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SOME INTELLECTUAL WEEDS OF AMERICAN GROWTH

BY

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In no other country or time has there been such a strange luxuriance of intellectual and social weeds as we are now and here growing on American soil. Any attempt even to sketch a historical review of them would require a volume. It seems impossible in speaking of them to avoid the use of the word crank. Our crankism is such a strange jumble of inconsistencies that there is no old word by which it may so well be named. The patient's diseases are old, it is true, but he seems to have all the old quack diseases all at once, and that makes at least a new symptom-complex. The connotations of the term crank are such that the subject is recognized as not actually or entirely insane, and yet always partially so, sometimes and in some ways perilously near, possibly really over the border line. He is also in some respects sane, or possessed of a cunning that adroitly simulates sanity. To an extent, or as regards some things, he is sincere, in one or two positively fanatical, but again he shows the previous psychologic contradiction of keeping some parts of his brain normal. His mind is evidently constructed on the water-tight compartment plan. All of this is also part of the suggested meaning of the word crank. Again, he is as to certain objects unselfish, in reference to his hobby furiously so: but there is never absent the attribute of a spider-like watching for "the main chance," a highly developed astuteness in getting money from the greater fools who trust him. He is intensely ignorant, and as inordinately egotistic, and all of that is latent in the word crank also. Lastly, "he" is often a woman, and the word must be stretched to cover that noteworthy fact.

The morbid egotism of the cranks is perhaps the most striking thing that appears in all the books, periodicals, writings, preachings, and doings of these strange people. Alienists well know how egotism rules the minds of their insane patients. Mentally diseased the cranks

plainly are, normal cerebration being disturbed and irregular, or more commonly undeveloped and atavistic. Strip the mind of the higher educated and social results of evolution, whether by disease or by utter failure to keep up with civilized progress, and the egoistic instincts, the primal and basic of the *principii individuationis* are all that it has to fall back upon. Egomania raves and wantons pathetically, but also ludicrously, in every page of these sorry eddyites, "vibralogists," "mental scientists," distant healers, and ranters of a multitude of sub-varieties. The keynote of all the teaching is the infinite value of "I," the unlimited power of it, the eternal emphasis and repetition of it. In the worst cases and magazines the editor becomes one with God, and his sentences for pages are entirely meaningless drivel and word-swash, and one wonders how soon there must be a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* and a commitment to the asylum.

An interesting result of this uprush of commingled egotism and ignorance is that it pretends to be new, while in reality it is the living on of the old dirty medievalism which all historians know so well. One of the amusing characteristics of another "school" of medicine was its claim to be a brand new school, while it affected to look down upon the "old" school of scientific medicine. What was new was the laboratory, the science of the germ theory of disease, hygiene, scientific diagnosis, and the laws of health. What was "old" was the itch theory of disease, the mythical supernaturalism of high potencies, and a re-making of the medieval doctrine of signatures. So in the "New Thought" there is nothing newer than the African's voodooism; in the "New Christian Science" there is no newness, no christianity, no science. In vibralogy there is nothing but medieval magic and miracle mongering, and in osteopathy there is only the old English bonesetter's ignorance, plus the old impertinence of the old quack of the olden time. In other words, the entire brood of modern medical crazes and crankisms, while furiously contending that each is new, is in every cell of their being the very demonstration of the utter lack of the new or modern spirit, of the mental incapacity to take it on, or even to see it. Every modern discovery in biology, sociology, and medicine, is ignored. It is the spook of the middle ages ludicrously gibbering in a really new epoch of science, skill, and reason. It is atavism pure and simple; the old barbarism freed by democracy. It is a sequel of a rapid growth of the intelligent in many while the rest, not growing, become the neglected residue of stranded incapables upon our hands. Our punishment is the warning that in the last resort we are responsible for the wreckage. The only way we can abridge the evil is to set about the duty of primary physiologic and social education.

Whenever a quack advertises, the most prominent part of the advertisement, the most of the costly space is occupied by the portrait of the great man. The more a man in the regular medical profession approaches to quackery and secret advertising the more his photograph appears in the lay or so-called professional journals. When vanity or money-making enterprise becomes an outspoken disease this tendency is illustrated most amusingly as well as instructively. In all the literature of faddism and crankery the everlasting photograph appears, and in one journal every contributor's picture heads his article, and each of the dozen "editors of departments" has the inevitable photograph in every week. The *New Thought* advocates and editors are especially prone to this sort of thing. The pictures of "Ella" and of "William" and of "Elizabeth" are everywhere. (They call each other in this familiar way in their papers, so no disrespect is implied here.) Ella's rings and arm are very "fetching," and William's (one of the Williams) stern piercing glance transfixes you with true Hubardesquesness. But Elizabeth's photograph would certainly scare away an intending lover, so indescribably terrible is it. "Glasses" would not "destroy that magnetic gaze." She publishes and sells her own books, and praises them too, as straight at you as her photographic eyes would indicate. Each copy of "The Constitution of Man," she says, "is full of power and inspiration," and "contains a speaking likeness of the author." "Experiences in self-healing," "is the latest and greatest of my books" (each is always the greatest), "alive, helpful, inspiring. Beautiful book, good picture of me."

