Reflections ON FAITH HEALING.

BY

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DURING the last few years the various notions which gather about the name of Faith Healing have gained such ascendancy as to command the attention of all thoughtful men, and of those especially who are responsible for the services of religion and medicine. If not in all times and places, yet over long periods of many nations, the offices of religion and medicine have been united, and one not only by connexion, not even by kinship only, but one in unity of source and sanction. The mystic medicine of the Pythagoreans passed to later generations through Plato and Plotinus; and although in the Hippocratic tradition temple medicine and professional medicine developed independently in the Roman Empire, religion and medicine again joined hands in the cults of Aesculapius, Isis, Serapis, and Mithra. The rite of Incubation, using this name broadly to signify ecclesiastical ritual as a means of cure, was revived under the Empire, and flourished with a vogue, intensity, and crudity which it had not known even at Epidaurus, and thus medicine again became subject, or at any rate allied, to religion through the Middle Ages until the Councils of the twelfth century on the clerical side, and the revelations of Vesalius and Harvey on the medical, once more wrenched the two supreme functions formally asunder. Yet such is their affinity, or their sympathy, that now in our own day again, even as we write, religion and medicine are kissing each other.

As in the age of the Antonines, as under the Byzantine emperors, as in the days of Gregory of Tours, these confusions of medicine with religion mystified medicine and polluted religion with superstitions, well may we ask ourselves if in the recrudescence of to-day also there may not be much that is reactionary and fraught with the evils which are bred of corruption, or, at any rate, of error? But at the same time we shall inquire no less carefully if in it may have survived much that is useful or even precious which, in the exclusive pursuit of either religion or medicine, had been lost or obscured—some infiltration of elements which, if suppressed, break into a ferment. The outbreak of faith healing and the conditions of the outbreak in the twentieth and in the second century present so many features in common that we may reverently ask ourselves if in these times and those some vital elements of human nature and of divine inspiration had thus again and again burst forth upon a starved experience? Or are we to conclude that the reaction is due to a vice of superstition in man so ineradicable that long ages of moral culture have failed to quench it?

Such questions and the matters of practice depending upon them are so urgent and so momentous that, notwithstanding a deep personal reluctance in one who is not a religious teacher to argue about spiritual experience, and that after long thought I do not feel sanguine of compassing more than our reasonable intuitions have already attained in practice, it would be an unworthy hesitation when formally called upon to refuse to consider this problem, however imperfectly. And having set out to speak there is nothing for it but to speak plainly.

Of the common features of which I have spoken there is one on which we cannot but pause, namely that, under the Roman Empire as in our own time, the recrudescence of miraculous medicine—that is, of medicine by way of religious rites—has coincided with the time of eclipse, or at any rate of instability, of religious doctrines; and of change in our conception of the Divine Nature. It is in eras when analytic and critical reason has failed to nourish the creative reason, and science is but enlarging the material conditions of societies, that we shall beware lest a yearning for spiritual life long repressed or ignored, or a blind rebellion against irremediable ills, should flow with force so irresistible as to sweep mankind beyond religion into superstition. Now if, as Dr. Fraser proves to us, provisional superstitions among rudimentary peoples are stages in development, relapses into superstition on the contrary signify and indeed propagate corruption.

When divine fervour is cooling the heart seeks warmth in the thrills of witchery.

Now as we cannot discuss any subject profitably until we have defined its terms, we cannot discuss Faith Healing until we have defined what we mean by Faith—of Healing we will speak hereafter.

By "The Faith" a religious society has generally intended an intellectual assent to a code of definite propositions, and has always been fairly content with this legalist acquiescence, preferring it, indeed, to less orthodox saintliness: naturally, because these chains of logic are the bonds of the edifice. But "faith healing" in all times has concerned itself little with intellectual schemes; the function has been notoriously independent of particular religious societies, or of any one society; its wonders have been wrought, and are wrought under, and consistently with, any set of opinions—orthodox, pagan, or bizarre. Of the miracles of Our Lord we shall agree this is not the place to speak. The wonder cures of Epidaurus, of the Tiber Island, of Apollonius of Tyana, of the medieval saints—as read abundantly in Migne and elsewhere—of Oriental magic, of savage dances and charms, as well as of modern pilgrims, Irvingists, Eddyists, Emmanuelists, and the rest, are in nature and event alike; and thus in considering them we find ourselves concerned not with thought, not with creeds, but with passion in various guises. Even in times like our own, when the claims of the critical and analytic intellect are predominant, this uprush of hope and will is copious even when springing from no religious system, but from more rationalist origins; as from the methods of the Spa, for instance, of the Dietetist, of the Gymnast, of the Electrician, and so forth.

