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ARTICLE II.

THE PATIENCE OF JOB.

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"God forbid that I should justify you;
Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from me.
My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go;
My heart shall not reproach me as long as I live" (Job xxvii. 5, 6).

UNDER the present dispensation, with the whole creation groaning and travailing together in its mysterious pain, man being born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward, we not only commiserate those who enter into their heritage of woe, but are impelled, in the exercise of a true sympathy, to take a keen interest in the special form of their suffering. If a friend falls ill, bare information of the fact does not satisfy; we desire to know the character and severity of his complaint; and the issue of medical bulletins during the illness of well-known persons is proof of this kindly solicitude extended to those in whom our interest is more or less remote. This particular information is still more to be desired in the case of one who, having passed through great suffering triumphantly, is held up to us as a pattern of the way in which the trials of life are to be borne, as without it we cannot appreciate adequately the strength and beauty of his character. Among such exemplary heroes is Job, whose patience under his manifold trials is proverbial. According to the sacred narrative, the last and greatest of these was the loss of physical health: he was prostrated by a malady which made his life a burden. What was this disease? From a very early period it has been the subject of much speculation, but no satisfactory diagnosis has yet been made.

In continuing the inquiry, we are met by various objections. Those who consider the book of Job as a philosophical drama, with but a slender, almost negligible, basis of historical fact, the prologue and epilogue being literary embellishments probably of separate authorship, which are to have little or no weight in its interpretation; and those who go further, and insist it is a religious apologue, a pure invention from beginning to end,—may jointly urge that a precise knowledge of Job's disease is not required, as any one of the ills that flesh is heir to, inflicted on the imaginary hero, would have served the author's purpose. There is no warrant for this assertion. Not only in the prologue, but also throughout the whole work, there are frequent and specific allusions to the symptoms and effects of the malady, which is sufficient indication that its character was not a matter of indifference to the author.

The inquiry is also deprecated on the ground that to examine critically the prosaic details of the drama, is to approach its study in a heavy, unimaginative, wrong spirit. To quote from a recent and interesting essay, "A critic who takes a scientific view of the book of Job is exactly like a surgeon who should take a poetical view of appendicitis: he is simply an old muddler."[1] This dictum will not bear examination. The elements of poetry are universal. Mental and physical evils, such as madness and blindness, have been taken by the greatest poets as fit subjects for their poetry, and from the point of view of the pathologist, at least, there is no essential difference between one malady and another. If a patient receives the full benefit of human knowledge and skill, why should not the surgeon be free to regard the processes of disease as he pleases, even poetically if he is so inclined, with-

[1] Chesterton, "Leviathan and the Hook," Littell's Living Age, November, 1905, p. 443.

out being called a muddler? And when disease is regarded not as a mysterious evil pervading the human frame, but as the gallant resistance of the body against known and material foes, there is much to stir the emotions as well as to excite intellectual interest. The wonderful manner in which myriads of living cells are assembled and organized to resist and overpower the injurious substances or organisms which have gained entrance; the desperate nature of the conflict, multitudes of the cells perishing to save the life of the body; the manufacture of new chemical weapons to meet attack and counter-attack; the way in which the field of battle is, if possible, confined to a limited area; the timely and valuable assistance given by the surgeon who does the work of an ambulance corps, conveying away the dead and dying combatants on either side, thus preventing further injury to the system which would result from their retention on the battle-field, and at the same time promoting the arrival of further reinforcements to the phagocyte defenders of the body; the uncertainty of the issue, victory now appearing to be on one side and again on the other,—all combine to form a subject not unworthy of Homeric poetry. At any rate, wherever and whenever disease occurs, and especially when it is the direct occasion of an intense spiritual struggle, it deserves careful investigation in all its aspects.

On the other hand, those who hold every part of the work to be strictly historical, may urge that it can be understood and its spiritual teaching appropriated, despite our ignorance of the precise nature of Job's sickness. To a certain extent, this is true. Numerous souls wrestling with the calamities of life, and longing for a kindly light to guide them through the dreary darkness of undeserved suffering, have found that the

book not only expresses their own questionings of Providence, but also truly and forcibly states the doubts and misgivings which have harassed the souls of thinking men of all ages and nations, and in this sorrowful brotherhood have learned the lesson of patient submission. Nevertheless, there are several good reasons why the question should not remain unanswered.

In the first place, taking a broad survey of the powers of evil against which man has to struggle, it is legitimate curiosity which impels us to try to identify the particular disease which the author considered was the worst possible that could befall the human frame. Its severity, and the imputation of its infliction to Satan, invest it with peculiar interest. Among all the crafts and assaults of the devil, what was it that was considered to constitute his last and desperate resource in this particular case?

