

ARTICLE III.

ORGANIC AND PARALLEL RELATION OF SOME
OF THE TRUTHS AND ERRORS OF
CHRISTIANITY AND MEDICAL SCIENCE.

BY ALFRED HITCHCOCK, M.D.

OF FITCHBURG.

READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, JUNE 2, 1869.*

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY:—

AT the last Anniversary of this Society, in a most felicitous after-dinner speech, in Music Hall, the reverend chaplain† of the day said, substantially, that, in our modern civilization, there is no finer example of Christian self-sacrifice, or, if you please, Christian martyrdom, than is given in the daily working life of the Christian Physician, especially the country or frontier physician. There is, in fact, said he, no life more self-sacrificing, none more dramatic, though there is no audience to applaud but the Angels.

* At an Adjourned Meeting of the Mass. Medical Society, held Oct. 8, 1860, it was Resolved, "That the Massachusetts Medical Society hereby declares that it does not consider itself as having endorsed or censured the opinions in former published Annual Discourses, nor will it hold itself responsible for any opinions or sentiments advanced in any future similar discourses."

Resolved, "That the Committee on Publication be directed to print a statement to that effect at the commencement of each Annual Discourse which may hereafter be published."

† Rev. Edward Everett Hale.

For here is a man, who, without any adequate compensation in money, and without that compensation in fame which is supposed to reward some martyrs, simply consecrates himself to the business of fighting evil in that concrete form, where evil is most dreaded, the form of sickness or pain. Literally, his fifteen mile ride across the country may be a match-ride against death himself, and he knows it is so. To this duty of confronting evil in this form, this physician dedicates his life, simply, from his devotion to an idea.

He is not adequately paid, nor flattered, nor in any other way rewarded for his service; except by the consciousness of knowing that he has *done the best thing that he could for the good of others*. This devotion of men to an idea, in this way, said he, has a historical origin, about which there can be no question.

There is no such devotion in any lands but Christian lands, or in any times but Christian times. There is, of course, some degree of Medical Science in all forms of civilization. But the medical practice of antiquity, and the medical practice of Pagan and Mussulman countries, are very different affairs, resting as they do on ignorance and superstition, and their usefulness limited by bigotry and selfishness. The enlightened modern practice of medicine, in which the physician holds himself in readiness, like a knight in chivalry, to *right all wrongs*, is like all other chivalry, a Christian institution; and was born on Christmas morning, at the moment when the "mighty child" was born who was laid in the manger at Bethlehem.

Risking the charge of self-adulation of our Society, and believing these statements to be theoretically correct in principle, and practically true in the experience of every honorable and consistent member of the profession, I have adopted this elegant sentiment of a distinguished clergyman, as the key-note of this address. And, I am less inclined to make apology for thus stepping aside from the beaten path, by the existing fact of our two days' entertainment in this city in listening to the scientific contributions from fellows on the different practical branches of our profession, and also by the opportunity we have had of witnessing the numerous and skilful illustrations of our art in its surgical amphitheatres. I have chosen, briefly as I must, at this hour, to invite your attention to a few suggestive remarks on

THE ORGANIC AND PARALLEL RELATION OF SOME OF THE PRACTICAL TRUTHS AND ERRORS OF CHRISTIANITY AND MEDICAL SCIENCE.

I can only hope, from the standpoint I ask you to take with me, to recognize but a few of the beauties and deformities of the panorama before us; or to take in but a partial view of the wide and extending horizon that our subject embraces. The historic past, curious, instructive, and lighted by many beacon fires for our warning, is, in its vastness, altogether overshadowed in importance by the duties and responsibilities of the living present.

Yet we may profitably glean somewhat from its pages, reject its follies, and grasp its truths with a

firm hand, and wield them in a manly fight against the living errors and vices of our own time.

Plato taught, that all men were conscious of needing something done for them, as the binding up of hurts, a staunching of wounds ; that the art of the Physician, in healing the bodies of men, did but image forth a higher cure and care for their souls ; and that both duties were but branches of one and the same discipline ; that the same God guided them both to soothe and purify the passions, and heal diseases.

He also taught that our vices would leave livid marks on the soul, as stripes and wounds would on the body ; and hence the universal sense of the need of a healer and curer for both soul and body.

Under the Theocracy of the old Testament we find a recognition of human necessity, and the manifestation of Divine intention of relief. The Hygiene and Therapeutics of that age, so far as it was designed to be universal, and not strictly local, in its application, was sound in principle, and rested on a scientific, and therefore a Divine basis. That old system of sacrifices, and purifying ceremonies, did but prefigure the grander and more perfect system of moral and physical relief, promised to the world. The old prophets foretold that new system of relief ; and the poets sung of the coming mission of Him, who, to men and nations, would bring "healing in His wings." That prophecy was fulfilled. "The Word was made flesh," and dwelt among men. Christ came, and died, that the "world might have life more abundantly."

