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# THOUGHTS OF A PHYSICIAN,

BEING THE

SECOND SERIES OF "EVENING THOUGHTS."



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# THOUGHTS OF A PHYSICIAN.

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## SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-DECEPTION.

Two men may be alike in habitually failing to act up to the promptings of their higher and better life, but so differ in self-knowledge as to be different characters. The one, with clear self-knowledge, knows with painful accuracy the amount of his deviations, regrets them constantly, and does not amend. Evil inclinations are too strong for his sense of duty, and his will becomes the servant of his baser nature. He does not resist, although he knows he shall suffer for it. He does not attempt to palliate himself to himself; he is not self-deceived; he understands his weakness much better than his friends know it; and if regret, and shame, and melancholy, and remorse, were sufficient punishment, he would expiate his faults even here. But, with all

this self-watchfulness and self-knowledge, he makes no amendment. Indulgence, not self-denial, has been the rule of his life so long, that he cannot break the iron chain with which he is darkly bound.

The other sins in the same manner habitually against his conscience, but excuses it, having always some convenient theory to justify himself to himself. Any doubts and misgivings as to his line of conduct are not met by looking the matter boldly in the face, and with cool judgment pronouncing self to be guilty, as in the other case, but the doubts are stifled by some plausibilities. If there is a strong will and powerful feelings, and a speculative intellect, and a constant religious sense, the peculiar religious theory which is adopted will be that which fits most easily and gracefully the permanent defect, and so hides it. Indeed, in some cases it may not be difficult to prognosticate from the besetting sin the particular religious system which will be embraced, or at any rate to trace the particular form of belief to the mental idiosyncrasy. Such persons cannot bear to be thought wrong (even by themselves), and are singular contrasts to the similarly erring

one who never shirks from dragging his failing into the light of his own consciousness, and holding it up to his own miserable and unavailing contemplation. Both have their own idols, which they equally worship in the dark dens of their own hearts; but one thrusts out the image, when he has sacrificed to it, into the glaring daylight, and sees and knows that it is a false one, and that it has disturbed his worship at the altar of the Invisible; whilst the other keeps his idol in its shrine, and lets the sunlight and the moonlight fall upon it from without, through windows which he has himself stained with rich colours, and tries to persuade himself that there is so much beauty in the form of his image in his coloured light, that it surely must partake of the Divine.

In both men there is weakness of will and strength of desire, but with self-ignorance there is self-conceit in the one, and, with self-knowledge, there is humility in the other; so that, in the eyes of those who know him best he may be the object of the most sympathetic regard, with the sanguine hope that help will ultimately come, and that a mind so really humble, so jealously self-watchful, so aware of its own weakness, may be even suddenly

#### 4 SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-DECEPTION.

illumed by that Light which will show it where it can get strength—even by means of this very weakness.

“ Unless above himself he can erect himself,  
How poor a thing is man !”

## OBSERVATION DEVELOPED IN SOCIAL CULTURE.

ATTENTION to others being an essential point in good breeding, a habit of observation is a prominent part of the earliest training of the highly cultivated. The child is taught to attend to what others wish, never to hurt nor to ruffle another's feelings, and ever to practise the divine art of kindness. This social art—the business of life with so many who are raised above its money-getting cares—as it requires a rapid appreciation of the effect upon another of what is done or said, demands a quick, fine, constant, and true observation. And such a power may be transmitted; for the children of parents so cultivated have often an intuitive quickness in divining thoughts, feelings, and motives, which is not often gained in other classes by the common observation of a long life. As a rule, the highly cultivated among the highest classes are better and more rapid judges of character than the middle classes ;

their observation of mankind—the only means of knowing men—is more practised; and this has an excellent effect on themselves. The *true* and highest specimens of their order have a candour and honesty, a simplicity, and genuine kindness of character, which, combined with ease and finish of manner, and a quiet attention to and quick intuition of the feelings of others, are the distinctive characteristics of the completest social culture. And for this high culture truthful observation is essential. It is Lord Bacon's physical philosophy (not the moral philosophy of his Essays) applied to the real social improvement of man. For such honest observation is the instantaneous detective of all cant, of every shade of affectation, of every disguise which vanity assumes, of meanness in any garb; and hence those who are brought up under such inspection are the least affected in their phraseology or movement, the simplest in their words, and have the least "nonsense" of any classes, except, perhaps, the labouring poor. To be thoroughly exposed to such scrutiny is a valuable schooling in truth and honesty, and must be useful to all those who practise medicine, which, above all other practical arts, requires a

scrupulously honest nature. It is a vulgar opinion that success in medicine may be owing to manner, address—even to lumbug. No true success in curing disease, nor any secure reputation, can be founded on the false. He who has no higher motive, and he who has a higher motive which is inoperative, may find it useful to recognize fully that he is among quick observers; that his windings and turnings will all be seen and perhaps talked about; that nothing will go down like candid, clear, and modest honesty; that instead of losing influence by stating the case as it really is, he will gain by it. Not that he should give an incautions opinion, for that will be remembered, but that he should be straightforward and simple, and without a shade of ruse, finesse, or any form of deceit. For some act as if their chief object in giving a medical opinion was to save themselves from committing themselves, by surrounding their opinion with loopholes of escape, as if these wriggings were not seen. The cuttle-fish obscures himself by his own ink-shed, but the black cloud is very visible.

When the practice of social observation is made more universally a branch of the culture



of the mind, honesty must more and more thrive. Observation is the mode of detecting what is false and discovering what is true, and is alike useful socially in the intercourse of men, and scientifically in the investigation of physical laws.

This well-bred social honesty is, like every true thing, in accordance with Christian teaching. A simplicity and truthful sincerity in conversation is attributed to the Spirit of God within the man, and is contrasted with its opposite, which is called "fleshly wisdom"—which must be that mixture of craft, secrecy, and selfishness, that vulgar social diplomacy, a complex entangled false art of life, in which many act as if they thought the open, honest course of life was impossible.

But this true social observation and quick facility of acting on the feelings of others, may be turned by a malicious spirit to base uses, for it gives the power of inflicting refined varieties of pain as well as of imparting delicate pleasures. The really consistent gentle spirit, in addition to this refined culture, must have the mind of Christ.



## ON SOME VARIETIES OF MENTAL TRIAL.

FOR minds not logical by nature, nor trained to severe strict ratiocination, nor book-minded, what temptation can there be from all those doubts springing out of apparent discrepancies in revelation which infest the man of an investigating understanding and of a contentious arguementative turn, and of literary tastes and habits? If the mind cannot think consecutively and argue logically, or detect differences, its trials will not be in that direction. The struggle may not be between the Understanding and the Reason, but between the Reason and the Senses. That "fair round belly, with good capon lined," or that jowl and great back head, or that juicy under-lip, may be outward signs that their possessors' trials lie in a lower direction. They may be perfectly free from intellectual doubts; their creed may be in strictly orthodox phrase; they may never utter an opinion in religion which is not

worded in the fixed dialect of their party; their head may never disturb them, unless it aches. But is the stomach as free from blame? Is it among books or before dishes and decanters that the trial of their faith fails? Or from organization, habits, sex, these coarser sensualities may be inoperative; but are there no more refined trials of the same kind, though differing in degree, which tend to put the more sensitive critic to the proof of what he really is? If the nerves are delicate, the outward senses sensitive as butterflies' antennæ to the finest impulses from without, the coarser excitements give no pleasure. The scales of the analytical chemist, which are so exquisitely balanced that the beam turns by the very dust, cannot weigh heavy bodies. Trials are not removed, not even lessened, as "refinement does not alter the nature of sin by robbing it of its coarseness." The eye, the ear, the touch may be the means of painful proof to one for whom the table has no attractions, or whose head is never disturbed by sceptical intellectual doubts. Or another's nerves may be of harder firmer texture, less easily moved, and rather the channels of his will in acting on

the external world, than the means by which he is impressed and victimized by external influences. He works from within outwards, and is not worked upon from without inwards. The hammer, not the anvil. There is more iron in his composition than clay (clay still, whether porcelain clay or brick earth). He may be in that period of life, in which his strong energies are all called out. His clear practical head is very fit for the business of life, but incapable of disturbance by notions of myths, and such speculative refinements, more difficult for him to accept than the facts they explain; and ingenious line-drawn explanations of mysteries and miracles on natural principles make no impression: for with us English—partly owing to natural liberty of speech and free discussions—the value of mere clever argument in the determination of truth is not over-estimated. A news-room table furnishes daily proofs that either side may be most plausibly supported. Whately, in disproving by argument the existence of Buonaparte, struck that kind of blow at rationalism which suits a clear-headed, active, and humorous people. If such a man doubts, the close reasonings of Butler suit

him ; for in actual life he acts on probabilities to the best of his judgment, and with success ; and he sees no reason why such evidence should not also influence his actions and belief in reference to the other world also ; for, in the business of this life, if he hesitated to act until he was perfectly certain he was right in every respect, he would not act at all. But, although neither harassing intellectual doubts nor bodily sensations, coarser or more delicate, are his stumbling-blocks, he does not escape trial. Hardness, not softness, is his failing. He errs in sternness, severity, a strict, harsh, rather merciless judgment of others, especially from their neglect of those virtues which he habitually practises—as honesty, temperance, rigid virtue. Satire or contempt for weakness, rather than pity, are the mental qualities which his nerves and head encourage, and which tempt him to disregard the diviner part, whose essence is love, and whose adornments and blessings are gentleness and humility. His praiseworthy activity also may become his temptation, by leading him gradually, and apparently by necessity, to such complete and constant occupation, that no time is left for higher contem-

plations; and at last even his religion is carried out in a business or trading spirit. Occasionally the two last varieties of temperament meet in the same man; the sensitive nervous organization in a frame capable of persistent energetic stern action—the organization of the artist with the iron will and masculine bodily energy of the man of command. Buonaparte seems to have possessed such an organization. He fainted from sensitive excitement; but with these sensitive nerves he had muscular and vital organs which could undergo enormous fatigue and long-continued application, equal for work (as Talleyrand found) to any four men. With such an organization, carrying him up to an eminence where he could gratify his despotic will unchecked, his special temptations must have been such as feebler natures cannot realize.

How can the Hamlet nature—"remiss, most generous, and free from all contriving"—experience any trial from the same motives, circumstances, and trains of thought or feeling which beset the sharp and narrow worldly man, who never acts without a personal motive, and who, in his short-sighted policy, never forgets his little selfishnesses and

self-seekings; who has "no speculation in his eye," no enthusiasm, no zeal, no public spirit? And though the shrewd one can estimate the deficiencies in practice between the aspirations and the shortcomings of the higher soul, yet he cannot enter into that state of mind which sees clearly the high and difficult path, but lacks the energy and perseverance to climb it; and who goes through life, or part of it, accurately weighing his own faults, detecting them acutely, and miserably self-conscious of his deficiencies, and yet without the vigorous will to amend them. It is the painting of this mighty contest fought unseen in that noble mind—

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's,  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The observed of all observers;

which constitutes the great attraction of Hamlet. A prince, gifted with "noble and most sovereign reason," utterly despises himself for his weakness in action, feeling that he is "a dull and muddy-mettled rascal," "an ass" in deeds, however wise he talks or philosophically generalizes. He knows his "capability and godlike reason," but that it rests in him unused. He feels that he has all the excitements of his reason and his blood to stir him



to act; that examples gross as earth exhort him; yet that same craven scruple of thinking too precisely on the event—though he knows the thought, if quartered, would be one part wisdom and three parts coward—lets all sleep. This contrast between the ideal and the practical, the painful struggles between the two, the self-knowledge detecting the weakness, and the truthfulness holding up to the scorn of the nobler self all the defects of the lower nature, are the incidents in this mental battle-piece which give it its deep interest to so many, who, in a feebler degree and on a humbler stage, undergo the same conflict. This noble candour in owning failings, joined with the honest insight in detecting them, like all forms of magnanimity, must be attractive. The feebler soul often fears by an admission of weakness to let himself down in the estimation of another, and is constantly on the alert to hide his deficiencies, and to seem what he would wish to be; when the higher and more generous nature admits the very failing which the other endeavoured fruitlessly to conceal, and by the confession itself mounts at once to the high places of regard.

It is a good lesson for the critic to look at other men's failings as the trials exactly adapted to the requirements of each individual, precisely suited, if rightly used, to the improvement of that one character; and although the critical observer may not fall into the same error which he sees and condemns, yet he may be sure he has his own form of imperfection quite as evident to other lookers-on. "Some temptations (wrote a wise bishop) may pass unheeded by; against others we may find ourselves armed by education; but if we severally discover that in some one point we are each of us unable to resist, this one point will compel us to have recourse to some superior aid; and, convinced of our weakness, we shall be induced to seek for strength where it may be abundantly found."—T. VOWLER SHORT.



## THE HEREDITARY POSSESSORS OF THE EARTH.

THAT the meek (that is, the gentle-hearted) shall inherit the earth, is one of the blessings which Christianity promises; and is it not becoming more and more realized? Is it the hard men who are now in hereditary possession of the lands of this fair England? Are not the most gentle-hearted of her sons and daughters the real possessors of her soil by inheritance? For the promise is that the gentle-spirited shall *inherit* the earth, not *gain* it. It is often gained, that is, wrested, from others, or purchased, by fraud, by might, by strength in those active faculties which lead to acquisition. Strong, stern, coarse, or wily, and always grasping ambition wins the broad acres; but who inherits them?—the gentle daughter, the tamer son. For how often does the strong-willed man marry one whose nature is his opposite—as femininely submissive and tractable as he is arbitrary and independent,

and who transmits (as mothers so often do) her mental characteristics to her offspring. No one who is brought into contact with all classes will deny that the gentle-hearted are at the summit of the social scale. In those quiet mansions embowered in or overlooking green parks dotted with stately trees, the law of kindness and consideration is most often found to be the characteristic of those lives which are apparently and outwardly the least dependent on the good will of others. The village poor, or the small country tradesmen, have a fine tact in discovering at once a gentleman or gentle woman in the true sense of the term. Those whose attention to the feelings of another depends on whom that other is, and is not a life-long habit which has become the law of their nature, expose their true character to those socially beneath them, by exhibiting unmistakably that the stuff they are made of is veneered and not the genuine wood. Plutocracy would be the ruin of all social grace if the inheritors of wealth inherited also the acquisitive spirit which heaped up the wealth in huge heaps. To think of others before himself, to study their wishes habitually before his own, to abhor what is selfish,

grasping, uncandid, and unkind, are rules of social training which, if carried out in business, would materially interfere with what is called success. But the son was born to spend, not to acquire, and has, as a rule, none of that early training in acquisition which was the secret of his father's wealth; so that in two or three generations (which are proverbially requisite) that spirit of trade which "consists in looking at all things through the medium of the market, and in estimating the worth of all pursuits and attainments by their marketable value" (COLERIDGE), is replaced, or should be, by a higher standard.

Exceptions there are, of course—men in business of the noblest liberality, noblemen of sordid avarice—but there are enough examples of the inheritance of land by the gentle-hearted, and there is enough in the epithet itself, to intimate that this apparent paradox is the law of true progress, marking that the leaven of Christianity is working; and indicating the tone of mind which shall be universal when God's will is done on earth as it is in Heaven.

If this gentle spirit has the promise attached to it of inheriting the earth, if this is the secure tenure of hereditary possessions,

then would pride, haughtiness, hardness of heart, and other forms of ungentleness, contribute largely to the decline and fall of some families, and the descent of lands in other lines or to strangers. As these lands were held by no strength of their possessors, who had no recognized worldly capacities for gaining or adding to them, but simply by the power of gentleness, an opposite spirit would break the entail and show the occupants that they mistook their real position, and did not recognize that their real title-deeds were humility and meekness. This is a necessary inference from the promise in this beatitude, and in accordance with that inspired proverb that pride cometh before a fall. Considering the influence of the manners, habits, and dispositions of the highest classes on those beneath them, this law, which places the gentlest in the highest places, seems exactly adapted to spread the lowly Christian virtues. Those who are recreants to their order by ungentleness are as injurious to the state as the coarse revolutionary demagogue, for they undermine the foundations of their class, whose only strength is in their gentleness. Who, on looking at a vast crowd suddenly

drawn together in a city by a fire or any other temporary centre of attraction, and on roughly estimating the huge amount of voluntary physical force in this mass of men, has not thought with wonder that these, the bodily strong, possess nothing, few even calling their dull dark mean tenements in close narrow alleys and yards their own; but that the rich landscape stretching away on every side, with its fields and hedgerows, and distant plains, and woody heights, and blue hills, melting off into the remote sky, are the possessions of the few, of the weak, of the gentle. How is it, he may have asked himself, that these strong multitudes do not unite as one, and share amongst themselves the goodly spoil? What invisible influence renders them powerless to use their united strength to their own apparently immediate advantage? What gives them that respect for law over force, for right over might? Some power higher than their own must influence the many to submit, and must give the power of possession to the few. Christianity solves the difficulty when it shows that the meek are to inherit the earth, and that this gentleness of theirs, which appears so weak, is their truest strength. If, therefore,

they hold the earth through a Divine power, which makes it their inheritance as a law, the security against those violent and sudden changes in the social state, which are so fatal to those who possess the earth, is the cultivation of the higher Christian life, of the spiritual graces of love, gentleness, truth, justice, peace, and charity. That this has been the security of England cannot be doubted. This meekness is not softness nor effeminacy. Our great Example united with a gentleness which showed itself in infinite consideration and tenderness to the erring and the weak, the highest courage, the most authoritative intellectual power, entire fearlessness of men, stern denunciation and exposure of eant, the strong endurance to live a hard life of poverty and of self-denial for others, and to die for them the most painful death. This gentleness is a branch of self-command, of that taming-down of arbitrary temper, opinion, passions, of that despotic will which indulges them regardless of others. And this self-conquest is the characteristic of the highest and most refined culture, the farthest removed from the state of savages, or from those dangerous inhuman classes in all great civilized communities which



are but little less disciplined than savages, though kept by the outward checks which civilization imposes, in somewhat better order.

