

MONMOUTH WEEKLY RECORD.

S. D. PERCIVAL, Editor.

Obituary notices, resolutions, cards of thanks, programs of entertainments 5 cents a line, for all over five lines.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 8, 1893.

SELF MEASUREMENT.

Exception About One's Own Capacity Less Common Than Formerly.

It is nearly impossible that the new accuracy of self measurement as to powers, be they intellectual or physical, should not extend, in a degree at least, to qualities, and we believe it does. We will not say men are not self deceived still as to their virtues and vices, but they are much less deceived than they were. They know for the most part perfectly well if they have temper, or if they are tyrannical, or if they are greedy, or if they are selfish, or if they are afraid of danger. They may not admit a defect of qualities as they admit a defect of powers, because their new clearness of vision has developed a new dread of circumstances, but they recognize it fully and sometimes make of the recognition a basis for action in life.

We have known at least two cases of jealous men deliberately refusing profitable positions in which that passion would be strongly excited and have repeatedly heard men assign their temper as difficulties which would, as they saw with perfect clearness, impede their success in life. As to greed, we believe its recognition to be the commonest of all things and a constant reason with the man himself either for choosing a career or deliberately rejecting one as too much surrounded with "temptations" for his particular weakness. The timid constantly decline good prospects for careers for which they know themselves unfitted, and so, occasionally, to the intolerable vexation of their friends, do the very, who very often are thoroughly aware of and deplore a vice—if it is a vice, which depends on circumstances—of which they nevertheless cannot purge their nature.

"I know," says the man so affected, "that I shall shirk the work." Laxity, too, are keenly aware of their special temptation, and though they refuse nothing on account of it are wonderfully aware of the risks they run, and usually, though not always, hate those who bring their vice into active exercise.

Selfishness is a more subtle quality, because it takes to itself intellectual disguise—the selfish desire for dominance, for example, often presenting itself under the appearance of duty. But even selfishness, we imagine, seldom hides itself from the man whose nature it corrodes. Certainly the most selfish man we ever encountered knew thoroughly that he was selfish and excused himself to himself, not by denying his vice, but by attributing it to every other person with whom he came in contact. The view inwardly as well as the view outwardly has cleared, and the men of the day tend at all events to realize the philosopher's advice and know themselves quite through.

Whether this clearness of view induces modern men to purge themselves of their evil qualities more than their more self deceived predecessors, we cannot quite decide. On the whole, we think not, and that there is a strong alloy of cynicism in modern clearheadedness, but there must be reserves in that harsh judgment, and more especially about selfishness. We never knew a man made less greedy by his controlling will and never heard of a man cured of laziness by anything but poverty or other deep cutting whip. Even that often fails, laziness being in some natures as dominant a vice as the desire for excitement which we call "dipsomania." But we have seen desperate and successful efforts to control temper and, curiously enough, real cures of selfishness effected from within. The man is helped in that last effort by the modern passion for sympathy and sometimes leads himself in the opposite and stupidly illogical position of one who believes that the pleasant course is the selfish course and therefore justifies the wrong course to pursue—which it may be or may not.

Very little water on the face. Anhydrous on the mouth assert that the face should not be washed unless the skin is dry, and that the water should be applied to the face, as is the case with the regular use of soap. Very little water should be applied with a sponge or a "baby" sponge, or high priced facial sponge.

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