Secondly, the affliction was sent to test the disinterestedness of Job's religious service. When character is tested in this manner, the nature of the physical misfortune, and the way in which it is regarded by the world at large, have much to do with the issue. There is far more likelihood of unshaken fidelity, if prolonged illness be such as to win the sympathy and ready help of others, than if it excite their ridicule or aversion, so that it can be said of the sufferer: "As one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Sickness and deformity of this kind, it is well known, has a tendency to embitter the feelings toward mankind, and to shake faith in God to its very foundation. Pope, Byron, and several other unhappy men of genius, morbidly conscious of physical defects, exhibited this bitterness, and Shakespeare strikes it as the key-note to the character of the wicked hunchback king, Richard III.

"I that am rudely stamped and want love's majesty. . . .
I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;
Why I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity;
And therefore since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair well spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasure of these days."

In the New Testament there is an example of a mortifying affliction that happily became a means of grace to the sufferer and his friends. "You remember that illness was the cause of my telling you the Good News in the first instance," writes St. Paul to the Galatians, and then he adds with wonder and gratitude, for such sympathy was extremely rare in those days, "and as for what must have tried you in my complaint, it did not inspire you with scorn and disgust, but you welcomed me as if I had been an angel of God" (Gal. iv. 13, 14). Job's fate was different. It was not simply that he had to bear the scoffing to which all those in the East with disfiguring disease are compelled to submit: there was something connected with his malady which made those who knew him in better days, dislike and scorn him. His wife bade him renounce God and die; most of his friends deserted him; the few who remained, constantly upbraided him for his wickedness; he was the song and byword of the community; he was even had in derision by men he formerly would have disdained to set with the dogs of his flock. What was there in Job's case which excited all this hostility?

Moreover, in writing for those who considered that all physical misfortune was invariably a direct punishment from God for transgression, the severity of the malady being exactly proportioned to the heinousness of the sin, it would be ineffective to select a trifling ailment to inculcate the lesson that a man may be afflicted and yet righteous; for the lightness of the disease would, of itself, be an indication to them that he was not a great sinner. To drive the lesson right home that suffering is not always penal, it would be necessary to give the account of a person afflicted with a severe disease, which was furthermore held in abhorrence because known to be associated more closely with personal transgression than any other, and then show that he was innocent in spite of the circumstantial evidence against him. Such an account we find in Job. He suffered from a terrible disease, which was regarded by his friends and neighbors as a disclosure of his deep wickedness. It was not any broad disquisition on the general law that all disease is more or less the consequence of sin that gave him distress, for the sick are seldom disturbed by such vague philosophical reflections, but the pointed accusation of individual wrong-doing. What was this disease so obviously the consequence, in most cases, of personal sin? Surely it was known and recognizable, and its character distinctly involved in the argument; else how could it have been used to point the moral we have indicated?

For these reasons we assume the author drew from life; he had before him a certain man,—whether Job himself, or some poor unknown to whom was given the character of Job, does not for our present purpose very much matter,—who was afflicted with a disease not at all uncommon, and known to be

linked with infraction of the moral law. If it can be identified, additional light must be thrown on the problem with which the author grapples.

Many commentators are of the opinion that the symptoms incidentally mentioned in the discussions between Job and his friends, point unmistakably to *Elephantiasis Græcorum*, or leprosy. Others have suggested the guinea worm disease, and the "Oriental sore." An eloquent English divine, in a sermon preached in 1722 against "the dangerous and sinful practice of inoculation," contended that Job's disease was small-pox, and that he had been inoculated with it by the devil. In Arabia, Job's native land, there is an ancient tradition that it was venereal disease.

Others doubt if its character will ever be determined. An eminent English physician, writing on the subject, states that the antiquity and purport of the book on which there is so much difference of opinion, and the metaphorical character of much of the writing, all render it extremely difficult to speak with confidence on the precise nature of the disease; and he concludes that we are perhaps justified in assuming that it was altogether of an exceptional character.[1] This position cannot well be maintained. If the disease were so exceptional, would it not lift Job out of our common humanity? Would it not mean that even before the commencement of the last trial, Satan had been foiled conclusively, inasmuch as Job's virtue and endurance were so impregnable and superhuman that the calamities which assail and test ordinary humanity were not sufficiently severe to test him, and so recourse was had to some strange and fearful disease the like of which has never been seen before or since? There is no authority for this in the narrative itself. In the course of his argument, Elihu apparent-

[1] Bennett, Diseases of the Bible, p. 100.

ly refers to Job's affliction as a typical instance of a not uncommon infirmity, from which recovery is possible on repentance, for he says: "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man." Some of its features were certainly familiar. The friends of Job must often have seen among the homeless beggars herding together near the ash heaps outside the town or village, men with loathsome skin diseases, and so covered with vermin and dirt—"with worms and clods of dust"—as to be driven to scrape themselves with broken potsherds to relieve the intense itching and irritation. Job had descended to this condition. "He crept out as unclean from the village, and sat down on the ash mounds with other beggars and outcasts."

