

FAITH-CURES.

It is our conviction that in the "promise of the Father" we have the common ground of agreement concerning all the truths of the Gospel, and that the subject of faith-cures need not be an exception. But the reply is made to this, Are there not many who accept the teachings of the Bible concerning the gift of the Holy Ghost, who even profess to have the experience, and yet who are drifting apart, if not antagonizing each other, because they do not think alike on this question.

We reply that the acceptance of a truth in name and reality may be two widely different matters; and further, there may be very clashing views held by different parties as to some of the legitimate consequences flowing from the same central truth.

In discussing the dress question in our Association gatherings, and in the EXPOSITOR, we discovered a common ground of agreement, so that now many whose views on this question differ are united in the Spirit, and work together in perfect harmony; and so of other burning questions which have threatened to separate professors of holiness.

It is true that from time to time some have demanded that *their* views of truth should be accepted, on pain of refusal to co-operate with those who did not see eye to eye with them. But this is ever to be expected. It has been, is now and ever shall be while the world lasts. Under such circumstances our Heavenly Father makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder He restrains. So, with serene confidence, he who really believes in God can go on and do his work with untroubled heart, for it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Now study closely what is implied in the gift of the Holy Ghost in its relation to our bodies, and it will be found to be all comprehensive. If the Comforter Divine really abides with us, and is not a mere aspiration, or a sentiment, then positive advantages accrue to us which can be accurately defined. In the first place, His presence is not only a reality, but it is, or may be, a *constant* reality.

His constant presence as companion and guide is the pledge of the fulfilment of all the promises. "And hereby we know that He, Jesus, abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us," 1 John iii. 24. And "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 7. Plainly, then, all possible blessings connected with our bodies are promised in answer to the prayer of faith.

But just here is where some who commenced in the Spirit leave Him as Guide and Counsellor to find out some rule or law in the Bible by which to fashion their prayer for the body's welfare. That is, to use St. Paul's illustration, they forsake the way of the Spirit for the way of the flesh. In place of recognizing the fact that the presence of the Spirit is a sufficient guarantee that we shall be led to ask in faith for all possible good for our bodies, they, following the natural bent of human desire, fancy they will be more certain of securing blessings if some law or ordinance can be discovered, or manufactured, on which to base their faith in asking for bodily health. Of course the usual legalistic result follows—narrowness, bigotry, and censorious denouncing of those who are spiritual. For as it was in olden times so it is still, he that is born after the flesh—some law—persecutes him that is born after the Spirit. See Gal. iv. 29.

This is a necessary law of our being, and one does not require to look far from home to see it illustrated. Hence he who relies on some presumed rule or law in the Bible to regulate dress, in place of being led distinctly of the Spirit in the matter, will persecute another who looks to the Spirit first and last in this thing.

Of course we use the word persecute in a modernized sense, meaning refusal to co-operate in the Lord's work, private opposition, or public denunciation. Like Saul, their prototype, they are zealous for the law, and persecute all who are not after *their* way. And so it will be seen in every instance where some law or rule of faith is exalted so as to take the place, in part or whole, of spiritual law, that is, the guidance of the Spirit; opposition to, and denunciation of those who are spiritual, that is, who receive