15 Newton (A. E.)

THE BETTER WAY:

AN

APPEAL TO *MEN*

IN BEHALF OF HUMAN CULTURE THROUGH A WISER PARENTAGE.

By A. E. NEWTON.

"Is there anything better in a State than that both men and women be rendered the very best? There is not."—PLATO.

"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."—JESUS.

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APPEAL.

BROTHERS:—Suffer a few words of earnest appeal, from one who is identified with you in all common interests, on a topic of momentous importance to every person now living, and pre-eminently to all who through our agency may come after us. The urgency of my subject is my only apology for asking your attention.

I may have some unwelcome truths to tell—some distasteful advice to give—and possibly may awaken in some minds painful thoughts of the past. Quarrel with me if you will—dispute me if you can—but listen! "STRIKE, BUT HEAR!"

Recently a small pamphlet came into my hands, the reading of which has stirred my soul with thoughts that burn for utterance. I cannot quench them if I would, and I would not if I could.

The pamphlet referred to bears the significant title of "MOTHERHOOD: *Its power over Human Destiny.*"* In its pages a mother, out of the depths of her maternal heart, which yearns for the blessing and uplifting of all humanity's children, pleads with her sisters to arouse themselves to the knowledge and the exercise of the mighty moulding power which they hold, through wisely regulated motherhood, over the characters and destiny of the race. Could a nobler subject engage the mind and heart and pen of an American woman?

* By Mrs. L. B. Chandler.

But is it not one in which all right-minded MEN, equally with all with all true women, are interested? It is not possible for woman to do her best and worthiest work as mother, unless seconded and properly aided by the intelligent co-operation of man. Let us, then, brothers, attend to a few of the pregnant utterances of this mother-heart.

I. PLEA FOR A WISER MOTHERHOOD.

I quote a few passages from the tract referred to:

"Man has discovered that the animal kingdom below him is capable of extensive improvement. He experiments, forms associations, compares experiences, to aid in securing the highest results in producing the beast which perisheth. Even the filthy swine shares his profound investigations. But through all these centuries of the Christian era the subject of human culture has waited for consideration.

"But more than all to be lamented is the almost total want of instruction in regard to the wise regulation of conjugal commerce,—that instruction which by every consideration of the fitness of the mother's position toward her offspring, holding in the nature of her being the keys to the inmost life of her child, she should impart, and which, if in the possession of the sons and daughters, might save to many the wreck of health and happiness which often attends the outset of married life.

"I charge it upon an ignorant motherhood not yet conscious of its high duties, its far-reaching, God-endowed powers, that this deplorable ignorance, this fearful prostitution of the marriage-bed, this degenerated and degenerating standard of physical womanhood and all its attendant evils, surge over our broad country like a besom of destruction."

"In maternity alone," continues our author, with undoubted truthfulness,—"In maternity alone can the conditions important to maternity be experienced, and, through this experience, revealed. They are not within the scope of intellect alone. That laboratory of the Divine Artist, motherhood, is one whose secrets cannot be fathomed by man; he only can wait at the portal."

Here is affirmed an important truth too often overlooked by the masculine sex, in our pride of intellect. Let us give it heed, and, waiting reverently in our proper place at the portal of this great mystery, listen to woman's revelation of her needs and our duties. Nay, we must do more than this. We must invite and encourage the revelation. For refined and sensitive women—and such only are capable of revealing to us the finer and higher truths—will not, cannot, obtrude their profounder thoughts, their deeper monitions, upon those who have no ear for them. They shrink from casting their pearls before swine. To the want of an earnest desire and a reverent, listening ear on man's part, for the truth on this subject, must be attributed the fact that the revelation has not sooner come. As to our cattle, horses and swine, there was money to be made in their case! The prospective clink of the dollars has made men attentive! But our children, alas! are not a merchantable commodity (except in slave-holding communities), and who has cared much about improving their qualities?

Not to quote too largely from this mother's eloquent plea (which is worthy the thoughtful study of every man as well as of every woman in the land), suffice it to say, that she depicts in burning language the wrong and outrage of maternity undesired and incurred without due preparation —often resulting from "phrenzied passion" on the one hand, and accompanied by "a sickening terror" on the other lest the dreaded result ensue. She points out some of the fearful evils which are entailed upon offspring and society from this cause, and affirms that—

"In motherhood desired, all the energies of soul as well as body contributing to the new life, and provided with conditions in accordance with physical and psychical law—motherhood fitted to instruct and courageous to perform its

duties—is the only possible hope for the consummation of a divine order of society upon earth, and *through it alone can the kingdom of heaven come to be established.* All reformatory efforts not commencing here lack the basis of permanency."

The Divine Overshadowing.—Undisturbed Maternity.

This author further declares that—

"Every mother, from the hour when the new life commences, is 'overshadowed by the Most High,' and could she understand her needs and powers, and secure to herself the respect due to her sacred office; and, free from all polluting intrusion upon herself, bathe her spirit in the influxes which the life within her attracts, very rapidly would disappear the loathsome deformities, the discordant spirits now blotting the fair proportions of humanity."

She claims that in the scripture statement in reference to the parents of the child Jesus, that Joseph "knew not" Mary from the hour when the announcement of the new life was made till the birth of the child, is involved a deeper and more important meaning than the Christian world or the medical profession has discovered; that this "undisturbed maternity" which was essential to the ushering into the world of the Prince of Peace, is equally in all cases "a vital and indisputable necessity for the salvation of humanity." "Motherhood," she feelingly urges, "should be a shrine unpolluted by one touch of selfishness or lust. O woman! this would and will be thy recompense for all the sufferings and agonies which pertain to physical womanhood and motherhood."

Such, fathers, brothers, is the purport of this mother's plea in behalf of a purer and wiser maternity—such some of her revelations of its necessary conditions. Do you not feel their force thrill through every fibre of your manhood?

Do you not sense in your inmost soul that this plea has been born out of the depths of the great Heart of Deity, of which the Mother is the true exponent? Does it not stir within you a high and chivalrous resolve to do *your* part, whatever it may be, to aid woman in ushering in on earth the era of a nobler maternity?

But what is our part? Before we undertake to ascertain this, let us look at some of the facts to be seen around us, by observant eyes, in every community—yea, in almost every family—showing the power of parents, and especially of the mother and her surroundings, over the character and destiny of offspring. I will confine myself to a few which have come to my own knowledge, and have never before appeared in print.

II. A FEW FACTS.

How Beauty and Amiability were conferred.—A mother, well known to the writer, at an early stage in pregnancy, had her attention drawn to a beautiful figure of a child, in wax, exhibited in a shop-window in one of our cities. It had a lovely face, indicative of an amiable character, and it greatly pleased the lady's fancy. She frequently visited the spot in order to feast her eyes upon its pleasing features, and brought the energies of her soul to bear in an endeavor to transfer them to the unfolding germ within. When her child, a daughter, was born, its features were an almost exact copy of those of the beautiful figure, markedly different from the features of any other of the family (she has five other children); and this daughter, now a full-grown woman, has developed a character of corresponding beauty and loveliness.

How a Tattler and Busybody was made.—A physician narrated to the writer the following case: A young wife,

living in comfortable circumstances, relieved from the necessity of taking any part in household labors during her first pregnancy, but having no disposition for self-improvement, and no thought of the effect of her conduct upon her offspring, became indolent, and spent a large part of her time at the street-windows, watching the movements of her neighbors, and speculating about their affairs, or in gossiping with such as were as idle as herself. Her child, a boy, is now the pest of the whole neighborhood where he resides, on account of his idle and dissolute habits, and his propensity for an inquisitive prying into the affairs of everybody about, and babbling of the same to all who will listen.

