



FRIEND *or* ENEMY?

*To the Men of the
Army and Navy*



Friend or Enemy?

TO THE MEN OF
THE ARMY AND NAVY

M. J. EXNER, M.D.

*Secretary International Committee of
Young Men's Christian Associations*

Association Press

347 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT, 1916, BY
J. F. McTYIER

Approved by the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities, Social Hygiene Division.

FRIEND OR ENEMY?

The Soldier's Problem

The real test of a man's character is the way he governs his native instincts and desires, and keeps them true to the ideals of his best self under unusual conditions. His primitive instincts are the raw material out of which his character must be forged—good or bad. They may become his most loyal friends or his most relentless enemies. Whether friend or enemy will depend on the kind of training and education they receive.

No one more than the man of the army or navy must do straight thinking and form a manly purpose as to the ideals that shall govern his sex instinct, in order that he may be fortified against the temptations with which he will be called upon to do battle. This is the supreme fight of his life. It will test his manhood, his courage, his heroism more severely than the plunge into the carnage of modern battle at its worst. Thousands of men who have made that plunge without flinching and with utter abandon have been woefully defeated in the severer battle with self.

The need for clean-cut decision on this matter is shown by experience in the European war. It is generally admitted that in all the nations engaged in this war, the results of prostitution present one of the greatest, if not the greatest, army problem. The extent and the ravages of venereal disease have been appalling. During the first twenty months of the war, one of the great powers had more men incapacitated for service by venereal disease contracted while in the training camps, than in all the fighting at the front. A medical officer of high rank is authority for the statement that in that same country there are seventeen thousand cases of venereal disease concentrated in a single hospital camp. Not long ago eighty thousand soldiers on their way to the front passed through a certain Mediterranean city with an average stay of two weeks in that city. The medical service is authority for the statement that ten per cent of the men became infected with venereal disease during that stay.

From the standpoint of army strength and efficiency alone, such waste is serious. From the standpoint of the men, it is much more serious. For them it means not only inconvenience, suffering, or death; it means lives dishonored, trusts betrayed, ideals shattered, character destroyed. But it is only

when we picture to ourselves the inevitable consequences of pouring back into the stream of society this immense volume of venereal disease and moral disease—consequences in suffering, mutilation, and death of innocent women, in enfeebled, defective, and still-born children, and consequences in moral contagion spreading from generation to generation—that we get some conception of the seriousness of these facts.

The Significance of Sex

The first thing necessary for straight thinking on the subject of sex is an understanding and appreciation of its function in human life. A right conception of it as the essential source of the dignity, beauty, and power of life must replace in our minds any estimate of it as a thing ignoble and serving merely selfish ends.

The whole essential structure of modern civilized life has grown out of the impulse of sex. It was not until sexual reproduction arose that growth to the highest forms now shown in human life became possible. Not only the physical structure of life but its spiritual structure as well has grown out of sex. Our social instincts and feelings, our moral aspirations, our religious sense, our poetry and art, our æsthetic nature, have been developed mainly out of sex.

The most wonderful fact of all is that human love, the purest emotion and highest activity of which man is capable, has developed with and through the development of sex. Love, "the greatest thing in the world," in all its manifestations—parental love, friendship love, sexual love, love of the beautiful, love of the divine—had its origin in the first faint glimmerings of sexual sympathy in animals of prehistoric waters. We are just beginning to see that the real goal of the evolutionary process is the perfect development of love, and that in this lies the solution of the life problems of the individual and the race. Sex in human life today can be rightly interpreted only in terms of the affections. The sex instinct forms the very core of the love-life, out of which the springs of life flow. If love is defiled, the very springs of life are defiled.

Just as civilization has grown out of sex, so the development of the individual today is dependent upon sex. One of the most interesting and significant discoveries in recent years has been the fact that the development of the essential characteristics of manhood and womanhood is dependent upon a product which the sex glands furnish to the blood. In the male the rugged form, the powerful muscles, the qualities of will, of initiative, of courage, the social

instinct, love, and the spiritual sense are dependent upon the sex glands for their development. If these glands are destroyed in boyhood, the normal male qualities either do not develop or are greatly modified. The same is true of the growth of womanhood. The sex organs hold the key to the normal development of the individual in body, in mind, and in spirit.

