

FOOD AND MORALITY.

TOLSTOI THINKS FLESH EATING LEADS TO IMMORALITY.

Moral Perfection Can Only be Attained Upon a Vegetarian Diet—Abstemiousness is the First Virtue in the Pursuit of Moral Perfection.

The distinguished Russian writer, Tolstoi, thus speaks in the New Review of animal diet in its relation to conduct and character.

"I only desire to establish the propositions that, in order to lead a moral life, it is necessary to observe a certain sequence in good actions; that if a man is serious in his aspiration to lead a good life the practical manifestations of that desire will necessarily unfold themselves in a certain order, and that in this order the abstemiousness (self-mastery) is the first virtue which he will have to cultivate. In the pursuit of the virtue of abstemiousness he must again observe a certain definite order, and the first step therein will be abstemiousness in food-fasting.

"In the practice of fasting the first thing from which he must abstain, if he really and truly aims at leading a good moral life, is animal food, and this for the intelligible reason that, not to speak of the passions it engenders and fosters, the consumption of animal food is plainly immoral, because it demands an act which does violence to our moral sentiments—viz., murder—and is encouraged and kept up only by men's greed of gold and their appetite for savory food. The reason why the first step in fasting and in right living is abstinence from animal food has been admirably formulated, not by one man only, but by all mankind in the persons of its most accredited representatives during the course of human history.

"But why, one may ask, if the illegality—i.e., immorality—of consuming animal food has been recognized by mankind for such a long period, have people nevertheless persisted down to the present in ignoring this law? This question naturally suggests itself to those who are prone to be guided less by the light of their own reason than by public opinion. The answer to the question, however, is that all moral progress (and moral progress is the essence of all progress whatever) is a work of time, is accomplished slowly, but that the sign of genuine progress, as distinguished from casual advance, is its uninterrupted continuance and its ever-increasing rapidity.

The vegetarian movement ought to fill with gladness the souls of those who have at heart the realization of God's kingdom upon earth, not because vegetarianism itself is such an important step toward the realization of this kingdom (all real steps are equally important or unimportant), but because it serves as a criterion by which we know that the pursuit of moral perfection on the part of man is genuine and sincere, inasmuch as it has taken that form which it must necessarily assume, and has truly begun at the very beginning.

"It is impossible not to rejoice at this, just as it would be impossible for people not to feel glad who, after having vainly endeavored to reach the top of the house by attempting to climb up the walls from various sides, at last meet at the bottom step of the staircase, and, crowding together there, feel that there is no way of reaching the top except by ascending that staircase and beginning with this first and lowest step."

Words Misspelled Mentally.

"I suppose," said a man who was looking in the dictionary, "that many of us arrive at mature years with a wrong impression of certain words. There is for instance, a word which I wish I could recall, but I can't, which was in some way originally impressed upon my mind, with an added letter; it is a word that is comparatively in common use. I grew up carrying that additional letter in the word and never thinking but that I had it right. I have no doubt that I had seen this word in print time and again in its correct form, but the absence there of the letter which I had in the word in my mind had never struck me. One day, however, it did strike me very plainly, and the word then looked so different from the one to which I was mentally accustomed, that at first I thought that it was misspelled, as I saw it in print, but I very quickly discovered that it was spelled there correctly. I remember now that for some little time hereafter it halted me whenever I encountered it, but it soon ceased to appear strange, and the proof that it was right, as I now saw it, was so overwhelming that it made me smile. I had no difficulty in erasing from my mind the old spelling and substituting the correct form.

"An acquaintance tells me that for years the impression upon his mind of the word repentant was repugnant. He didn't discover that the word was repugnant until he had occasion to write it, and then he could at first scarcely believe that he had had it wrong for so long a time. The simple explanation of his mistake was that he had transposed the letters in a hurried reading.

"Another acquaintance tells me that for some time in his youth he carried the word discolate in his mind as discolate. He says that always it almost seemed to him as though there was something the matter with discolate, and yet he thought it must be all right. It seems funny that he didn't look in the dictionary. That is what he did at last, and when he discovered his mistake he set the word in his mind, and he tells me that it hasn't been out of joint since."—New York Sun.

The Fireless Stormy Petrel.

During a recent trip across the Atlantic the passengers on one steamer had a vivid illustration of the endurance of the Stormy Petrel. Shortly after the ship left the Irish coast two or three of these birds were sighted at the stern of the ship. One had been caught at some previous time and its captured bit of red flannel or ribbon around its neck and let it go. The bit of red made the bird very conspicuous, and it could be easily identified. That bird with others that could not be so easily distinguished, followed the ship clear across the ocean. Rarely, during the daytime at least, was it out of sight and if for an hour or two it was lost to view while feeding on the refuse cast overboard, it soon reappeared, and the last seen of it was within a few miles of Sandy Hook, when it disappeared, perhaps to follow some outward bound steamer back to Ireland. When the fact is considered that the ship day and night went at an average speed of 20 miles an hour, the feat performed by the daring ocean traveler can be better appreciated. When or how it rested is inexplicable.

