

ary. So also is Mr. Grant to whom my correspondent refers.

3. I believe that God ordinarily works by means that are more or less within our knowledge, that He who made bread for the time of health, made medicine also for the day of sickness, and that both alike should be used. By eating, I do not assert that man lives by bread alone; nor by taking medicine do I assert that he is cured by that alone.

The Hindus are fatalists and despise means. They are only too ready to let their friends lie down and die, because they say God can cure them if He likes, and if He does not do so, it is His will that they should die. Or charms and spells are looked to, and journeys made to a supposed holy place, in this Island, where an image is exhibited that is said by the Roman Catholics to have fallen from heaven, and a miraculous cure is expected. Now when a man comes to me as a religious teacher expecting a supernatural cure for some simple malady, am I to magnify that bodily evil as calling for a very special exercise of faith and struggles in prayer? Or am I to impress upon him the greater evil of sin from which Jesus saves us, and for deliverance from which he ought to agonize? For an abscess ripe for the lancet we know the remedy, and so also in many cases of sickness that are daily occurrent. They cause little anxiety and are not fitted to call forth the higher exercises of faith.

4. Where means have been used and have failed, we should seek the divine guidance and blessing as to the use of others; and where no means are known to us as available, the divine power is still available to work by unknown means, or so far as we know, without them. And in such cases God has often interposed in his own way to save from danger and from sickness. Answers to believing prayer are not miraculous.

5. Shame, fear, toil, sickness and death came because of sin, and Jesus saves us from our sins; but these five remain and exercise a ministry in favour of righteousness in this sinful world. They work together for good—for peaceable fruits of righteousness in God's children. Where is the promise that sickness will flee away cured by faith in Jesus? If its ministry for the soul's good is not wrought out it will not, and it would be no mercy if it did; and if God is to be glorified in our death

more than by our living, the sickness will be unto death. It was so even when there were miraculous cures, and deliverances. Lazarus died again. Peter escaped but James was slain. The thorn remained in Paul's side, and no faith-cure delivered Timothy from his infirmity. Each however received grace to glorify God. The passages quoted, then, if taken literally of bodily sickness and applied universally, prove a great deal too much. When we say to any particular man, if you believe in Jesus he will save you from your sins, can we with the same assurance say, he will save you from your sickness also? There is a clear commission to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name; am I authorized to say, "and bodily healing too."

My correspondent says, "How soon the heathen would believe in your God if you would heal the sick in this way," that is by laying on of hands and prayer. Suppose the cure was not effected, in a case of leprosy for instance. Might it not greatly prejudice the matter of faith in Jesus for his soul's salvation. And suppose it were effected, does the case of Paul at Lystra, not suggest that likely enough they would give us the glory and wish to worship us as gods or soocerers, and when we rejected their worship be easily persuaded to stone us.

6. But what of the cures said to be effected? In many cases the disease is mental, or imaginative and so is the cure. Instances might easily be given of cures wrought by apparently accidental circumstances, quite as sudden, and quite as complete, as those produced by the faith-cure. What disease has not been cured even in its worst stage by some of our Patent Medicines? And does not the confidence with which they are recommended give them in many cases more curative power than any inherent virtue in them. The failures one never hears of. It is so with the faith-cure. Its failures are ignored or explained away. The greater number of its cures are explicable on other grounds. The few that remain as genuine answers to prayer are in perfect harmony with what I am persuaded is the safe ground to take, namely, that while we have no promise to assure us that it is God's will to cure even his own children in every case, we can ask him to do so, if it be his holy will and he will answer us yes or no according to his infinite wisdom.