

Social Hygiene Series

**'SELF KNOWLEDGE  
SELF REVERENCE  
SELF CONTROL'**

**A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS  
OF GIRLS' SCHOOLS**

**WYCKOFF**

**THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA  
MADRAS ALLAHABAD COLOMBO**

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# “Self Knowledge, Self Reverence, Self Control”

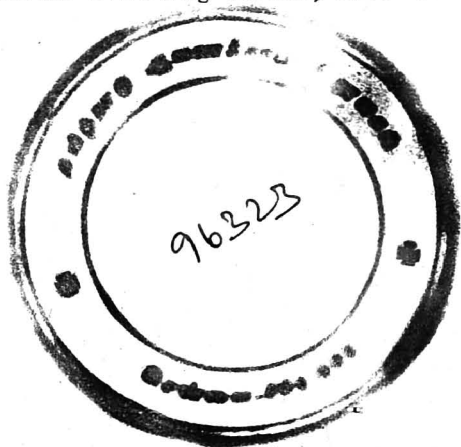
A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS  
OF GIRLS' SCHOOLS

19 JAN 1931

BY

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CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA

MADRAS ALLAHABAD RANGOON COLOMBO

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# **'Self Knowledge, Self Reverence, Self Control'**

So many books are written nowadays about the need and the method of sex-education for young people that it is hardly necessary to repeat the arguments. There are, however, many teachers in girls' schools in India who are either opposed to such instruction or not sufficiently roused to the need of it, as well as many who, feeling the need of it, are uncertain how to go about it. It is hoped that this pamphlet, based on fifteen years of experience with adolescent school-girls, may afford a little light on a difficult subject.

## **The Need of Sex-Education for Indian Girls.**

In the past Indian girls of some castes were married soon after maturing, if not before. Before marriage girls of all castes were kept quite closely at home under the supervision of their elders. Modern education and the spread of western ideas, as well as the economic changes of modern life, are completely changing the life of the Indian girl. She goes back and forth to school, she takes train-journeys, she comes into contact with men in many ways that she never did before. Wider reading is bringing her new ideas of freedom and romance. In larger towns she is becoming familiar with 'movie-



stars' in sentimental films. An increasing number of Hindu as well as Christian young women are taking positions as teachers, doctors and nurses in circumstances which necessitate considerable association with men colleagues, as well as being obliged, by the frequent transfers of Government service, to live far from their families with insufficient chaperonage and protection. The changes which came more slowly in Western countries, are taking place in India with incredible speed, in cities and towns. News of elopements in the daily papers set the older people to shaking their heads and talking of the good old days when a girl married at her father's bidding. No amount of head-shaking can bring back those days. They are definitely going and we must adapt ourselves to deal with the different problems of modern life. It is not within the scope of this pamphlet to take up the continuing problems of the child-bride and child-mother of more conservative India. Our immediate contacts, as teachers, are with school-girls who remain unmarried until twenty or twenty-five years of age or longer. How can we prepare them to stand alone in this new India? What must be our part in clothing them in an armour of chastity that can pass unscathed, as did Sita's, through the fires of difficulty and temptation that may surround them soon after they leave our care? How can we fill them with such high ideals for their homes and their children that they may not be led away by the allurements of high pay, into professional work that leaves no time nor strength for home duties? How can we help to preserve the modesty and charm, gentleness and devotion of

Savitri and Damayanti, in an age which seems more to demand the courage and initiative of Chand Bibi and Padmini?

### Other Sources of Information.

One fact remains fairly certain. Whether we tell our girls anything about the beginnings of life or not, they are going to find them out very soon. Some of them have lived in villages and *cheries* where they often crowded into a mud-hut, even as tiny tots, to look on at the common spectacle of child-birth. When the whole family share a single room, even the innocent obliviousness of childhood must have its limits. The shrill gossip of mothers and aunts is not always hushed at their approach, even though a direct question wins no more than a reproof or a laugh. In the better class of homes, educated Christian mothers have often adopted even stricter reticence and secrecy about all such matters than old-fashioned Western mothers, leaving the child to imagine by mysterious allusions or snatches of overheard conversations, that there is some fascinating and evidently wicked world of knowledge, the key to whose entrance she must try to obtain by some secret means. If she goes to school she will have no difficulty in finding others who think themselves possessed of this key, who find a great thrill in passing on their misinformation. Finally there is the Hindu girl who takes for granted from earliest childhood certain familiar customs and ceremonies in her family, even before the great *tamasha* or 'first marriage' which announces to the world that she has matured. She may not be given any definite

information but she picks up a great deal which affects her whole attitude and outlook on life.

From these different types of homes and others, come the girls who are thronging our schools. They mix and mingle, and sooner or later they will whisper and snicker in corners, despite our efforts to keep their minds on other things. No amount of extra forbidding is going to rob the forbidden fruit of its sweetness. If we say that such talk does not go in *our* school we probably confess only our own ignorance of what is happening in the minds behind those docile-looking little faces.