Timidity transmitted.—A wife became *enciente* unintentionally, at an unfavorable time. Her husband and herself had planned to erect a new dwelling that season, and, in the occupations and bustle incident to this enterprise, the interests of the unborn were overlooked. The mother, overburdened with domestic cares and labors, found little opportunity for seclusion and repose, and was continually striving to conceal her state from the rude men, mechanics and laborers, who were employed on the premises. In due time a child was born; but instead of being, as it should have been, a joy to its parents, it was feeble, extremely irritable, and nervously afraid of strangers. When any person with whom it was not familiar entered the house, it would set up a violent screaming, and could not be pacified. "What does ail this child?" was the frequent, puzzled query of the mother, as she witnessed these annoying freaks. Had she remembered her own habit of shrinking from strangers, while carrying the child, she would have had the answer. This child, as it grew up, continued to manifest the same excessive timidity, often running to hide in the house if a

stranger was seen to approach; and this troublesome trait will doubtless cling to it more or less through life. Many, indeed, suffer all their lives from excessive bashfulness, which no doubt has a similar origin.

How a Roving Disposition was imparted.—A child well known to the writer was begotten at a time when its parents were about removing to a new location, with a change in business, and high hopes of improving their worldly condition. In due time they were gladdened by the birth of a vigorous and healthy boy. But as he grew up, while in many respects the pride and joy of his parents, he developed a propensity for roving about and visiting new places—an indisposition to remain long at any employment or in any locality. When earnestly remonstrated with for this tendency, by his parents, on one occasion, when about fifteen years of age, he burst out, through a shower of tears, with these significant words: "Well, I don't know what makes me do so; I know it is not best; but there is something in me which continually says, 'Go! Go!' and I *can't* stay long in any place!" These words conveyed to his parents a solution of the whole matter. In the circumstances under which the boy was begotten, the impulse to "go," the desire of change, had been infused into the very elements of his being. How could he be expected to do otherwise than act it out? To show that such cases are not hopeless, it should be added that when the cause of this tendency came to be understood by both the young man and his parents, and reason thus brought to bear upon it, it was in a few years corrected, and at the age of twenty-three he was able to settle down at a useful profession.

Slyness and Thieving—how entailed.—The following narrative was received from the lips of a physician in one of our large cities:—Said an anguish-riven father, whose first-born

son had just been committed to the penitentiary for the crime of larceny, "I am glad my boy is there at last!—it is the best place for him, poor child! And I hope he will be kept there the rest of his life!"

"Why do you say so?" asked a friend.

"Because I am satisfied he can never refrain from taking what does not belong to him, if free. It was born in him. And all because I was in such haste to lay up money!" he added with a tone of deep grief.

"Will you tell me how it happened?" he was asked.

"Yes. When I was married, I thought that for the first year I and my wife could live more cheaply by remaining with my mother in the old homestead. We did so. My wife was timid and bashful in the presence of her mother-in-law, and never felt at home. She soon became pregnant, and in that condition had her cravings for articles of delicacy, which she did not dare indulge in my mother's presence. She would obtain and secrete bits of cake, preserves and other niceties, as she found opportunity, and would eat them in her own room or out of sight. After our boy was born, and had become sufficiently grown to sit at the table, we noticed that he would never eat, while there, any piece of pie, cake, or other delicacy that was offered him, but if possible would secrete a piece and go away slyly in a corner, or behind a door, and greedily devour it there. At first we thought this was only an amusing freak of childhood, and called it cunning. But after a time it became annoying; we wondered at it, and tried to break it up, but without avail. He soon began to take other things, but we thought it only a common childish fault, and hoped it would be outgrown.

"When he was but a few years old, I took him one day to a store, to buy him a pair of shoes. His eye fell on a

pair of boy's boots which took his fancy, and he said he wanted them. I thought shoes preferable, and purchased a pair. When we reached home, I was pained to find that he had the boots hidden under his coat. I reprimanded him, reasoned with him, and tried to show him the wickedness of the theft; but he insisted that he wanted the boots, and was going to have them. I told him he must take them back, and tell the storekeeper he was sorry; but he stubbornly refused. I compelled him to go with me and return the boots, but not a word of regret could I induce him to utter. From that time onward my troubles increased. In spite of all we could say or do, the boy would appropriate whatever he could lay his hands on that pleased his fancy. All my property has been spent in paying fines and rescuing him from the consequences of this evil propensity; the peace of my family has been destroyed, and I am a broken-hearted man—all for the sake of saving a few paltry dollars at the beginning of my married life! Poor boy! I know he cannot help stealing, and therefore I am glad he is where he can have no chance to steal!"

Think of it, reader! Blasted hopes—a ruined family—anguish-riven hearts—a wrecked life—"all for a few paltry dollars!"

A Welcome Child.—In one family, with which the writer is well acquainted, are three children. The first two were undesired, and they exhibit various peculiar traits, such as were to have been expected from the conditions which preceded their birth. Among these are occasional fits of despondency and gloom, when for the time life seems to have no interest, and the world no place for them, and they wonder why they were born. These are evidently but the reflex of the mother's moods at times during their gestation.

The third was a welcome child. All the mother's energies were directed cheerfully and lovingly to its ante-natal fostering and culture. This child, now grown to young womanhood, is markedly different in temperament and general characteristics from either of the others. From her birth she was a sunbeam of joy in the household, never causing a sleepless hour, even in infancy, by petulance or irritability, and never a shadow of grief to her parents' hearts. On the contrary, she has ever been a cheerful, dutiful, helpful and happy child, loving and beloved by all who know her, within and without the family circle. She evidently feels that she has a right to be in the world, and that it has a place for her, and has a disposition to do all in her power to make the world better and happier. "Of such," truly, "is the kingdom of heaven," and when the earth is peopled with such, the kingdom of heaven will have come!

Craft, Treachery, &c.—Every one who has had opportunity of familiar acquaintance with the products of "miscegenation," as practiced in the southern section of our country in the days of slavery, must have remarked the almost universal absence of truthfulness, manliness, and honesty in these illicit offspring of diverse races. The father belonging, in most instances, to a proud aristocracy of color, and the mother identified with a despised and downtrodden class, the commerce between the two has been almost necessarily characterized by secrecy, lust and shame. Consequently the offspring, though in many instances endowed with marked intellectual capabilities and refinement of manner, are in general living embodiments of craft, treachery, selfishness and moral obliquity of various kinds.

How Murderers are made.—Startling facts known to the writer might be given—(but for fear of adding further

pangs to hearts already wrung with anguish)—going to show that an attempt or desire on the part of a mother to destroy an embryo before birth, is likely, if unsuccessful, to result in producing a *murderer!* The mere indulgence of such a desire, it seems, though unexecuted, tends, by the action of psychical law, to implant a pre-disposition which makes even that most heinous of crimes *as normal or natural to the child as is any other inborn tendency!*

This is a terrible thought, indeed, but who can deny its truth, in the light of such facts as have been already given? And it seems needless to add more, since those of similar import may be learned in almost every community, if only suitable inquiry be made. But these facts suggest a few thoughts on a most important subject, to which your attention is asked before we proceed. That is—

III. THE SOURCE OF CRIME.

The alarming prevalence and increase of crime, in almost all sections of our country, within the last few years, has attracted the anxious attention of moralists and legislators. Not long since, in Chicago, a commission was appointed "to inquire into and report on the causes for the increasing prevalence of crime in that city." A leading and widely circulated public journal in an eastern city, noticing the report of this commission, says:

"They divide the causes of crime into two classes—the *predisposing* and the *exciting*. The first class is dismissed with a paragraph, and the latter is limited to the single element of habitual drinking."

"Dismissed with a paragraph"! And that paragraph so unimportant that we are not even told its purport! Nor has our influential journalist one word to say to supply the failure of the commission. This is the best that the press—

the trusted "guardian of the public weal"—seems able to do for us in this momentous matter of the predisposing causes of crime.

