

Contemporary Thought.

A FALLACIOUS notion has somewhere crept in that an *intellectual* man must be below par *physically*, and that the one faculty is necessarily cultivated at the expense of the other. The old proverb, *mens sana in corpore sano*, has been flouted as an absurdity. So much, very briefly, for the first cause of race-degeneration; the second, and the one to which this paper would direct attention, is the influence of hereditary diseases. This factor has never received the attention it should have had at the hands of the writers on social science. The races of which we have been speaking had little of this element to contend with. The weaklings were either deliberately exposed and left to die, as in the case of the Spartans, or if they attained maturity they were held in such low esteem that they willingly kept in the background. Look for a moment at our modern civilization, and mark its diametrically opposite tendency. Every day hospitals are being erected to nurture the diseased and imperfect specimens of our race, and every year thousands of children are by skill and care saved from the death to which Nature would consign them. All this accords with our enlarged notions of humanity, and reflects great credit on the zeal of the philanthropist and the science of the physician, but it exerts a baneful effect on the race. To one who has had access to any large city hospitals, it is a pitiful sight to see the multitude of children who are tidied over a few years, and sent out into the world branded with an hereditary taint, to propagate their wretched breeds. The limits of this paper will not allow any extended statistics, nor the nature of it warrant a special discussion of hereditary diseases, but there are two whose effects are apparent to all, consumption and insanity. The former, consumption, using the term in its widest sense, has for ages produced the most frightful ravages. For example, in England, from 1837 to 1841, of the total number of deaths from all causes sixteen per cent. were from consumption. In Philadelphia, from 1830 to 1849, the death-rate was one of consumption to six and a half from all other cause, or about fifteen per cent.—*Dr. George J. Preston, in Popular Science Monthly for September.*

To the thoughtful woman the question recurs again and again, What can be done with the purposeless, untrained women willing to work for wages but unable to spend time and money in a doubtful attempt to fit themselves for a particular occupation? A woman's exchange is chiefly a storehouse for undesirable articles, a few of which are bought in pity. It is a device of those who are earnestly seeking to help their fellow-women, and not a natural outgrowth of the law of supply and demand. The training school begins at the foundation; it fits a girl to hold her own, asking no favours. A woman's duty begins with the woman nearest to her by ties of blood and affection, and stretches out to those accounted *less fortunate* than herself; but it does not end there. There are women far above her in the scale of wealth, perhaps, who need a wider outlook and broader sympathies; who need to be drawn out of themselves and their exclusiveness, who need to be interested in the great, busy, struggling world outside of their own circle, and to feel that upon them rests, in

part, the responsibility of making it better and purer. In some ways they are more restricted than the woman who sews for them. The wife of a teamster, if she have the time, can take up any remunerative employment, and her friends neither question nor repudiate her. The wife of a millionaire, possessed of unlimited leisure, must be idle. For "he also is idle who might be better employed." If she can endure the epithet of "peculiar" she may give her life to the investigation and improvement of tenement houses or devote herself to a particular line of study; otherwise her work for her fellow-men and women will be confined to charity balls and fashionable bazaars. To do aught which would bring her a return in money is not to be thought of for an instant. And from the wife and daughter of the millionaire to the girl who starves behind a counter rather than go into a comfortable kitchen, the same power is at work. Alas! how weak we are! Women may say that all honest work is ennobling, and all voluntary idleness belittling, and that, in comparison with the woman who never lifts a finger to serve another, nor has a thought above her own adornment and her social conquests, the woman who does the work of her kitchen if she do it well, is worthy of all the honour; but the conviction has not yet become a part of them.—*Ella C. Lapham in the Forum.*

THE death of Paul Hamilton Hayne, the lyric poet of the South, at his home, Copse Hill, Ga., the 7th ult., removes from the republic of letters an ornament and exemplar. His death will be lamented throughout the country, but among his own people of the South, whose affections he won in camp and field as well as in his study, his departure will be especially mourned. He was born January 1st, 1831, at Charleston, S. C. He was educated at Charleston College, from which he graduated in his 20th year. He immediately prepared himself for the profession of the law, and was admitted to practice at the bar, but having a taste and desire for literary work, and being in financial circumstances that would permit him to enjoy and prosecute his chosen labours, he abandoned the law and entered the literary field with the zeal and inspiration that characterized his continued and successful efforts. He laboured in both prose and verse, and the third year of his efforts resulted in the production of his first volume of poems. This was favourably received, and added to the reputation he had gained as editor of different Southern periodicals. In 1857 his second volume appeared, and his third in 1860. At the commencement of the Civil War he laid down his pen and took up the sword in support of the Confederate cause, losing none of the courage and enthusiasm that attended his literary work. He occupied a position on Governor Pickens' staff, but his military duties and the exposure of army life soon wrecked his delicate physical organization, and he again took up his pen, supporting with song the cause he was unable to defend with the sword. At the close of the war he found himself without means and dependent upon his literary efforts for subsistence. These he pursued with a wrecked fortune and health, showing an ardour abated only by his declining strength. The work accomplished in his late years was extensive, and embraced almost the full scope of letters. He

reviewed publications for several journals, and contributed largely to the Southern press and many of the leading periodicals of the country. His war songs, stately, as an army and warm as his Southern heart, have an abiding place in the Southern home, while his lyrics descriptive of nature and the beauties in harmony with which his heart was attuned, are universally admired, and will live as long as there are hearts to love the true, the beautiful and the good.—*The Current.*

FROM earliest times there have been teachers and students; from earliest times great-minded men have given themselves to the work of education. We see throughout Europe ancient seats of learning cared for by governments and reverently regarded. More than this, during the past two, even three centuries, enthusiastic efforts have been made to found education upon its true bases. Most fitting opportunities were granted to men who thought they had the science of the matter; experiment after experiment was tried; and yet to-day we find ourselves in the very thick of the conflict, on the threshold of great changes, and apparently no nearer the education-science. Naturally the question arises, Why is this so? as naturally as also the further question, What have we to expect? These inquiries are vitally related, and the answer to the second follows from the answer to the first. Past endeavours have not given us a science of education because, from the nature of the case, education is the last subject that can become a science. Who is it whom we seek to educate? Man. What is man? Evidently if we are to educate man upon scientific methods we must know what man is; we must know the laws of his being, the relation of these laws to one another, and to the end for which man is made. The science of education, therefore, presupposes a true psychology, and a knowledge of the formation of character based upon this psychology. In our country so-called educational treatises are written by persons who have neither psychology nor minds to comprehend it; and, while these works may have much valuable practical matter, they should not be received as in any sense scientific. With one exception ("Education," by Herbert Spencer) the only works which may claim to pretend to treat education scientifically are German, and every one of these bases itself directly upon some psychological system. I need but name in illustration A. H. Niemeyer's "Ground Principles of Education," Fred Schwarz's "Instruction-Book of Pädagogik," as coming directly out of the Kantian thought, or Miss Anna C. Brackett's translation of "The Philosophy of Education," by Professor Rosenkranz, the biographer of Hegel, as an application of Hegelian thought to education. We of to-day are feeling the influence of an entirely different philosophical system from either of those above mentioned. Our educational methods are being remarkably and rapidly modified. This change has received its psychological expression in England, and Mr. Spencer may be regarded as the representative thinker of this new school. Here the idea of man as to his nature and the laws of his development is distinct and peculiar; it gives us an education based almost entirely upon instruction in the physical sciences.—*From "Some Outlines from the History of Education," by Prof. W. R. Benedict, in Popular Science Monthly for September.*