

Religio-Philosophical Journal

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CHICAGO, ILL., OCTOBER 13, 1877. Mr. Underwood's Rejoinder.

We have no intention of following Mr. Underwood into a discussion of the theistic question. That would be quixotic, considering our limited space. If God were scientifically demonstrable to our finite and earth-bound faculties, he would not be God. Human science has for its domain second causes only.

The most brilliant atheistic writer of our day, the German Schopenhauer, was obliged to postulate an unconscious and incognitive Will in Nature as the true ground or reason of all phenomena. His successor and his peer in ability, Hartmann, also a nominal atheist, is obliged to postulate not only Unconscious Will, but Unconscious Intellect.

With regard to the proofs of Purpose or Final Cause, Hartmann shows that physiological and psychological processes and indeed the phenomena of the universe generally, cannot be satisfactorily explained and accounted for except on the hypothesis that they were at first arranged, and are ever afterwards directed and kept in activity, by one governing purpose; in other words, that they every where indicate intelligent design.

Here is one of the profoundest modern thinkers among atheists admitting Will in Nature, and another admitting Will and Intellect in Nature. Surely it is not taking a very broad leap to admit Consciousness also after this! But we will pause here; for as we have intimated, the subject is one of the speculative intellect and of the emotions, which last have an authority in their axioms just as much as the reason has which claims to be scientific.

Mr. Underwood tells us that "material activity is involved in the very conception of matter." If he would look more closely into Lange's "History of Materialism," to which we called his attention just before its publication in this country, in our remarks of Sept. 1st, he would find that he is not at all justified in this remark, except so far as it may apply to his own individual notions.

Mr. Underwood postulates an evolution or life from "pre-existent conditions," the theist calls God, and thus places a real existence at the beginning of things. It is difficult to see why this real existence is not as rational an hypothesis as a "nebulous mass," big

with the potencies of mind and intelligent activity; for the "nebulous mass," bringing about what it does, must have a sort of soul in it. Matter, with a tendency, sooner or later, to evolve into mind—into the thought of Plato and Shakespeare, the science of Newton, the art of Angelo and Mozart, into the undying love and faith that looks through death—and finally, as Spiritualism declares, into an immortal being, carrying with him all individuality and memory, and high mental endowments of the earth-life—such matter would seem to be essentially different from that which we tread under our feet or sweep from our doorsteps.

It seems to us that Mr. Underwood's attempt, by a quotation from Mill, to escape from the common-sense of Frederick the Great where he says, "It is flatly inconceivable that intellect and moral emotion can have been put into him by an entity that had none of its own," is not only singularly unfortunate and pointless, but glaringly evasive. Mr. Mill's sarcastic illustration is: "There must be pepper in the cook because there is pepper in the soup made by the cook."

Mr. Underwood's own illustration from the watch—"man is a ticking animal because the watch, of which he is the cause, ticks," equally fails of its mark. Man intelligently uses the materials and laws, given by God, (or by "material activity") to produce a certain mechanical effect. Yes, man must be, in a certain sense, a ticking animal. We take Mr. Underwood at his word. The ticking was in the man's mind, in the pulsation of his heart, and the watch was a production of that God-like faculty which the Infinite has planted in the finite.

Matter does not generate the phenomena, of which it may be the instrument or outward mask. Our spiritual phenomena throw new and wonderful light on matter. Modern science is drawing nearer every day to the great conclusion that all the phenomena of material nature result from the action of force upon matter; and that force, in its last analysis, is mind.

The whole materialistic difficulty is well summed up and dismissed by Proudhon, the celebrated French radical. We quote from Mr. Tucker's excellent translation in the first number of his Radical Quarterly Review:—"Something (which you call matter) is the occasion of sensations which are felt by another something (which I call spirit)."