The parasitic affection to which allusion is made is extremely common among the destitute in all lands, and though very troublesome, is regarded by them as a trifling ailment. In Job's case, it was simply a complication or aggravation of the principal disease, evidently constitutional. Our task is to collate the various symptoms mentioned by the writer, and form our judgment accordingly.

In doing this there is the difficulty of discriminating between the literal and metaphorical. When Job says,

> "He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare;
> He poureth out my gall upon the ground,"

this is clearly metaphorical. But when he writes,

> "Thou scarest me with dreams,
> And terrifiest me through visions;
> So that my soul chooseth strangling,
> And death rather than these my bones,"

we are not sure whether he means he would rather lie awake and endure the strangling sensations of his disease, or sleep and be scared by horrible dreams; or whether, as suggested

by the parallelism of the verse, he wishes for death to put an end to all his sufferings, even though it were a painful death by suffocation. Still there are many statements sufficiently clear and matter of fact to serve as a guide.

According to the narrative, Job is smitten with a disease which develops very rapidly,—an important point. The first and most striking symptom is an eruption of sore boils which covers his body, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot (ii. 7). Loathsome ulcers then form; they multiply apparently without cause (ix. 17); they close up and break out afresh (vii. 5); in places the skin turns black and falls away (xxx. 30); in fact, the ulceration is so deep and extensive that he calls himself a ruinous heap (xxx. 24); he is like a rotten thing that consumeth, like a garment that is moth-eaten (xiii. 28). No part of the mouth is sound except the teeth (xix. 20). The facial disfigurement prevents his friends from recognizing him (ii. 12). Appetite for food is lost (vi. 7), and he becomes much emaciated (xvi. 8; xvii. 7; xix. 20).

To show that such a condition may still be paralleled, there is the following description of a case in a recent medical work on a prevalent disease: "At the beginning of that time the patient came back with a vesicular and bullous eruption just beginning on his face. The eruption blazed up with extraordinary quickness, and in the course of a week his whole face was covered with crusts; there were many also on his limbs. He became extremely ill, was confined to his bed for several months, and was so much emaciated that we thought he would die."

In the case of another patient with the same disease, blisters covered his whole face and neck, and a week later they covered all his limbs. These blisters became confluent, and heaped up crusts covering areas as large as the palm of the hand were formed. The ulceration was deep, so much so that on the back of one hand the tendons were exposed. He was confined to bed, and was in the most loathsome condition. He became exceedingly emaciated. The face was almost wholly involved in scar. Most of the scars left by the ulceration were of a deep purple color: those on the legs were purple almost to blackness.

But the most distressing feature of Job's disease was the severity of the pains in his bones. "Put forth thine hand now, and touch his *bone* and his flesh, and he will renounce thee to thy face," was the challenge of Satan. Consequently the bones bore the brunt of the disease. They burn with heat (xxx. 30), the heat of inflammation. Corroding, gnawing pains most intense at night,—another important diagnostic point,—are unceasing; they give him no rest (xxx. 17). So persistent is the agony that he is rarely able to sleep (vii. 3, 4), and the little sleep he does get is disturbed by frightful dreams: his soul chooses strangling and death, rather than the pain of his bones (vii. 13–16). He loathes his life, and would not live alway.

In the same medical work mention is made of another patient, who was emaciated to an extreme degree, who had open nodes along the whole length of the bones of the leg, and in whom nearly half the surface of the skull was bare and black; the pain was so great that he was obliged to take large doses of morphine for its relief.

Passing to the manner in which the disease was regarded by the acquaintances of Job, we find that it made him an object of loathing and contempt. Most of his friends and relatives deserted him; the few who remained he called miserable comforters, physicians of no value; they added to his distress by saying that his sickness was the consequence of his sin (viii. 6; xix. 3, 4; xxii. 5), and perhaps hinted more specifically, that the sin was impurity (xxxi. 1–12). Notwithstanding the sins of his youth (xiii. 26; xix. 4; xiv. 17), Job passionately asserts his subsequent innocence (xxxiii. 9; vi. 28, 29; xxxiv. 6), but admits that appearances are so heavily against him, it is an almost hopeless task trying to prove it (ix. 27–29; xvi. 8; xxxiv. 6).

