

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

"FAITH CURES" NOT MIRACLES.]

A New York physician, Dr. Shradly, has investigated the so-called miraculous cures of Sobrader the alleged divine healer, and gives his views to the public through a New York paper. It is interesting inasmuch as it is the first time, we believe, that a scientist has taken the trouble of noticing the phenomenon seriously. Generally these so-called healers are simply ignored, a bad policy in view of the popularity they sometimes obtain. Dr. Shradly is said to be one of New York's leading physicians and the editor of a medical journal of recognized standing, and his views are entitled to consideration.

He admits that there are numerous cases of healing by Sobrader. He relates a case of a man with rheumatism. The patient had not walked in four months. Physicians had labored in vain over him. The healer struck the town and the man read of his cures. One morning at daybreak the man crept from his bed, and alone, unknown to the rest of the family, started on the road to the healer's house. It was two miles, but he half walked and half crawled it. When in sight of the healer's house he straightened up and ran. There was a line forming, and the man had to stand with other cripples for three hours until the healer touched him. When the "divine hands" were laid upon him he sobbed with joy and had to be carried out, so great was his emotion. But when borne back home he was well, and though weak from long lying in bed, he was bedridden no longer.

The doctor argues, however, that there is not, properly speaking, anything miraculous in this circumstance. The patient was really cured before he saw Sobrader. If, the doctor says, the sufferer had made the same effort for his family physician, had crawled into the street and risen to his feet by mortal effort, the muscles and the nerves would have begun to strengthen, and in a few days he would have been well. Whenever the influence of Sobrader, the doctor thinks, is beneficial, it is owing to the faith and the efforts of the patient. A soft-hearted person you can make cry by telling him a sad story; you can make him laugh with a merry one, and can arouse him to anger with a tale of wrong. In the same way susceptible persons can be influenced by "healers." They are told that they are well, and they will straighten up and walk away rejoicing.

Whether this is all there is to the alleged cures of Sobrader and other similar healers must be left to those interested in the investigation. It should be pointed out, however, that there is an essential difference between these alleged miracles and the works of power manifested both in ancient and modern times among the people of God. The latter had the great object in view to establish the claims of the servants of the Lord and the truth of their message to the world, and also to strengthen the faith of the believers. Miraculous power was the divine seal

on the credentials of the messengers and a proof of authority to administer in the ordinances of the Church, even to the extent of forgiving sins on earth. And their power to rebuke sickness was not limited to cases of rheumatism or nervous ailments, but it extended over death, the grave and demons. Here is a vast difference. Sobrader, Soblatter and the others never claimed to be the bearers of a divine message to earth. They have no commission the genuineness of which must be established by accompanying miraculous gifts. Their power does not go very far. The so-called sacred water of Lourdes, or the whitened bones of some Catholic saint are known to have exercised a similar power.

Sciences is awakening to the fact that the belief of a patient is a powerful agent for life or for death. Dr. Shradly refers to the methods of a popular French physician. When this doctor is called he takes with him a medicine case. He finds the patient sick with diphtheria. Now comes the wonderful part. The doctor places a bottle of medicine against the affected part, in this instance the patient's throat, and holds it there quietly for five minutes. "We are now giving medicine by absorption," says he. "This medicine permeates the system and acts upon the throat. It is very powerful. It acts immediately when administered in this way. You will soon go to sleep." And the patient, does go to sleep. His mind, lulled by the feeling of the bottle on his throat, passes away into slumberland, and the doctor meanwhile instructs the nurse how to take care of the patient. As often as he awakes and gets restless the bottle is reapplied. The nursing goes on, and the patient gradually recovers.

This, the doctor asserts, has succeeded in every case, except one out of eighty sick people, and their diseases ran all the way from gout to fever, from cold to serious internal troubles.

The inference is evident. The natural powers with which human beings are endowed are so wonderful as to almost resemble the supernatural power sometimes manifested by those holding the Priesthood of the Lord. The effects are sometimes so similar as to nearly deceive even the elect. There are, however, marked differences, and it is necessary to be aware of these in order not to be misled by appearances.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

Ever since the visit of the czar of Russia to the various European courts rumors have been in circulation of an agreement between Russia, England and France, looking toward a definite settlement of the Turkish question, and only a few days ago there was consternation at Constantinople, caused by a dispatch from the sultan's representative at St. Petersburg, confirming the report. What the agreement is, has not been given to the public officially, but there can be no doubt that some understanding exists, and

that it is no secret in diplomatic circles may perhaps be inferred from the non-committal reference to the matter in President Cleveland's message to Congress, in which a conviction was expressed that Christian Europe would soon find some means of terminating the oppression of the Armenians.

From statements made from time to time in European papers it seems that the basis of agreement comprises the following arrangement: The deposition of the sultan, the occupation by Russia of that part of the European Turkey situated between the Black Sea and the Bosphorus; the neutralization of Turkey and Egypt under rulers subject to international supervision; the establishment of a joint protectorate over Constantinople, and the formation of an Armenian zone, where all Armenians shall enjoy liberty of conscience. Whether these several propositions have been actually agreed upon, or whether they still are subject for negotiations does not clearly appear.

Were only Russia and England concerned, the Turkish question, it is believed, would no longer present insurmountable obstacles. The latter country would gladly accept, in Egypt and along the Red Sea, compensation for any concessions as to the disposition of the Turkish domain. But Russia cannot close a bargain with England without considering at the same time the claims of her French ally, and it is in the Nile valley that the interests of Great Britain and France continually clash. The neutrality of Egypt and a khedive under international tutelage would not remove this difficulty but merely open the way for new intrigues and diplomatic conflicts in the capital of Egypt, where the representatives of each country would overbid the other for the paramount influence.

The proposed agreement between the powers will not settle the vexed question, but it will open a way for its settlement, and this is probably all that at this time can be had in view. With the substitution of modern government for Turkish rule in Constantinople, progress will rapidly be made toward the complete victory of civilization in that important part of the home of the human family. Some more struggles between repeding barbarism and advancing civilization will undoubtedly follow, but it will be in the interest of human progress in the highest and best sense of that word.

UTAH IN AN ENGLISH NEWSPAPER.

A special correspondent of the London Telegraph has been making a tour of America, and writing letters to his journal about different parts and features of this country. He visited this city, had interviews with prominent persons here, and has attempted to write about existing conditions in Utah.

He dwells at length on the subject of woman suffrage and some of its results, treating it in a vein which may be called witty in England, but is very insipid to an American newspaper reader. He also says considerable about the abandonment of polygamy, interspersing his observations with what are evidently intended to be