Indeed, the mark of morbid self-consciousness is in every article and sentence of most of the crazy or crank literature so rampant among us. It is not only marked by it, but is rather drenched in it, so that teachers, priestesses, and humble pupils seem to delight in standing and paddling in their own slush. It is an old and well recognized law of disease and insanity that one is unconscious of healthy organs. Most people, for instance, go through life without a moment's attention to their knees, their ears, or their "desires." But let them get synovitis, middle-ear inflammation, or the New-Thought disease, and at once all their attention is absorbed by their knee, ear, or "mind." In all of this literature, "psychometry," fortune-telling, "character readings," "somnopathy," phrenology, mediumship, "graphology," "astrology," "self-healing," hypnotism, occultism, and a hundred forms of morbid "ministering to the mind diseased" form the staple of "instruction," the substance of page after page of magniloquent nonsense, and more important still, fill all the advertising pages to repletion. The personal answers to correspondents illustrate it to satiety. "How shall I

get rid of the fear?" "How prevent mean thoughts?" "Is the love between the sexes incompatible with the highest mental states?" The jealous wife, "misunderstood woman," misunderstandings with husbands, how to get well, "Soul-mates, the wearing of glasses and the magnetic gaze," bashfulness, the second divorce—these are some of the things the editor takes upon himself to write about to the victims who appeal to him for advice. "Thought-Force" is a book by one of the omniscient teachers, and its purpose is thus stated by him to be:

A wonderfully vivid book answering the questions: Can I make my life more happy and successful through mental control? How can I affect my circumstances by my mental effort? Just how shall I go about it to free myself from my depression, failure, timidity, weakness and care? How can I influence those more powerful ones from whom I desire favor? How am I to recognize the causes of my failure and thus avoid them?

Can I make my disposition into one which is active, positive, high strung, and masterful? How can I draw vitality of mind and body from an invisible source? How can I directly attract friends and friendship? How can I influence other people by mental suggestion? How can I influence people at a distance by my mind alone? How can I retard old age, preserve health and good looks? How can I cure myself of illness, bad habits, nervousness, etc.?

"Thought-Force" gives an answer to questions like these.

It is evident that here is a new disease in the world, genuinely epidemic, too. The diagnosis is easily made, but is there any therapist would dare suggest a treatment?

When the history of the outbreak of mental disease which its adherents call "Christian Science," "New Thought," "Mental Healing," etc., comes to be written, it will be found that not a little of the responsibility for its existence rests upon New England transcendentalism. As regretfully as one may say it, Emerson is their favorite philosopher, or was once so. Of course, neither this noble man, nor that popular movement, is entirely responsible for the present day examples of mental degeneration and disease. So far as one can learn, these people have no care for anything outside the dizzy whirl of their monomaniac ideas, or preferably, lack of ideas, and far from knowing anything about so ancient a person as Emerson they reckon not and know not of any interest except "vibralogy" and the repetition of a meaningless lot of words. In one or two instances there is a glimpse of the fact that they have a vague idea of an outside world, as in Wilmans', for instance, but it is only of the world of phantasmagoric newspaper science (as, *e.g.*, "a life powder compounded by a Chicago physician to revive dead animals") taken in all seriousness. In one or two things all are united—in treating disease by "absent or distant treatment," and getting money therefor, in hating doctors, and the "postal underlings" (for excluding their purely commercial fraud

journals from the mails). All agree the Cain of the primal couple was sired by Quimby and dammed (*absit omen!*) by Mrs. Mother Mary Baker, etc., and the parents were only "spiritually" married! But the accident of names is as nothing. All names sit lightly on the consciences of these ladies. So under any other names the epidemic must have come. The conditions were such that the result was inevitable.

The psychology of eddyism, best illustrated in the latest sectarian degenerative end-products, is familiar to all alienists and students of insanity. A healthy mind cannot read the so-called "new thought" journals for an hour or two without the overwhelming conviction that these people are really insane. The wonder is that they have preserved so much commercial cunning. The money aspect, pay-in-advance for reading notices, for absent treatments, for "psychometric readings," for books, for "vibrations," for insuring "success," for shares of mining stocks, for letter pads, for journals and lectures, and all that—this is never forgotten. It goes on, however, at the same time and in the same columns with the dreariest waste of reverberating words, words, words,—utterly without meaning, and utterly without end. There are tons of such printed stuff as this going out every month:

Unity is Non-ethical. It simply is. God is! Energy is! Power is! Light is! Life is! Thought is! Love is! Attraction is! Electricity is! Man is! Existence is the beginning of our search for happiness. Existence is non-ethical. It is a mistake to call God good.