What, then, are the common elements animating all these issues? The answer to this question is beset with grave preliminary difficulties, difficulties which involve the deepest problems of our nature and dwelling place. In the first place we must not only admit but realize that although we have to act continually beyond knowledge, perhaps in every important work, yet we ought never to act contrary to knowledge; we must never act contrary to what is, relatively for each of us individually, the best of our knowledge. Not only so, but we must try to delineate, or at least to sketch what we know, and to distinguish it from what we do not, and even cannot, know. For instance, to say that time and space have no objective existence, but are only modes of our cognition, is beyond knowledge, but not contrary to knowledge; while to seek to know the origin of evil, the reconciliation of freewill and determinism, the distinction of the material and the spiritual, is bootless, for, so far as we can see, the solution of these and such mysteries will always lie outside the scope of our earthly understanding. Yet, notwithstanding, as consequences of great practical moment depend upon the sense in which we regard these antinomies, we have always to act in their regard in some measure beyond knowledge. In life we are met by these antinomies at every step and in every hour; we have, therefore, to make with them a provisional truce, and to perceive that while we can foresee no reconciliation between good and evil, freewill and determinism, material and spiritual, we can frame a working rule in the contrasts of their extremities and more emancipated terms. As Professor Hobhouse has said, our theory of life cannot be complete and consistent; we have, therefore, at various stages of development, "to counterfeit finality." For example, concerning the antinomy of matter and spirit: as in the lowest material categories there is an imperceptible trace of mind-stuff, so in the most spiritual some fine woof of the material is inevitably and continuously implied. Spiritual gifts may or may not consist in the insertion of a new entity, they certainly do consist in a reanimation and remodelling of thinking matter in the uppermost strands of the brain, and probably of some other, perhaps even of all the other, molecular activities of the body. Probably no limb, no viscus is so far a vessel of dishonour as to lie wholly outside the renewals of the spirit; and to an infinite intelligence every accession of spiritual life would be apparent in a new harmony (*συγγυμνασία*) of each and all of the metabolic streams and confluences of the body. On this conviction it is that the hopes and methods of faith healing depend. Conversely, every man who watches his own life must know

* We cannot, I think, allow the profession of "Christian Science" to be monopolized by any sect.

this; as in time of weariness or pain he grieves over the drooping of his soul—that the highest spiritual life depends on the highest bodily health; but this health means, not health only of the belly, not only health of the heart and common brain, but also of the rarest and most exquisite textures of the cerebral web. If in a rude health of the grosser body these subtlest parts have not been exercised and cherished, the total harmony is diminished; highly efficient as, on lower planes, the particular body may be, it is defective in comprehensions, it is an inconsummate body. To this "materialism" of the body, even on its most spiritual planes of structure, we must not close our eyes lest in our search beyond knowledge we walk contrary to knowledge. "To pray well," said the noble Teresa, "one must eat well and sleep well." If into the last analysis the Pauline division between the carnal and the spiritual cannot be carried, if under the relations of other times and of other ideas we have to reinterpret it, yet still in its broader contrasts it points out a plain way of life and conduct—one so plain that the perplexities of the middle terms may be left to the casuist.

It must be granted, then, in respect of faith healing, that spiritual influences, divine directly, or indirectly through human mediation, may to some unknown power radiate from these highest currents downward through the more and more "material" planes, arousing them less and less as they have become more and more statical in order. But, while we grant this, we must first be sure, as we shall presently see, that we have exhausted certain other conditions, more physiological than transcendent, which certainly go far to explain the cases of faith healing, and may within limits suffice to explain them.

Now these things being so, if we are to be careful not to act contrary to knowledge, we know, and must candidly say, that the physical life of a sick man depends, not upon prayer, but upon the timely arrival of the physician with the antidote, upon the hoofs of his horse. In bitter certainty we know that the mother who in the hour of crisis betakes herself to prayer only will lose the child which is spared to the prayerless mother who had learned the path of infection and how to outwit it. And since we have discovered the paths of malaria, of yellow fever, of diphtheria, have we not learned also that to stay these plagues no pageantry nor humiliations will serve us, but to look to our serums and our water-butts? By no invocations can we even think to reach and to purify the cradles of disease; yet in the sphere of prevention lies the future of medicine. These words are spoken not in irreverence—God forbid—rather, I trust, in the deepest reverence of hoping on beyond knowledge, indeed, but at the same time of working in loyalty to such knowledge as we have, and of never working contrary to knowledge.