But our wise journalist dissents from the opinion that habitual drinking is the great cause of crime, though confessedly a prominent excitant thereto. His sage conclusion is that this cause is to be found in the non-enforcement of penal statutes. These are his words:

"In proportion as the laws to protect the rights of property and the sacredness of human life are imperfectly, partially or dishonestly administered, so also is the increase of crime."

I laid down the journal containing this wise dissertation, and took up another, published at the National Capital, in which I read these startling words:

"Two fearful murders, following with a day's interval only between them, have occurred already this week in Washington. This state of affairs is sufficiently alarming to awaken the deepest solicitude," etc., etc.*

Well might this state of affairs awaken the deepest solicitude; for the very city where these murders had occurred had, only one week before, enjoyed the great moral lesson of two hangings for murder! That is the way the perfect administration of the laws deters from crime!

It is time we cease giving attention wholly to futile attempts to dam up this devastating stream, and look earnestly for its source.

In the light of such facts as have been given in the foregoing pages, is it not plain where this source is to be found? A predisposition to violence and murder was doubtless implanted in these criminals before they were born, just as a roving disposition, or a tendency to theft, is implanted in others.

*Washington Chronicle, of Dec. 25, 1873.

In a report on "Criminal Abortions in America," prepared by the distinguished Dr. Storer, of Boston, and published under the sanction of the American Medical Association, in 1859, abundant evidences were given to show "that forced abortions in America are of very frequent occurrence, and that this frequency is rapidly increasing, not in the cities alone, but in the country districts."

It may be safely assumed that if at that time *abortions* were very frequent and rapidly increasing, *unsuccessful attempts* at abortion were also frequent and increasing in equal ratio.

This sufficiently accounts for the fearful increase in crimes of violence and murder in years subsequent to the date above mentioned.

And when the children begotten amid the strife and animosities of the late war shall come upon the stage, we may look for a still more abundant harvest from the seeds of violence then implanted. Thus it is that one war tends strongly to generate another within thirty years.

Facts like those presented seem fully to justify the conclusion that parents are directly responsible for the criminals who prey upon society. And this responsibility must fall largely if not chiefly upon the fathers, for the reason that they in general act with greater freedom, or less subjection to circumstances, than do mothers, in the production of offspring.

Fathers! let us look this matter squarely in the face. We who have caused children to be conceived and brought forth in shame, concealment or privation, whether within or without the pale of marriage;—we who have robbed the mothers of our children of that to which no law or custom can give us any right, namely, the possession and control of their own bodies and souls;—we who have compelled the

bearing of unwelcome burdens, and so have given rise to the murderous desire to be rid of them by unnatural means, perhaps fostering that desire by our own wicked counsel, or by lack of sympathy;—*we are the chiefly responsible agents in this fearful work of making swindlers, thieves, robbers, murderers, and felons of every class!* Let us look in our prisons, our penitentiaries, on our scaffolds, and behold OUR work!

Is not this a true charge? Deny it, who can.

Do we plead ignorance?

That plea may be of some avail as to the past, in view of the deplorable want of instruction on this momentous subject—though every one of us who has erred in this regard must expect, sooner or later, in this world or the next, to confront the wronged victims of our ignorance and selfishness, to whom we must make such amends as we can ere our own souls can ever enter into rest.

But the plea of ignorance will no longer avail. Now, my reader, WE KNOW. And hereafter he or she who sins in this matter does so against light, and must expect to feel that sharpest sting of remorse—"*I knew my duty, but I did it not.*"

Facts of this class, when duly considered, will also teach us the charity we ought to feel towards criminals of every sort, and will suggest that means should be adopted *for their cure*, instead of the infliction of vindictive punishments which have so long been tried in vain. Ah! verily—

> "The world needs a new theory of crime
> And retribution, based on all the facts
> And fixed in all the reason of the race—
> As full of hope as Christ's great heart of love."

IV. THE KEY TO OTHER MYSTERIES.

The facts herein-before recited furnish us the key to many of the mysteries of human character and conduct. Nothing seems more fully established, through all history, than that the prominent states and characteristics of both parents at the time of inception, as well as those of the mother during gestation, are likely if not certain to be incorporated into the very fibre and tissue of the new being that is originated. Here (to say nothing of tendencies inherited from grand-parents and remoter ancestry) is the undoubted source of many of the peculiar traits, strange idiosyncracies, singular aversions, and absurd inconsistencies of character, as well as various physical maladies, which afflict so many of our children and curse society. And here we learn why it is that so large a portion of humanity are actuated by no genuine love of their kind, no noble and worthy purpose in life, no aspiration above self-interest and self-gratification. *Their parents implanted no higher motive in the act which brought them into being.*

More than this, evidences point unmistakably to the conclusion that the indulgence of *any* evil desire or thought on the part of the mother, during the period of gestation, is likely to infuse, through the inevitable force of mental or psychical impression, a subtle moral virus into the very texture of the young life that is being so "marvellously wrought" within her own—a virus which poisons to a greater or less extent the fountains of its being, blunts its moral sense, and thus deadens its realization in after life of the enormity of the vicious or criminal tendency which may be so implanted. Appalling to witness has been the indifference with which youth, unfortunately born, have confessed to the writer the criminal proclivities which they have inherited.

Nay, still more: there are strong reasons for believing that these entailed proclivities often assume in their unfortunate subjects the form of an imperative "must"—a seemingly uncontrollable impulse. It is common for murderers, kleptomaniacs, and other criminals, to plead that "something within them *makes* them" commit the crimes laid to their charge. What is this but the mysterious force of an inborn tendency?

On the other hand, it is undoubtedly the mother's privilege, at this critical period, to so prepare and elevate herself, by proper living and pure aspirations, that her soul may be constantly bathed in hallowed effluxes from celestial realms—truly "overshadowed by the power of the Highest." By this means the newly-begotten one may become so harmoniously developed and so permeated by a divine and purifying influx, that with no irreverence it may be termed, as was Mary's babe of old, a "holy one," and, like that child, may grow up to walk among men as a true son or daughter of God.

In brief, the law seems to be that, such is the intimate connection between the mother and the embryo, the exercise of any faculty of her mind or soul, or of any organ of her brain or body, stimulates and develops in proportionate degree the corresponding faculty or organ in the incipient child.

Thus it is that the iniquities as well as the excellences of parents are transmitted to their children, even for many generations. And hence it is in the power of the mother intelligently and wisely to shape or to greatly modify the development, in the germ, of all the powers and tendencies of her expected offspring.

In fact, it is for the mother, by the use of appropriate means (provided a sufficient organic *capacity* has been ger-

minally contributed by the father, and provided, also, the mother's efforts are properly seconded by the father), to produce a poet, a thinker, an artist, an inventor, a philanthropist, or any other type of manhood or womanhood, desirable or undesirable, as she will. *By an intelligent exercise and direction of her own mental and psychical forces, in an orderly and systematic manner, during the development of the embryo, she may determine with almost unerring certainty the bent and career of her unborn child!*

This may be a new and startling truth to some, but in the light of constantly accumulating facts its refutation may safely be challenged. It has been generally taught, indeed, and piously believed, that God determines or "foreordains, according to his inscrutable good pleasure," the characters and "gifts" as well as destinies of individuals. But it is now apparent that in this, as in all things else, he works through instrumentalities; and these instrumentalities are the men and women who stand in the relation of parents.

What follows from the recognition of this tremendous truth cannot be fully delineated here; nor can the momentous subject of pre-natal culture be adequately treated in these pages.

That the mother's spiritual states and mental activities, as well as her physical surroundings and employments, during such period, are or may be greatly affected by the father, is evident to every one. He may do much to make or to mar suitable conditions. By the line of conduct which he pursues, the topics of thought which he presents, and the aid or hindrance he offers in her efforts at pre-natal culture, he may help to beautify and ennoble, or to disfigure and ruin, the work of High Art in which his companion is engaged. Indeed, so intimate is the relation usually sub-

sisting, and which ought always to subsist, between the mother and the father at this period, that even his unexpressed thoughts and desires are likely to act upon her sensitive organism, and through her upon the more sensitive embryo.