I see that my strength is God, and therefore I know no weakness or tired feeling. I am eternal energy. My peace is God, and therefore I am eternal harmony. All presence is God, and there is no presence of sin. All existence is God, and there is no existence of evil. I affirm the allness of truth. I am the truth, for there is not anything for me but truth to be. I am the whole truth, as it is indivisible unto parts. I see that I am truth and all goodness there is. I can not be sick for my life is the almighty.

Grammar and spelling are matters of indifference also. Prior to Mrs. Eddy, the fashion of scorning the accepted meanings of words, had been well set by inflamed egotism and transcendental enthusiasm. But to call an unfaith "Christian," and an idiocy "Science," was left to that daring lady and her followers. The habit of misapplying words, of making any word express any fact at pleasure, is characteristic of insanity, and when words themselves lose all meaning and become a jargon of monologue—then the end is not far. In the same sequence of sentences, a mental healer will claim that all drugs are violent *poisons*, **POISONS**, **POISONS**, and that they are also inert, dead, wholly without effect on the system. Left without support of religion or government, relieved from duty and poverty, with not a scrap of knowledge, the wrecked mind must feed upon its own vanities and fancies, call itself God, and sell "healing vibrations," "cash always in advance."

In commercial medical journalism, the owner-publisher will usually allow his professional servant-editors and contributors sufficient freedom to write about their little professional matters, as they please, providing, they do not interfere with his advertisements, reading notices, ways of making money, etc., and especially if they, the editors, annually accept a sufficient number of articles lauding advertised preparations—there must not be too many, or they would excite suspicion and destroy professional support, but they must not be so few—and, heavens, not none at all!—as to discourage advertisers. It is strange how this same problem presents itself elsewhere, and even in the divine and inspired journalistic organs of the popular new religiometaphysicommedical crankeries, multitudinously named. In these periodicals, the advertisements are not confined to any certain pages or parts of pages, and the publishers of the books of the editors fill their own reading columns with reading notices, and puffs, as unblushingly as the worst of our enormously circulated “medical” journals. In one of the most successful of the crank journals, the editors sing their angelic songs of science and drugless healing, in charming ignorance of interspersed pages by the publisher (who plainly has his way with every column as he will) in praise of his Food Company remedies, his Tobacco Company, his Iron Ore Company, etc. He frankly confesses, his journal subscribers have subscribed many tens of thousands of dollars to his business enterprises. He is evidently a very astute promoter.

When one makes a study of the earlier weeds of morbid psychologic literature and sects, and after he has grown tired enough of Mother Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy and her children, he will next come upon the “New Thought,” represented best by a journal of that name, edited by Ella Wheeler Wilcox and William Walker Atkinson. (In proportion to the fame of great ones, the entire set of names must be spelled in full.) The perusal of a half dozen numbers of this periodical will only take an hour or two, and although so far of much interest, and instructive, one will then begin to tire of the thoughtlessness of the new thought, and of its oldness, and especially of its puerile and repetitive lessons. One will get a wearying conviction that if, as the publisher avers, there are 100,000 subscribers who find this childish stuff adapted to their needs, then surely the schoolmaster is not abroad in the land, or he is not doing his duty very thoroughly. Had we space, we would like to reproduce a few hundreds of excerpts we had marked. There is nothing directly vicious or nauseating about it, as is so common in other forms, but it is, of course, indirectly morbid. The people who are ministered to, and treated, are surely sick, very much so, mentally and socially, but the teachers, the high priestesses, and their little amen-sayers, the priests, are surely much “sicker.”

One thousand dollars were given, in fourteen prizes, by the publisher of *New Thought*, for the best definition, within ten words, of "New Thought." The following were the definitions, winning the prizes—the first of \$500, the second of \$250, etc.:

- Being and doing one's best by repeatedly affirming one's ability.
- We are what we assert ourselves to be.
- Claim that you are what you desire to be.
- The cheerful, persistent assertion of the soul's prerogative to rule.
- Continuous affirmation of whatever helps us achieve our highest possibilities.
- Attaining the ideal in life through thought concentration and assertion.
- Mental imagery, personally controllable, governs bodily health and individual circumstances.
- Holding constantly before one's thoughts the omnipotence of man's mind.
- Human development through recognition and assertion of human divinity.
- The control of mental force by positive, concentrated, ideal suggestion.
- Relization of ideals by becoming them through force of desire.
- Benefiting or injuring others and ourselves reciprocally through thought force.
- Fear nothing; love everything; believe you can do anything.
- The recognition, realization, and manifestation of the God in me.

It seems, therefore, that the more one claims, regardless whether he has it or not, the more egotism one cultivates, the more one ignores facts and lives in indifference to them, the more one ignores disease and treats himself, or hires "absent treatment," by means of "vibrations,"—the more one "realizes the God in me."

