

FOOD IN RELATION TO MORALS.

(By Nurse Ada E. Chappell.)

Many people will find it difficult to believe that there is any connection between food and morals even in a remote degree, but the more I scientifically study the subject of sex the clearer do I see how food acts and reacts on sex in more ways than one. In all living creatures there are two systems at work—the assimilation and accumulation of nourishment until maturity is reached, and then the power to reproduce. In the lowest forms of life the creatures reproduce themselves and then die. Apparently the end and aim of their existence has been fulfilled. As one goes higher in the scale of life, the two fundamental systems still remain, though in the human being to reproduce is not the end and aim of life, because of the dual nature, that of the divine as well as the animal. The animals are limited to their animal bodies, and cannot rise higher nor sink lower than the cast-iron enclosure formed by their instincts. But the animal body of the human being is merely the casket for the priceless jewel it contains, and however beautiful a casket it is, is subservient to the jewel it contains.

So that while reproduction in the animal kingdom is the crown of its existence, the body and all its functions in the human being should be subservient to this fact: "Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost," as St. Paul said. As a temple they are meant solely as instruments through which the Divine nature can operate. Often the animal kingdom is held up for human beings to copy. How absurd, when we remember human beings were made in God's image, and possess the two natures. It is sad, but true, in too many cases that animals, in spite of their limitations, are superior in conduct to some human beings, and might be copied with advantage by those with benefit to themselves and the race. The reason must be the greater the height the deeper the fall. Must we come to the conclusion that large numbers of the human race have none of the lofty desires and ideals which would keep them above the animal level? One comes into contact with those who seem to despair because they come so far short in purity of their ideals and desires. Does this make us believe

that God is so far from what we call "humane" that he gives people physical cravings, as one said to me: "I've no time for God. He gives people physical passions, and then damns them for yielding to them." Ten thousand times, No! With the spread of scientific knowledge, combined with high ideals—above all, Christian ideals—these problems which have cursed men through the ages can be brought within the control of most individuals now, if they retain their full intelligence, and in a few generations the problems which are to-day fierce and strong to the majority, to their children would be almost nil.

What we eat, and how much and what we drink are the fundamental questions every person should ask themselves who want to purify their own natures to make the path of right smooth and straighter for their children. Too long have we created physical difficulties for ourselves in this way, and blamed God for the consequences. The body should be looked upon as an engine, and man as the stoker. Every stoker of an engine knows how many calories of heat he needs to accomplish a certain quantity of work, and feeds his fire with the quantity of fuel which will produce this, and no more. Were he to pile on fuel without thought or care of the capacity of his engine to use or to store the energy, disaster would follow. The same is true of the body. Food is fuel, and creates calories for the use of the human engine. The man who expends much physical strength requires more calories than the one who is doing light work, and when that man does lighter work the fuel should be lighter also. Many middle-aged people would have better health if they ate less when their activities have become less.

Some writers speak of the surplus of nourishment after the ordinary cells of the body have been supplied as being transmitted into the superfine secretions and pooled for the use of those parts specially nourished. Whatever part makes the greatest demand on this pooled energy by using up its cells there the greatest supply will follow, and channels will be thus made which will make it still easier to flow in that direction. This is particularly so during the adolescent period, when habits of life are being formed, which will make it easier or difficult to live purely in mature life.

In human life maturity is not reached until twenty-three in the woman, and twenty-five in the man, and it is to their life-long loss if this pooled energy is attracted to the reproductive organs by impure thoughts, pictures, filthy or suggestive stories, impure companions, or handling of the parts. This pooled energy or nourishment should be looked upon as the water which irrigates the fruit orchards. If the water is directed to plum trees the results are plums, or if to pear trees the outcome are pears. That water used thus is good and produces good results. If we direct it against a house it will undermine it, and be its downfall. So with this pooled energy if directed to the brain there are mental creations and an increased capacity of brain. If directed to the muscles, there is increased strength and capacity there. Any stimulation of this pooled energy to the reproductive centres is a loss, and detracts from maturity. Even when maturity is reached it is a draft drawn upon the capital stored in the bank, and the purpose for which it is drawn should be such as to justify the expenditure.

Referring back to the pooled energy, one must remember the storage capacity is limited, therefore the fuel must be supplied with this in view, or an excess will cause sex temptation, even if the brain and muscles are actively employed. It is well to know that a complete fast will take all sex desire from a man, while he is still able to do his daily work, and it will also cause the normal functioning in a woman to cease, both returning when sufficient nourishment has been accumulated. This proves that reproduction is, as it were, an extra, and that the individual functioning can be performed perfectly without the reproductive functioning. This is also proof that in a normal person the cells of the body take their toll of nourishment first because when nourishment is cut off it is the functioning of the reproductive system whose supply is cut off first, and the ordinary processes of the body of the individual continue normally. Nature has provided for the lesser need to be supplied last. In the case of a new life forming in its mother's body, the same principle is carried out. The new life makes the first call upon the nourishment of the mother. Mothers who have been short of food, and almost skin and bone themselves, have