

The Alpha.

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Human Rights before all Laws and Constitutions.—Gerrit Smith.
The Divine Right of Every Child to be Well Born.

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A MOTHER TO OTHER MOTHERS.

Ruth Eliot was a wide-awake girl, thirteen years old, attending a public school in a large city. Her mind was open to all the new impressions which, at that age, nature and circumstances are so ready to give. One morning, just before the school exercises began, a teacher was passing a group of the girls, foremost among whom was Ruth, when she overheard some words of their conversation; they made such an impression upon her that she immediately wrote a letter to Ruth's mother—a warm personal friend of hers—in which she spoke of the suspicion which the few overheard words had brought to her mind, and begged that Ruth might learn of the things pertaining to her woman-nature through a mother's tender guidance rather than through the ignorant curiosity of school-girl talk.

Now, Mrs. Eliot had been brought up in the old school, where parents were very reticent to talk with their children on any subject pertaining to the hidden things. She instinctively shrank from doing anything of the kind; indeed, whenever she thought of the matter as a duty, she had allowed her daughter's youth to hinder her from any direct action with regard to it. But now, upon receiving this note, her naturally deep nature was thoroughly aroused. She realized, as never before, that only from her ought her daughter to learn of the new truths which she was now ready to know. She determined then and there to conquer all her own natural diffidence and make her duty in the matter a delightful privilege. So imbued with the determination to talk with Ruth that very night on her return home from school, she went to her room where she sat and thought for some minutes as to her course of action. Then she began to take out from their hiding place the dainty little things she had been secretly making for several months past, and arranged them tastefully on the bed at her side. She had scarcely finished doing this when Ruth came bounding into the room, school-girl like, "to find mother." Immediately her bright eyes saw the lovely little things spread out before her, and her girlish enthusiasm was unbounded, for she had always loved to make and play with dolls' clothes, and were not these just the same, only larger? Mrs. Eliot quietly watched her young daughter in her enthusiastic admiration, and before the questions springing up in the girl's mind had had time to find utterance, she gently drew her to a cricket by her side. Then in a hushed and reverent manner she told her of the little life that she was car-

rying under her heart; how it was being prepared to come to them in the fullness of time; how happy she had been in making such pretty things to welcome the little stranger, and how blessed it was to have a home all ready in which to receive joyfully and love tenderly the dear little creature when it should come into the world which, at its best, must offer some kind of trouble or sorrow.

Then, as the twilight deepened, she told her many things that she wanted and needed to know, and crowned the new knowledge with the promise that she would come to her with every new question which her mind prompted, rather than stoop to learn anything through the ignorant curiosity of school-girl talk.

The supper-bell closed their interesting conversation, and the mother and daughter, happy in their new and larger relations, joined the family at the tea-table.

As Mrs. Eliot met her son Paul, a boy two years older than Ruth, the experience of the day flashed upon her anew, and in a moment's time, she resolved to talk as freely with him as she had talked with Ruth. So, before he retired for the night she called him to her room, and in the earnest conversation that followed, with its lovingly-drawn-out confidences, she was surprised, as well as deeply grieved, to learn that even then he had learned much from a wrong standpoint. She then appealed to the highest in him, and urged him ever to avoid all that was coarse and sensual; while, at the same time, she gently revealed to him the true nature of all the glorious privileges which, as true men and women, nature intended should be theirs to enjoy. She showed the necessity of shunning all that idle talk with his boy friends which would lower his mind and taint his heart and so prevent him from keeping himself noble and pure.

Thus in her talk with her boy Mrs. Eliot used such a loving, wise tact, that he promised faithfully to give to her his whole confidence in the days to come, and to go to her rather than to his school-mates to learn of the things pertaining to a larger knowledge of himself. Each was cognizant of the new relation which had sprung up between them, and they both knew that life would be more to them for it.

Long after Ruth and Paul had bade their mother "good-night," she was sitting in her room and thinking over the new experiences of the day and their relation to her future action. Her heart was full of that peculiar happiness which comes as a reward for love's work fulfilled. Ere she retired, she wrote out of a full heart a

letter to the teacher friend who had warned her in the morning, and begged her to write to other mothers as she had written to her. She also urged her to try herself to satisfy the natural desire to learn of those unfortunate ones who had no mother either in name or sympathy; for since she felt, as she had never felt before, that a desire to know, or, in other words, a natural curiosity was the first cause of either the good or evil that followed, she saw more truly the necessity of an early and true guidance into the knowledge of those holy things which, rightly learned, opened the way to life's greatest happiness.—*Elizabeth Porter Gould, in Phenological Journal.*

PHYSICAL AND MORAL HERITAGE.

[Continued.]

"Nothing, says Dr. Pritchard, "seems to hold true more generally than that all acquired conditions of body, whether produced by art or accident, end with the life of the individual in whom they are produced. Many nations mould their bodies into unnatural forms; the Indians flatten their foreheads; the Chinese women reduce their feet one third of their original dimensions; savages elongate their ears; many races cut away the prepuce. We frequently mutilate our domestic animals by removing the tail or ears; and our own species are often obliged, by disease, to submit to the loss of limbs. After the operation of circumcision has prevailed for three or four thousand years, the Jews are still born with prepuces, and still obliged to submit to a painful rite. Docked horses and cropped dogs bring forth young with entire ears and tails. But for this salutary law what a frightful spectacle would every race of animals exhibit! The mischances of all preceding times would overwhelm us with their united weight, and the catalogue would be continually increasing until the universe, instead of displaying a spectacle of beauty and pleasure, would be filled with maimed, imperfect, and monstrous shapes."

This is certainly true as to the general law, but the instances above quoted, and those with which systematic works on such subjects abound, show that the law has numerous exceptions, and indicate the possibility of the transmission of even the most casual and fortuitous defect.*

Amongst the external diseases lepra, herpes, and ichthyosis are considered hereditary. Cophosis nervosa, or nervous deafness, cataract, and amaurosis are the most frequently hereditary of the affections of the special senses; and, next to them, those very peculiar derangements of vision called *nyctalopia* and *hemeralopia*—day or night blindness. Cuvier describes a family in which this singular disease had been propagated for two centuries, and where, from intermarriage, chiefly with the males of this family, a great district (the Commune de Ven-

*Mr. Youatt observes upon the breeding of horses: "The first axiom we would lay down is this: *Like will produce like*; the progeny will inherit the qualities, or the mingled qualities, of the parents.

We would refer to the subject of diseases, and state our perfect conviction that there is scarcely one by which either of the parent is affected that the foal will not inherit, or at least the predisposition to it; even the consequences of *ill-usage or hard work* will descend to the progeny. We have had proof upon proof that blindness, roaring, thick-wind, broken wind, curbs, spavins, ring-bones, and founder, have been bequeathed both by the sire and the dam to the offspring. It should likewise be recollected that, although these blemishes may not appear in the immediate progeny, they frequently will in the next generation. Hence the necessity for some knowledge of the parentage both of the sire and dam."

demian) had become seriously overspread with it. Of internal diseases it would be difficult to say which of them did not induce a liability to their reappearance in the offspring. We shall briefly allude to a few. First, perhaps, in order of frequency and importance, so far as our own country is concerned, is the inheritance of the various forms of scrofula and consumption. If both parents be affected we generally observe almost the whole of the children sooner or later are taken off by some form or other of these protean complaints. If, on the contrary, one parent be of a healthy and vigorous stock many of the children may escape, but it is rare that all do so. There is also a most remarkable transformation observed in some of these cases—that of a *bodily to a mental affection*. A mother dying of, or far advanced in consumption, at the birth of a child, does not always leave to that child the precise morbid heritage of her complaint, but in many instances—far too frequent to be considered the result of accident or coincidence—there is remarked, as the child grows up, a deficiency either in intellect or morals, which quite opposes any effectual culture; in intellect there appears to be a power of expansion up to a certain very limited extent, *but no farther*; in morals the most frequent phenomena appears to be a lack of perception of truth, and the rules of social order and relationship.*

Epilepsy and convulsive disorders generally inhere strongly in families—as, in fact, do all organic or functional affections of the nervous system. In ancient times the legislature interfered to prevent the propagation of sundry of these diseases, and most severe and inhuman were the enactments made with this view, as the subjoined note† from Boethius indicates. Gout, gravel, asthma, and apoplexy are amongst the most frequent forms of hereditary disease, all affecting in many instances, the singular peculiarity of passing over one generation, and attacking the alternate ones only. A very inexplicable phenomenon connected with transmission is mentioned by Sir H. Holland—hydrocele occurring in three out of four generations, the omission depending upon a female being in the third series, in whose son the complaint reappeared. Of such a fact as this neither science, in its present state, nor conjecture, can afford even a plausible solution or explanation. Sir Henry also mentions instances where the inability to distinguish colors as blue and pink (color blindness) ran in entire families.