As a state of society approaches when the will of God will be done on earth, the desire and striving for acquisition must of necessity diminish, and the disproportion of possessions be gradually more and more equalized to the real well-being and happiness of all.

## HAPPINESS.

THOSE great poets whose writings are most cherished, as they are the outpourings of the highest, deepest, completest souls, have only attained this earthly perfection by the stern discipline of the affections through which they have passed. Unless the poet has dived himself into the depths of sorrow, he cannot depict them; unless he has been overwhelmed by the deep floods of passion, he cannot represent dramatically the profoundest emotions. You may admire the novel of the young artist for his descriptive pictures of the vividest colour, or softest beauty; the story itself may be of consummate skill; but if he has never himself suffered uneasiness of heart he cannot move yours. Whereas some unknown woman living in remote country solitudes, in an out-of-the-way village, away from all so-called society, with no varied experience of mankind, and no knowledge of the world, but with an



observant eye, and a tender, fiery heart which has been sorely tried, carries you away with her. She has lived and loved, and can dissect her heart's ultimate fibres, and can thrill yours. In common intercourse, how full and rich and wise and companionable is the heart which has suffered much and improved thereby. It is this deeper wisdom which is the true compensation for the lost beauty and charm of youth, giving a ripe soul-beauty which is permanent. If, then, the most painful kind of sorrows improves the soul, if those sufferings to which in intensity and distress no bodily pains are comparable, build up the human heart, and give a developement of character which nothing but such sore experience can bestow; what becomes of the intellectual doubt which may flit bat-like across the twilight of our mind, that pain, sorrow, and misery are either a riddle in God's earth, or inconsistent with the idea of a God of goodness? Feeling that comfort and bodily ease are pleasant things, we frame our little theory, that happiness, by which is usually meant bodily ease and delight, should be the lot of all, or at least of the greatest number. But Christianity teaches us that the perfection of

the human spirit is the object of life, and all experience confirms the general law that the full exercise and trial and proof of the powers both of the body and mind—physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual—are necessary for their complete developement. There is much attendant happiness; the tried soul may be even compensated by higher joys; but, as a matter of fact, labour, not happiness, is the law of life. Happiness may or may not be one of the circumstances, but it is not the end or object of this existence on earth.

No one, probably, who has successfully accomplished a high work of art or of literature, who has become a discoverer in science, or who has applied its laws to works of practical usefulness, looks back at the intense labour which he has undergone with a feeling of anger, or even of wonder, at the dearness by which his success has been won. If he has scorned delights and lived laborious days, he is, on the retrospect, well satisfied to have purchased his success at such a price. Is a man, then, to fancy that his moral developement is to be acquired with a less sacrifice than his intellectual growth; that Humility, Patience, Prudence, Unselfishness, Sympathy with all

forms of Distress, Generosity, Magnanimity, Self-restraint, Faith, Hope, Charity, and whatever other virtues are proved and perfected by the severe and painful moral discipline of life, are to be established and confirmed without that practical trial which the powers of the intellect require for the completion of a work of genius, or even of one of practical usefulness? The successful student, the artist, the mechanist, may look back with regret, but it is at the hours which he has devoted to bodily ease and gratification, not to those in which his immediate comfort and pleasure were sacrificed to his distant and laboriously sought object. And at that period, if it ever comes—and it has come to many in the closing hours of life—when the purpose of his whole existence has suddenly become clear to a man, he may see that the painful passages of his life were the seed-times of his most permanent and valuable acquisitions. “*Horas non numero nisi serenas*” will not be the motto of him who endeavours to mark the stages of his own spiritual growth.

## WORDS WITHOUT THOUGHTS.

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

NEITHER do they go to the hearts nor to the convictions, and not even to the fancy, of our fellow-men. In all matters which concern duty, one recoils with a certain instinctive repugnance from one who is not talking from his inward experience, but is repeating what he has learned is the right thing to be said. He who asserts his own individuality by uttering what he really feels and thinks and observes, and not a mere formula borrowed from others, has a freshness and originality which charm more than acquired knowledge, a persuasion more irresistible than close logic. Such a talker must, it is true, feel and observe and reflect on his feelings and on what he sees or hears, and have the power of expressing his thoughts in words—no mean faculties. But the barrenest silence is more agreeable socially

than the most fluent discharge of mere words not founded on personal feeling or thinking, or individual observation, or at least on acquired knowledge thoroughly digested into the substance of the talker's mind. How much more pleasant as home companions are those gifted with this judicious silence than the others.

William von Humboldt mentions his acquaintance with a lady who had received a first-rate education : she could read with ease the Greek and Latin writers ; she was well versed in modern languages ; she married, and although she kept up her information she never neglected a household duty ; and yet, with all these accomplishments, she never wrote a letter worth reading. On the other hand, those who, without any such amount of acquired knowledge, yet are gifted with an observant eye, a warm heart, a lively fancy, and the power of reflecting on their outward observations and inner world, are the most charming of letter-writers, the most agreeable of companions. With these there is an individuality of character which is of the nature of genius, a real self-originating action of the mind, not a simple reception and dis-

tribution of the products of other men's intellects. The talk of the little child upon whom this new outer world is making its vivid impressions for the first time, and calling out its young feelings and innocent thoughts, more deeply interests than the copious outpouring of acquired knowledge.

To distinguish between what we really feel, and what we think we ought to feel, becomes of importance when the errors produced by confounding the two are reflected on. Think of growing grey in the belief that we really feel the truths of Christianity, when we only are talking or thinking about feeling them. Consider that it is possible to profess a religion, the essence of which is love and humility and self-sacrifice and self-control, without being able to bear an affront, with an irascible temper, with a sensitiveness to fancied wrongs, with harshness to inferiors and cringing to superiors, with a love of outward adornments, with an estimation of others according to their wealth, with a pleasure in repeating tales to the discredit of the absent, with no power to refrain from little sensualities, and with selfishness in trifles.



## USEFULNESS OF AN INVALID.—DR. ANDREW COMBE.

THE well-known saying of Dr. Johnson, "We can be useful no longer than while we are well," was not true of the late Dr. Andrew Combe, and, further, it was his own disease which caused him to be so extensively useful. Disease of the lungs withdrew him from the active practice of his profession, and compelled him to live by rule in order to live at all. Living by rule he lived ten years, and became fully accomplished for working out the purpose of his life—the translation of the scientific language of medical science regarding the structure and functions of the body and the preservation of health, into simple, clear, common language, which all could understand.

He was well educated in medical science. He practised medicine upon others for many years, and he finished his education by carrying out and watching the effect of his knowledge upon himself. The knowledge he thus

gained was more real and practical than any thoroughly healthy man could attain. His clear Scotch common sense commended itself to the general mind, so that he could not write too much for the public. And yet he wrote volume after volume of carefully considered matter, with disorganized lungs, which would have been a valid excuse for indolence. He is gone. That tall spare figure, with its bright mild and benignant eye, and manner modest, yet firm and self-controlled—a man who struck the observer at once as above the ordinary stamp—is gone. But his good sense, his self-control, his temperance, still influence. Mothers study his book on infaney. Invalids read attentively his reasons for moderation, and discipline in habits, and often attend to this quiet printed advice when they would disregard spoken words, and live longer and more comfortably and usefully. When a man so fitted by nature and education had been withdrawn from active duties by illness, the common stock reflection would have been that it was a sad thing. But this kind of pity is constantly misplaced. His ten years of disease and self-discipline have been worth many a life of healthy activity. His usefulness



depended on his suffering. It could not probably have been purchased at a less cost. The expression of his face, to a casual observer, showed that he bore what he had to endure, with manly fortitude. There was no querulousness, no discontent, no peevishness, no disappointment in the lines of that face. He was in a region above complaint. He knew accurately the amount of his disease, which was very considerable; he understood as well, the conditions on which his life was tenable; he quietly and firmly accepted them. He submitted, but not in idleness, or with some self-indulgent occupation as idle because purposeless. He used the talent which had been entrusted to him, and with abundant reward.

By regarding all painful events which happen to one's self as so much necessary discipline of our life-education, as so much experience of the most useful kind, and considering all the circumstances, to be obtained on no easier terms, we deprive those events of their power to give us any lasting pain. And until this lesson of the real use and purpose of life is learned, we are suffering the pain of experience without its profit—blundering on and floundering about without real progress. "So

long," said Rahel von Varnhagen (who had learned wisdom through much suffering), "as we do not take even the injustice which is done us, and which forces the burning tears from us—so long as we do not take even this as just and right—we are in the thickest darkness, without dawn."

"*I can bear an affront,*" said an old devout-minded widow, who was asked if she could put up with a fellow-lodger of uncertain temper; and seventy years of hard poverty were not wasted in attaining such an enviable condition. That short sentence, simply coming from her old yet unwithered heart, was the fruit of a life well spent in attaining such true wisdom. It was the bearing all things of St. Paul's charity; the ripeness, the maturity, the highest state of the Christian life. It sinks into the memory like a sentence from the New Testament, coming fresh from the heart; and it goes to the heart, and is the seed of good.

## EFFECT OF ILLNESS ON THE CHARACTER.—

DR. CHALMERS.

DR. CHALMERS' memoirs supply a prominent and decisive example of the direct effect of illness in improving the mind.

In his twenty-ninth year he had a long and severe illness. Before this his character was strongly marked with intellectual pride. There were, to be sure, certain grounds for this self-consciousness of real superiority over his fellows. He had a fervent, enthusiastic temperament, an inborn energy, which kept his intellect in full and incessant play, and this intellect was of great power and well cultivated; and as he was by profession a Presbyterian minister, in a small town in Scotland—a country where there is such a general religious education amongst all classes, with a singular earnest contentiousness on points of doctrine—he must have been thrown into

collision and close companionship with much coolly calculating worldly prudence, and with no small quantity of flat shallow dulness, and with many varieties of unimaginative prosaic prejudice. His orthodoxy was suspected (and rightly so, it seemed) by many who must have been intellectually his inferiors, and the dust-feathers from the wings of his fine fancy must often have been rubbed off by the rude handling of zealous practical men. That under such circumstances he was, as he confesses, severely critical, readily provoked by injustice to himself and by slight affronts, intolerant of those with whom he could not sympathize, given to sudden outbreaks of temper, whilst anxious for praise and panting after literary reputation, was natural enough. No more trying situation could be found. Hot and cold, moist and dry, sunshine and darkness, could not be more opposed than this fiery-hearted untamed young minister of Kilmany and the mass of his hearers. But a severe illness of a year's duration, with the solitude and serious thoughts accompanying it, changed him. It humbled him; it lowered his intellectual pride, so that he simply accepted the great facts of Christianity

as facts, and no longer (misled by a false philosophy) considered that a clear and consistent theory in explanation of those facts was necessary to his full belief in them. It softened also the pride of his heart, so that he became affectionately loved and deeply respected by all his parishioners; and in the accomplishment of this, how infinitely tolerant and self-denying must such a nature have become. The Christian virtue of humility was seldom more required and seldom more strikingly attained; for what are the bodily discomforts of self-inflicted torments, of fasts and vigils in solitary cells or desert hermitages, compared with the calm and serene endurance by a quick enthusiastic temperament of social asperities, the abstinence from intellectual sympathies, and the dry and meagre diet of the narrow controversialist, of the dull pedant, or of the inveterately prejudiced, eaten with such forbearing goodwill as to be converted into wholesome sustenance? To change his religious views and to acknowledge his errors publicly, must alone have been great sacrifices for such a nature. The change of character was not sudden, as his diaries show; he had hard struggles and many falls; but by humi-

lity and self-denial his nobler nature was gradually confirmed. His illness gave him time for reflection; it showed him that the real purpose of life was not reputation as a preacher or fame as a writer—though both followed as consequences when ignored as motives—and that he had industriously wasted much of his powers. For four months he laboured hard, by close watchfulness and by diarizing his faults, to attain a higher moral state; and his failures in this attempt showed him experimentally that he was himself unequal to the task; that he must seek a higher influence; that he must simply trust in Christ's power. This trust gave him gradually the self-conquest he wanted. The previous faults of his character became, under this higher influence, the source of its strength. Great self-confidence, strong convictions, a powerful will, an inflexible purpose, a natural enthusiasm fed by unquenchable inner fires, a manly, honest, fearless nature, uninjured by conventionalism, not too much tamed by early contact with polished society, was solid stuff enough from which to make a man. Genial, social, full of deep tenderness, capable of life-enduring attachment, loyal, patriotic, it



wanted but humility; and this it got from Heaven, and by means of severe illness. That such mental changes in illness are partly owing to physical causes is certain. That buoyant condition of vigorous youth which feels life in every limb, from the highly oxygenated and pure blood flowing through its arteries, and the exuberant nervous force of sensitive and voluntary motion, unexhausted and feeling inexhaustible, fosters self-confidence, self-dependence, pride, and is oftener allied to passion than to true tenderness. But let this high vitality of the blood, this full nervous power, be diminished by illness, and a few weeks may effect the discipline of years. The feeling of bodily weakness and the consciousness of dependence on others, the substitution of uneasiness and restlessness and exhaustive excitement for that abiding sense of well-being and bodily comfort which is physical happiness, tend to lessen hardness of head and of heart, to abate stoical independence, and to awaken true tenderness; whilst the withdrawal from all outward activities gives time for reflection, and the prospect of the actual possibility of death favours a practical application of religion to



the man's own circumstances, which tends to convert airy and curious speculations into deep realities. In this instance the illness, although severe and long, appears not to have impaired his organization. Throughout his subsequent life he seems to have been equal to long-continued and vigorous and exciting exertion. The flood of that vehement eloquence which poured from his lips and carried away his hearers unresistingly, as by a mountain torrent, his power of long-continued and concentrated attention in composition, his parochial labours and his public exertions, show the strong mind in the strong body, and prove the great vital organs to have been unimpaired.

Not that he (or any other man) attained suddenly or slowly a perfect victory over the besetting faults of his nature, so that he could rest on his oars and complacently look back at the rapids he had traversed. Sixteen years afterwards, when he had passed through the experiences of a husband and a father, when he had gained literary fame as well as inhaled the incense of crowded auditories hanging breathless upon his fervid oratory; when he had tasted the full enjoyments of success, and

was an acknowledged master-mind of his country, with the power as well as the will of devoting himself with untiring labour to the cause of God; yet still he was plagued and mortified by his conscious imperfections, and, with the rare candour of the strong man, chronicled them in his diary, not in general or vague terms, but definitely. He confessed his impatience under the crosses of his daily and domestic history, his grievous dereliction from the meekness of wisdom when soured by the perversity of his own household, his want of positive love for those amongst whom he moved and talked in society, his social mortifications, his inability to keep up communion with God all the day long, his too great love of praise, his wish for attention and impatience at not receiving it when due. There was no chance of such an honest self-investigator not having enough faults to keep him very humble. Lookers-on, biographers, see nothing but what is of marked excellence; but their hero's heart is sorely tried with all the weaknesses of common men.

## THE SEVERITY OF LIFE.

THE oft quoted aphorism of Shakespeare, that "the course of true love never did run smooth," admits of a wider generalization, for it is also true of the course of all other important passages in man's life. Investigate the memoirs of the practised statesman, the man of original discovery in science, the victorious general, the judge, or any other of the more prominent and favoured of mankind who have vigorously pursued one course to a conclusion—successful beyond their sanguine early hopes and anticipations—as to whether as a whole it ran smooth, or if any long periods of it were calm and untroubled?

"I was," said Goethe to Eckermann, "ever esteemed one of fortune's chiefest favourites, nor will I complain or find fault with the course my life has taken; yet truly there has been nothing but toil and care, and I may say that, in all my seventy-five years, I have

never had a month of genuine comfort. It has been the perpetual rolling of a stone, which I have always had to raise anew."

