remaining for a time as the ages go. We behold the reflections and conceive them as real, whereas the Real Being is always invisible, acting as an invisible mirror casting our reflections before us. In the rapt vision of St. Paul: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory into glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." So, I take it, my friends, that we evolve through transitory stages of the glorified rapture, the transfigured realization of what we call the soul. And so, I say, it comes to me as a conviction that as this body lives for a time and shall pass away, so also that which I call the soul, though it live for a time, shall also pass away.

What, then, is the Soul? Is it the ultimate and infinite self, or is

it but the temporary reflection, in human conditions and relations, of that indestructible, universal, and all-pervading Spirit which exists forever, and in which we live, move and have our being?

The Soul, as we know it, is the temporary expression of permanent Being. As each thought reaches the altitude of consciousness and sinks anon into the unconscious realm, so the Soul itself, which is but the household of the infinite wandering thoughts of the human mind, is the temporary expression of their mutual association.

What we know as the Soul, in any one moment, is that state of consciousness which is determined by the group of thoughts which are temporarily associated to produce it. When that group disappears, the Soul, for the time being, ceases to express itself in that form. Its consciousness varies with its varying relations. Something is always expressed in and through the Soul. The Soul is but the appearance, the outward expression of that Something. The expression is temporary, transitory. The Something is constant and persistent. The triumph of the Soul lies in the consciousness of its relation to the Infinite which finds expression through itself.

The Soul, as a temporary reflection of universal Being, comes and goes; is to-day and to-morrow is not. But the universal Being—the All-Sustaining Essence—the Supreme Energy—survives all the transforming states of human consciousness, and persists as the constant and complete Consciousness of the Universe.

Hence the human Soul attains its constant poise as it realizes its own reflection of the permanence of the universal consciousness. It becomes eternal as it realizes that its own transitoriness is lost in the permanence of universal Being. If the Soul is but expression, that which is expressed through the Soul is inexpressible in its entirety. The Soul reveals but glimpses of it, and according as those glimpses enlarge and become sustained, does the Soul expand and become a more perfect and constant reflection of permanent Being. If once the Soul can but lose itself in the consciousness of this Universal Reality, it discerns the triumph of its mission and has learned the meaning of eternal life.

Continued in February issue.

Nature's Miracles—Vol. III.—*Electricity and Magnetism* by Dr. Elisha Gray. (Fords, Howard & Hulbert.)

I recently reviewed in these columns Vol. II. of this same series. This volume, devoted to Electricity and Magnetism, I read with the pleasure which a good story commonly affords. Its style is so simple, the profoundest and least understood principles of this once occult science are so clearly, succinctly and candidly stated, that even a child can easily grasp the author's meaning. In this little volume, costing only 60 cents, this eminent scientist (an electrical specialist and the inventor of the telephone) tells us everything that we need know concerning his field of research. He begins by tracing the early origin of electrical discoveries, in remote history, and then by gradual stages reveals all the mysteries of the working of the Telegraph, the Telephone, the Tellaugraph, Wireless Telegraphy, the wonderful application of the electrical energy guaranteed by the long-wasted force of Niagara Falls, with all so interestingly, absorbingly and convincingly, that we feel when we have concluded our reading we have become electrical experts and could pass a very fair examination. Every reader of this magazine should procure the three volumes on Heat, Sound and Electricity, for the sake of the liberal education they afford.

Two of the handsomest and meatiest little magazines which in many a day have floated down upon our exchange table are "Wings of Truth" (an excruciatingly taking title), and "The Occult Literary News Review," both edited by Mr. E. Marsh-Stiles, St. Stephens' Mansion, Westminster, S. W., England. Both of these dainties are devoted to the presentation of all phases of so-called "Occultism," including Mental Science, Metaphysics, Hypnotism, etc., from a cultivated, scientific and intelligent view-point. I welcome both with much pleasure and bespeak for them the utmost success.

From Chicago hails a cyclone called "The Natural Healer," published by Editor Willard, at 3985 Cottage Grove Avenue, and from the contents of its first few numbers I fear the conventional doctors will be forced to look to their laurels. This new crusader has entered the field of reform with the avowed object of knocking out the entire

medical profession. He has invented an appellation which will do more to disturb them than all his other arguments. He calls them *Killopaths*. Go it, Brother Willard—while I don't believe you'll annihilate the profession you will certainly do valliant work in exposing humbugs and the nausiating contents of poisonous drugs.