Here we will leave Mr. Underwood for the present. The pithy, incisive words of Proudhon would seem to cut the Gordian knot of difficulty in this dispute about matter and spirit. They reach the pith of all Mr. Underwood's ingenious and well expressed arguments. Let us concede, then, that the theistic question is one which human science is utterly impotent to settle even by an approximation. The Atheist is simply spinning round in a circle when he would

try to convince the Theist that the mind, the will, and the love in the world are no evidence of a God. As well try to convince a Beethoven that there is no such thing as music!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

Ethics of Spiritualism.

It affords us extreme pleasure to be able to announce to our readers the deeply important fact that we have perfected an arrangement whereby we are to receive from the inspired pen of the man whom of all men in the ranks of Spiritualism will be acknowledged as best able to handle the subject, a series of articles treating of the Ethics of Spiritualism.

Spiritualism has been charged with immoral tendencies. It is proposed to show that it is the foundation of all systems of religion and the source of the purest morals. Ethics studied by the light of evolution and the immortality of the human spirit, becomes a theme wide as the universe, as deep as its foundations, as lofty as the throne of Infinite force.

It will emphatically answer the question: "What do the spirits teach concerning the conduct of life?"

This series of articles alone should insure us thousands of new readers. We shall very shortly commence their publication and trust our readers will realize their importance without further amplification at our hands.

Prof. B. F. Underwood on Material Activity.

In support of his thesis, that life is a form of material activity, Professor Underwood tells us that life is always seen in connection with some form of matter. Do not the facts and phenomena of Spiritualism require that this expression should be modified in order to be strictly scientific? Our phenomena abundantly prove that life, in its efficient exhibition, may be manifested independently of any visible connection with matter or material organs.

The "Independent Voice."

When listening to the voice of the spirit, James Nolan, the principal speaker at Mrs. Hollis-Billing's sances, we have often wished we could convey to our readers some of the valuable information or original and common-sense thoughts that flow with such fluency from his lips.

Augustus Brentano, Jr., has succeeded Mr. August Brentano as proprietor of Brentano's Literary Emporium, at 39 Union Square, New York, where he will continue the business on the principles so well established by his predecessor.

Laborers in the Spiritualistic Vineyard and other Items of Interest.

J. Frank Baxter, the lecturer and test medium, received a grand surprise and reception at his residence a short time ago, from a goodly number of his former pupils of the Winchester, Massachusetts, school. He was presented also with two neatly framed pictures, entitled the Voyage of Life and the Orphan's Rescue.

C. B. Lynn speaks at Ballston Spa, New York, during October.

Kersey Graves has just returned to his home in Richmond, Indiana, after a three weeks' lecturing tour in the West, during which he was very successful.

Dr. J. R. Newton is located for the present in the city of Utica, New York.

Mrs. Jennie Crossé, test-clairvoyant, business and healing medium, has removed to 25 Indiana Place, Boston.

C. B. Kitteringham & Co. are about to commence the publication of a monthly paper at Hempstead, Texas, to be called the Texas Spiritualist; terms, one dollar per year. There are many Spiritualists in Texas, and if they all put their shoulder to the wheel, they can support a monthly journal without much difficulty.

Mr. Watts, of Campbelltown, Preble county, Ohio, who is on a visit to this city, the exposition and the mediums, made us a fraternal call.

G. A. Mansfield advertises to do wonderful things, assisted by three of the best mediums in the world. He says that sometimes "eight or ten" spirit forms appear upon the stage at the same time. We have no confidence whatever in the truthfulness of his assertions as set forth in his circular. He Barnumizes too freely, and his show doesn't amount to much, except on paper.

Dr. Denslow, of South Bend, Indiana, escorted a company of friends to our office last week, when several of them subscribed for the JOURNAL. Let all doctors do the same, and they will have the same eminent success in healing as does Dr. Denslow. If they don't heal the body, they will certainly help the spirit.

Our good friend Underwood broadly but politely suggests that, in our criticism of his lecture, we quoted from Lange without credit. Our readers will recollect that we specially referred Mr. Underwood to Lange, the American Edition of whose work was not then in the market, we believe.