In Him was the advent of that system of new enlivenment, which has illuminated, refreshed and invigorated the physical, intellectual and moral world.

The gigantic advances of modern science, germinated, and have been nourished to their massive growth, under the moral influence of Jesus Christ upon the world. This is an admitted fact of history, which cannot be gainsaid. The statistics of the success of medical science, the increased longevity of man, the arrest of plague, the limitation of contagion, the abolition of pain, are, certainly, suggestive indications that the scientific practice of medicine was ever intended to be a necessary part of Christ's system of apostleship.

The existence of so many means of curing or mitigating human suffering, while it shows the Benevolence of God, does not explain why, in his infinite Wisdom, the necessity for these remedies was allowed to exist as a part of the Divine plan. But the fact is very patent, and the duty imperative, to use Quinine for Ague, Iron for Anæmia, and Anæsthetics to relieve the pangs of the primeval curse and the agonies from the surgeon's knife, notwithstanding the original "plan" permitted all those pains and sorrows. Christianity and medical science unitedly demand the prompt and efficient application of all the means that can be found useful to lessen the amount of human suffering and increase the sum total of life and its pleasures; and in doing this they only carry out, in part, the great remedial idea of saving men from physical suffering and death by

influences external to themselves, in unison with the "*vis medicatrix naturæ*" within themselves; and do not thereby conflict with the so-called "Divine plan" of allowing disease and suffering to exist in the world.

The same idea of combined influence, carried out in its highest spiritual significance, elevates, purifies and saves the moral nature of man, and in this the parallelism becomes almost identity. The minute anatomy of a bone, or blood-vessel, gives us no hint that, when one is fractured, it contains within itself the power of reparation with true bony matter; or, when the other is ligated or broken, that the blood has the power of ploughing new channels for its course, thus remedying the physical evil by an inherent power which cannot be recognized by scalpel, crucible or microscope.

Even this inherent power we know can be greatly aided by extraneous means, and, alas! is often sadly interfered with by officious or ignorant pretenders. The Author of nature, who, for some reason, permits both physical and moral evil, has kindly provided reliefs and remedies, either partial or complete, even though many of those evils are the fruit of our own chosen violation of physical or moral law.

The Therapeutics or Remedies for human physical evil are of two classes. The first is the *Materia Medica* of the world, and the second the *restoring processes of nature*, which, so far as they are remedial, are self-adjusting or self-acting, and are more eminently manifest in the healing of wounds and reparation of injuries. To these remedial measures science now adds preventive means and arrangements,

to be enforced by personal efforts and sacrifices by ourselves or others.

So, too, in the realm of morals man needs both the external influences which come from another and higher power, in unison with all the internal energy and culture which Christian faith alone can inspire and develop.

And here presents the grand moral opportunity and necessity for preventive means and arrangements, alike demanding enforcement by personal efforts and sacrifices. These extraneous remedial means, and this delicate inherent remedial process of uniting broken bones and restoring the obstructed circulation of the blood, certainly suggest the inquiry whether in this may not be foreshadowed the great remedial arrangement for repairing intenser and deeper evils that come to the *moral* nature of man.

Nay more, when Christianity and medical science shall have done their co-ordinate and perfect work, may we not indulge the hope of mitigating or removing, more perfectly, many physical and moral evils, and thus, in a measure, restore man to the image of God?

In this connection I cannot forbear to make the following modest and eloquent quotation from the distinguished surgeon and pathologist of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. "If I may venture," says Mr. Paget, "on so high a theme, let me suggest that the instances of recovery from disease and injury seem to be only examples of a law yet larger than that within the terms of which they may be comprised; a law wider than the grasp of science; the law that ex-

presses our Creator's will for the recovery of all lost perfection. To this train of thought we are guided by the remembrance that the healing of the body was ever chosen as the fittest emblem of His work whose true mission was to raise man's fallen spirit and repair the injuries it had sustained; and that once the healing power was exerted in a manner purposely so confined as to advance, like that which we can trace, by progressive stages, to the complete cure. For there was one upon whom, when the light of heaven first fell, so imperfect was his vision that he saw, confusedly, 'men, as trees, walking,' and then, by a second touch of the Divine Hand, was 'restored, and saw every man clearly.'

"Thus, guided by the brighter light of revelation, it may be our privilege, while we study the science of our healing art, to gain, by the illustrations of analogy, a clearer insight into the oneness of the plan by which things spiritual and corporeal are directed. Even now we may trace some analogy between the acts of the body and those of man's intellectual and moral nature. As in the development of the germ, so in the history of the human spirit, we may discern a striving after perfection; after a perfection not viewed in any present model (for the human model was marred almost as soon as it was formed), but manifested to the enlightened Reason in the 'Express Image' of the 'Father of Spirits.'

