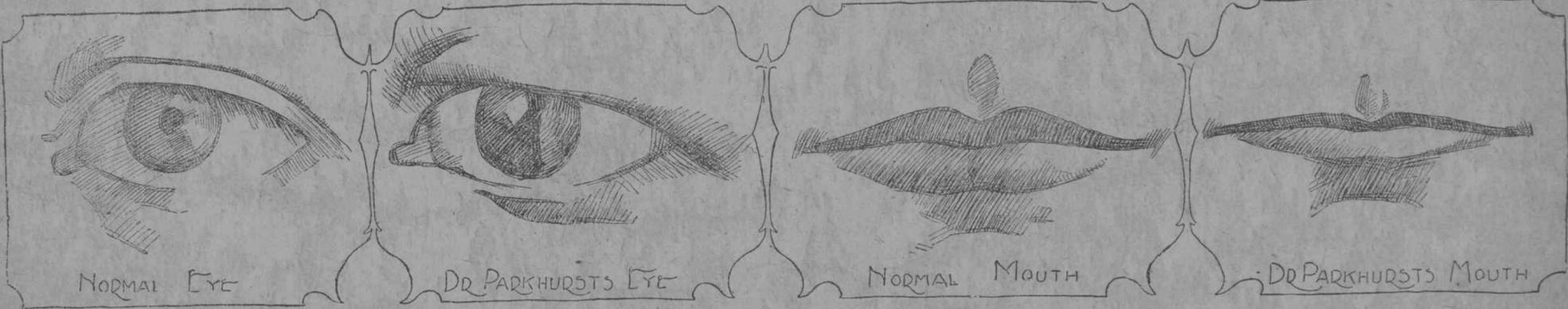


# "I HAVE CONSIDERED DR. PARKHURST MENTALLY UNBALANCED FOR SOME TIME," Says Thomas C. Platt in a Recent Interview.



## A Study of the Famous Clerical Reformer's Physical and Mental Characteristics.

"I have considered Dr. Parkhurst mentally unbalanced for some time past," Thomas C. Platt in a recent interview. "Mehomania or paranoia is an insanity in which the mental aberration consists in the existence of limited delusions that are either of a grandiose or a persecutory nature. The general mental health of the subject is not always bad. . . ."

"The reformatory mania would regulate society according to his own methods or system. If he occasionally has sufficient influence he gets himself appointed or elected as president of some society with a more or less noble aim and enforces persecutory or nonsectarian regulations, and his zeal is insane in its exhibition and draws forth censure and newspaper abuse, no matter how sincere he may be."—From a paper among the writings of Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton, the famous alienist.

Is Dr. Parkhurst insane?

The facts in the case are these:

The "documents" in evidence are the personal characteristics, acts and sayings of the man, the features—eyes, nose, ears and mouth—that go to make up his face, physiologically considered, his head from a phenological point of view, his handwriting analyzed and compared with the handwriting of a paranoiac, and the opinion of the leading neurologists of New York as to what paranoia really is.

For if Parkhurst really is insane, it is paranoia, or, as it used to be called, mehomania, that is his affliction. It is paranoia, that dread, inscurable form of insanity that is so hard for the brain doctors to put their fingers on and understand, and so difficult of cure. A paranoiac may live peacefully in his community for years, unsuspected, regarded only as a slight "crank," and finally break out in some terrible deed. The disease is all the more dangerous since it is so insidious and so concealed that it puts none on their guard.

Has this mental quality that baffles so many physicians laid hold of Dr. Parkhurst, and does it explain his eccentricities, his single idea and his fierce diatribes against every one that does not agree with him?

Several years ago, when the Lexow Committee had just begun to meet and Parkhurst's inflammatory campaign was at its fiercest, Superintendent Thomas E. Byrnes said to a friend (this being hitherto unrecorded history): "That man is crazy!"

Dr. Parkhurst does not think he is insane. Behind this bold statement of fact there is interesting detail. The writer called upon the famous divine the other night and quoted Thomas C. Platt's statement word for word.

"I have already read that," said Dr. Parkhurst. "No, I should rather say that friends of mine have told me about it. I have absolutely no comment to make; not a line of comment."

