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ELLEN G. WHITE

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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July 1, 1897

Mind Disease

EGW

Thousands are sick and dying around us who might get well and live if they would; but their imagination holds them. They fear that they will be made worse if they labor or exercise, when this is just the change they need to make them well. Without this, they can never improve. They should exercise the power of the will, rise above their aches and debility, engage in useful employment, and forget that they have aching backs, sides, lungs, and heads. Neglecting to exercise the entire body, or a portion of it, will bring on morbid conditions. Inaction of any of the organs of the body will be followed by a decrease in size and strength of the muscles, and will cause the blood to flow sluggishly through the blood-vessels.

There are domestic duties to be done which many think it impossible for them to perform, and so they depend upon others. Sometimes it is exceedingly inconvenient for them to obtain the help they need; they frequently expend double the strength required to perform the task in planning and searching for some one to do the work for them. If they would only bring their mind to do these little acts and family duties themselves, they would be blessed and strengthened in it. God made Adam and Eve in Paradise, and surrounded them with everything that was useful and lovely. He planted them a beautiful garden. No herb, nor flower, nor tree was wanting which would be for use or ornament. The Creator of man knew that the workmanship of his hands could not be happy without employment. Paradise delighted their souls, but this was not enough; they must

have labor to call into exercise the wonderful machinery of the body. The Lord had made the organs for use. Had happiness consisted in doing nothing, man, in his state of holy innocence, would have been left unemployed. But he who formed man knew what would be for his best happiness, and he no sooner made him than he gave him his appointed work. In order to be happy, he must labor.

God has given us all something to do. In the discharge of the various duties which we are to perform, which lie in our pathway, our lives will be made useful, and we shall be blest. Not only will the organs of the body be strengthened by exercise, but the mind also will acquire strength and knowledge through the action of those organs. The exercise of one muscle, while others are left with nothing to do, will not strengthen the inactive ones any more than the continual exercise of one of the organs of the mind will develop and strengthen the organs not brought into use. Each faculty of the mind and each muscle has its distinctive office, and all require to be exercised in order to become properly developed and retain healthful vigor. Each organ and muscle has its work to do in the living organism. Every wheel in the machinery must be a living, active, working wheel. Nature's fine and wonderful works need to be kept in active motion in order to accomplish the object for which they are designed. Each faculty has a bearing upon the others, and all need to be exercised in order to be properly developed. If one muscle of the body is exercised more than another, the one used will become much the larger, and will destroy the harmony and beauty of the development of the system. A variety of exercise will call into use all the muscles of the body.

Those who are feeble and indolent should not yield to their inclination to be inactive, thus depriving themselves of air and sunlight, but should practise exercising out-of-doors in walking or working in the garden. They will become very much fatigued, but this will not injure them; rest will be sweeter after it. Inaction weakens the organs that are not exercised, and when those organs are used, pain and weariness are experienced, because the muscles have become feeble. It is not good policy to give up the use of certain muscles because pain is felt when they are exercised. The pain is frequently caused by the effort of nature to give life and vigor to those parts that have become partially lifeless through inaction. The motion of these

long-disused muscles will cause pain, because nature is awakening them to life.

Thousands of women are suffering for want of useful employment that would give them vigorous, physical exercise. Their breathing is not full and deep. They do not go out enough in the open air and expand their lungs and exercise their limbs. The arms and chest need to be used. When people will study to know the laws of health, and how to prevent sickness, with one-half the interest with which they study the fashion-plates, and will obey the light which shines upon them in regard to health reform, there will be fewer invalids and far more happiness and true religion.

February 1, 1901

Privileges and Opportunities of the Christian Physician

EGW

Every physician should be a Christian. In Christ's stead he is to stand by the suffering, and he should work as Christ worked, ministering to the needs of the sin-sick soul as well as to the needs of the diseased body.

