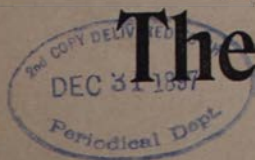


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# The Journal of Practical Metaphysics

DEVOTED TO

THE UNIFICATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

AND THE

*NEW PHILOSOPHY OF HEALTH.*

HORATIO W. DRESSER, Editor.



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THE FAILURE OF THE NEW THOUGHT  
MOVEMENT.

BY HORATIO W. DRESSER.

It is to the lasting credit of the New Thought disciples as a class that they are persistently and hopefully looking for the good, both in people and in the circumstances of the world at large. Never has the value of optimistic thinking been more strongly emphasized than by them, and never has there been a more successful attempt to relieve suffering humanity by simple and effective methods. I would not for a moment detract from the good thus accomplished, nor cast the least shadow on the bright prospect for the future. But idealism is not the only phase of human truth. Realism must ever be its balance wheel, and the prophet needs occasionally to look at life just as it exists today. To be brought to judgment, to come to consciousness in regard to our faults, or become aware of a higher standard, is oftentimes to feel a far healthier stimulus than could come to us where we have everything our way. I therefore propose in this article to point out some respects in which the mental healing movement has failed to meet the expectations of its most ardent followers, and I do this with a firm belief in the future development of the New Thought.



1. Many followers of the new doctrine, instead of branching out into ever new lines of inquiry, have become conservative and narrow. Inspired by the enthusiasm of a cure by the mental method, its disciples have naturally become warm advocates of its doctrines. But they have too often permitted their whole thought world to revolve about these new, and to them all-important, facts. Consequently you will hear them criticizing really superior discourses and books, if perchance the application of thought to health be omitted. You will find them attending lectures without end on the New Thought, teaching and limiting themselves and their reading to these favorite ideas. In due time they become as narrow in their new belief as they were once in the old. A large proportion of those who are cured become healers; many take up the work of teaching, and finally publish books. The market is now flooded with books, pamphlets and papers, in which the same doctrine is set forth in slightly varied language, and the time must soon come when this over-production shall cease. Out of these publications a few are clear expositions of the new doctrine, and have accomplished great good; some are well adapted to elementary purposes, but many are decidedly crude, and abounding in surprising statements in regard to the world's great wealth of philosophic and scientific literature. You may search in vain for a really scientific statement of the subject, — that is, one in which the facts of mental cure are clearly set forth, and then subjected to the tests of scientific reasoning. Clearly the only call for new books in this line is for works either of strongly scientific or of marked literary value.

2. The New Thought advocates have as a class failed to evince scientific interest. Seek clearly stated facts either from patient or healer, and you will be met with coldness or receive glowing accounts of cures calculated to support their theories. The strenuousness with which they have insisted that it is not hypnotism has debarred them from any discussion with those who sought to discover the difference between mental treatment

and hypnotism. Modern science has been condemned as materialistic, and hence its aid has not been called in. Yet genuine scientific training is probably the only real basis on which the mind is prepared to judge what is a fact. It has been positively disheartening to those who have tried to quicken the love for scientific truth and to secure mere facts to find in how slight esteem truth for its own sake is held, and how strong a hold is still given to theory, prejudice, and dogmatism.

3. Because of its crudities, its personality worship, its extravagant stories and promises of cure, its unfortunate millstone (Christian Science), which has retarded its growth for many years, and its willingness to let people die rather than coöperate with an M. D., it has in a measure failed to win the interest of the best-educated and most thoughtful people. This is of course true only of the extremists, and the independent truth seekers are not to blame for the dogmatism of the radical school. Nevertheless the entire movement has suffered from its connection with Christian Science, since in the eyes of the world there is little or no difference between the outsider and "the faithful" disciples of the radical school. Has not the time come to separate entirely from the radical wing of the new movement?

4. The new movement has produced many teachers who talk very readily on speculative subjects, but who are decidedly undeveloped on the practical side of life. Thus has come about an unwillingness to adopt business methods, and in lieu of this a sort of easy-going method of depending on charity and the help of those who out of sheer sympathy come to the rescue. But "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and those who are the most practical and systematic live a far more commendable life than those who are dependent upon the good-will of society. The great need now is for the leaders to come down out of the realm of the abstract, the self-complacent and the dreamy, brush away all quasi-metaphysics, and state in clear, simple, common-sense language the fundamental principles of the new doctrine, that even "the common people" may understand. Such state-

ments should rest on facts, too, and not on Bible texts, now no longer accepted as proof since no two interpretations agree.

5. To the habit of affirming that "all is good" is traceable the indiscriminate praise bestowed upon lecturers, teachers, and books. But discernment between the rational and the vague, the illogical or the absurd, is the first test of truth. One must be as truly on the alert for *limitations* as for strong points, and not until one has ceased to be "carried away" or absorbed and learned to test truth for one's self may one safely follow any teacher as far as he may go. Involved, backhanded, and crude Orientalism is frequently accepted as truth to the neglect of Christianity, in which the same doctrine is put in its direct and simple form. Many have already come to their senses in this respect and learned to look nearer home for the best stated truth. There is a strong demand now for a more rational doctrine, and those who recognize this demand and meet it will have an abundant following.

6. The foregoing may seem like an arraignment of a sect which is accomplishing a wonderful amount of good, and the cry of uncharitableness is raised whenever a few daring ones tell what they know about the radical school and try to distinguish it from the independent wing of the New Thought. But these are simply dangers which threaten the New Thought movement unless its leaders awaken to the necessity of broadening out along scientific lines and shaking off encumbrances. Why should there be a new sect? If one is cured by mental methods, is it necessary to become an abstract metaphysician and throw both common sense and science aside? Why not say, Here are new facts, let me proclaim them to the world; let me practise the truth I have learned, and show by my life that I believe it, but let me not forget that wisdom existed before; let me beware of mere theories, and, most important of all, broaden out instead of becoming narrow from a new point of view. Is it not the greatest opportunity open to the New Thought disciples to take their teaching into the schools, the