"And so, whenever the spirit loses aught of the perfection to which it was once admitted, its implanted power is ever urgent to repair the loss. This power, derived and still renewed from the same Pa-

rent, working by the same appointed means and to the same end, restores the fallen spirit to nearly the same perfection that it had before. Then, not unscarred, yet living—‘*fractus sed invictus*’—the spirit yet feels its capacity for a higher life, and passes to its immortal destiny. In that destiny the analogy ends. We may watch the body developing into all its marvellous perfection and marvellous fitness for the purpose of its existence in the world; but, this purpose accomplished, it passes its meridian, and then we trace it through the gradual decays of life and death. But for the human spirit that has passed the ordeal of this world there is no such end. Emerging from its imprisonment in the body, it soars to the element of its higher life; there, in perpetual youth, its powers expand as the vision of the Infinite unfolds before it; there, in the very presence of its Model, its Parent, and the Spring of all its power, it is ‘like Him, for it sees Him as he is.’”*

The old prophet Isaiah foretold, in vivid and beautiful language, the physical blessings that would follow the incarnation of the Messiah. “The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped”; “then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing”; “they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” The fulfilment of this prophecy was literally commenced by our Saviour; and as His mission and gospel in its purity

* Paget's Surgical Pathology, p. 117.

has spread over the earth, its fulfilment has been more and more complete and triumphant.

Wherever the highest development of the Christian faith, clarified from human error and superstition, has been manifested, there medical science has flourished; and nothing is more certain from history than that modern medical science in its glory and grandeur is both an outgrowth and ally of Christianity, and that all scientific and revealed truth—reason and faith—have a common Divine origin. We cannot separate them. Christianity in its nature expands and enlarges the human intellect, helps to develop all truth, and make it practically useful to the human race. The *God-man* came that the race “might have life more abundantly,” involving the twin ideas of a better organic life and a better spiritual character; that nature, revelation and science might all more fully minister to the life and happiness of men.

His advent and the development of Christianity have borne rich fruit in the realm of all those arts and sciences that tend to elevate man and mitigate his sorrows. Columbus, Copernicus, Luther, Galileo, Bacon, Newton, Jenner, Watt, Morse and Field; each and all of their great achievements were the *results*, or the *normal growths* of Christian civilization. The special Science of Medicine, more than any other, is clearly and legitimately indebted for its benevolent spirit, and grand historic progress, to the radical and illuminating influence of Christianity. Under the banner of the Cross, in no narrow or sectarian sense, most, if not all the great discoveries

and inventions in art, science, and medicine, which now adorn and bless this age, have been made. These discoveries and inventions, like stalks from the same Christian root, are now yielding flowers, which adorn, and fruit, which enriches, while their leaves in a most literal sense are "for the healing of the nations." Under the old Jewish system the highest development of hygiene and morality was, "do good and live;" under the Christian system, "do good that others may live;" in short, its spirit culminates and intensifies itself in the grand practical idea of personal sacrifices for the good of others.

Its Author and Model sacrificed his own life that the world might have more abundant and perfect physical and spiritual life.

It is this exalted Christian idea of labor and sacrifice for the good of others, that ought to inspire and govern both the clerical and medical professions. It is this practical idea, purged of all error, superstition and selfishness that will help the world onward; illuminating its darkness, dissipating its ignorance, preventing and curing diseases, lifting up the down-trodden, providing for the blind, the dumb and the insane, and, in short, elevating the entire race in all its social relations to a higher plane and purer atmosphere of physical, mental and moral life. The Great Physician, our exemplar, *healed the sick*, recognizing the bodily wants of men no less than the spiritual, and thus furnished a practical illustration of His Divine mission. He also enjoined upon his followers practically, as well as theoretically, to carry the glad news of the possibility of a better, and so a higher physical and spiritual life to all the world.

We see in His reverence for human life, in His sympathy for all forms of human suffering, some of the grand truths of science blended with a more than human benevolence, unfolding and developing themselves into the whole art of Christian Medicine; expanding and intensifying their usefulness in all the modern, accumulated means for alleviating and removing pain and disease.

Under the fostering influence of an enlightened Christian civilization, we may point with pride to the discovery and use of Peruvian bark, to vaccination and the introduction of anæsthetics, and the marvellous achievements in Modern Surgery, including plastic operations, excision of joints and ovariectomy, also in Psychology and Sanitive Science, all marking great epochs in the practical development of great truths in our profession. These may find a parallel in some of the grand periodical advances in religious truths. Their development and practical application has been in no *new* discovered truth, but merely the clarifying of men's vision so that *old* and eternal truths have been seen, interpreted and intelligently applied for the good of the race. Again, looking back through the long lines of history, we find with regret that the truths of Christianity and Medical Science have often been permeated with the fecula of error, or crusted over with gross human superstitions, follies and crimes. But all this foul rubbish does not change those truths or dislocate their connection with God as the source and author of all truth. Like the dust or nuggets of pure gold, those truths are unaffected by turbid waters, or the quartz which

imprisons them in their native bed, or the brazen glitter of their human counterfeits.

