

and they may subserve great purposes in the progress and regulation of society.

It is certain they are not *new* spiritual phenomena. No period in the history of Christianity has been without them, and their prevalence has not been confined to Christians only.

The number of cases of suicidal religious despair, which, last summer, found refuge in this asylum, may have been but a trivial per centage of the aggregate of religious anxiety, which the Province embraced. Who would venture to assert that the awakening power which signalizes the religious revival must have proved injurious to the morbid condition in which the general mind was probably involved? Many a wretch, brooding over the horrid conviction of utter unworthiness and condemnation, might have been visited by a brighter light, and have rejoiced in consciousness of pardon to that indefinable sin, which, before, he believed to be beyond God's powers of pardon. The tides of human mind are no less stupendous, and no less mysteriously governed than the tides of ocean. Individual rational influences may accomplish little; but the contagious fervor of a mental popular commotion, seems capable of transforming man's whole nature, and, at least, temporarily suspending the operations of conscience itself. Who will reason the religious maniac out of his despair? But who can say what a different being he might become, if, lifted from the brim of the pit over which he cowers, and borne away on the heaving wave of a heaven-soaring popular religious commotion? It may be said this would not cure his insanity; but if it would take away his suicidal tendency, that would do for me.

To be just with religious epidemics, we should record, not alone the evil they seem to produce, but also that which they may prevent. Insanity occasionally arises from these