

us, one and another event supposed to be by divine *fiat*, is now seen to be due to natural causes, and the answers to prayer will, doubtless, when better understood, prove to be no exceptions to this rule. By prayer you merely set in motion a sympathetic spiritual machinery which has points of contact with matter, just as thought has with brain tissue, and which is found to be adequate to certain results, such as suggesting thoughts, such as inspiring emotion, such as magnetizing and controlling the nervous centres. That is my hypothesis.

219. But I am not at all afraid lest prayer should cease, nor even lest a belief in direct answers of the kind indicated above should die out. To the end of time there will probably be sufficient apparently unanswerable and obviously ungranted prayers to raise difficulties and rouse scepticism. There will always be abundant failure to comply with right conditions of prayer; but there will always be enough abundance of answers to prayer to make a widespread infidelity on this subject impossible. If it could ever be overthrown, I think it would be about this time; but I think that just now, after the fiercest of onslaughts, it is farther than ever from being overthrown.

220. After what I have said, you will find it reasonable to pray for others. You will then bring to bear upon them spiritual agencies which they may have failed to bring to bear upon themselves. Remember, to such agencies Space may be as nought. Continents may divide you, yet, like an electric flash or the passage of starlight to earth, so may be the influence that speeds to them, and the thought and impulse from the spirit realm that finds access to their brain. Of course your friend, your child, your husband, your wife, is still free—is still open to resist the influence of the heavenly as of the earthly message, in that as in the case of disease, one more means that might have succeeded has failed; but what was to be done has been done, all that could be done without interfering with the prerogative of human free will, without upsetting moral conditions. Mother, you may pray to save your son; wife, you may pray to win back your husband; child, you may pray for your parents; friends, you may pray for each other;—all *that* is restored to you rationally by the doctrine of intermediate agencies acting magnetically

through human nature. But you say, 'Is it not an insult to God to believe that my brother will be saved by my prayer?' Are the poor fed by you? are the sick healed by you? are the sorrowful comforted by you? Would they go unfed, un comforted, unhealed without you? Would God feed, heal, and comfort them direct? He might, but as a rule He does not. He sets you there to do it, and if you will not do it, often it is not done. You know that this is so. Well, you leave untried a powerful machinery within reach, out of mock humility. You will not pray, and others are not influenced that way who might be influenced that way.

221. Once more, you may pray for success, and thus open your brain to energies that inspire you to win—to compel—success. You may pray for wisdom and discretion; you may pray to be brought to the right people; you may pray to marry the right woman. There is nothing you may not rationally pray for, if you believe that by the act of prayer you are making it easy for wholesome, divinely-appointed influences to reach you, to co-operate with you, 'to undertake for you.'

222. And you who watch and you who pray will perceive that your life is filled with coincidences. They will be so piled one upon the other, that you, cautious as you are, will not resist them. And the more you use these powers, bringing here as elsewhere, everything to the bar of common sense and reason, not allowing yourself to be led further than the occasion warrants, the more you thus walk with God, the more convinced will you be that you are the centre of a circle of divine influences which will sustain and bless you indefinitely, just in proportion as you, by voluntary prayer and meditation, place yourself within the sphere of their radiant energy.

223. Men of prayer, women of prayer, do my words strike home to you? Do they interpret to you your own experiences. You felt that you were helped; you could not think how God could help you, or answer you. You felt in sickness a new revival; you were at a loss to account for it. Your doctors declare they had nothing to do with it. You spoke vaguely of God, yet what were the means He employed? You could not tell, it was all so strange. You thought you would pray desperately, hopelessly for the rescue of one dear to you. Some un-