It will readily be seen, then, that any practice or habit of mind which stimulates sexual activity during the growing years of boyhood and young manhood is harmful to the finest development of the individual. It must also become plain that a young man's ideals of sex and of love have more to do with determining his character and the richness of his life in any human relationship than has any other influence.

Sexual activity can have a rightful place in human relationships only as an expression of mutual love in marriage. Only so can it be consistent with self-respect and the deepest spiritual life of both parties. Sexual activity outside the field of mutual love in marriage becomes at once degrading to every noble sense, for it is a selfish animal act which uses another person as a mere convenience without regard to personality. It will be noticed that I said "mutual love *in marriage*." Some men ask, why cannot sexual activity as an expression of

mutual love outside of marriage be consistent with the highest interests of both parties? As society is constituted today, such activities entail consequences which are anti-social, and responsibilities inconsistent with love. Such an act cannot be divorced from selfishness.

The Young Man's Ideal

The manly ideal for the young man outside of marriage is the ideal of a sexually continent life. By a continent life we mean one in which the individual masters his impulses and refrains from all forms of sexual indulgence. Any other course necessarily hurts society and degrades the individual. There is no possibility of honorable compromise on this point. Let us consider briefly why this is so.

1. The continent life before marriage is the only practice which permits a full and fine development of love. Love is the biggest thing in a man's life. In it lie the main springs of his actions and the source of his noblest ambitions. Out of it grow the fruits that make life worth while.

The finer capacities of love, like any other great capacity, can be developed only by careful training and culture. To attain them a man's affections must be governed by high ideals, educated by right thinking, and established by noble conduct. Illicit

relations degrade love utterly. "Passion enjoyed as an end in itself," says Gulick, "is definitely antispiritual. It makes for coarseness of feeling, selfishness, and the debasement of regard for women." Many men who have lived loose lives have told me that afterwards when they sought to enter into the deep intimacies of pure love with sweetheart or wife they found themselves incapable of that deep, rich response in purity of love for which their better nature yearned. One man said, "In my most holy moments with my wife, when I most desire to have my thoughts of her pure and my love deep and undefiled, the memory of past experiences and a perverted imagination come in to defile these holy moments and I suffer the remorse of hell."

2. The continent life is the only rational life in relation to character. This follows from what has been said on the subject of love. Anything which degrades the love-instinct necessarily coarsens and degrades the whole of character. A noble character must be forged out of first quality stuff. Right thinking, pure imagination, unselfish desires, manly conduct—these are the brick and mortar of the character of a real man. The sensuous mind, the selfish purpose, the degrading relationships which go with illicit relations are not calculated to produce worthy character. It is such practices

that degrade men far below the level of the brutes.

3. The continent life on the part of the young man is the only sensible course from the standpoint of life's efficiency. High efficiency demands the strong grip of mastery upon our powers. Will-power, initiative, concentration, sustained application, singleness of purpose—these are qualities needed for high efficiency, whether in purely intellectual pursuits or in industry or trade.

An unchaste life is one of the greatest destroyers of personal efficiency. The reason is that such a life disorders the imagination. The imagination is perhaps the most wonderful power peculiar to man. It may be a source of striking originality and productiveness or it may completely disorganize a man's efficiency and power. An unchaste life leads to dominance of the imagination by mental imagery of a selfishly sensual character. It weakens the will, destroys the power of application and concentration, and dissipates high purpose.

It has been my privilege to deal extensively with students. Hundreds have admitted an almost identical experience about as follows: A student sits down in his room to get his lessons. He has a big evening's work before him and he purposes to study hard and master his task. As he has gotten

well started, some sexual suggestion flashes into his mind. The imagination evokes out of it alluring pictures and situations. His attention is quickly scattered. He tries to pull his mind back to his books, but the pictures and images persist and confusion grows. Soon the mind refuses to focus on his task, the evening's work is "shot to pieces," and in many cases the student leaves his books and goes to act out the unmanly situation which his imagination has created.

