

establish general truths by particular experiences. When a man proclaims the fact that he came to God for pardon and cleansing and that he obtained his heart's desire, and that now he is enabled to live a holy life, walking in all the commandments of God blameless, he emphatically testifies to the power and willingness of God in his case, but does not establish the fact that pardon and cleansing are for all. Nor can any number of witnesses establish the universality of the doctrines of forgiveness and heart purity. This must be a distinct positive revelation from God. And accordingly we go to the Bible to find it, and we believe it because we find it there established by a thousand passages of Divine truth. We teach this doctrine, we repeat, solely on the authority of God's Word. But living examples are wonderfully helpful in arousing men to the consideration of their privileges in the gospel.

So of faith cures, no multiplying of individual cases can of themselves establish the doctrine they teach as necessarily true. The fact that a patient obtains healing in answer to the prayer of faith whilst holding these extreme views concerning faith-cures, does not tend to establish his views as correct. We ourselves can recount a recent experience, when, although holding, as we do now, views antagonistic to the extreme teachings of this system, we were given the prayer of faith for a certain disease with which we had been afflicted for a few days, and the moment we used the heaven-appointed remedy the answer came in instant freedom from the disease, as evinced by the immediate disappearance of the pain which is a necessary part of that disease.

There was no effort of will-power required; no absurd assertion, again and again repeated, that we were healed whilst still suffering pain; no temptation to resort to the fanciful thought that we were certainly healed, but that now the pain, although the same, was a temptation of the devil. When the prayer of faith is given, the results are ever according to the faith given and need no specious arguments such as excite the smile of intelligent observers. But our argument from this

personal allusion is this, that our experience in no way establishes our views concerning faith-cures as correct. This will be readily admitted by those who differ in their teachings from us. But we demand the same with regard to them; for it is a poor rule that does not work both ways. We maintain that the relation of the most wonderful cures on the part of others cannot, in the nature of things, go any way towards strengthening extreme teachings on this subject.

We gladly admit the rich nature of many of these experiences, and rejoice with them as we listen to their relation or read of them in our various exchanges. We unhesitatingly give them our God-speed. We believe that the relation of experiences concerning healing, on all suitable occasions, is calculated to do good in many ways. We do not hesitate to make public any part of our Christian experience, at the call of the Spirit, and we freely exhort all to follow us as we follow Christ in this matter. But one can easily see how testimony of this kind can be made injurious, if the claim is put forth that individual testimony establishes general truths.

Finally, the outcome of our discussion of the facts of experience connected with the faith-cure movement is, that we are shut up entirely to the teachings of the Bible as to whether or no it is possible for all to be freed from sickness or disease of the body, or as to whether the prayer of faith which saves the sick, and which under the blessing of God raises them up, is always in order, being available any moment and for all.

Hence we conclude that the subject of a faith-cure, however marvellous the circumstances of his healing, has no vantage ground in discovering or teaching the universal possibility of faith-cures. We are aware that ground will be given grudgingly here, for although it may not be admitted, still we contend that the strength of the extreme teachings which we combat is in the assumption that those who are conspicuous examples of faith-cures or of using the prayer of faith have certain powers of investigating this subject not possessed by others, and that therefore their utterances are somewhat oracular, and should be accepted because