

THE WORD

MARCH, 1907.

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

A friend from the Central States asked: *Is it wrong to use mental instead of physical means to cure physical ills?*

The question covers too large a field to unqualifiedly answer "yes" or "no." There are instances where one is justified in using the power of thought to overcome physical ills, in which case we would say that it was not wrong. In the great majority of cases it is decidedly wrong to use mental instead of physical means to cure physical ills. How then shall we decide which instances are right and which wrong? This can only be seen according to the principle involved. If we feel sure of the principle the means employed will be in accord with it and therefore right. So that the question can be answered in a general way and not as to a particular case, that if the principle is perceived the individual will be able to apply it to any particular case and determine whether it is right or wrong to cure physical ills by mental processes. Let us discover the principle: Are physical ills facts, or are they delusions? If physical ills are facts they must be the result of causes. If so-called physical ills are delusions they are not physical ills at all, they are delusions. If delusion is said to be a disease of the mind and that the ill exists in the mind and not in the physical body then the delusion is not a physical ill, it is insanity. But we cannot now deal with insanity; we are concerned about physical ills. Allowing then that physical ills are facts, we say that these facts are effects. The next step is to seek the causes of these effects. If we are able to locate a cause of the physical ill we shall be able to cure the physical ill by removing its cause and helping nature to repair the damage. Physical ills may be the result of physical causes or of mental causes. The physical ills which are caused by physical means should be cured by physical means. The physical ills which have mental causes, should have the mental cause of the ill removed and then nature should be allowed to reestablish the physical harmony. If the foregoing be correct, we can now say that any physical ill which has a physical cause should not be treated mentally, and that any physical ill which arises from a mental cause should have the causes removed and nature will repair the physical

ill. The next difficulty to be removed in order to discover our way is to decide what physical ills have physical causes, and what physical ills have mental causes. Cuts, wounds, broken bones, sprains and the like, are caused by direct contact with physical matter and should receive physical treatment. Diseases such as consumption, diabetes, gout, locomotor ataxia, pneumonia, dyspepsia and Brights' disease, are caused by improper food and neglect of the body. These should be cured by the proper care of the body and by supplying it with wholesome food, which will remove the proximate cause of the physical ill and give nature a chance to restore the body to its healthy state. The physical ills which are the result of mental causes, such as nervousness, and diseases brought on by the use of narcotics, drugs and alcohol, and the diseases resulting from immoral thoughts and acts, should be cured by removing the cause of the disease, and assisting nature to restore the equilibrium of the body by wholesome food, pure water, fresh air and sunlight. Having distinguished between the physical ills as being due to physical causes and to mental causes, and having shown that those due to physical causes should be cured by physical means, and that those of mental origin should have the mental cause removed, we would answer the question by saying, that it is not wrong to use the mind to cure physical ills if these physical ills are due to mental causes, provided one knows the mental cause, and how to remove it, and if the motive of the healer is good.

Is it right to attempt to cure physical ills by mental treatment?

No! It is not right to attempt to cure the physical ills of another by "mental treatment," because one will inflict more lasting harm than good. But one has the right to attempt to cure any nervous trouble of his own and the effort may meet with beneficial results providing he does not try to make himself believe he has no ill.

If it is right to cure physical ills by mental means, providing the physical ills have a mental origin, why is it wrong for a mental or christian scientist to cure those ills by mental treatment?

It is wrong because Christian and mental scientists do not know the mind or the laws which govern and control the action of the mind; because in the majority of cases the mental scientist, not knowing the mental cause of the physical ill, and often denying the existence of the ill, attempts to effect a cure by mentally commanding the mind of his patient or by suggesting to the mind of the patient that he is

superior to the ill or that the ill is only a delusion; therefore, not knowing the cause nor the positive effect of his mind on the mind of his patient in relation to the ill, especially if the ill be ignored or considered as a delusion, he is not justified in the treatment. Again, if his motive were right in the attempted treatment of a patient and the results appeared to be beneficial, still such treatment would be wrong if the mental scientist either accepted or exacted money for the treatment.

Why is it wrong for mental scientists to receive money for the treatment of physical or mental ills while physicians charge their regular fees?