Finally, after the disease has lasted an unspecified time, Job regains his ordinary health.

I. As already noted, many commentators, following Origen, think the disease was leprosy. The opinion of so profound a biblical scholar, familiar with the diseases of the East, would be of great value in this matter, were it not for the fact that, in his day, not one but several diseases were included under the common term of "leprosy"; and this confusion existed down to quite a late period. In the sixteenth century the majority of those confined in leper hospitals were not really lepers, but persons afflicted with other disfiguring skin diseases; in some of the hospitals it is doubtful if any of the inmates at all were lepers.[1]

Of a certainty, medical practice was even less discriminating in the time of Origen. And the farther back we go, the simpler is the classification of disease. It is a mistake to suppose the cutaneous affections mentioned in the book of Leviticus, to which allusion is often made in this connection, are different forms of any one disease such as leprosy: they cannot be so identified. Just as, in the Middle Ages, loathsome skin diseases of every kind were swept together into the lazar houses as leprosy; so, when the Levitical code was compiled, similar complaints were all grouped as unclean *tsara'ath*. Consequently, the precise nature of the diseases of antiquity must be determined, not by the names which then

[1] "Unquestionably, a certain number of the unfortunate inmates of the lazar houses of the Middle Ages were sufferers from syphilis and chronic diseases of the skin; for we know that in the beginning of the sixteenth century, when physicians were better acquainted with such diseases, and especially with the diagnostic signs of syphilis, a revision was made of the lazar houses of France and Italy, and it was then found that in many of them the majority of the inmates were not suffering from leprosy" (Allbutt, System of Medicine (1897), ii. 44).

or since were fortuitously attached to them, nor by theological considerations, but only by comparing whatever medical data of them we happen to possess, with diseases as described at the present time.

Do the symptoms of Job's disease—which it must be remembered was of rapid development and of comparatively short duration—correspond with those of leprosy as described in modern text-books? We do not think they do. The author of a recent work on tropical diseases has this to say about leprosy:—

"Our early conceptions of the disease, derived for the most part from the Bible or poetical literature, in which the leper is symbolical of all that is loathsome and hopeless, are apt to mislead. As a matter of fact, in its earlier stages leprosy is far from being always, or even generally, a striking disease. Often for years the only visible evidence of its existence may be two or three small patches of pale or pigmented skin about the trunk or limbs—very likely concealed by the clothes, and perhaps disregarded by the patient himself,—whose true significance and nature can be appreciated only by the expert. It is generally not until the later stages that we see the disfiguring and extensive lesions on which the popular conception is founded."[1]

As an example of the mildness of its course and its long duration before the worst features of the disease appear, another medical writer tells of a prominent clergyman in this country who has had leprosy for more than thirty years, which until recently has not interfered with his usefulness, and not in the slightest with his career.[2] Of course this is an extreme example of its mildness: the present writer has seen boys and young men in the worst stages of leprosy. But in no instance did the severe symptoms appear with such rapidity as in the case of Job. Another differential point is the absence of nocturnal pains in leprosy: in fact, severe pain at any time is rarely a

[1] Manson, Tropical Diseases, p. 388.
[2] Osler, Practice of Medicine (1892), p. 259.

prominent feature, as the degeneration of nerves causes loss of sensation in the affected parts. Further, Job was apparently cured of his disease, whereas leprosy in ancient times was incurable.

II. It has also been conjectured that Job's disease was the "Oriental sore." This is a common affection in hot countries, and is known by many local names, as the "Bagdad boil," the "Biskra bouton," etc. It is probably identical with "the botch of Egypt," of which we read in the Bible, "The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore boil, whereof thou canst not be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the crown of thy head" (Deut. xxviii. 35). A traveler who lived for a long while with the Arabs writes:—

"The maladies of Arabia had increased in me by the way; the lower limbs were already full of the ulcers that are called the date button on the Persian Gulf coast, because they rise commonly near the time of the date harvest. The boil which is like the Aleppo button, is known in many parts of the Arabic world, in Barbary, in Egypt (Nile sores), and in India (Delhi boil). It is everywhere ascribed to the drinking of unwholesome water. The evil will run its course, there is no remedy; the time with me was nearly five months."[1]

This complaint, however, is not constitutional; it does not affect the bones, nor give rise to intense nocturnal pains; nor does it cause sleeplessness, weariness of life, and emaciation. Job's woeful complaints were altogether disproportionate to his evil state if he suffered from nothing worse than the Oriental sore.

