AN ADDRESS ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

DELIVERED BEFORE A LARGE AUDIENCE IN THE LYCEUM.

Speaker of the Evening Was Judge William G. Ewing, of Chicago, Ill., Who Spoke on "Christian Science, the Religion of Jesus Christ"—He Was Introduced by D. N. McKee, the First Reader of the Christian Science Church of This City.

Hon. William G. Ewing, of Chicago, Ill., a former judge of the Superior court of that state, delivered a lecture in the Lyceum last night on "Christian Science, the Religion of Jesus Christ." There was no admission fee charged. The lecture was under the auspices of the First Church of Christ, of this city, and was attended by a large audience.

The speaker of the evening was introduced by D. N. McKee, the first reader of the local church. He said the object of the church in bringing the lecturer here was to give the public an opportunity of learning what Christian Science really is, most people having an entirely false conception of the tenets of the faith. Mr. McKee, after warmly eulogizing Judge Ewing as a man, lawyer and jurist, introduced him to the audience. After a few preliminary remarks, the speaker took up the subject of the evening's discourse and spoke as follows:

JUDGE EWING'S ADDRESS.

There could be no clearer demonstration of the intelligence and cosmopolitan thought of this community than this magnificent assemblage of men and women, of all phases of religious belief, intent upon a candid investigation of the intellectual, Scriptural and scientific equipoise of Christian Science. This meeting is an omen of your profound interest in all questions touching the active relationship of the creature to the Creator, and man's present and eternal welfare. I fully appreciate the courtesy of your presence and shall present to you my views upon the subject of Christian Science, with the earnestness of my convictions, I trust, but at the same time with such due regard for your rights of opinion as will lead us all, as members of a common brotherhood, with one origin and one destiny, to reason together about the things of eternity and with the simplicity and heroism of truth to "hold fast to that which is good," although we stand alone amid the dismantled beliefs of our fathers.

It is safe to assume that nine-tenths of this audience are Christian religionists of some school; that you are honest and sincere in your church association and your religious tenets; wherefore it must not be expected that you will surrender the convictions you have concerning God and your duty to Him, unless your reason is convinced and your conscience satisfied that to do so is at once your greatest privilege and highest duty.

I am her to throw, if I can, a ray of light upon your pathway; to add, if I may, something to the joy and sweetness of your life and not to lessen your denominational strength, or add to my own. If you are happy, contented, satisfied in your present religious beliefs, God forbid that I should disturb them; for I know of no power, human or divine, that can add a joy to satisfaction. In the early morning of the world the psalmist sang as his highest eulogy of the glory and fulness of God: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

HIS MISSION.

My mission is to talk to those who are not satisfied; who deem it within the range of human possibility that there is a light in reserve that may gild with a sublimer splendor and crown with a sweeter and tenderer love man's appreciation of the infinite Fatherhood of God and "His ways to man." To all such I wish simply and earnestly to talk; not to preach to you a sermon—I am not a preacher; not to soothe you into a brief dream of content by flowers of speech—I am a stranger to the pleasing, but ephemeral, devices of the orator; I simply want to talk to you as man to man, as friend to friend, brother to brother; my only art will be the simplicity and courage of conviction; my only argument, a statement of facts; and, after all, how resistless is the potency of a fact! The sole purposes of inquiry in every court of justice in Christendom is, and ever has been, to invoke facts; the world is weary of theories, it longs for facts; it is surfeited with dogmas, arguments and platitudes and cries out for facts.

The great difficulty in presenting any new phase of religion to the world is the people's inherited religious beliefs, the opinions of their fathers. No one thinks it strange that we should discard our fathers' thoughts respecting dress, habitation or form of government; yet the idea seems to be almost universal that filial duty demands that the child shall think religiously, think of God, only as his fathers thought. And yet we know indeed that our fathers questioned the beliefs of our fathers and made us happier by it: that their fathers questioned the beliefs of their own fathers and made the world brighter by it.

