THE ACQUIRED BLOOD-RELATIONSHIP OF THE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND, AND CONVERSELY IN A LESS DEGREE.*

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THE words of Adam—"They shall be one flesh," are literally fulfilled when a woman conceives, for she comes to partake of her husband's corporeal qualities, and to fall under the mental sway of her lord, according to the words—"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

By the term "one flesh," I do not mean the temporary union of the organs of reproduction, but the modification of the constitution of the female by the influence of the male element of the embryo.

Sterile marriages produce comparatively little modifying power, and no similitude of the husband. The following are the propositions that I put forth:

1. Impregnation impresses the similitude of the husband on the wife, and effects other changes in the physical constitution of the female.
2. Infertile union effects changes to a less degree than fruitful marriage, and does not impress similitude.
3. The mental constitution undergoes alterations corresponding with the corporeal changes.
4. The corporeal and the mental constitution of the husband are changed by union, but no similitude of the wife is acquired.
5. Predisposition to disease can be engrafted by union, chiefly when impregnation results.
6. Actual disease can be engrafted similarly.
7. Predisposition to insanity, suicide, drunkenness, and crime can be engrafted by union, chiefly when impregnation results.
8. Actual insanity, suicide, drunkenness, and crime, can be engrafted similarly.

I proceed to consider the foregoing propositions. I am not prepared with facts to substantiate all that I have advanced, but I put the subject in a definite form, so that it may receive attention, and meet with diligent inquiry; for it is a matter of the highest importance to divines, moralists, physicians, and jurists. It is admitted by all men that the mind is influenced by corporeal conditions; therefore, if physical changes be granted, mental must ensue.

The moulding of the wife to her husband in body and mind is a natural process; and the importance of monogamy and of chastity in preserving purity of breed, as well as of soul, is apparent.

The similitude of offspring to their parents does not come within the scope of this paper; but it would be an interesting inquiry to discover whether the likeness of the first husband be transmitted to children by subsequent marriage. An influence of this nature is known to exist in the females of dogs and horses; whether it is observed in the vegetable kingdom, or not, I do not know. The transmission of corporeal and mental qualities should be investigated together with similitude.

First Proposition. I appeal to the artistic judgment of observers for evidence of similitude between husband and wife. Photography might render assistance to this study by a series of portraits, showing resemblance increasing *pari passu* with the number of children.

The second kind of evidence that I adduce is

theoretical. I say that, since the mother conveys to her child the image of the father, she retains the impression herself; she retains the negative and prints off the positive (using the language of photography). I further say, that the mother's organisation becomes impressed positively from the negative in the ovary, and that a maternal positive portrait occurs, as well as a foetal.

Similitude is only one of the physical changes in the organisation of the woman, that occur through impregnation. I do not allude to the alterations effected by the use of the reproductive organs. I assert that physiological idiosyncrasies are impressed on the wife equally with pathological, but I am not prepared with proof to support this assertion.

Second Proposition. Wives that do not conceive retain much of their maiden qualities; nevertheless, changes are observed.

If it be granted that the sperm and other generative products of the male be absorbed, they cannot fail to cause changes in the constitution of the female, although less than those effected by an embryo.

Some of the alterations are doubtless due to the performance of the generative functions, and are not directly dependent on the absorption of the male products.

Third Proposition. In bringing forward this proposition I am desirous of offering a few remarks on the relations of soul and body; I accept Waitz's views as expressed in his *Introduction to Anthropology*, (p. 9), as follows:—

"As man appears in history neither as a living body, such as physiology describes him, nor as a spiritual being, as conceived by psychology, but as a combination of physical and psychical life, he must be considered as a whole in the reciprocal action of his physical organisation and his psychical life, for it is only as a whole that he appears as the elementary basis of history."

Having premised this much, I affirm that the mind of the wife becomes altered in two ways; viz., by the influence of the husband's mind on her mind, also by corporeal changes.

Traits of the husband's character, and alterations of the mental faculties, are noticeable, and the wife finally falls under the sway of her lord.

I attribute to the conjoint influence of mind upon mind, and body upon mind, the attachment that exists between husband and wife under all kinds of usage. Exceptions occur, but the rule obtains. It may be objected that conjugal attachment is one of the specific qualities of animals; thus it occurs in the fox, whilst it is wanting in the dog.

It may also be objected that spaniels show attachment to their masters under ill usage, as well as under good treatment, and that this quality of adhesiveness is purely mental and free from corporeal source or intermixture.

I admit the force of these objections; still I urge that conception augments the adhesiveness of the wife's mind to a very great degree.

Fourth Proposition. If it be granted that the generative fluids of the female are absorbed by the male, changes in the body and mind of the husband must ensue. There is this difference between the sexes; the sperm is received by the one, whilst the germ is not received, unless accidentally during the catamenia. Old women say that husbands are affected by sympathetic sickness during the pregnancy of their wives. If there be truth in this assertion, the circumstance may occur through absorption of fluids changed by the state of gestation.

Fifth Proposition. Predisposition to disease, such as gout, rheumatism, tuberculosis, cancer, asthma,

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etc., can be engrafted on both sexes, but chiefly on the female, because of the potency of conception. I make the assertion, whilst I am only expectant of proof.