The same efficiency-destroying process in young men is at work in every calling, whether professional, industrial, or trade. The affections are the controlling motive forces of life. In the degree in which when rightly used they give it power, when perverted they bring confusion and degradation.

Lord Kitchener was fully alive to the awful waste caused by sexual indiscretion in the strength and efficiency of the British troops in India. He issued a special memorandum on the subject, which he ordered every soldier to place in his book of instructions for constant reference. In it he says: "It is discreditable, and even dishonest, that by contracting through self-indulgence a disease which he can avoid a man should render himself incapable of rendering that service for his country

which he enlisted to do. It is therefore, the duty of every soldier not only to keep himself clear of disease, but also by his good example to help his comrades to avoid temptation. Every man can by self-control restrain the indulgence of those imprudent and reckless impulses that so often lead men astray, and he who thus resists is a better soldier and a better man than the man of weaker will who allows his bodily appetites to rule him and who lacks the strength of character to resist temptation, and to refuse to follow any bad example he may see before him. Let each then consider for himself whether indulgence is worth the price which has to be paid for it in disease, in punishment, in injury to the man himself, his wife, and his children, in destruction of the efficiency of his corps and in degradation of his own body and mind."

4. The continent life for the young man is the only standard that is fair to woman. Society demands, and every right-minded man individually demands, that all women remain sexually continent before marriage. Every self-respecting young man expects his bride to bring purity to the marriage altar. Who would dare to suggest to any young man of spirit that his sweetheart has the right to indulge herself sexually with other men before becoming his wife?

Nothing could more instantly arouse his fighting blood. But has she not the absolute right to demand the same purity of him? Does not common fairness demand that he bring to the marriage altar the same purity which he expects of her?

Again, the self-respecting young man demands the same purity of his sister and the sisters of his friends. He would fight to the death for the protection of their honor. But such young men are often all too ready to forget that the less fortunate girl with whom he enters into immoral relations is somebody's sister and daughter. The fact that a girl has been unfortunate enough to fall—through love betrayed, through economic pressure, through weakness, through deliberate purpose of evil men, or through one of many other causes—does not remove from him in the least degree his obligations to respect in her the rights of all womanhood. Indeed, manly chivalry claims peculiarly his function of protectorship for the weak and unfortunate. The common assumption of men that, after someone else has accomplished the first deed, the woman becomes the legitimate prey of other men is utterly brutal and unworthy of any man of decent respect.

I am not unmindful of the fact that the problem of self-control is for the most part more difficult for men than it is for most

women. This is, however, not sufficient ground for greater moral laxity for men. While it is true that in most women the sex instinct expresses itself more in the outflow of the affections and less in passionate desire than is the case with most men, there is a considerable proportion of women in whom sex impulses are just as imperious as in most highly sexed men. Yet we make no exception in moral standards for such women. We demand that all women remain continent outside of marriage, and she who fails to do so becomes an outcast of society. There is no sound reason why the man who causes her fall should not meet the same condemnation from society.

5. The continent life before marriage is the only rational course from the standpoint of parenthood. To bring into the world children with the finest possible physical, mental, and moral endowment is not only a man's highest social obligation, but is one of the deepest sources of joy and reward. On the other hand, to bring into the world children with weakened constitution or defective in mind or moral nature, because of youthful folly resulting in venereal disease, is not only a crime but becomes a relentless, goading punishment for such folly. The danger of such disease is ever-present in illicit relations. This

may cause children to be brought into the world deformed in body, defective in mind, blinded at birth, or otherwise infected with the same loathsome disease.

Some time ago a friend of mine was in camp in the woods with a multi-millionaire's son, a young man who had led a fast life. He was now engaged to be married to a splendid young woman. In the intimacy of the camp-fire they discussed some of the vital problems of the love-life of young men. The young millionaire was much impressed by what my friend had said. They retired for the night and my friend thought his companion had fallen asleep, when suddenly he rose up, lifted his right arm and said, "If I knew tonight that I could marry and have two healthy children I would be willing to cut off this arm at my shoulder with a jack-knife." The millionaire no more than any other man can escape the hell of retribution created by an unchaste life.