In both departments the personal conceits, selfishness and exclusive dogmas of men have risen upon the tide of time, rioted in their transient notoriety, then toppled over to be submerged by other waves, to become known only as curiosities in history, like the fossil foot-prints of extinct birds and monsters.

The quacks in medicine ignore all science and culture; and contemptuously discard the accumulated wisdom of centuries of clinical study and observation. They claim that "seventh sons" and "natural bone-setters," cancer-curers, panacea-makers, and clairvoyants, know more by intuition and spirit invocations and rappings, and pretentiously offer themselves as safer guides in all the exigencies of medical and surgical disease, than physicians who have studied with the most untiring assiduity the laws of life, who have dissected and measured every bone, nerve, blood-vessel and cell of the human body, and have analyzed and tested the whole vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms, and with honest devotion have applied those laws and that science to relieve human ills.

And these quacks in medicine, who have such power to proselyte and use the people, have their parallel quacks among the so-called religious teachers. Each class of impostors change their phase or name many times in a century; sometimes claiming a new color or quality to their chameleon panaceas, or vaunting a new interpretation about the horns in Daniel or the beasts in Revelation, or some intuitive power to evoke the spirits of the dead

and harness them for mundane service, producing with each furtive change in the illusive drama a temporary religious or medical effervescence, minus morality, which lead captive hosts of silly women of both sexes. Many times during the Christian era such parallel absurd extravagances, and gross and senseless superstitions in medicine and religion, have been reproduced; extravagances which pervert the grandest practical truths of revelation and science, which at each re-appearance have seldom the merit of novelty, but which history records at frequent epochs to illustrate the deception, ambition and selfishness of their authors, no less than the impotence and credulity of their victims.

There exists in society, especially American society, a great tendency to extreme and ultra theories in matters of Theology, Hygiene and Medicine. The pendulum of each theorist proverbially swings to the most extreme point of remoteness from the supposed antagonist.

The questions of what shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, and what will cure our physical and moral disorders, are all answered by different theorists in a very diverse or contradictory manner. Those who thus dogmatize forget that man is tolerant of circumstance, that he can breathe at the sea-shore with an atmospheric pressure of fifteen pounds to the inch on the surface of his body, or two and a half miles above the sea level with about half that pressure, which is nearly the limit of permanent safe elevation, for above that he breathes badly, his blood-vessels burst and he dies.

He can flourish on the tropical fruits in all their wild and fresh luxuriance, or on locusts and wild honey, or on the fat of the seal and walrus like the Esquimaux, or on the more heterogeneous diet of the temperate zones; and the great and beneficent law of adaptation to circumstances renders them all wholesome and sanitive. The spirit of Christianity, like Nature, is ever comprehensive and catholic in its aim and application. Its success in individuals and nations implies a change from wrong to right of the whole man; arresting downward tendencies, and lifting heavenward man's entire being and the whole fabric of human society. There is no class or race and no part or mood of life to which it does not apply. Its offers are universal, its beneficence ubiquitous, like this natural law of adaptation. In every phase of life, it rebukes, guides, and stimulates; to the suffering it gives aid, sympathy and consolation.

Nothing in human society was too high, nothing too low for the Divine Master, who himself fed the hungry, cleansed the lepers, and gave sight to the blind.

One of the characteristics of Christianity which distinguish it from all other religions, is that of sacrifice; sacrifice for the good of others. While it enjoins that men shall bear one another's burden, it also requires personal responsibility for our own burdens. This is a cardinal principle of Christianity in its physical and spiritual development.

Other religions and a perverted Christianity allow the *strong* to use the *weak*, and inculcate a kind of fatalistic self-abnegation; while its pure precepts re-

quire that wealth, intellect and science are all to be used as Divine trusts for the good of mankind, and not alone for selfish ends; while it also requires its recipient to exercise his reason, his choice and his personal obedience to physical and moral law. The great Teacher came to be the light of the world; to aid in dissipating the ignorance and blind superstitions, heathenish errors and degrading practices of society. History shows us that Christianity from the outset, wherever acting normally, has manifested an affinity for and given an impulse to all true learning and scientific truth, especially those truths which, practically applied, give to men a higher physical, æsthetic, intellectual and moral life.

It did not, when developed in its purity, sweep away ancient culture with its art and science, but encouraged all true learning, and by its inherent organic force burst through all the incrustations of superstition and tyranny, false philosophy and false religion, and became at once and forever the ally and champion of art and science, and made itself the standard and test of all natural and revealed truth. While it provides for a better physical as well as intellectual and moral life for men, it also teaches that violations of physiological laws are no less reprehensible and sure of penalty than sins against the conscience. Christian Hygiene embraces the trinity of man's nature, *physical*, *intellectual* and *moral*. And here the whole science of Medicine in its purity not only finds a parallel function, but is really an organic part of the Christian system.

