

"MONOIDEISM."—MIND CURES, FAITH CURES.

AS old as the most ancient records of which we have any knowledge is the practice of endeavoring to cure diseases of all sorts without the use of medicines or physical agencies of any kind: but by the laying on of hands, by prayer, and by charms of various sorts. At the present time the dominant form of this kind of cure, and a development of a certain kind of psychological study is the "mind cure." The stronghold of this "cure" is Boston. An exchange says: "A couple of years ago a Mrs. Eddy, who was for some time considering the idea of a possibility of the will or mind giving a cure to a disease, and who was for some time before giving a constant practice of attempting to dispel disease by a conviction that only a conception of a disease by the mind was the disease itself, and asking others to do the same, originated this gospel. A constant pursuit of this idea gave it a fastening upon many minds, and from a focus of such contemplations in or near Boston a spread of the gospel was made. A spread continued until the affair crossed the continent. A score of good minds gave it endorsement, and a thousand common minds accepted it. A couple of publications are advocating it. Others will follow. A cure of disease is claimed for the gospel, and a most astonishing devotion to the cause is found in the female portion of the people."

It is claimed by the disciples of this delusion that there is a "transference" of thought from the one practising the cure to the patient. "The one who is to act the part of healer simply turns his own mental power and attention in upon himself, concentrating his energy upon the idea that the patient is free from disease. This he does while sitting by the patient's side, though it is claimed by some that it can be done without even coming into the patient's presence or entering his house. In proportion as his vital force, that is, his nerve force, becomes absorbed in this one thing, it is transferred to the mind of the patient, who is thus brought into physical relation with him, and is under his control to such a degree that what he believes the patient necessarily believes. The patient thus believes that he is well, and, as the result, he is well, either immediately or speedily." This,

according to their own statements, is the theory and action of the mind cure.

The influence of the mind over the bodily functions in health and disease is well known, the power of hope over diseased conditions, of a belief in recovery of a determination to get well is universally acknowledged, and, properly used or directed, might be a valuable aid to the physician and patient. Unfortunately it has been heretofore almost wholly in the hands of fanatics and charlatans, and much harm has thereby been done. In a lecture at the Edinburgh College of Medicine. Dr. J. Hughes Bennett, a physician, of much eminence, an author of repute, and an advanced deep thinker, in referring to the "mind cure," which he calls "Monoideism," said: "In all the cases of relief there can be little doubt that any benefit that did occur may be attributed to a strong belief, on the part of the patient, in the efficacy of the means employed. In recent times, more systematic attempts have been made in this way to relieve pain. This subject, however, is yet in its infancy, and has to be separated from the charlatanism which has hitherto been mingled with it. The labors of Dr. Eisdale among the natives of India and Mr. Braid in Manchester exhibit a worthy commencement to the rational treatment of disorders by the means now alluded to, and there can be little doubt that, in no long time, its influence, when further studied, will be acknowledged. But how far this influence is dependent on the confidence of the patient, on the belief of some mysterious circumstance which is presumed to produce the effect, or on some unknown law regulating function, through the mind, further observation alone can determine." Dr. Bennett then referred to cases which have been authenticated in which various kinds of pain and other evidences of derangement, hysterical paralyses of organs, etc., have been relieved or "cured" by this means.

In the words of a very good article in the *Scientific American*, "we know well that in every form of disease the patient can be largely benefitted by those attendant circumstances which give tone and hopefulness to the mind, and especially by the efforts of his own will. We have no reason to question that in many instances the