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SOCIAL PURITY

A Lecture

DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
DECEMBER 10th, 1891.

BY

JOHN FERGUSON, M.A., M.D., L.R.C.P.

Demons-trator of Anatomy in the University of Toronto



PUBLISHED BY

THE SOCIAL PURITY COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, M. C. A.



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SOCIAL PURITY.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

A year ago I was asked to give a short talk on some subject of a social purity character, and to deal with it mainly from the medical standpoint. This I consented to do. As the result of that talk, delivered in the school-room of Bond Street Church, I was again asked to address the members of the Young Men's Christian Association, and to deal with some of the questions then touched upon more in detail. I consented again, and, as a result of this consent, I appear before you to-night. "Speech is silvern, silence golden," said Thomas Carlyle. I fear very much that when I am through the judgment of this audience shall be to award me the baser metal of the two. With these weighty words of Carlyle before my mind, I appear before you with mingled feelings of reluctance and pleasure,—reluctance from a sense of my own inability to address you with that scope and energy which the subject demands, and pleasure that I am permitted to say a few words upon some topics of prime importance.

While it is of great value to the State that there should be well educated and intelligent citizens within her borders, it is of vastly more value that these citizens should be morally sound; and that the affairs of State are in the hands of those who are good rather than great. Greatness, however, is a relative term, and a people may be great in goodness as another people are great in wealth or in war. My political economy is that goodness and purity, in the lives of the people, form the real foundation for true greatness in any country. Byron was by no means of a religious turn of mind, nor a moralist, and yet he saw far into the secret that had brought Greece to occupy the degraded position she was in, when the poet penned the following memorable lines :

Climo of the unforgotten brave !
Whose land from plain to mountain cave
Was Freedom's home, or Glory's grave !
Shrine of the mighty ! can it be
That this is all remains of thee ?

'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
 Each step from splendour to disgrace ;
 Enough—no foreign foe could quell
 Thy soul, till from itself it fell ;
 Yes ! self abasement paved the way
 To villain-bonds and despot sway.

In looking over the history of the nations of the earth, how often can we see this very same record of self-abasement written in large flaming letters, and later on the account of the bondage and despot sway !

I hold, without fear of contradiction, that the real progress of a people will be found to depend upon the moral strength rather than upon the intellectual power of its leading men. That national greatness is as much influenced by national morality as is individual greatness by individual morality, must be accepted as a fundamental axiom. It is an undoubted truth that the canker of immorality may be limited to a small section of the community, and that though the general sentiment on questions of right and wrong be sound, nevertheless the infection is dangerously liable to spread, the risk incurred is tremendous, and it has often happened that the strength of the good has been undermined, and the whole nation became tainted and degraded. One of the most dangerous states in modern civilization is the apathy with which so many regard every form of moral obliquity stalking daily before their eyes. While society shouts for the arrest of a poor boy who commits a petty theft, and applauds lustily over the severe punishment meted out to him by the magnates of the law, it shuts its eyes to those far greater evils that threaten to sap and loosen the very foundations on which all good order rests. The penny theft is speedily and severely dealt with, but the man who robs the country of hundreds of thousands of dollars, or seduces from the path of virtue as many young women as his fiendish cunning can waylay, walks in the height of fashion and mingles in the gayest of society.

This is by no means all. Were the evil effects of immorality, in all its forms, only to produce immorality in others, the case, bad as it would be, would still be less momentous than it really is. For, so sure as a community becomes immoral, physical troubles speedily follow with mathematical certainty. There are, then, two infections to deal with. On the one hand there is that which corrupts the manners and nature, and, on the other hand, the one which corrupts and injures the body—spreading out in ever-widening circles, and passing on into the future, to infect and blight the generations yet unborn. The morality of the people, therefore, is a great national problem. But the real remedy for immoral conduct, acts of oppression, vicious tastes, cruel behaviour, selfishness,

