

The True Significance of Food-Reform.

The word Reform has been associated with politics, with religion, with municipal affairs, and, in fact, with all matters wherein the benefit



of mankind has been involved, and an honest effort made to secure that benefit by the removal of conditions which had militated against human progress and well-being. And now in our own day and generation we have Food-Reform—a subject undreamed of almost for centuries—but, for all that, none the less important because so long unrecognised.

Its real importance is, perhaps, scarcely grasped yet even by many who are following in the steps of the Movement, and who, whilst seeing clearly certain benefits derivable from it,

have not yet fathomed its true depths, viewed from an ethical, moral and spiritual standpoint.

Food-Reform is simply a natural outcome of the evolution of the race. Our barbarian forefathers killed and ate their prey—(the cannibals still kill and eat each other). Then came a time when man became civilised and ceased to kill his prey, but preferred to depute such unpleasant tasks to the butcher—a very slight and indeed questionable improvement upon earlier methods be it noted.

Yet the custom has survived even until the dawn of the 20th century, and people who aspire to culture and refinement are still unaware of any barbarism or even inconsistency. But it is only because they do not allow themselves to dwell upon the subject or to think of the means by which their roast joints have been secured.

The quivering flesh and the knife are excluded from their thoughts; the very limbs are often disguised under fanciful names which figure upon the menu, though the terms, leg, shoulder, and chop, are quite barbarous enough in their bluntness it is true.

The revel in bloodshed has gone on and increased until it has reached such awful proportions in this country and America that there has come a tendency to cry 'halt'; thinking people have become aware of inner questionings. Can all this be right? Is there no harm whatever in all this massacre? Is cruelty *unlawful* and all this *lawful*? And to-day there are thousands who are asking the same questions, and, what is far better, there are thousands and tens of thousands who have said, "It cannot be right and I will have no more of it."

And these have adopted a new diet which is all sufficient in nutriment, is highly palatable, and causes pain to no living creature.

"My daily food shall not be obtained at the cost of untold pain and suffering to dumb animals" is the unselfish resolve of increasing numbers every day; and they shall have their reward, "for not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge."

The qualities, then, of Mercy and Compassion are the true basis of Food-Reform—these are the highest motives.

Other motives there are, such as the suitability of a non-flesh diet to the needs of the brain-worker, or the immunity from disease which it affords, or even the question of cost, where again advantages are apparent; but all of these are secondary to the true motive of humaneness and real culture.

We may well rejoice at the rapid strides which have been made of late years. The voice of ridicule is no longer heard as it once was, not so long ago either. The scoffer knows full well he will be confronted with athletic records which will confound him utterly should he indulge in playful sarcasm. He knows, too, that medical testimony of a high order supports the Food Reformer. He also knows he can no longer talk glibly of "a few faddists," but has to reckon with a mighty host, many of whom have already climbed to greater heights than he could hope to reach.

The world is going forward, and woe be to him who tries to dispute the fact; light is breaking over our heads, and we can no longer be content with the conditions which were, or vainly shut our eyes to evils which are as unnecessary as they are deplorable. The fact that many people who profess true culture and refinement are still outside the Movement and unconcerned, need cause no misgivings—such contradictions between professions and conduct are common enough, alas! in other matters of equal seriousness.

Depend upon it the increasing popularity of the subject has already attracted their attention, and will in its later growth sweep them with it; but it will be no credit to them if they merely follow a *fashion*, apart from the question of Right and Wrong; but they will still benefit, and most surely will look back with something of regret at their past indifference.

The brutality which existed among men a few centuries ago is appalling to us to-day, and so it will be a few years hence when men look back upon the legalised butchery of the shambles, which to-day is a matter of absolute unconcern to many.

Even were it necessary to the welfare of man it would still be awful, but in the light of our present knowledge it is still more so, for we know that the fruits and seeds of the vegetable kingdom furnish in rich profusion and variety the necessary nutriment for human beings; and more than that, they offer immunity from those loathsome diseases which are for ever dogging the footsteps of those who partake of animal flesh.