These antinomies are, then, not so much flat contradictions as contrary movements between the lowest and the highest planes; they are points of perspective, the material rising to the spiritual, the rigidly determined to expanding freedom, positive evil to relative good. For if now we proceed to the antinomy between freewill and determinism we shall observe likewise that if in the lower categories of natural structure and forces we feel ourselves in bondage to "mechanism,"* we perceive no less assuredly that, as consciousness and comparison of motives begin, we enter upon a new order, and as we attain to higher spheres of spiritual activity the divine immanent in all Nature becomes more free and radiant. Between freedom and uniformity there is no necessary discord. In the spiritual life we now find all, and more than all, the freedom we can make use of.

And is it not in this manner that we may contemplate the most terrible of these antinomies, that most poignant of the doubts which perplex us, the conflict of good and evil? The darkest hours of our spiritual lives have surely been not in the concern of intellectual difficulties, but in the cry of sorrow, pain, and ruin. To say that in the desolations of San Francisco and Messina, in the blind suffocation of Martinique, in the blighting of the child in the arms of its mother, we are to read the signs of God's vengeance, or to accept the formula, which experience continually refutes, that He makes this evil, this ruin, that He may overrule it for good, is not only to do violence

to our own trust in the Father who pities the falling sparrow, but it is to gainsay the judgement of Our Lord concerning the fall of the Tower of Siloam, which made no selection of sinners; it is to dishonour the Gospel, to forsake reason for sophistry, and not to hope beyond knowledge, but to judge contrary to knowledge. For us, indeed, the Father is not God as He seemed to the ruthless Elijah, yet even He was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire.

To put limits to what God can do were presumption indeed; but we must try to see with eyes open what God wills and what He does not will. Of the tenets of the followers of Mrs. Eddy I know too little to speak with assurance; but it is said that they endeavour to repel or evade the assaults of material evil by persuading themselves that it does not exist, that it is a spectre engendered in the warped and sinful medium of man's understanding. Deeply as we may sympathize with the hearts which will not attribute to God acts or implications which revolt our highest ethical instincts, which cannot see in the earthquake infinite love, this denial of the plainest facts of life is too audacious an imagination to serve us in the interpretation of disease. This is not to hope beyond knowledge, but to defy knowledge, and the humblest truth must go before the noblest error. When we refuse to face facts all is lost; we may not hypnotize ourselves.

Then how does an ascent to the higher planes of spiritual apprehension help us to understand or to withstand these terrible conflicts of the best and the worst in and about us? Well, to me it appears that our light and consolation are in this: that the conceptions of all the religions have been and still are too static; that, as in all else, our conceptions are expanding from those of Being to those of Becoming; to apprehend that the Divine Soul has striven with Chaos, as in its microcosm the human soul is striving; that even for God Himself the Cross was on the way of perfection. And if to any reader such a meditation seems untimely or overstrained I must plead that by this way only have I been able to gain a foothold, or to give a provisional answer to the problems on which thoughtful men are seeking counsel and, amid their failures and afflictions, consolation.

If, then, we are to face the facts, if these mutually complementary disengagements of the spiritual from the material, alike in the universe as in the microcosm of man, are practically valid, then the power and range of prayer must be directed not to our natural strife against carnal evil, but towards these spiritual disengagements, towards that sphere wherein the human and the divine spirits meet each other, love, and seek unity. We shall not pray, then, for things frankly material, but for spiritual gifts; not for the setting of a bone, nor even for the renovation of a withered or a poisoned film of brain, but for conformity with the divine will, and for that communion with God which seems to be one of the most assured of those moral probabilities which mould our lives. Congregations of to-day would be taken aback to hear the prayers for change of weather which in my childhood were customary, as our children will cease to pray for deliverance from plague, battle, and tempest, but to be delivered from envy, blindness of heart, and uncharitableness. The prayers of Our Lord were directed rarely and scantily to the material side of life. "Give us our daily bread" was but the elementary condition of a prayer for spiritual gifts. And in the Psalms, that mine of prayer and adoration, the few material petitions—"that our garners may be full," or that we "may go upon the lion and the adder"—are plainly metaphorical.