The physician who has no practical knowledge of the great needs of the soul looks upon disease merely from a scientific standpoint. He trusts to his own skill. He watches with human sympathy the sufferings of the afflicted; but he can not do that which he might do did he realize that the One who gave His own life for the sufferer, even the Son of God, is watching the case with intense interest. If the patient recovers, he takes the praise, forgetting the Author of all life, the One who says: "Satan is the destroyer; I am the Restorer; I will spare you, that you may become acquainted with Me and believe on My name."

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Every physician is to be a representative of Jesus, the great Physician. How inconsistent, then, for him to stand by the side of the suffering, unable to point them to the great Physician, the sin-pardoning Saviour, the Mighty One who can heal not only every physical disease, but every spiritual malady.

The physician needs to have a very close connection with God. He should be a man of earnest prayer, never losing his hold on God's

helpful, strengthening power. He should look to his Saviour, saying, "I sanctify myself through the grace freely given me, that those to whom I minister may also be sanctified." If he would impart to others light and hope and faith, he should himself possess that hope which is sure and steadfast, the hope that Jesus is a very present help in every time of trouble.

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The physician should reverence and study the Word of God. This Word is exceedingly precious to the receiver, for it sanctifies the soul. The physician who hides it in his heart is prepared to soothe those who are tossed by doubt and fear; for he himself knows the value of the precious promises which reveal the Redeemer's love. He can speak with assurance to the soul that is hovering between life and death. To such a physician the Lord will give great wisdom in his work.

Wonderful opportunities are given to the guardians of the sick. Knowing the Lord Jesus, it is the privilege of the Christian physician to introduce Him to the sick-room as the One who can speak peace to the soul, and give strength to the body. As he holds out to the patient the hope of restoration to physical health, he can present the wonderful comfort to be found in the Mighty Healer, who can cure the leprosy of the soul, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. The physician who can not do this loses case after case which otherwise might be saved. If he could speak words that would inspire faith in the sympathizing Saviour, who feels every throb of anguish, the crisis would often be safely passed; for the Life-giver would fill the heart with a joy that would strengthen the sufferer, enabling him to look and live.

Jesus is interested in every one who is in need of His healing, vitalizing power. Would that physicians might understand the greatness of the service they could render to humanity if they were able to speak simply and tenderly of His love, and of His willingness to save souls even at the last hour of life. What a blessing, what peace, the Christian physician can bring to the sin-tortured soul who accepts the Saviour! What melody is awakened in the heavenly courts when Satan loses his prey!

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The fact that the physician acts so important a part in bringing relief from suffering naturally places him where he is regarded with feelings of love and gratitude by those whom he has helped. When the sick are restored to health, the glory is often given to the physician, when it is the divine touch, the healing balm of the Saviour, that gives relief and prolongs life. If the one who has been restored gives the praise to the physician, it is the physician's privilege and duty to hide self in Christ, pointing to the compassionate Saviour as the One who has spoken the word of life. It is his opportunity to acknowledge the Lord as the worker, and the physician as only the instrument, and to impress upon the minds of those to whom the Saviour has thus given a renewal of life and health, that their lives have been prolonged for a high and holy purpose.

* * * * *

“Without Me,” Christ declares, “ye can do nothing.” He says to the faithful physician, “I will stand by your side, and as you tell those for whom you work that Christ is all in all, that He died for their sins, in order that they should not perish, but have everlasting life, I will impress their hearts.” Those thus born again will be prepared to speak to others of the power of Him who has done so much for them; for of them Jesus says, “Ye are My witnesses.”

The physician who is acquainted with Christ, who realizes the preciousness of undefiled religion, is indeed a representative of the great Physician. He who tells the sick and suffering of the love that Christ has for them, is a true teacher of righteousness. He bears to the afflicted soul the very balm of Gilead. What a sacred work is this! And how earnestly should physicians labor to fit themselves for it! They should make it their first business to become personally acquainted with the great Physician, that when in the sick-room, they may recognize His presence and receive His counsel.