I cannot sufficiently express my appreciation of the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, which I have just received from the secretary, Hon. S. P. Langley. Government Reports are commonly regarded as such dry affairs that the ordinary individual can find but little interest in them. But to anybody who possesses even a casual interests in scientific subjects, this volume must prove to be of standard value.

The formal report occupies but a small portion of the book. The value lies in the special articles which are reproduced from various sources. This volume contains, for instance, an article on the Le Sage Theory of Gravitation, a treatise read by M. Provost before the Berlin Academy in 1682. This treatise, in many ways, anticipates the modern theory of gravitation and molecular interaction, and to those who have not read it is a source of surprise. Then we have the Chemistry of the Stars—Professor Lockyear's famous article of a dozen years ago; a noteworthy treatise on the progress of color photography; then telegraphing across space; the Kinetic theory of gases; here, too, we have Professor Dubois' famous article on the Pithecanthropus Erectus, which startled the scientific world a few years ago; and then Ernest Haeckel on our present knowledge of the origin of man; and many other articles of equal importance too numerous to mention in our brief space. Each volume that is issued by the Smithsonian Institution contains a mine of information which can nowhere else be found in such compendious and well-selected arrangement. I am deeply grateful to the Institution for favoring the Independent Thinker with these publications, and I trust that all our readers who are interested in this line of study will make an effort to secure the volumes as they issue from the press. A letter to Professor S. P. Langley will bring the information as to how the books may be procured.

"A thing of beauty and a joy forever" came into my mind when I received from East Aurora and unwound the package containing The Catalogue of Roycroft publications.

If you want something to thrill you into a sense of the beautiful—something utterly unlike anything else that's done in book-shops in these days, get "next" to Fra Elbertus and beg him for a copy of this gem. I shan't try to describe it. I'll just do what you will when you receive it—dream about it.

Just How and Why to Wake the Solar Plexus," by Elizabeth Towne, Holyoke, Mass. This is a vivacious little book which explains what the author says came to her as a discovery, namely, that the solar plexus is the inward sun of man, and holds the same relation to him that the sun does to the solar system. She claims that this may be awakened by a process of breathing, consisting chiefly of two exercises which she explains in the book. Well worth reading, 25 cents.

LIST OF BOOKS RECEIVED, WHICH WILL BE REVIEWED
IN FUTURE ISSUES.

"Victor Serenus," Henry Wood ; Little, Brown & Co., Boston. "Discovery of a Lost Trail," C. B. Newcomb ; Lee & Shepard, Boston. "Helps to Right Living," Katharine Newcomb ; Lee & Shepard, Boston. "Evolution of Immortality," by Rosicruciae ; Eulian Pub. Co., Salem, Mass. "Spiritual Law in Natural World," by Eleve ; Purdy Pub. Co., Chicago, Ill. Selections from Geo. Macdonald, by J. Dewey ; Purdy Pub. Co., Chicago, Ill. "Home Cyclopædia of Popular Medical, Social and Sexual Science," by Dr. E. B. Foote ; Murray Hill Pub. Co., New York. "Compulsory Vaccination," by Dr. J. M. Peebles ; Battle Creek, Mich. "The Biochemic System of Medicine," by Dr. Geo. W. Carey, San Francisco, Cal. "Nature's Miracles—Electricity," by Prof. Elisha Gray ; Fords, Howard & Hulbert, New York City. "The Ten Commandments," Rev. Geo. W. Chainey, Masonic Temple, Chicago, Ill. "Manual of Ethics," by John S. Mackensie ; Hinds & Noble, New York. "Annual Report Smithsonian Institute," Washington, D. C. "Death Defeated," Dr. J. M. Peebles, Battle Creek, Mich. "Personal Magnetism," Leo S. Osman, 169 West Twenty-third street, New York City. "The Power of Repose," Annie Payson Call ; Little, Brown & Co., Boston. "Political Economy in Natural Law," Henry Wood ; Lee & Shepard, Boston.

CHATS VIS-A-VIS.

A Stirring Voice from "India's Coral Strand."

"We are a body of rather free thinking Hindus, with a philosophical turn of mind. Ever since we saw your contributions to the *Ideal Review* on "The Creeds and their Origin," we wanted your other publications, if any. Hence, in behalf of the Association of which I am the President, I request that you will be kind enough to send me a sample copy of your valuable "INDEPENDENT THINKER" and specimen copies of your other books. Christian bigotry is doing much havoc among the school-going population here, and we hope your magnificent work will counteract the evil."