Life is not a smooth current. It is severer work than any untried man, or men, (or nation as Guizot has well remarked,) give it credit for. It is not only the lover who has to suffer the reverse of his pleasure, to feel the chill rain and wind and shade as well as the sunshine and summer breezes, but every man also as he passes through the stages of his life from its maturity to its decay. Those who by innate wisdom or by wise instruction accept life as it is, and not as they wish it to be, fare the best on their journey. Those who try to shirk its present difficulties, who shrink from its immediate labours, who are bent on ease or self-enjoyment, in the end, like lazy people, take or suffer the most pains. There are some invalids who, intent upon shutting out all external sources of discomfort, grow so morbidly sensitive that they increase a hundred-fold the causes of discontent and annoyance instead of diminishing them. Loud sounds and bright lights and abrupt movements disturb them, and, by gradually shutting themselves up in stillness and in darkness,

the very light of day and its human sounds and domestic movements become torments. Throw open their shutters in their closed and gloomy rooms, where they lie relaxed in bed; and the common sun, the air, the sky, instead of opening Paradise, are the opening of Hades. And the mind may be treated in the same way with a like result. By avoiding carefully all the causes which somewhat rudely exercise it, and when rightly used, discipline it, it becomes so feeble and susceptible, that trifles, such as the wholesome healthy mind takes no notice of, are the occasions of painful agitation.

The sound strong mind loves a difficulty. It is its normal stimulus to full exertion, and its powers are never felt to be wholly called out, until it has some new and formidable obstacle to overcome. Such a mind has consciously or unconsciously acquired this state by setting itself to surmount difficulties, however small, until it has gained the habit of overreaching, and enjoys its sense of power in greater victories. Whereas the mind which has weakly yielded to slight necessities of exertion—which has always rather delayed its decisions, even in such things, than be at the

trouble of immediate decision and action, which even chronicles small beer by proxy—instead of possessing that enjoyment in the exercise of power which belongs to the healthy sound soul, finds absolute annoyance or pain in reflecting, judging, and acting, in the minor affairs of every day. Like the pampered body, it has made miseries out of the common elements of life, and thus by avoiding work has increased it. Many a one spends life as the odd minutes and half-hours are too often spent when waiting for an appointment or when exercised by domestic unpunctuality. The man of trained habits occupies that time fully with whatever business or employment is in hand, and it passes quickly and pleasantly. The lazy or the half-trained think it but half an hour and not worth working in, and it consequently lingers tediously. How slow and listless and dull is a life or a portion of it spent like this half-hour, without a definite end or aim, dreary in the spending, painfully unsatisfactory in the retrospect. The mistake in both is the shrinking from immediate exertion—the wish to pass the time in doing nothing decisively. A light book and a soft easy chair are very well as a relaxation,



but soft habits will make the mind as soft as the seat, and much weaker than the book. To work resolutely against the grain, so necessary "to take the knots out of the mind," brings its great reward. Self-indulgence has its immediate pleasure, which from its nature is incapable of long continuance; the indulgence may be continued, but the pleasurable sensation does not last; but strenuous exertion, and especially self-denial—not for itself, but for some right object—brings enjoyment of a higher and more lasting kind, though not so immediate. It brings power and the sense of it and the consequences of it, but self-indulgence has no future except regret or remorse.

The illusive view of life in the distance—that beautifully painted vision of the future which is natural to the young—seems to be one of many similar provisions by which the entrances into the most serious and arduous and often painful passages or acts of life, are adorned and vivified and graced with the most seductive but fading colours. It is as if the high excitement of the imagination, or the warm exaltation of the feelings, or the inspiration of a burning enthusiasm, or the flatteries



of delicious hopes, were absolutely essential to induce mankind to enter upon long courses of stern and necessary duties, which they would be too cowardly to commence, did they foresee in cool blood, the disappointments, the difficulties, the anxieties, the labour, the care, and the sorrow which must be encountered. Youth will have its day-dreams and the maturer man his temporary illusions; but when they are passed, the severity of life and the unevenness of its course should be taught and expected; for few, probably, suffer more than those who fancy that life as a whole is intended to be a scene of mere enjoyment, or that any permanent pleasure can be obtained except by the strict performance of its duties.

## CASTLES IN THE AIR.

HE who habitually builds castles in the air, indulges his indolent fancies by assuming that he has gained the possession of that which he wishes, and has only to dispose of his acquisitions as he likes. The earnest practical thinker may look forward to the same pleasure in the enjoyment, but his mental powers are immediately bent on the best steps for obtaining the hoped consummation, and when this decision is cautiously made, he at once puts his thoughts into the shape of actions. He promptly and decisively realizes his airy thinkings, and thus gives them a solidity they had not before. This practical habit of mind leads him to a sobriety of wishes and aims. It has been well said by a French writer that no one in action is so rash as a timid visionary, for he never really purposed to realize his desires. Whereas he who has a distinct aim which he fully intends to compass, never

indulges in visions of the impossible, but carries out firmly and consistently his more moderate projects. The other may deceive others who give him a false credit for an ability to carry out his expressed wishes, which power he does not possess. Incapability is deeply marked in his character, for he has never taken the steps which alone lead to real ability. He has never habitually considered his plans, even for the day (not to speak of life), and endeavoured to carry them out consistently. The mind is active enough in the habitual day-dreamer, but it is a false activity which leads to no action. Hopes, anticipations, expectations, wishes may be indulged; but as they can never be realized except by actions directed with a right aim, and consistently pursued through all difficulties, the indulgence of these hopes, with no intention of realizing them by action, is so imperfect a proceeding, that it must lead to mental debility and not to strength, just as the misuse of any faculty of the mind or of any function of the body injures the organ or the power. The mere day-dreamer, who never puts his visions to the test of truth, who habitually paints his clouds, may find at last that he has so weakened his mind by this mere

passive indulgence, and so neglected action, which alone shows him what powers he really has, that he has never grasped realities at all, but has allowed them to escape him, so that he has no strength, but is one of those straws, weeds, or timbers, floating uselessly on the stream of time, which is carrying it in its current into the ocean of eternity. To this defect may probably be traced the future of many whose friends have thought, from a certain brilliancy of early talent, that much more was to be expected of them; whilst the duller mind, not because it was dull, but because it perseveringly realized its possible, has been the victorious tortoise in the life race. The hare-brained with all his quickness and false promise, is left behind. Such characters the world soon discovers and puts no trust in, for there is no strength in them. They may be pleasant companions, brilliant talkers, amiable when pleased, but they are weak; or they may be boasters, full of self-conceit, with no self-dependence in difficulties, but always weak. They have been repeatedly tried according to the value they set upon themselves, and have been found wanting. It is true that the world trusts in humbugs,

but there is something in this latter class which the mere visionary has not. They know what is expected, and they put the illusive image in the place of the real one, and thus deceive; whereas the dreamer knows not the right way of carrying out any plan of life, because he has never practically attempted it, or if he knows it, yet, from want of use, he cannot practise it; so that even if he would wish to deceive (which he often does not) he could not do it successfully. He is weak, and deceives others by his weakness as he deceives himself. He is his own enemy and unconsciously the enemy of others from the same debility, but he has not that practical ability which knavery demands. He is more likely to be the tool of rogues than a rogue himself. "The day-dreams" (wrote Southey to a lady) "in which you habitually indulge are likely to induce a distempered state of mind; and in proportion as all the ordinary uses of the world seem to you flat and unprofitable you will be unfitted for them, without becoming fitted for anything else."

Day-dreaming is so common, so natural to youth, that its entire absence would indicate a want of fancy or imagination, and imply a

defective state of mind. If it is a fact in our mental organization, it is worth investigation. It may be abused, but what is its right use? It may become morbid, but to what extent is it normal? For what healthy purpose is such a power given? Is it not a form in which that instructor, Hope, shows itself, which for wise purposes gilds the future of the untried? For if the child, the youth, the young man looked on his future life without illusions; if he could, with cold judgment and critical observation, estimate himself and his probable career, with all its errors, difficulties, and disappointments, he would be dismayed. By the law of his nature he cannot help looking forward, and happily he gilds and beautifies the future landscape of his life with the bright sunshine and gay cheerful flowers of his own May time, anticipating none of the dull cheerless gloom of wintry weather—

And if an unexpected cloud should lower,  
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch he builds  
For fancy's errands.

Who has not, even from an early period, carried on some airy construction which was the one particular form of ideal happiness in which he was to find perfect satisfaction? But, as



the purpose of life is to discipline us for another state of existence, and therefore to show us that there is no permanent satisfaction to be attained in this state of incessant change, these youthful illusions of the imagination, when they have served their temporary purposes, are swept away. The serious duties of life, compelling attention to its realities, so occupy the mind as to give it no time for these airy fancies, and the habit is broken and not resumed; but if the imagination is strong and resists this ordeal, or if circumstances do not war against the indulgence, it is often by disappointment that these delicate visions of the earthly distant are destroyed, never to be renewed. For the weaker character the disappointment of hopes may be enough; but for the stronger the disappointment must come from failure of the realization. He is a strong man of action, and he is permitted to try if that which he longed for is indeed satisfying. He finds that it is not, and that his real strength and satisfaction lie in this discovery; though still he may say with a sigh, that short and sole tribute which the memory pays to so many past enjoyments—



How much is lost when neither heart nor eye  
Rose-winged desire or fabling hope deceives ;  
When boyhood with quick throb hath ceased to spy  
The dubious apple in the yellow leaves ;  
When, rising from the turf where youth reposed,  
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore ;  
When the huge book of fairy land lies closed,  
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more !

The mind's action in day-dreaming may be instinctive of its immortality. The day-dreamer anticipates and paints for himself a future condition of life on earth in which he thinks he should be entirely happy. It is usually one in which there is rest from all the laborious activities of life—or, at least, action without painful exertion, life without care, and a perpetual unwearied and delicious enjoyment of the bodily sensations, or of those affections which make the being both the subject and object of love—or a full exercise of the intellectual powers, or of the love of the beautiful, or of those noble energies which together raise the man in the estimation of mankind and give him power. In this dream-land there are no griefs, no anxieties, no tears, no regret, no failure, and realization without disappointment. And as there *is* a state of happiness beyond this life, a state of

rest and of love, may not this day-dreaming be the unconscious impulse of the soul dimly foreseeing its future, already catching a glimpse of the beautiful hills in the distance, and overlooking the rough journey there, whilst in anticipation it enjoys the pleasures as if they were already gained? Christianity teaches the due culture of this hope, which falls so short of its true goal. It tells us that there is a future condition beyond this life in which we shall be perfectly happy, where we shall be what the day-dreamer vainly, imperfectly, weakly wishes to be at some future stage of his being; where we shall have all the attractive qualities of truth, of power, of insight, of love, for by seeing God we shall become like him; where all tears shall be wiped from all faces, and where those who weep not, but are weary and heavy laden, will find rest. It tells us that this anticipation may be indulged in, not as a mere day-dream, not as a mere lazy anticipation of that which the indolent dreamer will never take the steps to attain, but as a hope leading us to a certain course of action, by which alone it will be realized. Christianity altogether opposes a dreamy *fainéant* state of mind.

Whilst placing *all* in the state of mind and feeling of the individual, yet it reminds us that action is the proof that the right state of mind is attained. Mere feeling, mere belief that does not show itself in right action, is said to be worthless. By works, by their fruits, are the existence of faith and love to be demonstrated. If they bring forth no fruits, the illusive images (the idola) are there, not the true Faith, the true Love.

But are there not dreams of the day rather than of the night which are heaven-born impulses—the voice of God in the soul of man?

The generous spirit who, when brought  
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought,

must have been moved thus early by no idle fancy, but by a divine inspiration. And are not all day-dreams rather to be looked upon as deep realities than airy fancies—as things which even children should be taught to consider seriously and earnestly as indications, if rightly divined, of the path in which they are to walk, of lights dimly illuminating the way before them? Probably day-dreams should be tried like other thoughts, not ruthlessly crushed or

secretly indulged in with a feeling of shame, but recognized as real spiritual experiences to be subjected to the law of reason and her enlightened judgment; to be struggled against if they are merely hidden indulgences of anticipated pleasures, with no other object than self or than others as they gratify self; to be quietly cherished as a divine voice within, if they lead to self-sacrifice or wholesome exertion of the highest intellectual powers in the discovery or advancement of truth. Even when they are of the selfish kind, and when it may be impossible to crush them and reject them wholly, the attempt may be made to rectify them by giving them a higher aim. "The man whose eye is ever on himself doth look on one the least of Nature's works;" and as he can raise that nature by steadily fixing his contemplation on God as Incarnate in His Son, he might thus raise his weak and selfish day-dreams to the rank of those divine instincts of which they are the disordered aberrations.

READING AND LETTER-WRITING AS RESOURCES IN  
ILLNESS.

THE advantage of gaining and preserving a habit of reading is constantly seen in attendance on the sick. To visit day by day, for months together, occasionally for years, one labouring under a complication of disorders, from which there is no hope of recovery, though no prospect of speedy death, and to find the mind entirely engrossed in the diseased body, is one of the saddest sights. Intercourse with others to any social and companionable extent is out of the question, for a dull sick-room is soon deserted. There is constant bodily discomfort, uneasiness, restlessness, often severe pain; and on these morbid feelings and on the means of rectifying them by the little outward aids of medicines, or constantly changed food and drinks, the attention of the mind is fixed until it becomes absorbed in its body, and thus intensely

though unconsciously selfish. The amount of attention exacted from kind nurses or affectionate relatives is incalculable, and many a healthy and strong body succumbs in such coarse unrelaxing servitude; for, in the same proportion that the invalid's mind is so wrapped up in self as to forget others, it feels as little gratitude as it does consideration. The religious influences of a healthier period inevitably decline. The mind without exercise grows weaker and weaker in its powers, except in its acuteness in detecting and describing the disordered feelings; and at last the time which is not spent in sleep, or in attention to the appetites or bodily sensations, or in a little feeble small talk, is passed either in a discontented state of depression, in miserable complaints, or in a dozing condition which spoils the natural rest. When this happens to the elderly it is bad enough, but in younger persons, especially in women who are thoroughly out of health, and who have no "place" in life which demands exertion, it is especially sad.

The time wasted under such circumstances is startling even to the patient, if she is persuaded for a few days to keep a journal of



the way in which she spends her day from hour to hour. The Bible or Prayer-book may be read, but languidly and inefficiently; memory even is not exerted, and no attempt is made at any practical pursuit of the passive virtues enjoined. The feebleness of the body is the excuse for this miserable waste of existence.

The picture Dr. Arnold gave of his sister shows how such a bodily state may lead to glorious gain, by annihilating selfishness in the place of cultivating it. He writes to Whately, Archbishop of Dublin:—"I never saw a more perfect instance of the spirit of power and of love, and of a sound mind, almost to the annihilation of selfishness—a daily martyrdom of twenty years, during which she adhered to her early formed resolution of never talking about herself; thoughtful about the very pins and ribands of my wife's dress, about the making of a doll's cap for a child—but of herself, save only as regarded her ripening in all goodness, wholly thoughtless; enjoying everything lovely, graceful, beautiful, high-minded, whether in God's works or man's, with the keenest relish; inheriting the earth to the



very fulness of the promise, though never leaving her crib nor changing her position; and preserved, through the very valley of the shadow of death, from all fear or impatience, or from every cloud of impaired reason which might mar the beauty of Christ's Spirit's glorious work."—Stanley's Life of Arnold, 8th edit., vol. i., p. 269.

The habit of reading is especially well adapted as one means for preventing this indolent consequence of illness. It is quiet, unexciting, solitary, and may both invigorate and amuse the mind, when all outward circumstances, when memory and anticipation as well as the state of the body, tend to weaken and to depress it. Those who have attained this *habit* in health are rarely at a loss when sick. Solitary and uncompanionable, they call to their aid the silent companionship of the best minds and hearts of the day and of all ages. The most genial humorist, the finest wit, the best storytellers, the most observant travellers are at their command, silently pouring into their ready minds this chosen entertainment. The familiar letters of the maturest and

most graceful, the lives of the best souls of all time, the thoughts on the beautiful and the good of the choicest heads and hearts, all minister to the instruction and deep delight of the invalid compelled to solitude and inaction, and pain, and otherwise hopeless dulness; and where there is strength of constitution, and no organic change in a vital organ or malignant disease, this employment of the mind tends to mitigate the disorder and to give a better chance of ultimate recovery. For invalidism, unless from disease of the brain, is no excuse for complete mental idleness, although it often weakens mental power and interrupts its continuous activity. Some of the most useful lives have been those of invalids who, without a constant and conscientious habit of mental exertion, might have sunk into mental decrepitude and total inutility. Those who have acquired the habit of reading should keep it up in store for the day of declining health. It should be practised as a duty until it becomes a pleasant habit by the permanent invalid, as well as by those whose constitutions are originally feeble, and who after a

severe or long-continued illness never do nor can attain to strong health or complete freedom from bodily discomfort.

Writing letters is another quiet intellectual employment, especially adapted to women cut off by invalidism from the wholesome activities of healthy life. By letter-writing is here meant a careful painstaking exercise of the mind, not the rapid outpourings of weak words or mere feeble written talk and gossip, but letter-writing practised, like drawing or music, as a branch of art. Accomplished artists with their pens have proved how capable it is of high development, whilst experience shows the increasing spread of this domestic accomplishment, so especially suited for and excelled in by thoughtful cultivated women. Watchful, minute, and rapid observation, imagination, fancy, wit, humour, genial pleasantry, original thought, dramatic power, picturesque description, may be severally displayed in good letters. Reading and letter-writing co-operate: the thought suggested by books and their information add substance and strength and variety, if rightly used, even to the lightest treatment of the topics of the day.

