

A GIRL'S VALUE TO HER COUNTRY

A TALK TO GIRLS

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DURING war years we heard a great deal of a boy's value to his country and we all recognize it is very great, but I believe a girl's value to her country is infinitely greater.

A nation's greatness depends upon social conditions, health, and home life, all of which are absolutely in the hands of the women. Women set the social standards throughout the world, and on the enlightenment and high ideals of the women the moral standards of the nation depend. It has been truly said that "no nation ever has, or ever will rise above the level of its women." There is nothing more depressing to the social worker than to see among our girls their lack of appreciation of the power of their young womanhood. If it were only possible for our girls to realize the influence they carry for good, or evil, it would mean much in saving our girls and safeguarding our boys. It is a great privilege to have influence, but it is also a great responsibility from which we cannot escape even if we would. The mere fact of being a girl carries with it the influence, and it is in her power to make this influence count for good.

No one can be in such a lowly or obscure position that her influence does not count. Think of the beautiful story, recorded in the fifth chapter of second Kings, of the

little Israelite maid who was taken captive by the hosts of Naaman—what comfort for us when we feel lonely or discouraged. Here was a young woman who had been carried off as a slave, away from all her friends and everything dear to her, a stranger in a strange country, yet because she was true to the things she knew to be right, and was not ashamed to acknowledge her God—her influence changed the life of those in whose household she was living.

In contrast to this beautiful picture we have another that is as sad and discouraging as this is bright and encouraging. This story is also of a little maid and is recorded for us in the Gospels; the story of the girl who by her sneer caused Peter to deny his Lord.

This story is especially sad because we have it repeated every day on every hand right here in our land. There is not one word in this story that suggests that this girl was in any sense of the word a bad girl but just one like the many hundreds of thoughtless girls who think it smart, and that the boys will admire them if they scoff at things that are religious. Could they only see what a sad mistake they are making and what damage they are causing. Peter, although he had come from the presence of his Lord fell before the sneering remark of this young maid. Thousands of our young men are falling to-day because of the scoffing remarks of our thoughtless girls.

Every right-minded girl wants to make the most of her life and in order to do so she must understand how to take care of her body.

The human body is an instrument entrusted to us by our Creator to do the work for which we were sent into the world. The human body is the most remarkable thing in nature, in the variety and delicacy of its action, and in the marvellous adaptation of its parts and functions. Surely such an instrument requires to be properly cared for.

This human machine is so much more wonderful than any that was ever made by man that all that is necessary to keep it a smooth-running and effective working machine is to come to terms with nature. We cannot come to terms until we know what nature's terms are, so let us briefly consider them. *Nature's first demand is Oxygen*, we cannot live without air, from the air we get oxygen. The purer the air the more oxygen it contains. We should always try to have a good supply of fresh air in our living rooms, where we work and especially where we sleep. The air should be taken into the body in the way nature intended, *i.e.*, through the nose, not through the mouth. If there is any obstruction to the air entering through the nose consult a doctor and have this defect remedied. Cultivate the proper position for work, for play, and for sleep. We cannot breathe properly and get as

much exchange of air in the lungs as we should if our posture is bad.

Another essential of life is food. Just as it is important that air should be taken into the body through the nose in order that it be prepared to enter the lungs, it is important that food should be properly eaten.

Food cannot be properly chewed if the teeth are not in good condition. It is a well-known saying "You must be *true* to your teeth or they'll be *false* to you". This means the teeth must be well brushed and kept free from decay. Before food can nourish the body it must be digested, that is, acted upon by fluids secreted by the various digestive organs; these fluids chemically change the food into substances which are absorbed into the blood and carried to all parts of the body. The first of these fluids, the saliva, is secreted in the mouth.

Food should be chewed until it is thoroughly pulverized and moistened by the saliva. Never drink while eating, finish chewing and then drink, but never take fluids to moisten the food in the mouth; if you do you are interfering with the action of the saliva and laying the foundation for indigestion.