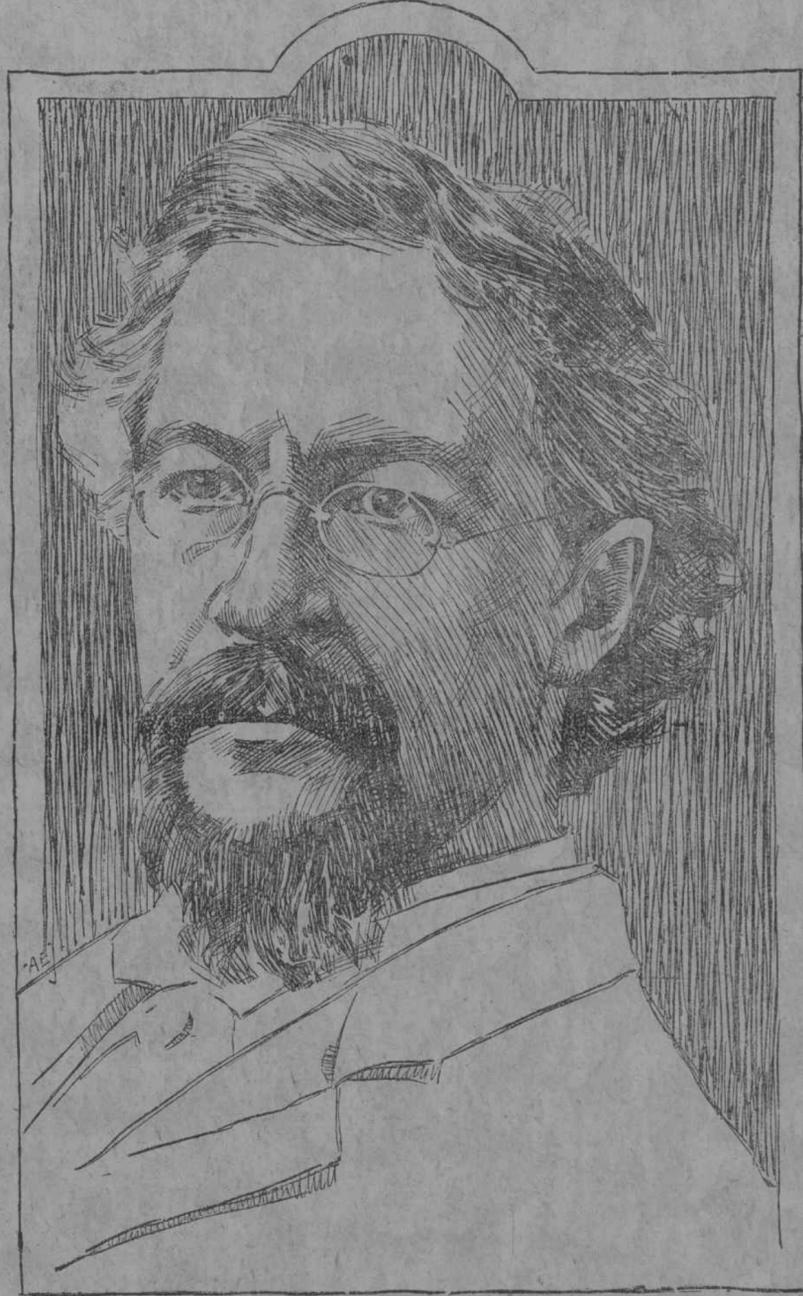
There was not a tremor on the Doctor's part, not a vestige of excitement. His eye was fixed upon his questioner steadily, and his expression was cold. If the statement of Platt, when first heard, had occasioned him any excitement he had long since mastered it into a committingly stolidness. Not an eyelash fluttered. His air was that of a man who had to listen to some trilling remark and bear the speaker through. The faintest possible smile flickered upon his lips, a smile that might mean several things, as he turned away.

Mr. Thomas C. Platt, having said his say, stands to his guns and no more. Asked to

amplify his statement or to explain Dr. Parkhurst's particular form of insanity he looked up with a Sphinx-like expression. "Do you really think I am such a fool?" he said.

In bringing forward the "evidence" which may, in the minds of some, read insanity on the part of Dr. Parkhurst, sanity in the minds of others, when it all is strided, these medical and scientific facts must first of all be remembered: Paranoia, or mehomania, is not, as is generally supposed, the dominance of a single idea, warping the brain and impairing the intelligence. It is an association of ideas, a series of delusions dependent one upon another. These delusions are all logical, built upon that primary idea of absurdity that has crept into the paranoiac's brain.

For example, a paranoiac believes himself



DR. PARKHURST.



CHEIRO'S READING OF DR. PARKHURST'S HAND.

## His Eyes, Nose, Mouth, Ears and Handwriting Analyzed by Noted Experts.

know there is an amicable understanding as to the looting. That is legislation. That is the sort of unctuous unwar that is even now watering with beastly voracity at the succulent prospect."

"New York is only a sample of what distinguishes our cities generally. New York five years ago was literally festering with disease and stinky with its own noisome putridity."