No one can know better than I how very difficult it is for one to forsake the traditions of his fathers. I speak from experience, for my ancestors were Scotch-Irish Calvinists, with much of the assertive impetuosity of the Irish, with some of the solemn piety, and all the dogged stubbornness of the Scotch; in that faith I was born and educated, and have yet the profoundest respect for the learning, high character, sublime faith, and sincere, though awfully solemn piety of the great Presbyterian church; in infancy I received its baptism; for more than a quarter of a century I was in its communion, and so tenacious do the teachings of youth abide with the man that it was years after I had been rescued from the cold clutch of death, by Christian Science, before I could give up the early lessons learned of God, life, death, hell and heaven.

MOTHER'S SUBLIME FAITH.

My mother's sublime and beautiful faith in the measureless goodness of God I have not surrendered, nor shall. Its simple memory is an abiding benediction, jeweled with joy and luminous with love. My own experience awakens the profoundest sympathy for the man or woman who struggles with a sense of present duty in conflict with adhesion to long-cherished ancestral opinion. However, reflection satisfied me, and doubtless will satisfy you, that every advance in religion, as in liberty and morality, for centuries, is the result of the children battling the beliefs of their ancestors. If John Calvin had not questioned the beliefs of his fathers, there would have been no Presbyterian church; if Martin Luther had not raised his mighty voice against the beliefs and practices of his fathers, the world would never have rejoiced in the light and glory of the Reformation; if the Wesleys had not forsaken the tenets of their fathers, the sublime devotion and heroic sacrifice of the Methodist circuit rider would never have gladdened, purified and sanctified the humble homes of England and America. God be praised, say I, for the moral courage, the intellectual integrity, that places duty before sentiment. The history of the Christian era is replete with demonstration that rebellion against the religious beliefs of the fathers, not less than "the blood of the martyrs," is "the seed of the church."

I do not undervalue the effect of our ancestors' thought upon the civilization and Christianization of the world: but clearly its worth rests in the patent fact of the indestructibility and restless progression of good, and the further fact of the good in the experience and knowledge of each generation furnishing vantage ground to its successor for something better. We are stupid, indeed, if we are not wiser than our fathers; we have the accumulative knowledge of years that they did not have. Of all the countless dead at the beginning of this century, not one, if he should revisit the scenes of earth, could even understand the simplest nomenclature of the great discoveries of the practicality of electricity and steam that have girdled the earth with light, brought the distant places near and made a conversational convocation of the nations as speedy and practical as was the assemblage of a presbytery or diocesan convention in their day.

God be praised for the moral courage, the intellectual integrity, that enables men and women to discharge the duties of today in the light of today, rather than by the mere pride of ancestral opinion; for the important question is not what was our fathers' conception of the mission of Jesus, but what, in fact, was that mission, and what duty does it impose upon us.

THE "PRINCIPLE OF LIFE."

I cannot explain Christian Science to you in an evening's interview, or in many times the limit of a lecture; and my opinion of the legitimate length of a lecture is quite in keeping with the great Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge's, who, when asked in a class by a theological student how long he thought a sermon should be, promptly replied: "Thirty minutes, with a leaning to the side of mercy."

In the limited time at my command, I can, at best, in the simplest form of expression, tell you but a little part of what this wonderful revelation of truth has done, and is capable of doing, for a sin-burdened world; "Principle of Life" upon which Christian Science depends, with the hope that you may be induced to make such investigations as will enable you to determine for yourselves, after careful and faithful research of all the avenues of truth, whether Christian Science brings to you Dead Sea fruits that turn to ashes with a touch, or rather a beautiful and abiding hope, born of understanding and radiant with the love of God. But you can only become an accomplished Christian Scientist by earnest, honest and persistent study and demonstration of its truth.

Doubtless there are many points involved in Christian belief and conduct respecting which you and Christian Scientists are in perfect accord; a brief reference to these will, I think, bring us a little closer together, possibly inspire in us mutual confidence, and enable us, at least, to prosecute the inquiry of the hour in the pleasing assurance that we are equally earnest and honest in our search after the ultimate good—a knowledge of God—"of whom to know aright is life everlasting."