The errors and superstitions of both Christianity

and the practice of Medicine are *human*, and are not in any sense, as before stated, an integral part of their nature; and, though sometimes obscuring their lustre, do not permanently tarnish their purity or create a lasting doubt of their Divine origin. Errors and follies in Religion and Medicine, like counterfeits, which prove the existence of a genuine coin, will be always more or less current, in the world's market, so long as men love the pleasure of being cheated. One form of superstition and imposition displaces another, like Satan casting out Satan; or sometimes "seven worse spirits" rap in concert to empty and sweep the victim's house and garnish their own pockets. In contravention of all the truths and principles of Christianity and Science, religious and medical delusions, superstitions and crimes make a dark record in the page of history. Nor is that dark record yet finished. The foul drama is even now passing; the curtain has not dropped.

This may seem a strange anomaly in the midst of the self-congratulations of the age claiming superior knowledge, liberty and Christian civilization. *Clairvoyance* and *spiritualism*, or the practice of invoking the souls of the dead to cure the bodies and guide the morals of the living; *inebriety as a sin and a disease*; and *pre-infanticide*, not an imitation, but a forestalling of the work of Herod, together making a tripod of crime which in this nineteenth century not only permeates with leprous poison the heart of American society, but already, like a huge melanotic cancer, deforms its body and threatens to make it loathsome to sight and touch.

Scarcely a street in our cities, or hamlet in this commonwealth, but echoes the mumbling jargon of clairvoyants and spiritualists in their religious and medical contortions and pretensions.

They have revived the old Alexandrine or Sybilline *ecstasy*, without its genius or inspiration, promising its imbecile believers a superhuman science in the realm of mind, as well as matter, on condition of themselves first losing all consciousness, thought, liberty, memory, all that constitutes man an intelligent moral being.

They claim to converse with the spirits of the dead and evoke their presence and teachings for the good, or ill, of the deluded victims of their jugglery. This is one of the results of an ignorant or dishonest departure from revealed and scientific truth.

Pascal once said "that whoever professed to become an angel became a beast," a truth often and shamefully verified by the clairvoyants, spiritualists and Free-loves of the present generation of impostors in religion and medicine. Cicero marvelled at the imperturbable gravity and mock honesty of the Roman augurs and soothsayers. He understood and satirized the deception.

In this modern age, so called, good Christian people look with amazing faith upon the contortions and cabalistic mutterings of the clairvoyant at the bedside of the sick, and marvel at the supernatural wisdom and skill of the performers.

The first Napoleon, for *reasons of state*, with an impressive air of sanctity, alternately played the Mohammedan, the Jew, the Catholic or the Protestant,

as best suited the place or the occasion ; while these juggling impostors, many of whom are Napoleons in ubiquity and cunning, have only *reasons of pocket* as their motive power. The most astonishing and deplorable feature in reference to the popular existence and practice of these delusions in this commonwealth is, the fact of the tolerance, nay the encouragement and patronage of them, by people who claim to be intelligent Christians.

The gyrations and gibberish talk of these modern impostors as they pretend to evoke lessons in religion, morals and medicine, from the soul of some sage or physician, dead centuries ago, is witnessed, believed in, and adopted by some of our modern Christians, who very properly shed tears of pious grief, and testify to the sincerity of their sorrow, by gifts of money to send teachers and missionaries to convert the Hottentots and Feejeans from precisely the same fetish rites and heathen incantations.

I say nothing against Christian missions. I believe in them. But I respectfully ask that the friends of missions shall act consistently, and not neglect the *home field* in their very commendable zeal to convert the world from superstitious fooleries and fetish practices in religion and medicine. I greatly honor the wisdom and fidelity of those societies that have, during the present century, so often selected scientific medical men for the advance couriers of Christian civilization. This is natural and right, and gives omen of success. Without naming scores of other physicians who have in the double sense carried "life more abundantly" to heathen nations, our soci-

ety to-day points with pride to one of its Fellows, the Hon. Peter Parker, M.D., who performed the first operation for lithotomy in the Chinese Empire, and who there gave gratuitous surgical treatment to more than fifty-three thousand patients while serving as a Christian missionary; and who with his missionary associates gave medical prescriptions to more than *half a million Chinese* patients.

With such heathenish practices in this commonwealth, encouraged and patronized by (*quasi*) religionists, or, if you please, only tolerated and abetted by their apathy, cowardice or motives of interest, I respectfully submit that their logical results will, ere long, reach the degrading depth of delusion which marked the days of Salem witchcraft, when hysterical girls and children in teething convulsions were regarded as possessed of a real devil, which only prayers or hanging would cast out.