churches, and into business, and *add* it to what is already known? Is it not far better to begin systematically to develop and control the body than it is to deem it inconsistent to attend a gymnasium? Many have made themselves nervously tense by the use of abstract affirmations, and have held themselves up in thought to a fine-spun ideal, until they grew out of adjustment to this present life. But surely what we need is to *come down* into full happiness in the life that now is. We need to be at home in our own bodies and our own minds. We need to ask, What is the next step in evolution? and take that, instead of affirming that we are already perfect. Society has now seen enough of this abstract method to know that it is largely a failure, and it has a right to demand common sense of the New Thought advocates before it can be expected to listen. Balance, poise, rounded-out development,—these will be the watchwords of the next decade in this movement. And this practical ideal will be realized, not by affirming, but by *work*; by settling about systematically to cultivate mind and body, by solving practical problems, by uplifting business and therapeutics, by reforming education, by caring properly for the insane, by helping either to abolish or reform our prison system, by stemming the tide of sensationalism, by refusing to buy newspapers which furnish forth accounts of murder trials and hangings for the delectation of the vulgar, and by facing many other vital issues in a practical way. These are the great needs of the day,—not the relation of being to non-being, the possibility of recalling how one lived when one was an Arabian, or the difference between southern Buddhism and northern Buddhism as related to Occidental Theosophy. All that is practical, all that has proved really helpful in the New Thought practice, should be sifted out and the chaff thrown away. The world stands in sore need of this helpful thought. The every-day man of the world will listen when you appeal to his *reason*. But he asks to be met where he is, and he wants facts. Tell him about your beautiful philosophy, too, if you will; but state it in "plain United States" language, as one



has said. Define the simple laws; tell him a few experiences which illustrate the power of thought, and leave him to think them over. But do not boast of the New Thought as a universal panacea; do not say confidently, "Oh yes, I can cure you; I have never failed." And do not limit your metaphysics to mere mental healing. There is something else in the world besides mental healing. There is a body as well as a mind, and, theoretically at least, there is no more reason why one should become a prophet of "the subtle power of thought" than a warm advocate of the power of gravitation. There is a far deeper phase of the New Thought movement than that which lays so much stress on mere thought and egoistic affirmation. Here, as elsewhere, it is broadened, deepened *life* that tells, not the thought and the talk. Those who have suffered and lived are the ones who know. These you will find quietly going about doing good. Here is the leaven which shall leaven the lump of unregenerated society. Here is the best exemplification of the rediscovered ideas termed the New Thought; and here is where the spirit of the Christ is once more stirring in the hearts, inspiring the minds, and appealing deeply to the permanently good and true in humanity: out of the first failures of the New Thought movement shall ultimately come its success.



*Self-Protection; Five Steps in Evolution:*

(1) If anybody undertakes to hurt me, that person will suffer most. (2) It is better to suffer injury than to commit it. (3) Since to be the injurer is a worse thing than to be the injured, I will protect my brother from so ill a thing as far as I can. I will not provoke him to injure me. I will so guard myself and my interest that he shall find no opportunity to injure me. (4) There is no evil. My brother cannot harm me. I cannot harm him. (5) God is omnipresent love. I am love. My brother is love.

MYRTA LOCKETT AVARY.



## MODERN SENSATIONALISM.

[As one of the signs that the rational school of the New Thought is awakening to the splendid opportunities before it, we gladly give space to the following circular of the Metaphysical Club. If the new movement may in any sense be deemed a failure, what could be said of the old thought from which it is a reaction? Is not the partial failure simply the first setback of a stripling in its tussel with a giant,—the giant of morbid, criminal, selfish thought? And is not the New Thought destined to lay aside its incumbrances, outgrow its crudities and extravagances, become more and more scientific, and in the end more rationally spiritual, until its power in the land shall be irresistible?—ED.]

CAREFUL thinkers, who look beneath the surface for the roots and causes of events, are substantially agreed in the statement that delineated criminality is a gigantic and threatening evil. Its subtile and unappreciated power to demoralize furnishes strong reasons for some attempt to hasten the formation of intelligent public opinion regarding it.

While it is known that an ounce of prevention is worth many pounds of cure, society concerns itself greatly with the punishment of crime, but very little with its prevention. To pluck up here and there a thistle with the expectation of diminishing the crop, while the air which blows across the boundless mellow and fertile soil is thick with their winged seeds, would be no more illogical.

Everything grows by what it feeds upon, and positively, even if by unconscious degrees, takes on its quality. The law of suggestion and the certain trend of familiarization are no less

sure in their working than is any principle in physics or mathematics. If, as is well known, the sanest minds cannot immerse themselves in a perverted environment without taking on a little of its slime and abnormality, what shall be said of unnumbered weak, immature, youthful and unsymmetrical natures who delve into a foul atmosphere which they inhale, absorb and become saturated with? What myriads of unbalanced minds dwell near the boundary line of some great temptation, crime, or disorder, who need but a little suggestive push to land them in the domain of overt action? What an abnormal gloating over horrors, and a morbid itching for notoriety is kindled! A thousand good deeds receive no mention, but a crime is held aloft, magnified, spread out and turned about in the light, until it fills the mental horizon, and gradually becomes familiar, then natural, and finally almost inviting.

Youthful and pure consciousness is stealthily invaded, perverted, and poisoned. The criminal is unwittingly surrounded with a halo of romance, gilded with notoriety, and his likeness printed upon the memory of unnumbered thousands. With impressionable natures a morbid heroism often becomes a consuming passion. A possible and uncertain future penalty has little or no weight as a deterrent. For the present it is as distant as the antipodes. It is well known that suicides come in epidemics in consequence of sensational examples. These statements include but a few psychological hints which might be enlarged upon indefinitely.

It is both useless and unwise to hold the purveyors of the press responsible for present conditions. Even the lowest recent degradations of "yellow journalism" are amenable to public opinion and demand. Under the stimulus of neighboring competition, theoretical "enterprise," but more than all upon demand, the present system has grown up by imperceptible degrees. Doubtless many of the better class of journalists, who through the influence of prevailing conventions have gone beyond their better judgment, would welcome a change in public

sentiment which would lessen the demand for such mental pabulum. Psychological laws are exact and untiring in their operation. This fact needs to come into intelligent and general appreciation, and it is to be hoped that clergymen, teachers, authors, philanthropists and all leaders of thought will inaugurate such an educational campaign.