If, then, in medicine the spiritual is never wholly divested of the material, and the material is never wholly withdrawn from the influence of the spirit, yet in practice we discover that to avoid dilemma we must distribute a certain range to each aspect of the compound function. And on returning now to the chief question before us—Is prayer effectual for the corporeal needs of the sick?—we will proceed to consider the provisional demur already signified—that before yielding to the temptation, which besets us all, of transcendental solutions, we must exhaust those nearer explanations which we call physiological. It is probably true that, by reinforcement and harmonizing of that part of the vital web which ministers to the spiritual life, we may pour out energy into certain other saving capacities of the human body—

* This term, which vitiates most modern philosophy, I use to be readily understood; but mechanism, however vast, is but an extension of man's hand, without which it is nothing.

processes wherein "thoughts touch their effects." I saw it assumed in a recent essay on this matter, that on the sick bed good Christian men and women make better recoveries and surmount their physical ills better than the irreligious. This is my experience only thus far—that while a calm and happy temper is conducive to therapeutical succour, rebellious agitation is contrary to it; for my part, by the sick bed of saintly men I have observed that in not a few of them the instinct of self-preservation continued so strong that in spite of divine hope they clung to life; yet not more successfully than men of coarser habit who stretch out their days by strength of will and worldly desire. I am not convinced that spiritual inspiration, as such, is directed with any specific quality even towards bodily survival, still less to repair damaged limbs or tissues; though perhaps this conclusion is to be accepted with some reserve in respect of those highest cerebral films which are more especially the seat of that "innermost" wherein lie conscience, spiritual freedom, and the vision of God. Yet we see daily that when these textures themselves are in decay, or poisoned, the instrument of the soul is broken, and access to divine aid is lost in the utmost need. And this not in "insanity" only, but in many another malady, indirectly dimming the fairness of the mirror.

Be this as it may, the "lower," the more mechanical the lesion—a broken bone, for instance—the less can we count even upon the mediate healing of spiritual influences, not even upon those effects of sympathy and encouragement whereby, humanly speaking, fading and vacillating forces are fortified and replenished. Speaking broadly, it is in the fields of functional disease that we shall anticipate, and that we find, the most striking effects of spiritual influences; and then to less and less degrees about the functional fringes of diseases more and more static—in cases, that is, in which, although equilibrium, local or general, is disturbed, stability is not lost. But from diseases of this class a very large deduction has at first to be made for coincidence—for the *post hoc, propter hoc*. And even in those in which the beneficent effect of "faith" seems indisputable, we shall assume no miracle, no insertion of a new entity, no dislocation of natural order; but inquire more particularly what, if any, effects within this order we may expect from the "mind upon the body." In ancient times this question was soon answered; the soul differed from the body only as gaseous matter differed from solid. The pneuma, the breath of life, was familiarly seen to enter and to leave the body, and new volumes of the pneuma were to be sought, perchance from the heavens. We no longer believe ourselves able to call forth and convey entities thus; what we do believe is that we can call forth latent potentials, release energies, and trim sails to their breezes. In our modern logic we are wont to divide too much human faculties which act together or in fusion; still, it is true that, if reason be at the helm, the breezes spring from the emotions. Without passion to fill his sails the helmsman makes no voyage. How, then—for faith healing is no mere speculation, but means business—how is it to be done? If the wonder cures are not miracles, how are we to account for them? Before we incline to miraculous intervention what capacities are there in physician and patient whereby a failing vitality may be fanned, and whereby even a local lesion may conceivably be affected? It seems to me that there are such material means, and that they are at least threefold; I will call them Solace, Reanimation, and Readjustment.

Of solace, of the calming of fret, of the gentle hand for the body and the gentle voice for the heart, few words are needed. By solace energy running to waste is spared. For his reflecting brain man must pay the cost. By reflection his pain is infinitely multiplied; we suffer ten times over; pain and sorrows are fanned by regrets and by forebodings, and to their inroads is added the weariness of inhibitory controls. Solace at any rate we shall be content to call humane therapeutics.