Another important function of the human machine is excretion. In order that this function may be carried on properly the body must be kept clean. The skin is one of the organs of elimination

and has many small openings all under control of the nerves, so that they open or close as necessary. These pores cannot respond properly if they are filled with powder or covered with paint. Apart from the fact of spoiling the appearance the paint and powder habit lowers the resistance and impairs efficiency. A skin treated in this way soon loses its vitality and becomes dry and wrinkled and looks prematurely old so that it is necessary for the one who "makes up" in youth to do so all her life in order to hide the lifeless looking skin.

How should the skin be cared for? Keep it clean! Every evening before going to bed all the exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned with warm water and soap, and rubbed well with a towel until the skin glows; in the morning a quick wash in cold water. The entire body should be bathed twice a week and a daily sponge is always an advantage.

If the skin is kept clean then these pores are empty and elastic so that they quickly respond to nature's needs, *i.e.*, if we are in a warm temperature, or doing active work, these open, allowing a fluid to appear on the surface of the skin. The perspiration evaporating from the body gives off the excess of heat and keeps the temperature normal. If we are in a cold atmosphere these pores close, perspiration is checked and the heat retained in the body.

Not only must the body be kept clean on the outside but on the inside as well. One of nature's laws is *regularity*. Everything in nature is regular, so we too must form regular habits. The bowels should move every day, teach them to empty out the waste materials every morning. If the refuse is allowed to remain in the body, it goes on decomposing and a poison is absorbed into the blood; this causes headache, backache, a sallow or even pimply complexion and a general feeling of being tired or depressed. One very eminent authority says "Ninety per cent. of the ills of girls are due to constipation" or to carelessness on the part of the girl, for if she took a drink of water first thing in the morning and observed a regular time for the bowels to empty she would not be constipated. It is easy to form health habits, are you forming them? or forming habits that will enslave you?

I will not insult the girlhood of Canada by explaining the evils of smoking for I do not believe that there are many decent girls indulging in the habit. As for the girl who does smoke let me quote the words of a noted nerve specialist, "She need not worry about her future for she hasn't any."

Sleep is nature's repair time and if one gets sufficient sleep in a well ventilated room, there is not much danger of the nerves getting out of order. During our hours of activity, energy is used up, waste

products accumulate. At least seven or eight hours' sleep is necessary to allow nature to readjust everything so that there is no injury to the body, nor accumulated fatigue. When we do not allow nature regular time for repair the nerves have to do extra work and very soon get out of order, causing all the undesirable symptoms of nervousness.

The human body is more than a machine, it is the house we live in, "The Temple of the Holy Ghost". How wonderful to think of the body as a Temple, something set apart for that which is sacred, what an honour God has conferred on us to entrust us with a Temple! The human body is more precious in God's sight than any Church or altar built by man.

That few girls realize the sacredness of the body is shown by the fact that so many are defacing this Temple with paint and powder and rendering it hideous by the grotesque clothing they wear. If girls realized how they injured themselves and others, by improper dress they would hesitate to adopt it. Surely it is a perverted mind that regards the deformed as beautiful, yet the high-heeled, narrow-toed shoe is a hideous deformity and takes away from the foot its proper function as an organ of locomotion. The present mode of dress is simple, graceful and healthy if not carried to extreme. The disgusting habit of exposing the body, as the extreme fashions do, not only

lowers the vitality of the wearer, but the moral standards of all around them.

Girls do these things thoughtlessly. I am sure there is not a girl who, if she realized just what influence the extreme fashions of to-day have, would for one moment consider wearing them. We say we want equal rights with the men, but if a man appeared in public with as little clothing on as the fashionably dressed girls wear, he would be arrested for indecent exposure. Doctors attribute the high death rate from Tuberculosis among girls, to the fact that the wearing of insufficient clothing and denying themselves nourishing food in order to appear slim, has so lowered their vitality that they have little resistance left. One of the greatest authorities in Social Work said, "I believe the extreme mode of dress of the younger women is responsible for the downfall of more of our young men than all other agencies combined." Girls, play fair, respect yourselves and help others to respect you.