Sixth Proposition. I exclude the consideration of local syphilis, and other local ailments of the generative organs. There is indisputable evidence of the communication of disease to woman by the foetus *in utero*, as observed in constitutional syphilis. There are numerous instances of the wife resisting the influence of diseased sperm, until conception occurs, and there are a few instances of perpetual resistance. It is usual for the woman to become less and less susceptible, miscarrying at first, and subsequently bearing children prematurely, then maturely.

It is an important question, what constitutional diseases can be engrafted by sexual union? Can phthisis be so communicated? Wives that occupy the same bed with their husbands ill of this disease, occasionally succumb to the same complaint. It is probable that hectic fever is contagious. Inquiry is necessary to furnish evidence on this as well as on all the propositions advanced in this paper.

Seventh and Eighth Propositions. I cannot adduce any facts to substantiate these propositions, yet they must be true if corporeal changes be admitted, for the mind acts through matter, and the cerebral convolutions subserve thought as the eye subserves sight; in both instances, matter is the instrument, whilst spirit is the individual.

I regard insanity, suicide, drunkenness, and crime, as twofold in nature; viz., partly physical and partly psychical, the corporeal disease consisting in an alteration of the instrument of the soul.

If husband and wife can mutually become tainted by the mental as well as the corporeal infirmities of each other, the question is one of the utmost importance to society. Marriage is indeed the arbiter of a man's mind as well as of his body, yet it is oft-times contracted without due care. Could it be regulated by physicians, numerous forms of dyscrasy, and much moral disorder, would cease to be rife; but the passions of man forbid this interference.

I wish to make a few remarks respecting the transmission of moral disorders to children, although this subject does not come within the scope of my paper. Parents transmit defective instruments of the feelings as well as defective instruments of the understanding. The feelings are wrong in numerous instances in which the understanding is right. Such offspring are morally infirm, more or less, and these individuals are apt to commit motiveless crimes. I boldly affirm that motiveless crime is committed solely by the offspring or the relatives of lunatics, epileptics, suicides, drunkards, or criminals.

I recommend this subject to the earnest attention of psychologists and jurists. Another remark that I wish to make, is the law of alternation of mental endowments observed in offspring as clearly as the law of resemblances.

If the mental faculties are exercised judiciously, or if certain of them retain their vigour notwithstanding overwork, the offspring will more or less resemble the parents.

But if one faculty, or one series of faculties, should lose vigour by over-exercise, the offspring will possess endowments that contrast with those of the parents, each series of faculties having laws peculiar to themselves, as well as the general laws. The musical ear consisting of several elements, such as time, tune, etc., is more usually transmitted than not, but the entire ear is not always transmitted; sometimes one element rather than another.

I will now return from these few remarks on like and unlike generations, to the subject of the inter-

change of the qualities of husband and wife. I ask pardon for putting forth assertions in lieu of facts.

My statements arise from intuition, and not from ratiocination; therefore they must be taken *cum grano salis*. I leave to other men the labour of proving or disproving my assertions.

Reports

OF

HOSPITAL PRACTICE:

METROPOLITAN AND PROVINCIAL.

KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL.

NECROSIS OF THE LOWER JAW: REMOVAL OF DEAD BONE.

(Under the care of Sir W. FERGUSSON.)

NECROSIS of the lower jaw used to be a common affection when ordinary phosphorus, instead of the red variety, was employed in the manufacture of lucifer-matches; but it rarely occurs idiopathically, as the result of inflammation of periosteum covering the bone, as was the case in the present instance. The patient was a common labourer, about 50 years old. He had been a sufferer for six years; and, as Sir W. Fergusson remarked, this was no extraordinary length of time for necrosed bone in the lower jaw to remain fixed. As a rule, separation was very slowly effected in such cases, more slowly than in other bones; and he had seen the alveolar ridge of the inferior maxilla, and as much as half an inch of the bone below it, lying bare in the mouth for years without becoming loose. In the present instance, a large oval piece of dead bone was easily extracted from the front of the lower jaw; but some difficulty was experienced in pulling away another large fragment of bone from the left side, where it was imbedded in new bone and hardened tissues, and an elevator had to be used. Behind this last, and higher up, was a third piece, which no attempt was made to remove on this occasion, as it was not yet perfectly loose. Sir William observed, however, that he expected that this piece would very soon become loose, as, after the removal of a large piece of necrosed bone, it generally happens that smaller pieces subsequently get detached of themselves, and are pushed up, as it were by the granulations. In a middle-aged female who came into the operating theatre immediately after this patient, this remark was well exemplified. A week previously, a piece of necrosed bone had been removed from her hard palate, and another piece which had been left behind was now perfectly loose, and was easily extracted.

EXCISION OF THE KNEE-JOINT FOR A SECOND TIME.

(Under the care of Mr. HENRY SMITH.)

Excision of the knee-joint is an operation which is regarded with great favour by the surgeons of King's College Hospital. In our number of January 19th, we recorded two cases of scrofulous disease of the knee-joint in which excision was performed, and in which there can be no doubt that many surgeons would have preferred to amputate. Indeed, in one of them, amputation had been proposed at another metropolitan hospital. Unfortunately, one of these patients, the one operated on by Mr. Smith, has since died of pyæmia; but this untoward result cannot be