

truism. To say that he is one of those who have abounded in our profession in all ages, doing no particular harm, gaining a temporary notoriety, is equally evident. But to understand the exact state of mind that is implied in knowing so much about a disease, taking so much trouble to hunt up every author on the subject, arguing in favour of a particular pathology so plausibly, seriously entering the lists with such men as Dr. Anstie and Dr. Radcliffe, brandishing his spear over an imaginary victory over them, and then finishing the performance with a grand proclamation that he has discovered a new "system" of medicine, in which hyperæmia of the spinal cord and sympathetic system is proved to be the origin of all disease, and ice-bags to cure it:—this, truly, is a study for the medico-psychologist.

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*What am I? A Popular Introduction to Mental Philosophy and Psychology.* By EDWARD W. COX, Sergeant-at-Law. Volume I. *The Mechanism of Man.* Longmans and Co., 1873.

No one can find fault with the candid and earnest manner in which Serjeant Cox enters upon the formidable task of supplying an appropriate answer to the momentous question, WHAT AM I? Believing that the small progress made by Psychology and Mental Philosophy, when other sciences have been advancing with giant strides, is the consequence of the obsolete method of investigation pursued by the few who have undertaken the study of them, he has set before himself the aim of treating Psychology in the same fashion as the Physical Sciences are treated—that is to say, "by the gathering together of *facts*, attested by good and efficient evidence, trying them by experiments carefully conducted, rejecting nothing on merely *à priori* argument, nor because of its apparent impossibility, or improbability, or seeming inconsistency with some fact or law already assumed to be true." This volume is the first instalment of his labours; it is devoted to a description of the human mechanism—Body, Mind, Soul—merely as it is constructed; and it is to be followed by a second volume, which will be devoted to "a description of the *machinery in action*, and will embrace all the phenomena of *intellectual existence*, as distinguished from pure organic life, viewing it in its normal and abnormal conditions, in health and in disease."

The first nine chapters of this volume are occupied with a description, in plain language and in popular style, of the human machine—how it lives, how it grows, and how it dies; or rather perhaps, as we should say, with a dissertation on what Serjeant Cox conceives it to be, and on the way in which he conceives it to live, grow, and die. For, it must be confessed that the learned author by no means confines himself to the sober path of description, but indulges in long flights of imagination; it is only fair, however, to add that he conscientiously warns his readers not to accept his opinions as proved facts, but to take them as only conjectures. Assuredly the quantity of facts bears an exceeding small proportion to the great mass of conjecture and speculation.

In succeeding chapters he treats of the different senses, setting forth briefly the conditions and limitations under which each sense works, the kind of information which it furnishes to us, and discussing the value of their evidence when they act together in aid of one another. In this part of his book he is far less speculative than in the foregoing chapters; though there is not anything novel in what he says, some of his remarks will be found suggestive of profitable reflection; and he makes some not altogether undeserved strictures on men of science who are “found still cleaving to the old discarded folly of making their own conceptions the test of truth, and not only rejecting facts that do not square with their theories, but refusing even to inquire and investigate, contending that asserted facts are not facts, because, according to their own preconceived notions, such a fact is impossible.”

What is this unphilosophical folly but a tacit assumption of infallibility? Common sense as well as experience should teach them that the course of wisdom is to deal with a fact, asserted by credible witnesses, by bringing it to careful investigation, with patient trial and test, and thus to ascertain *if it be a fact* or a fallacy. . . Unhappily for the cause of Science, this appears to be too severe a toil; or, perhaps, is thought to be too humiliating a confession for Philosophers who claim omniscience and infallibility; and so they go on obstructing, instead of promoting, the progress of all knowledge that happens to be in discord with their assumption. It is sad to see Professors exhibiting this dogmatism of science, which in them is more odious than the dogmatism they so lavishly charge upon the Professors of Theology.

