

interchange is premeditated, as eloquence dictates, the muscular and magnetic influence of the will rivets the chain upon the heart of the hearer, who may be extremely attentive and charmed with what he hears without being a personification of love or wisdom. But raptures exert no healthful influence, unless the process which evolves them is strictly scientific in its bearings, and the true uses of life always include this characteristic.

The riches of the universe are borne home triumphantly to the heart of the philanthropist without the wish to revel in the delight which is the consequence. The happy miner of investigation who finds jewels of inestimable value upon the point of his spade, hugs not himself with swinish delight, it is to be hoped, because the avails will enable him to gorge his senses with intoxicating pleasure, of no exalted nature, but he feels that such gems contain the fairy mystery which under his auspices will beautify his own neighborhood, give employment and relief to the poor, and the thrill of holy delight which permeates his whole frame arises from the fact that his own nature contains a happy mingling of love and wisdom in such divine proportions that the whole world can reap some benefit from his manly and benevolent exertions.

I humbly think that the highest raptures will come to us in moments when least expected, and devotion to the loved one is best shown by contributing to his highest good.

Raptures of all descriptions are only attendants of surpassing loveliness, who wait upon duty as the dew of labor pours from her noble brow.

The best happiness of the heart is like the music of the well-tuned lyre, the perfume of the rose, the purple light of the evening cloud. But when emotional cravings break up or become the whole business of existence, the harmony of our being loses its best significance, and, as a great writer remarks, life ceases to retain its noblest energies, and "passes languidly into destructive and unmeaning dreams of rapture and anguish."

ALHAZA CROFT.

HEREDITY, HOW OPPOSED.

The doctrine of heredity, so ably argued in late numbers of THE ALPHA, deserves further notice of the hindrances of its acceptance. I essay to discharge the office.

The hindrances might be compressed in one—the ready acceptance of the cheap, the superficial, the pretentious; or we may specify two principal forms of the same tendency. One identifies baptism with regeneration, the sign is exalted into the thing signified, the sacramental water removes the stain and disabilities of inherited depravity. Consistently saints must be celibates. Children are forbidden to them who might most boldly claim the promise to them and to their children. Not more preposterous if a ranchman should restrain the choice of his flock and breed only from meaner cattle.

Another portion of the Christian community ignores the law that the spiritual nurture of the child begins before its birth, or admits it only in its evil applications, as in case of the expectant mother indulging in irregu-

lar appetites or viler passions and transmitting to her offspring unwonted depravity in the same direction. The law should be recognized as equally available for good, as was found in case of Jeremiah, Isaiah and the Baptist, (Jer. i, 5; Is. xlv, 15; Luke i, 15.) Nothing exceptional here, all normal and to be expected, whenever it may be said of parents, "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."—O. vi, 7. Despite the principles running through the Holy Writ, despite the teachings of science, philanthropy and common observation with a large portion of the Christian community, the beau ideal Christian begins life a heathen, goes astray as soon as he is born, speaking lies, though born of Christian parents, and perhaps dedicated to God in baptism, he is still accounted an alien till the revival comes along to effect his conversion.

The utmost that parents are encouraged to hope is the early conversion of their children. Sanctification from or before birth is at most admitted a bare possibility, may be in rare cases; is not accepted as the normal and expected thing, and not expected is not realized. Under a ripened Christianity we shall not hear of the conversion, early or late, of children of Christian families. Children will be born with the germs of divine life implanted in them, to be quickened into activity. Indeed I believe that, to a hopeful extent, such is already the case, that of many Christians the practice is better than the theory, proving that a sanctified parentage assures a sanctified progeny, and that the reported conversion of children is rather the revivification of a principle afore imparted. W. W.

"PUISSANCE OBLIGE."

Under the above title, the *Cambridge Review* of the 2d ult., in an article which well deserves attention, upon the duties of the strong towards the weak, says:

"There exists in our community a class of persons to whom its teachings have as yet been very imperfectly applied—why, it would be hard to say, for whatever claims weakness has upon strength, they possess in a superlative degree. Mr. Lecky, in a flourish of sublime nonsense, has dubbed them 'the priestesses of humanity,' bearing, since some must bear it, the sin of the world. And who are these majestic priestesses? They are not women. They are children, women-children, at least when they first assume their sacred functions. Their are young girls in their teens, that is, of the age when our daughters and sisters have hardly got into 'long dresses,' when they are still at school, or in the school-room, when they prefer a circus or a pantomime—the babies!—to a party 'where you have to be so proper, you know.' Of such are the 'priestesses of humanity.'"

"With this difference. That they have never had a father to romp with them, or a brother to protect them from a whisper of insult. That from the first, life has meant to them hard work, privation, severity, servitude. That for many of them—not so much born as damned into the world—it has meant education in evil and encouragement, nay, compulsion to vice. That the happiest of them have not been sheltered from temptation;

that the wisest of them are very ignorant and childish; that the richest of them are very poor.