As an evidence of the progress of free thought, we notice with pleasure the issue of a supplement by the Eddyville (Iowa) Advertiser, giving a report of the debate between W. F. Jameson and Elder D. R. Dungan. As usual, the partisans on each side think they got the best of the contest, and good feeling and courtesy prevailed.

J. M. Allen's address during October, will be 215 Chestnut street, Philadelphia, Penn., care of A. H. Love. He has closed his labors in New Jersey, and is now turning his face southward and westward. Those who desire his services, should address him soon.

Thomas Cook informs us that he is now traveling with Silas Arthur, whom he considers a "great musical medium." He says that Mr. Arthur can play on twenty-one musical instruments, six at one time, in perfect order and tune, constituting a "string band;" and while doing that, he can read from a book or newspaper, and while discoursing sweet music, store up valuable ideas in his mind.

"Christianity and Infidelity," a joint discussion between Rev. G. H. Humphrey, Presbyterian clergyman, of New York, and D. M. Bennett, editor of The Truth Seeker. It was conducted in the columns of The Truth Seeker. The subjects discussed were as follows: Part I.—The relative services of Christianity and Infidelity to American Liberty. Part II.—The relative services of Christianity and Infidelity to Learning and Science. Part III.—Is there a stronger probability that the Bible is divine than that Infidelity is true? The discussion has excited a large share of interest, both among believers and unbelievers; and as both sides are fairly presented, it is suited to readers of all shades of opinion.

Capt. H. H. Brown addressed the Otisco, Mich., Agricultural Fair Sept. 28th upon the theme "How can Farmers pay their debts?" and spoke for the Spiritualists of that place on Sunday Sept. 30th. He spoke at Sparta Centre Oct. 6th, 6th and 7th; speaks at Plainwell again Oct. 14th. He will continue to speak for the Spiritualists on Sundays and week-day evenings, when not otherwise engaged. Where friends desire it, Mr. M. C. Vandercok, of Allegan, Mich., song author and vocalist, will accompany him.

In an account of a Spiritual camp meeting at Cassadaga Lake, Chautauqua county, New York, Sunday, September 16th, the Chautauqua Farmer says: Rev. J. H. Harter of Auburn, N. Y., was introduced, and his burning words of eloquence stirred the hearts of all. Mr. Harter seems to have great control over his audiences, and when he closed moved them to tears. Again, with his sparkling wit the woods echoed and re-echoed with applause.

Several items of interest from Bro. D. A. Eddy will be attended to in due time.

Mrs. Bailey reports that the meeting at Dansville, Mich., was a success in numbers and interest. A permanent local society was organized with E. J. Smith as President, Mrs. M. Fox, Secretary. D. A. Hewes, L. J. Miller, John Densmore constitute the board of directors. These friends are all active workers in the cause and the society will no doubt be the means of great good.

At the close of a series of six lectures, delivered in Crooks' Hall, St. Charles, Minn., by Dr. J. K. Bailey, the following endorsement was unanimously adopted by the audience: "That we, the Spiritualists and Liberalists of St. Charles, recognize in Dr. Bailey, an earnest champion of free thought, and an able exponent of the Spiritual Philosophy."

It is a well known fact, that the Czar of Russia consults the spirits.

A well-known medium, lately of New York city, whose power for physical manifestations and slate writing has never been doubted, was recently detected in the act of "helping the spirits" in a dark circle. Such mediums are becoming decidedly too common.

Lyman C. Howe challenges the clergy to debate with him on the following questions: Resolved, That the phenomena of modern Spiritualism are real, and have no complete explanation short of the Spiritual theory.

Resolved, That all the claims of modern Spiritualism, involving a future life and the influence and communion of human spirits after death, are false, and all mediumistic phenomena are tricks and frauds.

He will affirm the first, and deny the last of these two resolutions.

Rev. Thomas Colley, an Episcopal clergyman of England, is coming to this country for the purpose of investigating Spiritualism.

