

mark the appalling proportion of *children* among the dead and dying, I mourn not with an unsoled sorrow. For while on the one hand, alas! many lives, pure, vigorous, beautiful, and rich in promise of stamina and worth to the race, by the decree of a dark and uninterpreted Providence, are broken off from and forever lost to the family of man; on the other hand, the vastly greater number bear into the tomb a deadly blighting and corrupting taint, which otherwise, through the attainment of puberty and successive germ vitalization, would become transmitted, and diffused into and fixed upon the life currents of the race. I am constrained to believe that over a large part of the record of the dead, whom we in our sorrow memorialize in marble flower-wreaths, and lambs, and doves, and angel forms, and whose early death we in our ignorance and short-sightedness deplore as untimely *loss*, our all-wise and all-pitying Heavenly Father writes *gain! gain* for the yet unborn, gain for the common family of man, gain for the race.

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The disease-blights of our individualities overreach the lives primarily afflicted by them, and through the same channels stamp themselves on the life-moulds of the race. If we trace their projection on the generic life-stream, we see them cropping out in one generation in anomalous forms of broken and enfeebled constitutions; in another, in appalling diseases, strewing all the way with chambers of suffering and anguish, with altars of sorrow and mourning and new made graves. Oh, the unmeasured reach and ruin of such a legacy.

What a motive is here for health culture, what a motive for protecting, with all possible care, developing and strengthening by all possible means, and cherishing with all possible prudence these marvellously wrought body temples which God in infinite love and mercy has vouchsafed to us. For such culture not only enables us to tabernacle in them the longer, and dwell in them the happier, through them to do the more, and bear the more, but secures to the race-mould which we transmit the ineffaceable stamp of strength and hope. Oh, the blessedness of such a patrimony! it is richer far than a title to great wealth, or a kingdom, or a crown—better far than the record of a great deed, or the reputation of a great name.

And what a warning there is here against the sacrilege of our approved modes of living.