

CHAPTER I.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the *flesh* and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—1. Cor., vii. 1.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy ; for the temple of God is holy, whose temple ye are."—1. Cor. iii. 17.

The central idea of the religion of Christ is purity, and it applies to the body as well as to the soul. Is it any wonder that God requires a pure temple to dwell in ? Would we offer a dear friend, who came to see us, a filthy room to occupy ? Nay, but we would provide for his reception with the greatest care. How much more careful should we be to furnish a pure temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in.

Now, the common use of tobacco is a most filthy habit to lungs, mouth and clothes ; it is a perfect stench. It is not necessary to see a pipe in a man's mouth to know whether he is a smoker, he literally stinks as he goes about, his very breath is fetid and loathsome. How can such uncleanness be reconciled with the purity required in the above passages of Holy Writ, and indeed not by them only, but by the whole Gospel ? If cleanliness is a part of Christianity, and it undoubtedly is, to be filthy is to be wicked ; yet the common use of tobacco is extremely filthy and therefore sinful. Besides, God positively asserts in His word that he who dares to defile his temple shall be destroyed.

We do not expect anything better of horse-jockies and debauchees than that they should indulge in such filthy lusts of the flesh, but the children of God—the men and women who profess the holy religion of Christ—are expected to put away every unclean thing, and to abstain even from the *appearances* of evil.