Quackery and superstition have had an existence coeval with medical science and Christianity. The notion of miraculous interference with the laws of nature has from time to time prevailed, according to the current Theology or Diabology of the age. These notions have sometimes been honestly entertained, but have generally been used by a few cunning impostors in religion and medicine for selfish and wicked purposes. The frequent opposition of the clergy in past ages to discoveries in natural science, or at best their timid and reluctant acceptance of those discoveries, clearly indicate how deep seated has been the delusion, even in educated minds, that revealed and scientific truth were in some way an-

tagonistic, and have not one and the same Divine Author.

The miserable delusions of witchcraft (now called clairvoyance and spiritualism) which culminated in its natural atrocities, no less than the earlier abominations of the church, which invoked the tornado of the Reformation, find only a partial parallel in some of the wild vagaries and rash practices of some adventurers in the medical profession, which, in spite of their enormity, have made epochs in its history, each of which has been followed by a tremendous swing of the pendulum in the opposite direction. These extravagances and errors, both in religion and medicine, historically ebbing and flowing, are simply proofs of a depraved tendency of men to depart from the purity and simplicity of truth, to disregard common sense and natural law in curing their bodies, and to try to save their souls by climbing to heaven on some narrow and weak ladder of their own invention. It was evidently the intention of the Divine Author of Christianity to bring humanity under a discipline that would put a rein upon the deplorable mysticisms and shameless superstitions and abject idolatry of the preceding ages.

While His teachings were not purely scientific, they were not its counterpart.

While they were not pure reason, so called, they were the truths of God, manifested and made available for the physical and moral cleansing of men, *in accordance with reason*. Neither pure science nor true philosophy, to borrow an idea from Cousin, thinks of trespassing on the ground of Theology,

especially when it remains faithful to truth, and follows its true mission, which is to find and favor every thing which tends to elevate man, and develop every true religious and Christian sentiment and practice in all noble souls. In spite of the imaginary foreboding of some theologians, and the flippant satires of some men of learning, in all ages, the Christian religion and good philosophy and science are not, and cannot be, at war with each other; they are inseparable, and alike indestructible, having an origin in truths of which God is the source.

The alliance between true religion and true science is both natural and necessary; natural by the common basis of the truths which they acknowledge, necessary for the better service of humanity. To separate religion and science has always been, on the one side or the other, the pretension of small, exclusive, ambitious or fanatical minds; and it would seem to be a duty, now more imperative than ever, on the medical and clerical professions, to cherish a more serious, elevated, and enlightened love for their work; to bring together and unite, instead of wasting, their efforts; and thus mutually energize the common cause which Christianity and medical science are mutually designed to promote, namely, the highest development of the physical, intellectual and moral grandeur of humanity. The deterioration and corruption of Christianity, and the degree of its departure from the spirit of its Divine founder, can always be pretty accurately measured by the increasing fondness of its disciples for marvels and mysteries, and their affinities for false philosophy and false science.

Our profession have sometimes been arraigned by the clergy as sceptical and irreligious, and therefore not promoters of good morals; a charge never universally or frequently true; though in all ages, and even now, perhaps, exceptionally true of individual members.

The old reproach that "*where there are three physicians there are two atheists,*" oftener proves the cowardice than the intelligence of those who repeat it. Unfortunately, the clergy sometimes, as champions of abstract religious truth, forget that our apostleship requires us to combat evil that is tangible and concrete; and that in so doing we grasp and practically apply one of the great central truths of Christianity, and try to give "life more abundantly" to the world.

In this respect our profession have not always received at their hands a just appreciation. While we trust that the old quarrels between the clergy and the doctors may never be repeated, and that no modern Galileo or Servetus will repeat their lurid history; we lament that the present century is not wholly free from the "strife of tongues" between men of science and men of Theology. More than sixty years ago Dr. Chalmers startled the world by asserting that "the writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe"—a truth now generally accepted by learned men of all professions. More recently, Darwin and Huxley and Dalton, and some other savants in science, have created a ripple among theologians which will doubtless subside in due time, as harmlessly as have all the alleged geologic heresies.

Revelation has sometimes been worse used by its friends than by its professed foes in any of the attempts to show its antagonisms to Science. But with Chalmers and Hugh Miller, with Simpson and Agassiz and the late President of Amherst College, reinforced by a galaxy of minds in both professions who have sanctioned the indissoluble banns between science and religion, we have nothing to fear. None but dwarfed or corrupt minds in either profession will in this age attempt to repel or disown the truths of science, or make the futile attempt to assail the citadel of Christianity. The alliance between Christianity and medical science is complete; time and trial only strengthen it; and now, in spite of the occasional spasms of sceptics and wits, all sincere friends of Christianity and medical science, rejecting their parasitic follies and inanities, may give each other the hand of fellowship, and work in concert to heal the sick, to dissipate mental darkness, to encourage desponding hearts, and reform and lift up burdened characters. Notwithstanding the discouragements which the grievous follies and errors that formerly, and even now occasionally despoil the development and application of religious and scientific truth, the gleam of their grace and beauty will never fail to shine and warm through all the fitful darkness. This man or that in either profession may be deceived; this or that class of men may dream fantastic or poisonous dreams and play off cruel falsehoods upon the race, but all men and all generations will not be thus deluded. Somewhere in the world and in many minds the great primal, God-given truths which are

the origin and power of both professions, emancipated from error, will ever live and expand to bless and perfect humanity.

