

who discourse learnedly about will-power, imagination, and fanaticism, still the heart of the Church beats true to the belief that the prayer of faith ever has been and still is efficacious against sickness and death, and to make inoperative, when needful, the very laws of nature.

That "the prayer of faith" is taught in Scripture as a distinct positive quantity, all must admit who even cursorily read their Bibles. Examine for example such passages as the following: "For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer." Matt. 17:20, 21.

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:23, 24.

"If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." John 14:14.

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." John 16:23.

"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." 1 John 5:14, 15.

"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." James 5:15.

It will be readily admitted that this list of Scripture references could be largely increased. Now, it is our contention that these and kindred passages plainly teach that "the prayer of faith" is a distinct, positive quantity in Chris-

tianity, and in this we believe we are in harmony with the whole current of teaching in evangelical churches.

But we further maintain that this distinct something may be separated, alike from presumptuous faith (the parent of fanaticism), and the mistiness of generalities, which tend to destroy its effective power. In this latter opinion we may not be as well supported by general belief as in the former; nevertheless, all will admit that the subject is worthy of the closest consideration, and that all efforts to clear it from errors, which impair its practical value, are in order.

Now, notice that too close literalism in interpreting these passages cannot be right. To affirm, on the strength of Christ's words, that any Christian has the power, if he will use it, of removing the Rocky Mountains, for example, is absurd. And yet, if the passage be carefully studied, it will be seen that a kind of literalism in interpreting it is proper. Does it not enunciate the law that "the prayer of faith" will remove mountains?

But what is this prayer of faith? In Christ's words, it is not doubting in the heart, but believing, absolutely, that the thing desired shall be done. But this is only removing the difficulty from one thing to another. It may be as difficult to believe after this sort as to perform the miracle itself. In consonance with the Saviour's statement, St. James declares that the prayer of faith shall save the sick. This must be literally true. But the question immediately arises, Is the prayer of faith always possible when the elders are called in to make supplication for the afflicted one? If it were so, then a few elders of the right sort would suffice to banish sickness from any church.

Now, it is just at this point that we take issue with the modern teaching in the faith-cure movement. According to these teachers the prayer of faith is always possible in the sick room, and that, therefore, it is virtually a mere matter of will power on the part of the patient and elders as to whether sickness shall depart and perfect soundness of body be secured. However, we will not in this article take up this part of the question, but will confine ourselves to