will never be found in Acts of Parliament, however good these might be. There is one remedy only : elevate the standard of life. When a number of persons in a community band themselves together, and earnestly strive to encourage others to attain to and maintain a high moral code, the influence for good ever widens. A larger number are, from year to year, brought within the health-giving atmosphere ; a tonic stimulus thrills their being, new aspirations rise before them, the feeling that they have been benefited prompts them to extend the benefit to others, and thus the higher ideal of life is reached. To individual morality we must therefore look for that power which is to save the nation. It is here that the influence of the Young Men's Christian Associations comes in to accomplish its great work of purifying the lives of those with whom it comes in contact. Go on then with your work, and, though often discouraged, ever remember that the light is steadily coming nearer. Think of the words of the poet :

Like a spirit hastening to his work
Of glory and of good the light springs forth ;
Rejoicing in his splendour till the mask
Of darkness, falls from the awakened earth.

No matter what our religious opinions may be, we can all happily unite on the question that a high-moral standard ought to be maintained. While you cannot get all to agree to a belief in any religion, you can get the most immoral to admit that it would be better for the world if all were moral. Let us, therefore, apart from any religious consideration, deal with some of these weighty matters from a lower level. I propose to discuss moral questions altogether independently of their religious relation and bearing. In this way I hope to strengthen those who look at these questions from a religious standpoint ; and, if my arguments do not convince, they will not be easily controverted. I shall treat these moral questions from the medical side, and say what little I have to say under the following headings : (1) Immoral Literature ; (2) The Solitary Vice ; (3) Prostitution, and (4) Diseases.

1. *Immoral Literature.*—One of the greatest dangers to the morality of a community is the free sale and distribution of an immoral class of literature. It can be readily understood how the sale of a single, small, cheap production, saturated with vice, can do more harm than many good persons may be able to counteract. No dangers to persons and communities are to be so much dreaded as those which put on the external appearance of decency, or which do their work silently and unseen. An evil that is open to the

gaze of all, or that is loud in its behaviour, is far more easily traced and controlled than the one that quietly falls in the way of some unfortunate person, but leaves no outward marks to indicate its presence. Of such an order is an evil book. There are some whose sole desire seems to be to poison the minds of others, and a favourite plan with them is the cheap book. True, some of these authors are prompted by the love of gain to write such books; but a very considerable number are moved to do so by sheer badness. Of such evil there is no end; and it often comes to us under the guise of goodness. Such books are often full of finger-posts directing the unwary into paths that lead to ruin and disaster. The great pity is that so many of these writings, full of poison of the most deadly character, fall into the hands of the young at an age when impressions are most readily made and most difficult to remove.

From a large experience and a close observation of young persons, I have formed the opinion that, in the great majority of instances, they would be good if they were not corrupted from some source or other. There is, however, a strong craving to get hold of and read books dealing with the reproductive functions. I regret exceedingly to say that numerous books on these subjects, of a very poor class indeed, are far too common and far too widely diffused among the people. These books contain the most disgusting details, the statements in them are as false scientifically as they are foul morally, and the motives of the authors as base and mercenary as it is possible to conceive any human motive to be. I trust if any of you come into the possession of any of these books, you will have the good sense to throw them into the fire.

If there be any truth more firmly established than another, it is that incalculable harm is done by a premature knowledge, on the part of boys and girls, of the relations of the sexes. Some of the most terrible examples of moral ruin can be traced to the information obtained from the reading of some of these lewd writings. To the young and inexperienced a vast amount of mental anguish and misery, almost bordering on insanity, is caused by the perusal of books that pretend to deal with such problems, and do so in a most ignorant and licentious manner. Many of these writers are persons of much experience in knowing where the weak points of the young boy or girl lie; and with much flow of language dress up their vile thoughts so as to give rise to a vast amount of deception, fear, and wickedness in the unfortunate readers. There are as great injuries being done at the present moment by such writings as would be promptly rewarded with a term in the penitentiary were the equivalent committed in the form of open assault or robbery.

