

HOME JOURNAL

A Department for the Family

PEOPLE AND THINGS THE WORLD OVER

A leper in Wellington, New Zealand, a Maori, has been discharged after seven months in a hospital, cured by injections of the leprosy bacillus.

Premier McBride, of British Columbia, unveiled the monument recently erected at New Westminster to the memory of Simon Fraser, the discover of the Fraser River.

For the first time in the history of the British Pharmaceutical Society the Pereira Medal, the blue ribbon prize in pharmacy, has been won by a woman. The successful candidate is Gertrude H. Wren.

On Friday, the 18th of September, the birthday of Dr. Johnson was celebrated at the Three Crowns Inn, Lichfield, Stafford, by an eighteenth century supper of beefsteak pudding, followed by punch and "churchwardens."

A marvellous mirage was witnessed at Honolulu, an exact reproduction of the Pacific fleet appearing in the southern skies. The fleet is now approaching this port from Samoa, but its distance from Honolulu is not known.

Miss A. B. Warnock ("Katherine Hale"), of Toronto, recently gave a lecture at the Lyceum Club, London, on "Canadian Literature." The September issue of the Imperial Review gives a good synopsis of the address, and also a pretty fair picture of Miss Warnock.

Important frescoes representing religious subjects have been discovered on the walls of the Church of Santa Maria at Maranola, near Caserta. Unfortunately, the paintings have been spoiled by the breaking of the surface of the walls in order that the whitewash with which they are covered might hold.

New postal rates came into force in the United States on October 1st. Under the new scale letters not exceeding one ounce can be sent to England, Ireland, Scotland or Wales for two cents. It is expected that this rate will also be applied to mail sent to Germany, France and Italy in the near future.

The latest of the numerous attempts to prevent the decay of Leonardo da Vinci's celebrated painting of "The Last Supper," in the old monastery of Santa Maria della Grazie, which is now used as a cavalry barracks, has just been completed, after three months' work. The public will again be allowed to view the picture.

What Jane Addams is to Chicago, another young woman, Kate Barnard, is to the new state of Oklahoma. Miss Barnard is only twenty-seven years old, and her early life was one of hardship and poverty, but she has already proved her success as a leader, for the enactment of needed reforms. Her special object has been to secure the enactment in the new State Constitution of compulsory education and anti-child labor provisions. Without any solicitation on her part she has been made State Commissioner of Charities and Correction. She is planning to have brought before the Legislature the need for juvenile courts, for prison reform, a plan for treatment of the feeble-minded, and the need of homes for orphan children. Her success, says Henry B. Blackwell, in the *Boston Woman's Journal*, is a stronger argument than any direct form of advocacy for the enfranchisement of the women citizens of Oklahoma.

THE COUNTRY BOY DEPRIVED OF PLAY

In Montreal fourteen small boys were arrested, fined and imprisoned for playing on the grass at Dufferin Square. They had broken a city

enactment and destroyed city property, but should a city provide purely ornamental grass plots as a temptation to its young citizens before supplying play grounds, legitimate places for the exercise of the play spirit? One of the big Montreal dailies notices the incident editorially, and we quote a sentence or two:

"The boys committed a crime against society and must be punished. But who is to punish society's crime against the boys? Were not boys made to play? Do not kittens play, and kids and puppies and the young of every creature? Have not boys a right to play? Indeed they must play. Yet society has provided them no playground, and makes them into criminals from their earliest years for the mere act of playing. Society's crime is not against the boys only, but against itself. What is it storing up for itself in the future, by thus manufacturing criminals and anarchists out of innocent children, by telling these boys that to be good in society's eyes they ought not to play out in the sunshine, but sit on the curb at the door of the corner saloon that society has provided, and talk such talk as may there occur to them?"

The necessity of providing playing places for children is being impressed more and more on the thoughtful people of the big cities. It isn't a philanthropical movement or a charitable project, it is a sound business proposition of interest to every man who has any care for the welfare of the world beyond his own immediate generation.