There is, however, scarcely any portion of our subject which bears so grave an interest as the heritage of mental affections—the inheritance of an *unsound mind*. This we must understand in its most comprehensive sense. We have seen above how mental aptitudes, and even acquisitions, are transmitted from parent to

*We have before our eyes two families in which this peculiarity had been strikingly developed. In one, two children were born whilst the mother was far advanced in consumption. One, a girl, died epileptic; the other, a boy, had, at eighteen years, faculties so limited that he was totally unfit for any employment requiring the least comprehension. In the second family, one child inherited some of the bodily disease of the mother, and was not deficient in some moral perceptions; two others, who appeared healthy, were completely impervious to any ideas of the sort.

†"Morbo committali, dementia, mania, lepra, etc., aut simili labe quæ facile in prolem transmittitur, laborantes inter los, ingenti facta indagare, inventos, ne gens fœda contagione laderetur ea his nata, castraverunt; mulieres hujusmodi procul a vivorum consortio ablegarunt, quod si harum aliqua concepisse inveniebatur, simul cum fetu nondum edito, defodiiebatur viva."—Boethius *De Veterum Scotorum Moribus*. Lib. 1.

child; we shall now see that mental defects and feeblenesses are with even greater certainty and constancy entailed upon the offspring.

Insanity itself, in its defined forms, has universally been recognized as an hereditary disease. It appears to be more so amongst the rich than amongst the poor; although this may arise in part from the greater difficulty of ascertaining the facts amongst the latter. According to the zeal and accuracy with which the subject has been investigated, we find a greater prominence given to instances as a cause of insanity. M. Esquirol says that one-half of the cases amongst the higher classes, and about one-third amongst the lower have been inherited from parents or ancestors. According to another authority, seventy-seven per cent. of the cases at the Bicêtre were hereditary; and Dr. Burrows makes the proportion eighty-four per cent. Feuchtersleben thus writes:

"Hereditary descent is unquestionably the most frequent cause; more than half the cases that occur are occasioned or favored by it. Marriages in the same family contribute, therefore, to the propagation of the germ. It often takes place uninterruptedly from the father to the son, from the son to the grandson; often with an interruption, from the grandfather to the grandson; often irregularly to the nephew, etc. The danger is less when the procreator does not become insane till after the procreation, and therefore had previously only a predisposition. The tendency manifests itself on the physical side: 1st, by passiveness in thinking, in feeling, and in *willing*. 2d, on the physical side, by predominant erethistic vital debility, the fundamental character of the present generation."

The practical importance of this subject, in a popular point of view, consists in two facts: 1st, that there is a debatable ground of mental condition, which is not insanity in the eye of the law or of the physician, but which cannot possibly be spoken of as perfect mental soundness; and, 2d, that the various forms of slight and severe mental affection are naturally interchangeable and transformable by way of generation; thus hysteria or chorea, in one generation, may become imbecility, mania, or epilepsy in the next or third. Insanity of any form in the parent may be represented in the offspring either by a similar affection, by sensory disorders (as deaf-dumbness, etc.) by epilepsy, by hysteria, or by the vague and undefined weakness or perversions of judgment, capacity, or will, which we call unsoundness of mind. The general law with these neuroses is that, without special attention to the rules of hygiene, they increase in gravity and intensity from generation to generation; and thus young persons who weakly encourage hysterical habits, or the blind indulgences of impulses without the intervention of will and conscience, are laying the foundation for the most serious lesions of intellect or morals in after generations. For not only are the special vices of organization and function inherited in an aggravated form, but it is sad, yet certain, that there are individuals who in their own person inherit the *sum* of the perverted tendencies of many anterior generations. M. Morel, speaking of such beings, uses the following forcible expressions:

"A development sufficiently remarkable, of certain faculties, may give a different color to the future of those unfortunate heritors of evil; but their intellectual existence is circumscribed within certain limits, which it cannot pass. "The conditions of degeneration in which the heirs of certain faulty organic dispositions find themselves, are revealed not only by exterior typical characters easily to be recognized, such as a small ill-formed head, predominance of a morbid temperament, special deformities and anomalies, etc.; but also by the *strangest and most incomprehensible aberrations in the exercise of the intellectual faculties, and of the moral sentiments.*" (*Traite des degenerescences*, etc. p. 62.)

Our English law recognizes as *insane* those who do not know right from wrong; and, considering their moral liberty as extinguished, views them as irresponsible. It recognizes as *sane* those who do know right from wrong, and views them as responsible, as enjoying moral liberty; a very imperfect and faulty conception. Many of those who are called insane could tell in forcible language the difference between moral right and wrong; whilst many of those who mix daily in the affairs of men, and are considered sane, have no proper or practical conception of such differences. Now if moral liberty means anything beyond a formula without interpretation, it means the power of choosing and acting, according to the dictates of judgment, conscience, and will, in opposition to impulse and temptation. The impulse and the temptation being increased, and the faculties of judgment and will, and the dictates of the conscience being both relatively and absolutely diminished; it follows necessarily that, in proportion to these changes, moral liberty is invaded, its powers curtailed, and responsibility to some extent modified. These are precisely the variations which we observe occurring in obedience to the law of heritage, in its comprehensive sense; as in physical heritage all the qualities or lineaments of a parent are not equally inherited by the children, but divided amongst them; so in affections of the mind it is not always the same and entire phase which is represented in the offspring; but this is analyzed, and the elements distributed. In one, we have an impulsive nature, in which, between the idea and the act, there is scarcely an interval; in another, the proneness to yield to temptation of any kind—a feeble power of resistance, inherited either from the *original* or the *acquired* nature of the parent; in a third we have an imbecile judgment; in a fourth, an enfeebled vacillating will; in a fifth, or in all, a conscience, by nature or habit torpid and all but dormant. All these are the normal representatives of an unsound parentage, and all are *potentially* the parent of an unsound progeny; in all is moral liberty weakened; in all its responsibility not an absolute, but a relative idea. The man who inherits from his parents an impulsive or easily tempted nature, and an inert will and judgment, and commits a crime under the influence of strong emotion, can no more be placed in the same category of responsibility with a man of more favorable constitution and temperament, than a man who steals a loaf under the pangs of starvation, with the merchant who commits a forgery to afford him the means of prolonging a guilty career.

We do not hesitate to say that these constitutional defects may be (and *daily are*) so combined as to produce almost complete irresponsibility, under a rational system of judgment; even in cases where the intellect, *such as it is*, remains coherent, and its possessor is accounted sane. Hence arises in great measure, that strange, insoluble problem of our race—the existence of what are called the “DANGEROUS CLASS;” a people who seem set apart to fill our jails, our penitentiaries, our houses of correction, our penal settlement; a people at war with their kind—natural enemies of their brethren; a leaven leavening and infecting and drawing into the vortex of its own corruption even the comparatively sound elements of society; the pariahs of humanity, the despair of philanthropists, the opprobrium of legislation. It will not be by constantly repeated corrections that these classes will be reformed. “Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more”—but by a patient repetition of the means by which man, as a race, has been civilized. Successive generations, undergoing the process of elevation from barbarism, have been born not only into an improved and more favorable medium or condition of society, but also into an inheritance of faculties or aptitudes, intellectual and moral, refined and strengthened by the cultivation of those of their parents; and so it must be by successive attempts at the cultivation of the moral nature of these dangerous classes, that they, the barbarous elements of social life, must be redeemed from their present degraded condition; and enabled to transmit an improving and still improvable nature to their descendants.

There is another form of weakness introduced into society through the medium of generation, important to notice, though not numerically so serious as the last. We quote from Mr. Whitehead:

“The offspring of parents, both possessing great intellectual capacities, are liable to inherit such capacities in still greater proportion; but along with this refinement, so to speak, of the cerebral faculties, is usually conjoined a degree of physical delicacy, or of disproportionate development, which constantly endangers organic integrity; and the peril is further increased if education be urged, in early life, beyond a certain limit. The mind which seemed capable of comprehending intuitively the most abstract problem, is soon shaken and unbalanced, merging at length into insanity. It is somewhat singular that amongst a people so barbarous as the Chinese we should find, in reference to these hereditary weaknesses and crimes, a custom, worthy of, but little followed in, the civilized nations. In examining a criminal, they do not only inquire into the facts of the crime itself; they examine most minutely into the temperament, complexion, and physical state of the accused, into the most trifling events of his former life, into every thing that can throw any light upon the motive or impulse; also into the state of his parents and ancestors. Were this same rule systematically followed out in European courts of justice, we should very soon have a collection of the most valuable data of the solution of many hitherto insoluble problems, such as the general relations of organizations to morality, of criminality to ignorance, education, insanity, etc. This excellent cus-

tom in the nation in question is accompanied, however, by a barbarity of punishment which we should by no means wish to emulate. If a Chinese be convicted of lese—majesty, the law is, “that he be cut into ten thousand pieces, and his sons and grandsons be put to death.” It appears that a similar law exists in the code of Prussia, but only as to the *letter*, never being acted upon.

We have now to notice more especially those forms of degeneration in successive generations which arise in accordance with tolerably defined laws, from certain arrangements of society, certain habits of life of individuals, and certain occupations.