One of the "New Thought" journals is called *The Nautilus*. Holmes' poem will be forever spoiled for anyone who has ever read this periodical. "Build thee more stately mansions, etc.," is the motto of the title page each week. One of the recent numbers devotes a page, or more, to the thesis, that "The root-cause of all so-called self-consciousness is really self-unconsciousness, a lack of self-knowledge and self-valuation." So morbid has morbid self-consciousness become, that it is even encouraged as a virtue. Vanity is here deliriously inflamed. A praised illustration, that extends through the columns of one of the articles, is that of a girl, who spent her life in practising poses, facial expressions and tricks of speech before a mirror, cultivating blushing, as she had learned it was pretty and becoming, etc. We are informed in the fourth column, that "self-knowledge *includes* a knowledge of the universe as a whole, and of every human being as a part of the whole." *The Nautilus*, according to motto No. 2, is "devoted to the art and science of self-expression." Ida C. Craddock (arrested for abuse of the mails with obscene literature) is called editorially "a sweet, earnest, clean soul, who chose, for the sake of forcing her teachings upon an unready world, to butt her head repeatedly against the stone wall of the law, etc." One of the editor Elizabeth's new, greatest, latest, most inspired books, "Just How to Wake the Solar Plexus," explains—let us say everything, but chiefly man's relation to the sun,

shows what the solar plexus is to the human body, how to control emotions and thoughts, to develop concentration, kill fear, etc., and to insure the attainment of a strong poised selfhood. The advantages to purchasers is shown by testimonials; we have space for only one:

J. F. WILLIS, BRECKENRIDGE, COLO., writes:—"I received more special benefit from one reading of 'Just how to Wake the Solar Plexus' than I have during a period of ten years with medicine chest and doctors' bills of over \$800, aside from much time lost."

The editor prints the following letter from a subscriber:

I am enjoying a vacation and rest from all care and responsibility, where my friends hope to cure me of my belief in astrology—the best place I could ask to be in for study and observations of extremes of character, etc. Please send *Nautilus* here. *Others here as well as myself will appreciate it.* X. Y., Manhattan Hospital for the Insane, Central Islip, L. I. [Italics not ours.]

Of "Elizabeth Towne's Experiences in Self-healing" she herself says:

Those who want real experiences in the new thought and its application will find this book a mine of information. I have shown plainly just how I grew up in new thought, healing myself of almost every imaginable kind of disease from heart trouble to the catching-cold habit, from all sorts of chronic and acute things, and from all sorts of faults of disposition and temperament. I have described every method I used in overcoming not only diseases mental and physical, but poverty as well. And incidentally I have described at length the methods I have used and evolved in the healing of others as well as myself. Not a thing in my experience have I glossed over or omitted. The book is an inspiration and has been written in a white glow of purpose to reveal a soul's efforts and progress and accomplishment, to the end that other soul may see and understand and be inspired to greater self-conquest and self-expression. It contains more of me than anything, or all things else I have written.

To cure asthma, beside vegetarian dietetics, "mental breathing," and physical ditto the patient is instructed to read "Solar Plexus" book every day for a month and get into the spirit of it and shine for dear life all the time! She is to stand or sit straight, chest out, and breathe down and out, taking pains to hold the breath and then let it out more slowly and evenly than she took it in. With each breath she is to mentally affirm, I am whole, or I am love, or I am power—using one affirmation for each day. "Solar Plexus" book tells how. Above all and in all she is to wake up and go at it with a will. To put will into bodily action is the cure for asthma. Will is just what an asthmatic is averse to using, will and persistence. Asthma means a curled-up will and it is not easy to uncurl it.

Baldness can be cured:

Perhaps you will ask me "what thought you are to hold" for dying hair. This item is written presumably for those who have been "holding the thought" without apparent results—as I did for several years. Then it came to me that I must supplement "the thought" with action. So I went to studying causes and thinking out what to do. I've been doing it. Faith and works will accomplish anything. The only thought to hold for dying hair is the thought of life. Keep thinking it right in with every rub of your finger-tips until it gets to thinking itself without special effort.

The following questions and answers of puzzled correspondents are to be noted:

"When you treat yourself for a cold who is doing the treating, the objective or subjective self? Does mortal mind tell the spirit to do so and so?" B.

There you go calling yourself a "mortal mind." You are immortal mind. When you talk or treat it is immortal mind, talking or treating—talking to itself and treating itself.

"When you pray is it the God in you talking to the Universal God?" J.A.

Ye gods, no! It is the Universal God talking to himself. You are the Universal God. Crawl up out of that little tadpole you and spread your wings in the Universal.

"I wish you would have more to say about treating."

