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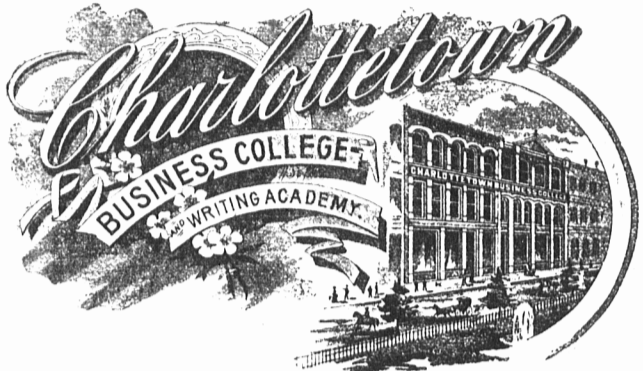
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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

[Continued from Page Nine.]

In order to bring this theological conflict to a close the two schools persuaded the two leaders, John Calvin and this mighty man, to meet and discuss the theological questions at issue. What did this famous reformer do at that conference? History tells us that he brought along a tablecloth, upon which was embroidered these six words, taken from the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew: "Take, eat; this is my blood." They placed that cloth over a table and simply rested his hand upon it and said nothing. No matter what arguments were brought forward, he answered nothing. All that he did was to point to the one sentence written upon the table, "Take, eat; this is my body." "But," said John Calvin, "Christ also said, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches.' Are you going to take that sentence literally? Does that sentence imply that Jesus is a stick?" But the reformer would answer nothing. All that he did was to point to the one sentence upon the table, which read, "Take, eat; this is my body." So in the same way the faith curists pure and simple will not accept the trend of the Bible's teachings. They will not compare passage with passage. They will not see that every leaf of every chapter of every book of the Bible teaches that faith must go hand in hand with works. They will not see that it is almost impossible to find an incident where Christ healed the sick unless at the same time he compelled action upon the part of those whom he would physically help.

Did not Christ compel action upon the part of him that was blind? After he had anointed the blind eyes with a moist clay did he not say unto the young man, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam?" He went his way, therefore, and washed and came seeing. Did not Christ compel action upon the part of the ten lepers? "Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass as they went they were cleansed." Did not God compel the leper Naaman to leave the far off Damascus and dip seven times in the Jordan before his flesh became like unto that of a little child? I am not here advocating any heretical idea that Christ cannot and will not in many cases heal our physical diseases, but I assert that as people we have no more right to expect the Divine Physician to answer our prayers for health without any co-operative effort on our part than we have a right to expect our Divine Commissary to give us our daily bread without our working for it. We have just as much right to kneel down at night and say the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," and then in our eagerness to expect next morning a visionary breakfast to jump out of a visionary fire and sizzle upon a visionary broiler and the water faucet to fill the pot with visionary coffee or the yeast to tumble the empty bread tray down the dummy filled with visionary hot toast as we have to expect the sick to be made well without our own effort upon which divine blessing has been invoked. Faith to react upon works; works always in the invalid's room to go hand in hand with faith!

If the Bible does not honor the medical profession why did Christ use as illustration this sentence for one of his sermons, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick?" Does not that divine statement mean "They that are sick need a physician?" When Hezekiah was sick unto death he prayed to God to give him a longer lease of life. God answered that prayer. But how? Through human medication. Isaiah, the prophet, told the nurse to make a poultice out of figs and put it upon the King's boil, and he recovered. Hezekiah prayed. Oh, yes. But in answer to that prayer God told him to use a sanctified poultice. What did Paul mean when he wrote to Timothy to "take a little wine for thy stomach's sake." Paul was merely prescribing a dose of medicine for a sick colleague. Paul writes thus to Timothy, because the Holy Land with few exceptions, is noted for its impure waters; therefore Paul, as a common sense Christian, prescribes a little medicine when he says, "Drink no water but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake." All through the Bible we find commendatory pas-

sages like these in reference to doctors. In no case do we find the medical profession anathematized and ridiculed in the Bible. Tyndall, the noted synthetic philosopher, once hurled at the Christian church his famous prayer challenge. Said he: "Let us set apart two wards in a hospital—one to be filled with men who do not take any human medicine but prayer, the other to be filled by sick patients under the care of competent physicians. Then let us compare results and see which is the most efficacious—a physician's prescription or a clergyman's prayer."

