

eradicated is too much to hope, and as Utopian as to expect that a high order of knowledge will ever be universal ; nevertheless, great mental attainments and perfect physical health have been realized, and therefore must be accepted as a standard for approximation. Nor is such a realization fortuitous. Long years before our era a wise philosopher of Greece declared that *chance* was nothing more than *cause* unperceived by human reasoning. Now, the welfare of the human race suffers in proportion to the survival of a belief that chance and not some ascertainable cause underlies the evils that endanger it. We are prone to shift the responsibility for our misfortunes upon others, and slow to take the blame on ourselves, where it commonly belongs. Life is certainly a desirable thing under favorable circumstances, and oftentimes we are the makers, or, at least, the modifiers of our environment. As a rule, bad health is the foundation of the greater part of the unhappiness of man. And yet nothing is more positive than that the preservation of good health depends upon a strict observance of the laws of being, which include those of inheritance.....

Nature is never cognizant of extenuating circumstances. Whatever a man's motive, he is equally a victim of a neglect to preserve his bodily well-being, whether his intentions be good or bad. We see death prematurely and with impartiality destroy the just and the unjust. We know that life bears many an old sinner to its utmost limit, and, contrariwise, that goodness is not incompatible with extreme old age.....

Life has been defined as "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." Hence, a partial failure of the inner man to meet the successive changes that are going on about him, means incomplete life or disease, and a complete failure of a similar adjustment signifies death. The transmission and the development of characters known as inheritance are made clear by the hypothesis of *pangenesis*, which, therefore, with your permission, let me give : "Every unit or cell of the body throws off gemmules or undeveloped atoms, which are transmitted to the

offspring of both sexes, and are multiplied by self-division. They may remain undeveloped during the early years of life or during successive generations ; and their development into units or cells, like those from which they are derived, depends on their affinity for and union with other units or cells previously developed in the due order of growth." Here we find an explanation of the manner in which predispositions to disease are probably transmitted, and, what is more, the particular form of inheritance known as *atarism*, or the recurrence of certain features after one or two generations of immunity. I dwell upon this matter of inheritance in order to show how futile the attempt to construct a perfect being out of imperfect material. No amount of therapeutic skill will ever be able to atone for the fatal mistake of unwise parentage.....

What affects the child, too, in some degree affects the parent. Indeed, the suffering of a parent over the misfortunes of the child is often greater than that of the child itself. It is important that man should understand the great power that inheritance exerts upon the race for good or for evil, so that he may make a wise departure in the right direction ; and that he should know that his daily life so regulates his habits of mind and body that each succeeding day is the sum total of the days that have gone before in its influence upon his future health and movements.

Confucius says : "When you know a thing, to hold that you know it : and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it—this is knowledge." The laity are of necessity more or less ignorant of the nature of disease. And it would seem that their ignorance is shared by no inconsiderable number of our profession. Every malady pursues a definite course, and ends in restoration, incomplete recovery, or in death. Now, I believe that those medical men who are familiar with the natural history of disease will admit that the milder forms of most acute affections will pass through their various stages and end in recovery without the assistance of a single drug. Moreover, I think they will be obliged to