The first to which we allude is the subject of marriages between members of nearly allied families—what are called consanguine marriages. The very general opinion is, that the children of such unions are affected with some form of physical or mental peculiarity, not possessed in the same degree or kind by either parent; but it is alleged by some that such ideas are chimerical, and, in fact, that as the earth was first peopled by one family, there can be no valid reason why those even most closely allied should not inter-marry. The question has been controverted warmly, and may be considered yet as not quite settled. Such illustrations as can be derived from the breeding of animals is contained in the much argued question as to the propriety of crossing, or what is termed *in-and-in* breeding; that is breeding from near relations. Mr. Youatt’s verdict as to horses is as follows:

“On the subject of *breeding in-and-in*, that is, persevering in the same breed, and selecting the best on either side, much has been said. The system of crossing requires much judgment and experience; a great deal more, indeed, than breeders usually possess. The bad qualities of the cross are too soon engrafted on the original stock, and, *once engrafted, these are not for many generations eradicated*. The good ones of both are occasionally neutralized to a most mortifying degree. On the other hand, it is the fact, however some may deny it, that strict confinement to one breed, *however valuable or perfect*, produces gradual deterioration.”

Sir J. Sebright, speaking of the *in-and-in* breeding, says: “I have no doubt that, by this practice being continued animals would, in course of time, degenerate to such a degree as to become incapable of breeding at all;” and Mr. Knight adds, that “the animals in all cases gradually acquire, though with some irregularity, more dwarfish habits.” It is worthy of remark that, under this system, the male constitution suffers first, and most. Mr. Walker observes: “The reproductive power is enfeebled; and upon that the whole organization of the animal depends. *Hence nearly perfect beings would inevitably degenerate*.” These views seem to be pretty generally understood, and acted upon. It is true that, for the race-course, the pure Southeastern breed is adhered to; but different *stocks* of the same breed, and those brought up in different localities, are selected.

There is this difference between the breeding of domestic animals and human propagation, that the former may be met in a condition nearly approaching perfection, and so contain within any given family but few elements of degeneration; but it is otherwise with man, for it is rare to find any family that had not some taint

of disease or weakness, moral or physical, from two members of which the progeny will be much more affected than either parent; for two individuals having the same defect will transmit it many times multiplied in intensity to their offspring. Burton says strongly, but not without truth: "By our too much facility, in this kind, in giving way for all to marry that will, too much liberty and indulgence in tolerating all sorts, there is a vast confusion of breed and diseases, no family secure, no man almost free from some grievous infirmity or other, when no choice is had, but still the eldest must marry * * * or, if rich, be they fools or dizzards, lame or maimed, unable, intemperate, dissolute, exhaust, through riot, as it is said *jure hæreditatis sapere jubentur*, they must be wise and able by inheritance; it comes to pass that our generation is corrupt, we have many weak persons, both in body and mind, many feral diseases raging among us; crazed families, *parentes piruntores*; our fathers bad, and we are likely to be worse."

It will be necessary briefly to allude to the mode in which the parents respectively contribute to the formation and constitution of the offspring.

Into the entire argument for and against we cannot enter, but must content ourselves with giving those conclusions which seem most generally accepted as accordant with the phenomena of horse and cattle breeding, and those observed in man. It appears that both the parents are represented in the offspring, and probably almost to the same extent; all parts of the system are *modified* by each, yet each presides over a separate system of organs which follow respectively the type of our present. Thus one parent may give the locomotive organs, which will include the general form and the muscular and osseous development, whilst the other parent will give the vital or nutritive system, with the organs of the senses; the former will give volition, the latter sensation and the emotional faculties. Either parent may, according to circumstances, give either series of organs; but if in one series there be traced a strong resemblance to one parent, the other series will almost certainly resemble those of the other.

In animals of the *same* variety there is this uncertainty in a marked degree; but in crossing two healthy breeds, it is found as a rule that the male parent gives the locomotive and volitional organs, whilst the female communicates the vital and emotional ones; there is, therefore, much greater certainty of producing any desired modification of form or constitution, by crossing, than by "close" breeding. By selecting males with that development of locomotive organs that may be wished for in the offspring from one breed, and females with the desired vital organs from another, we can calculate with tolerable certainty the character of the produce.

But the case is different if we attempt the same with parents selected from the same family, though they may appear respectively to possess the same qualifications. We *may* succeed, but have no certainty. The young animal may, on the contrary* inherit the comparatively

feeble locomotive organs of the mother, and the vital agent of the father. This latter contingency appeared to become almost a certainty—if in-and-in breeding be long continued, the males lose their force, and the females give the locomotive and volitional organs.

It is not difficult to apply these principles to the question of consanguineous marriages. The parents are here of the same breed and family, and we may almost with certainty conclude that neither of them will be free from defect or weakness in some organ; and being closely allied, the probability is that this organ will belong to the same series in one as in the other. In such a case as this the offspring cannot escape the taint; but supposing that in one the defect or weakness exists in the locomotive and volition series, and in the other exists in the vital or emotional organs, seeing that there is an uncertainty in these close alliances as to which parent gives each series, there is a *chance* that the infant *may* inherit the sound elements of each constitution; but, as vice of formation has a strong tendency to transmission, there is a greater chance that one defect at least may be inherited; there is also a possibility that, to the exclusion of the sound parts of the organization, the unsound elements of both parents may descend to the child. This gives a reasonable solution of the phenomenon of two sane parents, who are nearly allied, having an insane child. One parent may have weak volition, and the other weak sensation and emotion, and the child inherit both, having none of the counterbalancing properties of the parents separately. The very same parents, again, may have another child who will inherit and transmit to its posterity *all* the better qualities of mind and body possessed by the father and mother. The conclusion from all which is this, that (theoretically) marriages in the same family are more likely to propagate and intensify defects, and from which such defects being probably of the same nature, less likely to eliminate them, than unallied marriages.*

Meanwhile observation goes strongly against the propriety of nearly allied marriages. M. Lucas, having quoted the opinions of many breeders to the effect of *close* breeding, if long continued, succeeds very badly, and ended in the extinction of species, race, health, fecundity, and viability, thus proceeds: "History testifies to the same results amongst men; the aristocracies, reduced to repeated intermarriages, according to Nilbuhr, are extinguished in the same manner, and often passing through degeneration, imbecility, † and dementia.

man. Suppose a morbid germ in a family, and it is certain that this germ or diathesis will tend to develop itself more and more by consanguine marriage, in the progeny, the result of which will be extinction. For, as says Joseph de Maistre, every organic form bearing in itself a principle of destruction (*sic*), if two of these principles are united they will produce a third form, incomparably worse; for those powers which unite do not add only—they multiply. This explains why aristocratic families are constantly becoming extinguished." In *Danger des Mariages Consanguins*, etc., par. M. Devay, Lyon.

*"For three reasons, belike, the church and commonwealth, human and divine laws, have conspired to avoid hereditary diseases, forbidding such marriages as are any whit allied; and as Mercatus adviseth all families to take such, *si fieri possit quæ maxime distant natura*, and to make choice of those that are most differing in complexion to them if they love their own and respect the common good."—*Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy*.

†Mr. Knight observes: "Amongst ancient families *quick* men are abundant, but a deep and clear reasoner is seldom seen. How well and readily the aristocracy of England speak!—how weakly they reason!"

*The crossing of races is of immense utility to the species—the neglect of it is the cause of physical degradation in animals, and of organic and moral decay in

THE MOURNING GARB.

(Concluded.)

My objections to the wearing of mourning garb, of what color soever, are:

1st. The reflex influence on the wearer is bad, if the sorrow it expresses is real.

2d. It is undesirable to surround children and invalids with the symbols of grief.

3d. The expense is often greater than is consistent with the circumstances of the mourner.

4th. In many instances the crape expresses a sham sentiment or is merely a concession to fashion.

5th. 'Tis like a reburial when the mourning is taken off.

1st. The influence of mind over body is an important factor in estimating the evil influence of the mourning garb on the health and conduct. Instances will readily occur to our minds of feats of strength achieved under the influence of excitement. Carpenter relates an incident of an old cook tottering with age; having heard an alarm of fire, she seized a box containing her property and ran down stairs with it as easily as she would have carried a platter. After the fire had been extinguished she could not lift the box a hair's breadth from the floor. Here we see the result of sudden emotion, the body for the nonce responding to the will, which in its turn is wrought upon by the sense of fear. Short-lived power, you will say. True, but a visit to any of our lunatic asylums will show that this same emotional influence does become so persistent and potent as to wreck not only reason but bodily health. Ferrier's experiments suggest that in certain regions of the brain cells exist in which do reside the different emotions. Here fear, here hate enthroned; there love, there resignation; and whether one considers the brain as the organ of the conscious mind or as all of mind, there the same truth holds good. If the cells are unhealthy the mental processes will be imperfect; and the health of each part of the body, be it bone, muscle or brain, depends upon the supply of blood.