Another question naturally coming under this head, is that of advertising in the public press certain remedies and books. In one paper you will see in large type the announcement of some wonderful remedy that will cure every form of female ailment. But, if you only take time to read between the lines, you can see at a glance that the real purport is to cure her of some foul disease she has contracted from immoral acts; or, to procure an abortion, if through these immoral acts she finds that she is going to become a mother. Then you will see notices in the papers, hailing frequently from some reverend source, offering you a cure for all the evil results of the sins of your youth, telling you that if you will only write to the advertiser, he will be so glad to send you, for nothing, a remedy. His love for you is so great that he goes to the great expense of advertising this remedy all over the country. Just think for a moment. If he had anything to offer the public, all he needs to do is to send it to some leading medical journal, and the editor will insert it for nothing. Next week all the medical profession would know of the remedy. But, no, this is not the way of this species of vulture. He advertises in the lay press. You send for the remedy. He sends you a lot of printed matter, containing a vast amount of untruth. You become frightened at the catalogue of diseases you may have. His great remedy you cannot get filled at any drug store, because he has given to a few common ingredients a few uncommon names. You are told, however, that if your druggist cannot procure it for you, this reverend advertiser will be happy to do so for the small sum of five dollars. Keep clear of all such. Be he reverend or be he lay, you had better meet with the Prince of Darkness at once than indirectly through such agents.

Many hold that young boys and girls should be taught early on matters relating to the sexes. To this view I positively object. Information of such a character, given to very young persons, is likely only to stimulate them to seek more; and in a short time they will be reading books of the most questionable nature. In handling such subjects it is only necessary to deal in general, broad principles of moral purity, and to supplant bad books by the use of good ones. Teach self-restraint to the young boy or girl till the mind has matured sufficiently to grasp the details on which such teachings rest. Injudicious statements on such matters often only kindle the imagination. Some hold that the young should be taught the physiology of the sexual functions. In accordance with this view, some of the most disreputable books in the English language have seen the light of day. My own opinion is that the ideal of a pure life should be constantly held up before every boy and girl, and that this ought to be accomplished on sound moral prin-

ciples, with as little reference to particulars as possible, until the years of discretion have arrived.

You may ask me how to obtain the good and avoid the bad. Well, I would make two suggestions. First, some general instructions could be prepared for the use of parents and teachers, for the guidance of those under their care ; and second, there ought to be some stringent State control over books and advertisements, so that those of a questionable nature could at once be suppressed. There is no sense in restraining physical murder, and allowing moral murder to stalk the land red-handed and free.

2. *The Solitary Vice.*—By this term is meant the habit of self-abuse, masturbation, self-pollution. This is a most dangerous habit, because it is a very common one. Its great danger lies in the facts that it can be practised so often, that it fastens itself so firmly upon its victims, that it is so difficult of detection, and that, if continued, its results are so varied and disastrous. It would be difficult for the human imagination to think of a more abominable habit.

The source of much evil in this matter is bad management and improper training in the early years of life. Bad habits may be learned while the boy, and girl too, are quite young. They may arise from ignorance, carelessness, or dirty habits on the part of the mother, nurse or guardian. The habit may soon become a most pernicious one, which may prove most difficult to cure. It is usually by boys who have thus acquired the habit that it is introduced into schools and spread among their companions. One tainted individual may in this way become the source of infection to many innocent persons. The evil may rapidly spread, and unless proper vigilance be exercised large numbers are made victims.

The prevalence of the vice is also a matter of deep regret. In the manner just stated, the habit has become all too common. In some countries, and in some districts of others, it is almost universal. In Russia, for example, it prevails to a deplorable extent, among girls as well as boys. If the Czar directed a little more attention and money to this question, and less to his great army, he would be much nearer the true ideal of what the head of a large nation ought to be. This debasing habit is much more frequent with the youth of both sexes than is generally supposed. A great many of the troubles that come upon young persons after the age of puberty arise out of the long existence and oft repetition of this habit. Many of the weaknesses often attributed to growth and development are due to this practice.