III. We are informed that in Bokhara the guinea worm disease *(Filaria medinensis: Dracunculus medinensis)* is called by the inhabitants "the disease of Job." The parasite is a long slender worm of an average length of about three

[1] Doughty, Arabia Deserta, ii. 479.

feet, and one-tenth of an inch broad, which develops beneath the human skin, usually at the ankle or lower part of the leg. As a rule, only one worm is present in the body, but in countries where the disease is very common, there may be two or three, or perhaps more. It is not a constitutional disease, nor are the bones affected in any way. There is no analogy between it and the disease of Job. It is interesting to note that these guinea worms are supposed by some writers to be the "fiery serpents" of the Pentateuch.

IV. Passing by the conjecture that the devil inoculated Job with small-pox, there remains to be considered the Arabian tradition. According to this, in the days when the world was young, long before the patriarch Noah was born, a prophet named Ayoub (Job) provoked the displeasure of Allah, and as a punishment was smitten with syphilis. Ayoub transmitted the disease to his descendants, and from them it spread to others. Down to the present time the term *marrad Ayoub*, i. e., the "disease of Job," has remained in common use in Arabia as a synonym for syphilis.[1] A prophet is not without honor save in his own country; if this tradition has some basis of fact, we can understand why Job's own people despised him.

So much difference of opinion is evidence that the delineation of Job's complaint is not clear and unmistakable, and therefore no diagnosis can have stronger weight than that of probability. With this qualification we think the symptoms mentioned,—the extensive eruption which appeared and spread so rapidly, the ulceration, the inflammation of bone with nocturnal pains, the insomnia, the anæmia and emaciation, and the eventual recovery,—all point to the disease specified by Arabian tradition,—a disease, alas! which often falls upon the innocent,

[1] The Practitioner (Engl.), July, 1904, p. 84.

as physicians and surgeons know by professional observation, and in many instances by sorrowful personal experience.

As an objection to this diagnosis, it may be urged that the disease was not known in Europe until after the discovery of America, though, as Job is supposed to have lived in Arabia, it does not affect the present argument, except by implication. It is true there was a most remarkable outbreak of it in Europe coincident with the discovery of the New World, but the Indian, wild and untutored though he was, cannot be charged with its introduction to the races of the eastern hemisphere. There is evidence that it had existed in Europe long before. From a very remote period it has been known in Hindustan, China, Japan, and other Oriental countries,[1] and some medical writers think allusion is made to it in the Old Testament, more particularly in the book of Leviticus. Apart from this literary evidence, there is the conclusive testimony furnished by pathology. The tokens of the disease are visible on human bones thousands of years old, which have been found at various places in Egypt; and prehistoric remains unearthed in Europe furnish the same damaging testimony. In all lands, and in all

[1] It is almost certain that the character and infectivity of this disease was known to the Semitic peoples of ancient times. In the Assyrian narrative of Gilgamesh, a hunter is commissioned to find a temptress called *uchat*, who was to aid him with her enticements in bringing the hero Eabani to the city of Erech. The *uchat* was a woman attached to the temple of the goddess Ishtar and devoted to her service. Buret is of the opinion that "the name of the hierodule 'uchat' points very plainly to the 'uchat' disease, the syphilis of the ancient Egyptians" (Syphilis in Ancient Times, i. 82). In another part of the same narrative, Gilgamesh, lamenting the death of Eabani, goes to an ancestor that he may learn the mystery of his apotheosis, and at the same time secure recovery from the loathsome disease with which the goddess Ishtar had smitten him. This disease was syphilis (Johnston, Journ. of Semitic Languages and Literature, xvi. 30).

generations, men seem to have been familiar with the malady.

Another objection is the ethical one that the diagnosis carries with it the imputation of moral turpitude. This is a mistake. Despite the moral stigma with which the disease is branded, the proportion of its innocent victims is very large, owing to the virulence and portability of the *materies morbi,* and the consequent frequent transmission of the disease by indirect means. Children are born with the malady, inheriting it from their parents; other children have acquired it from diseased nurses, or by vaccination or circumcision. Physicians, surgeons, nurses, and midwives are liable to contract it in the exercise of their vocations, and so are glass-blowers, assayers, weavers, musicians, cooks, furriers, upholsterers, shoemakers, and servants, from the use of articles which have been in contact with the sick.