TRAVERSING THE NORTHERN SEAS.

Less Uncertainty Now Than There Was in the Days of Franklin.

The experience that has been brought down from the various Arctic expeditions, and more particularly from the different whalers which every year traverse much of the northern icy seas, has infused an element of certainty into Arctic navigation which could hardly have been realized by the heroes of a period twenty-five or thirty years ago. The capture by the Melville bay pack of McClintock's Fox in the latter part of August, 1887, could scarcely be paralleled to-day, according to Scribner's, except as the outcome of ignorance or disregard of every day knowledge. In an average season Melville bay can be traversed about as readily as almost any large body of water lying southward, while its earliest seasonal passage can be predicted with a precision almost akin to mathematical calculation. The hard pack-ice which has accumulated as the result of the winter's frost, and has to an extent been held together through the large bergs which are here and there scattered through it, usually shows the first signs of weakness between July 15 and 20.

Large cakes or pans of ice have by that time succumbed to the powerful oceanic currents that are directed against them, and detaching themselves from the parent mass float off to find new havens of their own. The weakening process continues until most of the ice has been either removed or melted away, and before the close of the fourth week of July little beyond shore ice (shorepan) remains to indicate the barrier which but a few days before rendered a passage all but impracticable. The trend of the ice is northward through the bay, then westward to the American side, and finally south to the open sea. It was the purpose of the relief expedition to reach the southern boundary of the Melville bay pack on or about the 20th of the month and there watch the movements of the ice until the opportunity for action arrived. An earlier traverse might possibly have been made through persistent "battering" of the ice, but the dangers incident to this form of navigation were such as to render slowness a prudent measure of safety.

A Vast French Electrical Scheme.

It has long been prophesied that the electric motor is destined to revolutionize the factory system, and the recent accounts of the past electrical scheme of the shrewd men of Lyons would indicate that a distinct phase in such a change is about to be entered upon. The rapid current of the river Rhone is to be utilized for the generation of electricity, which will be distributed in the city of Lyons and its suburbs. The waters of the river will be tapped about seventeen miles above the city, where twenty turbines, representing 1,000 horse-power each, will be established. These turbines, operated by the water precipitated upon them from a convenient height, will work the dynamos, and the electric current will be conveyed by six cables to distributing stations situated at various centers in the city. The special object in this undertaking is to benefit the smaller industrial enterprises, and with that view the supply of power to any single subscriber will be limited to fifty horse. Of these smaller industrial enterprises, that of the silk weaver is by far the most important. The other uses to which the project contemplates the application of electrical power are too numerous to be indicated separately; but they include the mixing of bread, the working of saws and other tools of sewing machines, printing machines, lathes and ventilators, the working of fans, elevators and coffee mills, hair cutting, bootblackening, the purification of sewage and the charging of baths for the cure of nervous and other affections. Electricity will also be largely used for traction and lighting, and a system of irrigation is already being planned. In fact every industry in the city will be carried on by electricity. The flow of water to the turbines is to be regulated by means of a system of sluices, locks, and compensating reservoirs, and when the stream has done the work required of it it will return to the Rhone by a special canal. The canal, while borrowing largely from the Rhone, will not in the least injure the navigation of the river. Very much to the contrary. From the point where the canal leaves the river, and onward to Lyons, the usually too fierce current will be greatly slackened in force, enabling vessels to pass up and down far more comfortably than at present, and keeping the navigation open during the greater portion of the year. The whole of the necessary capital has already been privately subscribed, chiefly by merchants, manufacturers and capitalists of the city of Lyons.—Chicago Times.

The Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter.

The recent discovery of the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter is attracting very little attention among scholars, and not unnaturally, for if the present theories concerning it are true it will have a direct bearing on at least one of the most difficult of modern critical problems, viz., the date and authorship of the Gospel of John. The Apocryphal Gospel of Peter was discovered about five years ago in a Christian cemetery of Elkhmin, Upper Egypt, but the translation has only recently been published in Paris. It is a fragment, and contains a narrative of the crucifixion and the resurrection. In substance it agrees with the gospels in their descriptions of these events. One noticeable difference is the use of the exclamation, "My power, my power, why hast thou forsaken me?" instead of "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" This phrase is held clearly to indicate that the fragment is of Docetic origin. The conclusion concerning the newly discovered document is thus stated in the "Guardian" by Arthur C. Headlam: "The newly published Apocryphal fragment contains a portion of the last Gospel of Peter; it was written probably in Antioch early in the second century, and was used by Justin Martyr, and it is a Gnostic compilation which makes use of all four canonical Gospels." This is the present belief of the critics, and is based on the best of reasons. Two exceedingly interesting questions are in part answered by this document: (1) If the Gospel of John existed prior to this document, as it plainly did, and if this belongs to the first quarter of the second century, then the reasons for believing that John wrote the Gospel which bears his name are greatly strengthened; and (2) here is another distinct answer to the oft-repeated inquiry whether any other writings of those early times contain an account of the life and death of Jesus Christ, for this fragment in its statement of facts is in substantial harmony with the Gospels.—Christian Union.

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