

Association for its kindness and trust that its confidence may not have been misplaced.

As to-day we seek to adapt treatment according to the cause of disease, so, looking back to the remotest ages, we find the human instinct groping along the same pathway. But in the early ages of the race science was unknown and miracle was seen in every unexplainable phenomenon. Hence disease was attributable to the wrath of a good being or the malice of an evil one and treated accordingly. Among the ruder tribes the Medicine-man has ever held sway, but even in higher civilization we find that in Egypt the priests of Osiris and Isis claimed powers over disease; in Assyria the priests of Gibil; in Greece the priests of Aesculapius; in Judea the priests of Jehovah. While these have ceased to exist with the decay of their respective religious systems, the ruder primitive methods have persisted. They are found among the aboriginal tribes of Africa to-day, as also on this side of the Atlantic. Parkman, in discussing the customs of the Hurons, says: "A great knowledge of simples for the cure of disease is popularly ascribed to the Indian. Here, however, as elsewhere, his knowledge is in fact scanty. He rarely reasons from cause to effect or from effect to cause. Disease, in his belief, is the result of sorcery, the agency of spirits or supernatural influences, undefined and indefinable. The Indian doctor was a conjuror and his remedies were to the last degree preposterous, ridiculous, or revolting."

Among the Coast Indians in British Columbia the practice is still kept up, and it may interest you to hear me relate what I saw not forty miles from here, only three years ago. In the Indian villages are to be found huge barnlike structures called rancheries, each consisting of one immense room and capable of accommodating twenty or thirty families. Living close to nature, the floor of course is mother earth. Rough stalls, arranged along the walls, separated by screens of rush matting and open towards the centre, form the none too private retreats of the individual families. Each lights its own fire on the earthen floor opposite, whereon their rude cooking is done. The smoke escapes through the shingles as there is no chimney and in the absence of windows the light comes through the cracks in the wooden walls. I went down one evening to such a place to see a sick Indian woman. It was dusk and the waves of the sea were lapping the beach close at hand, while dusky children flitted by in the twilight, engrossed in some pastime. On entering the only door in the rancherie, I found it in utter darkness, excepting for a small fire burning at the extreme end of the building. Here was presented a study in light and shade to have suited a Rembrandt. Around the fire was arranged a circle of Indian women; (it is always