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December 1, 1901

Working as Christ Worked

EGW

For three years the disciples had before them the wonderful example of Christ. Day by day they walked and talked with Him, hearing His words of cheer to the weary and heavy-laden, and seeing the manifestations of His power in behalf of the sick and afflicted. When the time came for Him to leave them, He gave them power and grace to work as He had worked, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were to go forth into the world to shed abroad the light of His gospel of love and healing. The work He had done they were to do.

And this is the work we also are to do in the world. In sympathy and compassion we are to minister to those in need, seeking with unselfish earnestness to lighten the woes of suffering humanity.

In the path which the poor and the neglected, the suffering and the sorrowing must tread, the Saviour walked while on this earth. We shall find His footsteps by the sick-bed, by the side of the suffering, in the hovels of the poverty-stricken and distressed. We may walk in these footsteps, comforting the sorrowful and speaking words of hope and courage to the despondent.

As we engage in this work, we are to remember that man has a body as well as a soul to save. Both are to be restored to health by God's simple but efficacious methods. In this, as in all else, Christ is our example. When people applied to Him for help, He relieved the suffering body before He attempted to minister to the darkened

mind. The physical sickness of the suppliant removed, his mind could better be directed into the channel of truth.

Our Lord devoted more time and labor to healing the sick than to preaching. When He sent forth the seventy, He commanded them to heal the sick, and then to preach that the kingdom of God had come nigh unto them. The physical health was first to be cared for, that the way might be prepared for the reception of the truth which the apostles were to proclaim.

In giving His last commission to the disciples, Christ said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.... These signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." When the Saviour comes again, He will commend those who have visited the afflicted and relieved their necessities. He will say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another one for whom He gave His beloved Son. The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows, and even by our utterance of them. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read, no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He does not take an immediate interest.

The greatest of all gifts, all talents, is true, Christlike love. It is not position or profession that makes a man of value in God's sight. It is being good and doing good. Paul declares: "If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, ... but

have not love, I am nothing.” “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.” “Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”

The doing of true Christian-help work brings rich blessings. It is a practical carrying out of the Saviour’s commission, and it demonstrates the power of the gospel. It calls for laborious effort, but it pays; for by it souls are brought to the cross of Christ.

Our happiness will be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by divine love; for in the plan of salvation God has appointed the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence twice blessed.

February 1, 1902

Health Principles

EGW

Man came from the hand of God perfect in organization and beautiful in form. All his faculties of mind and body were fully developed and harmoniously balanced. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. He stood before his Maker in the strength of manhood, the crowning glory of the creative work.

In infinite wisdom, the world which God had newly formed was placed under fixed laws. Laws were ordained, not only for the government of living beings, but for the operations of nature. Man was created subject to law. He was to glorify God by a life of obedience to the divine laws, including those that relate to his physical organization. But God's laws are not merely an expression of His selfish or arbitrary authority. He is love, and in all that He did, He had the well-being of humanity in view. He would have been glorified in the work of His hands had man retained his first perfection, and had all his varied capabilities of mind and soul and body been developed so as to reach the highest possible degree of excellence.

The appetites of our physical nature were given us for important purposes. Kept, as they were at first created, in subjection to reason and to the laws that God made for their regulation, they would have worked only for good. Their legitimate action would have prompted health and happiness; but the Creator's benevolent purpose has been

interfered with. By the fall, man was brought into bondage to sin. He lost his moral uprightness and his physical perfection. The appetites and passions that were given to him as blessings were perverted, and became warring lusts, the ministers of death. And so man passed under the dominion of the grave. Sin is the cause of physical degeneration; sin has blighted the race, and introduced disease, misery, and death.

Since the fall the tendency of the race has been continually downward, the effects of sin becoming more marked with every successive generation. But so great was the vitality with which man was endowed that the patriarchs from Adam to Noah, with a few exceptions, lived nearly a thousand years. Moses, the first historian, gives an account of social and individual life in the early days of the world's history; but we find no record that an infant was born blind, deaf, crippled, or imbecile. Not an instance is recorded of a death in infancy, childhood, or early manhood. Obituary notices in the book of Genesis run thus: "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died." "And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died." Concerning another, the record states, "He died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years." It was so rare for a son to die before his father that such an occurrence was thought worthy of record: "Haran died before his father Terah."