To show the necessity for care in this important question, we have only to look for a moment at the causes. First of all comes

the general cause—ignorance. Young boys and girls know no better. They have received no instruction in such matters, and, consequently, fall easy prey before the first temptation. Another cause is dirty habits, which keep up irritation of the sexual organs. If the saying, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," has any application it is surely here. Many have fallen into evil habits through inattention to this simple particular. Another cause for young boys being led astray is the immoral practices of nurse girls and servant girls. Sometimes on purpose, sometimes ignorantly, yet only too frequently, they prove the originators of much mischief. Residential colleges for boys and girls are often the sources of most contaminating influences. Close daily contact with some one who is not sound infects the entire class; and all this unknown to teachers or parents.

Already I have expressed my opinion on the question of giving advice or warning to young persons, when speaking of immoral literature. What I then said referred to certain ages at which, I held, we should deal with this question by instilling into the young general principles of truth, purity and honor. Such principles will guide the boy or girl. But we are now discussing an age one step in advance. We are dealing with the boy or girl that is reaching, or has reached, the age of puberty. At this age the sexual functions come into activity, and the sexes begin to show their respective distinctions of mind and body. It is a question that has troubled the minds of good men when instruction ought to be begun. It may be adopted, as a safe working rule, that information should be imparted as soon as there is manifested any curiosity in this direction. If there is any reason to think that there is any anxiety in the mind in this matter, then the craving must be satisfied with healthy knowledge, or it may too soon be filled with evil imaginings, gathered from very bad sources.

No little skill is needed in introducing such instruction as ought to be given, so as not to produce an unhealthy excitement. Too much information should not to be given at once. The first great object should be to secure the full confidence of the young. They will then readily impose trust, and resort with pleasure to their superiors for advice and guidance. Just as we learn our mother tongue, our geometry, our history, our classics, so ought we to learn, bit by bit, step by step, the functions of those organs whose use it is to perpetuate the species, and the misuse of which has brought so much immorality and disease into the world. I hold that it is not wise to push the enquirer away, telling him at the same time that this whole matter is a mystery that must be avoided. When reason is awakening, and curiosity dawning upon the young

mind, the more we enshroud a subject with the air of secrecy and mystery the more intensely engrossing does it become. There is in this way an impulse given to gain information that, unguided, may be very serious and far-reaching in its results. There is nothing wrong in knowing. The evil is in how we come to know. True, the first instalment of information may cause some disturbance in the young mind; but the fuller information that is to gradually follow acts as a decided calmative. No matter how much or little information be given at any one time, let me enter a strong appeal that it be truthful and pure in character. Nothing can be more dangerous than that kind of mock modesty which conceals the true conditions under a thin veil of disguise that must soon perish, suddenly exposed, leaving the real truth which ought to have been exposed by degrees. I am convinced that secrecy has gone too far, and that it has caused serious evils.

Much more serious than this degree of ignorance, because it is much more common, is the evil arising from the very objectionable manner in which sexual knowledge gains access to the mind. Instead of being conveyed in some plain, moral way, it is too often gained through the medium of vile jest or obscene print. At the most plastic period of life, when the mind is full of new instincts, and the whole being is one of disquietude, we withhold from the young that knowledge which nature is trying to impart; and we leave them to find their own way, or to become the dupes of evil companions or bad books.

Why do the young regard a book dealing with these topics with such curiosity? Not from any natural badness in them, but an innate desire to learn, a longing for that information which they have a right to possess. This all right minded parents ought to furnish in such a way as to instruct the reason without inflaming the imagination. Sexual knowledge is not wrong; the effect of such knowledge is not injurious, but the secrecy that is maintained about such questions is often very hurtful. It is a notable feature in our nature to seek forbidden fruit. The sexual function is naturally powerful; we increase this vastly by regarding it as a forbidden topic.

But suppose, by misfortune, the habit has been formed, and indulged in over a lengthy period, what is to be done? Here, I think, I can offer you some words of genuine comfort. Like a man, give up the habit once and for all. This done, the cause is removed. Do not be afraid of your own powers to accomplish this. It is one of the grandest possessions a young man can have, to be able to say that he has confidence in himself. Without this few can hope to attain to any distinction.