Why, everything I say is "about treating," and everything is a "treatment." Everybody on earth is treating all the time. If he isn't treating for health he is treating for sickness; if not for happiness, then for grief; if not for wealth, then for poverty. Every thought is a treatment, and every individual has the power of choosing what he will think. Choose ye this minute what you will "treat" for. Treat yourself and your relatives and the whole world, etc.

"*The Success Circle*" is the title of an enterprise thoroughly advertised by *The Nautilus* and its editor, with the incomparable photograph attending. It says:

The Success Circle is designed to aid all who are seeking to better their condition by understanding and applying the laws of mind. It is simply a very large class of students who are being taught, through my writings and my silent Word, the principles of success; who are coming into touch with me and drawing inspiration to go in and win for themselves. What I teach I know. I have practically demonstrated every step of the way, from a state of dependence, to one of freedom and power to command. I know how I did it and I can tell others how. I teach by the Word (i.e., statements of truth) printed in my book, "How to Grow Success;" printed in the monthly letter to the Success Circle, published on page seven of each number of *The Nautilus*, and conveyed telepathically to the members, whom I treat individually and collectively. Water is free to all, but if some man pipes it to your kitchen sink you have to pay him, not for the water, but for the piping. I have piped the Word, the creative power of the universe, and I offer it to you as the printed Word, in my book and paper. For these I ask a reasonable price. You pay for nothing but the book and paper. For the Word conveyed telepathically I make absolutely no charge. My silent Word, or statement of truth, goes out to all the world, and whosoever will may receive and vibrate with me for the upliftment of himself. Each copy of "How to Grow Success" contains a three-quarter length portrait of the author, and is signed and numbered in my own handwriting.

As to the success for the author of the Success Circle there is no question; and none, according to the testimonialists on their part. Mrs. Jones's health and "good looks have improved 100 per cent.," and "Mr. Jones's business is everything we could wish for." It brings rain and good crops to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jackson, of New Athens, Ill., when their neighbours have none. Mr. Ridout, a land agent, of Bruce, Wis., writes:

The year previous to joining the Circle was quite uneventful in a business way; it started on a jump the very day I got your receipt for the money sent to join the Success Circle. Note that I am in the real estate business, and I sold more land the very day I got your receipt than I had sold in the six months' previous, and nearly every day since I have had all the business that I could attend to. People marvel at my success. My daughter found employment the very next day after getting her receipt of membership.

Dr. James W. Cormany, Mt. Carroll, Ill., says:

I am getting every one I can to join the Success Circle. I have increased my business 50 per cent. Now that "ain't to be sneezed at," when I was doing a good business before.

Even electricity obeys the all-commanding Elizabeth, for C. E. writes:

I am happy to say I am succeeding in the line of my desires since joining the Success Circle. Am night watchman in a large manufactory, and some of the machinery is kept running all night by electricity. Now I have noticed that when things go wrong with the electric current or the machinery it is when I am out of tune myself. So now, when I find myself raking over old troubles or dwelling on wrongs, real or fancied, I say to myself, "Look out, old boy, some of this machinery will be catching the melancholic and making trouble for you." Then I pull myself together and look on the bright side.

Without comment, and properly so, the editor of *The Nautilus* copies the following from the *Boston Herald*:

Tenderly she laid the silent, white form beside those that had gone before. She made no outcry, she did not weep. Such a moment was too precious to be spent in idle tears. But soon there came a time when it seemed as if nature must give way. She lifted her voice, and cried long and loud. Her cry was taken up by others who were near, and it echoed and echoed over the grounds. Then suddenly all was still. What was the use of it all? She would lay another egg to-morrow.

Another of the "New Thought" periodicals is called *Freedom*, and is said to be of "Realistic Idealism," published at Seabreeze, Florida. We cannot give the editor's name, for she—it is, of course, a lady that edits such journals—has a multiplied personality and many names. These are some of them, scattered everywhere through the samples before us: Wilmans, Helen, H.W.P., Wilmans Publishing House, Helen Wilmans Post, Helen Wilmans, No Signature, etc. Financially Helen seems the most successful of all the New Thoughtists, Mental Healers, or whatever name one should use to describe them, and there are occasional glimmers of sanity to be found in her paper so that one may be hopeful even of this large class of the American people and of their mental convalescence. The greatest of the complaints of Helen and of her publishers and contributors is of Postmaster-General Madden. The violence of the language against the "postal underlings" of the Government for excluding *Freedom* from second class rates is unworthy of the divine people for whom "there is no evil." And all this in the same issues which contain the legend, "entered at the post-office as second-class matter." It is incomprehensible. The papers "multed" or suppressed, it is said, are "those devoted to the promulgation of ideas not in harmony with the postoffice officials." This seems unnecessary, and contradicted by the columns of reading notices and advertisements of the editor's and publisher's business enterprises, books, lectures, etc., a column or two of one editorial being devoted

to the publisher's Letter Tablet, price 25 cents. The editor's financial ability is thus spoken of in her own journal:

Mrs. Williams Post claims to have mastered poverty by using her power to think; that by concentration of thought on money she has drawn wealth to herself as if to a magnet; and certainly her large financial income and magnificent properties in Florida give indications of her success in raising herself from a condition of most abject poverty to one of unlimited opulence. In her famous book, "The Conquest of Poverty," she sets forth her *modus operandi*.

