

How, again, can any external observer take cognizance of such spiritual considerations as those which must enter the determination of the questions whether, and in what form, a prayer shall be answered? Where are the delicate instruments which shall indicate or measure the results on the character of the suppliant which are produced sometimes by the denial, and sometimes by the granting of his requests? Therefore, you cannot classify results here, and argue from them as you do in statistical investigations, and the demand which was made some years ago for a scientific test of prayer, betrays on the part of those who made it ignorance of the fact that prayer lies not in the plane of physical science, but in that of moral and spiritual things, and indicates a spirit not unlike that of the Israelites of old when, in the tent of God, they said, "Is the Lord God among us or no?" In the wards of the hospital, the physician deals with each patient according to his disease, his temperament, his constitution and his history. He does not give each what he requests. He may even give the one the very thing which he has just denied to the patient next him. And he does all this from considerations altogether beyond their knowledge, and, perhaps, also above their comprehension. He is there, not simply to grant their requests, but to heal their diseases. So with God and his people; he treats each one as he requires and grants his prayer or refuses to grant it, according as it will best promote his spiritual welfare. But how can men who look only on the outward appearance take cognizance of the considerations which are only apparent to the eye of God? No mere human test can distinguish a true prayer from a false one; and if it cannot judge of the cry that comes out of the lips of a man, how can it analyze the answer which comes out of the heart of God? But as a second inference from this whole subject it may be seen that to be successful suppliants men must be holy. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." Character, as God sees it, gives its quality to prayer, and they who are nearest akin to God in holiness get the most frequent answers to their requests. Yet this