

OUR LIFE

passes along the *right* branch, and in reptiles along both branches. The blood of mammals is distinguished from that of any other vertebrate by the circumstance that its red cells have lost their nucleus (by reversion). The respiratory movements are effected largely by the diaphragm in this class of animals alone, because only in them does it form a complete partition between the pectoral and abdominal cavities. Special importance, however, in this highest class of animals, attaches to the production of milk in the breasts (*mammæ*), and to the peculiar method of the rearing of the young, which entails the supplying of the offspring with the mother's milk. As this nutritive process reacts most powerfully on the other vital functions, and the maternal affection of mammals must have arisen from this intimate form of rearing, the name of the class justly reminds us of its great importance. In millions of pictures, most of them produced by painters of the highest rank, the "madonna with the child" is revered as the purest and noblest type of maternal love—the instinct which is found in its extreme form in the exaggerated tenderness of the mother-ape.

As the apes approach nearest to man of all the mammals in point of structure, we shall expect to hear the same of their vital functions; and that we find to be the case. Everybody knows how closely the habits, the movements, the sense activity, the mental life, and the parental customs of apes resemble those of man. Scientific physiology proves the same significant resemblance in other less familiar processes, particularly in the working of the heart, the division of the breasts, and the sexual life. In the latter connection it is especially noteworthy that the mature females of many