What pen could paint the simple anecdotes of village life with a lighter hand than Cowper's? What additional attractive fulness her varied general reading gives to the letters of Mrs. Trench, not encumbering the native graces and gifts of that accomplished lady! It is no wonder that Romney's portrait of Mrs. Trench is considered to be his *chef-d'œuvre*, when he had to paint a face with the beautiful characteristics of that ripe full nature, which her intellectual freshness and facility enabled her to portray so attractively in her letters. Its beauty (even in the engraving) recalls the Cenci; but instead of that sad look of doom there is a mother's soul in her early summer bloom beaming through those eyes, happy and contentedly resting on her healthy affections, whilst the delicate curves of that refined mouth express the fine critical appreciation of the beautiful, and a sweetness softening fearless decision.

The rock to be avoided in invalids' letter-writing is subjectivity. The design is to get out of self, and the staple of their letters should be objective; observing, watching, relating, adorning outward things, and for-

getting self; the spirit of love indicated rather than too self-consciously expressed, and its results shown in the careful, painstaking endeavours to convey pleasure, and satisfaction, and happiness, and affection, in choice, simple, honest, considerate words.

## DISAPPOINTMENT IN WELL-DOING.

MANY do not fully recognize the fact, that in carrying out any benevolent project—even with a single motive for the good of others, and without any more of that selfish alloy than makes up the composition of the purest working metal—the same kind and number of annoyances may happen, as in following out to a successful issue the ordinary plans of life. The pureness of the motive which induced the individual to undertake the work for others, and the goodness of the object, do not prevent those painful difficulties which ever oppose men in the ordinary business of their lives. If there had been a clear foresight of these hindrances, fewer perhaps would have had the courage to embark in projects who now have been the agents of much good; but many have failed and withdrawn too soon from similar useful labours, from expecting that benevolent work could be



and ought to be carried out successfully without any of those impediments and attendant vexations, which they would have looked on as matters of course in the common business of life. But there is often more feeling of annoyance and ruffling of temper amongst those engaged in works of benevolence than with men of business in their occupations. One great source of this disquietude is in that self-seeking tendency of the mind which is combated with such difficulty. The impulse to the benevolent undertaking may be of the least selfish kind; but by degrees the personal feelings become so interested in the success of the plan, that personal disappointment is felt at opposition and want of success. The individual has not sufficiently felt that if the undertaking was a good one, the impulse which led him to begin it came from a higher source than himself, and the success really depended on that higher power. If he could have kept this principle steadily in view, and yet have continued to work in his subordinate capacity with the same activity as if all depended upon himself, like a good soldier under an able general, and as Christianity teaches,

it would have diminished, if not have removed, that personal disappointment from hindrances and temporary failures and vexatious oppositions, and the hidden frauds of pretended friends or the honest opposition of outspoken opponents. Folly would not anger him, stupidity would not irritate him, failure or its forced confession would not mortify him. He would be raised into that higher and quieter region above himself where he can look down on these disturbing forces as parts and necessary parts of the divine plan, from which he has no more business to be personally annoyed, than the carpenter by the gnarled wood on which he has to work, or the astronomer with those perturbations which give him so much additional trouble in his calculations. Work on, and this knotted wood gives a beauty to the carving which was unforeseen, these perturbations reveal a new planet, and these oppositions to a good work which seemed hindrances turn out to have strangely promoted success. To gain this serenity requires long discipline, but certain kinds of minds must pass through it in order to be strengthened and purified. It teaches, or ought to teach them, such self-knowledge

as they could not get by a less painful process—the knowledge of their own inherent weakness, even in their best and highest actions. Humility cannot be taught by advice, by books, by self-inspection only. The individual self-importance must be lowered by experience in the actual working of life, and must be felt to be so lowered. A looker-on may suspect that he who is actively employed in unselfish benevolence may be building dangerously on the merits of his works; but perhaps there are no persons who build so little on this sandy foundation as those who work the most. It is by action that the man is tested. He not only does not know what he can do until he tries, but what he cannot do. And he who has done much has by that very course of action learned so much of his own deficiencies, as to be both more humble as to his own merits and more charitable in estimating the merits of others. It is the untried man who has life before him yet unexplored, or the lazy inactive man, or the mere muser and dreamer, or writer, who is more likely to be censorious; for he may see clearly what has not been accomplished—he may be a forcible objector, but he is practically ignorant of the strength

and perseverance necessary to the accomplishment of any good systematic undertaking, and he may also be ignorant that he himself has not one of the qualifications necessary to success. Let him try to carry out one scheme of usefulness to others which requires some skill in arrangement, knowledge of men, industry, resource, moral courage, and manly strength, and his defects will become clear to him, and his critical tendency considerably abated.

## DEATH.

A LIFE of labour, accompanied by sorrow and terminated by death, is, according to the Mosaic account, the curse to which the whole human race has been subjected; and no one can dispute that it agrees remarkably with the natural history of man. The actual experience of life teaches that this earth is a place of toil, and that work of some sort cannot be avoided without a worse curse; that with all kinds of occupation, there are anxieties, disappointments, and cares (alleviated by much that is pleasant, and brightened by Hope); and that all ends in death, preceded or accompanied by bodily suffering. Christian revelation also teaches that this life, if rightly spent, is an introduction to a glorious state of rest and happiness.

There is an analogy between the escape from pain by death and the escape from temporary pain by its cessation, indicating the

operation of the same great law. Those who have suffered bodily pain of the most severe kind know that the cessation of that pain is the most agreeable state of bodily happiness. Paley, who laboured under a disease attended with attacks of exquisite pain, which ceased for a time and left the sufferer completely at ease, thought that the delightful sensation of relief was a sufficient compensation for the agony, so grateful to him was bodily ease following torment; and something of this kind, but infinitely higher in degree, may be the feeling of the soul immediately after death. The introduction to a state of peace that passes all understanding, into a rest which cannot be broken again; by a painful death, terminating a laborious, anxious, careworn, disappointing life, may thus be the means of enhancing and confirming the new happiness.

Pleasure here, if expected, never satisfies. He who sees the ocean for the first time thinks, "Is this all?" and who, from Solomon downwards, has not said, "Is this all?" with as flat a disappointment after tasting the best pleasures which this life affords? But no one ever said, "Is this all?" to the ease of body which follows severe bodily pain. Ask the



mother when she hears the first cry of her new-born child. Ask the sufferer after a painful operation. There is no disappointment in these cases; ease is satisfying in itself. Again, we know not the value of ease, its positive pleasure, until we have suffered pain. We know not the exceeding value of health until we have lost it; the priceless worth of the affections of others, until they are gone or are endangered. In this life, by suffering we become conscious of enjoyment. The same law may operate at death, as during life. To appreciate the blessedness of rest, it may have been necessary to live a life of unrest.

But heaven is not only a place of rest, but of love—of love that satisfies and is unchangeable—and the same law may here hold good. The severest trials in life are the trials of the affections; the death of those we love the most severe. The alienation of friends; the temporary love failures of youth and early manhood, or the bitterer pangs of a successful mistake; the hard lesson, which only personal experience can teach, that the law of change rules even in those feelings which seemed for the time incapable of alteration, and that no perfect satisfaction is possible—must, according

to this law, be both necessary to the self-conscious appreciation, as well as to the enjoyment of a permanent and immortal love that satisfies and fills the soul.

The generous nature whose wishes are prevented and limited by poverty; the affectionate heart made for love, but to whom love is denied; the noble ambition aspiring to change a society for the good of the suffering ones, but cabined, cribbed, confined by the limitations which narrower heads and colder hearts and meaner spirits impose; the discrepancy between human powers and wishes; the isolation to which (strive as it will) the human soul is subjected on earth; that dread anticipation of a hereafter which so often overcomes like a summer cloud the otherwise light path of those who love life best—may be instances of the working of the same law, the means, though painful in themselves, of a higher joy hereafter.

## EARLY DEATHS.

THOSE of a gentle, pure, child-like spirit, and without that intellectual power or energy of character which would enable them to impress any marks on the world, or even successfully to struggle with it if left alone, if they die young may not require that particular discipline, with which this world tames, and subdues and purifies stronger natures. These amiable weak ones might possibly suffer here without improvement, and are mercifully spared the evil which is to come. The common course of life is from the innocence of childhood and youth into sin, and back again by repentance, not to innocence, but to a life-struggle to act according to the better nature, which is all the more painful and difficult, in proportion to the strength which practice has previously given to the bad. But in many who die young, the child-like, trusting, God-like state seems to have lasted beyond child-

hood and early youth, and to be so natural, and so little mixed with the baser nature, as to be above the coarser temptations of life. Compared with the old hoary practised sinner, the grey iniquity incarnated in Falstaff, these are as pure as Alpine snow, or as freshly opened flowers, or as noonday clouds among mountains. There is no self-conceit in such natures: they often feel deeply and painfully their imperfections (which are better than the perfections of the others), and they look with an undoubting faith to Christ alone for their ultimate happiness. If they are better than others, if they have that poorness of spirit, purity of heart, pity, meekness, peaceableness, which is blessedness, they are unconscious of them; they have never thought about themselves except in depreciation; and they alone, of all who know them, are ignorant that they are nearest to the kingdom of God. But, suppose either pride, or ambition, or sensuous desire is an element in a character otherwise gentle and amiable, and with so much of the God-like, then either of these defects may start up suddenly like an armed man, and sweep away innocence for ever, and the stern necessary discipline of life comes; and if this

trial has answered, and beaten down the evil, that superior energy of understanding or of character, which such desires demand and prove the existence of, may render the older and mature man, sinful yet repentant and humbled, of some service to his fellows, in advancing God's kingdom on earth.

## DEATHS IN THE MIDST OF USEFULNESS.

## PRINCE ALBERT AND DR. ARNOLD.\*

PRINCE ALBERT and Dr. Arnold were striking instances in which the suddenness of their removal from most important positions, was the very means of bringing permanently and strikingly before the nation their valuable qualities, with an impression deeper than could have been stamped in their lifetime. "*De mortuis nihil nisi bonum*" is the expression of the true human feeling for the dead. Envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness are at once stilled, and all men (worth the name) with sympathetic kindness, give full credit and a just appreciation to the good qualities of the dead. The biographer steps in, and an

\* This was written in 1863; and the recent publication of Prince Albert's early letters and confidential memorials of the Idyllic period of his life (so truly characterized in *Blackwood* by a Roman hand), show that "the child was father of the man."



approach to the ideal of the character is given to the world. Stanley's "Life of Arnold" became at once a standard work for all time, presenting a portrait of a life spent in earnest duty on the highest subject—Christianizing the intellectual education of our public schools, not by words merely, but by conduct, action, his whole existence; and the very fact of the suddenness of his removal in his full strength and work, and, consequently, of his biographer bringing at once before the world the hidden as well as the more known history of his course, made an impression deeper far than if his life had been prolonged into old age, and he had been forgotten by the world in his mountain home. A biography then might have had none of the peculiar impressiveness of one written by his favourite pupil, with his fresh and vigorous powers full of glowing enthusiasm for his master. Like the difference which Nelson and Havelock's deaths produced, compared with what might have been caused by their departure in extreme old age, so with Prince Albert. Those who knew his character and work intimately and personally, were thunderstruck at his loss; but by the nation at large, how little was known of his

real character! Those who had had private interviews with him on public business were struck with his clearness of head, his exact general knowledge of the principles and details of science and art, with his rapid insight, and his general intellectual accomplishments. Those who saw him on public platforms remembered his strikingly refined early beauty of form and face and expression, and his consummate grace of movement, recalling the fine touches of Shakespeare's portraits of ideal princes; and thoughtful readers hailed his speeches, as marked by a philosophical breadth and height and depth of view and completeness of form, with an individuality which marked them unmistakably as his own.

But all the circumstances of his death, brought into the common light of day those virtues which had been only known in their completeness to his Queen, his family, and his few friends. He was removed in the prime of manhood and in the fulness of his powers, suddenly and unexpectedly, from all that apparently made life desirable; and the loss felt by all was intensified by that loyal pity, akin to love, for one who, seeming to possess

all, yet lost the light of all, by one stroke. Although she humanly suffered it in common with the poorest widow amongst her people, yet, from her solitary height, and from the splendour which invests it and the gorgeous gloom which imagination casts on all the details of the deaths and funerals of kings, she seemed at the same moment the most exalted in place and power and the deepest in misery.

It then only began to appear that Duty was the one rule of his life; that with the rarest abnegation and completest absence of pride, vanity, or any such forms of littleness, he had clearly seen from the first, that his position was to live wholly for the Queen and country, keeping himself in the background, giving to his work all the resources of his innate wisdom and of his originating intellect, trained by fine education and persistent industry, and yet concealing from public notice the share he himself had in it. In this hiding of his own labour, desirous only of its results, lay his real use to England. How, therefore, could he have been adequately known and appreciated as an example during

his life? His death alone could have displayed his Christ-like principle of self-sacrifice, which made him the ideal prince of this age, and "Albert the Good," a name and character, whose example in this and the rising generation, and in the history of our kings, must be priceless. But there may be a higher reason which harmonizes this necessity of his early death as an example, with the immediate loss to the country of so much wisdom and goodness; and this cannot be better stated than in the words of a devoutly meditative man (John Sheppard), one who has during a long life, deeply mourned over the early loss of his young wife, and brought before his own soul, by contemplative piety, the realities of the next stage of being, with the hope of meeting her again.

"We must banish the narrow thought that *this* life is the only scene of service for God; still more that none can do Him service *here* but those who have not been taken from our sight by death. Probably the very object of the summons for those who are so taken was to give them higher commissions; to put them early into the rank of ministering spirits and

send them forth (even hither) on embassies of love." \*

\* Mrs. John Sheppard's early death was brought into some publicity by one of Lord Byron's most touching letters, in answer to her husband's communication of affectionately sympathetic expressions for his best welfare, found after her death in her private journal. Byron seems to have felt deeply this hidden kindness for him, at a time when he experienced but little consideration for his glaring errors.

## COMPLETE RESIGNATION.

THE expression in the eye in complete resignation to death under bodily disease, is deeply pathetic and rare. It is only seen in a thoroughly chastened soul which has absolutely submitted without hope. It is not the mere expression of patience, not that of a serenity above change. A disease may be lengthened, and be wearing out the body, by slow, and certain, and unwavering steps, and it may be borne with invincible patience; but there may be still hope, and, therefore, not this expression. There is here a tinge of melancholy, of sadness, but with no querulousness, no restlessness. There is the conviction of true insight, that it is only in the other world that the chastening hand will be withdrawn. With this sure conviction there is an absolute submission to God's will; a wish that it should not be otherwise, yet the abiding painful sense of the sore trial. The sufferer is



uncomplaining, still, submissive, sadly and pensively quiet, rather than simply patient or loftily serene. The like expression may be often transiently observed, as a passing phase of an invalid's mind. I knew a boy of fourteen, who had spent half his life in a state of almost complete paralysis; whose clear mind was imprisoned in a body which was almost incapable of performing any of the offices of his will. He was surrounded by younger sisters, whose exuberant life habitually and painfully reminded him of the sad differences between them; his pure and virgin and most devout soul, quietly longed for its release, and realizing fully that death was not only such a release, but an entrance to a happiness here denied him; submitted with quiet resignation, and yet with the full consciousness of his bodily afflictions; and he had this expression permanently. He has had his trial here, and has gained that other shore he so constantly longed for. Once I have seen a countenance which seemed to express the very mind of Christ, and it was the face of one summoned in middle age, and after a severe illness, to leave all that is thought to make this life happy.

## LITTLE CHILDREN.

As physically, infants and children are dependent on their vital instincts, or on the care of others, and only as they advance in years are fitted to provide for their own bodily wants and become self-dependent, so spiritually there is an analogous sequence. The spiritual state of the child's mind, his innocence, goodness, trust, purity, joy, are bestowed upon him, like his living instincts, as innate gifts. There are evidences enough that he carries these in an earthen vessel, but he is innocent, and good, and trustful, and joyous, without any striving of his own, without any outward teaching, by nature, not by art. As he becomes older, stronger, and more self-dependent, and as he is forced by the law of his nature to exert his bodily powers and intellect for his own preservation and culture, so in like manner his spiritual growth is thrown more upon himself,

and he has to preserve by his own exertions, those graces of the spirit, which freely waited upon the sunny hours of his childhood. His whole nature cries to him, You must stand alone or you will fall. Those divine influences of purity, confiding trust, and warm affection, which, like the light of morning, shone into your heart's chamber, and illuminated and warmed your soul from a higher source of light and love, visiting you unsought, unwished for, must now be sought, desired, prayed for, or they will leave your soul dull, dark, and desolate. The curse upon your body, that you must earn your bread by the sweat of your face, cleaves to your spirit also, and as much care, and diligence, and industry, and watchfulness are necessary for that spiritual nourishment and growth, which are now left in your own hands, as for your body's preservation and developement. Hence it is, that as years advance, the spirit is often more and more tried. The early faith of childhood is often impaired, and not recovered, unless by passing through the painfullest doubts, often through dreary scepticism. That early purity, guarded by unconscious inno-

cence, that diamond armour of childhood and youth, must be consciously guarded by the watchful spirit, using the whole armour of God. The young heart, in whom "love was its own security," must now be watched, as the possible source of death, if it is not of life. Joy and content, which came with the dawn and remained as constant visitants the day through, must, as advancing time brings its dull grey skies and sere and yellow leaves and chill cast winds, be promoted by art and skill—

But something whispers to my heart,  
 That, as we downward tend,  
 Lycoris! life requires an *art*,  
 To which our souls must bend;  
 A skill—to balance and supply,  
 And, ere the flowing fount be dry—  
 As soon it must—a sense to sip,  
 Or drink, with no fastidious lip.