In the facts and considerations thus presented, have we not plainly the key also to a means within human control, under the beneficent laws of the universe, whereby our homes and our world may be peopled with beings of beauty, health, nobleness, love, and joy? That means evidently is *a wise and intelligent* MOTHERHOOD, *aided and sustained by a worthy and noble* FATHERHOOD.

We are now prepared to advance, and to consider some of the

V. DUTIES OF FATHERHOOD.

What, then, brothers, in the light of the truths now before us, are some of the duties devolving upon those of us whose high privilege it is to stand in the relation of fathers to the children of the future?

Obviously our first duty is—

PERSONAL PREPARATION.

If, in reproducing ourselves, there is a likelihood that we may reproduce not only our bodily weaknesses and ills, but also our mental and moral obliquities—our foibles, meannesses, defects and overpluses of whatever kind—to plague and curse those whom our hearts would prompt us only to bless, then surely it behooves us first to attain the best possible conditions of health and soundness, in every respect, of which we are capable. Our bodies should be in the highest vigor in every part—our minds clear, serene, and duly active in every faculty—our wills strong with a delib-

erate purpose—our consciences void of any stain—and our spirits buoyant with hope and alive with good-will to all our race.

Above all things, one should never participate in that holiest of sacraments in which a new life is begotten, under the impulse of unregulated passion or untutored desire. In the procreative act, man most nearly approaches the highest prerogative of the Creator. In it he enters the vestibule of the most sacred of Nature's mysteries, and stands in the very presence-chamber of the Most High. How dare he profane the hallowed precincts with unclean hands or an impure heart? With what decency can he present himself when steeped in the fumes of alcohol, tobacco, or any other noisome thing—especially any thing which stimulates lustful desire? Let him first "cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit," before he presumes to worship in this holy of holies. Let him seek to have his whole nature so permeated and purified by the divine spirit, that all inherited evil tendencies shall be made quiescent for the time, and so the deposited germ be free from all taint of moral virus, as well as of physical disease. This is for those who earnestly seek it.

No man should allow himself to become the victim of a blind impulse, as is the brute. If passion is aroused, let him wait until it subsides, and he becomes fully master of himself. Surely, in this noblest, most important and most responsible of all acts, man should have self-possession, intelligent purpose, full preparation, and the highest inspiration. Only when in his best estate can one expect that the Divine, through him, will enstamp clearly His own perfect image on the new being coined by his instrumentality. Otherwise what else can he look for than that the creative electric fiat, that, out from the great ocean of deific energy

surrounding us on every side, converges through his organism to enkindle a new life, will carry with it some portion of his own foulness to mar the begotten germ? *

Though all the mysteries of hereditary transmission may not as yet have been fathomed by the physiologist, enough is known to render it probable, if not certain, that the male parent contributes the *basis* of the new being—that is, the *capacity* and fundamental characteristics of the offspring, which are more or less modified and clothed upon by the female. This being the case, it follows that whatever imperfections or evil tendencies are implanted by the father will be more deeply-seated and difficult to eradicate by any processes of education or discipline, than are those derived from the mother; and they usually come to the surface and manifest themselves in the character later in life. This consideration renders thorough personal preparation on the part of the father doubly important.

Such preparation as is here indicated is not the work of an hour, a day, or a month. In fact, the whole previous life is none too long to be devoted to such a work. And why should not the whole life be devoted to *true living*, in all respects, and in the best and noblest manner? What right has one to inflict upon a helpless and innocent child the results of a life of sensualism and debauchery, or even of thoughtless indifference to the nobler aims of existence?

Selection of a Partner—Mutual Love.

The man who takes care thus to prepare himself will of course take care to select a partner in the noble work who has made a like preparation. He will abstain from all

* A charge of electricity, when passing from one object to another, often imprints an image of the former upon the latter; or, if it passes through a portion of the atmosphere, it may gather the impurities therefrom and enstamp them upon the next object it enters.

waste of his life-forces among wantons, and from all impure and promiscuous associations. He will carefully choose for a companion one who is adapted by temperament,* by physical and mental conformation, and by moral and spiritual culture, to take part in so momentous an undertaking. And he will be careful to keep free from the bewitching entanglements of blind magnetic attraction, so often mistaken for "love," until a wise choice can be made.

Love, in its best sense,—that is, mutual affection, of the strongest character,—beyond all question, should be an indispensable pre-requisite to the begetting of offspring. But this means something vastly more than mere sexual attraction, which so many mistake for it,—more, even, than the mutual personal idolization which many conceive it to be.

Nothing is worthy to be called love which has not in it, as its chief element, the *desire to bless and make happy its object*, rather than to *possess* for selfish gratification. Self and self-gratification are always in abeyance, and ready to be sacrificed for the good of the loved, in the true lover.

Beyond this, there should be, in those who would come into conjugal union for the production of offspring, an intimate and sweet blending of their whole natures, from highest to lowest, or from the inmost to the outmost planes. This blending, where it exists, is a perpetual source of mutual delight, satisfaction, repose. It should commence in the highest or inmost department of being—that is, in the religious, emotional, or spiritual—in order to be deepest and most lasting. Thence, as from the inmost centre, it should extend outwardly, through the moral, the æsthetical, the intellectual, the social, to the physical plane.

Such a blending is indicated by harmony of emotions,

* Like temperaments, as indicated by like complexions, color of the eyes, etc., it is generally conceded, do not blend to the best advantage. Such should not marry, with the intention of raising offspring.

sentiments, tastes, convictions, etc.; and where it exists the union is complete, and may continue with augmenting delight, for aught that appears, to all eternity. And its results in offspring (other conditions being favorable) may be expected to be correspondingly perfect, since they will then be likely to be generated in a complete interblending of all departments of the being.

But if harmony exists in only a part of the scale, as evinced by concord in some things, and discord or repugnance in others, the union of souls is incomplete, and likely to be ephemeral; and the results in offspring will be correspondingly imperfect.

The above is believed to be a statement of the law of conjugal harmony and permanence, which cannot be successfully controverted.

It is evident that in many if not the majority of cases, in these times, the process pointed out is reversed. That is, the attraction, or blending (if any exists), is first and strongest on the physical or sexual plane. Physical charms form the chief attraction, while the requirements of the higher nature are more or less ignored. The parties often never stop to seriously inquire whether there is any real blending of soul, in the spiritual, religious, moral, æsthetic, or even intellectual departments of their being. They rush to the gratification of the desires of the flesh; and the consequences are, these soon turn to disgust,—their offspring (if such result) are children of lust, often of discord and hate, badly organized and full of antagonisms,—and the relation is sooner or later dissolved, or continues only as a hateful bondage. Such is the history of married life in too many cases. It is time that men and women learned to proceed more wisely in a matter so profoundly important to all the best interests of human existence.

To a neglect of such preparations, and such care in the selection of partners, as have here been suggested, is owing the fact that so large a portion of humanity is literally "conceived in sin and begotten in iniquity"—or at best chance-begotten and undesired—growing up to curse the earth from generation to generation with new harvests of wickedness and crime.

O brothers! fathers! is not this the very truth of God? Presume not, then, I implore you, to put it aside, on any consideration.

Favorable Circumstances.

Another evident duty is, never to enter upon that sacred mystery which gives origin to a new life, until she who is to become the mother is placed in circumstances favorable to the worthy discharge of the noble function of maternity.

This means more, perhaps, than may be thought at first-blush.

(*a*) *Public Recognition.* It implies, first, an honorable recognition before friends and the community in which you dwell, of the relation in which this woman is to stand to you, and you to her, and of a mutual intention to fulfil all the obligations growing out of that relation.