The Metaphysical Club of Boston is by no means limited to fine-spun theory, but its scope is designed to be thoroughly practical. It proposes to take up as rapidly as is practicable educational work along these lines, and invites the coöperation of organizations and individuals. It will welcome essays, sermons, or tracts upon the subject from any quarter, and aid in their circulation. It intends to agitate and discuss this much-needed reform, and it cordially invites and counts upon the coöperation of reputable managers of the newspaper press as well as others.

THE METAPHYSICAL CLUB, CIRCULAR NO. 10.

WARREN A. RODMAN, *Secretary.*

*Headquarters. 201 Clarendon Street, Boston, Mass.*



An excellent method in the development of concentration, and one which can be practised at any time during the day, is that of devoting one's self entirely to one kind of work at a time. Do not while you work think that you ought to be elsewhere, or while at play think that you ought to be at work. Do not try to solve the mystery of the universe while you are working with your hands. Do not look ahead in fear and expectancy, nor toward the past with doubt and regret. But live in the present. Call yourself entirely into the present moment, and give your full attention to the task at hand. It may not be the wisest task, but having chosen it abide by your decision.

## NOTES FROM THE JOURNAL OF A TRUTH-SEEKER.

THE ideal of all philosophical inquiry should be to make every statement and every deduction as clear, as convincing, and as impersonal as a problem in mathematics. If we possessed all knowledge of all facts in their unity, we should simply need to state them rationally and systematically. Such knowledge would speak for itself and be unanswerable. Therefore in approximating to this ideal, every contrary proposition should be *refuted, if possible*, allowing nothing to pass unscrutinized, however fondly the conclusion be cherished.

Seek facts, reasons, causes, the truth. Theories are only needed temporarily to eke out facts, or as first steps in the scientific method. No theory is final nor all-inclusive.

Do not assume premises: prove everything.

Think carefully, accurately, moderately, profoundly.

Follow *reason* rather than preconception, *wherever* it leads.

Use no word whose meaning is not perfectly clear.

Define accurately when necessary.

Ignore no facts whatever. Be open-minded, on the alert for new evidence.

Use language which cannot be mistaken.

Make no statement for which you could not, if questioned, give an adequate reason; none on authority, none on *personal* evidence alone.

"Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so *clear and distinct* that they cannot be doubted."

Be content only with the most rational, the best provisional, the most accurate statements which our limited knowledge permits us to make.



Do not be eager to explain facts according to some pet theory, but willingly sacrifice the theory.

Avoid the confusion of your point of view with the fact which you wish to interpret.

"Unless you refute your opponent at his best you are refuted by him."

Define the nature of your search; know what sort of Reality or ultimate somewhat you are in search of.

Understand clearly that the materialist, the idealist, the theologian, and the man of science *mean* one and the same Substance, the Spirit, the Life of all, whether they term it matter, Infinite Self, God, or force, and you will no longer be troubled by the divergence of their opinions.

True, sympathetic criticism is the greatest stimulation to growth, and is like the argument of an adversary in debate: we are eager to meet its demands.

The facility with which people accept statements on the authority of others seems to indicate that sincere desire for the truth is not common. Some people appear to pride themselves on the fact that they believe, but do not understand, and do not wish to understand. They hold it sacred to believe, profane to question one's belief.

It may be true that we have no innate ideas. But ideas come to us from a hidden source either immediately or through past experience, and the fact that they come shows that a receptacle was prepared for them. Call it what you will, temperament, natural bias, genius,—each one has an element in him which gives shape to his entire life. "Style is a manner of thinking." It is this style of thought that causes words to group themselves around an author's pen in a manner peculiar to himself. In like manner thought determines dress, bearing, facial expression, attitude, the tone of voice, all that constitutes life. You can change your life permanently only so far as you change your thought. Thought is power. Thought moulds the world.

Professor Lovering once said that the reason why people no longer believe the corpuscular theory is because those who held it have died off. A suggestive remark.

It is well to distinguish between absolute truth, genuine insight, unalterable law, on the one side, and our knowledge of truth, seeming intuition, hypothesis, on the other. At best our statements of truth are relative statements, likely soon to be modified. We are apt to say that we *know*,—and if a man thinks he knows he closes the door of true knowledge. Even one's inmost conviction may be found to be true only in part. Suppose a man living in the tenth century were to say to another, "I *know* that the earth is the centre of the universe." He might feel perfectly sure he was right, for the reason that he was not yet open to a wider view. Many love hypothesis rather than truth, because truth is so far beyond them. If the intuition of one age becomes the reason of the next, and the superstition of the third, then either it was not genuine intuition, or it was only a partial statement of truth. It follows that either our intuitions are not intuitions at all, and we are not able to distinguish between inclination, theory, reason, and insight, or they are glimpses of truth through the thick veil of our ignorance.

It is the special privilege of the childhood of the world to rejoice, to build air castles, to have great hopes, to have firm convictions. But it is the task of intellectual manhood to analyze these very hopes, and even to doubt them. We are inclined to hold fast to our childish dreams. The religious world has scarcely passed through this stage. Yet the philosopher tells us that we do not *know* until we have tested our visions. Shall we, then, doubt everything? No; we should rather cling to our deepest hopes until we prove them to be either false or true. But we must make sure of three points: (1) that we love truth more than any human statement of it; (2) that we are open to growth through experience, reason, and intuition; (3) that we are not holding something to be true for which we have no evidence.

Is it not true that we take life too solemnly? Why should we be so serious? It is not nature's way. God never gives us an individual problem too great to solve. He never deserts us in our attempts to overcome our difficulties. Surely a greater happiness, a deeper feeling of thankfulness that we exist in this beautiful world 'would tide us over many a trouble which now seems too great for us to bear. Happiness means life. Melancholia, pessimism, means death. If we would escape from the prison of our own selves, if we would rid ourselves of this unnatural worry and fear, then by all means let us ascend the mountain tops of happiness and look abroad over this peaceful earth, so beautiful in its ever-fresh manifestations of God.

How many there are who narrow their lives through want of confidence, through erroneous ideas of life and by morbid self-consciousness!

