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THE  
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA

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ARTICLE I.

GIFTS OF HEALING.

BY EDWARD M. MERRINS, M.D., WUCHANG, CHINA.

THREE or four years ago, a distinguished bishop of the Episcopal Church arraigned the Christian world for its lack of interest in the general uplifting of the great mass of our people, and urged that active steps be taken at once to cure their mental and physical as well as their moral ills. "What I should like to see," said he, "is a greater understanding, a more active interest in the institutional church. I mean by that a church which provides for the social and physical welfare of its people with as much interest as it preaches at them from the Bible." Conversely, it was being asserted in the secular press that, for the first time in the life of man upon the earth, the care and cure of the body had definitely taken precedence of the care and cure of the soul, and that much of the personal influence and mystical authority exercised formerly by the priest had passed over to the physician. Short as the time has been, a surprising change, traceable to a variety of causes, has since taken place. The soul is once more regarded as the dominant partner; and ministers, sighing for new worlds to conquer, are opening clinics in connection with their churches, where they under-

take to cure disease either by mental suggestion or moral persuasion, generally the former.

The treatment of disease by suggestion, of course, is nothing new, and it has long been employed in the service of religion. In the temples of the ancient world, elaborate systems of psychotherapy were practised which can hardly be equaled in our modern institutions. "Indeed, in the pilgrimage to the temples, the preparatory practices, the temple walks, the sacrifices with musical accompaniments, the prayers, the therapeutic conversations with the priests and, above all, the oracular dreams, we recognise a series of experiences so pregnant with psycho-therapeutic possibilities that we wonder whether some healers of today are not too simple, or too lackadaisical to make their work effective."<sup>1</sup>

In the range of treatment and in the methods employed, the practitioners of psychotherapy differ somewhat from each other. Those in the Emmanuel movement confine themselves to nervous disorders certified by competent medical men to have no organic basis. Others use psychotherapy for the treatment of all disease, whether functional or organic, arguing that men have no right to limit the resources of Omnipotence, or that disease and all other forms of evil have no reality to a sound mind. The appeals and suggestions made to patients also differ, some being religious in character, others philosophical, or frankly secular. As the explanation which science gives of cure by suggestion is applicable to every case, and as therapeutic results appear to be about the same whatever the means employed, it is not surprising, though it is to be regretted, that the careful religious and psychological work of the Emmanuel movement is often grouped with that of

<sup>1</sup> Barker, on Psychotherapy, *Journal American Medical Association*, August, 1908.

Mrs. Eddy and the Christian Scientists, Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophists, Swami Vivekananda and the Vedantic Philosophers, and various other societies serving under strange banners. "Religion or philosophy," writes a free-thinking and very successful psychotherapist, "it matters little which flag one marches under, provided it is held bravely on high." And all in the long procession, it is proclaimed, are marching towards, if not already within, a new spiritual land, which even now has over two million inhabitants and a myriad of shining temples.<sup>1</sup> Turning aside from this radiant vision, it is proposed to consider soberly and broadly the relation between physical and spiritual disorder so as to indicate what appear to be the limits of psychotherapy, and how far it is wise for the average Christian minister to practise it.

I. In the first place, in opposition to those who assert that disease is commonly due to a distressed, timorous, or otherwise disordered mind, it is necessary to point out that the greater part of all the disease which afflicts mankind owes nothing whatever of its origin to mental influence, but is due to the presence within the body of pernicious micro-organisms, the patient as a rule being quite ignorant of the exact time and manner of invasion. Consider the constant and dreadful ravages of tuberculosis, cholera, bubonic plague, yellow fever, typhoid fever, leprosy, syphilis, small-pox, diphtheria, malaria, and many other infective diseases! No fear or mental perturbation ever produces them in the absence of the specific micro-organism; nor does faith, courage, or stoical indifference afford absolute protection against them. Generally speaking, they run a definite course whatever the state of

<sup>1</sup> Williams. article abstracted in *Current Medical Literature*, February, 1900.

the patient's mind may be. In pulmonary tuberculosis, for instance, so bright and hopeful is the patient that often it is difficult to convince him of the seriousness of his condition even when the disease is far advanced; but his optimism does not alter the shadow on the dial.<sup>1</sup> In all cases of infective disease, apart from the duty of giving spiritual help and consolation to those distressed in mind, body, or estate, it is difficult to see what else ministers can do in individual cases that cannot be performed at least quite as well by the laity. While it is true much remains to be done in the way of prevention and treatment, it cannot be said that the medical profession has been defeated in its contest with these diseases, and therefore it is justifiable to turn elsewhere for succor. On the contrary, in all civilized lands it has been remarkably successful in diminishing their prevalence and virulence. No other profession is so steadily undermining the ground for its own existence. In fact, if the sanitary laws it pleads for were adopted by governments, if men would boldly and wholeheartedly enter into possession of their kingdom, a prominent scientist has declared that within fifty years all epidemic disease would be abolished. As to the spiritual aspect, in thus banishing disease by the enforcement of sanitary regulations, physicians are working in harmony with the laws of God, and helping to turn, perhaps not always avowedly, the hearts