"If the Ten Commandments had been jammed through the way the Raines bill has been jammed through, I would break them—the whole of them."

And, last of all, his words at the dinner of the City Vigilance League on December 8, in reference to Platt: "But we can't afford to send there a machine politician whose only ambition is to carry

hence he has physical courage and personal bravery, not much of the brutal sort with his temperament, but with his large head he has clear thoughts, definite purposes and always a line of effort which he chooses to procure, and hence he tries to hit where he looks. There is nothing indefinite about him.

"His intellect is cooler than that of most men. There is about it a certain clarity, pungency or method which does not doubt its own conclusions, and he does not travel in uncharted lines intellectually."

"When we look at his face we see precision and thoroughness. We see precision in the nose and we see strength and thoroughness in the upper lip. We see definiteness and earnestness in the chin, and the breadth of the cheek-bone means personal prowess. Men who have that shape of face, if they walk in the roughest phases of life, strike out from the shoulder, and where they hit it hurts."

"Any phenologist would say in looking at this face and head that he was a mean man, with possibly a dash and daring that could not be recommended to general practice."

Cheiro's (the palmist) verdict on Parkhurst's palm throws little light on the question. It is, he says, the hand of the philosopher, the ecclesiastical and the political.



the State of New York in his vest pocket; whose only idea of statesmanship is the question of how much of the emolument of that State can he put in his own pocket; a man the history of whose life is too foul and too filthy to be read, even in instalments."

This he said of Byrnes in December, 1892. "For the Lord's sake, Byrnes, when you quote don't eulogize the Gospel in the same vein breath with which you make that damning self-inculpation. Your case is strongest when you say least. You had better quit the hourly business and attend to your legitimate concerns."

He turns upon his friends and reads them metaphorsically limb from limb with out warning.

He no longer preaches the Gospel, but politics, from his pulpit, and has persistently neglected his pastoral duties to carry out his pet schemes of reform.

He has never been known to take advice, receive information or let himself be corrected, except along his own lines. People suggesting anything else to him are openly flouted or are plainly told that they must be partners in the crime, too.

His mind is emphatically morbid, seeing little of light or pleasure anywhere, only a dark surface of sin, and his thoughts seem constantly to tend to gynecological problems.

Physiologically speaking, there is little question of his facial abnormality. This by no means signifies insanity, though it may simply prefigure a man of extraordinary intellect. Extraordinary intellect Dr. Parkhurst does not seem to have, though there is certainly a fluent brilliancy. Taken separately the features are remarkably suggestive. The mouth is cruel and cunning, the best physiognomists say; the ear shows signs of degeneration; the nose corresponds with the mouth, and is wide and rather flat, and the eye is, to say the least, suggestive. Its pupils are dilated, and the stare from it is fixed and penetrating.

All these features are widely divergent from the normal, and, taken in conjunction

former, and the lines show hardness in still late in life, troubles and dangers. The line of destiny stretching toward the first finger (Jupiter) indicates power, authority and deistical position. Parkhurst's hand, it should be said, is strong and bony; its fingers knobby, and has not an unpleasant grasp.

Some valuable data are furnished in the comparison of the handwriting of a paranoiac and that of Parkhurst. There is some slight resemblance, at least, in the styles.

Dr. Peterson, when asked for a precise definition of paranoia, quoted his article on "Insanity" in Stier's "Nervous Diseases":

"A typical case of paranoia exhibits certain positive indications which distinguish this form of insanity from all others. There is a hereditary taint. There are eccentricity and peculiarity in childhood and youth, often associated with hypochondria. At about the age of thirty years, sometimes earlier, sometimes later, there is a growth and systematization of delusion of persecutions, which in turn are combined with or give place to systematized delusions of an exalted character, either religious, philosophical, patriotic or erotic. Such fixed ideas completely dominate the entire mental action of the patient without impairing every faculty. For studies of paranoia, famed in national annals and in literature, such as the rulers of Russia, Austria, Bavaria, Spain, the cases of Louis XIV., Guttauer, Swedenborg, William Blake, and so on."

The question was put to Dr. George W. Jacoby and answered in this way: "Paranoia is a primary delusional insanity, that is to say it is an insanity which gradually develops upon a hereditary basis generally, often on an acquired basis, but which is always accompanied by delusion. Now, these paranoiaes have always been peculiar, peculiar in childhood, eccentric in dress and in their conduct with others. All of a sudden they develop a delusion which is a result of their reasoning. That is the distinction between that and other insanity. Finally, nearly all paranoiaes show it is some measure. Not is there any doubt but what some of our most brilliant men are paranoiaes today, though it is never suspected of them."

mental tendencies fit these scientific facts, these not-to-be-denied and agreed-upon evidences and proofs of paranoia? There is a plentiful supply of material to work upon.