Try to live in such a way as will develop strength, and preserve health, because in this way you will have the greatest success in life, and be of real value to your country. The Physical is only a means of expression ruled by the Mental and Spiritual, but without health we cannot live efficiently, nor do our best for those who follow us. In this Temple in which we live there are several rooms.

So far we have spoken only of the rooms

that are for ourselves, those that we have to use in order that we may live; the selfish parts; but there is another very wonderful room in this Temple, the room that is for others, the part that makes it possible to fulfil the highest function of life, that of giving life. This little room which is situated in the pelvis was not necessary to our life as a child and so it only begins to be furnished when we are developing into womanhood. It is necessary that a girl should realize the important trust given to her by God.

In the beginning God created everything, then He gave to each thing the power to reproduce its kind by means of its eggs. All life comes from an egg, and the female of everything, plant, insect, fish, fowl, and animal has ovaries or egg beds. Every little baby girl from the time she is born has two ovaries (or egg beds), one in each side of the pelvis, connected with the uterus or womb by means of tubes. The eggs in these egg beds do not begin to develop until the girl is from twelve to sixteen years of age. This is called the adolescent period. Even when the eggs are fully developed they are so small that they can only be seen by the aid of a microscope. Once every four weeks one of these eggs is cast off from the egg bed and passes down into the uterus and a fluid is given off from the uterus that washes it away. This discharge is known as the monthly period. This is not a sick-

ness but it is necessary for a girl to be careful not to over fatigue herself, to get very cold or to sit with wet feet at the time of her period. She must be very careful not to allow her bowels to be constipated and should never indulge in too active exercise or dancing for the first two days at least, for there is a little extra strain on nature at that time and to exhaust her strength will not only tell on her health but will affect the health of the babies that some day may come to her.

Every girl wants to make a success of her life. The greatest thing anyone can do is "to pass on the torch of life, not only undimmed but shining even brighter"; whether or not the torch of life is to be passed on in better condition to each succeeding generation depends upon the care our girls take of their physical and mental development. Remembering how willingly our boys gave up everything and went into training to be ready to save the country for the future citizens, the girls should be willing to deny themselves the things that might harm the coming generations. Virtue always brings its own reward. Beauty is every girl's birthright but only those who obey nature's laws can be endowed with the glow of health and happiness.

At the time a girl is developing there is not only the physical change that we have already spoken of, but there is a constant secretion from the ovaries of a fluid which

is absorbed into the blood. This gives the lustre to the eyes, the gloss to the hair and the fresh healthy colour to the complexion and causes the lanky awkward girl to fill out into the graceful woman. Anything which disturbs or irritates these organs, such as improper clothing, constipation, cold wet feet, handling the parts, too familiar relationship with men or even thinking too much about the opposite sex will have a disturbing influence and the girl pays the price in the loss of the vitality that this secretion gives.

A girl is not a woman as soon as her monthly periods begin, this little room is only beginning to be furnished. It takes several years for nature to complete her work; the girl who tries to be a woman too soon is spoiling her chances of ever being a perfect woman. It is during these years of development that a girl should fit herself for her life work. During these years a girl will form many friendships. Be sure they are of the helpful kind. Every girl needs friends and she should be careful never to form a friendship with anyone that she would not be glad to introduce to those whose opinions she values most.

In all your friendships avoid the kind that excludes everyone else and especially in all your relationships with boys observe the *simple little rule* "Hands off". No girl ever regretted sticking to that rule and by so doing she wins the respect of both boys and girls. Boys may often try to get a girl

to break this rule, but they lose their respect for her if she does. Girls must respect themselves or others will not respect them.

If girls keep high ideals and have a reverence for their body they help the boys to live in the same way and will attract the right kind of young man, the wholesome pure-minded young man who is working to fit himself to set up a home and be in a position to care for a wife and family. When this young man is choosing a wife he wants the sensible healthy girl as his help-mate. It is not only necessary that a girl should have taken care of her body, but that the young man she marries should have done the same, for the health of the children depends on both father and mother.