Reanimation depends on that principle of "reserve," in each organ of the body and in the organism as a whole, on which for medical readers I need not dwell at length. It is well known to experimenters in ablation that a fragment of an organ left behind makes itself felt in their results; that often for a time the specific quality of it may persist in something like full measure. In common

therapeutics we are wont to liberate such reserves by drugs like digitalis, or strychnine, by certain "physical" methods, and so forth. As I have said, an organ, a psychical organ for instance, or higher association web, may for lack of a stimulant, ethical or other, recede, and yet be capable, on the access of such a stimulant, of re-entering the functional concert. I think it cannot be doubted that the existence in almost all patients of unexpected reserves of potential energy, especially in maladies partaking more or less of the nature of hysteria, is a large factor in the results attributed to "faith healing." For in all disease, eminently of course in chronic disease, parts and functions not directly impaired, whether by contraction of receptive fields or by lapse of associative strands, tend to sink into inactivity. When we entreat the patient to "make an effort," it is to encourage him to keep alive every function over which he may still retain any control. For example, in tabes many limbs and parts of limbs outside the ring of the fixed disease tend to slip into a common indolence with those which are irreparable; and the physician knows that by re-education on this margin a surprising measure and kind of efficiency can, even at later stages of the malady, be recalled. In the defect of the damaged parts those in functional abeyance may, it is true, be of no great or immediate usefulness, yet we find that to reanimate is not only to multiply the will power by pouring fresh streams of energy into the system, but even to gain some advantage over the malady itself. Thus in many a severe functional malady, to arouse latent reserves by a rekindling of hope and courage may compass a marvellous cure, and a lively rally even in some by nature incurable.

Of such are the reserves; now as to readjustment of the balance of forces. If we imagine the human system in its swift orbit and mutually reciprocating parts we shall see it revolving about some centre, and we shall desire to see it in each of us revolving about its ideal centre, and in some larger concert than the individual life. But how often is this so? Which of us can hope that his more exalted functions have, as a spiritual gyroscope, so habitually governed the commoner and the meaner that his life has not generally, or too frequently, found its centre of revolution at or about some lower point? Now it is a curious inquiry in physiology, and one which, as we have seen under "reserves," is of chief importance in our present inquiry, how far and for how long a considerable function may run at low speed, or even fall out of gear, without withering; and still, after the lapse of time, of years perhaps, be ready to bound suddenly back into the system, even with accumulated intensity. On the spiritual side the unquestionably genuine phenomena of Conversion point to such changes, to new tides so swift and voluminous as to swing the system out of previous equiposes, and to move to some larger measure. And if unhappily the new equilibrium be too often transitory, if too often the bondage of older habit drags the system down again to its former and lower mean position, yet in many instances the new position is maintained permanently. The annals of our own times, the annals of our Churches and religious "Armies," are rich in such witness.

Now it appears to me that the phenomena of "conversion" are in the spiritual life like to, and indeed partially identical with, those of disordered or oblique bodily balance. In hysteria—the most notable sphere of such phenomena—larger or smaller receptive fields are shut off, so that their corresponding centres, though still supplied with blood, are in abeyance; they stand out of gear. Then all at once—as a fluid may suddenly freeze at the tap of a finger, as an electric coherer may be shaken into activity, or as a jar to a kaleidoscope may transfigure its picture, so all at once the parts shut off may slip back into gear, and the system rise to revolve about a correspondingly higher centre. In the spiritual life we call this charge regeneration; in the sphere of functional disease we call it cure; often a wonder-cure. We have seen that even the purest spiritual life depends upon bodily integrity; unless all the organs and tissues are there, and relatively complete, the transformation cannot take place, and the system can revolve only about some inferior centre. Without, substance that, if dormant, is sound, there is no "point de prise."

So far, then, as the malady depends upon suspension or arrest of parts, the cure depends upon their being still potentially efficient and available when the new impulse stings the dormant periphery into sensation. Thus the magnetism, the call, or the alarm which makes the hysterical paralytic leap up, will not make the man walk whose leg is broken, or whose motor centre is poisoned. Or if, under great exaltation of heart he were to stagger to his feet his effort would be brief and evil. And thus again the healing balm for the sorrowful heart will fail to comfort the melancholic in whom the corresponding part of the psychical texture is torn or poisoned.