This latter is no slight matter, but its importance has not yet been grasped by the majority of people, for the simple reason that they have refused to think seriously upon so unpleasant a subject. But surely that is a short-sighted policy.

No man or woman has ever yet contracted, or ever will contract, Cancer or Consumption through partaking of the wholesome products of the garden and the orchard. But who shall say what number have gone to an early grave, after the most terrible sufferings, as the direct result of eating the diseased flesh of unhealthy animals!

It is a source of satisfaction to know that the authorities are more fully awake to this awful danger to-day than perhaps they were a few years ago; but is it not a dreadful thought that an article of food should have to be subject to inspection to ascertain whether it is diseased or poisonous?

Pages might be written on this unsavoury subject—police-court evidence, medical testimony, and the open admissions of experts; but suffice it to say here that the

fact is beyond dispute that the seeds of awful diseases are being daily scattered in our midst and finding lodgment in the systems of scores of people whose account at the butcher's is one of the chief items of expenditure. That those seeds do not *in every case* germinate is no argument against the reality of the danger.

Dietetic Reform constitutes an honest effort to successfully combat disease by striking at the root rather than by patching up, and on that ground alone the Movement is worthy of appreciation and hearty support, which support it is destined to receive more and more each year as people become more intelligent, more reasonable, and more humane.

Mental Purity.

But disease of the body is but one aspect—serious enough in all conscience, and truly terrible in its ravages: for there are diseases of the mind too, subtle and often unsuspected, but not one whit less real for all that. These, too, are often the further direct results of an impure and unnatural diet.

The cells of the body are built up in two ways—by the food we eat and also by the thoughts we encourage and hold. Pure food is necessary and pure thought also if these cells are to be refined and healthy in the true sense of the word.

Each day of our lives we meet or come in contact with various people, each one a composite body constructed entirely of an enormous aggregation of minute cells; some of these people are refined, some are coarse, and others, perhaps, brutal. Now it is a very fair statement to make that, other things being equal, you can depend upon it that a 'Fruitarian' or Food-Reform man or woman will generally be more refined than the flesh-eater. It cannot be otherwise, for day by day the latter is taking into his system the composite particles of the animal system, with the result that the blood currents are contaminated and the entire physical structure is coarser and less ethereal than would be the case in the absence of all flesh diet.

The mind, of course, suffers with the body, and the thoughts more easily tend towards low ideals and gross purposes, and are with difficulty raised to a higher plane and there maintained.

This truth is the ready explanation of the, to some people, curious fact that many of the greatest poets, artists, musicians and scientists have been life-long vegetarians. They have found a pure diet to be the greatest possible help in reaching up to the attainment of their highest ideals. Nay, more than this. Their naturally refined and well born souls could never have become allied to so coarse and degrading a habit as the eating of the flesh of slain creatures.

They were, no doubt, born above such grovelling propensities; but we all of us, though not equally fortunate perhaps, may still rise to the same ideal, and boldly take our stand on the side of those who embrace humaneness, unselfishness, and the desire for true progress towards a higher code of living.

If there be care needed in order to keep the body healthy, there is infinitely more care necessary to insure wholeness of the mind in the fullest sense of the word. The body will always make a natural effort to throw off impurities and to restore the balance where it has been upset by wrong living or inharmonious conditions, but the same cannot be said of the mind. Once wrong conditions are set up and degrading habits indulged in, the tendency is for the mind to remain degraded and to tend to become more so; in other words a low level may be easily reached and maintained, the only difficulty being to ascend to

a higher level. Falling is so easy, mounting so very difficult.