This is the main object, doubtless, of the institution of Marriage. Marriage laws, as they now exist, may be, and unquestionably are in many instances, unwise and oppressive in some of their provisions—perhaps are "relics of feudal barbarism," unadapted to the age in which we live. But that is no sufficient reason for discarding all law, all obligation, and all public recognition in this matter.

It is *a law of woman's nature* that she cannot fulfil the function of maternity in entire concealment, and that she cannot fulfil it in the best manner without the full conscious-

ness of her *right* to do it, and that this right is conceded by those about her—especially those whom she esteems. In the acutely sensitive and impressible condition which maternity brings, no woman, however strong in her own convictions of right, can at all times resist the psychical influence which the thoughts and feelings, even unspoken, of those around her exert. This influence, through the mother, reaches the embryo, and enstamps upon it mental and moral characteristics which it will bear through life. Hence the depressed and abashed demeanor, the sense of loneliness and sadness, the want of self-respect and dignity, usually observed in illegitimate offspring, and often, too, in offspring called legitimate, on whom similar influences have made their mark. Whatever may be the abstract "rights" of parties in this matter, *it is a fearful wrong to inflict such a life-long incubus upon a helpless child.* No man, with a spark of manhood in his nature, will be guilty of such a wrong.

If our marriage institution, as defined by existing laws, be imperfect, then let us earnestly set about improving it. If its laws in any respect contravene the laws of nature and of right, so as to prevent the march of improvement in humanity's most vital interest, then let us disregard and defy them, if need be, in obedience to the higher law. That may be the speediest or the only way to secure their improvement. But let us act openly, honorably, and above-board, doing nothing which we are ashamed to acknowledge and defend before our fellow-men and high heaven, manfully taking the consequences of all that we do.

(*b*) *A suitable Home.* Another law of maternity is, that the mother should have a home of affection, quiet and harmony, wherein she can have all the repose and seclusion which her nature demands for the successful performance

of this, its highest task. And to every woman of taste and refinement, this must be one of some degree of elegance, as well as of comfort. Until this can be secured to the mother, no man has a right to expect of her the assumption of this task—nor has she, in justice to the unborn, any right to assume it.

Freedom.

Another plain duty is, never to enter upon that most sacred of mysteries without the free and full concurrence of the partner.

Every woman should be allowed to feel, at all times and under all circumstances, that she is the absolute owner of her own person, and especially has the right to control those functions which are her peculiar glory. Only herself can determine when and by whom they should be called into exercise. Only herself can know when her organism has been prepared—as it should in all cases be—by celestial influxes, as well as physical conditions, to properly receive and mature the germ of an immortal being.

Intrusion here is a most flagrant outrage against nature, no matter what sanction it may have in perverted religious teachings or in man-made laws. "Marital rights" usually means marital *wrongs*. The law written in woman's constitution cries out against such outrages, though its voice may have been unheeded through all the centuries. And the consequences of the violation of this law are written in the history of violence and outrage, on the one hand, and of cringing submission on the other, which blacken the annals of humanity in all past time. These are but the fruits of seed too often implanted in the very genesis of human beings.

Do you wish your child to grow up an imperious despot, regardless of the personal rights, interests or feelings of

others, bent only on its own selfish gratification at whatever cost? Then do not infuse into the very elements of its germ the virus from which those qualities will surely develop. Or do you wish your offspring to be a cringing, abject-creature, always doubting its right to exist, to think or to act without the behest of some lordly despot—its soul often filled with undefinable fears of some impending terror? Then do not place the mother, in the very act of its inception, nor at any subsequent period, in the mental attitude which is likely to enstamp these traits upon the child.

Sometimes we see both the traits above described embodied in the same person, and each alternately in the ascendant—forming a bundle of contradictions which are a puzzle to himself and to all around him. The foregoing hints furnish a key to all such mysteries.

INDEPENDENCE.

To the end that woman may feel that she is always the owner of her own person, it is plainly important that she should be ever independent and self-supporting.

So long as she sells herself for a home, a livelihood, or the "protection of a man," she can have no genuine freedom, but is liable to experience "the protection which wolves afford to lambs." In the nature of things, she cannot feel free to assert her own rights or wishes, with reference to maternity or any other thing, so long as she is or feels herself to be dependent on any man for the means of support.

If on entering a marriage partnership, a woman holds no property in her own right, and continues in no outside remunerative occupation, her husband should remember that her services in making home what a home should be, and surely in bearing the burdens of maternity, are above all price, and entitled to any pecuniary compensation

which it is ordinarily in his power to make. Their money-value, if they can be said to have one, is at least equal to that of man's services in *any* capacity. This is a point too little considered by either husbands or wives; and the latter too generally are ready to regard themselves as earning nothing, but merely *supported* by their husbands—from whom they must virtually beg such pittances as they from time to time require. In any case where a wife performs her part with ordinary fidelity, she may fairly be considered as entitled to one-half the income, whatever it be, and to the same freedom in the use of her share as has the husband of his. This being conceded, she will have a sense of equality and self-reliance which in other circumstances is impossible. At all events, this matter of the wife's pecuniary independence should be settled at the outset, in some way, beyond recall. If not secured by public law, let it be by private contract, faithfully respected.

The growing demand among women, at this day, for better opportunities of self-support, for equal compensation for the same service, and for equal political privileges that these benefits may be secured, springs from an intuitive and just desire for independence, and should be seconded by all true men.

True, if we wish to hold a woman solely by affection, we must make ourselves attractive. If we would be loved, we must be loveable. This we cannot be while selfishness, love of domination, ungoverned passion, grossness, filthiness of habit, meanness, or unmanliness of any sort, is predominant in us. Be noble, generous, just, self-sacrificing, continent, manly in all things,—and no woman worthy of you can help loving you, in the best sense of that word. When a woman, in perfect freedom, pure affection, and full trust, offers herself on the altar of *desired* maternity,

then, and only then, is she worthy your partnership in the holy relation of parentage.

Do not these suggestions, my brothers, commend themselves to your better judgment? Then fail not, I entreat you, to make them the guide of your lives.

Attention during the Critical Period.

The germ of a young immortal having been wisely implanted, its nurture and development through the whole period of gestation should be guarded with equal care.

The father should see to it that she who has taken this precious germ in charge is relieved from all other charges that would interfere with its best unfoldment—that no labors, cares or responsibilities come upon her, other than such as will give the desirable exercise and play to all her powers. While over-fatigue and exhaustion should be avoided on the one hand, on the other, indolence, listlessless and *ennui* are perhaps still greater evils.

During this period the mother should be shielded as far as practicable from contact with disagreeable persons, from all repulsive objects, from the knowledge of painful and shocking occurrences, and especially from all inharmonies in the domestic circle—in short, from any and everything which, through her mind, may make an undesirable impression upon the sensitive embryo. While it is doubtless desirable that the mother should, by self-discipline and self-reliance, as far as possible, fortify herself against the disastrous effects of sudden shocks, yet it is not well to incur needless risks in this direction. Man is constitutionally more positive and less impressible than woman. Hence the husband should surround and insphere the wife by his more positive atmosphere, to shield her from all adverse influences.

During this early stage of growth, the embryo being has its peculiar needs. The effort of nature is to supply it with all the elements necessary for its full development, according to its type. If anything is lacking in either parent, or unsupplied in the mother's ordinary aliment or associations, she is made to feel a craving for it, often from strange and seemingly whimsical sources. These cravings may have respect to mere physical elements, as found in foods, liquids, etc., or to mental, moral, social, æsthetic and spiritual qualities, to be absorbed from the atmospheres of the proper persons. Probably these cravings will be less extravagant or erratic in proportion as the mother pursues a well regulated and judicious system of diet. The father, indeed, should be a reservoir from which may be drawn all manly elements, all desired masculine qualities. But the mother alone can judge of her requirements in these matters. Her leadings, at least if she live purely and wisely, are the monitions of the Divine Artist working marvellously in secret, and should be religiously heeded.

