

## MEDICAL MISSIONS.

Now-a-days, when one reads of a great army going forth to do battle for its country, it is matter of deep interest to note the variety and ingenuity of appliances furnished by science and civilization, for the preservation of life, as well as its destruction. With still deeper and higher interest the intelligent Christian may note how earnest thought and mature experience are being turned to account in the introduction of improved methods of operation in our warfare with Heathenism. Our Bible women at home and Zenana women abroad are new and valuable aids. Though jealousy arise at times between our disciplined regulars and the independent Guerilla Evangelists, the latter have their place and function. In Medical Missions we have discovered, or rather recovered, a most valuable arm of the service—*recovered*, for though unknown till recently in the Protestant Church, they are both in principle and practice as old as Christianity itself. The practice was not brought with them when the Reformed Churches left the Roman Apostacy in the fifteenth century, and we can not wonder much, considering the priestly anointings and superstitious mummeries which had become identified with the practice of the physician in holy orders. The revival of letters and consequent progress of the division-of-labor principle among professions, facilitated the change, and helped to make it a fixed feature of Protestantism. The prolonged conflict with infidelity, which subsequently arose and has not yet ceased, has led us too much to regard the miracles of our Lord merely as evidences of Christianity, or, when we do go beyond that, only to use them as illustrations of Gospel truths, instead of recognizing that they were part and parcel of a religion of divine love and mercy, fruitful, not only of "glory to God in the highest," but "good will to men," for "the life that now is," as well as the "life to come;" that it is meant to meet man's every want and bless him wholly in "body" as well as "soul and spirit." Some of the ancient systems despised the body, and inculcated its neglect as a sacred duty. Others held forth hopes of relief to the suffering who could reach their temple precincts, and propitiate their divinities with costly *off rings*, but cruelly cast out the incurable for fear of pollution by death or the loss of prestige. In strong contrast to all this, He, whom a historian of Apostolic age described as "the complete Physician of human nature, curing both soul and body," arose and spent the years of his ministry "going about doing good," freely instructing the ignorant, and at the same time preparing the way for and enforcing the truths of eternal life, by as freely exercising his matchless skill for the relief of every form of human suffering. His followers were instructed to do likewise—"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give." That these instructions did not lose their force with the cessation of miraculous gifts, the early Christian clearly believed. The strong grasp they had of the principle which underlay them is evident from the fact that many of their eminent men were as famous for their healing skill as their preaching. Such were Melito, Bishop of Sardis, (A.D. 140), author of works on "The formation of Man," "Of the soul, body and mind," etc. Theodotus, whom Eusebius calls, "Physician and Bishop of Laodicea," and adds: "First he excelled in his knowledge of the medical art as applied to the body, and next was skill'd in the cure of the soul. He had no peer in kindness, sincerity and sympathy, and in zeal to help those who stood in need." In the third century we are told that wonderful cures were still wrought by the disciples of Jesus in India, and were personally