A constant guard over our thoughts and actions must be kept if we are to avoid this downward tendency, and a constant aspiration towards higher attainment is necessary if we are to rise. Who, then, can fail to see that the constant practice of the ingestion of carnal food must act as a permanent magnet towards lower conditions of mind, ever tending to keep us on the purely animal plane of consciousness. Who, then, amongst us is so strong that he can afford to saddle himself with so heavy a burden on his spiritual march.

The Things that Hinder. The world and its cares and a thousand other dangers which we know not of are ever around us, barring at times our way and hindering our steps always. Add to all these a coarse and cruel custom practised daily and little wonder if we find the struggle so hopelessly 'uphill' that we are often tempted to give it up entirely, or else to simply relapse into a state of spiritual stagnation, dimly hoping, perhaps, that we will mount higher after we have settled with the undertaker.

If this picture be a trifle overdrawn depend upon it there are thousands of people to-day whose moral and intellectual progress is at a standstill, and who are incapable of rising higher than their commonplace surroundings, and yet they do not suspect that the cause may lie partly or even wholly in the nature of the food they eat. Let us remember there are few things that can truly be called trifles. Even small things have their power to bring about results, and nothing we do, or say, or think is without its effect for weal or for woe.

The locomotive has revolutionised our life, yet think how its inventor first saw the idea in embryo. The law of gravitation was discovered by a trivial occurrence. Our individual lives may be altered entirely by a word or a deed of which we think nothing at the time. How much more then is it possible, nay, probable, that the question of the kind of food we eat may lie at the very root of the problem of progress, both ethical and spiritual.

We cannot afford to shelve the question and look upon it as vague and problematical. We must know and feel in our innermost hearts that it is a *principle* which is at stake, a duty which is incumbent upon us to face and to fulfil. Whatever else is uncertain, it is very certain indeed that "as we sow so shall we reap," and if we are partakers in cruelty and bloodshed we cannot expect to escape penalties which are sure to follow.

Wrong actions, even if done in ignorance, still bring their punishments with unerring sureness sooner or later. Our aim should be to live, as Trine puts it, 'in tune with the Infinite,' and that involves being in harmony with all nature, with our fellow-men, and also with the dumb creation. This brings peace and knowledge, and removes from us all that is cruel, all that is mean and sordid, all that is selfish.

We know that we are a part of the great whole and that we may neither hurt nor destroy, but rather seek to minimise the pain and suffering which exists at present, and not add to it by any action in our lives.

Great and far-reaching will be the effects of the Nation's adoption of a pure and bloodless diet—there will be better health, greater intelligence, higher ideals, deeper spirituality, and in addition to all these benefits there are questions of national importance which will thus find their solution.

Rural De-population. Great and far-reaching will be the effects of the Nation's adoption of a pure and bloodless diet—there will be better health, greater intelligence, higher ideals, deeper spirituality, and in addition to all these benefits there are questions of national importance which will thus find their solution.

Prominent among them is the Land Question. Much of the poverty and distress so prevalent to-day is a direct result of the depopulation of the rural districts and the congestion of the cities, which is largely the outcome of the increased acreage devoted entirely to pasturage. As this increases so does the arable land decrease, and this to an alarming extent. No country which allows its agricultural interests to decay can be prosperous. It is an absolute necessity that a great portion of our country should be put under cultivation and made to produce the fruits of the earth in due season.

This desideratum the Food-Reform Movement will bring about, and employment of a natural and healthy kind will be provided for tens of thousands who to-day are simply surplus population and a burden to the State as well as to themselves.

Social Economy.

And more than this. Let us remember that to-day there are thousands of families whose means are so small that it is a difficult matter to make ends meet. We

have a message of hope for them, for if they will adopt the non-flesh diet they will succeed in effecting a saving in the cost of their food which will probably surprise them.

One longs to see the day when the hundred and one miserable specimens of butchers' shops which now exist in the poorer quarters of the large towns are no more, and in their place are Natural Food Stores, where the careful housewife may lay out her scanty means to the best possible advantage.