In the important work of Pre-Natal Culture, by which the mother may, as previously suggested, through the systematic and wise exercise of her own powers and faculties, secure to her offspring a healthful and harmonious organism, with a bent in any desired direction, the father can render most essential service. But that point need not be enlarged upon here.

Lastly, under this head, it should be remembered that the mother needs the support of a generous sympathy and encouragement at all times during the accomplishment of the perilous task of maternity, and especially in the hours of suffering, perhaps of foreboding, which are usually attendant upon it under even the best of circumstances. Its perils and dark hours will no doubt be rendered comparatively

few and brief under such conditions as are herein advised. Yet in whose ear but the father's can the expectant mother whisper all her anxieties? On whose arm but his can she well lean for support and sympathy? He must be less than human who can leave the mother of his child to meet the burdens and dangers of this trying period without the best and fullest aid which he is capable of rendering.

No Intrusion.

The matron, when once her organism has entered upon the work of developing a new life, should be left unmolested by intrusion upon that department of her being. The work cannot be well performed—it may be wofully defaced or ruined—if the energies of her system are drawn upon by additional demands upon the sexual organism.

It would seem that, for most minds, little need be added to the forcible considerations on this point urged in the treatise on "Motherhood," referred to in the opening pages of this tract. But as a contrary opinion is somewhat prevalent, an additional suggestion or two may not be out of place.

It is affirmed that the ministration of the opposite sex is sometimes demanded during the period of gestation, and more strongly than at any other time; some even claiming it to be necessary to the development of the embryo, and to give strength in bearing the burden.

It is possible a fetus begotten in lust and enstamped with excessive desire may incite in the mother demands in this direction during its incipient stages,—as infants so begotten are sometimes known to manifest erotic impulses while in the mother's lap. Whether indulgence on the mother's part will tend to increase, or denial to diminish, this tendency, may not be known; but it is most earnestly urged that

children should not be so begotten. The consequences of implanting this tendency in excess need not be portrayed. Society is seething with them on every hand.

Besides, who can tell how far this seeming demand of the mother in the direction alluded to is merely a sympathetic response to the unchastened desires of the father? His ungoverned impulses are almost sure to react upon her sensitive organism, especially if the two continue, as is the common but unwise custom, to occupy the same bed. It is well to scrutinize closely, before we decide what are "nature's authoritative demands" in such a case.

At all events, the intuitions of the mother, when *against* the practice referred to, should never be violated. The whole nervous force of her system—the whole energies of her being—in ordinary cases at least, are undoubtedly required for the proper discharge of the maternal duty she has undertaken. Any activity of the sexual department tends to draw away these forces from their proper action, and so mars their work; while, under the action of laws already set forth, it can scarcely fail to stimulate a corresponding activity of the same department in the embryo, resulting in exaggerated proclivities in a direction not to be desired.

The same remarks apply to the whole period of lactation or nursing as well as to gestation. So long as the young life is drawing its sustenance from the mother's organism, she should not be taxed with other demands upon the procreative function. Else the offspring is robbed of its just due. What is meaner than to rob a helpless infant of its proper nutriment?

And this immunity of the mother should extend to *thoughts* as well as to acts. For thoughts are things! They are penetrative forces, whose power is felt, though their sub-

stance is not seen. Lascivious and lustful thoughts affect the sensitive organism of the mother, and the more sensitive embryo she carries, to an extent of which few except the highly sensitive are aware. To abstain from these, as well as from all intrusive acts, is a duty which no father can disregard with impunity.

No Profanation.

Another plain duty of every father, and of every man as well, is to cease to regard the procreative function, or the mystery of sex and the organs which express it, as something base and filthy, fit themes for coarse jokes and obscene jests. No true man can be guilty of such profanation.

Nothing can be nobler or more Godlike than the worthy use of a function so nearly allied to the Creator's prerogative, the highest function of organic life—and so nothing is baser, viler, or more ruinous, than its misuse. Every function, every organ, should be sacredly consecrated to its best uses. When this is done, it becomes a powerful means of elevation, instead of degradation, to the individual and the race.

Never should the maternal function, or the condition of pregnancy, be made the subject of lewd jeers or leering looks. Such things cannot occur in the presence or with the knowledge of a matron when in the exercise of that function without producing more or less effect, through the mother's mind, upon the susceptible embryo—an effect which is likely to manifest itself in after years in a foolish squeamishness, a needless shrinking, at the mention of subjects pertaining to the origin of life. From this almost every one of us is suffering at this day, however earnestly we may desire to know the truth for useful ends. This un-

reasoning squeamishness, more than all things else, prevents the full enlightenment of the public on topics confessedly most vital to human welfare.

There is, no doubt, a native and proper modesty relative to the procreative function and its symbols—an instinctive shrinking from exposure to unhallowed eyes—on the part of all refined and cultured people, and even of most savages, which proceeds from an intuitive sense of sacredness; but this is quite another thing than the false shame born of profanation.

No man who remembers that *he* was born of a woman, through pains and agonies which he can never comprehend, can indulge in such irreverence without sacrificing his manliness; and no father can participate in it, or fail to rebuke it in others, without proving himself unworthy the honor of fatherhood.

Support and Education of Offspring.

Lastly, the duty of a father to provide properly for the support and education of his children, that they may be duly fitted for self-support and lives of usefulness when grown up, is too generally conceded to need remark here. To abstain from bringing them into the world until there is a reasonable prospect of ability to do this, would seem equally obligatory.

There is, however, a sentiment somewhat prevalent, that it is the duty of the State to assume the care and education of every child that is born within its jurisdiction; and hence that individual fathers are not bound to give themselves any concern about it. No doubt it is far better that the State should charge itself with the duty of seeing that every child is properly educated, than that a portion should be left to grow up in vicious ignorance to prey upon others. But when a man claims a right to bring children

into the world for his own gratification, but for others to support and educate, shirking that responsibility himself, he proves himself so lacking in the qualities of honor and manhood as to unfit him to be the father of any child. Such base unmanliness ought not to be propagated to another generation.

But too few fathers take sufficient pains to intelligently inform themselves as to what is the best system and what the best methods of ordinary education. Too many are content with supplying their children with anything called a school, provided it costs little. Consequently our boasted common schools in general are far from what they should be. In them, with some exceptions, our children are subjected to unnatural and absurd methods of bodily restraint and mental cramming, till at length they are sent forth into life often with impaired physical constitutions, utterly ignorant of the laws of health or true living, with little practical training for life's duties,—frequently with an utter disgust for books, study, or any means of self-culture,—or, again, with intellects precociously active, but morals like an unweeded garden.

If children are rightly born, in accordance with the views hereinbefore set forth, their subsequent training, both mental and moral, will be a comparatively easy matter. Yet it is a matter of great importance. It is not within the scope of the present treatise to set forth even an outline of a proper system of common education; but every thoughtful parent will see at once that it ought to provide for the harmonious development and healthy exercise of all the normal faculties and functions of the human being, physical, mental, social, moral, spiritual. It should truly educate the whole being, instead of merely cramming the memory, or the intellect, at the expense of all other departments, and thus filling the world with human monstrosities.

But there is one vitally important branch of instruction which is so generally neglected that special mention of it must not be omitted here. It is that which relates to the origin of life, and the uses and abuses of the sexual system. This should be carefully attended to before the child can become contaminated with corrupt ideas. The only safety here is not, as many persuade themselves, in ignorance, but in knowledge, wisely and seasonably imparted. Ignorance is certain exposure to danger, if not to ruin. From whom can such knowledge be so properly imparted to a child as from the originators if its being? Fathers, as you value the welfare and happiness of those whom you have called into existence, I implore you, see to it that this momentous matter is not neglected.