I certainly am safe in assuming that you are in favor of whatever makes men and women better, happier, purer, more loving and lovable? So are we. You will aid whatever will lessen the burdens and sorrows of men; whatever will banish superstition and minimize fear? So will we. You, I am sure, will encourage whatever will destroy avarice, selfishness and lust; whatever will exalt manhood, sanctify the home, enthrone virtue, affection, sympathy and love? So will we. You, I trust, believe in one God and Father of all, infinite in wisdom, justice, goodness, mercy, truth and love—a divine, spiritual, incorporeal intelligence, without form or parts, beginning of days or end of years; who fills all space; is omnipresent and omniscient; who made all that was made and pronounced it good. You believe in, love, worship and adore such a God? So do we.

IN ACCORD WITH CHRISTIANS.

You believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who taught in the Temple, preached the Gospel, healed the sick, made the lame to walk, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, purity to the sinful; was crucified, buried, and on the third day arose triumphant over death, and with the radiant splendors of the transfiguration spanned the heavens with a bow of promise and dispelled forever the shadows of earth by the demonstrated truth of life immortal as God. You believe in this dear, compassionate, loving, healing Christ Jesus as your Lord, your Saviour, your exemplar? So do we. You believe the Bible is the divinely inspired revelation of God to man? So do we. You believe the Ten Commandments are God's laws of requirement and restriction, to be resolutely and absolutely obeyed, one not less than another? So do we. You believe that prayer is both a privilege and a duty? So do we. You believe in the great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind"; and the second, which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"? So do we.

Thus it is found that we are substantially in accord upon the essential requirements of the religion of Christ as you understand it. And is this not sufficient to establish the conclusion that we should not antagonize each other, even if we have different ways of reaching the same Omnipotent Good we in common profess to love?

Now let me tell you in the most general way something of what Christian Science is, in the hope that upon reflection and investigation we may agree upon the essentials of Christ's religion, as Christian Scientists understand, believe and practice it.

Christian Science was discovered and revealed to the world some thirty odd years ago, by the Rev. Mary Baker G. Eddy, a native of New Hampshire, and now a resident of Concord in that state. The whole philosophy and practice of Christian Science is published to the world in Mrs. Eddy's book, entitled "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures." The latter part of the title "with Key to the Scriptures," of this marvelous book is very significant; for in fact the great value of Mrs. Eddy's work, or, as I believe and am pleased to call it, revelation, is found in the light she has thrown upon the real, reasonable, and demonstrable meaning of the Scriptures, the divine revealment of God to man; and it seems to me that all merely captious objections, by Christian people, to Christian Science should be silenced by the fact that Mrs. Eddy distinctly announces how in her search after the Truth, she took the Bible as her only guide, and I am sure that she does not announce any doctrine or practice of Christian Science that she did not find and that you may not find, in the Bible.

OFFERS NO NEW BIBLE.

Let us, therefore, start out with the distinct announcement that Christian Science offers to the world no new Bible, and no vague or mythical construction of the old one; it enthrones no new divinity; but the "one only living and true God," so long ignorantly worshipped; Him, Christian Scientists re-enthrone and proclaim unto you. Indeed, the very substratum of Christian Science, its initial principle, the premise of all its reasoning, is the declaration of, and insistence upon, the patent fact that "God is all in all." This premise, I venture to say, no intelligent believer in God will presume to question; and yet, if conceded, the genius of Bacon or Locke could not imperil the logic of Mrs. Eddy's conclusion, namely, Christian Science.

The older Christian churches urge as an objection against what they conceive Christian Science to be, that it is sheer impiety for any person to assert that he is clothed with power of God to heal the sick. The striking weakness of this objection is that Christian Scientists do not profess any such thing. As it was in the time of Jesus, so now the power that heals the sick is the power of God.

Christian Scientists assert that the beneficent God of nineteen hundred years ago, who so loved the world that He gave His Son to suffer whatever might be necessary for Him to suffer to reconcile man to God, to enable man to know God, is our God today, with all the power, all the tenderness, all the love, all the sympathy for man that He manifested nineteen hundred years ago, and that it is the same power and love that now makes the lame to walk and the blind to see.

The only argument that Jesus ever used to establish His divinity was the one He sent to the questioning John; Go tell John "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk"; and that is the argument we used today to establish the divine origin of Christian Science. The lame do walk and the blind do see, and all the logic in the world cannot lessen the force of this fact.