So will the people be uplifted, and much of the coarseness, drunkenness, and vice now so prevalent will disappear as if by magic.

It is our privilege and pleasure, each one of us, to endeavour by all the means in our power to hasten the coming of that time, and so help forward in no small degree the world's progress.

Great have been the efforts of many worthy Societies to accomplish such an end, but how little reward has there been so far. May it not be that they have overlooked the *real* cause of much of the degradation which they have sought to dispel.

Flesh-eating and drunkenness walk ever hand in hand, and to attack the latter without any reference to the former is but a half measure, and half measures, we know, usually fail. To deal with an *effect* rather than with its *cause* is to court defeat.

More fruit and less beef should be the cry of Temperance Reformers the world over, and if it were, we should soon find the drink habit dying out.

Other benefits, too, will doubtless result.

Manners and morals will be greatly improved, and there is sad need for both in England to-day.

The principles of Brotherhood will be greatly helped, for as men become *merciful* they tend to become *kind* and considerate to each other.

To recognise the sacredness of life will make War almost an impossibility; and that we have it with us to-day as part of our National political system is but a proof of our failure to carry out our professions as Christians.

Inconsistency, if it does not vanish, will at least tend to be less glaring, and a mother will no longer partake of roast lamb with her children whom she had just told "not to hurt the dear flies—God made them."

The above, then, are a few indications as to the benefits likely to follow the adoption of Food-Reform; and, surely, they are sufficiently great to make us put forth hopeful and enthusiastic effort to help forward the coming of such improved conditions.

There is much uphill work yet to be done, much opposition to be faced, much ignorance to be dispelled; but we may take heart in our work, for there are signs that progress in the near future will be much more rapid than ever before. Thinking people are coming more and more to feel that there is much more behind this question than ever they had suspected; there is a *principle* concerned, and they have to make the choice whether they shall continue on the low plane of selfish desire which reckes not of suffering and cruelty, or whether they shall embrace the ideals of Mercy and Compassion, and by a little practical self-denial, if such it be to them, shew true manliness and consistency with their professions as civilized beings and as Christians.

They have all to gain by the change, and nothing to lose, for the new method of living is soon found to be an agreeable change for the better, and after a comparatively short time it would be found most distasteful to go back to the flesh-pots.

"Blessed are the merciful" is a truth which has not lost its meaning, and never will.

We all deprecate cruelty and the infliction of unnecessary pain, and we should try by every means in our power to minimise the suffering which exists in the world.

Can we then make a better beginning than in this matter of the needless slaughter of animals? Let each one of us face the question conscientiously and then firmly resolve to do our duty in the matter in the face of all difficulties and all opposition.

Thousands have done so and are the better men and women for it. Thousands more are ripe for the change and only require leading into the better way by those who are now treading it.

We may each use our personal influence in making converts and much good may be done by spreading literature on the subject. Numerous Societies are doing good work, and the subject of Food-Reform is now well received by the newspapers, in itself a significant indication of the growing popularity of the Movement.

Ere long the Churches will awake to their responsibility in the matter, and Leaders of spiritual thought will be careful to see that they do not lay themselves open to the charge of blood-guiltiness by clinging

still to habits which are unworthy of anyone who professes refinement—much more then, deep spirituality. Then, and then only, will their mission be a success, for it is essential that the teachers of the people should strive always to lead in thought and in example rather than be content with the same standard of conduct as the people whom they seek to elevate and educate.

It would be well for the Clergy and Ministers of Religion to face this aspect of the question squarely and without further delay, for if they choose to stand still, many of the laity are not similarly minded, but desire to progress constantly, and so are likely to run past their own professed teachers.

It is by the improvement of our lives *here and now* that we can make this world another and better one at the present time, and depend upon it, though many reforms are necessary, not the least by any means among them is this one of Food-Reform—a cleaner and more civilized diet, a diet which while providing the very best of nourishment to our bodies, quickens the mind and all its functions, elevates the soul, and while blessing man, delivers the animal world from its burden of suffering

and fear, and brings us near to the realization of the prospect foreshadowed long ago, when "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

Francis S. Blizard.