Now, although much of what has been said applies both to reserves and to perverted balance, yet we know by clinical experience that to call out reserves and to transform equilibrium respectively requires, as a rule, different means. Speaking now in that emotional field with which we are occupied, we perceive that while sympathy and ardour may call out reserves, to alter balance we must often exhibit something of a collision, a shock or surprise, pleasurable or even painful. Thus, highly-charged particles may be released and the composition of forces transformed as by a detonation. I suspect it will be found that all notable wonder-cures have been of this nature, or of the nature of astonishment; moreover, that they have been effected in hysteria, that amazing mimic of all and any disease. So Charcot, with his illustrations from Lourdes, was wont to assure us, and later experience has convinced me that his doctrine is true in the main. But the method of astonishment would not by any means be appropriate to the relief of the faint-hearted whose reserves we desire to call out; in most cases it would prove injurious.

It is in those lapses, melancholies, or ecstasies in which hysteria often begins, whims which Teresa regarded as the chief perils of the conventional life, that the domination of a stronger will—a "magnetic personality"—often prevails. Teresa declared that all this "letting oneself go" came of "sick brains"; and physiologically we know that in functional disease, in order to force open torpid functions, we often have to shut down certain lower issues through which energy is running to waste; so that love is only complete in a certain austerity. She warned the religious that "if the body be neglected it takes a terrible revenge upon the soul." She gently taunted a certain prioress with the words, "If I were with you you would not have so many of these extraordinary phenomena." "Suspect," she said, "everything which weakens the use of our reason; for by such a way we shall never attain to the liberty of the spirit." And her curative measures were as vigorous as her preventive; she began by assuring the visionaries that their brilliant humiliations were not in the least interesting, while the ardent worker or ascetic she would warn more gently that not till the harm is done will the strain of the endurance make itself felt. Very wise medicine, in all such ministrations to be remembered.

Now as Teresa thus recognized hysteria in all its guises, she disdained to assail it with prayer and ritual. She affirmed that to turn prayer and religious ceremony to impose upon these fantastic folk was to degrade it. It was by mundane methods that she brought them to their senses, quelled their fits, and dissipated their palsies.

Once more, it is said that in his "subliminal self" man possesses a substance peculiarly divine, or a substance or means through which we may reach divine communion, or through which especially divine purposes may be fulfilled in us. It is true that we do not know even approximately the content of the individual man, of the materials racially and personally acquired, the products of past experience, racial and personal, built sensibly and insensibly into his personality. May we not each of us be compared with a ship which began its voyage with no inconsiderable rudimentary equipment, then, calling at many a port, has gathered many kinds of stores and treasure? Of some of these stores, of some variety of them, the supercargo has a recollection, especially of those in frequent use; but, for the most part, the bills of lading had been lost. Unlike a cargo, however, these contents are not a passive burden, but a system of coefficients; some on planes which we commonly call material; some on spiritual planes; some working on the surface, some working stealthily within; so that much tact and insight are necessary to unveil and to reanimate those agencies in whose abeyance disorder re-

ineffectualness may happen to consist. And the influences which are to effect these revivals must be akin in nature to these kinds respectively; some must be solidly material—such as splints or drugs—some must be religious, moral, and even intellectual, yet inspired by emotion, by appeal to hope and joy; and their instruments must be devotion, sympathy, gladness, reasonable persuasion, and even surprise.

We have said that, although we do not know the contents of the individual vessel by the list, they are either freely or potentially active. Moreover, we know that each individual is by itself impotent; that, indeed, solitary confinement will derange and kill the individual. For its life, whether as a whole or in its parts, the mutual play of individuals one with another is a necessary condition. Furthermore, if about any one individual the play of the associated individuals is only partial, so that certain of its receptive fields are outside the play of common association, these unstimulated parts will fall into abeyance; though, if the activity of the whole be not gravely impaired, they are kept alive in the systemic ("subconscious") life, and will be ready to glow with animation again when kindred vibrations awaken them. Thus I have often spoken of individuals as the "synapses" of the social body, synapses endowed with instinctive affinities by which we awaken and kindle each other, and so cumulatively animate the whole social system. Now some persons—the "magnetic"—are peculiarly endowed with richer or intenser degrees of these instinctive "synaptic" affinities, and have thus rare and even singular faculties of awakening and stimulating others. Such persons are likely to enter the clerical or medical professions, and therein to multiply these faculties, and to use them for the refreshment of the sick and the sorrowful.

