

ity. Our religion appeals to that which is highest in men's natures. It asks us to be Christians not merely that we may enjoy certain rapturous emotional experiences, not merely to save our souls from hell, but in order that we may be men. I have known young men to make the boast, after having attended a series of revival meetings, that they did not "get religion," as people say; and one could scarcely blame them; for the appeals had been made almost altogether to their emotional natures—to their fears and selfishness; and many who professed to have "got religion" were spoiled: they were no longer good companions, joyful and generous, but had been converted into sanctimonious gloom and religious cant. Such conversions are a poor recommendation of religion to youth. "The glory of young men is their strength." Feats of strength in the gymnasium or football field; intellectual skill in the classroom or debating society; moral backbone in danger or temptation; these draw forth their cordial admiration. Manly strength is their ideal; and Christianity will never attract the best class of young men, until they realize that it is a strong thing—appealing to what is highest and best in men and developing nobility of character. Now, the Christian life, as set forth in the Bible and in the career of Jesus Christ—however much the followers of Christ sometimes give the lie to the statement—is essentially a strong thing. The Christianity of Christ develops robust manhood rather than soft effeminacy; it is a rational life rather than a sentimental experience. Too long have the claims of Christianity been presented to youth on the ground of prudence—as a luxury for old age or as an insurance against future hell-fire; but the Bible teaches that our religion makes special claims upon youth because youth is vigorous and courageous. "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong." We recommend Christianity to you, because

manliness is your ideal; and Christianity develops all-round manhood, requiring nothing which is against nature, but demanding the symmetrical development of the individual. It aims at evolving the full-grown man—true to his whole being, possessing a nature robust in every part. If any young man, therefore, is not a Christian—in the true sense of the word—he is untrue to nature—he practically refuses to develop perfect manhood, and is to that extent unmanly. His irreligion is something to be ashamed of rather than to glory in.

"The glory of young men is their strength,"—physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. Now, this all-round strength which constitutes manliness or manfulness, is exactly the aim of Christianity. Some one has said that "Training which is exclusively physical develops the bully; mental refinement alone, the intellectual prig; culture which is only spiritual, the emotional pietist; but Christianity seeks to produce the full-grown man, symmetrical, perfect. It evolves manfulness; and, therefore, appeals to what is highest and strongest in men—to the loftiest ideals of youth." Now, it has often seemed to me that the reason many young men refuse to profess Christianity is that they have radically erroneous conceptions of what constitutes manliness. They are not consciously cowardly and base in rejecting Christianity, but they wish to be and to appear manly, and they have false ideals of manliness. Although manly strength is the glory of young men, they often mistake the counterfeit for the genuine ideal, and they actually regard something which is in itself a mark of weakness, as a strong thing—worthy of their pursuit.

The glory of young men is their physical strength. Now, our religion seeks to promote bodily culture—to develop the physical side of men's natures. The self-control which Christianity teaches is the sign and condition of a healthy body. Sensual sin is not only injurious to phy-