

The warning is no less urgent against certain precepts which have become incorporated in the conventional rules of life. These run something after this sort, "Go it while you are young;" "Sow your wild oats in your youthful days." The drift of which is, dissipation is innocent, provided its cycle embraces no part of adult life; that its victim, when returned to himself, will prove a wiser and a better man; and as for the results, tarnished character, shocked or broken health, corrupted blood, of which he may or may not be conscious, these are his own, and only his own.

For no man whom God permits to touch the life-currents of the race is his own; he belongs to his children, and their children's children. It is no more true that his estate is theirs than it is that his individuality is theirs, with its wealth of health or its poverty of disease and taint.

Away then with the popular sentiment that it is a matter of indifference, beyond himself, how a young man may shape his course.

For be assured that health impaired and blood corrupted by his dissoluteness concern more than himself, though this were enough to shake him from his infatuate purpose; more than his mother or father, whose hair whitens faster at the spectacle of his folly than by the lapse of years; more than brother or sister whose brows light with joy at the memory of what he was, but blanch with shame at the record of what he is; more than his broken-hearted wife, who has been cheated by his vows and poisoned by his blood, and dishonoured by his name—yea, more than all these, they concern the ill-fated child or children through whom alone he is linked to the future of the race.

In conclusion, our subject plainly teaches that for any who are knowingly possessed of contaminated blood to enter into the parental relation is a crime.

I say crime, and no less so because human law and justice are too materialized to reach and suppress it. The crime is threefold.

1st. It is a crime against the offspring of such wedlock.

The wrong inflicted smites the defenceless, the poison scattered corrupts the innocent, and the blight entailed tarnishes the purity and beauty and glory of the otherwise undefiled.

2nd. It is a crime against the race.

Look over the world, and watch one generation from the womb to