

Medicines of Old.

Nearly everything in the animal kingdom was formerly used in the healing art, says Julius Stinde, a German writer. In the oldest medical book now known, composed in Heliopolis, where once Joseph served Potiphar, we find "a means for increasing the growth of hair, prepared for Schesch, the mother of Teta, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt." Dogs' teeth, over-ripe dates, and asses' hoofs were then grated. As Teta lived before Cheops, this recipe for hair-oil is older than the great pyramid of Gizeh, and is supposed to date back more than 6,000 years. The heads of venomous serpents have long held an important place in medicine. A strong broth made from them and mixed with salt and spices and a hundred other remedies was employed, under the name of *theriac*, as a cure for every conceivable disease. Three drops of the blood of an angry black cat gave relief to the epileptic. Even now animal preparations are officinally used, as sperm, wax, tallow, swine fat, pepsin, musk, cochineal, leeches, etc. But the nasty mixtures have disappeared. Even leeches are much less employed than formerly. When bleeding and cupping were considered important, leeches held the third place for this purpose; and in the Paris hospitals, between 1829 and 1836, from 5,000,000 to 6,000,000 leeches were used annually, drawing from the unfortunate patients seventeen hundred weight of blood. These examples indicate the degree of the changes that have been made in the science of medicine.

The Same Old Deceit.

The Evil One tempted our first parents to doubt God's loving care and His warnings. What God gave in rich plenty was forgotten; desire went after what was withheld. It was pleasant; it would make wise; it could do no harm; it could not bring under the power of death. God seemed to be keeping them back from good, and trying to awe them by vain threats. So it is now. To the young especially the same temptation comes. There are pleasures in sin, why should they not be enjoyed? There is curiosity to know about things which God warns us not to touch; why should it not be indulged? True we are told of loss and harm; but all this seems far off; and what is longed for offers itself now. And God surely will not punish, though He says He will. He will forgive, or He does not really mean His words, and means us to take them as simply true. In this doubt of God is the beginning of the soul's death. It is the putting aside of His care and love, and defying of His power. Sin works its own doom. It is its own doom. Innocence is lost when the knowledge of evil is gained. When God's grace is thrown away the soul feels its nakedness. Even the restored penitent has suffered loss. "What fruit had ye," writes S. Paul, "in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death?"

The Crisis of the Soul.

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE IS VERY NEAR TO THE GREATLY TRIED CHRISTIAN.

Says Phillips Brooks: "Whenever souls are being tried and ripened, in whatever commonplace and homely way, there God is hewing out the pillars for His temple." And Rutherford once said to a tempest-tossed soul: "Be sure that thou art most precious to thy Saviour, else He would not give thee so much medicine."

Corinna, when she first took up the Christian life, thought that only spiritual peace and joy awaited her. Nowhere in God's Word does He say: "Thou shalt not be tried;" for it is only by passing through the fire that gold is purified. The diamond, unpolished, is not comely, but the skilled workman knows that beneath the rough exterior lies hidden beauty.

It ought to be enough for us to know that our lives are divinely appointed, and that nothing comes to us by accident. The precious, abiding joy of the heart is God's own gift, planned for us since the foundation of the earth. The cross, too, which in bitterness of soul has been borne so long, oh, God, so long! can still be borne longer if it be His will. The soul of the creature should not

question the infinite wisdom of the Almighty. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Every joy should make the Saviour dearer to us; every sorrow should draw us closer to His side. How often with full heart has the child of God declared: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn thy statutes!"

How wonderful beyond everything is His compassionate love! Everywhere through the Bible are words of passionate affection: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" "I will guide thee with Mine eye;" "I am My beloved's and My beloved is Mine;" "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" "I am married unto you;" "As a father pitieth;" "As one whom his mother comforteth;" "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands;" "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." With such blessed assurances of love how dare the soul of the Christian murmur?

"Thou art as much His care as if besides
Nor man nor angel lived on earth, in heaven.
For thee He died; for thee He lives again;
O'er thee He watches in His boundless reign."

Endurance.

"He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved." Thus Christ shows His people the pathway to salvation. Rather, we should say, one of the conditions of salvation. It is nothing less than life-long devotion to Him, and life-long consecration to His service.

There is a time in the life of every one when the call goes forth: "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." Obedience to that call is the consecration of self to the work of the Saviour's vineyard. Endurance is never-failing devotion to the work even to the end, so that when the call to rest comes we may be found at our post.