If, as Christian religionists, you believe that God by the word of His power created all the worlds, whirled them into space, and set them "forever circling round the sun," you must believe that He has the power to keep His creature, man, in the image in which he was created free from sorrow, sickness and suffering, as well as from sin; you must believe that He who fashioned the eye and the ear, and strung to exquisite harmony what you call the marvelous association of human nerves, has the power to remove a film from the eye He created, a thickness from the drum of the ear He made, and inharmony, discord, or jarring, from the nerves created for song and joy and not for arches and groans. Now you really believe, or think you believe, that God has the power to do this, and you also believe that God is willing to exercise that power, and heal the sick, give joy for sorrow, peace for crying, roses for ashes.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK.

I say this, because, in your churches every Sabbath, and at your family altars daily, I trust you pray to God for the sick and suffering. It is yet fresh in the memory of us all that the whole civilized world was redolent with the prayers of Christian people for Grant and Garfield in their hours of dreadful anguish; and yet I cannot be so harsh as to presume that Christian people would indulge the impiety of petitioning God for relief while they questioned either His power or His willingness to bestow. It is true you come a little tardily to the Great Physician with your cherished sick, and somewhat, it must be confessed, in the spirit of the old elder who prayed: "O God, we come to Thee because we have no other place to go."

It is only after the doctors, patent nostrums, seven bark liniment, mud baths, electrical shocks, blue glass, pignut bread, cod liver oil and tepid water have left you desolate and hopeless, that you go to God, the infinite fountain of light, joy and life, with your loved sick ones, and even then, not trusting God for the relief you ask, for the chances are many to one that you pray with medicines in your pocket and doctors at your call.

All of you say, have said a thousand times, "In God we live, move and have our being," but do you really believe this? For it is simply equivalent to saying, "In God we live, have our health and immortality." I sometimes doubt whether you do believe it, for you act as if this beautiful declaration of the Allness of God were a promise made to the ear, to be broken to the hope; and that, in fact, your life and health rest in human aids, material things, the dull, unpitying clods of earth. This will not do; a moral belief that does not find expression in act is not an intellectual conviction; you may deceive others, possibly yourselves, but you cannot deceive the Infinite. I submit to you this simple proposition: If you believe you live and move in God, should you not, as a mere act of intellectual integrity, of common honesty, trust your life and health to their infinite Keeper.

Really, your lack of trust in God's healing power is not very strange; it is the natural result of the ancestral opinion I spoke of a moment ago. Our fathers believed, and taught us to believe, that God makes us sick; that God makes us blind and deaf and lame, and, therefore, we can easily understand how reluctantly and doubtingly one who believes that God is the fruitful source of all his sorrow and heartache would go to Him with a confiding petition for relief from the very sorrows He has wrought. And here is the marked distinction between the old churches' thought of God and our thought of Him. Christian Scientists do not believe that God makes you sick or blind or deaf or halt, but we do believe that God is infinite Love, "the Great Physician who heals all our diseases."

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF CREATOR.

The fact is, my friends, our respective concepts of God are wide apart. Christian Scientists do not believe that Infinite Goodness filled the world with reprobates and sinners simply to give Himself occupation in pardoning their sins "to the praise of His glorious grace," or in torturing them with sickness, anguish and flame "to the praise of His glorious justice"; but they do believe, and act upon the belief, that God is infinite Love, the bountiful Source and Preserver of life, the Great Physician who heals all our diseases.

Christian Scientists believe that when Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and read from the prophecy of Esaias, respecting the "office of Christ," where it is written, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," and closing the book, declared to the congregation, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Christian Scientists insist that when Jesus did this He thereby solemnly made proclamation to all men, of all time, of His God-sealed ambassadorship, not only to preach the gospel, but also to heal the sick, break the shackles of the bound and usher in "the acceptable year of the Lord." And thus we have clearly defined by prophecy and by the unequivocal words of Jesus the substance, spirit and practice of the religion He established; a religion of faith, works, freedom—freedom from man's oppression, from sickness, sin and death; a religion of ministry, cheer and love. And Jesus literally fulfilled His high commission, preached the gospel, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, broke the fetters of sin and gave liberty to the bound. He taught His disciples to emulate His example and told them that the mighty works He did, and greater, they should do. Who in the old churches will be so recklessly bold as to assert that Jesus did not mean what He said?