Does it show sanity or insanity?

Let the facts and the incidents of the man's life be set down here without comment, briefly and without any special arrangement.

The chain of associated ideas is there, dominant, completely overruling every thing else. "Social Reform" might of itself be called a single idea, but Dr. Parkhurst does not stop there. It is the reform of the police, of city government, of the various departments in said city, each individually more and more being taken up as time goes on. The mental process is logical, reasonable. On the basis of his first reform he takes up others, one now, one more to-morrow, his latest being his cry for reform among the married couples of New York, and his wild assertion of a deadly percentage of domestic and marital infidelity among them!

At this chain of associated ideas he drives constantly, with a steady of supererogation and insistence, hurrying another man and a horse at those who venture to disagree with him. The bare, solitary idea he started out with in his first ser-

mon has been expanded with enormous cleverness. Taking his premises as correct, not one false link can be found in it. Is this mehomania, and are these tendencies mehomaniacal?

Throughout all his campaigns he has never offered one practicable remedy for the social and political evils he seems to know more about than any other man in New York.

To accomplish his purposes he is willing to resort to the utmost cruelty—the

punishment of a Grand Inquisition, in December, 1887, he said, in speaking of the city's outcasts, just after they had been driven from their haunts: "Let the women starve or freeze in the streets, as long as they are starved and frozen into a healthier way of thinking and living." As long as these women continue to violate the law our society will follow them and keep them moving, whether they are chilled to the bone on the streets or starved in to decency."

Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton's definition of a "reformatory paranoiac," quoted above, speaks especially of "persecutory regulations."

He has quarreled with and attacked every man of political prominence in New York, with the exception of Theodore Roosevelt, even Mayor Strong.

These attacks his language is so frequently vulgar, coarse and brutal as to shock even his best friends.

Examples are easily to be picked. These are chosen at random:

"That little nip of a Lexow that is saved from being a barren zero only because of the interloper that he leans against and helps to make tea of, proposes to govern me."

This about the Legislature last March:

"When two sets of thieves cease to discourage one another's rapacity, you always

also, probably wise possible morning like more more mending but (post mortem)

*It is not enough that we succeed in doing right till we have learned to enjoy doing right*

DR. PARKHURST'S HANDWRITING.

*also, probably wise possible morning like more more mending but (post mortem)*

A PARANOIAC'S HANDWRITING.

How nearly do the details of Parkhurst's career, his speeches, interviews, deeds and

made of glass. That, however, is not all of his delusion. He knows, and can explain with seeming reason and cleverly, how he happens to be made of that material and how he must in consequence handle himself. He is afraid to go up and down steps lest he should slip and break himself; he is afraid to ride in the cable cars lest the jolting should smash him. From his wrongly taken, absurd premises he argues sensibly and logically.

Because of this paranoia is known as an insanity of reason. With it the reasoning powers are alert and healthy. There is no decaying of the brain cells. It is simply a curious abnormality, frequently marked by extraordinary brilliancy, but with the mind never free from the chain of ideas, twisting and changing every thought and action.

Paralysis of the mental faculties is quite another form of insanity. So, too, is mania accompanied by ravings and struggles. Some of these marks cases of paranoia where the mechanism of the brain goes on working smoothly, only in a wrong way. Medical science agrees that the last state is worse than the first. This is what Charles Folsom, one of the highest authorities, has to say in his treatise on "Mental Diseases" in "Pepper's System of Medicine":

"The popular idea of insanity is of wild, incoherent, or crazy conduct. If maniacal, the timid or frightened young girl who would not hurt a fly, and the tottering, harmless old man, if confused and partly demented, are hurried off to the asylum with the use and show of force suitable to a desperate criminal, while the victim of overwhelming delusions, because he seems clear, logical and collected, is vigorously defended against the physician's imputation of insanity until he commits an offence against the laws, when he is fortunate if he is not treated as a criminal. It is often impossible for judges, jurors, counsel and even medical experts to wholly divest themselves of the popular notions of the crime or prejudice of the day. . . ."

"Jurors, and less often judges, make up their minds what a sane man would do under given conditions, and of what an insane man is capable, judging from the facts within their own experience, and in forming their decisions it is the act itself and not the man, diseased or otherwise, in connection with the act, that chiefly governs them. Often they are right, not seldom wrong."

"On the other hand, because a man knows right from wrong in the abstract, and can ordinarily behave well, the very characteristic workings of his insane mind are often seized upon as unquestioned proof of sanity, even when their admission of no other explanation to the skilled physician than that of insanity."