Since the flood, the average length of life has been decreasing. Had Adam possessed no greater physical force than men now have, the race would before this have become extinct.

At the time of Christ's first advent, humanity had so degenerated that many endured a terrible weight of misery; and not only the old but the middle-aged and the young were brought to the Saviour from all the country around, to be healed of their diseases.

Still more deplorable is the condition of the human family at the present time. Diseases of every type have been developed. Thousands of poor mortals with deformed, sickly bodies and shattered nerves, are dragging out a miserable existence. The infirmities of the body affect the mind, and lead to gloom, doubt, and despair. Even infants in the cradle suffer from diseases resulting from the sins of their parents.

Disease and premature death have so long prevailed, with an ever-increasing weight of suffering, that they have come to be regarded as the appointed lot of humanity. But this is not the case. God is not the author of the many woes to which mortals are subject; it is not because He desires to see His creatures suffer that there is so much misery in this world. Neither is it all due to Adam's transgression. We may mourn over the fall in Eden, and think that our first parents showed great weakness in yielding to temptation, thus opening the door for sin to enter our world, with all its attendant evils. But the first transgression is not the only cause of our unhappy lot. A succession of falls has occurred since Adam's day.

The same subtle enemy that beguiled Adam and Eve still attends our steps, and employs his strength and skill to urge us on in the way that leads to death. He was working to thwart the purpose of God when he presented the first temptation in Eden; and he has ever since been trying to deface the image by marring the body and depraving the soul. Wherever we look, we see evidences of his success in this work in the indulgence of depraved appetites and lustful passions, in defilement and corruption, deformity and sin. It is to these causes, and not to the providence of God, that the physical degeneration of the race is attributable. Men have listened to the suggestions of the arch-deceiver, and he delights in the ruin he has wrought.

There is a close relation between the moral law and the laws that God has established in the physical world. If men would be obedient to the law of God, carrying out in their lives the principles of its ten precepts, the principles of righteousness that it teaches would be a safeguard against wrong habits. But as, through the indulgence of perverted appetite, they have declined in virtue, they have become weakened through their own immoral practises and their violation of physical laws. The suffering and anguish that we see everywhere, the deformity, decrepitude, disease, and imbecility now flooding the world, make it a lazar-house in comparison to what it might be even now if God's moral law and the law which He has implanted in our being were obeyed. By his own persistent violation of these laws, man has greatly aggravated the evils resulting from the transgression in Eden. How dishonoring to God is all this, how opposed to His design that men should glorify Him in their body

and spirit, which are His! How destructive, too, to the health and happiness of mankind!

Against every transgression of the laws of life nature utters her protest. She bears abuse as long as she can; but finally retribution comes, and the mental as well as the physical powers suffer. Nor does the punishment fall on the transgressor alone; the effects of his indulgence are seen in his offspring, and thus the evil is passed on from generation to generation.

Many complain of providence when their friends suffer, or are removed by death; but it is not in the order of God that men and women should lead lives of suffering, and die prematurely, leaving their work unfinished. God would have us live out the full measure of our days, with every organ in health, doing its appointed work. It is unjust to charge Him with a result which, in many cases, is due to the individual's own transgression of natural law.

Because mankind have, by the transgression of these laws, departed so far from God's purpose in their creation, and have brought upon themselves such untold woe, a reform in habits relating to health has become an important branch of the great work of God in the earth. The soul temple has been polluted, and men are called upon to awake, and win back their God-given manhood.

There is an intimate relation between the mind and the body; they react upon each other. In order, then, to reach a high standard of moral and intellectual attainment, and to secure a strong, well-balanced character, the laws that control our physical being must be heeded; both the mental and the physical powers must be developed. Such a training will produce men of strength and solidity of character, of keen perception and sound judgment,—men who will be an honor to God and a blessing to the world.