Has Helen attended the school she advertise—"The Washington Sanatorium and School of the Art of Attracting Opulence?"

Like all these descendants of Dr. P. P. Quimby, of Maine, plus Mother Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy, "Freedom" most of all things, hates medicine. Its pathology is as naive as would be expected of those who do not believe in matter or disease, and who have never studied any other kind of science than that in Chicago daily yellow papers. "Chronic disease is the gradual accumulation of dead matter, etc.," and "sickness is an effort to cast it off." "The effort in all cases of healing is that of the mentality, or spirit, endeavoring to free itself from the accumulated beliefs of the ages, etc."

It is thought alone—the right kind of thought—that has the ability to cast every element of decay out of our bodies by quickening the springs of action within them. Is the liver torpid? Thought can cast out every obstruction to its perfect action. Is the heart sluggish and the circulation slow? Thought can remedy this. And so of every organ; and with every organ renewed how can it be possible that the whole body should lag behind in sickness and distress, and how should it die? We know positively that thought can renew the various organs in the body.

Renewing organs by thought, is however, a small part of the claim to omnipotence. Helen says that she has an "entire conviction in the ultimate conquest of disease and every form of bodily weakness. This leaves us with the perfect right to assert the possibility of conquering old age and death; and I want it understood forever that I do assert it; that I believe in it with my whole mind, and that I work for it with every breath I draw."

Alopaths (it is always spelled so) and homeopaths, all drug-givers, and such despicable folk are "on the run," and, "Medicine is played out. Every new discovery of bacteria, shows us that we have been wrong, and that the millions of tons of stuff that we have been taking was all useless." "Any drug is a poison. Anything that cannot be digested and assimilated into the body is a poison. The drug has no power of action at all. It is utterly dead." What Helen and company understand by "doctors" may be gathered from this:

I have taken it upon myself to interview some of the persons whose pictures have appeared, with statements over their own signatures that they have been healed; and invariably I have found that the person was not healed at all. One man in this city, when I asked him why he gave his picture and statement which I saw in a daily paper, replied:

"Well, they took me over there and washed me out and filled me up with stimulants and electricity until I felt so good I thought I was healed. While I felt so well, they put the statement, you saw, under my nose for me to sign, and got my photograph. But after I had been home two weeks I was worse than ever I was before."

The faithful healer, however, is thus encouraged, thus encourages herself, or himself, or itself:

What matters if others reject you when you have once perceived the wondrous potencies of your Personality, the Shrine of the Infinite, the Tabernacle of Genius?

Another Journalistic illustration of the new miracle-mongering, is called *The Golden Rule*. It exemplifies the fact that "Christian Science" is a great promotor of that type of insanity which is not inconsistent with financial cunning. This journal claims 10,000 readers, and even if this is not true, the ability to pay the printers' bills on the part of the hundreds of these wild and morbid periodicals, tells of the vast amount of such mental alienation and of how near a great part of the race is to absolute insanity. It is plain that we may not safely ignore the fact, and that "smiling it aside" is not wise. From page after page of *The Golden Rule* not a hint of real thought is to be grasped, except when it comes to the "cash in advance" commands, and then it is all very clear and business-like. Two brothers seemingly edit, but it is "I" that speaks, very ungrammatically, but as "I" says, "grafficly" We cannot spare space for interesting examples of psychopathic word-rubbish, in which Brother "I" proves himself divine, and more; that "the universe is a man, male and female;" that "the universe is my institution, I heal the sick, etc." When "a devout member of organized religion," he-they got "catarrh of his head and stomach in fighting the devil, and other troubles," but "when truth came to his vision," he ceased to deny "his desires for tobacco and dancing."

I kept on eating everything that my appetite craved until there was perfect agreement established and my stomach trouble was cured. To my catarrh of the head I said, go ahead if there is something about my head that needs to be taken out or destroyed, I want you to do it. I am Spirit and nothing in heaven and on earth can hurt me. I have healed all kinds of diseases and casted out devils. Every day I am laying hands on the sick and they recover. I have taken up serpents and drank the socalled deadly poison and it did not hurt me. I speak with a new tongue in the way of explaining the Truth. Not only have I casted out devils out of one or more persons but out of the whole universe.

I think infinitely. There is no limit to the harmonious power of my life. I help people far and near.

Terms for treatment is five dollars per month, cash in advance.

RATZLAFF BROS.

