

[COMMUNICATED.]
THE DAYS OF CHANGE.

Many considerations and elements enter into the formation of human lives. What these think about makes or mars; the books they read color the character, and associations do determine in great part what an individual may become. From this pretty well determined conclusion much of the counsel given is based. "As a man thinketh so he is" says an observant writer. A man's reading is one of the touchstones by which one intelligent mind estimates and weighs another. "Evil communications," said Paul, "corrupt good manners," and the old English versifier claimed that: "one sickly sheep affects the flock and poisons all the rest." So the idea has the sanction of human experience; philosophers agree to it, educators seek to fortify the plastic mind against the influences of evil, while Apostles and holy men under inspiration approbate as if 'twere fundamental truth.

It is asserted by physicists and physiologists that the man is affected fundamentally by that which he eats, and that through sympathy the mind becomes affected in some mysterious and undetermined way through diet in the course of time. Some have said that the submissive character of the Chinese and Hindoos is the result of vegetable diet acting upon their generations, and that British pluck and Indian perversity are due in the first instance to animal food, and in the latter to their methods of life and war. Knowing ones say that when they are worked up to a high state of bloodshed and vengeance the drinking of human blood is a stimulus beyond contradiction. Whether an abnormal appetite for hog meat would make a man hoggish, or that one who uses much mutton will become sheepish, may not have been determined by scientific methods or is probably not yet clear. But it has been determined that as diet does affect the physical so also does the mental pabulum supplied the mind determine the mental development of man, and a man's speech will often betray by his expressions the special drift and caliber of the one to whom men listen.

It used to be said that the fecundity of the Irish peasantry was a consequence of potato consumption, and theorists have claimed that the phosphorus in fish made it a peculiarly suitable food for the student and thinker; brain food it was called. But whether oatmeal or flinnin haddie is most potent in the tissues and make-up of an average Scotchman probably only few can tell. Science has not essayed to establish the idea that Yarmouth or Douglas men are any more brainy than others, because of bloaters, any more than religionists would claim for the fishermen of Galilee special mental or spiritual preeminence because to their profession.

Nevertheless diet has been legislated upon from time immemorial. One of the earliest communications made to Adam and Eve was in regard to what they should eat, and the Mosaic economy was in part devoted to declaring "things clean and unclean," and commanding or commanding in regard to one or the other. In our very early experiences of association with members of the Church, after some years of dietary consideration and practice, the question was asked of the most devout, whether living in an era of so-called revelation any restrictions as to diet had been placed upon the Church members. The reply was, no, which brought out the rejoinder, that "if the new system was verily and indeed divine, sooner or later that regulation was sure"—and the preaching of the Word of Wisdom was not long delayed, to the half consternation of

some, and the general abandonment of the old fashioned "tea party," which at that date was as much of a feature of their social gatherings as it was among the sectarian churches.

Both under Moses and under Christ blood was prohibited upon the argument that it was "the life," but is blood the life, or is it the vehicle used by the indwelling spirit for the assimilation of material things by the body? "The Spirit" is life, according to good authority, and no better recognized Teacher than Jesus ever declared one side of the truth, at least, when He said, "It is not that which goeth into the mouth that defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." The punctilious Pharisees were offended at this, being sticklers for the law and the commentaries thereon, which constituted a burthen "grievous to be borne." Here the Savior eluded their quibbling spirit, and thrust home that inner meaning which gives the key to the present consideration. Applicable to this it may be said that "a good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit," and "no fountain can yield at the same time salt water and fresh."

