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Best Consecration of the Body to God's Service—Paul's Belief Concerning the "Coat of Skin" Which Enshrines the Higher Self of Man—How God Uses the Body.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1903, by William Bailey, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Chicago, Oct. 25.—This sermon is a powerful protest against the abuse of the body through sin and neglect and a plea for its consecration to God's service and to holy and upright living. The text is I Corinthians vi, 19, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

More than Westminster Abbey is to London or Notre Dame to Paris or the Vatican to Rome or the mosque of St. Sophia to Constantinople, more than Diana's temple was to Ephesus or the shrine of Athens to Athens, King Solomon's temple was to the Hebrew heart. It was the one spot about which national pride and religious fervor centered; it was the one place above all others which the Israelite wanted to see, as the Muslim devotee says, "Let me, I pray thee, worship once at Mecca before I die." In it was the Shechinah, the holy of holies, the repository of the covenantal ark. It was God's footstool. It was like a fragment of heaven's manifested glories.

Like the Taj Mahal of India, whose walls were once inlaid with gold and precious stones to the value of millions upon millions of dollars, the Solomonic temple was famous not so much for its size as for its intrinsic worth. "The weight of the nails employed in the temple," the book of Chronicles tells us, "was fifty shekels of solid gold." Josephus, the secular historian, records that its "walls were composed entirely of white stone; that the walls and ceilings were wainscoted with cedar, which was covered with the purest gold." So precious were the materials and utensils of this wonderful sanctuary that the fame of them spread to foreign lands and excited the cupidity of Shishak and Jehoash, who journeyed to Jerusalem to plunder it. All its glory and grandeur, however, were reduced to ashes when King Nebuchadnezzar, after stripping it of its gold and removing its jeweled vessels, applied the torch and its spirit, after an earthly existence of 417 years, Elijah-like, ascended toward heaven in a chariot of fire. Can we be mistaking in thinking that a building so beautiful and so exceptionally hallowed by the Divine Presence had a spirit? Is there not a spirit incarnated in St. Paul's, the work of Sir Christopher Wren? In the chaste architecture of the Church of the Madeleine in Paris? In the grandeur of the cathedral of Milan and in St. Mark's of Venice. Why not, then, in that magnificent edifice in which God dwelt among men?

Not alone in gold and precious stones was the temple of Solomon unique. It was great in its spiritual associations. Its very site had a sanctity of its own. It was so sacred in the eyes of king and people that when the temple was erected measures were taken to avoid even the ordinary sounds of tools. In the book of Kings we read, "And the house of stone was made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer or ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." When the temple's walls were reared they rose amid the impressive sacredness of silence. So sacred was the place that on the day when the temple's dedication, when was placed within the holy of holies, "the glory of the Lord filled the house with a bright cloud; it filled the house with the same majestic symbol as that which led the Israelites through the desert, as that which the prophet saw around the throne of God and as that which overshadowed our Lord when he talked with Moses and Elias on the mount of Transfiguration.

Paul had in mind both the intrinsic value and the surpassing sanctity of the Solomonic temple in the comparison of the text. The physical body of man is a temple in both senses of the word. Paul was not one of those who despised the "flesh," as we term the "flesh." He did not believe that "beauty is only skin deep" and that "ugliness sinks to the bone." He believed that the connection between the body and the soul is so close that you cannot injure one without affecting the other. So Paul, in these words of my text, practically says to all men and women, "Be careful what you do with that hand; be careful how you misuse that foot; be careful that you do not let the tongue become defiled with wicked words." Know ye not that your body is the place where God looks through the window of the eye and speaks through the trumpet of the throat and feels with the appendages of the fingers? Be careful of that frame of bone and muscle and flesh—that physical frame of yours, which the blood courses. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

The physical body, in the first place, should be a strong temple. Its chest should be broad and deep, its limbs supple and sinewy, its nerves steady and like cords of steel, its bearing heading with the regularity of a pump's automation; it should be made as strong as possible because all temporal and spiritual happiness depends to a great extent upon the physical body being in a healthy condition.

Not only happiness, but also most of temporal and spiritual usefulness, is dependent upon physical health.

We study with wonderment the gigantic work of the invalid Robert Hall, of the invalid Frederick W. Robertson, of the invalid Robert Louis Stevenson, of the invalid J. R. Green and of the invalid Henry Kirke White, who continued to work, although he was fighting death step by step. Yet for the most part you will find that the great leaders of the world have had strong bodies. But, though the necessity of physical health should be an axiom, yet the strange fact remains that most people by countless follies are flagrantly undermining the physical walls of the temple of the Holy Ghost. They are overworking the body, as you sometimes see a tired horse compelled to pull too big a load. They are abusing the body with the idea that God will forgive them because they are trying to do his work. No, no, my friends, this abuse of the body must not be. The temple of the Holy Ghost should be physically a strong temple. The broader a man's shoulders the heavier is the load he can lift for Christ. The louder his voice the farther, all things being equal, he can sound forth the message of a Saviour's sacrifice.

