

against the thing that is ruining our young men, our girls, and our women.

In my work as a missionary it is a great stumbling-block to our young Christians, and oh, the sad part about it all! The race that we look to for help, and for an example, are the very people that are leading our people astray. They break the law, and supply our people with liquor, and yet we have to stand by and see all this done; our women, girls, and young men trampled on, and yet not have a vote against it. Other natives from other places can come into our country, and vote either for or it or against it, and we who belong to the country have no say. Is it right? All we ask for is justice.

Yours for my people,

HERA STIRLING.

### PURITY.

A Paper read at Ashburton by Mrs  
W. Lill.

(Abridged.)

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Finally, brethren, . . . whatsoever things are pure . . . think on these things. . . . Keep thyself pure. . . . Unto the pure all things are pure. . . . the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are."

Madam President, and Sisters. I feel rather diffident in bringing this subject before you, but as I have been asked again and again to write a paper, and as I feel the subject is a most important one to us as women and mothers, I can do no other than my best.

Ignorance is not innocence. Twenty years ago I visited a woman in great distress. The mother and her daughter, a pretty girl of seventeen years, were crying bitterly. The mother said, "Oh, Mrs Lill, what shall I do? My —— has got into trouble." And the daughter said, "Mo her never told me, mother never told me." This sad case clearly shows that ignorance is not innocence. Who but a mother can bring such constant and strong influence to bear upon the young mind and character? Who so well

as a mother can teach the sacredness of the body as the Temple of the Holy One? Who else but a mother can implant in her son the habitual reverence for womanhood, which to man is a sure stronghold in after life? Who like a mother as he grows to years of sense and observation, and the curiosity is kindled, which is only a cry for light and teaching, can so answer the cry and so teach as to make the mysteries of life and birth to be for ever associated for him with all the sacred thoughts of home and his own mother, and not with the talk of low-minded persons and ignorant school boys?

There are certain mysteries of life which every man and woman must understand. We veil them in our ordinary talk as sacred things. They are sacred as part of God's universal plan of life. Only by vicious men and women have they been made to appear vile. It is an absolute necessity that the child shall know of these things. His health, his sanity, sometimes life itself will depend upon his right understanding of them. Who is to tell him of them? The father and mother in whose care God has placed him? Or is he to be left to hear of them in a perverted sense from the obscenity of his playmates? A well-known educator said lately, "We shudder at the impurity of certain old English plays, and we find fouler depths of it in modern French novels. But for absolute filth, go and listen to the talk of the boys and girls during recess in our schools. Some of these little ones belong to refined Christian families. Their parents would shrink in horror at the thought of unveiling the sacred mysteries of sex and birth to their innocent minds. Yet these mysteries were familiar to them almost before they could speak plainly; familiar, too, in their most brutal and obscene phases."

Let us teach our children, from the very first, self reverence, in touch as in word and deed, watch even their attitudes. Knowledge and watchfulness are the two cherubim with flaming sword turning all ways to guard the tree of life. We ought to train our boys to take care of their sisters, to be pure in speech, to keep a clean tongue—never allow

slang words in your presence. . . . I detest the habit of calling children "kiddies," it seems so lowering to motherhood, and yet it is so common. . . . God's great gift of speech is not to be defiled by dirty talk, by profane language, by lies or evil speaking. The organs that are given us to sustain life are not to be defiled by any gluttony, either in food or drink. The boy is not to use any part of his body in a way he would be ashamed for his own mother to know of. To do so is not only to defile, but to destroy. It causes softening of the brain, weakens the nervous system, lessens strength, and often, if carried to excess, brings results which are the very embodiment of those terrible words, "Him will God destroy."

By those immediately connected with an asylum I have been told that this terrible habit sends more to the lunatic asylums than drink itself. In our own neighbourhood, insanity and suicide has resulted in several cases from this sin. . . . A sound nation is a nation that is made up of sound human beings, healthy in body, strong in limb, true in word and deed, brave, sober, temperate, chaste; to whom morals are of more importance than wealth, or knowledge, or chivalry, with all its care of womanhood.

In the days of our Lord, women were little thought of, but see how instantly they rose to the touch of the true man, Christ Jesus. See how He made women His friends. Many severe rebukes are recorded from His lips to men, but not one to a woman.

Now, side by side with this picture of the True Man, place the present debased attitude of the men of to-day. A powerful writer says: "Is it not a received code, even among Englishmen, that if a woman knows how to respect herself, men are to respect her; but if she is a bit fast and giddy, if she has little or no respect for herself, if her foolish feet have slipped ever so little, then she is fair game."

The Bible, thank God, neither begins with sin, nor ends with sin. It begins with a sinless garden; it ends with a strong city of God, with evil known and recognised, but cast out beyond its walls. May God not be leading us to form a wider,