See clearly that the Infinite Spirit is symbolized in the outward universe and progressively revealed in the inner sphere, and you will understand why He seems so much more remote in the outer world and so much nearer in the inner. By and by we shall understand the symbol, and behold! we shall find that it corresponds to the revelation long ago made in our deeper nature.

Show me an atheist or pessimist, and I will show you a man who is one-sided, unfinished.

An optimist is a God-made man. The pessimist has not shaken off the earth out of which he came.

Is Socrates right in saying that knowledge is virtue? In what does virtue consist? Certainly not in cherishing some knowledge of what we ought to do to be good which we never apply. Emerson says that "the step from knowing to doing is rarely taken." To make this step requires courage oftentimes, self-possession, victory over selfish motives. This is virtue. Virtue consists in knowing and doing, never in knowledge alone. Socrates expressed but half the truth unless action were implied in what he said.

To admit that we are in the wrong is the first step toward regeneration.

It is erroneous to say that we cannot change our habits. Where there is a will there is a way.

He whose heart is not moved by beauty in some form has advanced but a short way beyond the brute.

Should not a man have the same charity for himself that he would feel for another? Would we bear it for a moment if another should condemn us as rudely as we sometimes condemn ourselves?

What would the world be without the birds, the coming and going of the seasons with all their charms, the sunsets, the babbling brooks, the silent woods,—in a word, all that is beautiful in nature? We little realize how much these beauties contribute to our happiness and the mastery over trouble. We forget that it is the contemplation of beauty that is the surest method of overcoming its opposite in ourselves.

Whence comes the desire for knowledge if it be true, as some affirm, that many things are sacredly mysterious? Surely curiosity is a God-given faculty, and we seek to know because knowledge is for us. We carry within us prophecies of all we are ever to be.

Faith, hope, optimism, must be definite, positive, to be of value. If I have an indistinct idea of some good that is to come to me, the good may come, and it may not. True faith is founded on understanding. If I see clearly that the good is for me, that, as Emerson says, "there are resources on which we have not drawn," and *determine* to have this good and to draw on these resources, then my definite faith opens the way for the realization of my hope. "The world is for the energetic man." True will power is God power.

There are three principles which govern human activity, or, to speak more accurately, three stages through which man passes in each of which he is governed by a different motive. In the first selfishness is his motive,—self-interest, self-



aggrandizement, etc. In the second his motives are ethical,—he considers what ought to be. In the third he is consciously united with the Infinite Father, and awaits the divine guidance,—his motive is love. The first is impulse, thoughtlessness; the second, intellect, deliberation; the third, inspiration.

Once the law of the survival of the strongest was the rule of life. But, although selfishness is still the guiding motive among men, and the strong still push the weak aside in the strife for money and position, a gradual change is coming over the face of affairs. The fittest will survive, not because of superior might, but through superior wisdom, because unselfishness, kindness, love, are stronger than their opposites. If history tells us rightly, Jesus was the purest type of this coming race of men,—men who will survive because they are mentally qualified to do so.

If I cannot explain all things to my own satisfaction, I can at least explain my own existence to this extent: I know the Source of my life, the Infinite Self; I know that He is *thinking* me, and I await His next action, positive in my conviction that He will answer all my questions at last, and fulfill all my hopes. Life is simple. The key to its solution is to know whence it comes, and to await its coming.

How long it has taken man to learn that life as we know it now is the product of the past! He is like a person with eyes in the back of his head. His gaze is still fixed upon the past. "Our age is retrospective." We seek for models of perfection in the past, but contrary to all sound reasoning. Perfectly logical reasoning forces us to look ahead, and frankly to admit that we know not what the goal of life is. By the very nature of the evolutionary process going on without and within us we are compelled to admit that the final word has not been spoken on any subject, that perfection in the realm of human activity is yet to be attained.

## THE DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF HEALTH.

BY FRANK H. SPRAGUE.

VIEWED from its absolute centre, life appears to be a perfect unit whose best symbol is the sphere; while from any eccentric point its proportions seem more or less distorted, and an infinite number of independent centres are seen. Each eccentric consciousness, on discovering what it imagines to be an unbalanced whole, tries to rectify matters as far as possible by *forcing* an adjustment of the world around its own standpoint. But every effort of this description serves to aggravate the difficulty by conflicting with a universal purpose. No man can comprehend his relation to the world, or find abiding peace and satisfaction, until he discovers that a common centre exists for all lives, and then comes into sympathetic relation with its attracting influence. "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Healing is self-revelation,—the soul's discovery of its correct relation to the absolute centre of Being. Only by apprehending the significance of life in its totality, including not alone its individual but its universal phase as well, can complete, permanent harmony be established. Effort is unnecessary,—simply renunciation of effort and recognition of the fact that all expressive power, energy, and force proceed from one absolute centre. Real efficiency and self-directed effort are contrary to one another; they increase and diminish in an inverse ratio. Great truths are marvelously simple; only error is mystifying. Even the most perplexing mathematical problem becomes easy when the fundamental principle involved is once grasped. Self-revelation transforms bodily conditions by removing the obstruct-

ing element of blind personal struggle and thereby allowing the vital energies free exercise in their natural channels.

Any instrumentality that reveals the soul to itself serves as a healing medium. It may be an objective event or personality, or a purely subjective experience. Instances are by no means rare of persons who, fancying themselves face to face with death, and feeling that their finite lives were about to suffer dissolution, had discovered for the first time an absolute principle or basis of life; and through the consciousness of spiritual vitality thus gained, bodily vigor was renewed. The existence of an eternal reality is a fact too simple to discover, while consciousness is enchanted with the glamour and illusiveness of phenomena; but when these fade from sight it stands clearly forth. Moments come as sudden visions to every life, when one realizes something of the absolute. The perplexing problems, doubts, and distractions of ordinary life vanish for a time; then the vision fades and is remembered only as an indistinct dream. But in truth *ordinary consciousness is the dream*, and those rarer experiences the real life.