As medical men we become painfully conscious of the fact that intemperance is rife through the land, in spite of the influence of the church, the various popular systems of pledge-taking on the part of the people, and punitive legislation on the part of their representatives.

Is it not, then, one of the prerogatives of our profession to investigate the causes of this fearful practice, so far as they exist in the style of religious teaching, in domestic training, in the human constitution, in professional usage as medicine, in the social customs and habits, in hereditary tendencies or necessities, and to recommend moral, educational and sanitary regulations to the people, on the same principle that we would suggest preventives or palliatives for any other human scourge. The late Dr. James Miller, Professor of Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, speaking of Dipsomania, says, "Alcohol is the Devil's chloroform, making the patient senseless to pain; not for the excision of any morbid and malignant growth; not for the amputation of a limb; not for the use of the cautery: but for the excision of the better part of the mental nature; amputation of moral control, and the searing of the conscience with a hot iron; not done all at once, but at many sittings; the foolish patient enjoying it all the while."

In this way Dipsomaniacs are made; and who

can say that their number in this commonwealth is not legion ?

It would be deemed criminal quackery in us to vaunt the curative remedies for some malignant disease, and at the same time suppress the knowledge and applied use of preventives. Dipsomania, which needs both prevention as well as cure, is a frightful disease, that makes a slave of the soul and a stolid automaton of the human body, and tinges the whole personal, social and domestic life

“ With hue like that when some great painter dips
His pencil in the gloom of earthquake and eclipse.”

As a profession we cannot shirk the responsibility of our influence on this subject.

Let us, then, always and every where inculcate and illustrate the Christian virtue of temperance, and help to succor the tempted, to lift up and save the unfortunate inebriate, always remembering that cure is much harder than prevention. Let us occupy no doubtful ground on this subject. Let us remember that the excessive use of stimulants and narcotics throws a charmed and fascinating halo around the users.

To them, scientific, moral and religious truths are not unfrequently enshrouded with either an iridescent or murky atmosphere, through which only refracted or broken rays reach the mental retina. With such a distorted reception of facts in any given case, the resulting inference, or opinion, and advice to the patient must be abnormal, monstrous, or dangerous.

The warnings and teachings of the physician on this great question, when supplemented by the influ-

ence of the family, the school and the church, will be more legitimately and successfully exerted, and inspire the hope that their united influence may prove to many families like the "blood sprinkled door-posts" of the captive Hebrews, protecting, not only the first-born, but every member of the household from the destroying angel of Intemperance.

Pre-infanticide, the last named, but not the least of the trio, in producing immense physical and moral damage to society, is an evil also demanding the united influence of both professions for its abatement. Wherever or on whomsoever rests the responsibility for the modern increase of this evil, the principles of religion and medical science in their bearing on this subject should all be used to educate the people, and expose the enormous physical, intellectual and moral depravity which this crime induces.

This home crime, in Christian America, this concealed skeleton around the domestic hearth, shatters the female constitution, destroys physical and moral health, perverts natural affection at the fountain, lowers the general sense of individual virtue, and the sacredness of human life, and is a barbaric stain and disgrace to Christian civilization.

Some bold and honest spirits in both professions have not feared to "sound the slogan and wield the claymore" against this monstrous and degrading evil; while many more Doctors in Divinity and Medicine, who doubtless in their consciences timidly approve of aggressive war in the quarters of this vice, have as yet only courage in the *gristle*, waiting for ossification to enable them openly to preach and practise against this pagan crime.

This is an evil demanding the enlightened vigilance and energetic opposition of every intelligent and reasoning Christian, whether clergyman, layman or physician.

In this connection it is but justice to say, that the Catholic Church, in reference to Pre-infanticide and Spiritism, is less derelict of her duty than the Protestant Church. Why it is so, I will not here inquire or attempt to explain, but the fact is patent and undeniable, and Protestantism, especially in America, must bear the disgrace or rouse itself to resist and overthrow the crime and the delusion.

Every city and almost every village in this commonwealth has its Herod, its Simon Magus or Elymas, with their premature killings, magic and sorceries, but lamentably few John the Baptists, or Peters, or Pauls, to denounce them as "enemies of all righteousness," and warn the people against their iniquities.

"Medical science and especially the study of mental disease is destined," says one of our distinguished professors, * "to react to a much greater advantage on the theology of the future than theology has acted on medicine in the past. The liberal spirit very generally prevailing in both professions, and the good understanding between their most enlightened members promise well for the future of both in a community which holds every point of human belief, every institution in human hands, and every word written in a human dialect, open to free discussion

* Dr. O. W. Holmes.

to-day, tomorrow, and to the end of time. Whether the world at large will ever be cured of trusting entirely to medicines as a substitute for observing the laws of health, and to mechanical or intellectual formulæ as a substitute for character, may admit of question. Quackery and Idolatry are all but immortal."