The social custom of ancient times of eating from a common dish, and drinking from a common vessel, must often have served to transmit contagious disease. In the communion service of the Christian church is the survival of an old custom of this kind. It is unpleasant to repeat, but the charge is made that disease has been transmitted by means of the communion cup.[1] This does not imply that any of those who attended the communion service did so unworthily; the diseased may not have known the true nature of their malady, or perhaps were not aware of the long period during which it is infective. It is useless to deny the possibility of infected persons being present in the congregation when we possess authentic records of clergymen in active service suffering for the stumbles of

[1] Dennis, System of Surgery, iii. 803. See, also, Lancet (Engl.), October 13, 1900, p. 1099; November 10, 1900, p. 1364; February 27, 1904, p. 616.

their college days.[1] Some may praise the persistent courage of the clergyman heretofore mentioned, who had leprosy for over thirty years but never permitted it to interfere in the least with the usefulness of his career, by which we understand that he performed all the functions of his office in the usual manner: but was his course fair to his congregation? Either they were kept in ignorance of his affliction, or the knowledge of it must have disturbed their minds during the communion service. It may be partly from unwholesome fear, but society is now determined to protect itself from all forms of contagious disease, and if possible thrust them out of sight.[2] Times change and manners change with them. The common use of a drinking-cup by relatives, or by a few intimate friends on some special occasion, in a country where people with disfiguring skin diseases were rigorously quarantined, is very different from the custom in these days of scores of people drinking in turn from the same cup, who are not well known to each other, are drawn from every stratum of society, and are of varied personal history. In the past the fear of disease has not been without influence in modifying ecclesiastical usages. The withdrawal of the cup by the Roman Catholic Church from all but the officiating priest was primarily due, no doubt, to the apprehension lest the consecrated wine should be spilt, or should adhere to the beards or moustaches of the communicants; yet the frightful prevalence and virulence of leprosy and syphilis in the Middle Ages, and the fear and

[1] For cases, see Hutchinson's Clinical Manual on Syphilis, pp. 273, 316, 337. This is the work from which were taken the extracts on pages 232 and 233.

[2] In Europe consumptives are being driven from most of the popular health resorts. Over here the suggestion has been made that such patients should wear bells on their necks, so that people can avoid them as lepers are avoided in the East ("The Boycott of Consumptives," Littell's Living Age, December 8, 1906).

disgust which they occasioned, must have prepared the way for the change, and reconciled most Catholics to it.[1]

As a concession to the demands of hygiene, some clergymen wipe the rim of the communion cup with a napkin, after each communicant has tasted of the wine. This is better than nothing at all, but is not really effective. Intinction, the custom in the Greek Church of dipping the bread in the wine, has been adopted by the English Episcopal Church, for those local churches where most of the communicants are tuberculous. The use of the individual communion cup seems to meet every devotional and hygienic requirement. It avoids the risk of contagion; the symbolism of the sacrament is not impaired, and the spirit of fellowship is broadened and strengthened when the most timid worshiper can perform his devotions with a quiet mind.

We trust enough has been said to show the many innocent ways in which venereal disease may be transmitted from one person to another, so we need not shrink from thinking it was the disease of Job. Nothing but deep pity was felt for the leper Father Damien, though he had not always been careful to protect himself scientifically from the contagion of the lepers to whom he ministered, and so fell a victim to the disease. The same pity void of blame should be extended to all the innocent victims of contagious disease. The scorn of the world is hard to bear, especially when entirely undeserved. Was it not this which gave point and sting to the accusations of Eliphaz and his friends?

[1] In a Roman Catholic Manual for Curates published in 1577, is the statement that to some lepers the sacrament cannot be given, because "non possunt Corpus Dominicum sic recipere et tractare in ore suo quin rejicerent ipsum, sic multi quibus reciderunt labia et dentes et sunt totaliter corrosi usque ad guttur" (Bennett, Diseases of the Bible, p. 24).

The present diagnosis is consonant with the author's imputation of its visitation to the agency of Satan. There is no other disease which more subtly pervades the human body, and which so often continues to exert a malign influence under the cloak of other diseases long after it has apparently been cured. It is stamped deeply with the malignancy of the powers of evil; it is a pestilence that walketh in darkness, a destruction that wasteth at noonday. No wonder that Job made such bitter complaints! If we were to search to-day for an example of the most poignant mental suffering occasioned by physical disease, it would be hard to find any one more deserving of respectful sympathy and compassion, or one more entitled to complain of the hard fate which has befallen him, than a person afflicted with this shameful disease, which has come to him not as the consequence of wrong-doing, but in the performance of duty, through the customs of social intercourse, or in acts of innocent affection. "My heart sank within me, and I wished I was dead," was the feeling of a prominent New York physician, when his attention was first called to the unmistakable evidences of the disease, which he had caught in the performance of his professional duties. While this article was being written, the life of a celebrated surgeon abroad was brought to a tragic close, because "about eighteen months ago he had the terrible misfortune, in the course of operating upon a patient, to contract an obstinate and insidious malady." He would have triumphed over his other troubles, including domestic bereavement, but in this last affliction, to further quote from the obituary notice, "fate imposed too hard a strain upon him, and he yielded." Job did not yield, but the strain almost reached the breaking point.