<sup>1</sup> There are constantly about three million persons seriously ill in the United States. More than half of all this sickness is due to preventable, infective disease. The one scourge of tuberculosis kills one hundred and sixty thousand a year, and keeps in chronic invalidism seven hundred thousand more. One million people suffer from influenza in the course of a year, the duration of the disease in each case ranging from one week to four. About two hundred thousand have typhoid, with an average illness of sixty days. Malaria has an equally bad record. At least five hundred thousand children are ill for an average period of ten days from diphtheria, and the other preventable diseases of childhood.

of men to him; for the diminution of sickness, premature mortality, and the sorrow of bereavement makes it easier for many to believe in the love and goodness of God. Healing is none the less Divine, because remedies are used. To attempt to treat these diseases by mental suggestion; to argue they are only a fiction of the mind, and not the retribution for the neglect or violation of the laws of health; to care not whether people continue to breathe impure air, drink polluted water, or overtask their bodies and minds, is not rendering the best service to mankind. The Christian minister, besides performing faithfully the duties of his own high office, may work loyally with the medical profession for the good of the whole community by instructing his congregation how to check the spread of contagion in time of epidemics, as was done by the ministers of Chicago a year or two ago.

II. A very large number of the remaining diseases depend upon structural changes in the tissues of the body which do not affect the mind, except as it is affected by misfortune of any kind. No mental influence so far as we know, can restore to the normal state the tissues of a cirrhotic liver or kidney, or the seriously damaged valves of the heart. For a time a patient so afflicted may be induced by persuasion or suggestion to believe there is nothing the matter with him, but sooner or later the actual condition cannot be ignored. Unless mercifully removed by sudden death, the close of life in such cases may be marred by bitter disappointment and by loss of faith. In this class of disease, the clergy can, by spiritual advice given with courage, tact, and kindness, impart to the patient fortitude and cheerfulness; and thus dissipate, not perhaps the disease with its physical pain, but that element of mental suffering of which it is often the nucleus — the feeling of neglect, injustice, and cruelty, all the hard and

proud thoughts concerning the providence of God, which make affliction only the harder to bear. In thus invigorating the whole nature there may result physical benefit, often to a surprising degree, as well as spiritual peace. More will be said on this point later.

III. We pass now to diseases in which both body and mind are disordered. In most of these it is the body which is primarily at fault; and, as a rule, the mind cannot regain its normal tone until the physical fault is rectified. This is not always possible. In the pronounced insanities due to structural disease of the brain, the mind is in complete bondage to the body, and there is no hope of deliverance this side of the grave. The physical origin of the mental disorder is obvious in such extreme cases. But there are numerous conditions in which the dependence of moral and intellectual disorder upon physical ill-health is not so manifest, though none the less real; and to regard such patients as wholly responsible for their ill-health, to tell them if they would only exercise faith, or make some strong effort of the will, their disease would wholly disappear, is cruel and unjust; and those who hold such views, unless they are very careful to cultivate the grace of compassion, must come to regard the sick with either scorn or indifference. Insanity itself, for example, does not always come as a bolt out of the blue; its approach may be so gradual, the deepening of its degrees so imperceptible, that long before the patient is placed under restraint he may have ceased to be justly responsible for his peculiar conduct. Damage to the brain such as occurs in apoplexy, rarely allows of perfect recovery, and after severe and prolonged fevers there may be lasting mental weakness. Just as a scar remains as the evidence of an old wound, so cerebral disease or injury leaves, as it were, its scar on the character.

In almost all forms of disease there is evidence of the same close connection between physical and moral disorder. Epileptic patients are often moody, irritable, liable to sudden and uncontrollable outbursts of murderous fury. Syphilitic disease may end in insanity, and the memory of wrong doing is apt to persist through the mental confusion. Locomotor ataxia may be accompanied by morbid suspicions and delusions of persecution. Those who have been afflicted with chorea in childhood, in later life are subject to hysteria and other neuroses. An acute attack of gout occasionally clears the mind of despondency, perhaps of insanity. Patients with kidney disease are apt to be depressed, irritable, of violent temper. In heart disease, according to the lesion, there may be either exaltation of ideas and emotional instability passing on to mania; or anxiety, vague fears, sleeplessness, ending in melancholia. Many young persons of neurotic inheritance, if attacked by phthisis become suspicious, obstinate, and irritable; the same disease in the old is often accompanied by hypochondria or melancholia.<sup>1</sup>

Various internal secretions of the body when lost, or abnormal, affect the mind. It is well known that when the thyroid gland is diseased and its functions obliterated, a species of idiocy is produced in children called cretinism; in adults, myxoedema follows with grossness of body and hebetude of mind. The accession and decline of normal functions may be attended by intellectual and moral disturbance. The bright, charming girl, on the near approach of womanhood, may lose her intellectual vivacity, become dull and awkward, and disappoint the hopes founded on her previous abilities. The period of late middle life is even more disturbing. Many an amiable, unselfish woman then becomes difficult to please,

