

COLERIC PEOPLE.

CHAPTER ON THE ADVANTAGES OF SERENITY.

Uncontrolled Passion Opposed to Longevity of Life—Health of Mind and Body Co-Dependent—Facts for the Hot Blooded to Ponder Over.

Regarding the matter merely from the hygienic standpoint, effort can be expended for the obtaining of few more valuable possessions than a calm and even temperament. Such a temperament does not rush to extremes, it is not swept by whirlwinds of feeling, and almost any circumstances it can endure.

Sir Isaac Newton, for instance, led the placid and uneventful if toilsome existence of a student and brain worker. The serenity of his days seems only to have been disturbed by the controversy with Leibnitz regarding the invention of the fluxional method, and the quarrel with Flamsteed, the astronomer royal. How great his equanimity was—in other words, how thoroughly reason was the controlling element in his composition, to the subjection of the passions—appears in the well known story with regard to his dog Diamond. And what was the result? His health was vigorous and remained unimpaired to within a few years of his death. He lost but one tooth in all his life. He never wore glasses. He never grew bald, and he lived to the ripe old age of 85 years.

Contrast with his the brief career of another famous English poet, Lord Byron. Born as he was by every passion, and the victim of that most wearing emotion, chronic hate, a spirit that furnished the arena in quick succession for the most intense and extreme revolutions of feeling allowed its possessor an earthly existence of but thirty-six short years. Our own calm Emerson, than whom, probably, no man that ever lived was less the prey of gusts of feeling, reached the age of 83. Eliza Follen, who was a sort of emotional shuttlecock, was miserable all his life, and died at 40. Edmund Keen, not only in his professional capacity, was an actor—and an actor is frequently obliged to feign the most vehement passions, which is commonly supposed to be the next worst thing to actually feeling them—but in his private life was a man of most erratic and very temperamental. Keen himself was a stage for the drama of the passions, and the consequence was he was frequently ill, and survived but a few years beyond 40.

Passion has been too lightly defined as any emotion of the soul which affects the body and is affected by it. Such is the sympathy existing between the mind and body, the mental feelings exercise a potent influence on the physical organs, while the latter in turn affect the former. The effect of mental emotions is manifested in the vital functions, and certain states of these functions serve in a like manner to awaken the different passions. The passions founded on pleasure seem to act as a universal stimulant to all vital action. Circulation is quickened, the blood distends the vessels of the system, the face brightens, the skin assumes a ruddy tint, the muscles grow stronger and invite activity. The whole body is reanimated—in short, every function responds to the vitalizing influence of the happy moral condition. As Haller says: "Love, hope and joy promote perspiration, quicken the pulse, promote circulation, increase the appetite and facilitate the cure of diseases." While joy and kindred emotions thus contribute to health by inducing a more active performance of all the vital functions, as with all other stimulants, the pleasurable feelings become painful if the bounds of moderation are exceeded.

On the nervous system the effect of the painful emotions is manifested by depression, derangement and, possibly, destruction of the vital energies. The same agencies influence the various secretions by increasing, diminishing or vitiating them. When the mind is severely and unpleasantly agitated, dryness of the mouth testifies to the suppression of the salivary secretion. This is proved "by the well known test, often resorted to in India for the discovery of a thief among the servants of a family, that of compelling all the parties to hold a certain quantity of rice in the mouth during a few minutes, the offender being generally distinguished by the comparative dryness of his mouthful."

Under the influence of disturbing passions certain secretions become corrupted and even acquire poisonous properties. It is a known fact that the bile of an animal goaded to desperation heels less rapidly, and is attended with greater inflammation than one administered when the system is unimpaired by the excited passion. Great mental disturbance in the mother hinders or vitiates the secretion of her milk, and it becomes harmful to the nursing child. The contrast between the physiological effects of the pleasurable and painful emotions, and their influence upon health, are obvious to all. In the faces of the happy and confident is seen the bright glow of natural vigor, while the drawn, careworn and pallid features of the sad and despondent testify to inward suffering.

In habitual irritability or fretfulness of temper, hatred, revenge, envy and jealousy, and, in fact, in all dispositions of the mind characterized by bitter feelings toward others, a measure of anger is almost necessarily blended. The effect upon the bodily health of the mind harassed by passions of this nature is to propagate derangements and infirmities. The appetite lessens, digestion is impaired, and then follow other functional disorders. The nervous system suffers from continued mental irritability, and hysteria, headache, and other painful affections often owe their origin to this prejudicial influence. Physicians well know that when the system is laboring under disease a temper amiable and tranquil under the little ills and crosses of life encourages recovery, while one easily inflamed by the base passions obstruct it.