After having abandoned the evil habit, live a good moral life. Give up all lewd thinking and acting. Keep your bodies clean and minds pure, and there will be but little soil for the Evil One to sow his seed in. Never allow a solitary habit to grow upon you. Man was intended to be a social being. There is nothing more harmful than a solitary life, and nothing better than good, pure, enlightened society. Avoid all stimulants, and I would also say tobacco, in these cases ; for anything that causes debility, or nervousness, is against the chances of mastering a bad habit. Having done all this, make a solemn vow to keep out of the hands of those who vend some famous remedy. They only wish to make capital out of your fear and credulity. Get your mind freed at once from that dreadful nightmare that haunts so many young men, that, as a result of their indiscretion, they are now the victims of seminal emissions. I wish to raise my voice, with all the power I possess, against this fear. There is no ground for it. The habit of self-pollution is bad, beyond the power of language to express ; but then, you have given it up. The mere fact that you have emissions is not bad. This is a perfectly natural thing, and would have taken place though self-abuse had never once been performed. I know that in making the above statement I am going in the teeth of much that is currently believed ; but I repeat it again—do not worry over the occurrence of emissions from time to time. You have no cause to keep your mind in a state of anxiety on this score. I wish some of those who have busied themselves circulating literature calculated to produce alarm on this matter, could be made to experience the misery they have been the agents of causing to others ! It is a perfectly natural condition for the adult male to lose a certain amount of seminal fluid ; and there would be just as much sense in taking medicine to stop the flow of saliva in the mouth as to take medicine to stop the flow of seminal fluid. While this is so, the provoking of this flow by masturbation must be regarded as most disastrous, both morally and physically. Grant that someone here has practised the habit. After you have done what I have just indicated, and you still have some fear on your mind, then go and consult some physician of known integrity, whom you know, and who will not make capital out of your anxiety. In your efforts to abandon evil habits and acquire good ones, think of the words Goethe puts in the mouth of Faust :—

A worthy object still pursue !
 Be not a hollow, tinkling fool !
 By understanding, judgment true,
 Rightly thyself alone canst rule.

3. *Prostitution.*—Over the door of a bawdy house there were writt-n by someone who knew the nature of the place, the following memorable words: "All hope abandon ye who enter here." When Dante composed that line, to describe the awful misery that was to be encountered on entering the infernal regions, I am sure he never thought that it would be quoted by some reader, and applied so appropriately as over the door of a house of ill-fame. No truer words were ever used. He who once starts on this course, and enters through that door, may truly be said to have cast the chance of all peace, joy, health and happiness behind. He has embarked wilfully on a dark and tempestuous sea, with unseen rocks beneath, and Scylla and Charybdis on either hand. A distinguished London surgeon once said in my hearing to a student who had begun going with fast women, "You have started on a road from which you will never turn back, and one that always leads to ruin."

How is it that so many young men and women fall into this vile habit? Not a few make their acquaintance with the lewd thoughts that are to lead them astray by reading immoral and inflaming books. When the passions are once kindled they are not always easily controlled. Some again, from intemperate and dirty habits, render themselves ready victims. Others learn their first lessons in impurities of language, which soon lead to impurities of thought. These impurities of thought soon ripen into impurities of action. One of the great causes of prostitution among young women is the fact that many of them find it so difficult to earn a living that they betake themselves to this practice as a means of increasing their income. Short-sighted and pitiable policy this is indeed, as no more expensive plan of living could be devised than that which demoralizes the nature and saturates the system with disease.

But the greatest cause of all for the ruin of so many young women is man's own shameful cruelty towards them. Attentions are paid to young women for no other purpose than that of gaining their confidence, which is simply looked upon as a stepping-stone to their seduction. Get the young men all right, and there is no fear of the young women. Let the men but restrain themselves, and the race of prostitutes will soon die out. It is quite true that if you walk down the streets of a great city you may be saluted and enticed by some woman, and perhaps she may yet look handsome. But why does she so act? Because, in the vast majority of cases, she was first enticed and seduced by some man. She lost her self-respect and her womanhood, and now she walks the streets.