In the providence of God, the laws that govern our physical being, with the penalties for their violation, have been made so clear that intelligent beings can understand them, and all are under the most solemn obligation to study this subject, and to live in harmony with natural law. Health principles must be agitated, and the public mind deeply stirred to investigation.

As in everything else, the Bible is the standard on this subject. The teaching of the Bible has a vital bearing upon men's prosperity in all the relations of life. Compliance with its requirements will be

a blessing to both soul and body. The fruit of the Spirit is not only love, joy, and peace, but temperance also,—health of body as well as health of mind.

May 1, 1902

Character the Child of Education

EGW

To obey nature's laws is a duty we owe to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God. To preserve the powers unimpaired, one must observe strict temperance in the use of all that is good, as well as total abstinence from everything that is injurious or debasing. Many are considered learned in the sciences who do not understand the laws that govern their own being. Intemperance is seen everywhere, and how few realize the fearful results that are sure to follow. Education on this line is sadly needed; for intemperance is on the increase, in spite of the effort put forth to prevent it. We should gain knowledge in regard to what and how to eat and drink, that we may have both mental and physical health, and thus be fortified against this great evil.

The home is the place where this education must begin. The youth should be taught the great evil of intemperance. A desire should be created in their minds to make the most of their God-given powers. They should be taught that all their habits, tastes, and inclinations are to be in harmony with the laws of life, that the very best physical conditions may be secured, and that they may have mental clearness to discern between the evil and the good. They should be made to understand that right physical habits promote mental superiority, intellectual power, physical strength, and that longevity depends on immutable laws; that there is no happen so, no chance about this matter.

Those who have the youth under their care are in a large degree responsible for the stamp of character and the training given them, but as the youth go out into the world, on themselves rests the responsibility of carefully heeding the instruction that has been given, if they would fill positions of usefulness. No one can turn from the light and knowledge that he has received, sacrificing principle either to fashion or to taste, without great loss. God will not interfere to preserve man from the consequences of a violation of nature's laws. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is much real truth in the proverb, "Every man is the architect of his own fortune."

Many a person who might have accomplished great and lasting good for his fellow-men has been ruined through intemperate habits. Some do not understand their danger until it is too late, but others refuse to control the appetite, though they know that it means their being utterly unfitted for the solemn realities of life, and that the end is destruction.

It is often in the home that intemperance begins. By the use of rich, unhealthful food the digestive organs are weakened, and a craving is created for food that is still more stimulating. Thus the appetite is educated to crave continually something stronger. The demand for stimulants becomes more frequent and more difficult to resist. The system becomes more or less filled with poisons; and as it becomes more and more debilitated, the greater is the desire for these things, until the will is overcome, and there seems to be no power to check the unnatural craving. One step in the wrong direction prepares the way for another. Many who would not be guilty of placing on their table wine or liquor of any kind, will load their table with food that creates such a thirst for strong drink that to resist the temptation is almost impossible. A wrong course of eating and drinking destroys the health and paves the way for drunkenness. Gluttony degrades, as well as intoxication by strong drink.

The use of tobacco is closely associated with the use of liquor. It is a slow but terrible poison. Its effects are more difficult to clear from the system than the effects of strong drink. It binds its victim in even stronger bands of slavery than does the intoxicating cup.

The people of today are suffering because of the wrong habits of past generations, and yet in many things they do not heed the laws of

health as well as their forefathers heeded them, though they have far less moral and physical strength to combat the tide of intemperance that rises before them. The people must be educated to see the cause of all this evil. Reform must begin in the home life. Instead of the home being the place where intemperance is fostered, it must be the school where the principles of true temperance are thoroughly learned, the place from which influences reach out to keep and save mankind from the ruin of intoxicating liquor.

When all intemperate habits are put away, when the eating and drinking are such as to give health instead of disease, then the appetite for intoxicating liquor will not be found. Then the demand for the accursed stuff will be forever at an end.