<sup>1</sup>Savage, *Insanity and Allied Neuroses.*

irritable, shrewish. It has been ingeniously suggested, that to this reason, in part at least, must be attributed the bad reputation which in every country is given to a great many mothers-in-law, for they are usually in this fretful period when their daughters marry.<sup>1</sup> It is also a sad fact that the degenerative changes of old age in the other sex may have a disastrous moral effect. Not infrequently there is seen in courts of justice, the gruesome spectacle of an old and hitherto honored citizen being lectured for conduct for which it cannot justly be said he is responsible. Little does the judge know when he inflicts some draconic sentence upon the trembling wretch before him, with what truth he might say to himself: "There, but for some mysterious difference in bodily organization, stands Mr. Justice Shallow."<sup>2</sup>

Addiction to drugs perverts the moral character. The opium-smoker, morphine habitué, cocaine fiend, dipsomaniac, and other wretched victims, defy all moral and social laws in order to satisfy their cravings. "The patients who may be everything that is good and refined when in health, become the most unmitigated liars and the most contemptible cowards and sneaks." The persistent use of chloral makes a person irritable and melancholy, and develops suicidal or homicidal impulses.<sup>3</sup>

And so one might go on indefinitely, did space permit, for this is a large and intricate subject. It would be untrue, and subversive of the sanctions of the moral law, to assert that moral disorder always has a physical basis, but there can be no question it has this basis more often than we are willing to grant. Even the use of drugs, at first for amusement,

<sup>1</sup> Dubois, *The Psychic Treatment of Nervous Disorders*.

<sup>2</sup> Allbutt, *System of Medicine*, art. "Vice, Crime, and Insanity," vol. viii. p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Savage, *Insanity and Allied Neuroses*.

or the relief of pain, becomes at last a frightful physical tyranny, the fetters being none the less real because forged by the patient himself. To influence a morbid mind by suggestion or persuasion without at the same time using medical means to relieve or cure the accompanying bodily disorder, is only dealing with the case partially and ineffectively, particularly in those conditions (cretinism, myxoedema, syphilis, etc.) in which it is known positively that certain medicines have a most beneficial effect.

On the other hand, moral means are not to be neglected. In those who have reached the depths in their craving for drugs, the one hope of permanent cure lies in a complete transformation of the moral character. "No human being has ever been endowed with the degree of resolution and strength of character that are needed to escape unaided from the tyranny of such a habit."<sup>1</sup> And no aid will accomplish lasting deliverance unless it is Divine. Hence, from the spiritual point of view, it is not an encouraging feature of the mind-healing movement, to read of a clergyman sending drunkards to a neighboring medical clinic to be hypnotized into a sober life. No wonder those at the clinic have composed the cynical couplet:—

"Conversion is suggestion just disguised;  
The new man is the old man hypnotized."

With regard to cases of drunkenness reported to have been cured by hypnotism, it must be remembered that many drunkards are periodical or paroxysmal drunkards, able to keep sober for periods varying from a month to a year or more, and then, more or less suddenly, seized with a craving for drink so intense and overmastering that it demands gratification at any and every cost. During the sober period, such

<sup>1</sup> Allbutt, *L.C.*, p. 273.

persons may be easily deceived into thinking that they are permanently cured.

IV. There remain for consideration the disorders in which psychic influences are dominant. These form the particular domain of the mind-healer. Its boundaries are somewhat indefinite. The leaders of the Emmanuel movement confine themselves to the treatment of neurasthenia, hysteria, psychasthenia, imitative chorea, hypochondria, and melancholia. Many writers regard imitative chorea and psychasthenia as forms of hysteria. Hypochondria and melancholia, except in their very lightest degrees, are serious conditions, often incurable, and almost always demand confinement in asylums. Practically neurasthenia or hysteria is the diagnosis in nearly all the cases which pass into the hands of the mind-healer. Neurasthenia is defined as a condition of nervous weakness and irritability, its particular stigma being a chronic state of moral, mental, and physical fatigue. In hysteria, hard to define exactly, the patients are abnormally sensitive, emotional, and the mind is peculiarly open to suggestion from every quarter.

These disorders are said to be functional, which simply means that we are ignorant of the precise physical condition which underlies them. In any case, it must be borne in mind: first, that the great majority, if not all, have inherited a weak, unstable nervous constitution, and that this is the remote cause of their breakdown in the stress and worry of life: "The event that brought on the acute symptoms was only the drop of water that made the vessel overflow";<sup>1</sup> next, that grave organic disease may be mistaken for neurasthenia or hysteria even by very skilful physicians;<sup>2</sup> lastly, that disorders which

<sup>1</sup> Saville, "On the Psychology and Psychogenesis of Hysteria," *The Lancet*, February 13, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> See Buzzard, *Simulation of Hysteria by Organic Nervous Disease*; Allbutt, *System of Medicine*, vols. II. p. 887; VIII. p. 155; Du-

at first were functional may after a time become organic.

