

March 15, 1939

"Lead a Clean Life"—I.



If we admire chastity in a woman, we admire it a thousand times more in a man. Even the world stands in awe of the power it gives a man. It cannot understand it; it scoffs at it as an impossible ideal; it even denies its existence—thus paying unwilling tribute to it—and withal it recognizes chastity in the firmness, the determination, and the power of the chaste man. The Devil, having no body, cannot understand the force of impurity and the source of its hold on man; the world, having no soul, cannot understand the force of continence and the source of its power.

"Know you not that you are the temples of the Holy Ghost and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" asks St. Paul. At Baptism you are anointed with holy chrism and consecrated as God's temple. He who dares violate that consecration must incur the penalty of sacrilege. Willing sacrifice and tears may wipe away the offense against God, if the sacrifice and tears are united with the Precious Blood that flowed on Calvary for the sins of the world; if willing sacrifice and tears are not forthcoming, the violator of God's temple must stand his penalty, which comes surely in the world to come, and almost as surely in this world.

You are considerate enough of the welfare of your children to want to give them the purest mother in God's creation, a mother who can train them to piety and goodness, so that they will not "bring down your gray hairs in sorrow to the grave." Could you ask a pure, wholesome girl to entrust her innocence to the keeping of a beast? Could you ask her to enter into lifelong association with an animal whose reason is swept aside by the first breath of passion, whose sole joy in life is the basest feeling that can enter into the heart of man? *Vice corrodes the mind as well as the body.*

Chastity overcame pagan Rome, for it gave to the martyrs the fortitude of which they are the most excellent example in the history of the world. And chastity has lost none of its force in strengthening the arm of character. What field of battle won, what triumph of arms can compare in joy with victory won over self! When the soul comes clean with the help of God from such an assault it is conscious of a power that can say NO with a force the world can understand and fear.

If you want hygienic reasons for purity they are abundant. Syphilis kills more people annually in the United States than any other disease, although in the death notice it is usually listed under some other head. The Public Health Service of Chicago states that most of the locomotor ataxia, general paralysis of the insane, congenital debility, icterus and aclearma, 50 percent of the organic diseases of the heart and angina pectoris, 40 percent of the diseases of the arteries, cerebral hemorrhages, apoplexy and softening of the brain, 20 percent of the Bright's disease, and 10 percent of several other diseases noted in death certificates should be ascribed to syphilis. *Perhaps the estimate is too high.*

Children suffer worse than parents. Fournier's study of 72 syphilitic fathers is typical: 70 healthy mothers gave birth to 307 children—110 stillborn, 166 syphilitic, and 31 healthy. One hundred percent of prostitutes are diseased; so are a large portion of wives and girls who are "easy-going"—and who are so at times in order to take a cruel revenge on mankind for their own condition. The ONLY sure precaution against disease is continence; every other precaution has been known to fail.

If you are inclined to scoff at this, ask some kind-hearted physician to show you cases. The Chicago clinic averages 2,000 cases a day and the hospitals and insane asylums have plenty of them. See the noses eaten away, look through the hole in the cheek, take a good look at a decayed brain. It gives you a new idea of Nature's revenge.

Liquor is the Devil's favorite weapon for assaults on chastity. A sober man may be unchaste, but no drunken man can ever be sure of his chastity, can ever be safe from disease. "Rottenness and worms shall inherit him, and he shall be lifted up for a greater example, and his soul shall be taken away."—*Ecclesiasticus, 19:3.*

Deceased: Sister of Rev. Joseph Corcoran, C.S.C., University of Portland (Oregon).