

seemed to expect a like chastity in ordinary men. A few particularly holy men have been expected to be chaste, and the priests of some religions have been celibates and supposedly holier for that reason—a very disastrous implication; but the mass of men have not pretended to maintain for themselves the same standard in this respect which they have forced upon their women. Kings, princes, and rulers have not been expected to be continent. Good society, so-called, took no offence at young men who were dissolute before marriage; and even women spoke lightly of such conduct in youth. To yield to the sexual passion was supposed by young men to be an evidence of virility and boldness. It was commonly believed that incontinence for men was healthier than continence, particularly if marriage was long postponed; and the carrying over into the married state of the characteristic diseases of profligacy was ill understood. Young men, left by their parents and schools ignorant concerning the natural processes of reproduction, and filled by ignorant or coarse companions with false notions on the subject, fell into evil ways without deliberation, in a spirit of adventure, or almost accidentally while under the influence of alcohol.

The advantage of preventive medicine, and the far better understanding of the conditions of health and bodily vigor which obtains to-day, have put the whole subject of masculine chastity in a new light. It is *now absolutely known* that *complete continence is consistent with perfect health*, and, indeed, that *continence is necessary to the highest development of bodily strength and endurance*. It is clearly understood that the consequences to offspring of lack of chastity in the father may be just as grave as those of lack of chastity in the mother; and that the happiness and security of family life is quite as apt to be destroyed by want of purity and honor in the father as in the mother. Thus the lack of children, or the limitation of children to one or two in a family, is not infrequently the direct result of immorality in the male.

There is therefore no physical reason, and there never has been any moral reason for maintaining two standards as regards chastity, one for men and the other for women. The same virtue is needed in both sexes for the happy development of that family life on which the security of the race and the progress of civilization depend. All down the centuries modesty, chastity, and fidelity in women have been desired and honored, because these virtues were held to contribute powerfully to the welfare of the family and the race. In the light of modern science, it is plainly to be seen that