Admitting the existence of functional nervous disorders, and that cases are fairly common, is it true they are increasing at such an alarming rate as to imperil our civilization? Is America, particularly, a land of nervous wrecks to such an extent as to threaten our very existence as a nation? Competent foreign observers do not think so.<sup>1</sup> Pride in the strenuousness of our life ought not to lead us to exaggerate its penalties. Is there ever an epidemic of nervous disorder

*bois, op. cit.*, pp. 186, 191. One peculiar painful case may serve as a warning. A girl, eighteen years old, apparently quite healthy and strong, began to find difficulty in speaking, and in swallowing food. A consultation of prominent medical men was held, and the provisional diagnosis of hysteria was made, and the treatment regulated accordingly. One evening on the exhibition of her symptoms, her mother warned her somewhat sharply to control herself. "The next day the patient came into her mother's room about 8.30 A. M.—to protest, as well as she might, poor child, that she really could not help these eccentricities,—when suddenly she fell to the ground, was convulsed, turned blue, and died at her mother's feet" (*Allbutt, op. cit.*, vol. vii. p. 238). Such obscure cases of organic disease show the need of caution in ascribing subjective symptoms to fancy, the subconscious mind, or to malingering.

<sup>1</sup> "To test the claims of the American people to a bad eminence in nervous instability, I spent two hours of one day with a distinguished student of such diseases in the street cars of New York in order to watch the multitudes of people who passed through the cars; for I had formed the opinion that, instead of a prevalent lack of nervous control in the American people, I had noticed in them a remarkable steadiness of demeanor; and this was admitted even by my friend, and rather to his own surprise. By their marvelous organisation of business, and in virtue of the elasticity and optimism of the national temperament, the American is no more worn by his town life than are our own citizens [in England], but indeed less so. The truth is that neurasthenia is found no more in the market place than in the rectory or in the workhouse; no more in busy citizens than in idle damsels; development of the higher nervous centres makes for control, while, on the other hand, listlessness, frivolity and adversity are not confined to any one rank in life" (*Allbutt, System of Medicine, vol. viii. p. 135*).

among us at all comparable with the Dancing Mania of Europe in the Middle Ages, or with the other obsessions of that gloomy period? Are our soldiers and sailors in time of war more inclined to panic fear than those of other nations? Do indoor assemblies of our peaceful citizens behave worse than others when accidents happen or there is an outbreak of fire? There is but one answer to these questions. Our citizens are no more neurotic than other urban peoples. Neurasthenia is common all over the world. It is a frequent disease in Finland, where stress of mind is probably no common peril. The fact is that with the disappearance of the more dramatic forms of nervousness, such as demoniacal possession and frenzied dancing, more attention is paid to the subtle forms. As Dubois observes: "In spite of the bitter struggle for existence, a sentiment of altruism pervades humanity. We all work for the good of all. It is only when we begin to gather up the wrecks of life that we stop to count them, and that is, in a long measure, why they seem so numerous to-day."

Religious healers, as a class, are said to be unfamiliar with, and averse to, the labor of collecting and publishing accurate statistics. In default of these and viewing the matter as a whole, the conclusion is reached that the fields which are white unto the harvest for the sickle of the psychotherapist who confines himself to nervous diseases which have been pronounced by competent physicians to be purely functional, are not as numerous and large as the stir the movement is making would lead one to suppose.

The subject of treatment must now be briefly considered. Psychotherapy may be either suggestive or rational. In conjunction with mental healing, measures of physical therapy,

such as rest, isolation, baths, massage, electricity, change of diet, etc., are used by some psychotherapists; but these measures can have only a very indirect effect upon the mind, and their prescription belongs to the physician rather than to the clergyman.

First, as to the treatment of disease by suggestion. Suggestibility may be defined as a condition of mind in which the conscious, thinking ego abdicates its functions more or less, and the subject passively accepts ideas, which influence his beliefs and conduct.

The suggestion may be the subject's own act, as when helpful words are repeated on falling asleep for the purpose of influencing the subconscious mind; or, as when a business man, to overcome his tendency to worry, takes a hundred yellow-eyed beans, and drops one into a little box every morning, repeating the formula: "Worry is in the bean, and the bean is in the box." There is nothing to prevent a clergyman advising auto-suggestion of this kind if he thinks it helpful to the spiritual life.

Suggestions may be impressed on the mind by another person when the subject is awake, asleep, or in a hypnotic trance. In order that hetero-suggestion in the waking state be effective, the subject must have a receptive mind, and strong faith in the operator and in the means employed. This faith may be kindled in various ways, good, bad, and indifferent; for numerous cures happen under every form of suggestive treatment, whether given by orthodox ministers using their authority as officers of the church; or by Christian Scientists, who deny the existence of disease and emphasize the saving grace of an optimistic mind; or by regular physicians, with their scientific and often very impressive apparatus for diagnosis and treatment; or by charlatans, with their

advertisements of wonderful cures. "No matter whether the object of your faith is real or false, the results you get will be equally good," was the conclusion reached long ago by Paracelsus, from his own experience.

