

Let us now consider some of the causes that, in the face of a dishonor worse than death, of the loathing of society, and the untimely grave which opens to receive its victims, at the expiration of a few short years, plunge thousands of victims, yearly, into the awful abyss of sin and shame.

And, first among the causes of these ever-filling ranks, is the fact, that to many it is their birthright. What is the meaning of this significant word, "hereditary?"—descending from parent to child. Have you ever walked through the crowded wards of a city hospital, and watched the hectic cheek, the pallid brow, the panting breath, and heard with a shivering sensation the hacking cough? You have questioned, and the mournful answer has been,—“I do not expect to get better; the disease of which I am dying,—consumption—is in our family.” Or again, “I hope to get better,—none of our family are subject to this terrible consumption.” Look at yonder bold, wicked face, with painted cheek, and tawdry ornaments, flaunting her shame, and tell me what she is? The child of drunken, vicious, sensual parents. Vices, passions, evil tempers, dwarfed, crooked souls, with huge excrescences, destroying uniformity, are hereditary, as well as physical weaknesses and deformities. A large per-centage of the children of drunkards become sensual and depraved. Is there no help? Must this go on perpetually? Thank God, No! Every besotted, grovelling, drunken father and mother you pledge to total abstinence: every man or woman bespattered and bedraggled with impurity and vice you lift to a better life, will, perchance, be the means of bringing a glorious immortality to souls yet unborn. And here let me breathe a word in the ear of the young mother. Great issues—the character of future generations—are resting in your weak, trembling, inexperienced hands. You realize this but dimly, and as you kneel with clasped hands beside the little crib, you promise in broken accents, to train your boy or girl for good. But did you ever think, that long before this period, when your babe lay sleeping so mysteriously next your heart, you *were*, all unknown to yourself, forming its character. You were then, more decidedly and definitely than you can ever hope to do afterwards, stamping it with the likeness of God, the impress of truth and virtue or the opposite.

Our children are mysteries. Do you wonder, sometimes, at the delicate brain, the sensitive soul, or the passionate, licentious traits, the taste for strong drink so early manifested by your offspring? Let me give you an illustration from Mrs. Kerby's book on "Transmission." In a certain rough, uncouth, and passionate family was one daughter—beautiful, refined, gentle, book-loving, with soft lustrous eyes of heavenly blue. No reason could be given for this apparent freak of nature, but in conversation with Mrs. Kirby, the mother happened to state the following facts:—In the months before this little daughter was born, they were living down south in a rude cabin. A pedler called one day with a pack of books. The mother saw a pretty