VI. SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Impracticability.

"Your views are utopian and impracticable. Men and women as they are will not practice such self-control and wise regard to results as you advise."

Answer. Men and women *as they are*—ignorant on these most important matters, knowing no better way than that in which their fathers and mothers have lived before them—are not expected to do any better. But men and women may become enlightened—may learn that there is a better and nobler life than that in which they and the generations before them have grovelled and groaned. To those who are enlightened, that which was before impracticable, becomes practicable. The object of these pages is to suggest and instruct in The Better Way, and if possible awaken an impulse to achieve it.

2. Strength of the Sexual Impulse–Necessity, &c.

"The strength of the sexual impulse in men generally

is such that it cannot be restrained within the bounds proposed; such restraint would be unnatural and injurious to health; indulgence, more or less frequent, is a physical necessity to men."

Answer. The strength of the sexual appetite in men is unquestionably the grand obstacle to the improvement of the race in the manner proposed. But the first question that arises is, Is this strength in all cases purely natural and healthy? Unless it can be shown to be so, no one can rationally urge that its demands should be indulged to their full extent—much less, that the personal rights, the health, and happiness of the opposite sex, and the welfare of unborn generations, should be sacrificed to its indulgence.

On the contrary, is it not obvious, on a moment's reflection, that this appetite must not only be susceptible of exaggeration, like all other appetites, but that it must have been increased and intensified in most of us beyond the simple requirements of nature, by the excesses of all past generations? And not this alone, but that it is constantly stimulated and made unnaturally active by artificial habits of living, and still more by the impure conversation, thoughts and practices almost universally prevalent among men and boys from early childhood? To all of which must be added the effects of *habit*, which are always cumulative in their tendency.

They who have ever carefully noted the effect on themselves of most kinds of alcoholic stimulants, of coffee, oysters, eggs, spices, and an excess of animal food of almost any kind,—and especially they who prefer these things *because* of their stimulating effects in this direction,—as well as they who find pleasure in the filthy conversation and practices referred to,—cannot surely with any justice charge upon "nature" the exuberance of their amatory desires.

In so far, then, as this appetite is excessive in us beyond the requirements of nature and enlightened reason, it is

unnatural and diseased. And it must be plain to the dullest apprehension, that, being unnatural and diseased, it should be subdued and regulated by the dictates of wisdom, for our own personal good, as well as for that of others. The same rule which common sense applies to inordinate appetites for food or drink applies equally here.

The writer is well aware that it is no easy matter to acquire the mastery over a tendency strong by inherited force and increased, perhaps, by long and ignorant indulgence. Especially is this mastery difficult to those who have not learned the full meaning and the better uses of the sexual impulse, and know not the aids that are available for its wise control. To all who are struggling in such conditions he extends his heartfelt sympathy. But experience has proved that the mastery can be attained. A determined will—an earnest, constant aspiration for power from above to overcome—with a careful abstinence from exciting foods, drinks, acts and thoughts, and the use of appropriate means to allay excitement,—these, persisted in, will bring the victory in due time.

Better Uses of Procreative Force.

As an aid in achieving this victory, it is important to know, what many have never been taught, that there are other uses for the procreative element than the generation of physical offspring—far better uses than its waste in momentary pleasure. It may, indeed, be better wasted than employed in imposing unwelcome burdens on toil-worn and outraged women. *But there should be no waste.* It is too precious. It is the concentrated essence of all the life-forces of your being, distilled and compounded with marvelous chemistry in the most wonderful of laboratories. These are not fine words merely—they state a most undeniable fact. This element when retained in the system—

the mental powers being properly directed—is in some way absorbed and diffused throughout the whole organism, replacing waste, and imparting a peculiar vigor in every part. It is taken up by the brain, and may be coined into new thoughts—perhaps new inventions—grand conceptions of the true, the beautiful, the useful—or into fresh emotions of joy, and impulses of kindness and blessing to all around.

This, in fact, is but another kind or department of procreation. It is the procreation of thoughts, ideas, feelings of good-will, intuitions of truth,—that is, it is procreation on the mental and spiritual planes, instead of the physical. And *it is just as really a part of the generative function as is the begetting of physical offspring.* Indeed, it is by far the larger part. For physical procreation can ordinarily be participated in but seldom (in monogamic marriage, usually but about once in two years), and only for a temporary period in life; while mental and spiritual procreation may and should go on perpetually through all our earthly lives —yea, through all our immortal existence.

That this is no chimerical notion, but that it is largely by means of the element elaborated in the reproductive system that thoughts and emotions are generated in the mind, as well as vigor in the body, is shown by the experience probably of every intellectual person. Such persons (as a general if not universal rule, it is believed) at once become keenly sensible, *in the brain*, of the effects of seminal waste or depletion. Acute pain, with a sense of exhaustion, and indisposition to effort, are the frequent consequences, in certain temperaments, at least. The same fact is also shown by the effects of self-abuse, especially when begun in childhood, which, as is well known, often results in idiocy, physical imbecility, and premature death.

Value of Continence.

The importance, then, of seminal continence, to all who

would maintain the highest condition of vigor, in body, mind, or spirit, cannot be too strongly urged.

It is specially important to the growing youth, if he would attain the full development of all his powers; and no one can estimate the deplorable loss to our country and the world, of mental and moral as well as physical power, which results from the ruinous habits so generally prevalent among the youth of our land.

To the mature man this continence is essential to the maintenance of a high tone of vitality and of manly vigor. On it depends the degree of positive or impregnative force which characterizes the individual in his mental activities. A speaker or writer who is addicted to waste in this department, though he may talk and write with great profuseness, may expect that his words will be comparatively powerless in their effect upon others. They will lack *germinating power*. But he who retains this element, other forces being in proper balance, charges not only his words but his very atmosphere with a power which penetrates and begets new thoughts and new emotions in those with whom he comes in contact.

Reserve is the grand secret of power everywhere.

And when the fit time comes to exercise the crowning function of manhood—to impart the germ of a new immortal, who shall repeat oneself in a nobler type, to expand and rejoice through the eternities—he who has reserved his forces has at full command the elements requisite for the godlike purpose.

There are periods, probably, in the life of every one, however well regulated, when sexual desire is powerfully stirred, and when continence may seem well-nigh impossible. Such a period is the dawning of puberty in the robust youth; and others occur in later years—markedly in times of great mental and religious or spiritual awakening, like

the present era. Many imagine these to be seasons of special temptation from the Devil, while others regard them as indicative of Nature's authoritative demand for sexual communication. Some, indeed, argue that the desire, being *natural*, should *therefore* be gratified by seminal expression—that this is "a physical necessity," and repression a source of disease.

But there is a wiser view. This impulse, (for the most part, at least) when rightly interpreted, merely indicates God's or Nature's method of begetting new life, new ideas, new conceptions, new emotions, and higher development generally, *within ourselves*. If the germinal element is expended on the animal plane, the very means by which a higher interior life would be generated is lost. The mental and spiritual powers fail of the development they might otherwise reach. A tree from which large quantities of the vital sap are abstracted, will cease to put forth new and higher shoots; but if the waste is stopped, and the current thus forced upward, more elevated branches are sent forth. True, some men may waste much in the way referred to, and yet exhibit a good share of mental power; but such fall far short of what they *might* attain by the reservation of this force.

The writer's counsel, then, to those who are sorely tempted, is, Hold a firm rein, and see if something better than waste and shame may not be born of this impulse. But remember one thing which is essential to success, and that is—*turn your mind to noble and manly things*. Scorn to think chiefly of self, and selfish gratifications. *Study what good thing you can do to serve others and bless mankind.* The bent and occupancy of the mind is the thing of paramount importance. If low, groveling and selfish, it will land you in the ditch of sensualism. If elevated and noble, it will turn the current of your life-forces in higher channels, and

grander thoughts, sweeter joys, purer delights, will be born within you. The continent youth will soon find his intellect blossoming with new ideas—perhaps fresh flowers of poesy; and the maturer man will realize the birth of grander conceptions, nobler resolves, higher life-purposes.