With regard to suggestions implanted in the mind when the subject is asleep or in a hypnotic trance, it is true that physical benefit is occasionally conferred in this way, as in the functional ailments of childhood; but as a general rule, surely it is not wise to employ it. Fallacies lurk in the arguments that psycho-neuroses are wholly diseases of the subconscious mind, and that the latter is the highest, the most spiritual part of man, the seat of conscience, of God's most intimate presence in the soul. Men's true personality is being slowly formed by all the multifarious experiences of life; but the remembrance of those experiences does not actually form the personality, even though they seem to be permanently embedded in the consciousness. In hysteria and neurasthenia, the main fault lies not in the insurgency of the subconsciousness, but in the weakness of the will, in the relaxation of the surveillance and control which it should never cease to exercise over the subconsciousness. Hypnotic suggestion does not strengthen the will; on the contrary, it simply weakens a weak will still more. It is passing strange that Christian ministers should undertake work of this kind on a large scale, when a distinguished free-thinking psycho-therapist, speaking only in the name of science, despises and denounces it, rightly asserting that "the therapy which cures ought to be based not on suggestions artificially put into the mind, but on lasting philosophical views which can serve as a guide in life."

Of more importance is the treatment by moral persuasion. Rational psychotherapy attempts to remove morbid doubts

and fears, fixed ideas of physical, intellectual, or moral helplessness, or whatever the mental weakness may be, by training the voluntary attention, schooling the emotions, and educating the will. The whole personality is thus strengthened, and the beneficial results more thorough and lasting than in treatment by suggestion. As it has been well said, suggestion enters into the understanding by the back stairs, while logical persuasion knocks at the front door; the one appeals to blind faith, the other to reason.

Of course, this treatment is not novel. Wherever and whenever infirm wills and morbid minds have been braced and strengthened by lessons inculcating hope, faith, courage, fortitude, self-control, it was rational psychotherapy. To practise it successfully, demands gifts of the highest order. The professional mind-healer should make a careful study of the patient's mental and physical condition; he must be a skilled psychologist, able to unravel the intricacies of a disordered mind and find the clue leading to recovery; an expert logician, quick in argument so as to answer at once the shifty, tortuous, illogical arguments of the patient; possessed of imperturbable kindness, patience, and sympathy; not easily discouraged by slow progress or absolute failure, for this will assuredly form part of his experience, as even in the most skilful hands, psychotherapy is not the panacea which its enthusiastic advocates claim it to be. Slow and painstaking work of this kind has its rewards, but it does not always bring public notoriety; it is treatment by suggestion, so mysterious to the laity, upon which most mind-healers rely for their influence, and apart from it few of them have any power. The Christian minister is, or should be, quite familiar with rational psychotherapy, for no new burden is laid upon him if he is called to comfort and help the weak-hearted, to raise

up those who fall, and to help us all to beat down finally our spiritual adversaries under our feet. Whether the clergy should attempt to heal disease directly, is a question which requires further examination.

When the Swiss philosopher Henri Amiel was ill, like many another philosopher, he did not bear his sufferings uncomplainingly. Especially did the deficiencies of his medical attendants weigh heavily upon him.

"The principal grievance which I have against the doctors [he wrote] is that they neglect the real problem, which is to seize the unity of the individual who claims their care. Their methods of investigation are far too elementary; a doctor who does not read you to the bottom is ignorant of essentials. To me the ideal doctor would be a man endowed with profound knowledge of life and the soul, intuitively divining any suffering or disorder of whatever kind, and restoring peace by his mere presence. The model doctor should be at once a genius, a saint, and a man of God."

There are few physicians who will not acknowledge with a sigh their failure to reach this high standard, and not many who would venture to join the order of sacred medical men which it is suggested should be created and added to the ranks of the regular ministry. But may this not be taken as the description of the ideal minister, and are there not those in all branches of the Christian church able and willing to reach this standard? Not all can do so, perhaps, for the power of "intuitively divining any suffering or disorder of whatever kind, and restoring peace by his mere presence," requires gifts and graces of a special kind.

Turning to the early church for guidance, it is evident from the New Testament that certain men within it possessed the gift of healing. Some of them were appointed elders;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the church at the end of the second century, those who had the gift of healing, after careful investigation had been made as to whether they really possessed the gift, and that the cure really came from God, were made elders. (Canons of Hippolytus; Lindsay, *The*

others seem to have formed a charismatic ministry which persisted for a long while side by side with the settled ministry, and then passed away as an order, or became merged in the order of exorcists.<sup>1</sup> In Protestant churches, exorcism is now seldom practised; but power to heal the sick has never wholly departed from them. In the Episcopal Church it is still held to be resident in the episcopate.<sup>2</sup>

1. Whether this gift resulted from the strengthening and exaltation of natural faculties by the impartation of the Holy Spirit at the time of conversion, or was an entirely new acquisition, cannot be determined positively; but the former view seems the more probable. In any event, the healer must have been endowed with the subtle charm of manner designated personal magnetism, the peculiar power which enables a person to win the confidence of others to a remarkable degree, and bend their hearts and minds to his own will. In every generation there are those who possess this power. The very successful physician often owes his success to it rather than to greater knowledge or skill above his fellows.