6. The continent life for the unmarried young man is the only rational practice for the good of society. A contrary course necessarily involves the degradation of women and the undermining of the social order. Illicit relations strike at the heart of the home—the institution upon which society is built. The young man who indulges in illicit sex relations thereby allies

himself with the forces which work for destruction in human society.

Venereal Disease

The venereal diseases which work such havoc in society find their chief opportunity to spread through promiscuous sex relations. They practically never spread through sex relations between a man and woman who remained continent until their marriage. The possible consequences—individual, domestic, social—of these diseases are so terrible that every young man should certainly know the essential facts about them.

Gonorrhœa (Clap) is a highly contagious disease of the reproductive organs. It begins in men with an inflammation of the canal of the male organ followed by a yellowish discharge. If the case is a slight one it may run its course and heal spontaneously. It tends, however, to pass back into the deeper structures and become chronic, thereby greatly increasing the difficulty of a cure and the chances of serious consequences to the individual and to others. The disease frequently leaves strictures of the canal which afterwards are likely to require an operation. The inflammation may pass down to one or both testicles, with possible sterility as a result. It may extend to the bladder, with the

likelihood of serious injury to that organ. It may extend to the kidneys and seriously cripple these organs or cause death. The germs of the disease may pass into the blood and be carried to the joints, the heart, and other internal organs, or to the spinal column or brain, setting up serious disease or causing death.

During the course of the disease the germs tend to become imbedded in the deep parts, particularly the prostate gland. There they may remain inactive for years after the individual is apparently cured. From time to time material carrying the germ passes away. If the germs come in contact with a fresh mucous surface a virulent case of the disease results. It is in this way that so many innocent wives are infected with gonorrhoea, to pay the penalty for the husband's selfishness with wrecked health, chronic invalidism, or mutilation. All outward symptoms of the disease having long ago disappeared, the young man thinks himself cured, and marries. He infects his wife with the disease. In most cases no adequate treatment is given. The disease is very prone to extend up into the womb and out to the tubes and ovaries. It is exceedingly difficult to eradicate the disease from these parts. The common results are sterility, a life of chronic suffering, or the removal of part or all of the

female organs by a dangerous operation. A large proportion of all the operations on the pelvic organs of women are due to gonorrhoeal infection. This constant stream of women passing through the hands of surgeons for the purpose of mutilation necessary to save life, and the still larger number of others who patiently endure life-long suffering innocently acquired, is one of the most pitiful tragedies of human life, one for which the folly and selfishness of men is mainly responsible.

If the infected wife is able to bear a child, its eyes are likely to become infected at birth, with probable destruction of eyesight. Much of the blindness in this country is due to gonorrhoeal infection.

During the acute stages of the disease the individual may spread the contagion through the toilet, towels, underwear, bed-linen, and other means.

Syphilis (Pox) is a disease of the entire system. No disease is capable of producing more terrible consequences. No other disease contributes so largely to the filling of institutions for the sick, the defectives, the insane, and the dependent. Syphilis starts with a local sore followed by skin eruptions, abrasions of the mucous membrane of mouth and throat, falling out of hair and other disorders accompanied by depressing constitutional effects. During

this stage the disease is very contagious. Later, perhaps after years, it manifests itself in disease of bones, muscles, internal organs, arteries, and especially the nervous system and brain. Its most destructive effects may appear twenty or thirty years after infection. It is responsible for practically all cases of locomotor ataxia and general paralysis of the brain, a large percentage of insanity, many still-born children, and for a heavy percentage of the early deaths of children. It is responsible for many cases of apoplexy, paralysis, and sudden death many years after it is supposed to be cured.

The infected husband is very likely to infect his wife, with all possible consequences enumerated. Added to her physical suffering is the mental agony which comes with the sense of degradation and loss which the disease carries with it, and the anxiety as to its effects upon her children. In the case of syphilis, children may be born already diseased or they may be defective in body and mind—imbecile, idiotic, or epileptic.