WHAT THE MIRACLES WERE.

It must be remembered that the "works" of which Jesus spoke were His so-called miracles, His ministrations to suffering, stumbling, cringing, crying men; the restoration of health, sight, hearing, strength, courage, hope, happiness, life, to men; and all without the aid of any drug, manipulation, diet, change of climate, mechanical contrivance, mesmerism, hypnotism, or effect of mortal mind upon human ills; but all, from the withered hand to the raising of Lazarus, by the power of God—the supreme majesty of the all-pervading Spirit of Good.

This is what Jesus did, and in His last admonition to the eleven, His chosen faithful disciples, is found the crowning cheer of His sublime ambassadorship: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. * * * And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

I submit that it is not within the range of intellectual operation to apply this last command and blessed promise of Jesus to the eleven only, and not to all generations of men forever and aye; and consequently to us, to you and to me; Jesus the Christ has spoken it, spoken it to you and to me: "If you believe, in my name you shall cast out devils; if you believe, in my name you shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Christian Scientists accept this call to duty as addressed to them, and by the most crucial tests, by thousands upon thousands of absolute cures, covering the whole range of mortal affliction, have demonstrated the efficacy of metaphysical healing and, therefore, the absolute truth of Christian Science.

From what I have said it must be apparent to you that Mrs. Eddy, with perfect propriety, named her great discovery "Christian Science"; Christian, because it is the Christ system, the Christ practice, and Science because it is demonstrable truth, infallible principle.

WHAT IT HAS ACCOMPLISHED.

May I tell you some things Christian Science has accomplished in the fifteen years last past? It has drawn to its loyal support more than 500,000 adherents; has organized more than 400 congregations; has built during the last five years many churches ranging in cost from $1,000 to $200,000; it has more than 10,000 practitioners devoted to healing the sick; it has restored to health, happiness and hope more than 750,000 of your fellow men and mine, most of whom had hopelessly exhausted the remedies usually known to medical learning. The membership of the Christian Science denomination has been drawn from all the churches—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish—and from all the respectable professions and callings in life. There is not a religious denomination in the world that has in its membership a larger percentage of educated, refined and cultured people than Christian Scientists have; and nowhere on earth, I am sure, and I say it not boastingly, but as a simple statement of fact, will you find people freer from the cares and worries of life, more contented in their business and their homes, more devoted to the duties of home, state and church, prompter in discharging their obligations to neighbor and to God, stricter moralists, closer observers of the proprieties, more munificent abettors of every good work, or people richer in the graces and amenities of pure manhood and womanhood, than Christian Science has given to the world.

I submit to the candid judgment of my fellow men the simple proposition that an organization showing such results cannot flippantly be ignored, and, by all the tests of common candor demands your serious, earnest thought.

I will not discuss the stock objections urged against Christian Science. They are, in fact, so contradictory that they are self-destructive. For instance, I noticed in an iconoclastic newspaper a series of interviews with prominent people respecting Christian Science. A prominent doctor of medicine, said "Christian Science is a beautiful religion; it is spiritual, devotional and uplifting in its thought; but it is impotent and imbecile as a curative of human ills." Immediately following this a no less prominent doctor of divinity said, "Christian Science does effect wonderful cures of disease; the evidence of this is too patent to be denied; but it has no semblance of religion."

NO DEFENSE NEEDED.

I will not offend your sense of "fair play," of warfare "in the open," your love of justice, exalted character and high endeavor, by entering upon a seriatim defense, in this magnificent presence, of Christian Science, that has gladdened the world with such surcease of sorrow, or the beneficent woman who in hope and prayer and love revealed Christian Science, and applied it to the daily needs of men—against the wanton assaults of malevolence, ignorance or greed, made upon either. As one of the tens of thousands of beneficiaries of metaphysical healing, with love unalloyed I say of Mrs. Eddy, that time to its utmost bound will be too brief for the world to discharge to her its debt of gratitude. Her life of devotion to God and humanity, her sacrifice of self for others, her ministrations to weary, suffering, dying men, her long years of fearless and faultless association with perfect good are her invincible panoply against every shaft of envy, ingratitude or malice. And of the science of life, immortal life, she has revealed, it is enough to know that, if it is true, all the powers of earth and hell cannot prevail against it. No detraction can mar it, and no eulogy can compass the sum of its infinite greatness.

