

towards the *fundus* of the eye, seems clearly to show that light, itself invisible, but the revealer of all "things" else, is no outside factor, no "offspring of heaven's first-born, or of the eternal co-eternal beam," as the pre- and *anti*-scientific Milton states it, but solely the product of the optic nerve and brain, so that, as Miss Naden affirms, each man or sentient being generally is still more the maker of his own world than of his own fortunes. And this view will be found to be the most sublime and poetical, as well as the simplest and most obvious one, in accordance with the proverb, "Fact is ever grander than Fiction." Lord Byron sees this point when he writes —

"What a sublime discovery 'tis to make
The universe universal egotism."

And the mystic and far-seeing Coleridge sums up the dialectical quasi-solution admirably in the lines —

"We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live;
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud."

I am, gentlemen,
Yours truly,
R. LEWINS, M.D.

Obituary.

PLINY EARLE, M.D.

This well-known American physician, the Nestor of psychological medicine in his country, died full of years and honour on the 17th May, 1892, at the Northampton State Hospital for the Insane, Mass., of which institution he was the second superintendent, having been appointed a few years after it was opened. "He gave it character," says the *Springfield Daily News*, "and raised it to the first rank in its class for the treatment of that endlessly varied disease, insanity, and also in the secondary matter of financial management. These were the results of a singularly broad and open mind, guided by a noble and earnest nature, and characterized by a constant and ardent devotion to scientific truth, for which he ceased not to seek through experience, being ready at any time to abandon what, in the light of greater knowledge, had grown untenable."

He was descended from Ralph Earle, one of the petitioners to King Charles II. for permission to form Rhode Island into a corporate colony. He was born December 31st, 1809, at Leicester, R.I., and educated at the academy there, and subsequently at the Providence Seminary of the Society of Friends, of which body he was a member till his decease. He graduated in the Penn. University in 1837, and visited during several years the hospitals and asylums in Europe. He was appointed, in 1840, resident physician to the Frankford Asylum, near Philadelphia, where he introduced the practice of giving lectures on natural philosophy. He was elected, 1844, medical superintendent of the Bloomingdale Asylum, N.Y., where he resided five years. He again went abroad and visited asylums for the insane. He became visiting physician to the New York City Asylum, 1853. He delivered in this year a course of lectures on insanity at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. For some years he engaged in practice as a physician, and was appointed professor of psychology in the Berkshire Medical Institute at Pittsfield. It is stated that this professorship was the first of the kind in a medical college in the United States. In 1864 he became the superintendent of the Northampton Hospital, where he lived to his death, although he resigned his office in the institution in 1885. A marked feature of his management there was the institution of lectures and social gatherings every week. "He was the first man who ever addressed a gathering of the insane on

any other than a religious discourse, and the only one who ever gave a course of lectures on insanity to his patients, and, to the surprise of specialists, these lectures were much appreciated by his audience of about 300 insane people."

It was a source of constant gratification to him that he was one of the thirteen original members of the Association of Medical Superintendents of Hospitals for the Insane, founded in 1844. He is the last of that historic group of earnest mental physicians. He was president of this Association in the years 1884 and 1885. He was the first president of the New England Psychological Society.

Dr. Earle wrote a considerable number of essays and books. Among these are "A Visit to Thirteen Asylums for the Insane in Europe," 1841; "History, Description, and Statistics of Bloomingdale Asylum," 1848; "Blood-letting in Mental Disorders," 1854; "Institutions of the Insane in Prussia, Austria, and Germany," 1854; "Psychological Medicine: Its importance as a part of the Medical Curriculum," 1867; "The Curability of Insanity," 1877; also "A Glance at Insanity and the Management of the Insane in the American States," 1879.

The funeral took place at the Northampton Asylum. Among those present were Prof. Hitchcock (of Amherst), Drs. Scrivener, Page, Stearns, and Mr. F. B. Sanborn (of Concord). The Rev. R. A. Griffin, of the Unitarian Church, took a leading part in the service. He was buried in the Bridge Street Cemetery.

Dr. Earle, as is well known, attracted great attention at one time to the question of the degree to which the insane recover, and caused much surprise, not unaccompanied by incredulity, by demonstrating from statistics that the percentage of recoveries was smaller than supposed, and the proportion of relapses greater. He was foremost in exploding the constant and seductive fallacy of confounding persons with cases, and unfortunately not a few remain unable to understand or appreciate the distinction between the two. He revelled in figures, whether scientific or financial, and, in regard to the former, may be compared to Dr. Thurnam, for whose laborious researches he entertained the greatest respect. In regard to asylum construction, he favoured a departure from the orthodox views current among the old school of American alienists. In this and other respects he was a man of independent opinion. In religion he was broad and Catholic in his views, and a foe to theological intolerance. Ministers of all shades of belief officiated in turn at the Sunday services held in the asylum. His early training "guarded him," observes his friend, Mr. Sanborn, "from some vain controversies and some immoderate ambitions. He followed humbly and sacredly the inner light, with very little desire to set up his own enlightenment as the limit for all other men."

Dr. Earle was an honorary member of the Association, having been elected nearly half a century ago, namely, in 1844.

JOSEPH DRAPER, M.D.

With deep regret we record the unlooked-for death of the greatly-esteemed medical superintendent of the Vermont Asylum, Brattleboro. His friends had hoped for many more years of service from this excellent man, whose earnest nature, strength of character, and kindness of disposition eminently qualified him for the post which he held. Pliny Earle died in the course of nature in ripe old age, but Dr. Draper long before the age which men count fit, for he was born in 1834, and therefore only 58. He came of a New England family, and was educated in the common schools, and subsequently academies in West Brattleboro', and Deerfield, Mass. He was 22 before he fully decided to qualify for the medical profession. He attended lectures in New York and Philadelphia, where he graduated in 1858. When practising at Greenfield, Mass., he met