The natural man seems to absorb evil, and by virtue of agency elects to prefer it; he is weak and susceptible; he eats forbidden fruit; he drinks "stolen waters" and rejects the bread and water of life; and his spiritual stamina is affected by the varied ailment around him. Environment is in part his life; virility depends upon his surroundings. You might transplant a Chinese infant into a Christian home, and he would doubtless become a Christian, and vice versa, just as the child of refinement and civilization, captured by an Indian, becomes an Indian after all; he is dwarfed and stunted, he partakes through the senses and resources of his life's surroundings. Not to make the contrast too striking, remove at an early age the child of cultured parents, establish him in the midst of dissipation, let all his surroundings be criminal and immoral, and it would be contrary to experience to find in him a lofty type of all the virtues. The boy who acquires a habit of reading prurient literature and continues it in manhood is very apt to become sensual and a moral wreck. Observation has proved that the reading of a local daily paper in years gone by has demoralized whole households, and uprooted the faith which had withstood years of persecution and variety of trial. A scientific reader (in the mind's eye) is so saturated with the nomenclature of science that greater truths are half lost in the verbiage of words. An individual raised until past maturity in the Methodist church receives the Gospel and dies at a good old age, but in his phraseology and quotations he was a Methodist to the day of his death. Thousands who gather to Utah from foreign lands never master the language of their adopted country. All over the wide world are persons from the different counties of England who never lose the twang of early days; the Scotchman, Irishman, Welshman, after enlarged travel and much human friction hardly ever become changed in tone and accent—though they are cosmopolitan in thought and denationalized in habit or action.

Associations mental, moral and religious do affect the man. His education, his development, his aspirations, are very much under the control of surroundings, and as most observers think, the results are seen and realized most easily and keenly when the discipline and surroundings are applied and purified in the morning hours of youth. Parents, teachers, guardians of the unsophisticated and unpurged,

minds of youth, should make it as much a matter of anxious solicitude that companionship, including mental and spiritual food, shall be nourishing and healthy, as pure and unadulterated as are the supplies for securing a vigorous, long-lived, perfect physique. The Latter-day Saints cannot build to their destiny on any other foundation. The end they seek cannot be achieved only through unremitting, undaunted spiritual and religious faith and habit. Schools and institutions can only minister in this direction, as their controllers comprehend the work on hand and the essentials of success.

True education aims to round the man; it will not cultivate or overbalance one part of the fabric at the expense of another, nor can it ignore, neglect or belittle attributes or faculties as they are. True educators, whether divines, scientists or special professors, must think and seek unitedly to harmonize the demands of organization which includes the physical, moral, mental and religious, that the pupil or student may be "thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work!"

Broad men, whose equilibrium is above suspicion, and whose comprehension of man is from divine sources, are needed more now than at any other potential period of human history, for everything (theory or practice) that can be shaken will be, in the fervent and searching processes of the great last days, when the to-be-taught are very numerous and the teachers but a few.

IN OLD MEXICO.

Colonla Juarez, Mexico,

Jan. 4th, 1898.

I left Salt Lake on the 7:30 p. m. R. G. W. train Dec. 17th, bound for Mexico. On the train I fell in with a man from Arkansas, who, although he had only one eye, said Utah was the best country he had ever seen. He was on his way home to sell his farm and move to Utah; he said he was tired of being burned up all summer and blown away in winter. So taken up with Utah was he that he went to Provo and through Utah county four times; it seemed so good to him.

When we left Salt Lake it was cold and stormy, and as we went up Spanish Fork canyon we also went to zero, and I guess more so, for the car windows froze up and it was bitter cold. Next morning at 6:30 we arrived at Grand Junction, where we took the Colorado Midland, went up the Grand Valley where the Mesa and Grand Canal Co. have a canal 90 miles long through a very rough and wild country. On this road we go over the Continental divide, said to be the highest over which any road goes—11,000 feet high. On the top we had a funny but unpleasant incident. The train ran into a long tunnel and when about half way through we heard a freight train coming in at the other end. Some of the passengers became frightened, others began to grumble at the carelessness of the train men. Then we began to back out, and while doing so some hitch occurred—in the meantime the engine kept on signaling and the fear of some of the passengers increased. A woman from the front end of the car ran to where myself and companion were sitting and wanted help. We told her we could not help her. Well, she said, if we have a collision she would stay by us anyway as she would rather die by a man than die alone. However, we backed out safely onto the siding, the other train passed, and on we went down to Leadville, the famous mining camp, where we stopped for dinner. From there we went up the Arkansas river, then over the mountains into