Self-manifestation, or realization of our essential nature through the evolution of consciousness, is the supreme end of finite existence. This nature seems to be physical, psychical, or spiritual, according to the quality of consciousness through which it is interpreted. When observed on a sensuous plane it appears as physical force; on a rational plane as psychic energy; on a higher intuitional plane as spiritual power. Certain material phenomena of evolution afford suggestions of those metamorphoses of soul consciousness. Every mentality passes through its nebulous and chaotic stages of vague subconsciousness, on a plane substantially physical in its aspects, until it reaches, by more positive tendencies of concentration, a higher state, in which previously latent psychic energies are evolved. These energies develop in degree and quality, until they surpass the boundaries of the psychical plane and assume the characteristics of spiritual power, radiating in beauty, truth, and love,

the light and heat of the spiritual realm. Three widely differing conceptions are possible, then, of that absolute, unchangeable reality which is the eternal source of all expression. The interposed medium of consciousness is the varying factor.

Many are at present so fascinated by the marvels of recently discovered psychic phenomena that they are inclined to linger on this intermediate plane, instead of rising to the spiritual sphere where alone the highest cravings of their nature can be satisfied. A sense of freedom from bondage to material notions and associations, and a consciousness of one's capacity to so modify the action of vital bodily processes as to remove symptoms of disease, often leads to the substitution of self-directed, personally conceived effort, for that deeper spiritual power which alone can accomplish the complete emancipation of the individual in every relation. The true goal of life cannot be reached by merely playing upon psychic energy and ordering it in relative channels of our own selection, for by that method we seek to determine events and adjust effects from the eccentric standpoint of our *finite* personality, and therefore act independently of the absolute cause, or eternal will. General spiritual experiences are born in a realm above the personal, and come spontaneously to the soul that has ceased to strive for results of its own choosing.

Every state of consciousness serves as a lens to focus the diffused rays of love and truth upon other mentalities within its range. When colored by prejudice and opinion, or marred by flaws of caprice and selfishness, its capacity as a concentrating medium is impaired, for it projects unfaithful or distorted images. But if pure, transparent, and free from the obstructing elements of personality, the picture is one of ideal perfection. Every one who lives in an atmosphere of spiritual consciousness inevitably radiates love and truth through all affairs of the lower planes of life, so that they find a natural, orderly arrangement, and conform to a supreme spiritual law. But one who dwells habitually in the physical or psychical



realms, even though successful in avoiding immediate discord and disaster, fails to realize the supreme end of life. Jesus, recognizing a direct relation between bodily symptoms of disease and a deeper, spiritual attitude, said, when healing the sick: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." "Go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." The complete unity of life is disclosed only to the spiritual, or super-psychical, consciousness. The necessity of watching and regulating bodily symptoms disappears when consciousness rises to that plane.

Self-revelation in the deepest sense awakens a desire to reveal others to themselves. The question is frequently asked, How far is it right or expedient to intrude our thought upon others? Ought we to try to influence them against their inclination to see truth? Thoughts originating on the self-plane may interfere with another's freedom, or occasion undesirable results. But only good can come from permitting elevating, spiritual ideals to be projected by our consciousness so that they shall reach another's vision. Every moment of our lives we are, either intentionally or unintentionally, sending out thoughts that appeal to other lives and influence their choice. Every thought that is born in the highest realm of consciousness is instrumental in advancing the true end of existence by drawing the soul into a closer relation with the absolute principle of life, and so aiding in the eternal process of self-manifestation.



Probably the most effective way to overcome the tendency to wander away from this present existence, to become partially disconnected from the body or project one's self at a distance, is to settle down into the physical body with real joy in the beautiful world of earth life. One should take regular physical exercise and put the mind upon each bodily movement. It is helpful, too, to feel one's self alive in all parts of the body, to think down into the feet and become poised there. For always when one is in a normal condition one is very much at home in the body, and mind and body are mutually adjusted.

## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

### THE DAWNING ERA.

ON the threshold of another century the denizen of this marvelous age stands in thoughtful wonder. Old faiths are crumbling with such rapidity that those who held them are left momentarily with nothing to believe. The god of matter and force has set his seal of triumph upon our times, and one by one all things are falling into the line of mechanical contrivance and labor-saving invention. The mind has almost ceased to wonder at these rich discoveries of the age, and is prepared to take any space-and-time-conquering device as a matter of course. "What next?" is the only comment; and man is asking this question in regard to his beliefs with an interest and persistency never known before.

From one standpoint assuredly the sum of human knowledge was never greater than it is today. It is asking too much of any one nowadays to be master of it all and take rank as a great man. The poor, overworked school-children are sent home with aching heads and over-active minds because of the wealth of facts they are supposed to treasure away. Otherwise viewed, however, our knowledge is surprisingly insignificant; and we are just finding it out and learning what treasures lie before us. Catch a theosophist, pin him down to what he really knows about astrals and reincarnation, and he will writhe about awhile, finally telling you that a friend of his has an idea that he can remember how he once met death in a former age. But out of his own life he can give you absolutely nothing of positive value. Question a physiological psychologist, and ask him what he has learned about the mind by his laboratory experimentation, and

he will serve you little besides chaff. The doctor knows so little about disease that the best verdict of the greatest specialist may be utterly false. As for remedies, the French physician has disposed of them all and of all doctors in one sentence: "We amuse the patient, while nature heals the disease." The physical scientist will tell you how force acts and how atoms combine in the ether. But what is force? Well, it is a mode of motion in the ether. What is ether? Oh, it is a hypothetical substance gotten up to account for the forms of matter and the modes of motion. And it is well not to push him farther. The preacher could once give you a directory of the streets of heaven. But tickets which secure one a safe passage through purgatory on payment of mere belief are not so readily obtainable nowadays. One thinker advises his followers to worship the state, now that they can no longer believe in a personal God. Thus the wonderful change goes on, and the skeptic in triumph points to the rapid decay of faith.

"What's to be done?" many are asking. "How shall we fill the churches?" But the rushing tide of a new era, carrying everything before it, is the only circumstance which makes reply. Despite all these doubts and questionings, it must be confessed that we are in the throes of a great spiritual awakening, and the day is coming when the voice of unmistakable conviction shall once more be heard in the land. We are breaking with the old faiths because we must first of all lay them aside that the new may absorb the mind. Let not, therefore, the anxious ones be troubled. There is a Master at the helm of events, and in place of this weak faith in a god of our own invention, we are going to perceive the real Father, and not merely perceive but *know* the realities of the spiritual life.