While the malevolent feelings, with which anger is blended are the promptings of an ill-conditioned mind or uncontrolled temper aroused by external influences, they may be excited by unhealthy states of the organs, and thus originate within the body. In certain functional disturbances and diseased conditions, the mind sometimes becomes disturbed, and the disposition peevish and irritable. Previous naturally amiable and patient under outward annoyances will often become anxious and fretful when attacked with bodily infirmities. Disturbances of the stomach, liver or other important organs are thus active in perverting reason, and in rendering the disposition suspicious, peevish and morose.—Boston Herald.

CORPULENCY OF THE SINGER.

What a Celebrated Tenor Says of His Own Physical Rotundity.

The corpulency of opera singers is very often the cause of remark, but you rarely hear it accounted for except that they have an easy time and live on the fat of the land. Neither is true. They do not have an easy time, nor do they glut themselves with the fat of the land. They are usually a self denying set of people, and must necessarily be so if they would maintain the excellency of their art. They are, however, peculiar. In spite of all their hardships they get fat. But it is a healthy fat, and does not incumber or depress them in the least. You never heard of a singer suffering from excessive corpulency.

"It is a kind of light, windy flesh we have," said a celebrated tenor, speaking of himself. "I look as soggy and heavy as an elephant, but I feel as light as a cork. I often disguise and dance in the ballet for the fun of the thing. My constant habit is to breathe free and full, asleep or awake, and that puffs me out. I know I'm laughed at by people with little, withered up stomachs no bigger than your hand, but they are fools and don't know how to live. Why, an opera manager can tell whether you are a good singer or not just about as well by the size of your abdomen as he can by hearing your voice. In applying for an engagement a singer always sends his waist measure, and the manager invariably requests it."

"But all opera singers are not big around," I said. "No, but they are exceptional. And sometimes you see a little man or woman who can sing like a bird, but they are most always physically defective or diseased. The rule is no puff no sing. Now, I swell biggest in warm climates. But when I was last in Italy, after singing two months magnificently with extraordinary rotundity, I felt that my waistbands were gradually loosening. It alarmed me, for I knew if I didn't begin to swell soon I was a goner. I noticed my abdomen growing gradually less, my voice losing its strength and tone, and in order to avoid a complete collapse I had to rest. It is strange and unaccountable, this rising and falling of the operatic abdomen. It is peculiar to ourselves. Speakers are not affected in this way. When one is dwindling he is spoken of by the profession as being 'on tap.'—Chicago Times.

Artillery Prelude at Gettysburg.

From the exertions and the anxieties of two days of strife the armies had fallen lethargy, a silence that told of nerves and muscles worn out. The morning of the third slipped away. A spirit of battle at Culp's Hill drove off the enemy there, and men at a distance turned over to hear the news and drowsed again. While some slept, others cooked and ate, then the sleeping and the waking, the hungry and the filled, exchanged places. From the description of Samuel Wilkeson, who was at Meade's headquarters, and whose son Bayard was now lying still in death just beyond the lines, this faithful record of the hour has been preserved. "A silence as of deep sleep had fallen upon the field of battle. Our army cooked and ate and drowsed. In the shadow of the tiny farm houses where Gen. Meade had made his headquarters, lay wearied staff officers. There was not wanting to the peacefulness of the scene the singing of a bird, which had a nest in the perch tree within the tiny yard of the white washed cottage. In the midst of its warbling a shell screamed over the house, instantly followed by another, and in a moment the air was full of the most complete artillery prelude to an infantry battle that was ever exhibited. It made a very hell of fire that amazed the oldest officers. The shell burst in the yard—burst next the fences garnished on both sides with the hitched horses of aides and orderlies. The fastened animals reared and plunged with terror. One fell, then another, until fifteen lay dead and mangled, still fastened by their harness, and having the expression of being wickedly tied up to the torture. These brute victims of cruel war touched all hearts.

The Carnage at Gettysburg.

