

Starkweather's theory is ingenious, and contains much truth, but is yet far from proven. As our knowledge and experience increase we may know more of nature's methods; but it is highly improbable that we will ever gain the power to regulate sex, for such power would be prejudicial to the best interests of the race. During countless ages, the diversity of man's environment, the unceasing struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest, and the gradual development of the race have continually, through barbarism and civilization alike, determined those laws of reproduction which were from time to time most conducive to man's welfare. Nature's experience is greater than ours; her wisdom, patience and unselfishness are greater than ours; her balance more justly equi-poised than ours. But, though we cannot supplant her, we may learn important lessons by observing her methods. The careful study of sex-formation should throw much light upon the mysteries of heredity, and enable us to foresee, and possibly forestall, many family taints or predispositions. The knowledge that a grandfather's peculiarities are liable to be propagated through his daughters to his grandsons should help us to grapple with such diseases as dipsomania, hæmophilia, or gout.

If, in any degree, it be true that the superiority of the parent is a powerful factor in determining the sex as well as the strength of the offspring, it must be equally true that the deterioration of the parent will cause deficiency or deterioration of the opposite sex in the succeeding generations. If, then, the modern craze for the "higher education of *women*" goes on unchecked till their physical powers are sacrificed to so-called mental culture, the prospects for coming generations of *men* will be dark indeed, and Miltons or Shakespeares will be well-nigh impossible. But nature's unerring balance eventually rights all things; the enfeebled progeny of weak, neurotic parents inevitably succumb before the vigorous offspring of the healthy and robust, for the fittest must survive.

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The central attraction for the medical man visiting London is her hospitals and medical museums. Whether they "do these things better in Vienna," as the Teutonophilist says they do, remains to be

seen; but there can be no question about the great advantages here open to the student who will avail himself of them. The endless amount of material that comes to hand in the various general and special hospitals makes it possible to study all diseases in all shapes.

I have noticed that very few students or attachés of one hospital know much about the service of other institutions, and you can accordingly easily understand how difficult it is for one having less than six weeks to devote to study here to acquire more than a superficial notion of the relative merits of the numerous teachers and clinics with which London is studded. However I shall give you my impressions, such as they are, with the assurance that the men and things whereof I speak were personally investigated.

I have been frequently told that in this city and its suburbs professional competition is very keen, and that the good old days of the guinea fee are going quickly by. Also, that in the lower strata of professional life private dispensaries where medicine and advice can be had all the way from a shilling to half a crown are not uncommon. In spite of these statements my intercourse with all sorts and conditions of practitioners here does not lead me to believe that life is any harder with them than in our colonial towns. I am certain of this, that they are a more *leisurely* class. Whether that be due to the phlegmatic style of doing things which everywhere contrasts with our nervous American routine I am unable to determine, but I am sure we have something to learn from our English brethren in this respect. Probably the first thing in respect of disease that strikes the stranger is the large proportion of rachitic, tubercular and scrofulous affections that one daily sees in the Out-patient Departments as well as in the wards of all the hospitals.

I am inclined to believe that syphilis is more frequent than we have it, and I am sure skin troubles are in greater variety, if not in greater proportion, than in Canada.

Barlow, of the great Ormond St. Hospital for children, stated the other day that of all *post-mortems* held there tubercle is found in the proportion of 60 per cent. We have not far to look for the causes of this state of things. London is one example of the rule that the poverty and misery of a city are in inverse proportion to its wealth. Bad and insufficient food, close unventilated houses, narrow streets, foul air,—all these combine to pro-