Bad home influences are greatly to blame for this. Surely no one would seriously maintain that prostitution is a necessary evil.

You can easily think of a society of one hundred persons, all of whom are strictly chaste. This number can be readily extended to several hundreds, and then to thousands, without a single unchaste member. If you must grant this, then you must grant that it is quite correct to conceive of the entire community, and country, being moral and pure. By proper training, boys ought to be raised to entertain a high ideal of the sacredness of a pure life. No sentimental particulars need be indulged in to accomplish this. The great principles of right and wrong can be applied here that can be applied to theft and lying. By such training young men would not be so readily disposed to act the part of the tempter, and young women would have a wholesome horror of any advance that would not bear the full light of day. From time to time you hear of cases where young girls of ten or twelve years are seduced by men of mature years. If these girls had only had some good advice from their mothers this sad result would not have taken place.

We often hear that a certain amount of indulgence is a law of nature and a physiological necessity. All such statements, and the arguments used to support them, are highly abominable. Those who propagate such a view must be hopelessly wicked themselves. They know that these assertions are false, yet they continue repeating them. The advice that any form of evil is necessary as an indulgence, is surely a most pernicious and cruel doctrine. Think for a moment of the thousands and thousands who have lived throughout long lives without once giving way to such a false ideal, and who enjoyed good health and sound minds, enriching the world with good thoughts and good deeds. It is pitiful to hear a poor, senseless fellow pretend to argue on the need for prostitution, and to brag of his own immoral acts as the evidence of real manliness. Such a person is too degraded, and his whole being too warped, to be listened to upon any topic. The only thing they are capable of doing is to lay traps to ensnare the unwary, and to spread their foul contagion to those who are innocent. There is no form of vice to compare in badness with that which wilfully corrupts the innocent. Away with all such sickly sentimentalism. Prostitution is not a necessary evil, it never was a necessary evil, and it never will be. It only exists because a certain number of persons, steeped in vice, wish it to exist. All teachings that prostitution is necessary on physiological grounds are as false as any human conceit could be. They are cruel, misleading, undermining, deplorable. W. E. H. Lecky, in his history of European morals, makes the statement that the existence in a community of prostitutes is a means of protection and safety to those women who wish to live pure lives. Could anything more outrageous to our sense of right have been

written? How can an evil, the very nature of which is to demoralize young men, prove a protection to young women who are virtuous, but who must of necessity mingle in society containing these contaminated young men?

It is not so. Evil in every form is a danger; and in this form is a very great danger. But there are some young men who would not seduce a respectable woman, and would yet associate with a prostitute. So say some of our moralists. Is there anything dishonest in finding a gold watch on the street and making no effort to restore it to the owner? Is there a long way between keeping a watch so found and actually stealing it? Is there a long way between going with a fallen woman and causing one yet innocent to fall? Rest assured of this, that he who will do the first will not hesitate very long about the latter. Suppose, however, that a man never went beyond the limits of selecting from the ranks of the fallen, the influence on himself is bad indeed. Our great aim in life ought to be to seek the companionship of those who are better than ourselves. But I go a step further. I maintain that no man has any right to associate with a fallen woman unless his object be to raise her in the social scale. If we cannot, or do not intend to, better her condition, we should not sink her lower down. Take the case home to yourselves. Suppose that the fallen woman is your sister, or your daughter, or your mother or wife that has been seduced from the path of virtue, what would be your opinion of me if I used my influence to sink her deeper down! On the other hand, how would you regard me should I do all that lay in my power to take her out of the miry clay and to plant her feet once more on the firm rock! Let it never be forgotten that every fallen woman is some one's sister, or some one's daughter, or some one's wife, or some one's mother. I ask of you, then, not to do unto others what you would not have them do to you.