The capacity of the arterial and venous system of each body is fixed; there can be no more blood created than there are vessels to hold it, else would death result from over-distention in some part. Therefore an excessive demand upon the life-current by one organ is invariably at the expense of some other. One does not find the left arm of a blacksmith as well developed as the right, and the legs of a ballet dancer are grown at the expense of the upper part of the body. Again, the abnormal development of the whole body in the training of the professional athlete is notably at cost of intellectual force, and excessive mental culture, on the other hand, is sure to rob muscular and nervous systems of some of their force. Apply this reasoning to different organs of the brain. If the attention is exclusively fixed for too long a period upon any one emotion, be it love or grief, the general health suffers. It is noticeable that girls who are married after a long engagement have lost weight and color; the blood which should have been distributed equally through the whole organism has been directed to one special part. The same is true of grief. Hence it behooves those of us whom sorrow has crowned to be-

ware lest her symbols so intensify our grief that we are unfitted for the duties of life. The wearing of the mourning garb has the effect of keeping the attention fixed upon the bereavement and so delaying the healthy reaction which is essential to the performance of life's duties. Common experience proves the truth of this statement, for once clothe our friend in sorrow's garb, and there is a constant appeal made to "rise above it," "do something to distract your mind," "come out of yourself," "do try to be interested in life," etc., etc. All the while the very garments are singing a dirge of joy day by day, and keeping the "heart bowed down."

2d. The influence of black is depressing to those about us, especially invalids and children. A boy of thirteen saw his mother for the first time in his life wearing a bright-colored dress; the young face glowed, the eyes deepened, as he exclaimed, "Oh, mamma, why didn't you tell me you were young?" The mother, whose loyalty to the dead had led her to shroud herself in gloom, had thus unwittingly robbed her only son of the child's right to joyous surroundings. Children have a right to all that is joyous and healthful, they need happiness as a plant does sunshine, and the conventional mourning dress casts a shadow upon the young life just in proportion to the sensitiveness of the organization. Physicians realize the influence of surroundings upon an invalid, and many a grave case has been cured by a simple change of environment. Trained nurses are ordered to wear a colored uniform, and sisters of charity, whose holy zeal for the sick and suffering has won through centuries the gratitude of humanity, have many a time caused keen suffering by their uncanon dress. The dead are passed from the realm of our sentient life; to them can come through us no more of joy or sorrow, and the sharpest pang in bereavement is the inevitable remorse, "Ah, if I had only lightened the cares of life; if I had only gladdened the days; alas, if—if—if"—who of us has not made that moan? Why not, then, take a hint in this direction and avoid the unnecessary shadow black casts over a household. Death seldom makes us utterly desolate; let us cherish what the cruel Reaper spares. These we may still cherish and serve, our dead are forever with the Lord.

3d. Custom makes cowards of us all, and the paraphernalia of woe is many times a tax the scantily filled purse can ill bear. Allow me one reminiscence. A clerk who had lived to the fullest extent of his salary suddenly died, and sympathizing friends in the business house of which he was a member made up from their small means a purse of one hundred dollars, which was presented to the widow soon to be a mother. Did she put the money by for a time of need? Verily, no. The proprieties must be observed. Bombazine and crepe, widow's caps to disfigure the young face, black bonnet and veil soon made a vast inroad in the tiny store, and the baby boy came into the world branded pauper by the very conditions of his birth—doctor's service a charity, attendance rendered by neighbors. Why should she be so weak? you ask. It might have been you or I, for would either of us have the courage to withstand public opinion? Abroad a royal family dictates the amount of mourning to be worn for each member of a

household; in America, where each claims to be a law to himself, let us defy imported customs, not try to express the depth of our sorrow by the depth of our crepe.

4th. Much of the mourning is worn in deference to public sentiment, and just so far as no real grief is expressed it is a pitiful sham. Witness the following:

Miss Gushington (to young widow whose husband has left a large fortune): "That is the fourteenth mourning costume I have seen you wear in three days, and each lovelier and more becoming than the other."

Young widow: "Oh! my dear; I have forty—but such a bother as they were to have made! At one time I almost wished that poor, dear George hadn't died!"

An exaggeration? Not at all. Go to the theatre any evening and you will find at least a dozen shrouded women whose merry smiles belie their crepe. Walk Broadway after nightfall and see the brazen faces shrouded in widow's weeds who are lurking to make prey of your son or mine. The black gown does not always—alas! one may say it does not even generally—cover an aching heart. Some one has well said the "first step toward a tailor is a step from the shadow of grief."

Thackeray has immortalized the crocodile tears of Lady Kew; and who can forget Mr. Mould's philosophy of a funeral! Apropos of the expense of Martin Chuzzlewit's funeral, he says: "Mrs. Gamp, I'll tell you why it is; it's because laying out of money, when the thing is performed in the very best scale, binds the broken heart and sheds balm upon the broken spirit. Hearts need binding and spirits want balm when people die. Look at this gentleman to-day." "An open-handed gentleman?" cried Mrs. Gamp. "No, no," said the undertaker; "not an open-handed gentleman in general, by any means—there you mistake him; but an afflicted gentleman, an affected gentleman, who knows what it is in the power of money to do. It can give him," said Mr. Mould, waving his watch-chain slowly round and round, so that he described one circle after every item; "it can give him four horses to each vehicle, it can give him velvet trappings, it can give him drivers in cloth coats and top boots, it can give him the plumage of the ostrich dyed black, it can give him any number of walking attendants, dressed in the first style of funeral fashion. * * *

"How much consolation have I diffused among my fellow-creatures by means of my four long-tailed prancers." Ah, friends, let us dismiss our Mr. Moulds; let us serve our very dead as Joe Gargery yearned to serve Mrs. Joe, "which I meantsay, Pip," Joe Gargery whispered, as we were being formed in the parlor, two and two, and it was dreadfully like a grim kind of dance—"which I meantsay, sir, as I would in preference have carried her to the church myself along with three or four others, friendly ones what come to it with willing hearts and arms; but it wur considered what the neighbors would look down on such, and would be of opinion as it wur wanting in respect."

I would fain have all the appointments of a funeral as simple and quiet as possible, sympathizing with Charles Dickens, who in his last will said: "I emphatically direct that I be buried in an inexpensive, un-

tentatious, strictly private manner, that no public announcement be made of the time and place of my funeral, that not more than three plain mourning coaches be employed, and that those who attend my funeral wear no scarf, cloak, black bow, long hat-band or other revolting absurdity."

5th. The same fashion which ordains the wearing of mourning fixes the period when it must be laid aside, and one stands for a second time beside the open grave and realizes anew the anguish of bereavement. Who among you has ever put aside the black gown without a kiss to the irresponsible thing and a tear for the loved one whose very memory now, so far as outward show goes, must be put out of sight. A new requiem is sung—again is the dead buried out of your sight, and the burial is celebrated in violet silk and pansies for remembrance.

Permit me a few words here concerning the disposal of the dead. Custom has varied in exact ratio with the increase of population and civilization. Among primitive peoples the body was taken to a distance from the homes to be exposed to the elements and to be the prey of wild beasts. Later, when sentimental and religious associations began to influence men, a sort of platform was raised and the body laid on that. Later, the dead were put into caves, or holes in the rock, and hermetically sealed, as witness the burial of Sara in the cave of Macphelah. To-day we bury in coffins under ground or in vaults. A Mr. Seymour, believing that decomposition would be hastened, and the well-known antiseptic qualities of fresh earth should have better play, has proposed the burial of the dead in wicker-basket coffins with wide meshes, so that the soil can come in immediate contact with the body. In Ziemssen's Cyclopaedia the plan is heartily endorsed, but has, of course, sentimental opposition. "The dead lie easier in coffins well padded and lined." [The Egyptians embalmed their dead, and cargoes of mummies are brought here to-day, their wrappings to be used for paper rags, the bodies ground to powder to enrich our soil. Modern undertakers aspire to embalming. Could we look forward a hundred years, would we choose such fate for our dead?] The Greeks, Romans, many ancient tribes of Europe and Asia burned their dead, and the subject of cremation is much discussed to-day. Epidemic and sporadic cases of disease directly traceable to effluvia from cemeteries, the crowded condition of graveyards, the increasing difficulty of finding room for our dead in our gigantic cities, have made the question of a final disposition of the body a matter of grave sanitary importance. With modern scientific appliances, a human body can be reduced to a handful of white ashes in a very short time and at very little expense. What method so sensible? It has been suggested that there could be a furnace near a church, where funeral services could be held, near the altar a slide to open into a wall which would represent the grave, and the ashes after cremation could be preserved in an urn. Sanitary and economic reasons are unanswerable. Let the women of the A. A. W. consider this subject well. One shrinks from the prevalent custom of bestowing our dead in the earth, where, shrouded in dampness and darkness, a prey to

the ghoulish worm, the forms we have tenderly cherished become potent factors in rendering the air unhealthy. Why not employ the purer fashion and allow the swift impalpable heat to resolve them into elements? A word to the wise is sufficient.

If sentiment is conservative, women certainly illustrate its power. Men make no change in dress when in affliction, but with the heartache well hidden go on with life's duties. Women are expected among all people to do the wailing, the mourning. They are, theoretically, sufficiently at leisure to indulge grief, and one of the strongest arguments in favor of a mourning garb is, "When one is in black nothing is expected; the dress protects from many social demands." Let us scorn the sham sentiment. Disinclination is sufficient production, and one has an entire right to do what does not hurt one's neighbor. And surely all grief which hinders the doing of life's duty is a dishonor to our dead and a defrauding of the living. In this nineteenth century we have yet to learn to view death aright.