"M.D.'s are requested not to send him-them their circulars, and telegrams and cablegrams are not desired, as he-they are so "busy giving treatment, till late at night, for all kinds of diseases, including poverty, and writing letters. Five dollars per month in advance." Mother Eddy has much to answer for.

But the *New Thought* has a still *Higher Thought* which is said to be "a journal of Realization," with the motto, *Ye are Gods*. In praise of its foremost writer of the foregoing issue it says he has been a "jack of all trades" and has done almost everything—"carpenter, gardener, homesteader, herder, hygienic physician, pioneer in Kans., Tenn., and Fla., book-agent, farm-laborer, orange-grower, poultry-farmer, professional nurse, newspaper-correspondent, story-writer, poet, editor. At twelve was a dreamer on Socialism, at thirteen an Atheist and in a few months converted, and by rapid stages Calvinist, Armenian, Swedenborgian. At one time a revivalist, later a working student in a hydropathic college. Became Agnostic about twenty-one and remained so till receiving the illumination of the Dawn Thought."

"The next symposium" is to be on "the sex question." It all finally comes back to a question of "health and disease" with these wonderful metaphysical, supernatural journals. One would suppose all the "Gods" (the "editors"—and their "patients," who also are "Gods") were in a strangely bad state of health, although each one of them is "the perfect idea of perfect mind." "I am all; I have all; I know all, for I am the likeness of all; all is now." "Health is the direct result of harmony and harmony only exists through agreement or oneness." I want to tell you," says one correspondent, "that spiritual poise is all right." "Highly successful in treating absent patients;" "distant treatments for health, wealth, and success" are advertisements of other "healers," and Weltmer has come into the Higher Thought! Weltmer is one of the "Gods," with all the other advertisers of "drugless science," of "Realization," of "Books of Health," "Breath of Life," "The New Man," "Purity Journals," "Free Healing," "Life's Great Healing Law," and all the rest!

Health is sought so avidly by the self-conscious cranks as to indicate a sad state of disease in them. One of the sects is called *The Ralstonites*. This is no cynical name bestowed by enemies, but one they give themselves. The book before us is entitled *General Membership Book of Knowledge of the Ralston Health Club Leatherette Binding*. On the title page it is said to be (84) eighty-fourth (84) Edition (84). It is the first attempt so far as we know to build up a secret organization in health-study or health-practice. "If there is any secret society about I want to get on the inside" is the thought which has preceded many strange gatherings of men. There are many degrees of wisdom, at least five, although "hundreds" are spoken of, the "Inner Circle," "personal magnetism clubs," etc. But there are dire punishments for betraying secrets, not keeping pledges, etc., and one is made to feel that invisible detectives and spies are dogging one's footsteps. "No

subterfuge or indirect action will remain long undiscovered.".....
 "It will sooner or later be discovered and will cause the loss of all rights as a Ralstonite and the loss of respect in the community." The loss of "all rights as a Ralstonite" must be a serious matter indeed, judging from the following quotations:

"No one pretends that there is any other channel of help to mankind except that offered by Ralstonism."

"We believe that Ralstonism is the lever that has been designed by the Creator for the work of uplifting the world."

"For a quarter of a century the great cry of Ralstonism has been its determination to create a new race of men and women."

A few thousand years ago, says Mr. Ralston, men lived to be centuries old. Such is the anthropology of this scientist. "Glame" is the word he has coined to designate the form of health-vitality. Such is his philology. There are 2,237 maxims listed in this book with "leatherette binding," which constitute the most amusing mess of nonsense, a seriocomic gathering of dietic and physiologic "tommyrot" beyond compare. Antidruggism sticks out everywhere. Let examples speak:

Perfect flour-making is rapidly spreading under the name of the Schweitzer system.

Wheat, being a perfect food, was the first cereal on earth!

Onions tell if the bowels are out of order.

Diabetes is the turning of the blood to sugar.

The vegetable kingdom includes everything not in the animal kingdom.

Honey is about one-eighth flesh.

A well-known man who was very fond of sucking pig has recently died a horrible death from cancer.

Eaters of lamb meat are of gentler dispositions.

Meats give brain power, but will not build minds.

The excretions of ministers after sermons show that a thinking man excretes more phosphorus than a laborer.

Dried herring dries up the blood.

Consumption is often due to iron.

All water comes from the clouds.

Nearly all cases of typhoid are due to well water.

Hot milk snuffed into the nose has cured catarrh that defied all medical aid.

The natural treatment of catarrh is different and is in Ralston Franchise at Fifth Degree.

Failing eyesight can always be prevented.

Glasses may be discarded by restoring the eye to its true shape. "Ralston Gardens" describes the treatment.

The optic nerve is weakened by too much starchy food.

In diphtheria, lockjaw, and other torturing maladies the agonies inflicted by germs are unnecessarily excruciating, malicious, malignant, cruel, relentless, satanic, and devilish.