Truth, whether in the scientific, moral or religious world, is like a many-sided diamond; no human eye can, at once, take in all the luminous rays which radiate from every facet of the gem; nor can any human mind at once comprehend all its wealth of beauty and intrinsic power. With God himself is all truth, and revelation and science convey to man only His glory in part; and to each mind, from a somewhat different standpoint; and hence arise different opinions and theories, and diverse practices both in religion and medicine.

Some men see and accept the dust specks from the lapidary, as if it were the whole diamond; and by the light of that feeble radiance, build systems in religion, morals or medicine, false and weak, and often very odious by their egotism and intolerance. Errors in religious belief, like erroneous practice in medicine, have always more immediate effect on men, and produce more perturbation in society than truth. It cannot be expected, however, from the very nature of the case, that truth in science, especially medical science, any more than truth in religion, will be accepted and practically applied for the benefit of the world without more or less gainsaying and opposition. But let us remember there is in *truth* a ten-

dency not only to clear itself from all unjust aspersions, but to carry an aggressive and successful war into the quarters of error.

On this principle we may rely with confidence, that both religious and medical truth will yet shake off all parasitic superstitions, and triumph over every form of error.

The plausible and well dressed charlatans, who trade in false pretences in religion or medicine, may well awaken our disgust, but never our despair of the steady progress and final success of the truth. Far be it from us to oppose or undervalue any tendency to sift established practice or accepted axioms in medicine, or to resist a new standard founded in truth by which to try the current rules of our art, or to deprecate any new lines of inquiry where eager minds may be disposed to search for hidden truth. Our age is progressive in Theology and Science, especially medical science, and he is bold in bigotry who would assert that laws may not yet be discovered, and occult facts classified, far beyond our present understanding.

Franklin and Morse harnessed the lightning to their triumphal car; Daguerre grasped a sun-beam for his pencil, and painted new and glorious forms of beauty; and Captain Ericsson is sanguine of success in utilizing solar heat as a motive power; while some future devotee of science may more fully control the power of tides, winds, frost, or even volcanic fire, for some great practical use to alleviate the labor and hardships of life. Nay more, may we not hope that science will ere long discover those occult

and furtive entities that cause zymotic diseases; or that subtle chemistry that paints and perfumes the lily and arbutus; or the unknown influence of the sun, neither heat nor light, that causes "*coup de soleil*"? Call you this materialism? Call it rather devotion;—devotion to truth—stepping stones to the Infinite; and forget not that the imperative voice of Christianity has ever been to those who embrace it, "*in understanding be men.*"

We may reverently unriddle all the secrets of the universe, and by utilizing their power, vindicate man's intellectual sovereignty over nature, no less than God's supreme wisdom and benevolence. If we study with a reverent and devout spirit, nature will be no longer stiff, but fluent; her laws, so stubborn before, will become elastic in our hands; confronting mountains will become plains; and the distant murmurs and darkness, that sometimes bewilder the student of science, will be changed to the full harmony and light of truth.

We have seen that there is a Divine tendency in both religious and medical truth to resist error. There is also a human tendency to pervert and distort both, or to encrust them over with folly and falsehood.

And this seems to be in accordance with the existing "plan of the universe," involving, of course, a necessity for vigilance, labor, and contest against the wrong. Let our profession take a stand wholly on the Divine side, and, like true knights, always keep our lance in rest, ready for defence or to make assault. Recognizing mysteries both in nature and

revelation, we may rightfully search for their solution with chivalric zeal, and serious religious interest. Thus may we enrich our armory and strengthen our weapons by a deeper and clearer knowledge of revealed and natural law ; and, by an increasing faith in their Author, more surely seize upon the utterances of the normal language of hidden but eternal truths, which, like vessels prepared for new wine, have long waited for consecrated practical use. The earnest student may often be misjudged and censured ; and he may sometimes be discouraged by the hostile surroundings of superstition and error. The way may be one of struggle and hardship. He may grow weary and his faith may sometimes waver as he waits for the darkness of error to break before him. Like Jacob on the plains of Luz, he may perchance trustingly rest his head on a stone, at the foot of a ladder of light, on which ministries of truth may ascend and descend, blending and harmonizing revelation and science.

“ Not far but near, about us, yea within,
 Lieth the infinite life. The pure in mind
 Dwell in the Presence, to themselves akin ;
 And lo ! thou sick and health imploring soul,
 He stands beside thee—touch, and thou art whole.”

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS :

A sacred and time-honored usage, no less than Christian courtesy, and fraternal affection, requires me to announce to this Society their mortuary record of the past year.