It would be much better were the State to pay or maintain physicians for the people, but inasmuch as this is not so the physician is justified in asking fees; because, in the first place he makes no pretense of occult power by mental processes, whereas he does recognize physical ills to be facts, and does treat them by physical means, and treating them by physical means he has a right to physical remuneration. It is not so in the case of the mental or other scientist, because he claims to cure by means of the mind, and money should not be concerned with the mind in the cure of disease, as money is used for and applied to physical purposes. If, therefore, the physical ill was called a delusion, he would have no right to take physical money for the treatment of that which did not exist; but if he did admit the physical ill and cure it by mental processes he would still have no right to receive money because the benefit received should be of the kind as the benefit given, and the benefit being from the mind the only pay should be the satisfaction of knowing that benefit had been given. The benefit received should be received on the same plane in which benefit is given and vice versa.

Why is it not right for a mental scientist to receive money for the treatment of disease when he devotes all his time to this work and must have money to live?

Because one who receives money cannot restore perfect health to one mentally diseased while the would-be mental healer's mind is polluted by the thought of money. One would not employ a dissolute, disorderly and immoral man to teach and improve the morals of himself or his children; and no more should one employ a mental or Christian scientist to cure him or friends when the "scientist's" mind is inoculated with and diseased by the money microbe. It is well

enough to say that the mental healer heals for the love of healing and benefiting his fellow men. If this is true, and the question of money does not enter into his mind he will revolt at the thought of accepting money; because the thought of money and the love of one's fellow are not on the same plane and are quite dissimilar in their attributes. Therefore, when money is suggested in payment for benefits received, the healer will refuse it if he heals only from love for his fellow. This is the true test of healing. But it is asked how can he devote all his time to his work and live without receiving money? The answer is very simple: Nature will provide for all those who truly love her and who devote their lives to aid her in her work, but they are tried by many tests before they are accepted and provided for. One of the requirements which nature demands of her minister and physician is that he shall have a pure mind, or that his mind shall be free from the love of gain for self. Supposing that the would-be healer has a natural good-will for mankind and desires to assist by mental healing. If he has any natural ability and meets with any success, his patients naturally desire to show their gratitude, and offer him money, even though he did not demand it. If he demands it or accepts it this at once proves that he is not the one that nature chooses; if he at first refuses nature tries him again, and he finds that he is in need of money, and when urged to take it necessity often seems to force him to do so; and the acceptance of the money however good his intention might otherwise be, is the first means of inoculating his mind with the money microbe—as has proven to be the case with the most successful healers. The money microbe infects his mind, and the money disease grows with his success, and even although he may appear to benefit his patients in one part of their nature he will damage them in another part for, even though unconsciously, he has become immoral and diseased mentally and he cannot fail to inoculate his patients with his own diseases. It may take a long time, but the germs of his disease will take root in the minds of his patients, and the disease will break out in the weakest sides of their natures. So that it is not right for one who would effect permanent cures to receive money, because he cannot cure permanently if he does receive money, however results appear on the surface of things. On the other hand, if his sole desire is to benefit others instead of making money by healing then nature will provide for him. If he does not know the truth he is not one of nature's physicians—he is only a commercial healer.

How can nature provide for one who really desires to benefit others, but who has no means of supporting himself?

In saying that nature will provide we do not mean that she will shower money into his lap or that unseen forces will nourish him or birds feed him. There is an unseen side of nature, and there is the side which is seen. Nature does her real work on the unseen side of her domain, but the results of her work appear on the surface in the visible world. It is not possible for every man to become a healer, but if one among many should feel that he had the natural faculty and decide that he would like to make healing his life's work, then such a man would do his work spontaneously. In nearly every such case he would discover that his finances would not allow him to devote all his time to healing unless he received money. If he accepted money nature would not accept him. He would fail at the first test. If he refused money and devoted only such time to healing as his circumstances would permit, then if he had the natural ability and his duties to the world and to his family did not prevent, he would find his position in life to be gradually changing. With continued desire to devote his time gratuitously to work for humanity, his circumstances and relation to humanity would continue to change until he finds himself in such a position, financially and otherwise, as to allow of his giving his entire time to his work. But, of course, if he had the thought in his mind that nature was thus intending to provide for him, that very thought would have disqualified him for his work. The knowledge must grow gradually with his development. Such are the facts, which can be seen in the lives of many of nature's ministers. But to see the proceedings of nature in developing the facts, one must be able to work with nature and to observe her workings below the surface of things.

Are the christian and mental scientists not doing good if they effect cures where physicians fail?

The one who looks on the immediate results without knowing the principle involved would naturally say, yes. But we say, no! Because no one can effect a permanent good without any evil consequences if his premises are wrong and if he does not know the principle involved. Aside from the question of money, the mental or other healer almost invariably begins his operations with wrong premises, and without knowing the principle involved in his mental operations. The fact that they do treat certain diseases prove that they know nothing of the operations of the mind, and prove that they

are unworthy of using the title of “scientist” which they claim. If they could show that they know how the mind operates in relation to certain diseases they would be mentally qualified to treat others, even though they may not be qualified morally.