In Canada the opportunities for developing the play spirit in children are not uncultivated for lack of room. Outside of perhaps half a dozen or a dozen cities there is unlimited room for young Canada to play. And these big cities are making arrangements as speedily as possible to provide a place for the boys. In smaller towns the children are usually fortunate in this respect. In the country, often, the play-spirit gets as little chance to grow as in the large centers of population. But the difficulty is not lack of space—that goes without saying. No one begrudges the youngster all the room he wants to gambol in, but he is begrudged the time to have some out-door fun. This isn't the unhappy fate of every country boy, but there are enough of them whose waking time is so filled up with chores and odd jobs that there isn't a minute between daylight and dark for them to devote to that play which is natural to every young healthy animal, human or other. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, of no interest to himself, or to anyone else. All play and no work makes him a lightweight. But there is a judicious mixture that should be possible in every home where there is a boy. Give the boys some time to play and they will find a place to play in.

THE PERSONALITY

When does the personality of the individual begin? We are born; we develop; we die. What is it that is born, develops and dies? Here is an infant a few hours old. To all appearance it is a little complicated mass of matter, which automatically performs certain functions, chief of which is the exceedingly necessary one of taking food into the system. A puppy does the same thing, and so does a jellyfish. Is there in this infant a personality distinct from the little body? Does this personality develop with the years, and what becomes of it when the body dies? It is a remarkable thing that science, with all its achievements, cannot answer any one of these questions. It can tell us much of the processes of life, but it cannot tell us what life itself is, and it is absolutely helpless when it comes to defining what the human personality is. The observations of everyone, old enough to make observations at all, lead to the conviction that there is a play, or, as we have called it for want of a better term, personality, in the human being.

Animals possess it, and when we endeavor to draw a line between the personality of animals and that of men, it is no easy matter to do so with certainty. Take the following instance: A resident of Victoria has a walk of nearly a mile from the car-line to his residence; he also has a dog. On dark nights the dog comes to meet him at the car. On moonlight nights he does not. The dog was not taught to do this; he took up the habit of his own accord. He is by no means an affectionate dog, but quite otherwise. His chief trait of character seems to be a sense of responsibility. Wherein does the personality of this dog differ from that of a man? And let us be quite consistent—what will become of this personality when the dog dies? We are accustomed to draw a distinction between instinct and reason; but no one can establish where the line of demarcation is.

If it is true that nothing that exists can be destroyed utterly, it follows that this personality, or whatever it may be that constitutes that which we mean when we speak of an individual, must continue, although not necessarily in the same form. This also must be true of the vital property of plant life. The idea that anything that is, or has been, whether it is matter or force, can be annihilated is unthinkable. Having been, it must continue to be, although it may, in the course of eternity, assume an infinite variety of forms. It is quite possible that the attributes which we share in common with the brute creation assume at death some other kind of existence; but have we a personality that is the property of humanity alone? And if so, has it such a separate entity that it can exist independently of the body? One of the objects of scientific research is to get an answer to this question, for science refuses to accept the traditions of mankind, whether they are preserved in one form or another. The man of science properly pays no more regard, in a scientific investigation, to the teachings of any so-called sacred literature than he does to the guesses of a child, or his own intuitions and beliefs. He must cast all these things aside when he seeks to ascertain if the personality of mankind exists in an individual form after the process known as death. At present it may be said that the question is unsolved, although some persons, who have pursued their investigations in a scientific method, are persuaded that they have had proof of such existence. One the other hand, there are others who think they have discovered evidence of something, which they call by a variety of names, and which seems to be a counterpart of the physical body. This is as far as investigation can be said to have gone with any degree of certainty. It has raised suggestions, which seem to have a strong semblance of probability, but has no certain word to speak as to the conscious existence of the human personality after death.

The argument from human consciousness has its limitations. It sounds reasonable enough to say, "I think, therefore I am." There does not seem to be any way of escaping that conclusion; but can we logically take a step further and say that "I am, therefore I shall be?" But if there are limitations to the arguments from consciousness, so also there are limitations to logic, and the experience of mankind shows that there are phenomena, which, to use the words of the Apostle Paul, "are spiritually discerned". From these the existence of a personality, distinct from the body and capable of being influenced by forces that are not physical, can be inferred with as great certainty as anything else whatever can be inferred. The result of the whole matter seems to be, that man is, in one aspect of his being, the image of his Creator, and this is the case; the personality must begin with birth and cannot end with death. At least these things seem to be the contrary to prove that there is no personality after death.