First of all, then, the change is from a heaven founded on the clouds of speculative fancy to the heaven that may be found by the fireside in our best-regulated homes; from a God on a white throne, of whom a frank person said impressively "I hate him," to the omnipresent source of love and wisdom abiding for-

ever in the hearts of men, and from a spirituality which apes the manners of a hypothetical and ethereal society to a warmly quickening life of good deeds *here and now*, where people stand in need of sympathy and of common-sense advice. If you find the iconoclast living a commendable home life, know that he is truly religious, whether he calls himself atheist or Christian. Character, altruism, love, these are the great possessions of life; and one who by his conduct shows that he *is* virtuous, and not merely a proclaimer of virtue, is the factor in society which shall best help to redeem it. Here is where the Christ shall come again, and nowhere else. All prayers unaccompanied by spiritual deeds are so many worthless words. Much that passes as spirituality and heavenly ecstasy is mere physical sensation and self-complacent deception. The world has a right to demand that the minister shall come out and say what he thinks, at the risk of losing his position. It has a right to demand that business shall be honestly conducted and politics become pure. The time is always at hand when if a man will but declare his convictions, instead of resorting to "the tricks of the trade" in order to compete with the throng, the public will stand by him. In due time each man receives what he deserves,—no more, no less. Let him advertise a poor article, let him push himself forward as he may, merit will tell because of the eternal law of justice which prevails at the heart of things. The coming age will see an increasing number who are ready to hold fast to ideals and await their fulfillment. Thus marriage, for example, will be raised to the moral and spiritual plane through the unwillingness of those who are true to principle to put up with anything different. The understanding of, and faith in, the eternal laws of affinity, justice and the rest will thus take the place of the encrusted beliefs which the fierce heat of skepticism is consuming. There will be deepened enthusiasm for the right and the true, and out of the ruin of mouldering and half-hearted creeds shall arise a moral enthusiasm which brooks no obstacle.



The transfer of interest which the world is now witnessing is therefore from the non-essential, the impractical and visionary to the vital, the practical, and the truly real. The world needs its dreamers. The next age has become a possibility only through what we have attained today. But when we perceive the signs of the times let us be up and doing, and not be pessimistic simply because the faiths of our fathers prove to be childish. The manhood of the world is upon us, and manhood calls upon one to awaken from dreams. And if one *must* know something about the future, then let it be encouragingly told that so much character and love as we have shall avail, while theology shall avail not at all. No skepticism can touch and no transition age can destroy that which is of real value to mind and heart. Truth is forever sacred, and all attempts to bolster it up, all heresy trials and missionary proselyting everlastingly absurd. Likewise virtue can protect itself, and no one can "wrong the universe." If you would make life a success, learn these few great laws and abide by them. A belief or philosophy which cannot bear the test of skepticism is of slight worth, and the sooner we doubt it the better. The real article always speaks for itself. Nine-tenths of our activity is so much wasted and scattered force. One great trouble with our age is its endless complexity; but the wise life is simple, and may be made almost frictionless. My own shall come to me when I am ready, not until then. I may learn my lesson in a day or in a score of years if I will. Everything depends ultimately on the way I meet circumstances; and if I am restlessly impatient the sooner I face this impetuous self and stop this useless hurry the better it will be for me. Whatever the coming years have in store for us, therefore, there is no real ground of complaint, no subject matter for the croaker. If one finds one's self unable to believe as books and teachers have taught, there could be no surer sign of development. Think for yourself. Wait until the clouds of doubt clear away. Do not try to push them aside, but let the sky clear in nature's own sweet way. By and by you will find

yourself more sure than ever of a few facts and laws, and on these you can rest your superstructure of thought and conduct. Some Power superior to our wills moves through minds and events. That we know. It manifests itself by definite methods. That we know. Experience has taught us much that is certain about these laws. Of that there can be no doubt. It behooves us, then, to have experience; to think about it and learn its meaning, then be true to the wisdom life has thus taught us. All else will take care of itself, if we are faithful to the task of the moment. As paradoxical as it may seem, nothing of highest worth comes to us when we directly seek it. Search for pleasure for its own sake, and you shall be pitifully miserable. Work for reward, for reputation and the like, and although you may secure these, you will not be doing your best work. Complain that your lot is hard, and nature will let you labor there for a generation; but perform your immediate duty faithfully, and in an unlooked-for way relief will come. The spiritual life least of all is to be attained through force. Try to hasten the growth of love and you crowd out "the tender flower." All impatience is useless unworthiness. All self-depreciation is equally so. Nature demands of us that we shall hold our heads up and *be* the thing we talk about. *Being* the thing itself is the magnet which draws to us what we deserve, and we need not go out into the byways to seek it. The pushing, aggressive way is the method of egoism, and nothing is said to succeed like this selfish success. But "they also serve who only stand and wait." If any one wishes to reform the age, let him begin by being unselfish. This is an untried method in society at large, and the experiment is worth the while. Here is the life truly worth living, and no one need despair, commit suicide, nor be unhappy who, instead of thinking of himself, begins in earnest to live for others. This is the greatest transition possible in human life, and the hope of the future lies precisely here, — that is, so far as each man makes the evolution, not the revolution, in his own life; first of all in his

family and then in society at large. If the coming years shall witness some change in this respect, even the skeptic shall see the dawning of the kingdom of heaven.



A reader who has recently investigated the subject of mental healing, and who has been helping a friend by this method of treatment, writes that W. H. Sheldon's article on "The Importance of Intellectual Training to the Mental Healer," which appeared in our September issue, effectively "put a stop to it; for what conscientious person would dare to answer for the absolute purity of his or her subconscious mind? The warning is a timely one, for these systems all lead beginners to attempt treating some one in order to learn. My question is this, How far should one be deterred from treating by scruples of this sort? How can one free the subconscious mind from the accumulation of doubts, fears, and all objectionable ideas that have been buried there during thirty or forty years?" One consideration immediately settles all questions of this sort,—namely, the *motive* or desire with which one enters the healing experience. Many have undoubtedly tampered with a power of which they knew but little in their first experiments in this field. Some, too, have made themselves receptive to healers of a lower order of mind than their own, and have been made ill as a consequence. The ignorant, the charlatan, and the money-getter are occasionally to be found here as elsewhere. But let one desire the highest, let the life be consecrated to the Father's work, and all *must* be well. Forty years of subconscious accumulation cannot stand in the way if one opens the mind unselfishly to help uplift another. Nor can any one be harmed who with the same faith becomes the recipient of such help. For after all it is not the mind that helps; it is not so much the person that does the work as the resident divinity, the spiritual power which is freely given in proportion to the

earnest desire, the calm receptivity, and the purity of the motive. And if one habitually opens the mind in this purity of spirit, the subconscious "accumulations" will in due time be purified without any direct effort, and with the surety of ultimate success in mastering all that impedes the divine inflow.