In the opening splendors of this dawn of truth, shall we not with sublime courage keep pace with the march of good manifest today? Alas for him who constantly looks mournfully into the future and depreciates the present. I believe in the progress of good in the sublime and beautiful Now; in its breadth of intellect, its conscience, its morality, its reach after God.

I champion this day as the brightest and best since the world began. Every yesterday was but the dawn of a grander today, and each today will pale in the sublimer splendor of tomorrow. There is more refinement, learning, gentleness, and genius; more estheticism and common sense, more contempt for hypocrisy; there is more truth and courage, homely honesty, simplicity and virtue, more unfaltering Christian faith, more devoted Christian piety, more affection, love and charity in the world today than ever blessed humanity in any yesterday in all the tide of time.

The world has learned that its great need is not a more intimate acquaintance with microbes and germs; not a science that will more accurately measure the sun and weigh the stars; not a loftier walk with the muse, or a more exquisite touch of brush or chisel, but rather a realization of the promise that flashed in splendor upon the world when the advent of the humble Nazarene, a knowledge of the true God, to be adored, worshipped and loved, but not feared.

WHAT CHRISTIAN SCIENCE IS DOING.

Christian Science is hastening the fruition of that promise. Its apprehension enlarges the moral stature of man, quickens the kindlier sentiments of his nature; makes the husband and father more devoted and affectionate, the wife and mother more tender and loving, works the negation of self and the development of love for our kind; moves the heart to pity, spreads the mantle of charity, and lifts the weary children of earth nearer to the great loving heart of God.

Strangely enough, the objection to Christian Science is made that it is the work of a woman. I say strangely, because to my mind this fact is the sign manual of its integrity and purity. It seems to me that to the most careless observer it must be apparent that by the exercise of mental and moral forces woman gladdens today, and hastens the dawn of the brighter tomorrow. In the republic of letters; in every form of intellectual combat; in every profession; in all arts, in all the sciences; in every walk of human learning; on every field where humanity struggles for humanity; woman panoplied with Truth and Love, moves to the shining goal of every laudable human ambition, confessedly the guardian of the "Holy of Holies," the spiritual thought of the world.

Surely, the beautiful tomorrow is dawning, when enlightened justice will have one code of morals for all God's children, and not, as now, one for the man and another for the woman; when man will be more just to woman, and woman will be more just to herself; when she will not shrink with loathing from her poor tempest tossed sister, who, in the uneven struggle for existence has fallen, and leave her a helpless and hopeless waif upon a remorseless human sea; but in the spirit of the pitying Christ,

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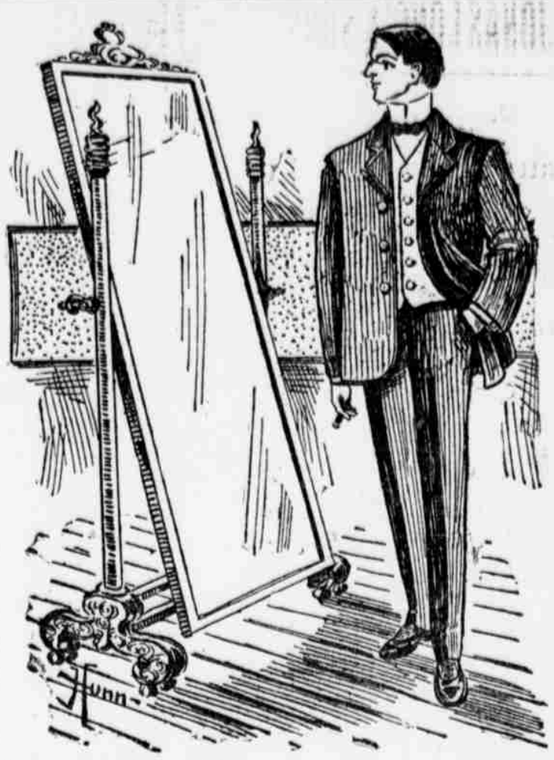
The Mirror Is an Unbiased Critic . . . .



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