"And what have we done for our women-children?"

"This is what we have done for the women-children, who might have been our own.

"We have taught them that a first downward step is irretrievable, and stamps upon them a brand which nothing can efface. We have goaded them on to fresh evil with all the force of cruel contempt or frigid indifference. We have herded them together in one outcast class, without distinction of character or experience in sin. We have hardened them, often in periods incredibly short, unsexed them, made of them drunkards, blasphemers, tempters, fiends in human form. We have done this.

"Even when we have had too much respect for womanhood and for ourselves, to heap fresh ignominy upon them, we have been responsible for their blood, inasmuch as we have stood aloof, and have deemed with a cynical apathy, or with the fastidious shrinking of a mistaken refinement, that their fate did not concern us.

"Upon the soul of every individual amongst us did a portion of guilt rest, as long as the slave trade remained legal," said Coleridge, and as long as society's laws, whether sanctioned by act of Parliament or no, ordain a yearly holocaust of thousands of its weakest members, so long will their blood be upon the head of every responsible member of society.

"Yet there is a change coming. There is on the horizon a cloud scarcely bigger than a man's hand which is destined to grow and grow till it overspreads the sky. It is the awakening of women to their responsibilities toward their young sisters. The truths that are dawning with irresistible but gradual force upon the reasoning minds of men have laid hold with a sudden fiery grip of the impassioned spirits of women, and caused the scales of age-long custom, the 'stiffening crust' of tradition to fall from their eyes. They are going forth to raise the newly-fallen, to melt the hardened with love, to wipe out a past of sickening horror in a future of hope and calm; they are moreover working socially for justice, for honesty, for a loftier purity, for the practical extension of the kingdom of Christ."

"Faust says:

"The Woman-Soul leadeth us
Upward and on."

"Not that we are to get a woman to smuggle us into heaven when we are sick of our follies and sins; not that we are to do our religion and morality by deputy, admiring women's purity and goodness with sentimental wistfulness, and contenting ourselves, for our own part, with 'half the virtues'; but that we are to defer to the weaker, to surrender to the needy and the oppressed, to do battle for the poor, to aspire with the pure in heart, to remember: 'Puisseance oblige.'—*The Shield*.

"SEXUAL ORGANISM AND ITS HEALTHFUL MANAGEMENT."

James C. Jackson, M. D., in his "Sexual Organism and its Healthful Management," in a chapter all ought

to read, page 258, says: "I am satisfied, from a thorough study of the organic relation of the sexes, that the faculty of amativeness has a two-fold purpose, and should be always gratified by either sex from this point."

But I am not "satisfied" that this is so, nor has the world ever had a fair chance to test the other side of theory. Men and women, like plants and animals, have gone on for millions, and perhaps billions of years increasing and multiplying whenever inclination and circumstances favored such a course. A few nunneries, cloisters and Shaker villages have made ascetic continence a religious rite and a martyrdom, but where are the societies who have tried pure, affectional, loving continence? Where can we find a community of men and women who have only had sexual commerce for purposes of procreation? and where are the generations that have had continent parents, grandparents, and great grandparents? Alas! echo answers where? And till we have just one such, this question will have been experimentally tested on one side only.

Men plead for moderate indulgence, (saying that continence will produce a race of apathetic, dull, lifeless, pale, sad-looking people—sexless and soulless.) But how do they know? The few Alphaits who have lived continently speak in eulogies of its effects upon themselves and all they know to have tried it. It makes them kind, loving, charitable and unselfish, strong, vigorous and young, even as plants and trees are stronger, more vigorous and long-lived, when not allowed to produce fruit. It is an up-hill work, I will allow, this one of unteaching the old, and ingraining into the mind the new. Women, wine and feasting—next to wars—seemed to be the greatest luxuries of antiquity. Not woman as she should be—man's equal, his helper and his mother; but as his slave, his subject and his plaything—one who ministered unto and gave him pleasure. The Arabian Nights and Shakespeare, and all old-time books, and indeed, all novels, even of today, place this question of sex prominently before us as if it was first and foremost in all hearts. We shall need a newer and cleaner literature ere the world will become pure and clean. But if here and there one is saved; if here and there one ray of truth reaches a single mind, our labor will not be lost, and that this is being accomplished every mail that reaches me bears record. Broken-down and despairing wives, passion and lust-cursed children, and pale, nerveless and debilitated men, all send in sad and bitter testimonies as to the great need of the work Alphaism is endeavoring to do, and now and then comes a glad, jubilant song from a saved soul that cheers and encourages to more and better work in the future, and assures us that all is not seed sown on stony ground.

"The time has come to preach soul;
No meager shred—the manly whole;
Let agitation come; who fears?
We need a flood; the fifth of years
Has gathered round us. Roll then on;
What cannot stand had best be gone."

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