How many of us heed the call to "go work?" How many "endure to the end?" In the early morning, when the bright beams of the sun gild our pathway, and the birds sing merrily in the trees that overarch it, we find the work in the vineyard exceedingly pleasant; and we wonder that so few obey the call which brought us thither. As the day advances, and the shadows diminish, we find the work a trifle harder, a little less interesting. The heat becomes intense, and there is a slight longing for the things we left behind in the world. Still we go on. We lift up our heart to Him who called us, we remember that His strength is made perfect in weakness, and we feel cooler at once, and the work again grows in interest.

Noon is past, and we grow faint. The details of our service have disappointed us: many things have developed in a way not expected, the rich promise of fruit has not increased as we hoped, and we are a little doubtful of the wisdom which led us to answer the call, "Go work." An hour later, the heat has become almost greater than we can bear, and matters begin to assume a serious aspect. Our whole body seems unusually tired, and we feel exhausted. Here a sweet voice whispers in our ear:

"O child, hold thou on in courage of soul
Through the stormy shades of thy worldly way;
And the billows of cloud that around thee roll
Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous day."

The message cheers us, and we bend to the work again. And so the day wears on. The end will soon be reached. The reward is sure.

Towards the setting of the sun, some of our old companions pass along, and seeing us at work, worn-looking and sad, they tempt us to leave the vineyard and go with them to pleasure and to ease. We reflect for a moment, and think how comfortable it would be for us, and how far less irksome than working in the vineyard. But another voice softly says: "Patient endurance attaineth to all things." And we go on.

The sun has sunk to rest, and the dews of night fall on the tired labourer. The day has gone. The toil is over. The labourer has endured unto the end. The Master came to the vineyard and found His child there, faithful to the last. He enfolded him in His love, and this was recompense a thousandfold.

Prehistoric Weapons.

You may go into certain prehistoric depots, where you will find, lying by thousands, flint weapons which have been carefully chipped and shaped and polished, and then, apparently, left in a heap, and never anything done with them. Is the world a great cemetery of weapons prepared and then tossed aside like that? We need a heaven where the faithfulness of the servant shall be exchanged for the joy of the Lord, and he that was faithful in a few things shall be made ruler over many things.

Cliffs of Character.

Character is the result of actions. Condition is largely, if not altogether, dependent upon conduct and upon character. And, just as the sandstone cliffs were laid down grain by grain by an evaporated ocean, and stand eternal when the waters have all vanished, so whatever else you and I are making of, and in, our lives, we are making permanent cliffs of character which will remain when all the waves of time have foamed themselves away.

Fairy Gold.

There are old stories of men who in the night received from fairy hands gifts of gold in some cave and when the daylight came upon them, what had seemed to be gold and jewels was a bundle of withered leaves and red berries, already half corrupted and altogether worthless. There are many things that the world counts very precious which are like the fairy's gold. Nothing that can be taken from a man really belongs to him. The only real riches, correspondent with his necessities, are those which, once possessed, are inseparable from his being, the riches of an indwelling God, and of a nature conformed to His.

Concentration.

One use of the tube of the telescope is to shut out cross lights, and concentrate the vision on the far off object looked at undisturbed. Unless we can thus shut off on either side these dazzling and bewildering brilliances that dance and flicker round us, we shall never see clearly that solemn future and all its infinite possibilities of sorrow or of blessedness. The eye that is focussed to look at the things on the earth cannot see the stars. When the look-out man at the bow wants to make sure whether that white flash on the horizon is a sun-smitten sail or a breaker, he knits his brows and shades his eyes with his hand, and concentrates his steady gaze till he sees. And you and I have to do that, or the most real things in the universe, away yonder in the extreme distance, will be problematical and questionable to us.

Let Your Light Shine.

The first thing a soldier does when he enters the army is to put on a uniform, and he wears it until he is mustered out. Every button on his coat is a confession that he is a champion for his country, and ready for any kind of warfare that comes to him in her service. He lets his light shine for the cause he has espoused with every step he takes. Wherever he goes he is a living proclamation that an army believes his government is right. He is not ashamed of his flag, and is ready to follow it to the death. The Christian ought to be a living witness that God has a friend in him wherever he stands. It ought to be the very first business of his life to see that all of his influence is on the side of Christ. The light that makes visible true Christian life is the best advertisement heaven has on earth. Wherever you go you ought to be a counting figure for the cause of Christ. "Before men." Before all kinds of men, taking them as they come. Not simply before your pastor, and the men who think just like you do in your church, but before men who break the commandments, and have a good deal to say about their being nobody but hypocrites in the Church. Before men who swear in your presence, and begin to tell you unclean stories. Be a light for God wherever you go, and He will make you a blessing to many who live in the dark.