The body is part of nature's general plan.

The faculties should remain stronger than the functions.

The sunrise sky is the golden field of hope.

The sunset sky is the rich meadow of peace.

In the last decade of the last century Ralstonism reduced the death rate by 10 per cent. in general.

We are sure Mr. Ralston is correct when he emphatically says "Ralstonism can never die." Neither will morbid ignorance. Seriously meant fun and selling \$25 books for \$4.44 are also eternal.

Not only the *New Thought* but these uncouth faddisms are generally based upon the healing business. *Christian* is the name of a "New Thought" periodical published in Denver, Colorado. The New Thoughtists praise it as illustrating the humorous aspect of the faith. With avidity, therefore, one seeks some relief from the solemn earnestness, serious as an insane ward, of all the other journals and writings. The intent and conscious purpose, it must be emphasized, because unintentionally and unconsciously they are far more mirth-provoking than any writing of Mark Twain. The editor of *Christian*, we suspect, would not claim any christianity for himself or his periodical—the "humor" may lie in that—although he tells us he is an "ex-preacher." His wife, of whom he is always writing in his editorials, he says, is an "ex-actress." Regretfully one must confess the humor, if intended, is not present. It is all as dreary as a "comic opera." Of the intended kind the constant calling of his readers "sweetheart" and "darling," and the iteration of such colloquialisms as "in the soup," "bucking against the postoffice department" (Mr. Madden would not let him in), "Shake, my dear girl," "Let him have his jimjams," etc., are illustrative. From a most serious "poem" occupying the whole front page, and composed by a famous member, three disconnected lines should also be excerpted:

"Tinkering of thoughts tobasco."

"Free from mustard meditation."

"Not a new food, nor a long-stunt."

Because there is so little fun in our own or in any method of "Healing," we reproduce a few extracts from the last number of *Christian*. The editor of this periodical should be encouraged because, however unwittingly, he is bringing the eddyistic and vibrational healing business to its legitimate and logical *reductio ad absurdum*. The editor and healer writes:

Give the healer a fair chance, and don't mix mental methods. The other day, a lady wrote, complaining that she did not improve. She said she had written to C and B and A and M at the same time that she wrote me, and had put her case in the hands of each of us. Five healers! It is a wonder she isn't dead or crazy! It is unfair to all of us. Mental medicine should not be mixed. I want you to myself or not at all.

I am the light of the world. I am all the light of the world. I am the light in the jack-o'-lantern and the light of the lightning-bug and the light of the sun.

The leaders of this modern metaphysic movement have not not made good in the way of healing themselves and others. Ostrich-like, they stick their heads into the sands of sect to hide their defeat.

The so-called New Thought is smelling a little musty. Throw it away, even if your old body should go with it.

Don't blame me if all the beautiful women on earth flock to *Christian*. It is by the law of attraction, for the I am is "the fairest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely."

Christian has had to fight for every inch of ground. It is now the only periodical of its kind on the planet. It is denied second-class postage because it is the

voice of the Free Spirit. Let all who are going to die prepare for death. I am here to stay. I defy disease, death, and the devil.

Christian is given five distinct treatments before being sent out in the mail. My wife and I transmit to its pages all the power and glory and love of our own lives. It is our kiss of love to all of you!

Baby Blanche is busy with health, but when she needs a doctor, I will not hesitate to send for one.

The new thought public had rather read how Thomas Jefferson Shelton actually cured himself of corns than to peruse the finest strung, theoretic article which the sedate and saintly *Essence*, or the grave and ministerial *Mind*, or the Puritaical *Ideals* is able to produce.—[*The Nautilus*.]

Some time ago an enterprising healer of the Southwest gave much amusement to his friends and enemies by instructing patients all over the world to lie down exactly at a certain hour of the day, and at that minute the absent healer would think of them and send forth the miraculous vibrations to cure each according to his receptiveness and need. The man had forgotten or had never heard of a complicating difference in time between the clocks of Kansas and Maine, San Francisco, and London, whereby his vibrations, instantaneously transferred, would not arrive at all on time. In the latest number of *Christian*, the editor, on page 8, says he is sending out 30,000 copies of his paper every month, and to each person he also sends the healing and success vibrations. Also, on page 8, he says the name of each of these 30,000 persons is "called every day in the healing-room." It is strange that the miracle-worker forgot his multiplication table. If at a high rate of speed of the caller, and a still higher rate of the vibrator, surely not over 30 names could be correctly read and called in a minute continuously by one caller. The "healing" would, of course, be easier. At the auctioneer's best, 1800 names an hour would severely tax the larynx and would be extraordinarily good business. Thus to get through the 30,000 names each day would require at least 17 hours of uninterrupted "calling" and healing. And yet this particular advertiser is the most sane and rational of the entire multitude of these curious people.