While the girl has in her body the eggs from which the babies develop, it is necessary that these eggs be fertilized by a fluid from the body of the male before they produce a new being. In order that this new being may be strong and healthy, it is necessary that both father and mother should have lived pure lives. This is where a girl can make her influence count for the future of her country, for if she has high ideals and lives up to them she makes it easy for those around her to do the same. Our boys will be moral when our girls dress and live in a way that will help, not tempt the men. When young people live as God intended they should they are the

greatest asset any country could have: happy, contented citizens in prosperous homes with healthy normal children. Nature is a just mistress and not only rewards those who obey her laws but she punishes those who break them.

The gift of reproduction is the greatest trust that God has given to us and if this trust is betrayed a very terrible punishment results. There are diseases known as Syphilis and Gonorrhoea which are practically always contracted by immoral relationships. It is dangerous to allow any familiarity with those whose standards we do not know for while these diseases are most often contracted by immoral practices they may be contracted by kissing.

There is a case on the medical records of a young man who had a syphilitic ulcer on his lip when he attended a party where a game of forfeits (the forfeit a kiss) was played and fourteen people were infected by being kissed by him. Surely in this age of enlightenment no self-respecting young people would so desecrate their bodies as to indulge in kissing games.

The germ of Syphilis is a very short-lived germ, does not carry in the air, and is contracted only by contact and heredity. It is a germ possessed of the power to pass through a mucous membrane (a mucous membrane is only a thin skin). All the openings of the human body are covered by mucous membrane. Our lips are red because the skin on them is so thin that

the blood vessels show through; such a delicate membrane affords easy access to germs. Thus the habit of promiscuous kissing cannot be too strongly condemned. Care should always be taken not to expose a mucous membrane to contact with anything that may harbour germs, such as public drinking cups, improperly washed glasses and spoons in ice cream parlours. If compelled to use a public closet be careful not to let the body come in contact with it, and in washing in a public wash room where it is not possible to use running water always wipe the basin thoroughly dry before using.

If children were taught careful habits it would mean much in conserving health. If everyone when they finish their toilet in dressing rooms of trains and so on, would, before throwing down the towel, wipe the basin thoroughly dry it would keep things clean and sanitary. Drying kills the germs of Syphilis and many others. No person has any more right to scatter germs that deprive others of health than to tie ropes across the street and cause them to fall.

I do want to add a word of warning to girls in regard to listening to or laughing at vile jokes or stories. Often men of questionable character will tell a story with an evil suggestion in it as a means of testing a girl. If she treats it with silent contempt or resentment she is safe, if she laughs at it the man feels he can take further liberties with her.

The dangers involved in going for motor rides, etc., with comparative strangers cannot be too strongly emphasized, for many a girl has had cause to bitterly regret such a thoughtless step.

Never loiter on the street or do anything to attract attention, or pick up a chance acquaintance of whom you know nothing. Do not allow any man friend to spend large sums of money on you or accept expensive gifts from men. If you do they feel that you are obligated to them.

These are days of restlessness and change and girls have many problems to decide. They cannot afford to be careless in thought or actions. A girl should always make a confidante of her mother or some older woman who has made a success of life. If a girl has come into the proper relationship with her Creator she is never alone but is protected by the presence of The One Who sticketh closer than a brother. Every girl should take as her life guide the prescription that has stood the test of time and never failed to give the promised result. Let me pass it on to you.

Whatsoever is True
Whatsoever wins Respect
Whatsoever is Just
Whatsoever is Pure
Whatsoever is Lovable
Whatsoever is of Good Report
If there be any Virtue
If there be anything worthy of Praise.

Think, think, cherish the thought of these things.

As we think in our heart, so are we. How soon this would transform this old world into a better home for humans.



Girls can gain much help from such books as Dr. Winifield S. Hall's "The Doctor's Daughter", "Life Problems".