To scientist and Christian alike there should be much more of joy than of sorrow in contemplating the death of a friend. When the eye is closed in the last dreamless sleep the scientist should rejoice that "after life's fitful fever he sleeps well;" that there is sure case of pain; and true love should be unselfish and rejoice with the dead.

That death has terrors to the Christian shows that Christianity in its genuine spirituality has not even dawned upon most minds. The Christian, if consistent, should rejoice and the spiritual ear should hear a rhythm of celestial melody which sings:

"What though Death may toll
His scornful prophecy of nevermore,
A still small voice is near unto my soul
Assuring me of life for evermore."

Oh, friends, 'tis not from ignorance of the power of grief I so speak. From an experience of depths of sorrow, which, please God, you may all be spared, I urge a radical change in all ceremonial pertaining to death. Let us learn to look at it merely as one step in life's journey, and, praying God for *courage to endure*, go on bravely doing his will.

"And friends, dear friends, when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall—
He giveth His beloved sleep.'" —Unity.

IS WOMAN SUPERIOR, INFERIOR, OR EQUAL?

"Male and female created He them and called their name Adam." This text is one proof that the ancients believed man was a dual being; that he was male and female in one body, and to more fully illustrate this question of bi-sexuality we will give two or three of the old legends showing how ancient is the belief that this was the first condition of humanity—but not the happiest, most perfect, or best, and so in every case resulting in semisexuality or the "climatum."

A legend of India says "Veradi, the first man, finding his solitude intolerable, fell into the deepest sorrow, and, yearning for a companion, his nature developed

into two sexes united into one; then he separated into two individuals."

In Persia, Meschia and Meschiani, the first man and first woman were originally but one body, and were cut apart. In China a legend is told that "The goddess Amida sweated male children out of her right arm pit, and female children from her left arm pit," thus making the mother of the race bi-sexual, and each of the sexes perfect halves of a complete whole, though a little grain of female inferiority seems to pervade it all, as we see the male is from the right arm! There is, however, one tradition in favor of the female superiority of sex which has escaped destruction, though anathematized by St. Clemens. It says: "Adam, when made, was like a beast, coarse, rude and inanimate, but that from Eve he received his polish and his superiority." It may be there were accounts of other legends, but they have been crushed out of existence by men, for it has been men who have kept the records, been the historians, copyists and preservativists of our literature through the past, and they have molded most of it to suit themselves and their fancied superiority. Hence we have male religions, male gods, male devils, male angels, male law, male descent and male sovereignty wherever it has been possible to ensure it. Prof. Le Conte, speaking of the original bisexuality of animals, thinks the reason why cross-fertilization produces stronger and better progeny than self-fertilization (where male and female are in one body) is, first, "the elaboration of both ovules and sperm in the same individual is *wasteful of vital energy*. The concentration of vital energy in one reproductive element secures that one product in a higher degree of perfection. Thus better sperm and better ovules combine to produce better ova and a stronger embryo. This is in accordance with the effect of differentiation of functions and organs of all kinds. Second, again in all cross-fertilization, different individual characteristics are inherited by the offspring. Such is most completely secured by the separation of the sexes in different individuals."

We who are pleading for equality of sex should study the great subject sex in all its forms. It is right here that our success lies. We must claim ourselves and save ourselves. We must rise from the domain of sexual slavery into the bright fields of sexual equality! We must teach and preach the true sex life, the life that finds mental and affectional companionship superior to the old passionless one of animalized sexual inter-communication. We must take the ground that there shall be no wasting of vital force through amative sexual indulgence for mere pleasure or for any end save the legitimate one of procreation. Only when this is the rule will woman own herself and become free. Only when this is the rule will men and women generate strong, pure, healthy and happy children. Only when this is the rule will the brain and the mind control the passions and the appetites. We do not decry the pleasures of amative love, but we desire to turn them in better channels. We wish to make Love the queen and Passion the subject. We do not wish to repress or suppress one strong, powerful, loving thrill, one magnetic, sympathetic force, or one true sexual element. We only wish to lift up, to

guide, and to build up. We want more love, more magnetism, more companionship of the sexes. We want them to become more inseparable in all departments of life. To help each other in joy and in sorrow, in work and in recreation; to remember that they are too equal halves of one complete whole, and what degrades, lowers, or enslaves one half, equally injures the other half.

ELIZABETH DRAKE SLENKER.

EXPERIMENT WITH A POT OF PLANTS.

To a mother who found it difficult to believe what I told her about the importance of sunshine in the development of her delicate children, I suggested the removal of some pots of plants which were doing well in a south window to the back end of her parlor, where it was quite light enough to read the small print of a newspaper, but where the direct rays of the sun never reached.

I said to her, "Now, let us see the condition of the plants before removing them from the window, and I will call at the end of a week, and we will carefully observe what change has occurred."

Her husband advised that we select two plants of similar condition, remove one to the back end of the parlor, and let the other remain in the window, being careful to give them the same amount of water. At the time for our second examination I had my reasons for writing her that I would defer my second visit a week. Before the second week expired she wished me to come and see the remarkable change.

Upon taking the plant which had been at the back end of the parlor to the window, and setting it beside the one which had continued to enjoy the direct rays of the sun, she exclaimed:

"I am perfectly satisfied. I could not have believed that two weeks' absence from the direct rays of the sun could have so changed this poor sickly thing."

I then suggested a similar experiment on Katie and Freddie. I said: "Expose Freddie to the direct rays of the sun in an attic room two hours a day. Place a mattress near the window, and let him lie down on it with his clothing removed, and allow the sun to fall upon his skin two hours a day, and at the end of a week let me come and hear what you have to say about the influence of the sun-bath upon his condition." The mother said that she was now convinced that the sun was the source of life, both vegetable and animal, but she could not defer the blessing for Katie. So the broad brims were thrown aside, and the two children were encouraged to play with bare heads, bare arms, and bare feet, until their health should be restored. The effect in this case, as in every case where such an experiment is tried, was most satisfactory.

No plant or animal can digest in the dark. Try it. plant a potato in your cellar. See how slender and pale it grows. Now open a window in another part of the cellar and notice how the poor hungry thing will stretch that way. The process of digestion, the great function of assimilation, cannot go on without sunshine.

Did you ever notice where grain is growing in an orchard that the part under the tree is smaller than that outside and away from them? And yet the land is actually richer there.

Have you never noticed that the only grapes that become perfectly ripe and sweet, the only peaches that take on those beautiful red cheeks and offer that luscious sweetness are those on the outside, entirely uncovered by the leaves, and exposed to the sun? God's laws are the same in human life.

Don't you see a good many pale girls in your stores, girls with a bloodless, half-baked sort of face, whose whole expression is void of spirit and force? Those girls are in a green state. Look at their lips and cheeks; they are not half ripe. Send them out in the country; let them throw away their parasols and live out in the sunshine three months, and I would give more for one of them in any work requiring spirit than for a dozen of those pale things that live in the shade. The only girls with red cheeks and sweet breaths, the only girls who become fully ripe and sweet, are those who baptize themselves freely in sunshine.—*California Farmer.*

A FEW CHEERING WORDS FOR MOTHER.

Dear good mother has been reading the stories for the children, and now she wants a few cheering words for herself. When evening comes how often we hear the mother say: "Oh, I am so tired, and yet I have accomplished nothing to-day! The children take all my time; there is always something to be done for them." Tired, faithful mother, instead of accomplishing nothing, you have accomplished a great deal of good work.

There is a record of your day's work kept in the upper courts of the King of all the earth. If you could see it, you would find recorded little acts of love and patience which you never thought worth while to mention, and scarcely remember.

Very near to the Comforter are the tired mothers. He sees all their self-sacrifices, all their patient suffering. When they feel their weakness he giveth them strength.

Don't be discouraged or disheartened, good mothers; you have the most important office of trust given to mortals. Faithfulness brings its own reward. By and by the little ones will grow to be men and women. They will rise up and call you blessed. The fruit of your good teachings and example will be seen in them. The children will never forget their loving, patient mother, and the memories of their home life with you will be the sweetest and dearest of all their childhood. Whittier has beautifully described the patient, faithful mother in these words:

"The blessing of her quiet life
Fell on us like the dew;
And good thoughts, where her footsteps pressed
Like fairy blossoms grew.

"Sweet promptings run to kindly deeds
Where in her very look;
We read her face as one who reads
A true and holy book.

"And half we deemed she needed not
The changing of her sphere,
To give to Heaven a shining one
Who walked an angel here."

—*Guiding Star.*

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AND CIRCULATE IT?**

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THE ALPHA.

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WE HAVE a few bound books containing volumes 7 and 8 of THE ALPHA. They are neat, substantial volumes and in good order. Price \$3.00.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF VOCAL ORGANS.