Good laws and good social regulations may do much, but they must fall far short of effecting a cure. The remedy, and the only remedy, for this great social evil is individual purity. Whether we look from a religious, a moral, a scientific, or a philosophical standpoint, we must admit that all true wisdom begins with self-control. Without this, we can do but little; and society in a short time would be reduced to chaos. It is the power of self control, of self-denial, that is the highest and finest principle in a well-balanced mind. To attain to a high degree of self-control it is necessary to begin early, and never once to yield to the temptation to do anything that conscience admonishes to be wrong. Never once let go your grasp on self.

"If once the wavering balance shake,
'Tis seldom right adjusted."

Who had greater cause to know the truth of these words than their gifted author, Robert Burns! See to it that your influence in society shall ever make for a high and pure standard.

Many of you may wish to hear my views upon the vexed question of licensing a certain number of houses of ill-fame. I shall not attempt to quote the hundreds who have given opinions *pro* and *con*. I have no fear, however, in giving my own, and standing by it to the last, that any such plan would be most monstrous, foolish and wicked; and if we could do anything thoroughly acceptable to the devil, this would be it. The only reason that can be advanced for such a course is the arrest of disease. In this regard it would utterly fail, as there would still be a large number of women who would carry on their nefarious traffic outside of the range of inspection. We would then only have recognized prostitution as lawful, while we would have failed in arresting its evil results. We would only make fools and children of ourselves in the face of the great enemy of mankind. I cannot do better than quote the words of that distinguished surgeon of London, Sir James Paget. He says: "I would just as soon prescribe theft or lying, or anything else that God has forbidden, as fornication. Chastity does no harm to mind or body, and it is an excellent discipline; marriage can be safely waited for."

A. *Diseases.*—I now come to the last part of my lecture. As this portion is more a medical one than a social one, I shall treat it briefly compared with the attention its importance really demands. The diseases arising from fornication, three in number, are all powerful to work physical ruin. The results and sequels of these diseases are manifest in the system many years after they were contracted. Every tissue of the body may be affected by them. They can be transmitted from the infected to the well with the greatest readiness. It is not always those guilty of prostitution who suffer. The innocent may be contaminated by coming in contact with the diseased, or with articles of clothing, cups or spoons that have been used by them. The ravages wrought by syphilis are truly appalling. These ravages do not stop with the infected. They pass on from generation to generation.

In speaking of syphilis alone
diseases, Dr. W. P. ...
populati...

I have seen numbers who contracted it innocently ; wives who got it from their unfaithful husbands, children who got it from their parents. Where and when is this great river of disease and misery and death going to end !

There remains the fact, and it is as old as the disease itself, that it can be prevented. One method, and one alone, is possible, and it is open to all. It is the prevention and the safety that comes from unbroken chastity. As we look back over the long centuries, we see the sensual more and more dominant in the past, gradually growing less as the race slowly rises. Are we doing all in our power to help on this rise. The opinions that suggest or permit incontinence are absolutely false. With all the force that any knowledge I may have can give, and with all the authority I may possess, I assert that no man ever yet was in the slightest degree the better for incontinence, or the worse for perfect chastity. That for unchastity all must be worse morally ; and that most are worse physically. That for many the result is, and ever will be, utter physical shipwreck on one of the many rocks, sharp, jagged, or on one of the many banks of festering slime that are about his course, and which no care can avoid. Let us beware lest we give even a silent sanction to that against which, even on the lowest grounds, I am sure, we ought resolutely to set our face and raise our voice. A few words from Milton and I am done :—

Only add

Deeds to thy knowledge answerable ; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance ; add love,
By name to come, call'd charity, the soul
Of all the rest : then wilt thou not be loth
To leave this paradise, but shalt possess
A paradise within thee, happier far.

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look from

point, we must adm

Without this, we can do but

would be reduced to chaos. It is the power of denial, that is the highest and finest principle in a well-ordered mind. To attain to a high degree of self-control it is necessary to begin early, and never once to yield to the temptation to do anything that conscience admonishes to be wrong. Never once let go your grasp on self.

“ If once the wavering balance shake,
’Tis seldom right adjusted.”