Peace comes not of itself, but must be pursued as an object, by those who would love life and see good days. How little does the young man, in the flush of his warm early hopes, look forward to this warfare as a divine necessity. He thinks he has to come into life,

to look at it, and to conquer; that years will necessarily give him strength, and that those temptations, faults, mistakes from which others have suffered, will not affect him. But it is not youth alone that requires to be taught the lesson that years do not necessarily improve our minds and hearts, but, on the contrary, that time deteriorates both, as it does our bodies, unless both mind and heart are made the objects of assiduous culture. To enter heaven we must become as little children; we must regain the trust, love, joy, content, peace, temperance, which God granted freely in the early morning of life, and much of which may have been dimmed, diminished, or withdrawn, from neglect, thoughtlessness, and sin; but it is promised that all these spiritual accomplishments shall be renewed, if assiduously sought under the conditions prescribed by revelation. The true second childhood of the soul is the ripened fruit, whose early buds and flowers were arranged and painted with so much fresh and living beauty: the flowers fell, the unripe fruit which replaced them was harsh and sour,

and without colour and agreeableness ; but the winds, and rain, and the hot summer sun, and the seasons' changes, have renewed somewhat of the lost beauty of the flowers, in the richly coloured serviceable fruit ; and that, too, can have its bloom, exquisitely overlying its ripe fulness.



## CHEERFULNESS.

CHEERFULNESS is the every-day garment of joy. The cheerful look at the happy side of things, note the unhappy rather humorously or ironically, without acidity or bitterness, but rather as a foil; loving the sunshine and the light, and regarding the shadows and darkness as necessary to the full significant expression of the sun; instinctively watching the beauty of the roses, not commenting on the blighted ones—an equable mental habit, eminently healthy, and tending much to bodily health also. It cannot exist without kindness; for unkindness, even in thought, spoils cheerfulness. Selfishness is fatal to it, for it is essentially sympathetic. Cheerfulness is one of the compound graces of the spirit; the quiet blending into one, of joy, and peace, and love, and hope, as harmonious as are cloudless summer evening skies, when the blue of the zenith and the crimson of the horizon

imperceptibly unite with such delicate gradations of the prismatic colours, that they make an undivided whole.

Cheerfulness in serious disease is especially charming, gilding the grey scene with its heavenly alchemy ; twice blessed, blessing the suffering one, and those on whom are cast the sunny rays. It is one of the great compensating qualities, often making the life of the unsuccessful in this world, more desirable than the prosperity of gloomy, dull, anxious, worldly-wise, successful men.

## SELF-DECEPTION.

A COMMON source of self-deception is in a man's confounding his wishes with his capabilities. Every individual wishes to be above what he is, and he may estimate himself according to his wishes, not according to that which he can actually accomplish. "What have I done?" should be the measure by which he should judge himself, not "What do I think or wish I could do?" Hence ignorance of self is especially prevalent in young men, who have life before them, with sanguine hopes as to their course through it, and with no experience as to their powers of action. It may also be the particular fault of contemplative minds, unless counteracted by the sober comparison of their ideal with the real, of their thoughts with their deeds. A high ideal is an inward standard of all great and good minds; but such minds only become great and good characters, by realizing, in a greater or less

degree, this ideal by their actual lives. Most transparently self-ignorant may such contemplative minds be to those standing by and watching them — though the critics be of superficial and narrow intellect — if they merely dwell in their own contemplation, until they imagine by knowing what is right, they can at once and on all occasions do so. Illness, by withdrawing the individual from action, and favouring contemplation, is a frequent cause of this kind of self-ignorance. It is a hard task for an invalid to bring himself to feel that he is a very useless and incapable, and ineffective person. It is more grateful to him to dwell on the cause, the disordered organ with its morbid sensations and sympathies, and to picture to himself what he might have been, had he not been withdrawn from active life by an inevitable fate; though perhaps this picture of his possible condition, had things turned out differently, is entirely unlike what would have happened. The evil to his own mind of this false picture is from his thinking it correct, and judging and approving himself from it, instead of from the actual and very feeble reality.

## TRANSITIONS IN LIFE'S STAGES.

YOUTH looks onward to its improvement by age as a matter of course; but having experienced the effects of time, the man looks back at his youth, and on the young, as bringing into distinct remembrance his own spring-time, with a very different impression. That tenderness and mimosa-like delicacy of conscience; that deep and unconscious affection which made the very thought of the death of its parents unbearably painful; that simple trust in others; that no respect of persons; that joy in the simplest pleasures of life; that humility and unconsciousness in a generous deed; that singleness of purpose; that child's heart — are oftentimes, when looked back upon in the distant past, or watched in others, either lost or impaired and not replaced. The mind seems to have passed from a better state of instinctive and quite unconscious goodness and purity,

through a worse condition; and the problem to be solved has been, by self-knowledge, reflection, and such repeated failures as so completely humble the soul as to lead it to cast off all reliance on itself, and to seek a higher inspiration; to gain again through Christian art what has been lost in nature. It is thus that in the nobler natures, the heart improves as age advances. There has often intervened between extreme youth and maturity or old age, a period of hardness and sternness, a feeling of independent strength which rejected all fellow-aid and was self-sufficient; that period which brought forth ridicule, satire, all varieties of contempt, unkindness, bitterness, of depreciation of others, and of self-exaltation, leading on to cold calculating worldliness, man-of-the-world shrewdness, and selfish ambition. It may be necessary that some minds must pass through this transition period, to find that no satisfaction, no rest is to be gained in this road; that the goal may be reached, but content not attained; or the goal may not be reached at all, and disappointment may teach the same lesson, that humility and love, the mild affections, not merely the proud selfish intellectual powers, are the surest sources of



happiness. To a certain extent there is a becoming sternness and vigour and self-reliance in that period of life which is most loaded with its burdens; and it is pleasant to watch these natures mellowing with time, feeling that as they grew older and weaker they must rely more and more on human sympathies, and in consequence valuing them and cultivating them and finding them. For this failing self-reliance in such marked characters, calls out from others just the assistance which is wanted.

## THE TEMPTER.

THE Adversary does not bait his hook with a May fly when he can catch his prey with an earthworm. Whatever bait is necessary, that he will use; and hence it is not by the cultivation of the higher intellectual powers, or the refined education of the senses, that his temptations are to be escaped; for this kind of culture only leads him to refine more exquisitely and to disguise with higher art his instruments of capture. The cultivation of the sense of beauty and of fitness (or taste) has been recently recommended by a working man as a means of escape from the coarse sensualities of his order. How could the beer-shop attract a man who has so cultivated himself? It might attract him as it attracted Burns, by giving him the pre-eminence; and thus bringing a company there who hung upon the poet's words with rapturous and seductive applause. The genteel vulgarity

of Dumfries might pass the immortal poet on the other side; but here was his revenge, here he was appreciated. And if this kind of applause was dangerous to the habits of Burns, in what way could the culture of the imagination protect those in whom it is but as a rushlight to the full moon? The man with the largest share in his age of that Divine gift was not even saved from pot-house attractions by it. No cultivation of the imagination alone—no refinement of taste to the utmost limits of fastidiousness—will save a man from temptation. The grosser sensualities or self-seekings may not allure, but may disgust; but there are refinements in sin as well as in tastes, and the two coincide; and he who knows that he is as he thinketh in his heart, and not entirely as he acts, will detect, under a finer and more graceful shape and a more simple and tasteful clothing, the very same spiritual evil which in its common coarse figure and dress he would recoil from with loathing. With this refinement in evil there is happily a correlative refinement in the self-detecting power, in the disturbing conscience. It is here taken for granted that the conscience is still awake, that the tempted is still anxious

to live above sense, however refined, and that, however often he may be overcome, he still repents his lapses, and still supplicates the higher power to give him the ultimate victory. For it is only through the light of the reason, that spiritual power above the understanding (given and replenished from the source of all light), that he either detects these finer kinds of derelictions, or wishes to overcome them. And this is the true mode of cure. The cure must be by a faculty above the imagination, however high that may be—the light which lighteth every man—a light which illuminates this artistic faculty, and thus enables it to beautify and to clothe the right and not the wrong objects; to create and to vivify and to gild—not the idols of sense, but the true images of the god-like,—the beauty of innocence, the dignity of submission, the divineness of sorrow, the chivalry of self-denial, the strength of gentleness, the loftiness of humility, the divinity of charity. These virtues the imagination may clothe in her sensuous images: she may reproduce the widow dropping her little all into the treasury; the Magdalen bathing Christ's feet with her tears and drying them with her hair; that

other Mary choosing the quietude of contemplative love; the woman, (her self-accusers vanishing self-convicted,) left with perfect purity, which yet refuses to accuse, but gently advises another and a better course; or the imagination may realize in thought her own creations, embodying like truths; and thus she may aid the pure reason in the higher life.

But the imagination, united to a vigorous, sensuous organization, may be a source of the greatest danger; becoming the procuress of this animal life, tempting it to the enjoyments of sense by images of delight, and satisfaction, and happiness, which, though they miserably disappoint in the tasting, may lead to ruin, if not through disappointment and misery, to recovery.

## WITHIN NOT WITHOUT.

EVEN our Lord, when healing the sick, excited the malignant hatred of the Pharisees; the purest Being, when exercising his divine power, thus becoming the exciting cause in others of their worst feelings. How strikingly this proves that the evil is *in* the man, and not in the outward object which seems to cause it. If the purest, holiest objects may excite us to sin, how essential it is to look to the discipline of our own minds for safety, and not to a change of outward circumstances. "Were it not for such a cause of temptation it would be all well with me. In this point I am tried beyond others. Certain circumstances over which I had no control have coincided in my case, so that destiny conspires against me to my injury, perhaps to my ruin," may be one man's silent soliloquy. To transfer the blame from himself to something external to him, alleviates for the moment



that inquietude which prompted the excuses. But this sophistry will not do, for with the disposition of heart which enables him to be tempted, the holiest being, the most pure action, might be the unconscious and innocent occasion of his fall. The reason a man is so much more charitable to himself when he has sinned, than towards others, is, that in his own case he clearly recognizes the outward steps which led him to act wrongly, whilst in another's sin he simply looks at the wrong act, without the excusing causes, and condemns it; but this is a false charity to himself. The cause is in himself, not in the outward circumstances. To a pure soul no outward impurity is a temptation; an honest soul is not influenced by an opportunity of secretly wronging his neighbours; a sincere, candid nature is open as day, even when false concealment may seem to another to be a great temporary gain. If the heart is impure, dishonest, insincere, there will be circumstances enough to excite the evil, and the individual can never escape from such occasions by any change of place, acquaintances, friends, or occupations. If the Son of God, when healing the sick, excited the

Pharisees to envy, to hatred, and even to murder, an evil mind would not be safe from circumstances of temptation among angels. Heaven would no more render him secure from temptation than earth. How finely Shakespeare has treated dramatically the truth that the origin of sin is in the man's heart, and not in the outward object of temptation, when he makes the pure Isabel the cause of the first temptation to lust, which that proud, grave, stately, cold-hearted, and severely rigid formalist, Angelo, had ever felt, and under which he fell, plunging headlong and at once into cool treachery and foul dishonour to compass his bad ends. How he moralizes and depicts, and finally blames himself, and yet makes no attempt to resist: all his soliloquizing betrays an evil heart—proud, cold, intensely selfish—under the sudden influence of strong desire, the evil lying entirely in the subject of temptation, whilst the object (the exciting cause) is in all respects pure and blameless.

It is consolatory to know that we are not necessarily the slaves of external circumstances, over which we often have no control. One is fixed to an occupation which he feels

is the constant occasion of tempting him to commit his easily besetting sin; another finds this temptation in companions from whom he cannot altogether break; another, in society from whose trammels he cannot free himself. If externals subjugated him, there would be no escape. But let him fully recognize and clearly see where the evil lies, in the undisciplined state of his own heart, and that he should be the lord of circumstances, and not their slave, and the first step is taken towards a victory. He has silently to seek an aid above himself; to trust that such assistance will be given, on earnestly asking; to rely on such assistance, and not on himself; and his very weakness will be his strength. Christianity (not Christianity without Christ) is here, as in all sincere efforts at improvement, the sole remedy.

## TRUTH.

PHYSICAL laws are invariable in their operation. When once the rule of their action is known, he who wishes to succeed in practical science must act in accordance with the law, or he will inevitably fail. He must renounce all his own opinions and wishes, and act simply in unison with the law, or he proves a bungler. The architect, engineer, natural philosopher, physician, must all act simply, sincerely, carefully, honestly, and straightforwardly, according to the discovered laws of nature; and inasmuch as they do so, do they succeed. This is so obviously true as hardly to require its statement. And can it be possible that the laws which govern the conduct and actions of men towards each other can be less true (for it comes to this) than those which govern the matter of the universe?—that in physical science a lie will fail, but in social science it will succeed?—that it is

essential to obey in truth physical laws, in order to preserve the body sound and whole, to erect buildings which will stand, steam-engines that will work, ships that will sail; but that there are no laws which require truthful obedience to insure the prosperity and well-being of the man himself? The physical philosopher says, discover the truth, and obey it, or your steam-engine will not work, your house will not stand, your bridge will not bear the required weight, your health will not be preserved, your disease will not be cured. No management, trickery, humbug, deceit, diplomacy, plausibility, address, will make up for honest knowledge and truthful pains. If you do evil, do not expect that good will come to your work. You can never get right by going wrong. And in the laws which govern us as social beings, can a different rule hold? Can any form of deceit, can any lie which the speaker knows is a lie, really advance the interests of any human being, even on earth? The first piece of armour with which a Christian is to be armed who will lead a godlike life on earth is Truth. Here Christianity is in complete accord with real science. It does not say

you may deceive a man for a just cause, but that "your means must be as spotless as your ends."

Truth, as Milton so finely said of zeal, is of "ethereal temper, clad in complete diamond," light in an armour of light, transparently clear as diamond, as incapable of contamination, as safe from injury, as protective, and as attractively beautiful. No single attribute of the mind so immediately captivates others as Truth. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." We must bow down and worship her. No witticism, no humour, no acquired knowledge, have the immediate influence on others of the simple truthful expression of an honest nature, for truth's sake and in love, thoughtless of consequences. A girl honestly educated on the principle that she is an individual soul; that she has thoughts, feelings, wishes, opinions, to which she has as much right as to the colour of her hair and eyes; and that she should at all times act and think and speak truly and sincerely and fearlessly, according to her own character, may have, before she has entered womanhood, a wisdom, a real attraction in her talk, looks, and actions such as the com-



pletest outward accomplishments and acquirements fail to give. The practised artificial man wishes in his heart that he had the open candour of the honest boy, fresh from his public school, from feeling its power and its charm on himself, and from contrasting these with the little real influence which his character has on others. And the scheming woman of the world involuntarily respects the open girl, who, to her astonishment, has a wisdom above hers; who seems to arrive at the truth by some simple straightforward intuition, very different from her worldly-wise maxims; so that she uneasily feels that there is a true dignity in the child which she wants and half fears.

It is a want of faith in the invincibility of Truth which leads so constantly to its violation. Weakness is at the root of much falsehood. Weak people do not trust themselves even. They fear openly to express what is passing in their minds, and, following in the wake of some other human being, untruly adopting his views as their own, have mistrust in themselves. Or they fear that an acknowledgment of an act, a thought, a feeling, may lower them in the eyes of another, and fail

thereby in gaining that approbation of others which they long for ; or they may feel so dependent as to accept the credit offered them, though conscious it is due to another. But the opposite fault, of telling your own mind regardless of the feelings of others, or purposely to wound them, is far the worst extreme. Christianity lays down the short rule, to speak the truth in love.