This is a lesson from experience. And this knowledge of the priceless value of that which is so often thoughtlessly squandered will help you to self-control.

It is hardly necessary to add, that such continence, instead of being "unnatural," as many affirm, is plainly the method of Nature for man's upward progress. It is not "repression" in any objectionable sense; it is simply *wiser direction.* A stream of water, pursuing its *lowest* "natural" course, goes largely to waste; but throw across its natural channel the obstruction of a dam, and you raise it to a higher level. There its power becomes available, under "natural law," for vastly higher uses. So with the procreative force in man.* In some lands, the streams pursue their "natural" wasteful course to the ocean, leaving the banks on either side dry and parched and sterile. By opening new channels, higher up, and giving a "wiser direction" to the streams, they are made to irrigate the whole surrounding country, and thus cause the "wilderness to blossom as the rose." Indolence may object that this is "unnatural," but good sense pronounces it The Better Way.

And as to the healthfulness of continence, try it! Avoid all known excitants of lustful desire, whether physical or

* Since the foregoing was written, the author has met with the following remarkable passage from Laboulaye, which presents an unexpected corroboration:

"The passions take the place in the soul which the will does not occupy; and there may yet be discovered a process by which passion may be transmuted into intellectual fibre. This is, indeed, the last and highest possibility of human culture."

The "process" alluded to, so far as relates to the sexual or procreative passion, is believed to be that described above.

mental. Remember that it is the action of the *mind*, chiefly, that stimulates excessive seminal secretion. They who constantly excite this secretion with obscene conversation and thoughts, or stimulate it with alcoholic drinks (fitly termed "the broth of hell"), or with coffee and the flesh of erotic animals, hotly spiced, can have no true health nor ever know its meaning. Their life is but a constant fever of burning desire, as far removed from health and happiness as hell is from heaven. Whatever may be the "physical necessities" of such persons, their desires cannot surely be regarded as the healthful demands of nature.

Shall I be cited to the proverbial crustiness, sourness, and shrivelled condition, in body and mind, of "old bachelors," "old maids," and celibates in general? Not all are such. Some celibates are as generous, large-hearted, sweet-souled, sunny and robust as are the happy parents of the largest broods of children. And what makes the difference? The fact that one becomes narrow, sour, and crabbed, is proof that the life-forces are *not* expended in noble and generous thoughts, or unselfish deeds. In such cases, it will doubtless be found that the procreative element, if not wasted by self-abuse, is repressed and stagnated, instead of being turned in a higher channel, to its better uses.

3. Overthrow of Marriage.

"Your views, if generally adopted, would overthrow the marriage institution, by making wives free from the control of their husbands, and leaving little inducement for men to enter the marriage relation."

Answer. If so, then let the institution be overthrown! Human welfare, purity and progress are of far more worth than any and all institutions. The latter are of value only as they subserve human good. Any custom or ordinance, originating in the rudeness and ignorance of the past, which in this day delivers over one human being,

body and soul, to the ownership and the uses or abuses of another, deserves to be overthrown.

But it is one thing to seek a reform of marriage laws in the interest of justice, equality, purity and human improvement, and quite another to seek their abrogation in the interest of license and self-indulgence. It is the perfection of Marriage, not its overthrow, that is sought in these pages.

Marriage is not necessarily, as some would represent it, the *ownership* and control of a woman by a man, or of a man by a woman, joined for sexual intercourse, and held by external law. It may and should be a voluntary *companionship* of man and woman, equal in all rights and privileges, joined for a life of holy uses, and held by mutual affection. This is what the spirit of the age demands, and what the future will see. When men and women choose to unite in the most intimate of relations, with the views and for the high purposes indicated in the foregoing pages, instead of those which have generally prevailed in the past, it is easy to see that their mutual relations and duties will require far different regulation by the State, for the general good, than has been thought necessary, *by masculine legislators*, for the old-style marriage. What that regulation shall be, may be safely left to the good sense of men *and women*, when they shall *together* assemble to legislate upon the subject.

4. Non-increase of Population.

"These views would lead to a great falling off in the rate of increase of population—so few women are willing, or fit, if willing, to become mothers, and so few homes are fit for nurseries of children."

Answer. Be it so! The fewer children born, the better, unless they can be well-born. One-half of those now ushered into existence are sacrificed before their fifth year to the unfit conditions under which they are born; and thousands who survive are a curse to themselves, to their parents, to

the State, and to the world. What though the census-lists be not swelled every year for our boasting? If the few who *should be* born prove worthy to live in the twentieth century of the Christian era, now near at hand, the world will be the gainer.

But it is a mistake to suppose that few women wish to become mothers, if placed in suitable circumstances, treated with the respect due to the sacred office, and sustained as every mother should be by the ready sympathy of the father. The desire of maternity is the first and deepest characteristic of unperverted woman's nature. Rarely do we see a young girl without a passion for pets and dolls. The exceptions are doubtless traceable to unfavorable antenatal and other influences. It is chiefly an instinctive *desire for suitable conditions* for maternity, and consciousness of their lack, that makes women shrink from it.

Homes of the Lower Classes.

True, many of our isolated homes, among the lower classes especially, are unfit for nurseries of human beings. The wives and mothers are too often drudges of all work, slaves to the caprices and untutored desires of their husbands. The apartments are destitute of conveniences and of objects of beauty or interest. Little or no opportunity for seclusion or repose can be had, and means of self-improvement and congenial social intercourse are few. It is little if anything short of a crime to usher a human being into existence under such conditions.

We punish by law—in some of the States, at least—the man who attempts to keep and rear domestic animals without providing for them proper shelter, food and care. But what legislator has ever thought of requiring the provision of correspondingly suitable conditions for the rearing of MEN for the State? Alas! of how much more value is a beast than a man!

But it may be said that the laboring classes, to a large extent, are unable to provide such homes as are suitable.

Then they should refrain from adding to the population until they can. But the securing of comfortable and even elegant homes is not so impossible a thing as it may seem. If the laboring classes could only be instructed and persuaded—assisted, if necessary—to avail themselves of the advantages of co-operation in the matter of homes, as well as of labor, they could have convenience and elegance at less cost than they now have squalor and repulsiveness. *

"To this complexion must it come at last," and the sooner political and social economists turn their attention to efforts in this direction, the sooner will society be lifted out of the slough of filth and crime in which its base now rests. The foregoing considerations present a mighty motive to efforts in this line. Who will take the lead ?

Of course, they only, whether men or women, are fit to enter associative life, who have learned to carefully respect the rights of each other, and to strictly " mind their own business." Gossips, meddlers, scandal-mongers, and graspers of what they do not earn, would be the bane and ruin of such an enterprise—and these are not fit to be the parents of children anywhere. How dare they transmit to coming generations the vile traits which debase their own lives and poison all about them ?

Society is what the individuals who compose it make it; and the character of individuals, as we have before seen, is largely determined by pre-natal causes. How then can society be much improved until children shall be better born?

* This has been abundantly proved, it would seem, by the experiment of M. Godin, at Guise, in France, where thousands of laborers of all grades are housed in a palace of architectural beauty, supplied with every needed convenience, with separate apartments for families, but a common kitchen, laundry, nursery, school, gymnasium, library, assembly-room, and all the requisites of an improving social life, at a cost within the means of the humblest.

5. Revolutionary.

"These ideas are revolutionary. They would lead to an entire change in the customs and institutions of society."

Answer. Very good! But what then? Are they not *true?* Can you refute them, in any important particular? Do they not, at least in their general bearing, commend themselves to your reason, your conscience, and your heart? Then, brother, you know your duty in the premises. Will you do it?

"Let us follow the truth, wherever it leads." It will surely lead us in The Better Way.