It is certain that some of the followers of science have not altogether escaped the bad theological habit of deeming

orthodoxy to be the test of truth, unmindful that in a world of which we know so little, of which we have so much yet to learn, the orthodoxy of one age must often be the erroneous *doxy* of the next age. But the learned Serjeant cannot fairly expect scientific men to be continually beginning at the beginning, and teaching each new comer his scientific alphabet, by correcting his misinterpretation of facts, and demonstrating to him, for example, that the sun does not move round the earth, that diseases are not the work of witches, that there are impostors and dupes in the world, and that the latter are the natural prey of the former. We have a suspicion that the real occasion of Serjeant Cox's strictures is that scientific men will not investigate the phenomena of so-called spiritualism, or, having investigated them, will not accept its alleged facts. Let him ponder a remark by Jean Paul:—"Hundertmal schweigt der Weise vor Gecken, weil er drei und zwanzig Bogen braucht, nur seine Meinung zu sagen. Gecken brauchen nur Zeilen, ihre Meinungen sind herauffahrende Inseln und hängen mit nichts zusammen als mit der Eitelkeit."

The second half of the volume is devoted to a description of the mental faculties, the author adopting the phrenological scheme of classification propounded by Gall and perfected by Combe. "If Phrenology," he says, "had done nothing more than give to the world this admirable classification of the mental faculties, it would have a claim to the gratitude of all who endeavour after that knowledge of themselves which has been truly called the most valuable of all knowledge." But Phrenology has wholly failed, he points out, to solve the problem of the abode of the Will; in its map of mind it has left no site for such a mental faculty, although it is certainly not less definite and distinct than the emotion of Benevolence or the faculty of Reason. A strange mental philosophy, which has no place in it for the Will! He offers, therefore, "a complete and rational solution of the problem"—namely, that "the seat of this important mental power, THE WILL, is in the group of ganglia at the base of the brain, which is connected with the whole brain, in which every part of the brain is centred." The extract will serve to exhibit the character of the Serjeant's psychological speculations, and on what foundations of acquired or unacquired physiological knowledge they are built. To criticise this theory, it would be necessary to begin at the beginning, and to fill several pages with the elementary exposi-

tion of physiological details, and of results of experiments which he certainly ought to have made himself acquainted with before he ventured to propound it. His training, as a lawyer, might have taught him that his duty, before coming to a conclusion, was to carefully collect and weigh all the facts; and this was a duty especially binding upon one who so often in this book censures men of science for their wilful neglect of facts. But we fear the Serjeant forgets altogether the sobriety of the lawyer when he comes forth in the character of a philosopher.

In the last few chapters of the book he enters into regions of speculation into which we cannot follow him—into speculations concerning the nature of the soul, its dwelling-place, and its destiny. No doubt these speculations will be of some interest to those who look upon Mr. Crookes and Mr. Varley as prophets, but we think that most men of science will continue to deserve the reproach of refusing to intermeddle with them.

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*Contributions to Mental Pathology.* By I. RAY, M.D. Boston : 1873.

Although with two exceptions the contents of this work have appeared in print, we welcome with pleasure their publication in one volume. Moreover, the recent notes to the articles as they originally appeared add to their value, and acquaint us with the matured and not likely to be changed opinions of this veteran alienist, so well known as the former superintendent of the Butler Hospital, and for his writings on Mental Disease, especially his "Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity." In his address, delivered on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the State Hospital for the Insane, at Danville, Pennsylvania, 1869, Dr. Ray gives an interesting sketch of the treatment of the insane in his own country, commencing with the year 1752, when the Pennsylvania Hospital was established, and exerted a very beneficial influence upon the action of other States. Coming to recent times (about 1838), Dr. Ray pays the following well-merited tribute to the philanthropic Miss Dix, whose unremitting exertions have done so much for the amelioration of the condition of the insane.

"Most fortunately, too, as if to confirm a favorite belief—that, when a great exigency arises, the right man or woman will be found ready to meet it, a young woman in Massachu-