Both syphilis and gonorrhoea can now in many cases be cured, especially if treatment is begun early. No cure can, however, be assured until thorough treatment has been given and the patient has been under careful observation accompanied by difficult

tests. Some cases resist the most expert treatment. In the case of syphilis particularly, even when the patient is cured there is likely to result more or less enfeeblement of constitutional vigor and health. Any one who believes he may have contracted one of these diseases should place himself in the hands of a competent physician at the earliest possible moment for examination and remain under necessary treatment and observation until he receives reliable medical assurance that he is cured.

No young man who has contracted either of these diseases has any right to marry until he has received adequate treatment, followed by a period of two, three, or more years under observation, during which the most careful and repeated examinations are unable to find evidence of lurking disease.

False Notions

The erroneous notions that some men still have, to the effect that sex indulgence is necessary to the health of the young man or to the development and maintenance of his sexual powers can be only briefly discussed.* Suffice it here to say that science has found no truth in such statements. The

* "The Physician's Answer," by M. J. Exner, Association Press, New York, price 15 cents, treats this matter at length.

following statement, which was originally signed by three hundred and sixty physicians, most of them among the foremost medical men of the United States, is evidence of this:

“In view of the individual and social dangers which spring from the wide-spread belief that continence may be detrimental to health, and the fact that municipal toleration of prostitution is sometimes defended on the ground that sexual indulgence is necessary, we, the undersigned, members of the medical profession, testify to our belief that continence has not been shown to be detrimental to health or virility; that there is no evidence of its being inconsistent with the highest physical, mental, and moral efficiency; and that it offers the only sure reliance for sexual health outside of marriage.”

Harmful Worry

A few words need to be said to guard the young man against unnecessary worry over conditions out of which the advertising medical quack makes capital. For want of reliable information on such matters young men are often led to regard nocturnal emissions—commonly called “wet dreams”—as an evidence of something wrong. These emissions occur in practically all normal young men. If they do not occur more than once in from one to four weeks they need cause no concern. The following safeguards against too fre-

quent emissions will usually be effective: The young man should avoid constipation, undue pressure in the bladder, and sleeping on the back. He should keep the parts clean. A long tight foreskin which renders proper cleansing difficult should be removed by the simple operation called circumcision. He should keep his thoughts and imagination clean. A lustful attitude of mind is the most frequent cause of abnormally frequent emissions.

Worry over the possible results of the habit of self-abuse after the habit has been stopped is useless and harmful. If the man refrains from the habit completely, develops the body, and keeps the mind clean and occupied, nature will, for the most part, repair the harm that may have been done.

Many young men worry over the occurrence of erections during sleep or at other times. Such occurrences are normal. They are due largely to reflex stimulation from physical states, such as a full bladder, overheating, or constipation. The erections that may become harmful are those excited by lustful thinking and imagination, because, in that case, the sex glands are stimulated to activity. The frequent habitual repetition of such experiences may deplete vitality and they will surely disorder the imagination.

No attention should be paid to physical

peculiarities of the sex organs or any other physical state which advertising quacks represent as abnormal, such as size, shape, and position. These representations are almost wholly a pack of lies, designed to fleece the individual of money. If doubt in the mind continues, the young man should consult a physician of known integrity who does not advertise.

One should not feel wicked or degraded because he experiences definite sexual desire from time to time. This is a natural experience of practically all normal men, and is entirely honorable. At such times one should get vigorous outdoor exercise, if possible, keep the mind wholesomely busy, and fix his attention on his most compelling ideals. Sexual desire is unmanly only when uncontrolled, or when roused by a wilfully erotic mind.

Self-Control in Marriage

Let no one infer from our expression "continent life before marriage" that after marriage unlimited indulgence is permissible. While the married man is no longer expected to be continent, that is, to refrain from sexual relations, he must continually exercise much of self-restraint and must refrain from indulgence for frequent and sometimes long periods of time, if he is to play the man, if the physical and

spiritual welfare of his wife and himself is to be conserved, and if there is to be a deep progressive cultivation of mutual love. The young man who has learned to master himself before marriage will not find the task of manly conduct within marriage very difficult. The man who has maintained promiscuous sex relations before marriage is likely to continue a selfish course after marriage. This is undoubtedly the chief reason why so many of the men who indulge in prostitution are married men. Such men are not likely ever to know what the real riches of love in marriage may become.