2. Next the gift implied an intense and loving sympathy with man simply as man. "In order to change the state of

Church and Ministry in the Early Centuries.) Later prayer was made at ordinations that God would bestow the gift of healing on those who did not possess it. "Let a presbyter be ordained . . . if in all things he be plous and quiet, so that being thus, he may . . . be counted worthy of the gift of healing." (*Testamentum Domini* (fifth century). Puller, *The Anointing of the Sick*, p. 292.)

<sup>1</sup> In the form for ordaining exorcists in the Roman Pontifical, occurs the petition that the ordinand may be "a physician of God's church, worthy of approval, confirmed by the possession of the grace of healing and of heavenly power."

<sup>2</sup> "Be to the flock of Christ, a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost" (*Church of England Prayerbook: The Consecration of Bishops*).

mind of any one who has fallen," writes the French psycho-therapist from whom we have already quoted, "it is not sufficient to grant him extenuating circumstances and to show him pity: one must love him as a brother, and stand shoulder to shoulder with him with a profound sense of our common weakness." The prophet Elisha could do no mighty work by sending his servant to lay his staff upon the unconscious body of the Shunamite's son; he had to go personally and apply his own nature to the child's needs: mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands, "and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm." The same may, indeed, be reverently said of the Lord Jesus Christ. In making himself one with our humanity, "we come to understand how his deeds of power were deeds of sovereign sympathy: how the words in which Isaiah spoke of the servant of the Lord, as taking our infirmities and bearing our sicknesses, were indeed fulfilled when the Son of man healed the sick who came to him; healed them, not by dispensing from his opulence a blessing which cost him nothing, but by making his own the ill which he removed."<sup>1</sup>

3. The gift of the Holy Spirit was proof they were men of an honest and good heart. In the liturgies of the Greek Church, they and their worthy successors are called "the holy and healing unmercenaries." Who can estimate the effluent healing power of a saintly nature over the weak and fearful? Whether the subject is influenced objectively or subjectively may be disputed; but there can be no question that in all ages the prophet's prediction has been fulfilled, that a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Under the shelter of a strong and

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Christus Consummator*, p. 26.

spiritual personality, weaker natures, protected from the desolating drift of worry, doubt, fear, and other maladies of the soul, are enabled to regain spiritual and often physical health.

4. The healers in the early church were men of faith: it was the prayer of *faith* which saved the sick. They came to the sick in the confidence that Christ, whose ministers they were, could and would work wonders through them for the banishment of pain and disease. The anointing of the patient with oil may have had some therapeutic efficacy in itself.<sup>1</sup> At any rate, it was much used in ancient times for the cure of disease.<sup>2</sup> But surely the significance of the rite was mainly sacramental though it was not a sacrament.<sup>3</sup> It was an outward sign to the healer himself, as well as to others, of the inward and spiritual grace which he possessed, thus strengthening him for the work he was undertaking, and strengthening in the patient's mind the hopeful expectation of cure. With strong faith on each side there is no good reason for doubting that a cure often resulted.

5. They were men of prayer: they prayed over the sick person, and knew it was prayer that saved him. The anoint-

<sup>1</sup> See Simpson, *Treatise on the Plague*, pp. 317, 318.

<sup>2</sup> Hastings's Dictionary, art. "Anointing."

<sup>3</sup> With regard to the connection between this anointing and the Roman Catholic rite of Extreme Unction, there is no historic trace in the first seven centuries of the Christian era, of sick people being anointed for any other purpose than restoration of health to body and mind. Nor during this time was the blessing and administration of the oil confined to the clergy; laymen and laywomen blessed and administered it, and the patient himself, in certain circumstances, whoever he might be, could anoint himself. How it came to pass that inunction for the healing of physical disease came to be transformed into a sacrament for the remission of sins is not clear. Probably, as the church lost the first fervour of her faith and love, it became more and more rare for recovery to follow the anointing, until at last, in order to preserve the rite, its efficacy was held to be purely spiritual. (See Puller, *The Anointing of the Sick*.)

