

[COMMUNICATED.]

WHAT OF THE ANALOGY?

The world of humanity is subject to imperfection, sickness, disease, and death. The highways and byways of life are peopled by those afflicted; some imaginary perchance, some occasional, and some chronic. Death meets and claims its victims from all ranks and all ages, from elaborate and poor surroundings, from vastly varied conditions. While skill and wealth are applied without stint or limit in many cases, in others destitution, ignorance and neglect are in evidence; and an observer may doubt whether one condition is any more favorable to longevity and enjoyment than the other. The point reached for, however, is this, that if all men read and hear were true, there should be abundance of health and a paucity of sickness—that man or woman, if subject to all the "infirmities of the flesh," whether from heredity, from self-injury or from the so-called liabilities of life, ought to find instant and permanent relief. The public press in all its issues, from those adapted to the most highly cultivated and intelligent, to the crudest and most vicious forms of literary or trade production, gives out an everlasting stream of assertion, invitation and commendation, calculated to meet every emergency, every want, every ailment which besets that depleted, emasculated and diseased condition of human nature, which no doubt exists to quite an alarming degree for such a boasted age as ours.

The few may claim that most of this is quackery and delusion. The few, too, may seek and have the benefit of some school of medicine or other. But even from those whose profession and standing in society should indicate better things, there comes along with the less enlightened, testimonials which, if positive and direct in criminal cases and courts, would convict any man if originally arrested on the most frivolous and flimsy evidence. There are boasted panaceas for specific ailments, for general conditions and as preventives. The invalid is encouraged and deluded; the well man is inveigled and tempted; the hypochondriac is assured of relief; and all the symptoms of irregularity as to the body, are so arrayed and dilated upon, that even the one in perfect robust health concludes, almost easily, that he is so affected and that he may expect any moment to be stricken down. Millions of dollars are annually spent in this enlightened land upon nostrums of one kind and another. The shelves of every drug store and thousands of "groceries" are laden with pills, potions, extracts, solutions and combinations, liquid and otherwise, that tell in forcible language how easily the world is gulled, betrayed and robbed. The infinitesimal dilutions of homeopathy have attractions for some; the larger the bottle the heavier the pill, the more nauseous the draught, the better suited is another class; while for a different section, the concentrated dose is prepared as the all in all. The imaginary invalid is cured; nature, spite of drugs and chemicals, restores the naturally robust, and here and there probably could be found one who has received benefit from a really good thing (for him) which by irreversible law would be a positive injury to another.

That this universal feeling to quackery and proprietary medicine is in great part due to the faculty we are assured. Persons of limited means are often deterred by possible expense, the visit often counting largely more than the prescription. Others, because of the egotism and self-manifest ignorance of both the patient's condition and the remedy. An intelligent sick

person often realizes that few practitioners give time enough for the operation of things administered, and changes are so numerous that neither the professional nor the patient can tell what accomplished good, so as to utilize after increased experience and intelligence in similar cases arising from day to day.

This topic is not now introduced for criticism or offense, but because of a seeming analogy in another and quite as important a direction, that of a religious and spiritual nature. It needs no argument to prove that the world is morally and spiritually sick; that myriads of human souls are in every condition and stage of disease. There is an everywhere acknowledgment of this both tacit and active. The former philosophizes and studies man, seeks to comprehend the condition, to diagnose the disease (singular or plural) and to seek for a remedy. The active philanthropist who erects institutions for the physical ailments of man, has his counterpart in the mental, moral and religious lines of activity. Schools and education are for the ignorant, law and prisons for the morally delinquent, and churches are the hospitals of sectarianism for the sinner. Each department has its professionals. Its pharmacopoeia, and claimants for recognition are as aggressive and as self-opinionated as are the exponents of schools of medicine. These decry each other, and in advertising their wares they are often as unblushing and pretentious as are the veriest quacks, who force their pills and nostrums on a credulous and suffering humanity. There is as much unfriendly rivalry, too, between professional ministers as between allopathists and their opponents, and to multiply sympathizers and adherents is more than to make believers and to help them work out a full and complete redemption from superstition, tradition and sin. The pathology of the human soul is as little understood by sectarian physicians as is the true physiology of man by the concoctors or compounders of quack medicines, which are to deliver (?) mankind from every form and vestige of chronic and to them irremovable disease!