What criterion have we as to what mental requirements a mental scientist should have?

To be mentally qualified to treat another mentally one should be able to set himself a problem or to have some problem given him which he proceeds to and does solve. He should be able then to watch his mental operations in the processes of thought during the solving of the problem and not only to see these mental processes as clearly as the movements of a bird in full flight, or the painting of a canvass by an artist, or the designing of a plan by an architect, but he should also understand his mental processes even as he would feel and know the sensations of the bird and the cause of its flight, and feel the emotions of the artist and know the ideal of his picture, and follow the thought of the architect and know the purpose of his design. If he is able to do this, his mind is capable of acting salutary with the mind of another. But there is this fact: If he can thus act he will never attempt to cure by mental processes physical ills which have physical causes, nor will he ever attempt to cure physical ills by “treating the mind of another,” for the reason that no one can cure another’s mind. Each mind must be its own physician if it is to effect a mental cure. All that he could do would be to make clear the truth of the nature of the ill to the mind of the other, and show the origin of the ill and the manner in which its cure might be effected. This can be done by word of mouth and needs no mental treatment or mysterious pretenses. But if the truth is seen it strikes at the root of both Mental and Christian Science for it disproves the theories of both.

In what way does the ability to follow one’s own or another’s mental operations, and to truly see causes, disprove the claims of mental and christian scientists?

The claims of both kinds of “scientists” are in the form of denials and affirmations. Taking the position of teachers and healers they assert their ability to teach the mysteries of the world of thought as a science. They assert the non-existence of matter and the supremacy of mind, or they deny the existence of evil, disease and death. Yet they establish themselves as leaders in the world of physics to prove

that matter does not exist, that there is no evil, and there is no disease, no death, that disease is error, death a lie. But without the existence of matter, disease and error, they could not live as they do by receiving fees for the treatment of disease which does not exist, nor could they establish costly churches and schools to teach the non-existence of disease, matter and evil. The name of science, which scientists have earned and applied to laws verifiable under predetermined conditions, they take, and then they deny these laws. Deluding themselves, they delude others, and so they live in a world of delusion, created by themselves. The ability to see mental operations, disillusion the mind from fancy because it shows the derivation of physical effects from mental causes, such as the action of hatred, fear, anger, or lust. The ability to see the working of one's own mind also brings with it the faculty of examining one's physical body as a thing apart from the mind, and all this proves the facts on each plane of action and the action of the mind on any plane. A mind so developed can never acknowledge the claims of the mental or christian scientists because those claims would be known to be wrong, and if one of their "scientists" should be able to see the facts on each plane he could no longer remain a "scientist" and at the same time see the facts.

What are the results of the acceptance and practice of the teachings of the christian or mental scientists?

The results, for a time being, appear to be most beneficial in the majority of cases because the delusion created is new and the living of the delusion can last for a time and for a time only. But there must come a reaction from every delusion, which will bring with it disastrous results. The teaching and practice of their doctrines is among the most terrible and far-reaching crimes against humanity as it compels the mind to deny facts as they exist on any plane. The mind so treated is rendered incapable of distinguishing fact from fancy, and thus incapacitated for perceiving truth on any plane. The mind becomes negative, uncertain, and will deny or affirm whatever it is bidden and its evolution thus arrested, it may become a wreck.

Why are so many mental healers prosperous if they do not effect cures, and if they are not what they represented themselves to be, would their patients not discover the fact?

All healers are not intentional frauds. Some of them believe that they are doing good, even though they may not examine too closely into their motives. A successful mental healer is prosperous because

he has allied himself to and become a servant of the great Spirit of the Earth, and the Earth Spirit rewards him. That they do effect cures no one who knows of them or their work will deny. But the means and processes by which the cures are effected, the healers themselves do not know. A healer would naturally not be expected to represent himself in an unfavorable light to a patient, but all patients do not see the healer in the light in which he would have them see him. If we believed some of the patients who have been treated by healers, these would be seen in an unfavorable light. One of the questions arising as to the treatment of patients, is what an unprincipled healer might suggest to his patient when that patient is either under mental control or at least sufficiently en rapport to receive his suggestions. It would not be astonishing to know that there are dishonest healers in the mental profession, as there are in every trade or profession. The opportunity and temptation offered to an unprincipled man is great, in that by mental suggestion or control it is an easy matter to affect the mind of a generous and grateful patient to insist on the healer's acceptance of a large fee or gift, especially when the patient believes that he has been benefited.