Again, faith cure, pure and simple, if accepted in its entirety of belief, would call a halt to the laboratory investigations made for prevention of disease as well as the physician's cures of those diseases after they have come. It would say to Edward Jenner: "Your discovery of vaccination is useless. Disease is a condition of the mind, not of the body. Let merciless smallpox start again if it will. The \$50,000 voted to you by the British House of Parliament as the greatest benefactor of your generation was a nonsensical gift, for you have been a curse to the human race instead of a blessing." It would say to Pasteur: "Savart, your inoculation for hydrophobia is itself a species of madness. If the people would only trust God and do nothing the bite of the dog afflicted with rabies would be a tonic instead of death." It would say to Koch of Berlin and Finson of Norway: "Foolish men, why hunt the bacilli of consumption and cancer with the penetrating eye of the microscope? God will and can cure disease if we will ask him. Let us pray that all these evil bacilli give one gasp and die, and they will die. The prevention of disease is entirely the work of the prayer chamber, not of the scientist's laboratory."

To most of us the old-fashioned doctor yet lives in the memory of our village childhood. He knew every family secret for miles around. He had heard the family skeleton rattling in many a dark closet. He was at every birth, at every marriage altar and at every funeral. With him the village church bell sounded a dirge almost as often as it chimed for a wedding. We knew not when we loved him the most—when he was gathering the rosebuds in the garden or the nativity or intertwining the orange blossoms or placing the white lily alongside of the pale cheek in the casket. There was a kind of religious rattle in his old gig. That child was the most envied of the village who could sit by his side and hold the reins over the back of the old mare, that seemed to be just as old as the doctor and to know just as many family secrets, yet it could not gossip any more than did its master. When the boy was in trouble this kind old doctor would place his fatherly hand upon the lad's shoulder and give him advice. The young maiden would smile under the twinkle of his fatherly eye as he chatted to her of her first sweetheart. Even the bees would buzz louder and the dogs bark more happily, and their tails would wag faster as the doctor drove along. We remember the old black bag he always carried and the long white bandages he placed about the splints when we fell off the haymow and broke our arm. The strange looking bottles filled with pills—bottles that all looked alike—and the pills, too, seemed to be the same.

When the minister on the Sabbath day entered the pulpit and gave out the first hymn down the church aisle the good old doctor would always walk. He was always a little late for services. Doctors are always a little late. I think that is part of their education. It is never dignified for a doctor to be on time. In prayer meeting we loved to hear the good doctor pray. We have heard a good many great and noted ministers pray in our time, but we always thought the old doctor prayed better than any. He seemed to be so near to God—he had seen so much trouble. When the poor family over whom he was serving he bought them food out of his own pocket. We never knew how much he did until after the funeral. He was part of every one's life. He was the poor man's helper.

One day the news went flying over the country roads, "The doctor, the good doctor is sick!" Was it not too bad that he could not prescribe for himself and take his own medicine? If he had we know he would have become well. But he could pray. How he did pray in his own sick room! Then one day the news went over the country roads that the old doctor was dead! While we were gathering in the home where lay the wornout body of the tired old physician I can imagine that the good doctor went up to the gates of the New Jerusalem and timidly knocked. The gateman called out, "Who is there?" The old Christian answered: "Only a poor, wornout village doctor, who is advancing in Christ's name. Can I come in?" Then the Lord Almighty from his throne called out: "Let him in! Let him in! Let the village doctor come in!" And the angels in the celestial choir began to chime: "Let him in! Let the village doctor come in!" Then all the redeemed spirits over whose earthly deathbeds he had hovered cried: "Let him in! Let our village doctor come in!" Then Christ himself, the great Physician, came forth and led the wornout man to one of the highest thrones in heaven as he said: "Come in, friend. Come in. This is your throne. For I was sick and ye visited me!"

Will you not believe in such a consecrated physician? Will you not believe that by the sick bed faith can go hand in hand with works and that the surgeon's knife and that the physician's prescriptions have a part in the civilization and the Christianization of the world? And will not you, O physician, be a Christian doctor, as well as you, O layman, a Christian patient?

All honor, then, to our Christian physicians, whose calling and office are thus divinely consecrated, and may a blessing rest upon their earnest efforts for the alleviation of the physical afflictions of the human race.



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