The expressions often found in battle accounts of "heaps of slain" and "rows of dead" are a fool for ridicule in this skeptical age, but a few figures showing the condition of things at Gettysburg will prove that in this case at least these terms are not mere extravagances of speech. The killed outright and mortally wounded were, in round numbers, 8,000. Of the 25,000 wounded and otherwise disabled, probably 12,000 more, at the outset, were prostrated, and the total number to be accounted fallen is 20,000, an army that, if placed in four ranks as soldiers ordinarily march, would reach nearly four miles, or a distance equal to the whole from Fort Mifflin to the Round Tops. Of course these prostrate men did not all lie in unbroken lines, nor were they to be seen all at one time. But the heaviest losses were on open ground, where the fire had a clear sweep, and although there is much scattering of the ranks when those not killed outright are slain, losses are so severe at the vital points on the several fields fought over that language could not paint the scene with milder words than "carnage" and "blood stained sod strewn with the dead and the dying, all mingled in ghastly heaps and rows."

One Way of Getting a Drink.

"A neat trick was played on me by an old toper the other day," remarked an East Side saloon keeper. "The old soak brought in a black bottle and asked for 50 cents worth of whisky. I drew it and hung on to the bottle while he went through his pockets after the silver. Presently he put on a look of dismay and said he had lost the money. 'All right,' says I, and turned out the whisky and put the bottle on the bar. He took it and went away, saying he'd be back after the inhibitor presently. He didn't come, however, but five minutes later I found him sitting on a horse block around the corner poking something in the bottle with a stick, and after every poke turn out a thimbleful of whisky in a cup. I seized the bottle and made an investigation. What do you think I found? Why, the old rascal had forced a sponge as big as my clenched fist into it, and this had soaked up a glassful of my whisky when I filled the bottle."—Buffalo Express.

To Make Knee Breeches Comfortable.

There are people who maintain that knee breeches are vastly "becoming" and "comfortable." Now, as to "becoming," that is stark absurdity, contrary to all experience and reason. The only way to make knee breeches comfortable is to imitate the now almost extinct Irish peasant breeches wearer and habitually forget to button them at the knee. As to the much abused steel pen coat, it is not beautiful, certainly. But properly constructed, as our grandfathers wore it, made double breasted and to button across the chest, it is a remarkably good garment. For any kind of bodily work or exercise it is absolutely unrivaled. It has no useless skirts to flap about and impede the movement, and the pockets, well out of the way, are only inconvenient when you sit down. It is the best walking coat ever devised, whereas the modern frock coat is about the worst and most cumbersome.—London Truth.

WAYS OF SHOPPERS.

MONDAY THE BARGAIN HUNTERS' DAY IN THE STORES.

Wednesday the Farmer's Wife Comes to Town—Thursday the "Lady Help" Comes Forth in Her Glory—A Rush on Saturday.

"Every day brings forth a different class of shoppers," said Inspector Knox, of Boston's police headquarters, to a reporter. The inspector is one of the most astute detectives of shoplifters and pickpockets in the police business, and from long habits of observation has had "size up" a crowd with remarkable quickness and accuracy. He can usually tell at a glance whether a person in a big dry goods store is "straight" or "crooked." There is something about every thief that "gives him away." Notwithstanding the disguises which they adopt, female shoplifters and pickpockets can never deceive Inspector Knox. The way they act when they meet him is often amusing. The detective pretends never to see them, and they at once begin maneuvering to ascertain whether he has really noticed them. Wherever there is a mirror or a store window that offers an opportunity to see what is going on without looking around, the "suspects" strive in ingenious ways to study the inspector's face and eye.

The officer has been too long in the business to get caught napping in this way, and the thief will gradually come to believe that he has not been observed. It is, of course, the object of the officer to make a case against the suspect, and at the same time to find out in what manner stolen property is likely to be disposed of. The thing then to do is to shadow the suspect through all the store windows until he may be seen finally to the lair. This is a most difficult thing to do, as the thief who has had experience will always make a number of "bluffs" at going home, perhaps calling at half a dozen different places, going in front doors and out back ones, until the officer has lost the scent.

DAY FOR BARGAIN HUNTERS.

"Monday," said Inspector Knox to the reporter, "is the bargain hunters' day. They have taken all the Sunday papers just to see what they have got to offer. The news and literary articles have no interest to them. They grab up the paper as soon as they get out of bed Sunday morning, and all day long they pore over it, reading the cut down prices of shirts, dusters, dress goods, house furnishings, including tin pans and brooms, and all the rest, and they can hardly wait for Monday to come, they are so anxious to get their hands on what is offered. Some of the literary articles have no interest to them. They grab up the paper as soon as they get out of bed Sunday morning, and all day long they pore over it, reading the cut down prices of shirts, dusters, dress goods, house furnishings, including tin pans and brooms, and all the rest, and they can hardly wait for Monday to come, they are so anxious to get their hands on what is offered. 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