The temple of the Holy Spirit, in the next place, should be a clean body. There are some men whose bodies are given over to moral filthiness. They are like some of the ancient heathen temples which were avowedly dedicated to the deities of lust, drunkenness and debauchery, the existence of which was a national dishonor. The worship performed in those temples was so vile that you could not describe it in public without bringing a blush of shame to every modest cheek and a demand for silence from every modest lip. Let the temple of your body be clean, as Christ wanted the Jerusalem temple to be clean when he drove the traders out of that temple, crying, "Is it not written my house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves?" clean as David wanted his physical altar to be clean when he uttered the agonizing prayer, "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin," or that other pleading beseechment, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

Have you ever seen a sanctuary of brick and stone which has been dedicated to God destroyed by earthquake or by fire? Well, I have. On a dark, stormy night I was awakened in my Brooklyn home by the rumbling of the fire engines. I heard a quick rap at my door, as my sister called: "Wake up! The Tabernacle is in flames!" I hurriedly dressed and ascended to the cupola of our house, which overlooked the city. There the whole family were gathered. The air seemed charged and surcharged with electricity. Off in the distance the public buildings of the city looked like the great white mansions of a celestial city, making by contrast the scene more dramatic. The church did not burn as other buildings seemed to burn, but its roof in its entirety was a mass of living coals. It looked like an altar, a huge altar upon which was being sacrificed the whole life's ministry of the noble father who stood by my side. Suddenly it swayed and shivered, like unto a dazed and dying man. "There it goes!" said mother. Yes, there it went. With one lurch it was gone, while we stood huddled together in the darkness. My father and I put on our greatcoats and started out in the storm. As we pushed through the crowds outside the guarding ropes we found the congregation there assembled, not by the church bell, but by the fireman's call. Some of the people were weeping and sobbing as though their hearts would break. Some of them had been baptized as children in that church. Some of them had mourned beside their dead within those walls. Ah, it is a sad sight to see a cathedral or a city church or a little village meeting house destroyed by fire. But it will be infinitely sadder to see a human being, whose body might be a temple of the Holy Ghost, consumed by the fires of hideous passions and appetites. Beware, O man, that you never desecrate that temple of your body or sacrifice on the altar of your heart which should be consecrated to God offerings to the demons of perdition.

The temple of the Holy Spirit should have a beautiful body—beautiful in reference to the glance of its eye; beautiful in the tone of its voice; beautiful as far as possible in reference to its apparel; beautiful as Sarah was beautiful, whose husband gave to her one of the sweetest and yet courtliest of compliments when he turned and in the quaint language of the east said, "Thou art a fair woman to look upon." If God Almighty demanded that the children of Israel should give of their gold and silver and precious stones to beautify his Jerusalem sanctuary surely then we ought to try to beautify his temple of the Holy Ghost. Christ has often been worshiped in a mud hut or an open barn, but he deserves the noblest and best of human architecture. We have all read how millions upon millions of dollars were spent to make artistic the sanctuaries of the east. The greatest of sculptors have chiseled for them their master-pieces and out of the solid stone have made flower gardens to bloom at the base and top of the massive columns which support the roofs. In them the greatest of all artists have been called upon to illustrate their genius in religious pictures, as Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" in a Milan convent is painted upon the walls of a Santa Maria delle Grazie, within which Napoleon's troops once stabled their horses, or as Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment" was painted upon the wall of the Sistine chapel at Rome. In them the finest of musicians play upon their organs. The sweetest of voices sing in their choirs. The most eloquent of preachers plead from their pulpits. But the temple that Christ most desires to occupy is the temple of your heart, and that may be adorned by the

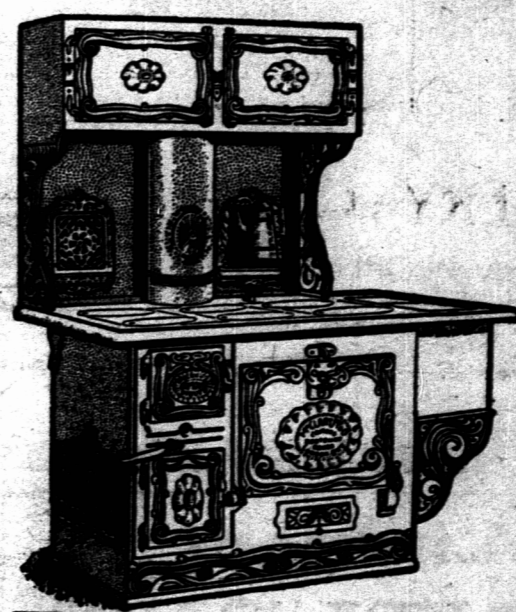
(Continued on Page 11.)

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