For the first time in America photographs of the vocal organs during phonation are published in "The Voice," (Albany, N. Y.,) for January, 1884. These photographs show the position of the vocal cords, tongue, soft-palate, and other organs, in singing various notes, with pure tone, nasal tone, falsetto, etc. They present the actual living vocal act to our view, and are of value to every professional and amateur user of *voice*—singer, speaker, reader, actor, teacher, physician, lawyer, preacher. With the photograph is begun a series of articles treating of the whole range of voice-culture in song and speech. Edgar S. Warren, editor. Terms: One dollar a year.

FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS. By Mrs. E. D. Cook, M. D.

Dr. Cook starts out with the truth that God did not design we should suffer if we obey His laws, and the chief cause of all our sorrow is ignorance, and so puts her shoulder to the wheel to dispel ignorance and diminish suffering. There is no doubt but it is the true province of the physician to prevent disease from wasting the lives and destroying the peace of the human family.

The subjects treated of are physical culture of bones and muscles, brain and nervous system, the skin, hygiene, ventilation and an illustrated department of the anatomical structure of woman with the diseases and displacements to which she is subject. For want of time we have not read this book so carefully as we hope to try and by.

"THE Duties and Dangers of Love, Courtship and Marriage." by Edward P. Jones; S. M. Webbes, publisher, Farmersville, Pennsylvania, is a little book full of wisdom, and a safe guide to the young and inexperienced. In style it is condensed, almost epigrammatic. Which, while not as attractive to most youths as poetic and flowery rhetoric, yet it so compresses its wisdom into sentences that are easily remembered and incorporated into one's life. We hope this book will have an extensive sale and do good service to many that have in their hearts a picture of home and domestic happiness they hope to realize before long. Its logic is sound and reliable; its sentiments pure and lofty, and although not so original, yet pointing out clearly the straight and narrow way of justice, equality and mutual concessions that must follow an honest, open, frank, courtship to secure a long and happy life—a home in the hearts of each wedded partner.

THE paper on "Mourning Garb," which we conclude in this number of THE ALPHA, was read by Dr. Julia Holmes Smith, at the Woman's Congress convened at Chicago, October, 1883.

We have taken special satisfaction in reproducing and indorsing it for our readers. It is a subject on which we have long had convictions and opinions, and most happy to see our sentiments so ably produced by one in the profession. We have often witnessed the deleterious effects of heavy black garments and long crape veils on the strength and health of the wearer, and frequently say to lady patients, "Do not wear your veil over your face, the effect is too depressing and the odor of the dye is a poison your health suffers from." When will the time come to displace heathen and semi-barbarous customs for a sweet and hopeful faith in the life and joy and health beyond the grave? This "year of sorrow" is anti-Christian. Life and immortality have been fully brought to light, yet we grieve more for our selfish love, than we are comforted by the release of our loved ones from suffering, into the glory and beauty of eternal life.

Again this foolish and tyrannical fashion blunts moral sensibility, for its claims are often more imperious than the dictates of conscience in expenditures that in many

cases encumber the estate of the survivor for years. So we indorse the writer's strictures on expensive funerals, and believe cremation to be the natural hygiene method of disposing of that which the spirit (*ego*) no longer can use. "It is well with them."

"THE EMMA BOND CASE,"

As the press persist in terming it, instead of the trial of Lee, Pettus, Clementi, and Montgomery, terminated in an acquittal of the guilty monsters, in spite of the most positive recognition of the accused by their unfortunate victim, and much corroborative testimony, both direct and circumstantial. It was a great surprise to the country and a shock to the people of Hillsboro and vicinity. They bitterly feel that Justice is not only blind, but deaf and dumb, and has become a paralytic imbecile, and claim that she shall descend from her pedestal in our courts, her presence having become a mockery, that her sword be broken, her balance destroyed, her form disrobed of the ermine. She is no longer a goddess, but of the common clay of this corrupt age—no longer able to protect the weak and defenceless, redress wrongs, or establish equity between man and man, as the statutes of our courts and their expounders are in the interest of and to shield the unrighteous. Woe is me! Woe to this age! Who shall restore the law of God in the land?

The only redeeming incident in the whole horrible transaction is the righteous indignation of the common people, which manifested itself so promptly that Pettus left for the West the next morning, Clementi went to Irving, a small town six miles from Hillsboro, where he has friends. As soon as it became known that he was in town, he was given five minutes to leave by a committee that meant business. He left. Montgomery is *hid away somewhere*. A dispatch from Taylorsville, Illinois, the home of the Bond family, says that when the verdict became generally known in that place the sentiment of the people was that *justice could no longer be obtained from the courts*. This fact may as well be at once recognized by the whole public, as it must ere a reform can be instituted in our department of falsely-called justice.

"THE MESSAGE OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE, TO MOTHERS AND NURSES" is the title of a delightful English book by Mary Boole. The spirit and atmosphere of which is very sweet, and opens with a more than usually successful effort to reconcile the word and spirit of the Scriptures with modern science, and utilizing psychic and mental science to the healing of the sick in mind and body, and the rearing of children; showing how

even unspoken thought influences the impressible and plastic soul for good or evil. The chapter on the "Forces of Nature" is especially thoughtful, logical and instructive, which is followed by one on "Development," the "Crises of Development," and the "Correlation of Parts," showing that excessive cultivation or development of any part of the body or mind is a loss to the whole body.

The chapter on "Mental Hygiene in Sickness" would delight that branch of modern metaphysicians who recognize the supremacy of thought, *till all that is*, becomes only thought; but Mrs. Boole admits such negative conditions as pain, mental suffering, falsehood, and sin, and does not consider the ills of undevelopment. "Imagination Only," the theory of "Thought-Reading;" or, "Thought Impression," are, to us, new and original. She calls "Impressional Reading in Infancy" nature's provision in lifting us over the difficulty of entering into communication with our species, and it is possible that every child a year old and not an absolute idiot, is, in a certain, vague, elementary way, a thought reader, or rather an impressional reader. "If the faculty is retained after the child is capable of thought, he becomes a thought-reader, just as a few weeks after birth the sutures of a child's skull close, so at some age under six years old, some closure or hardening process should go on in his mind as he learns to receive impressions through his outer senses. This closure may be delayed till twelve or fourteen years old; sometimes eighteen or twenty years; occasionally it never takes place at all. The causes of the retardation of mental closures are, I believe, unknown." This soul knowledge, applied to the healing of the sick and the treatment of children, is very beautiful, and must save much suffering. A chapter on "Homeopathy," and one on "Phrenology" closes this original and scientific work which we are thankful to the kindness of a friend for the privilege of perusing.

THE SHIRT OF NESSUS.

Who was Nessus, and what is it about his shirt? a correspondent inquires.

Nessus was a centaur (half man and half horse) of Grecian mythology. He carried travelers across the river Evenus for a small sum of money. Hercules, a hero renowned for muscular strength and deeds of valor, was traveling with his wife, Deianira, and came to this river. Hercules trusted his wife to Nessus's care, but proudly forded the river himself. Nessus attempted to outrage Deianira. Hercules, hearing her scream, shot Nessus with an arrow. When dying Nessus told Deianira to take his blood with her as a sure means of preserving her husband's affections.

After one of Hercules's successful raids upon the inhabitants of Teachis, he returned home and erected an altar to Jupiter. He sent for a white garment, intending to wear it at the sacrifice. Deianira, fearing Iole would supplant her in the affections of her husband, steeped the garment in the poisoned blood of Nessus. As soon as the shirt became warm on the body of Hercules the poison permeated into all his limbs, causing the most excruciating agony. He wrenched off the garment, but it stuck to his flesh, and with it he tore away whole pieces of his body. Deianira, conscience stricken when she saw what she had done, was so filled with horror that she hung herself, and Hercules caused a pile of wood to be built and fired, upon which he placed himself and was consumed. Thus perished one of the most valorous and powerful heroes of classical history, and like most of the Greek myths it contains a wonderful lesson for the present age and all ages of the world.

How many a young athlete of modern times, full of strength, abounding in life and promise, has been poisoned and sought self-destruction to deliver themselves from the agony resulting from perverted self-indulgence? Half the wives in the land listen to the voice of the centaur and distrust their own strength through jealous fears, and believe they can only hold their place in their husbands' hearts by some seductive spell, which renders life so torturing and unendurable that suicide seems an attractive deliverance.

This is a picture of perverted conjugal love that has many parallels in our day. So valor and prowess and life is wasted which should have become a joy and pride to both, and of service to the world. Such is the Greek fable, and such the lesson. Let us heed it.

THE Annual meeting of the Washington Society for Moral Education was held January 16th. The secretary's report was read and accepted, showing a good attendance at regular meetings, with a fair show of work accomplished. The treasurer's report showed the society to be out of debt, with some money in the treasury, and a large supply of books and pamphlets on hand from new tracts published during the year. Dr. Winslow reported THE ALPHA as steadily prospering, with many cheering evidences that it was doing a good work, and gaining adherents and friends throughout the country. The following officers were elected for the coming year: The first ballot re-elected Dr. C. B. Winslow president; but Dr. W. arose and positively declined to fill that office another year, alleging her inability to attend to its duties in a manner tending to the prosperity and best interest of the society, owing to ill health

and a pressure of many other duties. The following officers were then elected:

Dr. Susan A. Edson, president; Mrs. Ellen M. O. Connor, Miss Ellen H. Sheldon, Mrs. H. B. Johnson, vice-presidents; Mrs. Eveleen L. Mason, vice-president-at-large; Mrs. E. F. P. Pitts, recording secretary; Dr. C. B. Winslow, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Jerusha G. Joy, treasurer; Mrs. Ruth C. Dennison, auditor.