## INHERITANCE OF DISEASES.

THAT disease of body, or, worse still, disease of mind, should be transmitted from parent to child, seems difficult to reconcile with justice, unless the law is looked at as a whole. It is not merely the bad and imperfect body or mind which is transmitted, but the good also. The son becomes the sharer in his parent's virtues as well as in his vices. The man who has lived a virtuous life, who has followed strictly the voice of God within him, transmits his unsoiled organization (if he has received such a boon) and his corresponding sound mental qualities to his offspring. The son benefits by the self-denial, the industry, the goodness, the magnanimity, the sanctity, the constancy, the affectionateness of his parents, not merely in his material circumstances, but in his spiritual organization, which is born with him. The talent which was in bud in the father or mother may

become in the son the ripe fruit of genius ; and the difficultly discerned germ of vice in either parent, may be fully developed into monstrous wickedness in their offspring. The union of two natures in the child of genius may be the secret of the superiority of his mind over either parent, from his gaining from each what was necessary though wanting to the perfection of either, and the same would hold good in an opposite case ; and the more consummate and complete rascality of the son be traced to the cross which gave him the diverse powers of evil of both parents. The kind of education the child receives, which has so great an influence on his character, depends on the character of the parents ; whether he is exposed to the good or bad influences of others, disciplined or allowed to run loose, crushed or developed, softened or hardened, will depend on the carelessness or carefulness, selfishness or unselfishness, despotism or liberality, affectionateness or hardness, of those who beget him. The parents transmit their mental qualities, and thus organize him well or ill ; and the training of this material and spiritual organism depends on the same parental qualities which influenced its first formation. The child inherits his mind and

very much of the training which that mind undergoes. Thus man inherits mentally and physically good and evil by the same law; but there is a corrective even in this law, which tends to the preservation of virtue and of goodness, and to the destruction of vice, and which consequently prevents the rapid deterioration of our species. All evil is opposed to God's laws, and consequently is unnatural and destructive. The abuse of sensual enjoyments tends to the injury of the body, and although a vicious man transmits his vitiated organization, bodily and mental, yet as it is a deteriorated organism it cannot for any number of generations continue to propagate itself. As a rule, therefore, the vicious organization contains in itself the seeds of its speedy destruction; whereas the virtuous organism has all the requisites for enduring perpetuation. When looking, with that painful insight which medical science gives, at a child, scared, mutilated, and its life on earth blasted by its parents' vices, the physician would shudder at the apparent injustice and severity of its lot, if he did not consider the law of inheritance as a whole, and that for the race it is of the highest advantage that no disregard of the great moral

and vital laws should go unpunished, or should be capable of indefinite perpetuation. The feeble condition of such an organization, which contains in itself the elements of its speedy decay, and an inability to propagate its misery, is one of the best safeguards for the security of the whole race. We might as well blame the law of gravity, which as a whole keeps this earth and its contents in their due places, because he who neglected the law had lost, from simple heedlessness, his limb or his life.

Some communists have speculated on a Utopia where the material riches of the world are to be exactly shared according to each individual's capacity of acquiring them. There is to be no inheritance of wealth, but each man and woman is to have that which each earns, and this is to mark the good time coming, the reign of strict justice on earth. It would seem unjust that great wealth should be inherited, unless this material inheritance were regarded as a part of that great arrangement, which provides for the improvement of the species and the progressive advent of the kingdom of God on earth, for which we daily pray. We do not think it unjust that we inherit the scientific knowledge of all who



have preceded us ; that we inherit the advantages of the genius and labours of Newton, Harvey, Watt, Volta, and Oersted ; that we travel by steam or use the electric telegraph ; or a grievance that the dull, prosaic, and uncreative, gain by inheritance, the delights which the genius of Shakespeare and Milton have supplied, or even as Englishmen a part of the fame of these master minds. Abolish inheritance as unjust, and we destroy at once all knowledge, all the arts and sciences, and reduce the new race to blank savages. There is no more injustice in a man's inheriting an estate his predecessors gained, than in his inheriting the knowledge of laws which those before him have discovered. You say that it is unjust that a man without any merit of his own should inherit lands ; but is it unjust that you without any merit of your own to explain it, should be born at a particular period of the world's history, when you inherit all the advantages of other men's scientific labour, and can appropriate it to yourself without any of that labour or genius which discovered it ? Is it more unjust that you, sitting in your easy chair by your fireside, can master a law which took Oersted the labour of twenty years

to realize, than that your neighbour should be enjoying at leisure, the fruits of that wealth which his ancestors toiled for and acquired by sacrificing all leisure, and all (so called) enjoyment? It is by the inheritance of thought as well as of the material products of industry, that we have arrived at the present stage of civilization. It is a very fair question how far laws should interfere in promoting accumulations by inheritance in the hands of single individuals; but this is a different question to the abstract justice or injustice of inheritance. The theory that it is unjust and that each should have that which he earns, supposes that those qualities of acquisitiveness by which men gain and heap up possessions, are the only ones it is just to reward. Industry, intellectual activity, a determined will directed to the single purpose of acquiring wealth, even that acuteness of head with hardness of heart which unhesitatingly victimizes another with the coarsest selfishness, for its own sordid advantages, are the great virtues which in such a state of society would alone be met with in high places. Unselfishness, generosity, devotion to the good and well being of others, gentleness of heart, mild,

unpretending, unassuming goodness, would be the distinguishing characteristics of the lowest in the social scale. Chivalry and conscientiousness, as they are not money-getting qualities, would be very worthless. But the actual constitution of the world is very different. There is a hidden spirit of goodness at work which even here rewards goodness, and which is disbelieved in by the sordid, as they cannot explain it on mere commercial principles. There is that scattereth and yet aboundeth. The large-hearted giver is somehow none the poorer, but in the end the richer man. His smaller possessions are more productive; his children flourish; he gains, if not directly yet indirectly, through some unforeseen channel, the earthly harvest of his unselfish generosity. Whilst the narrow-minded grasper, who has always regarded that which was given away as lost, and that no money was secure but that which was realized in funds or shares, or land or houses, finds to his dismay that riches take to themselves wings and fly away, or that he has merely heaped them for others who will be injured by them, or to leave them to those he has never cared for, or that with all his increased wealth, the unexpected demands

upon him continually prevent him from feeling that he is a rich man. There are numerous facts which cannot be explained by any theory of economic science, but which indicate to the thoughtful observer a great moral law which includes goodness as a cause of material prosperity.

TYPES OF THE FRENCH NERVOUS TEMPERAMENT  
IN DEVOTION.

LACORDAIRE, TONNELLÉ, EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN,  
LA FERRONAY.

AMONGST the French an energetic nervous temperament prevails; and its best mental qualities,—such as love of glory, fearless enthusiasm for great principles, with its fervent outpouring in eloquent words or acts; such susceptibilities and training in the artificially beautiful, as are implied in taste—these, when allied to devotion, have their noblest expression. Lacordaire was such a character in action; and the papers we have met with of a youth (Tonuelli), published *in memoriam*, by his mother, reveal this nature, though in a feebler vehicle, displayed in contemplation.

“Lacordaire is a fine fellow,” said a venerable Protestant and Antipapist, on laying down Montalembert’s sketch. There he is depicted as an ideal Frenchman. “Before loving God I had loved glory, and

nothing else." A law student in Paris, in 1830, he was a democrat. He believed, and became a priest, and a democratic priest. Truth and liberty, he says, were his passions. "The child of an age which scarcely knows what obedience is, independence had been my couch and my guide. How was I to change myself suddenly into the docile of heart, and look for light and submission alone?" The government of Louis Philippe forbade any teaching, except under their licence. To try the question, he and Montalembert set up a free school, and were tried by the House of Peers, and condemned. They appealed, and went to Rome. The Pope decided against them, and both yielded. Lacordaire returned to Paris. Three years he spent in the humble duties of a priest, living in solitude, in a narrow street of the Quartier Latin. "Solitude is my element, my life. Nothing is achieved without solitude. The heart suffers, even when it is not lost, by continual contact with strangers. Man lives himself in his own interior, or nowhere else." He lived in one plain neat room; "growing daily in calmness and recollection, in prayer, charity, solitude—a grave, unnoticed life—truly hidden



in God, devoted to the life of the soul." "I live alone," he said, "in continual study, calm, trustful to God and the future." This life he led during the heated period, which Louis Blane, floating in the mad whirlpool, has described in his "Ten Years," when Paris was boiling over with that excitement which Lacordaire politically sympathized with. His correspondence with Madame Swetchine shows that he may have at this time owed much to her advice and friendship. But, although she might have polished his native strength, she had no influence whatever in forming or changing his resolutions. The fruit of this solitude was seen, when, on being ordered to give two courses of sermons in Notre Dame, he became at once the popular orator of Paris, carrying away for the moment the hearts of the students, by the rush of his eloquence, and the warmth and deep spirituality of his heart. In a way he did not seek, he found the glory which was his early dream. But he had another view in life. He said to the Archbishop of Paris, "Suffer me to withdraw from Paris, and to live for a time alone in the presence of God and my weakness." He went to Rome, and matured his pur-

pose of restoring monks and monasteries to France. This was the road by which he thought men might become wise unto salvation. He spent five years in an Italian convent, submitting to its strict rule, engaged in solitary study, and in writing books, occasionally rushing away, when this seclusion was too oppressive, and he became a Dominican monk. He reappeared in Paris with the shaved head and white habit of his order. The democratic and liberty-loving monk braved the authorities, for all such orders were suppressed. Again he preached in Notre Dame, with more mature eloquence, and even greater effect, "serving Christian freedom under the standard of public freedom." For twenty years in Paris, and in the great French cities, as a friar-preacher, he attracted large crowds; he founded several monasteries, and sat for a short time (and in his monk's dress) in the Republican Chamber of 1848; for though he had broken with La Mennais, he preserved for twenty years after, his political democracy. The *coup d'état* came, and with it he was suppressed, and retired to Soréze. Here was an abbey which he had reorganized, under the Dominican order, for the education of youth.

He had always felt education to be a real vocation of his life, "for he loved youth." Amongst these boys, conducting, animating, and governing the school itself, he humbly spent his last seven years; and here he died. "God," said he, "imposes upon me obscure duties; I must love them, and forget the past. God raises up special men for special purposes. He does not mind their small intrinsic worth, provided they are suited to his ends, and he casts them aside when they get to be in the way."

From the day he believed, he was the penitent disciple of Christ crucified. His dying words were, "My God, open to me, open to me."

There are hints in his letters, as useful now as in the days of the stoics. "People no longer know how to live on little. Retrenchment of the useless, the want even of the relatively necessary, is the high road to antique strength of character. A great heart in a little house is of all things here below that which has touched me most. The *modus in rebus*, moderation, is my most constant study, convinced as I am that moderation is the scarcest and stoutest of all weapons."

His plans for putting back the dial failed; his spirit of independence was in the wrong place; his political principles could never amalgamate with his theological; he tried, vainly, to reconcile the nineteenth century with the middle ages; to be a revolutionist, and a son of the Church. He was feared by his friends and suspected by his enemies. His love of glory, perhaps, was not so extinct as he imagined; and there was a certain theatrical element in him adverse to simplicity. But to love glory, and nothing else, until he believed, and then to change its direction in the narrow path of study, prayer, and self-denial; gifted with all those graces of head, heart, and imagination, which would have given him name and fame in Paris, and yet living in studious solitude; really despising the gifts of fortune, and diminishing on principle all his wants; naturally disposed to pride, self-assertion, and independence, and yet submitting to his spiritual chief; after tasting popularity, retiring for seven years' solitary study, in further preparation for his future life, and returning to public life with the same unselfish disregard of material advancement, and when his object had failed,

quietly resigning himself to the humbler object of a teacher of boys, is an heroic life.

Was it not the case that the last seven years was the fruit of all? as it must be a nobler task to educate boys religiously than to make monks of grown men. He failed in what seemed a great attempt to restore faith, and succeeded at the lowlier but more useful task of christianizing boys.

Had this fine fellow been an English clergyman, would he not have been another Arnold? Both carried out with the enthusiasm of genius what they felt to be the vocation of their lives, the education of youth: both were bent on attempting to christianize national thought, and to ally Christianity with freedom of thought. But how much more natural and wholesome, how much richer and fuller, is the life of the married English clergyman than that of this modern monk! The one, with fully developed affections, living a domestic life of devoted practical work, profoundly influencing the sober mind of a free nation; the other with undeveloped affections, his body out of harmony with his mind, his politics out of



harmony with his creed, attempting to carry out old plans that have had their day, suspected and misunderstood by his chief, silenced at last and subsiding into the sadness of a disappointed man, mourning over that France which he had laboured to influence, for its profound want of that energy of character which depends on a will mainly resting on the great principles of reason and of duty, without which self-government is impossible. How spasmodic, how theatrical, how abnormal, with all its excellencies, the life of the one appears when contrasted with the other! Laeordaire's life is a glaring instance, illustrating the debt we owe to the Reformation.

Alfred Tonnellé was born in Tours, in 1831. His father, a celebrated surgeon there, trained this only child "to the study of the true" in art and philosophy, with no other object (for he was rich) than his mental culture. From childhood grounded in English by an English governess, and subsequently in German by a resident tutor, he also passed through the complete education of the schools. He had all the subsequent advantages of



foreign travel, and seems to have observed art methodically in England, Italy, and Germany. An English lady, then resident at Tours, was struck with the sly, frank, handsome boy of seventeen, on one knee, before a large assembly, crowned with a chaplet of leaves, retiring, putting his arm through the crown, and returning, again and again, until his arm was covered; and amidst plaudits, carrying off, like his father before him, all the first prizes. She often met him walking with the square, heavy, light-haired German, whose solid, thoughtful, somewhat rough face, contrasted with the light, graceful, freshly-coloured youth, holding his tutor's arm tightly in his, whilst absorbed in earnest talk; the German imbuing his French pupil with his philosophy, and both untying knotty thoughts. The German outlived him—for he died at twenty-seven—and edited his remains. One paper, "On the feeling of the beautiful in reference to religion," is characteristic of this sensitive artistic temperament; but with French clearness and fervour there is a flavour of German philosophy and of English depth of feeling.

It may thus be freely rendered.

“ On earth I know but one good thing. It is the beautiful, and yet it is only good because it excites and vivifies our desires, not because it satisfies them. For me this is a serious love, not a mere recreation, for it produces suffering. When others feel it to be a source of enjoyment, or, at least, of consolation, I feel it as a new and delicious source of pain. The splendour of the evening, the calm of a landscape, the mild spring air blowing on my face, the divine purity of a Madonna’s face, a Greek head, a verse, a song, fill me with suffering. The deeper the beauty, the more it leaves my soul unsatisfied.

“ When the idea of the beautiful is not separated from that of God, and when the pleasures the beautiful excites are connected with the eternal needs of our souls, the beautiful, elevated and purified by love, leads to good. To approach the beautiful, we feel the necessity of a pure conscience and of keeping the conscience pure after we have contemplated the beautiful; otherwise its enjoyment is impaired from our loss of harmony with it. Who has not felt after a wrong act that the sight of the beautiful was a reproach to

him, producing a moral *malaise*, giving him a sense of humiliation, of inward discontent, instead of calm sweet happiness?

“Who has not felt his being, ennobled by great and vivid admiration; the splendid image which the beautiful has excited in his mind fortifying him against a low or shameful thought or a bad temptation? The soul being rendered delicate is more susceptible of the stain of grossness, and more fearful of being soiled; and if temptation has overcome him, this divine remembrance of the beautiful increases his remorse, and the sense of the unworthiness and hideousness of the wrong act itself, as well as the consciousness of his fall and his self-contempt. The beautiful still present within him condemns him. The divine, having been outraged, revenges itself by this painful reaction. Having approached the type of eternal beauty, deformity becomes striking by the contrast. But to attain this, the beautiful must be loved serenely and conceived as sacred and absolute. And then occurs in a slight form what may happen in the day of judgment—the hidden vision of our whole life, as in a clear mirror, with all its defects, shown by the full and un pitying light

of the beautiful. What is hell but the privation and separation from God, who is the beautiful?—the separation from the beautiful for ever—our habitation in the region of the ugly, of disorder, of darkness, of ignorance—all the essential and deep needs of our nature felt but not satisfied—the necessity of love turned into hate.

“Thus, in this world, the soul, having tasted the beautiful, sees by the light of one ray of the eternal Beauty all its defects, its discrepancies in the concert of divine harmonies; it understands its dissonances, and it suffers the anguish of that deepest grief a human being can suffer, the consciousness of having turned away from his true end and made himself his own object.

“This divine ray pours the full daylight on the baseness of his hidden thoughts, so that, rising above his weaknesses; and prostrating himself in the humiliation they cause him, he recognizes the image of God in the beautiful, which renders him happy, and yet condemns him, and he cries out, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter into my house, but nevertheless deign to purify it by Thy presence, that it may become worthy of Thy

habitation, and that I may live through Thee my true life.'

"So understood, the sight of the beautiful becomes a divine communion and a promise of eternal happiness.

"This is the only way probably to understand the beautiful in human art. It thus raises us towards the happiness of eternity, and gives both the promise and a foretaste of that blessedness."