The above delightful words come all the way from Madras, India, and is from the pen of V. Ramalingo Dikshik, President of the famous Brahma Somaj Society, founded by Chunder Sen, about a quarter century ago. With pleasure, my dear brother beneath the Himalayas, will I send you specimens of all my literature, now and henceforth forever, if my effusions can be of any avail in antagonizing the bigotry and superstition among you.

THE EDITOR.

From the "Open Door," One of the Brightest Journals of the Day.

"THE INDEPENDENT THINKER is one of the latest and best of the up-to-date, wide-awake, abreast of the times magazines that is sure to make its mark. Mr. Frank, its able and talented editor, has long been one of the great independent thinkers of New York City, and is now one of the prominent men in 'the public eye.' He is a magnetic and fascinating speaker, and has gathered around him an audience of the brainy and cultivated of New York's best people, to whom he lectures every Sunday in Carnegie Lyceum. One of these addresses appears in the July number, entitled 'Can the Soul Be Physician to the Body?' being the fourth in the course on 'The Creed of Christian Science Compared With the Creed of Christendom,' which is a highly logical and scientific discourse. Better send a dime for a sample copy, and if you do, you will be sure to subscribe."—*The Open Door.*

Cheerful Encouragement from a Keen Correspondent.

At last have I received the long-awaited magazine, THE INDEPENDENT THINKER, for which I thank you.

The literature is, indeed, both a consolation and aid to me, as it points out scientific truths, and defines them intelligibly and assures me that the world, no matter how bad it is, nevertheless is better than none. You are right, the optimist is truly the savior of the world, while the pessimist is its enemy; the resources of a poor man are equally as vital as those of a wealthy one, and even exceedingly superior, when the poor man is endowed with ambition, intelligence, and a good heart.

At the same time, the evidence, that the poor one is being cruelly taken advantage of, which so strikingly appeals to us, is too real and sympathetic to be overlooked by even the most conservative optimist. I am not one to do so.

Your lecture upon "The Commercial Hog and Missionary" has pleased me immensely, and I sincerely hope that you will not omit in the future to quote the injustice done to the producer of all wealth by the idler; the non-producer; it appeals, too, immediately to a conscientious and noble soul, to be underestimated.

Your undertaking is, indeed, a truly sublime one, and I wish you success from the depth of my heart

SIDNEY BERNSTEIN,
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An Appreciative Word from Mr. Pentecost.

MY DEAR MR. FRANK: I might have said more about your lecture the other evening with entire sincerity, for I have rarely been so pleased with anything I have heard from a public speaker. I am so easily bored by public speakers that I sometimes fear that unwittingly I must be envious of the ability of other men or incapable of appreciating what I hear; but my pleasure in listening to you was so great that I am now inclined to think that I can appreciate a good thing when I hear it, and that the reason why many men cannot interest me is because they are not interesting.

New York City, Nov. 7, 1900.

HUGH O. PENTECOST.

A Word of Cheer from a Fearless Warrior.

MY DEAR MR. FRANK: I do not often write to people of their work, but I am constrained to express my profound gratitude for your address on "The Conquests of Love," which I have just read. It is truth and life.

I wonder how you find your work in your church developing?

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE D. HERRON.

From a Bright Western Woman from Whom We Shall Hear More in Future.

Your articles have been read with eager and intense interest.

Judge not that I am in doubt or fear as to your Spiritual status. The Truth as veritable Life unfolds. Endless its possibilities. I also have been searching long for the Truth.

I claim, through you, the privilege of commenting upon your investigations as set forth in your articles. May I not too boldly intrude upon your time and fortitude.

To-day I jot down a few remarks—they are, as you ask, given freely and with candor; yet, as I well know, crude and imperfect.

Behind all your writings I behold the man. He also my brother. One who also died in the flesh to live in the Spirit. He also hath suffered crucifixion.

Who among us, having sought diligently the Truth, has not suffered the throes of death, aye, and the terrors of darkness, the agony unspeakable of despair and desolation?

Yet both of us think, write and speak without restriction. Conviction holds not alone the germ of Truth but the courage of action. I fear not to offend, even do I mightily dissent.

NELLIE N. COMSTOCK.

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