In the temptation to renounce his faith in divine justice because of the calamities which had befallen him, Job is said

to represent the sufferings of the whole Jewish nation, as well as those of the individual. If the opinion here advanced be correct, he is also the representative of the vast and sorrowful host formed of those who in every generation have been the victims of loathsome diseases innocently acquired. Not knowing the circumstances, their friends and acquaintances esteemed them stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, but they were the bearers of the world's iniquities. And this burden of physical woe is still appalling. In New York City alone, there are said to be fifty thousand new cases every year of venereal disease: more than half of the women affected, and of course all its hereditary victims, are quite blameless. What must its ravages be throughout the world? If its entire clinical history were known from the remote period when it first appeared in the human race down to the present time, it would be seen that it has caused greater damage and misery, and more decided race degeneration, than any other malady with the possible exception of tuberculosis. Cannot something be done to extirpate the evil? This is a most important religious and sociological question. Perhaps a brief digression on the issues involved will be pardoned by readers of this magazine, whose mission it is to war against evil in every form; for, as John Stuart Mill has observed, the diseases of society can no more be checked or healed than those of the body, without publicly speaking of them.

The subject is both complex and delicate; for, as soon as the attempt is made to control venereal disease, we are confronted with the social evil, the foulest and darkest blot on our Christian civilization. No other social problem is so perplexing and baffling to both church and state; for existing laws are with difficulty enforced, and reformers are divided in opinion

as to the wisdom and practicability of radical measures. Many despair of ever being able to control the evil, saying it has existed from the dawn of history, and, human nature being what it is, will last to the end of the world. Matters are not quite so hopeless; much can be done both to check the evil at its source and restrain its later manifestations.

For prevention, it is generally advised that the young should receive suitable instruction when they are ready to receive it, not only in physiology, but also in pathology to an extent that will warn them of the fearful physical consequences of licentiousness. They should also be informed of the numerous and alluring pitfalls which beset the path of the innocent and ignorant. Then certain reforms are needed, and can be won, in the social and business world. Wages adequate for independent support should be paid to women and girls obliged to work for their own living. Early marriages should be encouraged. The competitive strain of business ought not to make the prospects of multitudes of men and women so precarious as to deter them from undertaking the responsibilities of marriage until late in life or not at all. In this respect we may learn from the heathen. In China, for example, the vast mass of the people are very poor; yet, practically, early marriage is incumbent upon all, and large families are the rule, not the exception. In consequence, the nation is strong and growing stronger, whereas more than one Christian state is seriously concerned over the dwindling of its population; the social evil is not of such magnitude as here, and, except in the foreign settlements, it nowhere flaunts itself as it does in our large cities. In this country, many a young girl, poor and with no prospect of a home of her own, thinks it is just as well to get as much out of life during youth as possible, if nothing but a friendless, poverty-stricken old age is to follow the pleasant days of the

springtime of life. Next, every one, even the poorest, ought to be living in a fair degree of decency and comfort, not herded together in the cheerless, dirty tenements of our cities, where it is very difficult, not to say impossible, for the young to keep themselves unspotted from the world. These are practicable measures. Still, when these and other desirable reforms are accomplished, temptations will remain to which many will succumb. After all, nothing will enable a person to resist the allurements and wiles of the world, the flesh, and the devil, except the Spirit of God within the heart, producing a death unto sin, a new birth unto righteousness, and submission to whatever the Divine will may decree. In the disciple of Jesus, there will be no ignoble discontent with a lowly or hard lot from which there is no holy escape, and the inordinate love of riches, luxury, and display, which has so often led to moral ruin, will be extinguished.

