

"First, I will demand what is the meanin' of these here perceedin's."

"And where," said Mr. Tibbits, "is Betsy Cornelia?"

The woman who had piloted them in now spoke for the first time: "This, as you are doubtless aware, is the house of a Christian science doctor, and we, as the disciples, are administering to these women, who are so unfortunate as to harbor a belief in disease."

"Marier, look me in the eye," demanded Ebenezer, "an' tell me what's a ailin' of ye."

"Oh, Ebenezer dear, I've had a wicked belief in a carbuncle," and the last word died away in a prolonged wail.

"Ye hain't never hed no kind o' sickness sense ye was took in a swooned at the cattle fair, an' ye hain't a-goin' to."

Said the disciple: "She is just beginning to know there is no such thing as disease. All disease comes from thought. For centuries the material mind has been taught to believe in its existence, and behold there is not one good thing in them. The influence of mind over matter, sir."

"That be durn nonsense," said Ebenezer.

"That be astonishin'," said Hozia. "An' air ye a-claimin' to perform meracles?"

"If you call doing away with belief in bodily affliction a miracle, yes."

"Well," said Hozia, "ef we ain't sick we ain't a-goin' to die, 'ceptin' them as dies by accidents."

"Exactly so, and in time, when our good deeds are sown broadcast over the land, narrow, indeed, will be the mind still believing in corruption, disease and death."

"I believe the hull thing is a whoppin' lie, but ef ye cures my wife of believin' in sicknesses ye will be blest with my eternal gratitude, ef not my everlastin' respects an' admiration. Say, what'll ye take fer a cure? Makin' it a sure one, mind ye now."

"One dollar a treatment are our terms, but it is sad to see the carnal mind so stubborn."

"I see ye ain't above takin' pay, air ye, fer them meracles o' your'n?"

"We must live," was the laconic and unanswerable reply.

"An' livin' high, I calls it, too. Ef I'd 'a' made a dollar a prayer every Sunday, Deacon Tibbits wouldn't be in only middlin' circumstances now. But where be Betsy T.? I've got a big belief in bein' hungry, fer I hain't hed no supper yet to-night."

"Oh, the flesh pots of Egypt, the flesh pots of Egypt," groaned the female disciple. "But let us go and see how the cure progresses," and, motioning to Hozia, they left the room together.

They went on still farther down the hall and stopped at another door, in all respects exactly like the one they had left. They went straight in, without knocking, and closed the door behind them. What a sight met Mr. Tibbits' eye! There sat Betsy Cornelia in a large arm chair, her eyes were closed, in front of her sat a man, his eyes closed, and he was clasping Betsy's hand in his own. Hozia forgot all caution, and the disciple was rudely awakened from his prayerful attitude by a sounding whack on the side of his head from Hozia's fist.

"There, take that, ye sneakin' humbug! Lovemakin' to Betsy, was ye? I'll give ye a belief or two that'll make ye a considerable trouble, mind that," and he sat down, mopping his brow, while the innocent and discomfited victim of his wrath, the doctor, scrambled to his feet, not yet recovered from his wrath and proper indignation at the unmerited assault.

"I'll have this out of you, sir, for battery, sir, see if I don't, sir. And be so good as to explain your rascally conduct, sir," said the physician.

"Hozia, what hev ye done? Ye've broke up the treatment, an' it cost me a dollar. Hozia, ye air greener an' foolisher than I hev give ye credit fer."

"He was a-holdin' of yer hand, Betsy, an'—an'—ye seemed to like it. That's 'countin' fer my feelin's."

"That," interposed the female disciple, "is the treatment attitude. Communion is thereby established between patient and physician, whereby the patient is brought into harmony with spiritual law."

"Oh!" said Hozia, sheepishly, for he understood there had been a mistake somewhere, and that the homily was intended as a rebuke, "I'm fer boggin' yer pardon, mister, shake."

The doctor was agreed, for he saw a possible remunerative patient in Mrs. Tibbits, and peace was restored once more.

"Hozia, ye ain't angry with me, air ye?" Mrs. Tibbits asked, imploringly.

"No, no, Betsy, ye kin go right on a-treatin'," with a wink at the disciple to remind her of his bargain, "ye can go right on a-treatin' an' I'm yer man fer footin' up the bills."

It was nearly ten when the two families finally took their leave and departed to their homes. In the Hinks family there was a revolution of things. In the Tibbits family there was a scheme. Betsy Tibbits continued to take treatments regularly for some time, and gradually lost her old habit of complaining of sickness all the time, and appeared to look perfectly well. Her husband chuckled to himself and congratulated himself daily on what he was wont to term his "investment," for the plan was working amazingly well. When the winter came on, however,