A Spiritualist in Philadelphia tells of a death-bed where those assembled while singing a hymn had their spiritual eyes opened and saw the "dead brother" issuing out of his mortal tenement, joining his wife and child and floating away.

Dr. York, has been lecturing to the Spiritualists of Salt Lake City. They seem to have been delighted with him, passing a highly complimentary resolution in his favor. He is on his way east, and proposes to lecture in various quarters here.

In another column will be found an interesting communication from the distinguished lecturer, author and traveler, Dr. J. M. Peebles.

Next week we shall publish another interesting and characteristic letter from Rev. John Pierpont.

Madame Blavatsky's work, "Isis Unveiled," being as she says, "a master-key to the mysteries of ancient and modern science and religion," is said to be selling more rapidly than any work of its ponderous size ever did before. Already the second edition is in press. The two volumes complete in about 1,400 octavo pages, sell for \$7.50, postage free. For sale at the office of this paper.

"Clock Struck Three," by Rev. Samuel Watson, is a valuable record in favor of Spiritualism.

Mr. John Fowler, of Liverpool, made us a farewell call last week prior to his return home. Mr. Fowler is a member of the firm of Fowler Brothers, packers, a house second to none other in the same line of business, and one of the concerns that make Chicago the greatest provision depot in the world. Brother Fowler has been for years an active, devoted Spiritualist, and during his few months' stay in this country has given the subject considerable attention. He carries with him the kindest wishes of hosts of American friends and business acquaintances.

The Sunday Times, of this city, says that the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL has got the inside track among the religious weeklies, and that the inference therefrom is that the treatment of the whole range of religious questions by philosophic inquiry is a more popular method than the professional and special defense of particular theories. As the Sunday Times aspires to be considered authority among religious people, the foregoing remarks have peculiar significance.

Proof Palpable of Immortality, by Epes Sargent, also his work Planchette, the Despair of Science, should be carefully read by every investigator. We have no more trustworthy and candid writer on spirit phenomena than Mr. Sargent.

Alfred Heath, of La Salle Co., Ill., made us a fraternal call this week, patronizing our book department liberally. Brother Heath is engaged in the banking business in Tonica, Ill., and lectures regularly in Underhill's Hall on Sundays, under Spirit control. He is a very promising medium and is doing excellent work in that region.

Dr. N. W. Beckwith, of Ottawa, Ill., one of the liberal minds among the medical men, who is not afraid to avow his adherence to Spiritualism, livened up our office, in company with Brother Heath, with his genial presence. The doctor is quite successful in the treatment of chronic difficulties, as we would expect from his advanced position.

Frank T. Ripley, we hear, is coming West the last of October, in company with a "fire test" medium, and will make engagements to stop along the route, embracing the line of the New York Central R. R., to lecture and give tests. His address is 14 Montgomery Place, Boston, Mass.

Remember the JOURNAL is now sent to new subscribers on trial thirteen weeks for forty cents.

LIST OF BOOKS FOR SALE BY THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE CHICAGO.

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Advertisement for Mrs. Mary J. Hollis' 'World Renowned Seances', 'Mrs. M. E. Weeks' clairvoyant services, 'Astrology', 'The Electric Pen', 'The Chicago Progressive Lyceum', 'Patent Parlor Elevators', 'International Hotel', 'Medical Students', 'The Golden Melodies', and 'The Lyceum Stage'.

Advertisement for 'The Electric Pen', 'Christianity and Infidelity', 'The Great Spiritual Remedies', 'Ayer's Ague Cure', 'The Lyceum Stage', and 'Hudson Tuttle's Works'.

Advertisement for 'The Magnetic Treatment', 'Physicians, Healers, and Mediums', 'New Gospel of Health', 'Psychometry', 'American Health College', 'Rush's Nerve and Bilious Remedies', 'Clairvoyant Healer', and 'The Lyceum Stage'.