It needs no argument to prove, that a successful prescriber for the sick must understand his patient, the reasons for his condition, and the nature and action of the remedy he prescribes. To be this requires profound study, using as a collateral the accumulated experience of the best of his predecessors, and if he is a disciple of some "burning and shining light," he will use the methods and demonstrations of this broader authority and experience to supplement his limited own. The analogy is as near perfect as one thing can be with another in the spiritual and religious world. Unless the one who prescribes and ministers to the spiritually sick, understands the nature thereof, and the remedy for the conditions, he cannot be "a savior of men." He must graduate under "the Great Physician," one provided, not by human wisdom or foresight, but carrying supreme intelligence with a potential remedy and panacea for sin, subject to testimony both in heaven and earth as befits so great a necessity—so universal a demand. How for ages has the question been asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there?" All the appliances, organizations and ministers in Christendom, nay, in Heathendom as well—testify to this universal wail, the former alone crying out in the market places, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we!" Surely when an observer notes the variety and contrariety of mode and mood, of creed and catechism, of pretense and testimony, he is reminded of

medical quackery, through its assertions and professions, its lack of unity in prescription and administration, its disregard of diagnosis and authoritative remedy, its labored effort to vindicate schools of theology and disregard results, its failure to commend individual system through positive power and lasting good, its flagrant rejection of official claims, thereby making human wisdom equal to the divine, and its continually asserted hope that by fragmentary Christianity the world will be redeemed and man saved, as God would have him by methods peculiarly His own.

That there is good in churches and ministers is fully believed. That there is good in herbs and roots and barks, is equally true. But quackery uses each for its own ends and doubts its own prescriptions both in religion and medicine, as has been proved a thousand times. Yet this does not militate against true religion or recognized authority any more than it does against the healing art of the broad, studious, scientific, trusty friend who can teach us how to keep well, or how to deliver ourselves from the power of wasting sickness or disease. The earnestness and confident assurance of one who prescribes for sin or sickness is no guaranty of knowledge or success. The man of faith, the man of ripe experience, is modest even when positive, and to be subject to the inspiration of the Spirit "in the fear of the Lord" is a grand qualification for the healer of spiritual as of physical infirmity. To such it will never be said, "Physician, heal thyself." Robust health will be his portion because of obedience to law, and he will transmit this by example and word as his legacy for the generations yet to come.

TENNESSEE CONFERENCE.

Smyrna, Tenn., Dec. 27, 1897.

Ere the year 1897 closes, adding another period to past history, we deem it proper to inform the readers of the "News" of the progress of the work of the Lord in this part of the vineyard. A vallant band of workers, forty-two in number, are now marching to their fields of labor from the conference recently held.

Our conference convened at Duck River, Hickman Co., Tenn., on Dec. 18th, 19th and 20th. We were accorded the use of a large Christian church, in which we held our meetings. Due to the inclemency of the weather not very large crowds were in attendance, but we who did attend enjoyed a spiritual feast. Elders F. M. Lyman and M. F. Cowley, of the Council of Apostles, and E. S. Kimball were with us and did most of the speaking. However, during the services Saturday each Elder was requested to bear testimony. The principal topics spoken upon by the Apostles and Elder Kimball were, divine authority, acceptance of all truth, and the Elders as witnesses for God of the truthfulness of the Gospel.

In our Priesthood meeting of Monday, the 20th inst., we were advised to be very careful among the people, endeavoring to make friends of all, but to do it in a righteous way, also to not prepare sermons from which to speak as do the ministers of the world, but to depend wholly upon the Spirit of the Lord to lead us to preach on subjects that will be proper to be uttered at the proper place and time.

The people of Duck River did all in their power to make us comfortable and feel at home. For such kindness we are truly grateful and we invoke the blessings of Heaven upon them because of their acts of hospitality.

The energetic efforts of the Elders, through the mercies of our Father,