Did not Jesus and many of the saints cure physical ills by mental means and if so was it wrong?

It is claimed, and we believe it possible and true, that Jesus and many saints did cure physical ills by mental means and we have no hesitation in saying that it was not wrong, if they knew what they were doing. That Jesus knew what he was doing in effecting cures we have no doubt, and many of the saints were also possessed of much knowledge and great good will for mankind, but Jesus and the saints received no money for their cures. When this question is brought up by those who favor the work of the healers they do not always stop to think of this fact. How unlike Jesus and unsaintly it would seem for either Jesus or his disciples or any of the saints to charge so much per visit to every patient, cure or no cure, or to charge from five to upwards of one hundred dollars a lesson, in classes, to teach the disciples how to heal. Because Jesus healed many ills is no license for one to set himself up in the business of mental healing. Anyone who is willing to live a life as nearly like that of Jesus as he can, will have the right to heal, but he will heal with love for his fellow, and never accept remuneration. Jesus cured with knowledge. When he said "Thy sins be forgiven thee," it simply meant that the sufferer had paid the penalty of his offence. Knowing this Jesus used his knowledge and his

power to relieve him from further suffering, thus working in conformity with rather than against the law. Jesus, nor any other with knowledge, would not cure everyone who came to him, but only those whom he could cure within the law. He, himself, did not come under the law. He was above the law; and being above it he could see all those who came under the law and suffered from it. He could relieve physical, moral, or mental disease. The moral culprits were cured by him when they had endured the suffering necessary to make them see their wrong, and when they really desired to do better. Those whose ills originated from a mental cause could be cured only when the demands of physical nature had been complied with, when their moral habits had been changed, and when they were willing to assume their individual responsibilities and perform their individual duties. When such came to Jesus he used his knowledge and power to relieve them from further suffering because they had paid the debt to nature, were repentant of their wrong-doing, and in their interior natures were willing to assume and perform their obligations. After curing them he would say: "Go, and sin no more."

If it is wrong to receive money for curing physical ills by mental processes, or for giving 'science teaching,' is it not also wrong for a school teacher to receive money for instructing pupils in any of the branches of learning?

There is little comparison to be made between the teacher or healer of mental or Christian Science and a teacher in the schools of learning. The only point in which they are similar is that the teaching of both has to do with the minds of their patients or pupils. Otherwise they are different in their claims, purpose, processes, and in results. The pupil of the schools learns that figures have certain values; that the multiplication of certain figures has always the same certain result, and never, under any circumstance does the teacher tell a pupil that three times four are two, or that twice one make twelve. Once the pupil learns to multiply he can always prove the truth or falsity of another's statement in the multiplication of figures. In no case is the healer able to instruct his patient-pupil with anything like exactness. The scholar learns grammar and mathematics for the purpose and convenience of the correct arrangement and easy expression of his thoughts to others who are intelligent. The mental healer or Christian Scientist does not teach his pupil by rules or example to prove or disprove the statements of others, or to arrange his own thoughts and to express them in a

manner intelligible to others who are not of his belief, or to allow his beliefs and assertions to stand on their merits for what they are worth. The schools of learning exist for the purpose of enabling the pupil to understand the facts of the plane in which he is living, to be a useful, and an intelligent member of society. The “scientist” healer does not prove or demonstrate the claims of another “scientist” by his own processes, nor does the pupil of a healer prove the truth of the claims of his own or of another teacher with any degree of exactness; but the pupil of the schools can and does prove what he learns to be true or false. The teacher of the schools does not pretend to teach the cure of physical ills by mental means, but the “scientist” does, and is therefore not in the same class with the teacher in the schools. The teacher in the schools trains the mind of his pupil to understand the things which are evident to the senses, and he receives his pay in money which is in evidence to the senses; but the mental or christian scientist trains the mind of his patient-pupil to contradict, deny, and disbelieve facts which are evident to the senses, and at the same time exacts his pay in money, and according to the evidence of the senses. So that it does seem that there is no wrong in the school teacher’s receiving money as payment for his services according to the plane in which he lives and teaches; whereas it is not right for a mental scientist or a christian scientist to claim to heal or to teach against the evidences of the senses, and at the same time take or exact pay according to the senses which he denies, but which he nevertheless enjoys. But suppose that it is wrong for the teacher of the schools to receive money for his services. That wrong would not make it right for the healer to be guilty of the same wrong, nor would it in any way relieve him from the responsibility of his own wrong act.

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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WORD FOUNDATION, INC.

A Non-Profit Organization Established in 1950
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