THE JOURNAL OF PRACTICAL METAPHYSICS, its editor, and the independent movement it represents have no connection whatever with Christian Science or Christian Scientists. We acknowledge the great good wrought by this sect. We know that there are hundreds of earnest followers who believe they have found the truth, and there is much in common between this sect and other advanced societies of the day. But we cannot countenance its methods. It has an inside history whose publication would be a startlingly sensational exposure. We do not accept its extremely abstract and irrational idealism. We cannot endorse its personality worship and its allegiance to a few authorized books. The cause of truth has been at least temporarily hindered by its teachings. It is an entirely false conclusion to infer because THE JOURNAL or any New Thought publication advocates mental methods of cure that it in any way accepts the doctrines of this sect. We believe these doctrines, notably those in regard to marriage, work far more harm than good, and have broken up many a happy home. While, therefore, we do not feel called upon, as some urge, to enter a crusade against this movement, THE JOURNAL most emphatically puts itself on record as entirely independent of it. That it has had its mission we do not question. That its followers will some time know the truth about its history is equally clear. But those who are impersonally seeking the truth should not, it seems to us, be any longer weighted down by any connection in name or otherwise with this peculiarly exclusive sect. Let those who believe in it cling to it if they will. Let those who



know the truth about it be wisely silent, that it may work out its own destruction. But let the public in general understand that when we repudiate all connection with its distinctive teachings and methods that it is for strongly sufficient reasons.



It is well not to give credence to premonitions and alleged foreshadowings of calamity,—that is, never deem them the voice of unalterable fate. If a warning of approaching danger comes, one should be all the more energetic in the adoption of means to prevent it. The case was recently related of a young man who was drowned in a river at low tide during the past summer, and who, it was said, had a dream the night before that he lost his life under such conditions. Such a dream might so work upon the mind that one would not be able to save one's self, and thus death might result from auto-suggestion. But instead of permitting the mind to believe in or carry out a dream, the suggestion ought rather to be of an entirely different character.



# ONWARD.

To Be! to Do! To have the zeal to climb  
O'er all the shocks of Fate to zones sublime!  
To know that Time's successes,—praise and blame,  
Are transient fires however fierce they flame;  
That soon and late are equal,—death and birth,  
And love's sweet dominance alone of worth;  
That toil and struggle and pain's agony  
Are nothing if the inner eye but see!  
To realize, though cumbered in earth's ooze,  
That there are heights with ever vaster views  
To which the soul is hasting, freed from strife!  
This is the spirit's pole-star,—this is life.

JAMES H. WEST.

## METAPHYSICAL CLUB.

201 Clarendon St., Opposite Trinity Church, Boston, Mass.

**ORGANIZED** to promote interest in, and the practice of, a true spiritual philosophy of life and health; — to develop the highest self-culture through right-thinking, as a means of bringing one's loftiest ideals into present realization; — to stimulate faith in, and study of, the higher nature of man in its relation to health and happiness; — to advance the intelligent and systematic treatment of disease by the mental method.

**HEADQUARTERS** for the Club, at the above address, are freely open to members, and to others interested in the movement, from 9 A. M. until 5 P. M., daily (except Sunday).

**LECTURES** will be given from November to May. Announcement later. Admission to non-members twenty-five cents.

**MEMBERSHIP** in the Club may be secured by the payment in advance of Three Dollars, which is the annual fee. All who sympathize with the purposes of the Club are cordially invited to join.

**THE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT** contains a constantly increasing list of books on Metaphysical and allied subjects, which will be loaned, subject to the library regulations. Contributions to the library will be gratefully received, and will aid in its efficiency and interest. Equitable arrangements will be made for sending books by mail, in which case the receiver will be required, to assume risks and pay all charges for transportation. Rates, 2 cents per day; 10 cents per week.

**THE BOOK DEPARTMENT.** — A large line of books, pamphlets, leaflets, etc., on Metaphysical subjects is kept constantly on hand. Any books not kept in stock will be procured and forwarded on receipt of retail price. The proceeds of these departments are used to further the work of the Club.

**INQUIRIES** and communications should be sent to the Secretary.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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## JANUARY ANNOUNCEMENT.

Jan. 11—Rev. Stephen H. Roblin of Boston; subject, "Phases of Courage." Jan. 25—Mr. Henry Wood; subject, "What is Freedom?" Mr. Aaron M. Crane; subject, "The Scope of Individual Freedom."

Special attention is called to the membership meetings at headquarters, Tuesday evening, Jan. 4 and 18, at 7.45, and every Friday afternoon at 3. These meetings are proving of great interest and helpfulness.

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At the regular meeting of the Club, Nov. 30, Rev. R. Heber Newton of New York read a very able paper on "Spiritual Therapeutics as Seen from Orthodoxy." Considered as a whole, Dr. Newton found the limitations of the New Thought movement serious and the dangers great. Some claim that it is a substitute for Christianity. On the other hand, it presents knowledge which cures the errors of Orthodoxy. In Christ the science finds what the Church has always found theoretically,—the power to heal the sick. The early Church was faithless to the words of the Master in this respect. Only the outward form of laying on of hands was preserved. Spiritual therapeutics finds the clue to the higher healing. The conditions of the healing works which Jesus wrought are to be understood in his life. The exercise of faith is one of the conditions,—a condition of healing perfectly well recognized by the medical faculty today. More goes into the prescription than the druggist ever dreams of. The mind is at least potent, if indeed it be not omnipotent, in the cause and cure of disease. The power of thought to maintain and renew health is the secret of spiritual therapeutics. The work has a distinctively moral and spiritual character. "Seek first the kingdom of heaven and all these things (such as bodily health, freedom from pain, etc.) shall be added unto you." The healing of the body and the healing of the soul are different aspects of one and the same

