

The Family Circle.

SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE IN THE NURSERY.

TEMPERANCE is God's law for the body.

Accepting this broad definition, we cannot over-estimate the value of "temperance teaching in the schools." But this part of the child's education should not be committed entirely to the public school. The best, though perhaps not the most immediate result of the scientific instruction bill, will be the education of mothers. The agitation and discussion necessary to place this law upon the statute books of fourteen states must prove educative; and in those states where the movement has failed, the labour is not lost. The seed sown shall soon spring up.

Whatever the child learns grows into his mind, becoming part of it, and forming the grain of his character. The learning of later years is adventitious—it lies upon the surface. It is the difference between veneer and "real wood." The same current of blood that stamps an impression upon the youthful memory, carries building material to the growing brain, and these early impressions enter into the solid masonry upon which manhood is built, while the knowledge acquired in maturity is but paint or whitewash.

If our premises be true, we should teach first that which is most important in the realm of the child's comprehension. Can anything be more important than knowledge of the habits upon which depend health and vigorous physical life? Fortunately the young mind can understand the physical law at a very early age. Teach the child the true value of the body; that is not him, but his—the house built of God, which he is to occupy during his early life. He will see while very young that a fine house is desirable; and too that people are judged somewhat by the houses in which they live, and by the way they keep their houses. Don't let him think you send him to bed early to get rid of his noise; but tell him of his tiny cell-workmen who are building his house; how they do most of their work when he is asleep, and the very best in the first part of the night. He can understand that we need less sleep because our houses are finished, and they have only to keep up repairs for us, while for him they are really building up flesh and bone.

His imagination will make these wonderful little laborers more real to him than the microscope makes them to us. Tell him how they have to get building material from the blood, just as the mason has to use brick and mortar for a wall. Each set of cells, or workmen, select the material for their special use. The bone builders use lime and the brain builders phosphorus and many other substances, but all must get supplies from the blood. All use a great deal of water. Alcohol takes the water supply as a great thirsty

beast might drink the water from the mason's tank, leaving none to mix the mortar with; then the work stops. Then it saps the water from tissue already formed, leaving it tender and brittle, just as a wall begins to crumble after fire has burned the water out of the cement. Doctors call that "fatty degeneration." A great deal of oxygen is necessary too. There isn't much oxygen in tobacco smoke! Before this your little philosopher will ask, "What is blood made of?" When he hears it is made from what we eat, he will have interest as well as pleasure in his food, and you will have power over his appetite. He will begin to exercise self-control, that divinest force in human nature. Explain that the tooth builders must have lime phosphate for the enamel of the tooth, as surely as a mason must have plaster-of-paris to hard finish a wall. The chief source of lime phosphate is the grains, but only a very little is found in the white part of any grain.

He will soon learn to like brown bread, corn bread and the grits especially if his mother cultivates her taste as well as his. Tell him the meat makes so much waste the builders have to stop to clear away the rubbish. Milk does not hinder them so. Even pups, and little wolves, and lion whelps, who eat flesh entirely when grown, eat only milk when they are small and their mothers take care of them. Or you may save him from forming that unnatural carnivorous appetite which leads to the craving for stimulants, and of itself causes some kinds of fatal disease. Four of our teeth are "flesh tearers." From this we may get a hint of the proper proportion of meat in our dietary.

Tell him coffee and tea hurry and worry the nerve builders so they cannot possibly do their work well, while beer and whiskey make them so dizzy that everything they do is crooked. Thus every fact and law is idealized, or rather materialized, and physiology to the imaginative child—and another too—is a fairy tale. To do this the mother must acquire the hard scientific facts, and let her imagination play with them till she can give them to the child in pleasing form. Every woman has a touch of Mother Goose in her nature. The trouble is, mothers neither learn nor think of these things. They may understand the movements of the heavenly bodies, but they know very little of human bodies. I do not underrate "higher education" for women, but I do affirm that the highest education for women is that which makes her the best mother. And if I were talking to men instead of women, I would say, "that it is the best culture for you which fits you for the priestly, kindly function of fatherhood."

Inspire the child with ambition for a fine body, and he will do what has to be done to secure it. Show him what is involved in physical culture. The body is the instrument; not music, but the melody of life largely depends upon the perfection of the instrument. He may make it a noble creature, with every nerve steadied and every muscle trained to do his bidding, or he may neglect and abuse it till becomes jaded and low-spirited; or, most disastrous of all he may allow it to become his master. Then both horse and rider go down in the hot sea of sensualism.

Teach by precept and example that physiological law is God's law, and transgression is sin.—*W. C. T. U. Tract.*