For most young men living a continent life is not an easy task; it means a stern and steady fight. But that fight must be fought and won, if life is to yield its richest fruits. Let me say with the strongest possible emphasis ~~it~~ the easiest course is to play the game to the limit. The man who trifles, who occasionally plays with sin, is the man who has the relentless struggle. With the man who consistently exercises self-control, moral resistance becomes more and more instinctive and the ideals of his best moments become more and more consistently the atmosphere of his daily life.

The man who does not care to undertake the fight, who follows his native passions

whithersoever they may lead, is making his hell on earth as he goes along. He loses the very capacity for the finer experiences of life and of love.

A Winning Fight

Many young men who earnestly desire to win out in this fight for manhood fail because they do not know how to make a winning fight. In closing, I desire briefly to offer a few suggestions on this matter.

The first necessity for a life of self-mastery and of rich experience in a man's love-life is the choice of an adequate ideal. He must clearly and earnestly think through the whole question, weigh carefully all that we have discussed, and make a positive choice *once for all* of an ideal for his sex life that shall be big enough to govern it and fine enough to realize out of it the richest values of life. The man who trusts the outcome of every moral struggle to the moods and circumstances of the hour is sure to fall many times and never to know the matchless joy of a life of self-mastery. The ideal of his best self must become so clearly defined in his consciousness and so firmly grounded in his purpose that all the waves of temptation will dash themselves into impotency against it. Any number of fine fellows, men with

noble heritage and fine training, are whipped in their fight because such an ideal has been merely a thing admired in the abstract, as one admires a beautiful picture, but has never become the living reality that makes it the driving force of will, the refining spirit of feeling, and the governing power of conduct.

One day, years ago, an engineer of a fast express, as he rounded a bend, suddenly saw a short distance ahead a freight wreck on the track next to his own. Two cars had buckled over and lay in the path of his train. There was no time to slow up; there was not a moment to think. In a flash the engineer pulled the throttle wide open and yelled to the fireman to duck down low. The terrific impetus of the express knocked the wrecked cars from the track in splintered debris and the train was brought to a stop a half mile on the other side. As the passengers crowded about the engineer one asked him how, in such a moment of crisis, he could think quickly enough to make and to act upon the only decision that could have saved his train from wreck. He replied, "I did not think. I did not have to think. I had often thought of such a possibility, and I made up my mind ten years ago just what I would do if such a situation ever arose. When it did come I acted instinctively."

This is the kind of preparedness that is needed for the supreme battle of life.

In the realm of character life's severest fights must be won once for all by an irrevocable choice of a mastering ideal. Nowhere in human history has this been exemplified more strikingly than in the life of the supreme Master of the world of men. His forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness were days of fierce moral struggle. When they were ended he had won his fight once for all time. Many times afterwards came the appeal to misuse his powers, but that fight had been won back there in the solitudes of the waste places. Nothing short of such a choice of a compelling ideal of life and of love is likely to enable a young man to resist the downward pull of the military camp or the battleship and make him a positive force that sets itself against the disintegrating stream.

A second essential for a masterful fight in one's sex-life is uncompromising avoidance of evil influences. Do not let yourself become familiar with evil. Keep away from resorts and agencies of immorality. Do not go with the fellows "just to see what is going on," or because you hate to say no. Choose carefully your amusements. One licentious show may hang in your memory pictures that will dominate your imagination through life and lose you your

fight. Set yourself like flint against smutty stories and lewd conversation. If you cannot avoid them, fight them. For example, if the comrades in your tent are inclined to turn their minds and yours into a garbage pail, put yourself squarely on record as against that sort of thing. Your show of backbone is likely to rally a saving minority, if not a majority, to higher standards. Once a group of American military officers of high rank were conversing in a tent. Another officer entered and, looking about, said, "I see there are no ladies here, I have a good story to tell." A well known general spoke up promptly and said, "No, but there are gentlemen here." It is needless to say that the story was not told.