We next come to the means for dealing with the evil as it actually exists. Here the question arises, Shall the state or municipality try to control it by compelling notification and segregation, as in other infective diseases? Upon this point there is marked divergence of opinion among social reformers. On the one side it is urged that the extirpation of venereal disease is not above the power of governments. The isolation of the patient, and the adoption of a few simple expedients to prevent the transmission of the disease to others, have worked wonders in diminishing the ravages of such scourges of the human race as yellow fever, bubonic plague, cholera, smallpox, and malaria. There is no good reason, it is urged, why other infective diseases, particularly the one now being considered, cannot be controlled in the same way; and it is asserted that where efforts have been made in this direction, as among the British soldiers in India, a considerable degree of

success has been attained. Contrariwise, it is affirmed that in large cities where it is not possible to bring the people under the strict surveillance exercised in military camps, the efforts of the state to regulate the evil have failed completely.[1]

Against all such laws and regulations there is also the ethical objection that to safeguard the wrong-doer is to encourage him in his evil course. At first sight this is unanswerable, but the issue is not so simple as it seems. As already pointed out, the wretched consequences fall not upon the sinner alone, but also upon the innocent. The most strenuous upholder of the justice of the law which visits the sins of the father upon the children, surely cannot regard with satisfaction the pitiable condition of a family—to take but one instance—in which the mother is a chronic invalid; one baby died soon after it was born; two children are idiots; one is deaf and dumb; all these misfortunes being the consequence of the sin of the father in his heedless youth. Fortunately, it may be said, families thus diseased tend to become extinct. In a Moscow hospital, 2,002 children were born in ten years tainted with disease, and no less than 1,425 of them died soon after birth.[2] Truly it is said of the strange woman that "she hath cast down many wounded; yea, all her slain

[1] See paper by Howard A. Kelly, M.D., Journ. Amer. Med. Assoc., Feb. 10, 1906.

[2] To somewhat lighten the gloom of this part of our subject, it should be stated that parents who have been infected do not in every case transmit the disease to their offspring. It is only when the virus is in a state of activity, and conditions favorable to its transmission are present, that it passes to the next generation. Moreover, the disease is curable under appropriate treatment, and may die out without any treatment whatever. This has some bearing on the history of Job. After his recovery, he became the father of ten children, presumably healthy; the daughters certainly were without physical blemish, for "in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job."

are a mighty host; her house is the way to the grave, going down to the chambers of death" (Prov. vii. 26). For the sake of the innocent, ought not some check to be imposed on the spread of this terrible disease?

In the next place, the majority of the women drawn into the maelstrom of this evil, to a considerable degree, are morally irresponsible; they have not found the level path of life; their ways are unstable, and they know it not (Prov. v. 6). In Paris a large number of them were examined for the stigmata of degeneration, for the marks of defective mental and physical development, and none were found free from them. In their incapacity for steady labor of any kind; in their childish vanity, fickleness, extravagance, and immodesty, they are the belated representatives among us of that primitive state of human society, hetaristic, polyandrous, or polygamous, when the marriage tie was extremely loose; they are reversions to the type of their remote ancestors. When this fact is recognized in all its bearings, their state becomes all the more pitiable. Because of their inability to cope with the conditions of modern civilization, our government protects aborigines of the country. In the present state of society the immoral cannot be placed in reservations; but ought not such irresponsible, atavic creatures to be prevented from doing irreparable injury to themselves and others?

The complete solution of the problem has not yet been found, but it is hoped that the presentation of its difficulties will induce all those who are working to promote the moral and physical well-being of the race to view the subject broadly, and carefully to inquire into the facts for themselves before opposing any measure which has for its object the prevention or control of the social evil.

To return to Job: the endurance of his faith through the

severe trials imposed on it was proof of its heroic and disinterested quality; he was not religious, as Satan implied, simply because it was the best policy from a selfish point of view. Against the insinuations of his friends, he held fast to his righteousness, and would not let it go; he was not sinless, as he himself confessed, but he knew that no sin of his was adequate to explain the ruin which had overtaken him. In the end he is justified by God. No solution is given of the problem which perplexed him, for none can be given this side of the grave which shall silence all questioning. God simply refuses to answer, yet somehow the question is answered. "Job flings at God one riddle, God flings back at Job a hundred riddles, and Job is at peace." He wins that complete resignation which lies at the heart of religion, when all feverish strugglings and pleadings with fate are abandoned, and we let the waves and billows of misfortune beat over us uncomplainingly, and say: It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth to him good. And Job answered the Lord and said:—

> **"Behold I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?**
> **I will lay my hand upon my mouth."**

According to the epilogue, the disease of Job disappears, and he is restored to more than his former wealth and greatness. The trials of life do not always end so happily, but such a consummation is devoutly to be wished, and perhaps it happens more often than we imagine. God does not suffer us to be tempted more than we are able to bear, and sends with every temptation its own particular way of escape. When this is taken, the issue out of every affliction, whatever it be, is for the best. Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. With the cup of earthly happiness filled to the brim, Job enjoyed life for very many years, and at last

came to the grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in, in its season. "Behold we call them blessed which endured; ye have heard of the endurance of Job, and have seen the end appointed by the Lord, how that the Lord is full of pity and merciful."