ing of the patient with oil stimulated prayer by gathering it up into a focus and drawing forth prayer from hearts that were perhaps unaccustomed to the spiritual effort which it involves. To the secular psychotherapist, the power of prayer is a stumbling-block. "In Catholicism the touching of relics is enough, and Lourdes has become the place of the most frequent pilgrimages. Among the Protestants, they cure by the laying on of hands, and by their almost sacrilegious prayer, which consists in asking God to grant their desires."<sup>1</sup> As Christians we believe in the efficacy of prayer: Scripture is full of injunctions to pray. It is surely not unreasonable to hold that, owing to the solidarity of mankind, prayer by one person may open channels, as it were, through which God's grace may flow to those who need his help. When the disciples in their perplexity came to Christ and asked why they were unable to heal the demoniac boy, he told them that certain forms of disease could only be cured by the prayerful. As to prayer offered by the patient himself, it is certain that it brings mental and physical benefits as well as spiritual. Many a distressed mind has been quieted and healed by daily prayer.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, we conclude that if Christian ministers of the present day entered into their full heritage and possessed the qualities here enumerated to the same degree as the early

<sup>1</sup> Dubois, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> "As an alienist and one whose whole mind has been concerned with the sufferings of the human mind, I would state that of all the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits, and all the miserable sequelæ of a distract mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple *habit* of prayer. . . . Let there be but the habit of nightly communion, not as a mendicant, nor repeating of words more adapted to the tongue of a sage, but as a humble individual who submerges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to clean the spirit, and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emo-

Christians,— if they were endowed with a strong, winning personality, sympathetic, full of faith and of a holy spirit, and fervent in prayer, — there can be no doubt of their ability to help the sick far more than is possible to an ordinary individual whatever his qualifications may be. Almost intuitively they would divine spiritual suffering and disorder of whatever kind, and be able to restore peace by their mere presence. Indeed, not only the exceptionally gifted, but all true ministers as it is possess this power to some extent. So equipped, why should they limit their ministrations to those with functional nervous disorders, as if these were more important or more pitiable than all other forms of disease? Do not all who suffer from mental or physical infirmity need their help? To go further, why is it necessary for ministers to concern themselves overmuch or at all with the nature of the patient's physical disease? Is not such knowledge often embarrassing?<sup>1</sup> If a man is ill in body and distracted in mind, cannot tonalism, than any other therapeutic agent known to me. Our schools are as gardens for the cultivating, judicious pruning, and sustaining of young life, by gardeners who have, or ought to have, full knowledge of the tender plants under their care. Our churches are to the moral welfare of the community as our schools are to the intellectual. The church has been aptly termed 'God's Garden,' where the art of living good lives and the making of character is helped by specially appointed gardeners" (Hyslop, Address before the British Medical Association, *British Medical Journal*, October 14, 1905).

<sup>1</sup> A few months ago, the writer had to attend a young man afflicted with melancholia. The patient had been very well educated in a mission school, and was preparing to study for the ministry, when he was offered and accepted a lucrative government appointment. Under the pressure of work and responsibility, and with heart not at rest over the change in his career, his mind became unbalanced. This seemed a case very suitable for psychotherapy. When the writer learned, however, that the grandfather and great-grandfather of the patient both went insane, he could not muster the indispensable assurance for successful psychotherapy. Colleagues who were ignorant of this fact were able to speak with greater boldness, and the young man, at present, is in his right mind.

the minister relieve the mental distress without feeling it is incumbent upon him to cure also the bodily ill? Let that be left to the physician. At the same time, coöperation between physician and minister is most desirable. If, as in the tragedy of Macbeth, the physician is forced to admit that he cannot minister to a mind diseased, then, instead of saying, Therein must the patient minister to himself, although the patient may be utterly powerless to do so, let him send for a clergyman and give him all the information concerning the disease it is desirable he should know. The truth seems to be that in the Protestant reaction against the abuses of the Roman Catholic confessional, there has not been always that intimate, confidential relation between the minister and his people which induces them to send for him for the express purpose of opening their hearts to him in the hour of their distress. The whole mind-healing movement is another illustration of the truth of the old saying that every heresy and schism is the vengeance of a suppressed or distorted truth.

One more question: Will healing of body and mind invariably follow these spiritual ministrations? No: and we boldly maintain it is better it should not. Man in his complete personality must be saved; and to accomplish this was the main object of the healers in the early church: through prayer *the man* was saved, and his sins were forgiven. Physical health, while most desirable, is not the greatest, most heavenly boon in this world; but spiritual health is. There is a distinction between psychic and spiritual healing. By the former the patient may be restored to physical and mental health, but he does not necessarily undergo that spiritual transformation which qualifies him to join the ranks of the twice-born; not even when the cure has been wrought in the name of, and by the power of, religion. When our Lord healed the ten lepers,

only in him who returned to give thanks was the healing spiritual; he was saved by his faith. The man who was blind from his birth received physical sight, but it was not till he met Jesus in the temple that he received his spiritual sight. The assertion that healing of the sick is of the very essence of Christ's message to humanity cannot be admitted without qualification.<sup>1</sup> If the demons of care, doubt, and fear are expelled, and no good influences take their place, there is the very highest authority for saying that the last state of the man may be worse than the first. It is better he should continue to suffer, if his suffering and desire for help bring him to God.

