

Hearken to nature, that builds up and is a garden for the infant. Does she not inspire him with a burning curiosity to see, touch and taste? He lays his delicate hands on everything, and wishes to seize it; he will open a fruit or other object from curiosity, and break and destroy a thousand things; it is certainly not an instinct of cruelty, of innate wickedness, as some suppose, but a desire to see; a love of everything new to him; an exercise of strength. At this age, every sight is instructive; everything in the universe is strange and marvellous to him and makes an agreeable impression; for man is eager to fill up the immense void of ignorance that is in him.

If this instinct is encouraged by more seductive studies than dry grammar or thorny syntax, which are usually put too soon into a school-boy's hands, there is no doubt he would take a very lively interest in the various fields of study, and make remarkable progress in them. As a matter of fact, most children have an admirable memory; they learn a multitude of things with astonishing rapidity, and the impressions are often so deep that they last to old age.

Judgment is not well developed in children because this faculty exacts a great concourse of ideas for comparison and examination of their resemblance or difference; besides, a child is very changeable, very inconsistent, and not susceptible of the long attention and cool reflection which a mature judgment and coherent reasoning require. General maxims and abstract principles are beyond his capacity, and strangers to his simple ideas. He applies himself especially to physical objects, to things that move his senses, and not to philosophical considerations which have no attraction for him. This velocity of his movements is due to the quick action of the heart, and the impetuosity of the circulation, which cause the blood to rush in his veins. The same vehemence impresses a variable and violent character on his affections; anger, love, fear, hope, jealousy, hatred, joy, sorrow, excite these young beings in every way, and subside as quickly as they appear.

The fitness of the mind depends in a great measure upon the equal development of the intellectual organs and the hemispheres of the brain; the latter cannot be made unequal except by imprudent compressions. As great inconvenience results from the habit of giving too much preponderance to one side of the body, the other remaining feeble and incapable, so one eye or ear becoming stronger than the other by vicious habits produces unequal sensations, however simultaneous; and false or inexact ideas. Strabismus, or squinting frequently results from this cause. As regards the ears, some people are incapable of an accurate perception of harmonious sounds, hence the impossibility of learning music and singing in tune.

Children, accustomed from their cradle to the nurse's song, are soon accustomed to rhythm and cadence. Harmony diverts their attention from suffering, regulates their movements more equally and puts them to sleep more gently. There is some truth in the belief of the Pythagoreans that music largely contributed to good health, to growth, to vigor and harmony of the mind. Without the art of music, we would still be living wild and savage in the woods, if it be true that the harmony of Amphion and Orpheus mollified the first mortals. The laws of Greece bore the

same title as their songs. In their country, education in infancy was a pleasure.

We would insist moreover, if it were necessary, upon the grievous error of neglecting the development of the moral sense during infancy, as it may result in ferocious habits among children badly educated. Frequent examples of cruelty corrupt the heart and stifle kindness, the most essential of the social virtues, and that sense of justice without which the rule of violence and tyranny would prevail.

The most material of the senses, such as taste and touch, are very active in infancy. The first derives its strength from the vivacity of the youthful appetite, causing almost all children to be greedy and dainty eaters. The touch, from its mellow softness, in these tender creatures makes them very attractive, at the same time giving them exact ideas of everything they seize and embrace.

If the natural bent of children's minds was not so frequently thwarted, it is probable they would almost always manifest an inclination, more or less decided, for some special occupation. It is true that, as natural impulses are not all equally praiseworthy and useful, it might happen that a duke's son would consider himself fit to be a good cook, or the son of an artisan might perhaps display the talents of a general.

It has been established by statistics that a certain percentage of infants of one year perish before the age of five, and a certain percentage before the age of ten.

When blooming youth approaches early manhood it is time to be on the alert, and resist and repel the veiled enchantress that crosses the path of the young man, in various forms, before he enters the portals of lawful wedlock.

Be this thy guard, be this thy strong defence,
A virtuous heart, and unstained innocence.

Who then is free?—the wise that can control,
And govern all the passions of the soul.

Of all social institutions, none exercises so much influence on the state as marriage. As the State is composed of families, the prosperity of a nation will always depend on the perfection of its matrimonial laws: they influence the peace of society, and the rights of persons and things; the sceptre and the throne itself are dependent on them. If the multiplication of our species is abandoned to the natural reins of the procreative instinct, society would be dragged into a state of misery and discord far below the present standard. Social institutions, in so far as they protect us from such misfortunes, deserve to be respected; but they must be freed from those shackles which, instead of repressing or regulating abuses, have a contrary effect.

As a consequent of violent and unrestrained passions many children are born whose lives cannot be prolonged. Feeble and ephemeral offspring result from bacchanalian and other excesses, which a natural instinct unceasingly foment.

Children should be trained at home by their mothers, or a governess or infant instructor who has been properly educated at a training school. The incipient man should be taught at the beginning of his career to make a becoming use of his life that is opening before him. His watchful guardian is, therefore, charged with the direction of his first ideas, and development of his first affections. Taking care of his health is only a part of the task imposed on a good nurse; she should prepare her

scholar to be a useful member of society. To whom shall this precious trust be confided, this frail and delicate being on whom so many hopes are placed?

Such a question would have been not only superfluous, but offensive in the ancient days when civilized people preserved in all their purity those simple manners and happy inclinations which nature inspires. Having joyfully entered wedlock, women nursed their own children then. Disquiet and agitations, which are inseparable companions of maternity, were but as pleasures to them. When mothers again deign to nurse their infants, manners will reform themselves; the sentiments of nature will revive in every heart; the country will be properly peopled.

The attractions of domestic life are the best preventive of bad morals. The prattle of children becomes agreeable; it makes the father and mother dearer to one another, and strengthens the conjugal bond between them. When the family is animated cheerful and affectionate, domestic cares are the dearest occupation of the wife, and the sweetest amusement of the husband.

A good physique is indispensable to a good nurse, but there are other qualities no less precious, and still more rare, although equally important to success. She must possess unalterable sweetness, habitual cheerfulness and imperturbable patience. Equanimity of temper is the only means of impressing the moral sense, and is eminently adapted to the early formation of patience, sweetness and resignation, and to produce in the child those qualities which, developing with age, form ultimately the useful citizen. Plato recommends that nurses should not repeat a multitude of ridiculous and absurd stories, for fear, he says, such prepossessions may give a false direction to the mind. What would the philosopher have said had he heard tales too often recounted in our homes, not only to children, but grown-up men and women? Nevertheless, nothing should be neglected when education is in question. Vices and virtues often appear innate, or dependent on individual organization, because we do not perceive the impressions which, from the most tender age have occasioned their development.

Poor and less civilized nations, especially if free, multiply rapidly; and there is daily proof that the indigent and laborious classes of society produce the greatest number of children. We do not see that the mortality of children is greater among the middle classes than in the higher and more opulent ranks—where the most assiduous care is given to the young shoots of illustrious ancestry. In fact, the poor, and not the rich, nurse their children. The excessive dread of the least indisposition of his little highness causes recourse to medicaments and precautions which often help to kill him. The want of liberty and motion, of breathing the pure air, of accustoming himself by degrees to the inclemency of the seasons, the misuse of sweetmeats, taint his constitution, and precocious pleasures enervate his strength. The poor, on the contrary, inure themselves to fatigue, accustom themselves to plain food, and fortify their lives by free and vigorous exercise suitable to age. The imperceptible degeneration of the higher classes of society is the outcome of their modes of life, while the inferior ranks make themselves strong and produce generations more robust and enduring, both in morals and physique.

Woe to those who do not profit by the experience of the past on this important sub-