And if of those so happily endowed the light of the eye, the touch of the hand may impart marvels of refreshment and comfort, yet for the many less fortunate ministers to whom this measure of virtue is not given we may have to build up some standard of expression and form, a standard which shall be in itself impressive, radiant, gracious, and informed with the memorials of the past. For this service it may be true that to awaken our highest functions, whether we be sick in body or in mind, some form of words and ceremony may be necessary. For we perceive, no doubt, that beautiful forms, which for some persons at any rate, have lost much of their meaning, may for others effect more than the shy lipings of the most benevolent extempore minister. Yet the ultimate danger of forms is great—lest they become the armour of Saul! For as men are prone to believe that the internal significance will always follow the external performance, ritual insensibly supplants ethics, and we go astray upon the confines of thaumaturgy and magic. Formulate it as we may, faith healing consists in part in sympathy, in love, in active devotion; in part in comprehensible medical and surgical skill; but also in part in dispelling spiritual torpor, and in emotional surprise; and for these uses we may find a genuine ally in ordered and even ceremonial appeals to the heart and imagination. But we shall shrink from anything like bamboozling our patients with pretentious apparatus, we shall withdraw from hieratic artifices and all practices akin to imposture, remembering Lavoisier's true saying that "Medicine came into the world with a twin brother called Charlatanism."

For the hysteric at any rate the bedchamber is unwholesome; the disease, engendered of isolations, is fostered by the seclusion; in social suggestion lies its cure. For the sick and afflicted, on the contrary, peace and rest are restorative; and in the solitary chamber, where the stimulating synaptic vibrations of common life are muffled and remote, social "suggestion" is suspended. Therefore in the main the piety of the sick bed is a passive piety, the spirit is drooping; and then it is that a renewal or economy of energy—of emotion—both in the patient and his ministers is efficacious, "lest his brethren's heart faint as his heart." Even in health some men cannot play a losing game. At such moments and in this solemn seclusion a "synopsis" with spiritual issues, an inspiring touch to higher apprehensions may through the soul revive the animal spirits. Yet here again unless the faculty of spiritual conversation, a habit which like other attainments depends on exercise, had been formed in the health needful to its full practice it will be hard work in sickness to

attain to it. The physician knows there is no more arrant delusion than to suppose sickness to be a convenient season for inspiration; it is rather a season of apathy, or of despondency—*Domine quid multiplicasti!* At best the mystic quietism of the bedridden is not a virile enthusiasm; it is pallid and tenuous in fibre. Still it is true no doubt that the solitary and disconsolate heart, closed to common circumstance, may be more susceptible to other appeals, may offer less resistance; so that, as we have seen, unknown wells of energy may be tapped and fading and vacillating forces replenished. Then it is that the influence of a clerical minister, of a gentle friend or Bible-woman—brief angels' visits lifting up human hope and love into Divine love—may be twice blessed, blessed materially and spiritually. But even then the physician can take no active part in hypnotizing the smitten sufferer with promises of corporeal repair. Indeed in the more formal spiritual ministrations his part can never be direct; they are not obviously his business, and even a religious patient resents the divided mind. Notwithstanding, the sick man does feel dimly that diagnosis limited to material phenomena is imperfect; that its insight ought to penetrate to mental and spiritual as well as to bodily conditions; and he would say, did he know how, Do you understand me, or am I only a case? This seems to be our modest part in faith healing; and with it these reflections must end. How tentative and inconclusive they are no one is more painfully aware than the writer himself.

"SUGGESTION" IN THE TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

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ALTHOUGH the theory of faith healing differs from the theory of Christian Science, and that again from the theories of mesmerism, hypnotism, and animal magnetism, there is one thing which is common to them all, namely, the power of "suggestion." And by suggestion is here meant the enforcing influence of an idea.

Faith healing and Christian Science may be grouped under the term, "religious suggestion." Mesmerism, animal magnetism, etc., are now commonly spoken of as "hypnotic suggestion." All are included under "mental healing." In each of the methods of mental healing the curative effect seems to be brought about by the influence of some strong or vivid idea, of some subtle energy other than physical, upon the abnormal or morbid states of the body. To attempt to answer the question, "What is the psychological process by which this power or energy—'suggestion'—works the cure?" would require a consideration of the theories of "unconscious mind," of "unconscious cerebration," and of "dual mind," or in other words, the relation of the conscious or objective side of the mind to the subjective or subconscious side. It must suffice to say here that the most accredited theory at the present time as to the states of mind induced by hypnotic or religious suggestion is that the objective side is thrown into abeyance, whilst the subjective is brought into a condition which enables it to receive suggestions.