It is to be feared this mind-healing movement does not wholly rest on such sure spiritual foundations as will enable it to withstand the shocks and storms of life. It practically holds that imperfect creatures in an imperfect world have a prescriptive right to be happy and free from pain; that pain is of necessity an evil; or, to put the doctrine in its extreme form as expounded by the Christian Scientists, in a world governed by a God who is at once all-loving and all-powerful, pain cannot really exist: it is but the unreal creation of mortal mind. Hence, in contradistinction to the old teaching, Be good, and you will be happy, the new message is, Be happy, and you will be good. So we seem to have returned to a hedonistic and very attractive gospel.

"What philosophical truths can be more advantageous to society than those here delivered, which represent virtue in all her genuine and most engaging charms, and make us approach her with ease, familiarity and affection? The dismal dress falls off, with which many divines and some philosophers have covered her; and nothing appears but gentleness, humanity, beneficence, affability; nay, even at proper intervals, play, frolic, and gaiety. She talks not of useless

<sup>1</sup> Marshall, art. "Psychotherapeutics and Religion," *Hilbert Journal*, January, 1909.

austerities and rigours, suffering and self-denial. She declares that her sole purpose is to make her votaries, and all mankind, during every period of their existence, if possible, cheerful and happy; nor does she ever willingly part with any pleasure but in hopes of ample compensation in some period of their lives. The sole trouble which she demands is that of just calculation, and a steady preference of the greater happiness. And if any austere pretenders approach her, enemies to joy and pleasure, she either rejects them as hypocrites and deceivers, or if she admits them in her train, they are ranked among the least favored of her votaries."

As Huxley remarks in commenting on this pæan to virtue by Hume, there is more of the dance measure than will sound appropriate in the ears of most of the pilgrims who toil painfully, not without many a stumble and many a bruise, along the rough and steep roads which lead to the higher life. Virtue is undoubtedly beneficent, but though she may not talk much about suffering and self-denial, her silence on that topic may be accounted for on the principle *ça va sans dire*.

What is needed to-day is no new gospel: the old with all its hopefulness and yet unflinching sternness can alone suffice for all the experiences of life, ill-health, and death. The search after happiness in this life as the highest good is not Christianity. There is nothing meritorious in pain itself; but to extinguish all suffering in the present state of things, were that possible, would be to deprive the world of one of God's great means for the spiritual elevation and cleansing of his children.<sup>1</sup> It may be that as in the early struggles of mankind the individual had to assert himself vigorously at others' cost and pain in order to win, as it were, his own particular Adamic individuality; so in order to lift him to the higher life in which the spirit has dominion over the flesh, an altruistic life of love and service to others, pain is absolutely necessary to purge away all the self-assertion which in an earlier

<sup>1</sup> Miss Caroline Stephen. art. "Pain," *Hilbert Journal*, October, 1908.

stage of existence had to be exercised. Certainly, the more our knowledge extends as to the beliefs of primitive races, the more certain we become that the starting-point of prayer is fear of pain.<sup>1</sup> And all down the ages it has served to enrich the character, forming the virtues of fortitude, patience, self-control, wisdom, sympathy, faith. "Life grows out of sorrow and calamity, and death from ease and pleasure," wrote Mencius, the Chinese sage. Courageously and patiently borne, suffering draws men to God, and makes them one with the Captain of their salvation, who was himself perfected through suffering. If the soul shrinks from it, and benumbs itself with opiates — moral, intellectual, or physical — then, instead of receiving blessing, it drifts to a state of cowardice, weakness, isolation, and despair.

If, in addition to the usual arguments, that pain in its inception is wholly benevolent, serving the very useful purpose of protecting the organism from harm; that the greater part, if not all of it, comes as retribution for the neglect or violation of law; that it draws men together in the bonds of sympathy and helpfulness as nothing else does; that it works out an exceeding and eternal weight of glory for those who bear it rightfully, — if, in addition to these and other compensations, those with chronic or irremediable disease could be brought to see that their lives, maimed and pitiable as they seem to be, are caught up in the all-embracing plans of God; that as his suffering servants they bear witness to the world of beneficent laws which man has not yet discovered, or has neglected or violated, surely their lives would be transfigured not only by the uplifting hope of joining the glorious throng who have passed out of great tribulation; but also by the great ideal of becoming like Christ, by bearing in their degree

<sup>1</sup> "Some Thoughts about Pain," *The Lancet*, February 6, 1909.

the burden of the world's ignorance and iniquity, and so helping to take it away. However it may be with others, Christians cannot be indifferent as to the banner under which they serve:—

“The Son of God goes forth to war,  
A kingly crown to gain;  
His blood-red banner streams afar;  
Who follows in his train?

“Who best can drink his cup of woe,  
Triumphant over pain,  
Who patient bears his cross below,  
He follows in his train.

. . . . .  
“A noble army: men and boys,  
The matron and the maid;  
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,  
In robes of light arrayed.

“They climbed the steep ascent of heaven  
Through peril, toll, and pain:  
O God, to us may grace be given  
To follow in their train.”