This essay reveals his spiritual character. Beauty gives him pain from the contrast between that ideal of beauty, the divine presence within him, and the thoughts and acts which had desecrated that temple. The organization and training of his nervous system must have been hypersensitive, enabling him to feel every external sign of the beautiful, with that spiritual delicacy which is painfully aware of the slightest defects; the Hamlet nature leading him from the very height of his divine aspirations, to see most acutely the depths of his defects. This child-like feminine delicacy of bloom had never been roughly rubbed off by contact with the rough realities of life. He was an exotic trained for its own beauty in a conservatory, so that all



the charm of the flower was guarded and preserved from wind or rain or cold. But these shelters cannot keep out sorrow. His father, who was devoted to him, and a man of rare practical ability, with delicacy, lay for the last seven years of his life hopeless from softened brain; and this must have tinged all that son's feelings with the melancholy attribute of such natures. To these religion is a necessity; he could not exist without such a rest; and the fragments of his papers show those principles common to all Christians, which make the spiritual writings of Thomas à Kempis, Pascal, Fénelon, Nicole, St. Francis de Sales, as acceptable to the Protestant as to the Roman Catholic.

The journals and letters of Eugénie de Guérin, and of the La Ferronay family (so extensively circulating in France, and for their literary merits crowned by the French Academy), exhibit the mental history of women whose minds were of most delicate and refined structure, in bodies as sensitive and fragile, and whose training, surrounding circumstances, and the age in which they lived, were eal-



culated to cultivate and exaggerate their native nervous temperaments up to the highest point of modern civilization. The self-consciousness belonging to this highly artificial condition has been employed by them all, to paint the infinitely varying gradations of light and shade, which cloud or cheer such mobile souls in a world with which they are not altogether in harmony.\*

Eugénie de Guérin, early motherless, living a pure, simple, uneventful life with her family in the depths of the country, spending her days in diligent household duties, in visiting the poor, in consistent home piety, and in the devout ceremonial observances of her church; loving flowers, domesticated animals, birds, all nature, and appreciating its beauty; reading books of the purest stamp, instinctively recoiling from the opposite; writing finished letters and verses; devoted her virgin heart to her brother Maurice when he lived,

\* Dieu soit béni de ce jour passé sans tristesse! Ils sont si rares dans la vie! et mon âme plus qu'une autre s'afflige de la moindre chose. Un mot, un souvenir, un son de voix, un visage triste, un rien, je ne sais quoi, souvent troublent la sérénité de mon âme, petit ciel que les plus légers nuages ternissent.—*Eugénie de Guérin*, Journal, p. 41.

and to his memory after his early death; portraying the thoughts of that heart for years in journals for his sight alone. Many years after her death this journal and her letters have startled the thoughtful manhood of France with their unexpected literary ability, and are feeding with their refined spiritual food her trustful countrywomen; and calling out a certain condescending pity from slavish animalism, mistaking its physiological instincts for real power, and their representation for true art.

There is less genius, perhaps, but more varied attractiveness of the same kind in the portrait of the La Ferronay family,\* compiled from their journals and letters with such affectionate devotion, such grace of diction and power of composition, by Mrs. Augustus Craven, the only surviving sister. The father, mother, brother, the three sisters, and Alexandrine, the brother's Teutonic wife, the central figure, form an exquisite family picture of domestic love and unity, in their full enjoyments and deepest sufferings; where all seem dowered with the power of devoted affection to one another, and adorned and idealized with

\* *Récit d'une sœur.*

the graces and charms of high birth and training and social accomplishments. They seem all to have the ability, educated to express every shade of their pure emotions, of their passionate feelings, of their thoughts, wishes, dreams, aspirations, in that clear captivating style for which the French language is so well adapted. This condition, both of body and mind, is in every respect the opposite to what we call natural; but it is the highest form of the artificial. And, alas, these graces, decorated, and beautified, and veiled the morbidities of bodies unfit for the full purposes of woman's life, until stern nature, refusing any longer to sanction a perpetuation of the habitual violation of her vital laws, broke the mould by consumption. Such bodies, though hereditarily consumptive, required a simpler, hardier, less luxurious, less exciting life, instead of one calculated to increase sensibilities already in excess, and to render still more delicate fragile frames.

These, however, are a different class to the languid, inefficient, undervitalized; they are intensely vitalized beyond their real strength. In the language of electricians, they have intensity out of proportion to quantity of

power. It is impossible not to imagine the mother superior to them all. Her active good sense, her well-balanced, sweet, and firm temper, her sober judgment, recall "the woman breathing thoughtful breath;" but she had passed through the full experiences of life, and as a wife and mother had fulfilled to the last its wholesome natural duties, and proved at the last equal to the full discipline of sorrow for the death of the family she survived. Her children had to make the best of far inferior constitutions, and they lived and died as examples proving how even such morbid bodies could be made the occasion and the help of a higher life.

The heart was made for God, and can be alone satisfied in the love of God,\* is the deepest lesson in these books. It seems necessary, for those who have the power of fixed love, to learn its temporary nature by losing its object by death; and thus, those natures most capable of affection, and the most sensitive to pain, have to suffer the most in learning this lesson. The human leads to the divine; to make this suffering the path to an enduring love, is

\* St. Augustine.

the purpose of Christianity. Minds in such sensitive bodies pine and seek for rest, which Christ formed within them can alone give. Their means are not ours, but differ as these may, the end of all is the same, "Christ formed in the heart by faith." The devotional help these tender earnest souls, so brought up from childhood, find in ceremonial observances which tend to produce a diametrically opposite effect on those more firmly organized and more naturally trained, and more practically educated to the sterner duties rather than to the pleasures of life, explains and teaches much. One lesson is more Pauline charity, in those differently brought up, and with less sensitive temperaments, and of tougher fibres.

The physiology of the body and mind also teaches, in its clearest language, the necessity amongst the well-to-do classes, and especially the newly rich, of bringing up their girls in less luxury of habits and dress, with a more moderate allowance of intellectual, social, and bodily stimulants, if they do not wish to see them carry their soft luxuriousness into their religious obser-

vances, and literally make their ornamental outward signs, what the Parisian jewellers call "Articles de Religion." Such habits, by increasing the sensitive development of the nervous system, must tend to impair two national characteristics: good sense and good looks. The balance of the mental powers is good sense, and presumes a just balance of the bodily organs, and is impaired by an undue development of any one. The same holds true of beauty; and thus luxury tends to impair that full, complete, well-balanced, vital, and physical development of the women of these islands, the one remaining characteristic to which the censorious modern Frenchman, and the critical American, unite in giving unqualified praise.



### SOME RELATIONS OF THE WILL TO THE BRAIN.

THE essential characteristic of man is his self-determining, self-conscious Will. Sharing with animals their vital instincts which impel him to certain acts; hunger to the preservation of his body, animal desires to the conservation of the species; his rational Will constitutes him a man, and renders him capable of that voluntary education of his mind, which improves his own nature and that of the race. This Will, when energetic through blood, trained by circumstances, and informed by education, marks the men who actually command the world, and according as this Will obeys the pure reason, the light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world, the real progress of mankind is promoted or impeded.

The persistent energy of this self-determining power may be a natural endowment. The man may be born with it, he

may inherit it, and it is probably always connected with a fit material organization to carry out its purposes.

Its energy may be in action or in contemplation, in bodily courage and endurance or in the highest spiritual courage and endurance; and it seems probable, on physiological grounds, as well as from the effects of illness, and of age in weakening this energy, or of bodily health in strengthening it, that there is a material substratum necessary for its manifestation, and if so, from the law of action and reaction between the body and mind, the vigour of the will is closely connected with a sound state of bodily health.

The Will is exerted in muscular action through special and distinct nerves (the motor nerves of Charles Bell), which have their origin in certain tracts of the brain and spinal cord, and terminate in the closest connection with all the voluntary muscles. It stands therefore to reason that as there is a distinct, very extensive, and well ascertained apparatus of brain substance and nerves for the performance of the will's action, it must be of main importance to

the right performance of all the active duties of life, that this apparatus be preserved in the best working order by fit bodily training, and that any habits or acts which weaken this apparatus diminish the effective power of the will.

These nerves of motion are distinct from the nerves of sensation, which originating in a network beneath the skin, and from the organs of sense, terminate in the brain; and convey to the cognizance of the will all the messages of sense. From these bodily sensations the Will attains objective motives for action. In a healthy state of body these two distinct nervous organs, the one to carry messages from without inwards, the other for the channel of the will from within outwards, are duly balanced. Supply is equal to demand. If the balance is disturbed, for instance, by increase or decrease of the sensitiveness of the nerves of sensation, obviously the expression of the Will must be disarranged also, from its receiving too many, or too great, or too few impressions from without. The excess of sensibility which marks the extreme instances of the nervous tempera-

ment, is in this way detrimental to the sound action of the will, and all those bodily causes which unnaturally increase nervous sensibility impair its exercise. Seguin showed by education of Idiots that the will was often in abeyance from the torpor of these nerves of sense, which were required to be roused and excited, in order that the will might have working materials.

A higher exercise of the will is in attention. A thinker compels his mind to attend to one subject, and if it wanders, voluntarily brings it back to that subject. This contest takes place in the brain. It is essential to this power of compelling attention that the brain itself should be healthy. One of the most marked symptoms in commencing fever is the loss of the power of attention. The will cannot compel the mind to think, as its material organ is out of order. In many diseases of the brain itself, the power of attention is often the first which is lost; and in that softer state of the brain of the very young, as well as in that hardened and shrunk condition of the brain of the very old from deterioration of its tissue by time,

the voluntary power of fixed attention is much diminished.

Thus the necessary but invisible action of the Will in attention, depends on the condition of the brain, and this on the health of the body; so that in this instance the sanitary state of the body becomes a part of mental discipline. The same principle explains how the brain is connected with the highest spiritual attainments, as fixity of attention is essential to their development. A healthy state of brain is necessary to the power of attention; in all continuous exercise of trains of thought and feeling, and therefore in all spiritual attainments of the highest kind, attention is required; and that power of attention is from the will, keeping the thoughts to the subject, and the capability of that attention requires a healthy state of the brain itself. This is a firm standing-point, perhaps the nearest approach our knowledge of the laws of health and of disease enables us to make to the connection of the brain with the mind ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ) and spirit ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ ), and furnishes sound reasons for attending to the bodily

health, in order to secure healthy thoughts on spiritual subjects.

Christ told us that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. To worship him in truth requires the due attention of the intellect to religion as a study of what is true, and this, as it demands close attention, requires a sound state of the brain.



## DECISION OF CHARACTER.

THE importance to peace of mind of decision of character, dependent on a decided will, guided by a clear understanding and unclouded reason, cannot be overrated. If by habitual indulgence the power of self-restraint has been weakened, or the will, by avoiding decisions, has not been exercised, indecision will be the curse of life, as the constant cause of mistakes, failures, and consequent painful anxieties. The undecided, will constantly be in difficulties, and in great crises, when future happiness or success or usefulness depend on the step which must be voluntarily taken, the responsibility will seem overwhelming, and if a decision is not avoided, the eyes will be shut and the leap taken in the dark, and perhaps into continued misery.

If there is from education and parentage a strong sense of religion, the endeavour

may be made to throw the responsibility on our Maker. There may be the self-deception of idly allowing circumstances to take their course and attributing the result to Providence, when the powers that Providence has entrusted for use have been neglected. Reason, understanding, will, were given, and when wanted, their exertion was declined, and when circumstances made decision necessary, the undecided fell on his knees, and prayed to Jupiter that he might still escape putting his shoulder to the wheel himself. Or a decision which may be only the selfish indulgence of old habits is attributed to prayer, and the circumstances gradually leading him on the downward road, as providential interpositions to decide his course. If the indecisive condition is traced to its sources, it will be found that constant self-indulgence in trifles and the avoidance of decision on all occasions, when it could either be deputed to others or the immediate trouble could be got rid of, have so weakened the will and increased the love of ease, as to produce real self-distrust, and old habits are followed, though the ruin or

sorrow to which they lead are foreseen. But is such a state irremediable, and if not what is the remedy? The sense of weakness, failure, wretchedness, is a good sign. The consciousness of error is the first step to any amendment. What self-deception can be worse than to be self-contented and happy whilst habitually selfish and indolent? To be aroused into regret, remorse, and even despair, is better than unconscious satisfied selfishness. These painful symptoms are the growing pains of the soul. Growth is not stopped. There is an awakening to real existence, as if life had been hitherto passed in a dream. Self-indulgence instead of duty has left the traveller amongst the last in life's race, but still with a Will, and a Father to strengthen that Will and to forgive. If habitual self-indulgence and habitual indecision in trifles have induced this helplessness, then the remedy is immediate decision even in trifles, and constant self-denials in little self-indulgencies, and wants, until decision and self-denial in their turn become habits, bringing their rich reward in inward satisfaction and strength. And on the physical side the regimen

should be such as by air, water, exercise, and diet, the matter of the body should become firmer also.

This is an extreme case, carried out until the bitter end compels a change. Slighter habits of indecision are usually broken by the developement of the healthy vital instincts in women, and by compulsory labour in men. An indecisive girl becomes decisive enough when influenced by her affections, called out by marriage and by children. She is drawn to act decisively by a hidden natural power, more sure, unvarying, and strong, than the understanding. The absolute necessity of working for his bread, or of some employment to occupy his mind and sense, is the analogous cure of indecision in men. He must act decisively, or starve or beg; or if independent of labour, he finds strenuous occupation of some sort the only relief from weariness of life.

## THE THOUGHTS OF THE HEART.

As a criticism on a fault or failing produces soreness, irritation, and opposition, in the ratio of its truth, the more true, the more annoyance, some improvement would follow the admission that the smart was a proof of the existence of the weak place, and a reason why the mind should be strengthened in that spot. The determination to amend is quieting, because there is evidence of progress in discovering a flaw and in resolving to amend it. In this is the true purpose of existence. Such indications of character as provoke criticisms, are more from casual sayings and doings than from deliberate ones, as the spontaneous words and deeds reveal the ordinary condition of the mind, not its best phase. These sudden, unprepared, undress words and acts often grieve most in the retrospect. They are the cud of bitter fancy.

It is a bitter of a tonic kind, however, if he who chews it is led to regard the habitual state of his mind as all-important in self-discipline. If he kept a guard over his common silent secret thoughts and feelings; if he checked the evil when only known to himself, it would never grow into words and acts; the inward and spiritual defect would never, in unguarded moments, become outward and material. If he allow ungenerous, or severe, or suspicious views of others' actions, imputations of motives, depreciation of another with self-exaltation, to exist as silent thoughts in his mind's dark chamber, they will, as surely as they have been entertained inwardly, show themselves outwardly. If he is continually thinking of himself and of others in relation to himself, this unattractive dreary selfishness will not remain as hidden as the egotistical thoughts. The secret indulgence of wrong feelings is insidiously dangerous. A feeling towards another may be indulged in the heart's unseen depths, and, because it is merely an inward feeling, may not be condemned; may not, because it is not called out into action, be arraigned before the bar of conscience, and



judged in the stern light of duty. But that silent unseen indulgence of the heart may unconsciously, as if from impulse, reveal itself as an act, perhaps as an act which may be the beginning of a series of acts, the links of a chain ever lengthening and widening itself in ever new coils around its victim, until, struggle as he may from his self-imposed fetters, he cannot free himself. The thought is the egg of the serpent, which, when hatched and developed, will twine its close folds round the strong human limbs and vigorous body until it paralyzes their strength, and he, a man, a Laocoon, becomes the miserable victim of a creeping reptile.

That ease and gracefulness of movement, that repose, which in women so gifted never fail, and which is felt can never fail, from becoming a law of their nature; is a state of exquisite bodily harmony, the joint result of inborn grace and careful culture, to which it were well if the soul in its domain could more often attain. Why should the thoughts and feelings be less habitually trained than the muscles? Why should a man be good, and wise, and pure,

and just, and kind, and true, and noble, only in his better moments, when he deliberates and considers; but untrue, unjust, unkind, suspicious in his unguarded moments? He will be so, more or less of a surety, if he does not resolutely attend to and master his inward thoughts and feelings at all times, and especially in solitude. How often does he whose best condition when engaged in serious thought or dwelling amidst the best thoughts of others, is a high one, come away from conversation with others mortified with himself from falling to their standard, or even much below it. Talk with them has brought out his own want of charity, moral cowardice, insincerity, impurity, pride, vanity, meanness, or selfishness, to an extent he alone may be aware of. He has expressed outwardly what he condemns himself for; he has felt what he disapproves; he has done that which he wishes were undone. Still he has been true to himself. He has merely exhibited that which he actually was. He will find this to be true if he watches his more quiet thoughts; if he reflects on the indulgences he permits to his passive feelings, or (as Chateaubriand advises the

man who thinks himself without sin) if he interrogates his dreams. To improve his nature, to escape from the pain of constant repentance, he must regulate his secret thoughts and feelings, and judge himself by those he indulges in when alone and unoccupied, or only employed in such mechanical work as permits the thoughts to wander to other things and the feelings to distant persons. *Esse quam videri*, or otherwise you will seem what you really are.