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Mistakes.

God sent us here to make mistakes,
To strive, and fail, and rebegin.
To taste the tempting fruit of sin
And find what bitter food it makes.

To miss the path and go astray,
To wander blindly in the night,
But searching, praying for the light
Until at last we find the way.

And looking back across the past,
We know we needed all the strain,
Of fear, and doubt, and strife, and pain,
To make us value peace at last.

Who fails, finds later triumphs sweet,
Who stumbles once, walks then with care,
Who knows the place to cry Beware!
To other unaccustomed feet.

Through strife, the slumbering soul awakes;
We learn on error's troubled route
The truths we could not prize without,
The sorrow of our sad mistakes.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.



Glimpses of Truth.

Eat less and you will worry less.

Life is what we make it, and we can make it what we like.

Consult your better self and you will never be led astray.

You are just as beautiful as your thoughts and acts make you.

Every effort made increases the capacity to do and to be.

Consciously or unconsciously, you are each moment building your future. Is it not best to work *consciously*? You can if you will.

We should not talk so much in society if we only knew how often we misunderstand others.

A new evolution is at hand, and all shall recognize the power of the spirit, from the least to the greatest.

Spiritualism does not mean a mere belief in the existence of the spirit after "death," but a consciousness of spiritual existence here and now.

What a man has owned in this world, or what he has appeared to be, has nothing to do with his state in the spirit world. He gravitates to that sphere of spirit to which his thoughts have related him, for his thoughts have bound his life to that special state of being, by a law as unerring as that which keeps the planets in their orbits.

Lucy A. Mallery.

The Practical Value of Thought-Control.

"Wisdom ripens into silence, as she grows more truly wise,
And she wears a mellow sadness in her heart, and in her eyes.
Wisdom ripens into silence, and the lesson she doth teach,
Is that life is more than language, and that thought is more than speech."

In these days of the wonderful practical application of electricity, and so many other motive forces, it is strange that the most marvellous hidden force of all—the power of thought—should remain so generally undeveloped.



Here is an inexhaustible fund of recuperative, remedial and uplifting power waiting for its recognition by the world at large. Yet, how few women, harassed and perplexed by the complicated duties of wife, mother, and loaf-dispenser (for that, according to Ruskin, is the definition of "lady") turn their weary spirits to this invisible source of

help! And how few men think of utilizing the power of thought-control to solve their many problems, and disperse the manifold difficulties encountered on their path in connection with the complex questions of government or private enterprise with which they have to deal.

To indicate the all-embracingness of this means of Power and Influence would require time, space, and talents beyond my present endowments, but a few practical indications of the road to it may prove not unacceptable.

Take the case of the mother of a growing family—children of all ages, whose different developments of individuality are a sore perplexity to her at times. As one who has had much experience in the training of the young, I can confidently say: "Here, sister—here is a solution of your many difficulties—here is an unailing source of help in time of need."

Suppose a child to be possessed of some bad habit of mind or temper, which the parents have tried in vain by punishment or expostulation to eradicate; let the father or mother quietly direct the harmonizing power of the Spirit upon the child when he is asleep (when persons are much more susceptible to these influences), quietly suggesting to him thought contrary to the habit named; and in a short time, if this practice is persevered in, wonderful results may be obtained. One must remember that undeveloped souls, children, animals, and those whose being is on the emotional plane in great measure, are very easily influenced.

Or, take the case of a business man, who, we must pre-suppose, is honestly working to supply the legitimate needs of himself and his family, and to co-operate with his fellows at large for the general good. He wants guidance in some crisis—spiritual guidance first of all, be it understood ("Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you"), and then guidance in a practical everyday sense about some step that must be taken on the morrow.

Let him think strongly of *Light* or *Illumination*, or