

THE
MESSENGER STUDENT.

VOL. VIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1879.

No. 7.

Literary.

MIND AND MAN.

PERHAPS nothing presents a problem of more interest than the operation of the human mind. In the lower animals we find the vital force, the nervous system, and some attribute of mind in common with man. But in man the nervous system is more concentrated; and his noblest attributes of mind, such as judgment, reflection, comparison and imagination are found in some of the inferior species. It may be said that the lower animals reason, but this is done in a sort of mechanical way, and not with regard to the good of being, not in the light of duty and obligation. In man we have mind in all its bearings with its moral as well as mental attributes. Here we confront the materialist, who, fighting the battle upon the basis of simple matter, advances to his attack upon the mind and soul and finally besieges the Celestial City.

He tells us the soul is developed with the body, and that we know nothing of such an existence except in this connection. It may be admitted that the physical organisms furnish the conditions of the breath of life and the starting into being

of the living soul, but it is evident to the consciousness of every man, that there is the individual *ego*, always the same identical self, separate and distinct from the ever-changing matter with which it is connected. He tells us that the soul is dependent upon the body for its energy and activity, and that a weakening of the physical constitution is attended by a corresponding effect upon the mind. The old saying, *sana mens in sano corpore* sets forth a grand principle, but who has not seen the mind remain strong and active under great physical depression? The operations of the mind are not all attended by a corresponding impression upon the material organism. After the eye has fallen upon a beautiful landscape it may be closed, and yet the mind goes on combining and recombining, forming new pictures, pictures more beautiful than the first. What impression is there of the physical organism corresponding to this operation of the mind? None whatever. Again, we call up by attentive memory the scenes of long ago. Where is there any impression of matter corresponding to this? There is none, it is purely a subjective process.

The broad distinction however lies in this, matter is inert—mind is self-acting. If we are told that we know nothing of