A resolution was passed expressing the thanks of the society for the long and faithful services of Dr. Winslow as president, and a hope that the relief from the burdens thus borne may lighten her labors in every direction.

Mrs. Joy proposed a change in the by-laws, making three a quorum for the transaction of business. Carried. Adjourned.

THE Moral Education Society, of Cleveland, Ohio, held their annual election of officers October 29, 1883. The following officers were elected: Mary C. Batchelder, president; Mrs. E. S. Stevens, first vice-president; Mrs. M. B. Haren, second vice-president; Mrs. C. S. Bushnell, third vice-president; Mrs. A. S. Pettengill, fourth vice-president; Mrs. M. J. Preston, fifth vice-president; Tillie H. Lees, recording secretary; Lucy Huntington, corresponding secretary; A. S. Pettengill, treasurer. The society are endeavoring to do what they can in the work of reform. The attendance has not been as large as might be desired, but we trust the interest will be renewed.

LUCY HUNTINGTON, *Rec. Sec.*

I HAVE constantly been convinced, from the time I first felt the divine character of the truths of the New Testament, that invariably the best thing to be done for every child is to educate his conscience, to make him feel the enormity and ugliness of falsehood and evil, and the preciousness and beauty of truth and good. This is the one great truth which every teacher and every parent, especially every mother, should learn, without which, indeed, no noble character can be formed. Educate the conscience. (From reminiscences of an old teacher.)

GEO. B. EMERSON.

What an honest work it would be, when we find
A virgin in her poverty and youth
Inclined to be tempted, to employ
As much persuasion and as much expense
To keep her upright, as men use to do upon her falling.

Yes! Preservation is infinitely better than cure. It is economic in every sense not only to purse, but in time and suffering or rather happiness and usefulness.

CURE FOR MATERIALISM.

BY MRS. E. R. SHEPHERD.

Did we understand you, sir, to say that you do not believe in the immortality of the soul?

Then we have an exact gauge of your moral status. You are a supremely selfish man. You work, you plan, you live for yourself alone. To gain riches, fame or enjoyment is the one aim of your existence.

Your family! You think and work for them, and delight in their pleasure and improvement. Hence, call this charge of selfishness quite unjust?

Ah! it is because it is *your* family, *your* belongings; because it hurts *you* when they suffer, gives *you* pleasure when they are pleased. And what is that but selfishness?

Charity begins at home. Would we have you neglect your family? Certainly not. But in order to cure you of your infidelity we would have you get out into the world with your sympathies and your efforts, and *take your family along with you*. Engage in some of the great reforms of the day. Let the miseries and wrongs of society bear on your heart as if it was your own household that suffered, and lo and behold! you will find your unbelief melting away as the dew in the sun. You will find that your sympathies have taken hold on themes that reach out into the eternities; that your efforts are being expended on principles. You will become aware that principles are not limited by the boundaries of time. You will see that heartache and kindness, patience and teaching, precept and example can not be rewarded with the gold and silver that perisheth; that life is too short and error is too strong to balance the tears and prayers and toils of earth, and then hope will come on to the scene of action and whisper: "Beyond, beyond, ye shall see of the travail of thy soul and shall be satisfied."

Who are they to whom the doctrine of immortality is a joy, a support, a living reality, not a dead belief or an unbelief. Whose are the happy death-beds? It is they who have done all the good in their power. Not always to be measured by the amount accomplished but by that desired and done according to opportunity. It is said that belief in a future state is the cause of benevolent exertion. That is a poor rule which will not work both ways, and we will wager that no man can engage in unselfish endeavor to lift his fellow man to a higher life and long remain an infidel.

WOMAN'S POWER AND INFLUENCE.

Every young woman should form the noble purpose of being a true woman—to put on the glorious crown of womanhood, and make her life grand in womanly virtue. There is no higher thing beneath the heavens than a genuine woman. As mother, wife and friend, she wields a true scepter of vast power, and with all our Bibles and churches man would be a prodigal without the restraining influence of woman's virtue. She administers her influence at the very fountain of life. She plants the first seeds and makes the first impressions. She rears the twigs that grow into the world's oaks, and she may bend them at her will. In woman and her life are wrapped up some of the greatest interests of

humanity. She has a great mission and a great duty. She has character to form, example to set, lives to mould, and a mighty influence to exert upon the present and future generation. E. P. J.

The sixteenth annual Washington Convention of the National Woman's Suffrage Association will be held at Lincoln Hall, Washington, D. C., March 4, 5, and 6, 1884. Public sessions will be held at 2 and 7.30 P. M. on each of these days, and executive sessions, open only to officers and members of the association, will be held daily at 10.30 A. M.

All State and local suffrage societies are earnestly requested to send delegates with carefully prepared reports of works done and results achieved during the year 1883 in their respective States; and all persons interested in the enfranchisement of women are invited to attend the convention and to participate in its deliberations.

Among the speakers invited to be present are Matilda Joslyn Gage, Isabella Beecher Hooker, Rev. Olympia Brown Willis, Phoebe W. Cousins, Harriette Robinson Shattuck, Madam Clara Neymann, Belva A. Lockwood, Mary B. Clay, Sallie Clay Bennett, (of Kentucky); Lillie Devereux Blake, Elizabeth Boynton Harbert, and Helen M. Gougar.

The principal object of this Association, from its organization, has been to secure to the women of the several States and Territories national protection in the citizen's right to vote through a sixteenth amendment to the National Constitution.

The favorable reports of the special committees in both Houses of the Forty-seventh Congress lead us to hope from the Forty-eighth the final passage of the resolution now pending for the submission to the several State legislatures of a proposition to so amend the National Constitution that it will prohibit the disfranchisement of United States citizens on account of sex.

The satisfactory results of unrestricted suffrage for women in Wyoming Territory, of school suffrage in twelve States of the Union, of municipal and school suffrage in England and Scotland, of both municipal and parliamentary suffrage in the Isle of Man with the recent triumph in Washington Territory, the constant agitation of the suffrage question in this country and in England, and the demands that women are everywhere making for larger liberties are most encouraging signs of the times, and make this the supreme hour for all who are interested in the enfranchisement of women to dedicate their time and their money to the success of this movement, and by their generous contributions to strengthen those upon whom rests the responsibility of carrying forward this beneficent reform.

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No. 8 West 40th St., New York City.

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Riggs House, Washington, D. C.

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405 N. Penna. St., Indianapolis, Ind.

JANE H. SPOFFORD, *Treasurer*,
Riggs House, Washington, D. C.

EVOLUTION.

The work of evolving and consolidating an organization, being slowly conducted, will when applied to heredity require much skill and delicacy of plan, and much consideration of circumstance, before developments could be hastened or inaugurated.

Ages pass, and no change is evident in human nature, and so it will be until a band of pure-hearted beings can turn a deaf ear to the voice of love too passionate, and isolate themselves beyond the wilderness, shunning all the emotional allurements which human society can present. They will live as human beings ought to live.

Very few will be able to do this, but they will give birth to a robust nation—of men, not triflers—of high-souled women, who live not to worship one individual, but to pity and bear with the faults of the whole world.

Generations will pass before all this will be accomplished, and meantime emotional hearts, like flowers of the tropics, will bloom and dream on. The man of sanguine temperament requires adoration. He mesmerizes you without being aware of it himself. Turn back the south wind, or the stars in their courses, his sighs will not abate.

But there is no beauty in the life of an ascetic such as we have seen, for even his dreams remind him of the home he failed to dignify and adorn. He is a withered branch shut out from all worlds.

Nature alone, in her glorious way, can lead us upward, and she is now doing this, for we find that the buoyancy of the human frame is increasing. Intellectual aspirations communicate their life to more stupid substance. The soul drags the body up a mountain height. In time it will almost float over such a path, the hopes of the heart being as delicious as the mountain breeze.

He who wishes to hasten this culmination of health and improvement must spend much time in active exercise in the open air. It is easy to shun a pestilential atmosphere. If the mind is crowded with useful, agreeable, and exquisite thoughts, the ganglions at the base of the brain will insensibly decrease, the thoughts and words will tend toward freedom, purity, and truth. We must make great and heroic efforts to get out of the sphere of four-footed animals and their degrading lusts.

Refined beings who love each other will speak burning words of love for the human race, and how they shall aid each other in doing good. Better this than the idle repetition of acts of self-enjoyment.

We often hear that to prolong health we must rise from the table hungry, as an overloaded stomach presses against the lungs, whose function, freely exercised, sends a healthy stimulus to the brain, and this tends to exalt and purify the whole nature.

ALHAZA.