work of regeneration. Suffering in body comes to him who has sinned in soul. Prepossess the mind with the thought of health, and the wise soul expels the thought of disease. Orthodoxy has much to learn from this new heterodoxy which recovers the lost truth of Jesus. The idealistic philosophy implied in Jesus' teaching is also brought to light,—that mind is the real and matter the manifestation. Christian Science is philosophic idealism carried to its extreme. All that is valuable in this philosophy may be gained by understanding that matter is the manifestation of spirit. The theology is that of Jesus,—but one mind in infinitely varying manifestations, the true self. That which was true of him was true of all other selves. As he was the Son of God so are we all, even though we are but babes in the spirit. But spiritual therapeutics ignores the personality of God. Yet whatever God is, he cannot be less than man. In regard to the theory of evil, namely, that it is only seeming, Dr. Newton said that to deny the unreality of evil seems to deny its actuality. The actuality is that which we have to deal with here. The only reality is that of man's choosing it and making it real. What is meant by the unreality of evil is that it has no enduring existence. With these errors guarded against, there is nothing which is in essential conflict with orthodoxy. We may leave the conflict to take care of itself. All this truth in spiritual therapeutics is involved in the Nicene creed, which is a religious and genuine basis of philosophy. All that is vital in the new ism can be absorbed by the progressive orthodoxy. Orthodoxy will only be coming to its own again.



The publication of Prof. Chesley's recent address before the Club has been deferred. Due notice of its appearance will be given in *THE JOURNAL*.



## BOOK NOTES.

**THROUGH THE INVISIBLE: A Love Story.** By PAUL TYNER. With illustrations by Ella F. Pell. 196 pp. 75 cents. New York: Continental Publishing Company, 25 Park Place.

This story is based on the theory of reincarnation and the teaching of Theosophists in regard to other spheres of existence. But this should not prejudice the reader who may not as yet believe in reincarnation. The best quality in the book is the love element, the upward striving for unselfish love, culminating in the Christ life, in the perfect union of the masculine and feminine. Its tone is pure and its message clearly worded. It lacks touch with the best balanced *human* life, but it was evidently meant to touch upon the more visionary side, and one could not take issue with the author here without striking at the root of its theosophic basis.

**THE GROWTH OF THE SOUL.** By A. P. SINNETT. 459 pp. \$1.50. Theosophical Publishing Company, London.

To all who desire a general idea of theosophical teaching we recommend this book as one of the best expositions of reincarnation, Karma, the astral plane, etc. Like the majority of works on theosophy, it abounds in generalities, in much that is vague and unsatisfactory, especially from the point of view of those who are in search of a rational system of thought based on well-established facts. Argument is of little value on such subjects as this. What is needed is individual experience, and the best preparation for such experience is not the study of occult books, nor affiliation with crusades where the initiates must swear secrecy; but first of all the love of truth, scientific methods of investigation, and spiritual openness to the wisdom which is free to all, and which will be revealed to each soul as rapidly as true humility is attained.

**DE INCARNATIONE VERBI DEI**, with three subsidiary essays. By the Rev. ALAN S. HAWKESWORTH. 116 pp. \$1.25. Address the author, General Theological Seminary, New York City.

This is an able discussion of the doctrine of the incarnation, based upon the teachings of the Episcopal Church, with 250 extracts from the Christian Fathers. The doctrine is stated in very clear and logical form. The author sums up all that the theologian could desire on this subject, at the same time defending the doctrine of the logos from the "heresies" which have crept in from time to time since the days of the Alexandrian mystics.

MENTICULTURE, or The A, B, C of True Living. By HORACE FLETCHER. 280 pp. \$1.00. Chicago: Herbert S. Stone & Co.

This is a new edition of Mr. Fletcher's popular and helpful book, very handsomely bound and containing over a hundred pages of additional matter, including letters, newspaper, medical, and literary criticisms. In its present form the book is more valuable than ever, and we recommend it as the standard treatise of its kind, and a most helpful aid to character building.

BETWEEN THE LINES: A condensed statement of the truth of being.

By HANNAH MORE KOHAUS. 114 pages. F. M. Harley Publishing Company, 87 Washington Street, Chicago.

This book receives its title from the purpose of the author to state in simpler language that which is implied "between the lines" in more abstract treatises on mental healing. This is a revised and improved edition, and is written mainly in the form of specific questions and answers. It also contains many clear-cut definitions of terms generally used by the disciples of the New Thought. It contains one serious misstatement, however,—namely, that "for the knowledge of its practical application today humanity is indebted to Mrs. Mary B. G. Eddy of Boston." Mrs. Eddy was healed by Dr. P. P. Quimby in 1862, thirteen years before she published her book. Dr. Quimby had then been practising mental healing for nearly twenty years in Maine, and had a fully developed theory out of which the New Thought doctrine has grown. Mrs. Eddy learned these ideas and methods from him, at that time giving him full credit. She afterwards claimed that the truth came to her by "revelation" in 1866, imported many irrationalities into his teaching, and set up the exclusive claims which have so long divided Christian Scientists from the mental healing world in general.

Miss Susie C. Clark has issued an excellent little book of original paragraphs for each day in the year, under the title, *Key-Notes for Daily Harmonies*. The book was issued in response to a request for helpful thoughts from one mind, in preference to the compilations from many authors, which usually lack unity and harmony; and it will be especially appreciated by the many followers of Miss Clark. Price, 50 cents. 15 Centre Street, Cambridge.

The followers of Mrs. Gestefeld, and all who are helped by specific meditations and affirmations, will be especially pleased with a new book entitled *The Breath of Life*,—a series of self-treatments for morning and evening, when there is a sense of injury, fear of accident, heredity, death, failure in business, dread of the future, etc. By Ursula N. Gestefeld. 63 pp. 50 cents. New York: The Gestefeld Publishing Company, 1897.

*Healing Thoughts*. By C. Josephine Barton. 61 pp. 25 cents. Published by the author, 2623 Holmes Street, Kansas City, Mo. A brief specific statement of the fundamental principles of mental healing.