

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 religion—metaphysicomeditation-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.”