## THE WORSHIP OF BACCHUS.

“As far as any man (said William Von Humboldt) allows himself to be ruled by the power represented by Bacchus (not wine, be it remembered, but the collected weight of sensual inclinations), so far does he degenerate from his sex and his destiny.” The bodily changes effected by the worship of this deity are usually slow, and only seen by those who can have watched the youth pass into the middle-aged man. To those who can thus look back upon their contemporaries, how many there are, who, in youth and early manhood, gave promise of much physical beauty of form, who have lost it in this Bacchanalian service. That well-cut youthful nose has become gradually rounded, reddened into a knob, and is fast degenerating into a mere vegetable excrescence, more like an edible root. That graceful figure has become lax, shapeless, and pendulous; the gradual change from an Apollo Belvidere towards a Satyr. This is not the effect of time. Time alone

does not animalize the body. Its decay is not unlovely. Many increase in real beauty as they grow older. The compliment of Dr. Donne to Lady Magdalene Herbert is immortal from its exquisite truth:—

What spring or summer beauty has such grace  
As I have seen in an autumnal face?

But this unlovely, ungraceful change is not from age, but from indulgence in sensual inclinations, at first, perhaps, so slight as to be thought nothing of, but at last tyrannous and exacting as a self-willed giant. Look at Annibale Carracci's Silenus's in the National Gallery as types of this sensual degeneration. Are they not hideous exhibitions of human nature? Large masculine frames, strong, vigorous, capable of all sensualities, fat and rounded, fallen abroad and loose; low, big, full, round heads, thick necks, with reddened faces, curled into a fixed, sensual, gloating grin, expressing animal desire, always feeding itself but ready for more, filling but never filled; with no conscience, no consideration for others, to check or stop selfish indulgences. This is the artist's type of a variety of man — the Silenus that is often hidden beneath the

tailor's handiwork. Nature did not make him a Satyr. She gave him a true organization. The man effected the change.

The body becomes soft and lax by luxury, and excess, and indolence. Exercise is given up or diminished, easy chairs are used instead of hard ones, and a variety of wines and foods take the place of a spare and moderate table. Application to business, or to thought, or to study, is relaxed, and intellectual amusement, or mere indolence, substituted. The consequence is slowly apparent in the outward form; but the initiative was in the mind. It gave way gradually to little sensuous indulgences, and these softened and enervated the body. There was action and reaction of the wrong kind. The soft mind permitted sensuous indulgences, and these, through the body, increased the mind's weakness; until the body seemed to rule, and to render resistance, on the mind's part, at first difficult, and in the end apparently impossible. But as the will is the originator of strength, and can by willing obtain moral strength from the One great Will (through the one channel), there is a power of restoration given to man which



prevents the weakest, feeblest, frailest, humblest, and most insignificant being, from sinking in despair. Through this Divine power the feeblest body may attain that decision of character, which is the highest implicit obedience of his will to that of the Deity. The best specimens of an opposite class are to be found amongst some elderly military and naval officers, who have seen much service. The sensual have often destroyed themselves early, whilst those with in-born self-command, who have lived a life of active duty and temperate self-restraint, show the spareness and the alertness of prime manhood when at the full age of man. The alliance of sensualism with strong intellectual power, makes some of our strongest, ablest, practical men. It is to this class that the wise saying especially applies, "Call no man happy until he is dead." What passes in the interval between their disappearance from the public stage of life and the grave, is only known scientifically, and therefore in all its fulness, by the attendant physician. The interval may be short in time, but long in retributive suffering from broken laws of life.

## THE POSITIVIST AND THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHER.

THE use to which science will be put when it is permeated with Christian thought is foreshadowed by the reply of our great natural philosopher\* to a positivist. The positivist asserts that any inference as to design in creation and as to goodness in the Creator, is merely applying our moral attributes to God; an inquiry beyond our powers; and we had better not mystify ourselves, but attend to what we can see, and touch, and weigh, and measure; material qualities about which alone we can be positively certain; and he asks, "With what feelings can we think of a human being sacrificed to the growth of cancer-cells? What is the contrivance and the benevolence here?"

And the mature natural philosopher takes the instance, and describes a woman, "such

\* Professor R. Owen, in "Frazer's Magazine," Oct., 1867.

as we may all have known," slowly consuming with the inevitable grave before her, and yet with a visible radiance from that suffering body—as it were the face of an angel, in whom was happiness ineffable, such as no mundane prosperity could yield. Two conjectures, he says, are open. Either "a high organization has existed for the sake of some microscopic animal made to live upon it," or a high organization has been subjected to a process as a means of advancement to a higher grade and power in the universe.

The old old controversy. The scientific expression of the Hamlet nature to another order of mind,—“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in *your* philosophy.”

## THE INFINITELY LITTLE.

IF a strong man, when reduced by illness, will cry like a child on such slight causes of emotion as would not affect him when in his usual health, there may be every shade of mental irritability produced or aggravated by bodily weakness. That feeble state of the nervous system, with which so many are born, exposes them to greater annoyances, from the opinions of others, than the vigorous are at all aware of, and renders it desirable that they should strengthen themselves by a course of mental training against such causes of unrest. Now, these annoyances cannot be avoided unless the pleasures derived from the same causes are foregone. If the individual derives his pleasures from the littlenesses of our weaker nature, then will he get his pains from the same sources, and trifles light as air, the most frivolous causes of disquietude, will annoy

him. And as these are so common, and as the nervous system is so feeble and susceptible, uneasiness and restlessness and dissatisfaction will be constantly his lot. If the heart leaps with delight at the favourable opinion of Mrs. Grundy; if it exults in the little successes of the man's calling, or in the small triumphs of society; if it attains a certain satisfaction by dwelling complacently on those affairs of the day which have fed the love of praise, or exalted the individual in his own estimation; then, inevitably, will he feel proportionate annoyance from trifles when they take a contrary turn—when they tend to mortify vanity, to feed with blame instead of with praise, to abate self-esteem instead of inflating that very dilatable organ. He who chooses to indulge in the enjoyments must not grumble at the attendant pains. He must take both or neither. If his self-estimation is so great or his nerves so strong, that he feels none of the annoyances, he is not of that class to which these remarks apply; but if, on the contrary, he feels that the miseries outweigh the pleasures, he may think it quite worth

while to adopt a course of mental training. Christianity is the cure. The Christian—whose thoughts and feelings are, as they should be, habitually above the world—who gets none of his real quiet pleasures from dwelling on these short-lived vanities, must be free from those minor annoyances, which, in spite of mere philosophy, vex and irritate one who dwells in a lower region. “Am I (let him ask himself) habitually annoyed, or irritated, or vexed, or affronted by the conduct of others towards me in the little daily acts of life, or by the circumstances of the day? then I may be assured I have made very little progress in the Christian life; and, notwithstanding my doctrine may be right, I have not yet attained a Christian habit of thought or of feeling. These minnikin pins, which even a fool or an accident can thrust into me, are probes which prove how vulnerable I am.”

If this disquietude is probed to the bottom, the disease will be found to be self-idolatry, the remedy self-forgetfulness. It is not in the cause of the good and true that the pleasure is felt, but in self; in trifles which magnify, or exalt, or honour self, even although



there may be no truth in them; and the uncasinesses are likewise from causes, however trifling, which tend to diminish the estimation of self in the eyes of others, without reference either to the truth or justice of the depreciation. None of these trifles could disturb the serenity of one who lived in the true and the good, and for them; and this state can be obtained only in one way. So that we come back to the same point, that the perfect cure for all mental defects, with their attendant bodily weaknesses, is to be found in Christianity alone.

## QUACKERY.

THE food and fuel of quackery are the anxious wishes and deceitful hopes of the many to be enabled to escape the just penalties for the transgression of natural laws, and to commute their legal punishment for an easier sentence. Is there not a drug which will at once relieve me from the accumulated effects of habitual intemperance? Cannot I, by swallowing some medicine, be delivered from the miseries of unstrung nerves, which have been deranged by years of unwholesome excitements? Is there not a tonic which, without any change of my habits, now so fixed that I cannot alter them,—will brace my muscles, permanently weakened by hot rooms, sofas, easy chairs, soft beds, late hours, in which I have habitually indulged and must go on indulging? The quack (advertising or authentic) promises

to cure all such by his patent medicine or his prescription; but the scientific physician knows that this is impossible, and that it is for the welfare of men that it is impossible. If a man might set at nought all physical and vital laws, might indulge all his luxurious desires, might use all sorts of forced excitements to stimulate his jaded sensations, might lead a long life of habitual self-indulgence; and, whenever he chose, might reinstate his shaken body in health and comfort, by merely swallowing a certain quantity of medicine, it would be bad for human nature, by enabling men to sin with impunity. Now, Nature says, You shall not break my laws without severe punishment; and, as all sin is error, as it is abnormal, and as it leads to an erroneous use of the bodily functions, disease becomes one of the great natural checks to the unrestrained indulgences of the bodily powers. Man's "pleasant vices are the whips that scourge him." When once the health has been thoroughly shaken by any disorder, or disease produced by a long course of disobedience to natural laws, the individual rarely, if ever, regains perfect health. He

always feels, however he may be improved, that a screw is loose ; that he is not the same man he was ; and that improvement is not attained without a strict and long course of self-denial, especially of that indulgence, the abuse of which was the cause of the complaint. Judicious medicines aid, but they do not supersede, self-denying habits. The social, jovial epicurean, the modern (so-called) "good fellow," who begins to find his digestion weaker, or gout and rheumatism cripple his legs, or feet, or fingers, must retrace his steps. He must, even to get on with any degree of comfort, diminish his luxurious enjoyments, or, if he is wise and strong, he must change his mode of life altogether. Or, if the nervous system has given way, by constant excitements of the nerves of sensation, the most rigorous abstinence from his peculiar enjoyments is essential to a very ordinary state of health and comfort. Or, if he has exhausted his brain-power by mental application, joined with physical nervous excitement—for mental application alone rarely injures a man ; or by incessant mental activity, with anxiety and suspense or the harassing cares

of life, so that some slow or sudden nervous attack has prostrated him; then he must be contented to live henceforth a much slower and more vegetative life—to read, to think, to compose, to speculate, to act, to talk less, to be very moderate in all things, and to be content with that obscurity which befits weakened powers. But, instead of submitting to the inevitable and, by the strictest temperance in all things and self-denial in all the pleasures of life, preserving the feeble vitality which is left, and making the most of the power which, such foolish spendthrifts of their life, have so much diminished, how many run from doctor to doctor, from quack to quack, from one “pathy” to another “pathy,” in the vain hope of finding what is lost; and, in most cases, after still further diminishing their store of vitality by fruitless experiments (if they do not exhaust it in this way altogether), they give up the pursuit and if wise, submit to a life-long course of self-denial and the strict scientific directions of the “regimen of health.”

## APOLOGISTS.

THE sect of the "Apologists" is not confined to theologians. How common it is for men of science to apologize for alluding to the great truths of Christianity! How often in scientific books, and especially in medical writings on affections of the nervous system, or of the mind, or on medical ethics, some excuses are made for referring to Christianity, or more frequently for omitting any reference to that subject.\*

There are several reasons why the Christian aspect of medical art is avoided.

\* There has been a considerable change, even since this was written, now several years ago, as is seen in the Introductory Lectures delivered annually at the opening of the various schools of medicine. How many of these lectures now are imbued by Christian thought, often admirably expressed, and eloquently enforced as the foundation of medical training. To those who can look back thirty or forty years, is there not similar evidence of honester Christian expression in the debates of Parliament, the leading articles of newspapers, and in our most thoughtful reviews?



It is said to be a speciality, and the business of another profession. But regarding matter and mind as a unity, in this life inseparable, and the matter to be cerebral and nerve-tissue, how irrational must it be to consider one part only, the mere matter and its living actions, and to neglect the highest object of that matter, the vehicle for the action of the spirit. And if this is to be ministered to and understood, regard must be had to Christianity, if, as Christians, we believe that the very object of Christ was to restore the moral deterioration of the race, and thus to place the brain in the completest condition of mental health.

It is especially in the practice of medicine that the various morbidities of mind in their relation to morbidities of the brain and nervous system, and to their sympathies with the general state of health, can be watched, and traced, and studied. It is here brought most clearly before the mind's eye, that man is hereditarily deteriorated from a more healthy condition, and that the moral precepts of Christianity are wonderfully adapted (even as rules) to prevent disease, and to place the nervous system in the best circumstances for the re-establishment of its healthy state.

The physician may think it his duty to refer the moral treatment to the ministers of Christianity, but he can have no complete insight into the whole case unless he knows the moral symptoms as well as the principles of moral management and cure.

Again, it may be avoided by medical writers on the ground that it is too solemn, too holy ground. If such reasons are given in perfect earnestness, they should be respected; if they are a weak excuse, there is a serious warning of most terrible import, that whoever is ashamed of Christ here He will be ashamed of hereafter.

But there is another and a much more pardonable excuse. The writer may feel, as Horace did, and all such self-inspectors before him and since—*Video meliora proboque deteriora sequor*. But were this excuse valid, would David have written his Psalms, or Solomon his Proverbs, or Paul his Epistles? and how many of our best sermons, essays, or books or ethies, would have never left their writers' portfolios? It is founded on a common error amongst the inexperienced, that the teacher necessarily possesses the model mind he portrays, ignoring the fact that he

must necessarily have himself experienced the thoughts, suffered the feelings, and have been tempted to or actually performed the action he condemns. Our greatest teacher "had in all points been tempted as we are," though he never yielded. It is not more essential that the physiologist should possess the healthy body he describes, or the physician should follow the rules of diet he conscientiously recommends, than that the mental physician should have faultlessly practised the moral rules he believes are the soundest. On the contrary, he is usually a student in his own school, and like that lecturer who when he wished to learn a new science, gave a course of lectures upon it, and thus made himself a master of the subject by instructing others.

A few writers only have made direct and open and public confessions of their mental infirmities. But could we lift the veil which authors wrap around them, should we not find that all our great moral teachers had done secretly the same thing, and—whether as ethical philosophers, poets, dramatists, or divines, in essays, poems, novels, plays, and sermons—had dissected for the good of mankind their own compound

hearts. The difference lies chiefly in the form. Whilst Rousseau, unblushingly and with a rare candour, says he did this and felt that, the dramatist invents characters to illustrate his own faults, and the ethical and philosophical poet, and essayist or divine, disguise, as the result of their experience of mankind, the knowledge which they have principally acquired, or at least verified, by the study of themselves. It is sometimes said that second-rate poets obtrude their personality, whilst those of the highest class, as Homer and Shakespeare, go to nature only, and never introduce themselves. Milton, however, paints himself; so does Shakespeare, in his sonnets; and in his dramatic works he seems to be personally invisible from the vast comprehensiveness of his humanity, which experienced all that the universal mind and heart seem capable of. Instead of not writing from himself, but from the observation of others, does not Shakespeare reveal his mind in every character, and the more experience the reader possesses, does it not enable him more clearly to trace that every phase of his own mind and heart, besides those which he has not yet suffered or en-

joyed, has been passed through by Shakespeare? It may be doubted whether any great human teacher has existed who had not himself greatly sinned and perversely erred; otherwise how could he obtain that knowledge of evil which is his necessary material? That preacher makes an effective sermon who writes it from himself, and describes in the clearest words, and holds up as a warning to others, the error which at the very moment most harasses himself. The double-minded man publishes sermons describing and reproving his own painful struggles towards simplicity; whilst the mental and bodily organization of another, that exposed him to almost every desire to which man is liable, is the foundation of that minute knowledge of the morbid heart, which was the secret of the effect of his sermons in the great religious revival in the church of our day.

## MORALISTS.

No one who introduces ethical subjects can have any pretensions to originality. He merely serves up in new dishes those apples of gold, which have been at all times the common property of all thinking minds and feeling hearts. And on this account he must feel great doubts as to whether he had better not leave his thoughts in his note-books—doubts increased by his conviction that many of his friends could write much better on the same points, but do not; and that such a publication looks like an assumption of superior ability to impart truths to others which he may not feel. But, on the other hand, there are many who are not blessed with the companionship of congenial souls; who feel thankful, and kindly express their gratitude, to one who will take the trouble (and some pains are involved in it) of putting before them his own views of moral truths,



gathered from his own experience and observation, his own reflection and reading and knowledge of others; and if he can candidly and clearly utter that which is true to his own mind, though its experience may be very limited, compared to that of other natures, he finds there are minds in the same stage of development, and of a kindred structure, who rejoice in discovering that much which they have thought, felt, or experienced, has not been confined to their solitary musings, or to their single hearts, or to their silent struggles.

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ages, yet a new work has often a greater attraction than older and better ones. The writer lives in our own day, has felt its peculiar influences, has suffered its temptations and trials, and enjoyed its pleasures; has a mind cultivated and a heart disciplined by the common education of present life; and thus he can enter into the hidden sources of unrest which all similarly circumstanced have suffered, and can often point out the appropriate remedies.

The one requisite is, that the writer gives his own experience, and the results of his observation, simply and truthfully; and, though his ideal may be much higher than his own actual realization, yet that it is his ideal, and is not simply copied from the opinions of others; otherwise, his hollowness will be at once felt. The more mature should not, therefore, despise the less ripe, which he admits is good, as far as it goes, and that may possibly be, even to one, the introduction to a higher condition—the spelling-book of a new language.

1 Paternoster Row, May 1868.

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