A third important point is to avoid close physical contact with the opposite sex in any except the most conventional and proper relations. Intimate physical contact with the opposite sex naturally and inevitably arouses sexual responses in any normal red-blooded young man and makes his problem of self-control more difficult. The liberties of fondling and fooling embraced in the term "spooning" are not so innocent an indulgence as they are commonly looked upon to be. Indeed, these indiscretions in the relationships between young men and women are the biggest

factor contributing to illicit sex relations. Undoubtedly in the vast majority of cases in which young people fall, the first step is the result, not of deliberate intent, but of having lost their heads under the force of the impulses and passions aroused by indiscreet familiarity.

Aside from the danger to the individual, promiscuous spooning is unmanly, because it degrades love to cheap thrills on a physical basis and without regard to personality, and also because it breaks down the girl's modesty and reserve, which are the most effective safeguards of her purity and honor.

In the fight for a manly life there are not only things which a man must avoid, but things which he must positively do. The three essential aspects of a man's being are the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual. A normal and rich life as a whole demands the right use and the wise culture of these three. Failure in one is likely to spell disaster to the whole. Sensible care of the body is exceedingly important to self-control in the sphere of the sex-life. It is the physically weak and nervously debilitated who as a rule have the hardest fight for purity. Adequate regular exercise, sensible eating, abundant sleep, fresh air, bathing, and the observance of all the essential rules of health are very impor-

tant from the standpoint of sexual self-control.

Of yet greater importance is the hygiene of the mind. It is a fundamental law of the mind that of the many ideas which constantly come to the threshold of consciousness, the one which succeeds in getting the center of the stage, which gets attention, which tarries in the mind, is the idea that will spring into action. What a man thinks that he will become. No man who habitually allows his mind to dwell upon that which is sexually suggestive, or even on sentimental slush, need expect anything but defeat in character, for the laws of the mind are as absolute as the law of gravitation. The time to conquer evil suggestion is the instant it comes, by directing the attention to the big fine values of life. A mind and heart kept full of big, compelling interests and high affections is safe against the insidious influences of unclean suggestion.

But here is the rub. Hundreds of men have said to me virtually this, "Yes, I know that the state of mind you describe is proof against evil and it is what I earnestly long to possess. But how can I set in motion the will and the internal forces of character to produce and maintain such a state of mind?" The personal experience of Paul is a universal experience. "The

good which I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I practice.”

Man is essentially spirit, and the great motive forces of life are spiritual forces. A life of self-mastery is one in which the spiritual faculties control and refine the primitive desires and passions. There are many great motives which can help men toward that spiritual liberty which alone can fully master the life and release its powers, but the supreme and all-adequate motive, one which embraces all other great motives, is that which actuates a genuinely religious life, that which springs from a deep, intimate fellowship with God. This source of power is never failing, because it is drawn from the infinite resources of the spiritual universe. It is in this source that the rugged fighter Paul found his victory, so that at the close of life he was able to cry with triumph, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course.”

When a certain great railroad bridge in New York was being built, the engineers found at a spot in the channel where one of the great pillars was to be sunk, a huge derelict lying at the bottom, half buried in the sand. Divers secured it with chains and many powerful tugs were hitched to it, but the old derelict was so firmly imbedded that it resisted all efforts to lift it. A young engineer just graduated came to the

chief and asked for a chance to try to remove the derelict. He said he thought he could do it. The chief let him try. At low tide the young engineer had a huge empty barge towed to the spot and firmly chained to the derelict. As the tide flowed in, the mighty forces of nature slowly lifted the old derelict out of its bed and it was towed away and dropped in deep water. What man could not do was done with ease when the forces of the universe were harnessed to the task. In building the structure of character, the most difficult task of man, that which baffles the human mind and will more than any other, is accomplished with certainty and completeness when the life is gripped by the spiritual forces of the universe. The extensive experience which it has been my privilege to have in intimate relations with men, with reference to their deepest and most difficult life problems, has rooted firmly in me the conviction that the surest and completest solution of the life problems of man lies in a deep personal fellowship-relation of the individual with God. Such a relationship keeps him under the spell of a mastering ideal and puts at his disposal the infinite resources of God Himself.

para. 12