It is certain that lunatics are as much manufactured articles as are steam-engines and calico-printing machines, only the processes of the organic manufactory are so complex that we are not able to follow it.—*Maudsley.*

It a wholesome truth, that nothing is troublesome which we do willingly.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RIVERSIDE, SAN BERNARDINO CO., CALIFORNIA,
December 5, 1883.

DR. WINSLOW:

DEAR SISTER: I write to renew my subscription, sending the two dollars for a copy to lend and one to keep. THE ALPHA is growing stronger and better, and I rejoice in its existence, thankfully blessing every contribution. While to yourself my soul reaches upward and outward for Divine assistance to flow to you that you may be able to lead in this important work of human re-generation through generation.

Hoping your health is comfortable, I remain yours lovingly,
DR. DOROTHEA S. HALL.

MICHIGAN, January 7, 1884.

MRS. WINSLOW: Inclosed please find \$— for ALPHA. Mrs. A. and I like the last ALPHA the best of all. N. B. We like our faith, and practice better and better the longer we live, and the more we think and read and practice. Mrs. A. tells me that I, with head colored dark would pass for a man of only fifty, when in fact I am seventy-two past. For over fifteen years we have lived strictly as we should, and no marvel that we are both robust and mount up as on wings of eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. I was up this morning at 3 A. M., and at quarter past four up for all day, and now 11 minutes past 7 A. M. breakfast is over, and prayers and the washing partly done. Mrs. A. is the leading working one in doors, and I am out with no man or boy to help me, while our stock numbers nine head of horned cattle, one horse, and over fifty fowls. If any one can tell a better story I would be very glad to hear. N. B. Out of the \$— send us, if you can, ten extra sample numbers of the last ALPHA. We join in wishing you greater and still greater triumph.

* * * * *

After more thought we have concluded that we may be asking too much, and therefore say let the \$— pay for THE ALPHA, and we will do all we can with the material we have to get more readers.

With kindest regards,

CHARLES ADAMS.

PLEASE begin with the December number—that has so many good things in it. I grudge every line devoted to any other subject, even kindergarten and woman suffrage, for those subjects can be and are discussed in other papers, but we have but one ALPHA, and its doctrines are the most important to the human race; I believe there is not one exception. I suppose most people consider religion more important, but if one millionth part of the time, money, energy, talent and learning had been devoted to this reform and study that has been given to the study and propagation of religion, to-day's generation would be so good and so near right there'd be no need of regeneration. This may shock you possibly, but I'm becoming more and more fully convinced of its entire truth. Oh that I could wield the pen of a ready writer, and could have time at my own command. My heart burns to be active in the work of social reform, but poverty poor health, and the constant and exhausting care of an aged parent render it impossible. May God aid and strengthen you, and give you more abundant success than you dare hope for.

I remain your earnest sympathizer,

S. C.

NAPLES, ONTARIO CO., N. Y., December 31, 1883.

DR. C. B. WINSLOW: If mankind will reverently learn the lessons of nature, and become intelligently receptive like the unconscious flower, which unrolls its petals to receive the vivifying heat and light of Heaven, they may very rapidly bud and blossom into happy families and progressive brother and sisterhoods. There is no antagonism between enlightened reason and Father and Mother God. If "male and female in the image of God created He them," there is evidently a mother in heaven.

Not long since I called at the house of a distant relative, saw there a child between six and seven years old; when spoken to would shut its lips tight; could not speak a word. I asked the cause. The mother told me in an early stage of the child's existence (say three months) a woman came into her house and talked very abusive. She said because the woman was older than she that she would not talk back, so shut her lips tight, and the result is seen in the child. Yours for reform,

E. M. A.

BOONE, BOONE CO., IOWA.

DEAR FRIEND: Here are five new subscriptions and a merry Christmas to you. One of the many good things about THE ALPHA is the assurance that it will be stopped as soon as the subscription expires. Please send name and address of a good Western W. S. paper,
S. L. R.

NORTH READING, December 8, 1883.

MRS. C. B. WINSLOW:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter was received in due season, and I beg pardon for not having answered before this.

I am now teaching school and this last September I felt that I must have a few books for study and reference. My ALPHAS I had not thoroughly read, so I thought I would re-read those and not subscribe again at present. Every time I take one of my papers I find some new thought, and I may add some good thought also.

You spoke of the good your paper was doing; it has done me a great deal of good, has opened my eyes to truths that I knew nothing of. I have always been brought up by your Alpha doctrine of sexual intercourse, and I knew nothing of the misery which marriage brings to some women.

I find I have more patience with "dull" children, and I think they deserve more pity than they generally receive, as they are in no way responsible for their dullness.

I have loaned some of my papers, and shall send away some more soon. I believe if we do not do better in this matter of self-indulgence it is simply because we won't. There is now no excuse for our ignorance of these laws. We can know them if we will. People are not now so much afraid to talk about such things. They know that these doctrines are right and true, and they must be accepted sooner or later.

Respectfully yours,

M. A. F.

ONE GIRL OF MANY.

It needs must be that offences come, but woe unto her through whom the offence cometh.

One girl of many. Hungry from her birth,
Half-fed, half-clothed, untaught of woman's worth.
In joyless girlhood working for her bread;
At each small sorrow wishing she were dead;
Yet gay at little pleasures. Sunlight seems
Most bright and warm where it most seldom gleams.

One girl of many. Tawdry dress and old,
And not enough beneath to bar the cold;
The little that she had mid-pent because
She had no knowledge of our nature's laws;
Thinking in ignorance that it was best
To wear a stylish look, and—bear the rest.

One girl of many. With a human heart—
A woman's too; and nerves that feel the smart
Of each new pain as keenly as your own.
The older ones through long use, have softer grown,
And yet, in spite of use, she holds the thought
Of might-be joys more than, perhaps, she ought.

One girl of many. But the fault is here;
Though she to all the others was so near,
One difference there was which made a change—
No wrong thing, surely! Consequence most strange!
Alike in birth, alike in life's rough way,
She, through no evil, was more fair than they!

So came the offer, "Leave this stony cold
Where you may drudge and starve till you are old.
Come! I'll give you rest and food and fire,
And fair apparel to your heart's desire;
Shelter, protection, kindness, peace and love.
Has your life anything you hold above?"

And she had not, in all her daily sight
Here shown no vestige of the color white;
She had seen nothing in her narrow life
To make her revere the title "wife;"
She knew no reason why the thing was wrong;
And instinct grows debased in ages long.

All things that she had ever yet desired,
All dreams that her stained girlhood's heart had fired,
All that life held of yet unknown delight,
Shone, to her ignorance, in colors bright:
Shone near at hand, and sure. If she had known!—
But she was ignorant: she was alone.

And so she sinned—I think we call it sin;
And found that every step she took therein
Made sinning easier and conscience weak;
And there was never one who cared to speak
A word to guide and warn her. If there were
I fear such help were thrown away on her.

Only one girl of many. Of the street,
In lowest depths. The story grows unmeet
For well-bred ears. Sorrow and sin and shame
Over and over till the blackened name
Sank out of sight without a hand to save.
Sin, shame, and sorrow, sickness and the grave.

Only one girl in many. * * *
'Tis a need
Of man's existence to repeat the deed.
* * * * *
Social necessity. * * * * *

Men cannot live
Without what these disgraceful creatures give.
Black shame, dishonor, misery and sin;
And men find needed health and life therein!

CHARLOTTE A. PERKINS.

A PRAYER IN A POEM.

Oh, come to me daily, thee of the unknown,
Come to me nightly from thy high throne!
Bring me that, that will cheer my soul!
Give me the power that I may control
This body with all its weakness so frail,
Standing alone and nearing the gale!

Oh, come to me daily thee of the unknown,
Come to me nightly from thy high throne!
Oh, bring me the power that I may impart
To the weak and the weary, the wandering heart!
Oh, give me that, that will bid them good cheer,
To bear earthly trials with nothing to fear!

M. E. DILLAURY.

FOR THE ALPHA.

THE TEST.

"I love thee dearly," said my love one day,
"I love thee truly and shall love away;
Dost thou believe me, lover brave, I pray?"

"Now by what token can thy love be shown;
And by what testing shall thy truth be known?"
I said to her, one arm around her thrown.

"Why by this token what I give to thee;
Myself, my life, all that I have or be,
What more, indeed, would lover ask of me?"

"One little gift, dear love, I ask of thee,
And if 'tis granted it will prove you free,
And prove past doubt that you in truth love me;
The boon I ask is simply Liberty."

Then my love shrieked as if a dagger thrust
Had pierced her heart, causing its lobes to burst,
And cried, "Ask all, ask any, everything of me
But that one gift, and I will give it thee."

A moment's silence, during which divine love fills her soul,
Then my love turned and with a smile of peace,
Said, "Lover brave, I grant you full release,
For this, I know, did you indeed love me,
You would not ask the boon of liberty;
Your soul would be with perfect freedom blest,
For love alone can give the spirit rest.

As proof past doubt that I in truth love thee,
I bid thee go—no mountain kid more free—
Rove where you will, you cannot part from me."

BARD OF SOUHEGAN.

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