The readiness with which the subjective mind can be reached varies greatly in different races of men and in different persons of the same race. The French, for instance, are found to be more susceptible than the English. Some persons pass spontaneously into the hypnotic state, others are not at all amenable to either hypnotic or religious suggestion. Some are affected against their will; others, though willing and even anxious to be hypnotized, remain unaffected.

Esdaile, it is said, on one occasion hypnotized a man in open court behind his back and without his knowledge. Some operators are more successful than others. Some cannot hypnotize at all. Thus, it would seem that in some individuals the objective mind cannot be put into abeyance either at the wish of the person himself or at the will of another. Again, different subjects, even though susceptible to an equal degree, show very different phenomena under the influence of hypnotism. In some, ordinary consciousness is lost, and sleep, trance, catalepsy, or somnambulism

results, the subject rendering absolute obedience to the operator and on waking being unaware of what has passed. In others the effect of suggestion is marked by an exalted intellectual or emotional power, or by the acuteness of one or other of the special senses being so heightened that the subject is able to do things which he is quite incapable of doing in his ordinary state.

MENTAL SUGGESTION.

Hypnotic and religious suggestion are quite different from what is understood in metaphysics as mental suggestion. In psychology and metaphysics the term "mental suggestion" is used as the equivalent of "mental association" or the "association of ideas." It is employed to account generally for the facts of mental life, and to express in a general way the principle which Berkeley applied specially to the problem of visual perception—namely, that one idea may suggest another idea to the mind if these two ideas have been associated together frequently; and that, too, without our having any proof of the necessity of their co-existence, and without even knowing what it is that makes them co-exist.

The principle of "association of ideas" was pointed out by Aristotle, but the expression was first employed by Locke. Subsequent philosophers, especially Hamilton and Hartley, urged that association extends beyond ideas or thoughts proper to every class of mental states.

Hartley being a physician by profession as well as a metaphysician, in his *Observations on Man*, published in 1749, combined the doctrine of mental association with a detailed hypothesis as to the corresponding action of the nervous system, and he enunciated the principle that any sensation frequently associated with another sensation will, when presented alone, call up in the mind the ideas which are excited by that other sensation also. James Mill carried the doctrine still further than Hamilton, Hartley, and Berkeley, and held that "some ideas are by frequency and strength of association so closely combined that they cannot be separated; if one exists the other exists along with it, in spite of whatever effort we make to disjoin them." And John Stuart Mill made the same statement, though in somewhat more guarded terms, as to the "inseparable" character of the association of certain mental states.

Thus it is apparent that "suggestion" as a force in producing mental cures concerns the influence exercised by another person, or by some other external agency, upon the mental and physical states of an individual; whereas "mental suggestion" is the spontaneous recurrence of trains of thought in the same individual. "Mental suggestion" is a psychological process absolutely distinct from hypnotic and religious suggestion. Indeed John Stuart Mill sought to prove that "inseparable association" is the ground of our belief in an external objective world; whereas Christian Science denies *in toto* the existence of such a world, and under the term "Mortal Mind," which Mrs. Eddy uses as "the specific term for error," she refers to the body and to the whole material world as non-existent.

HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION.

Suggestion as a powerful agency was not unknown to Mesmer, but its significance was overlooked by the earlier Mesmerists, who adopted instead the theory of the "magnetic fluid" in explaining their influence over patients.

James Braid, of Manchester, who, in 1841, originated the word "hypnotism," denied that the mesmeric phenomena were caused by the "magnetic fluid," though he himself made use of mesmeric "passes." Braid, the hypnotist, the propounder of the theory of "nerve sleep," appreciated the importance of suggestion better than Mesmer; and Braid's followers, who anticipated the celebrated Nancy school of hypnotists, developed the theory of suggestion to a considerable degree. According to Braid, "the sleeper" shows "physical manifestations of the suggestion received through words, or excited by sensible impressions which thereby direct his current of thought"; and he further taught that "definite physical changes could be excited and regulated and controlled at will, according to the suggestion of another person."

In 1851, both Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh and Dr. Hughes Bennett described the phenomena of hypnotism as due to suggestion; and Bennett's view was that the predominating ideas which excite the phenomena of