The chief question that the conscientious mother and teacher needs to ask herself is 'Should I rather tell my girls the facts of life truthfully and mould their attitudes myself, or let them learn the facts in a distorted and suggestive fashion from playmates or servants whose minds are not clean?'

## Home and School.

Since the answer to this question is obvious, we shall proceed to consider what should be the teacher's part in this aspect of education. From the outset we may state that education regarding sex-matters, especially in childhood, should be the function of the home. The mother hears the child's first natural questions and is the ideal person to answer them, as well as to guide her young daughter into right knowledge and right attitudes later on. The difficulty just at present is that so few mothers have any education at all, and the educated ones are not possessed of the knowledge of how to go about this task even if they are awake to the need of it. Until

a new generation of mothers is trained, it seems that the school will have to play a large part in preparing girls to meet life under changing conditions.

## **The Purpose of Sex-Instruction.**

'Self knowledge, self reverence, self control,—

These three alone lead life to sov'reign power.'

First we aim to give the girl a knowledge of the structure and functions of her own body so that she may understand all changes that take place. We want her to think of her body not only as a marvellous mechanism, but as 'the temple of the Holy Spirit', to be kept pure and holy and consecrated to God. Moreover, we aim that she should have some understanding of the effect of bodily changes upon her mind and her emotions, so that she may be mistress, not slave, of her moods and passions. Such self knowledge, if it comes to her step by step throughout her period of growth, and always associated with thoughts that are pure, true, lovely and of good report, will naturally lead to *self reverence*. The policy of reticence often gave children the false impression that there was something to be ashamed of in sex-matters. Right knowledge will lead to respect and reverence. If a girl respects her body, the final step will be the desire and effort for *self control*. By self-control we do not mean only the negative aspect of inhibitions, but the voluntary directing of one's life into paths of the highest consecration and service.

## **The Method of Sex-Education.**

The most important thing to say about method is that education about sex should not be set apart

from the child's other studies, but should be integrated with them. Many detailed syllabi are being prepared to show how this integration can be carried out from the kindergarten upwards. A few general suggestions are offered at once, to explain what is meant by correlation.

## **In the Primary School.**

The most natural time for sex-instruction in the lower classes is in connection with the 'morning-talk' and the Nature Study class, possibly occasionally in Scripture if questions arise. It has been said that the mother is the ideal person to instruct the child. If the teacher is to take on this function, she needs to create the home-atmosphere in her class of little ones, so that they will talk and ask questions freely. Every question must be met calmly and the older person's being shocked or embarrassed or amused will arouse curiosity and perhaps a wrong idea in the child's mind. The teacher who wants to impart right attitudes from the beginning will welcome questions as her opportunity. The following are topics of conversation which arise naturally among children who have animals at home :

Our Family,—father, mother and children :

What does Mother do for us? What does Father do for us?

Reporting of the birth of a new brother or sister.

The Goat's Family or Cow's Family :

What does the cow or goat do for its calf or kid?

Reporting of the birth of new calves or kids.

The Cat's or Dog's Family. •

The Cock's Family,—hens and chicks.

Laying of eggs, care of eggs, hatching, care of chicks.

The Bird's Family :

Building the nest, laying of eggs, hatching, learning to fly, etc.

Through these conversations, which are familiar enough in any kindergarten, the idea of the two sexes with their different characteristics and functions, will naturally be impressed. The teacher can soon find out from the children's manner if they have any wrong attitudes. If they have noticed animals mating and have been led to think of it as dirty or funny, the teacher's matter-of-fact attitude toward it as a perfectly natural, normal thing, will remove the cloak of mystery, even though no biological explanation is given. It is not necessary for the teacher to advance any further than the children's questions lead her. The important thing is that she wins their confidence and makes them feel that any question is welcome. If they get a direct answer to a question their minds quickly turn to something else. It is the evasion that arouses curiosity.

In Clauses 3, 4 and 5 Nature Study continues to be a prominent subject, and it offers fascinating opportunities for study of reproduction. Along with the study of other parts of the plant should follow a study of the flower, with its stamens, ovary and pistil. The help of the bees and butterflies in carrying pollen, the growth of the 'seed-babies' in their pod-cradles, and their dispersal to take root and grow alone,—all make wonderful material for

observations and class discussions. Later study of frogs, fish and certain insects will lead to observation of different forms of reproduction. Even in these lower classes a well-qualified teacher will give accurate biological information in an interesting way, and introduce the terms and vocabulary which will make it easy to discuss human reproduction in later years; e.g. terms such as reproduction, ovary, fertilizing fluid, cell. Actual observation of cocoons, fish and fish-eggs, frog-eggs and tadpoles will lead children to notice the differences between the lower and higher forms of life. Parallels may occur to them without any suggestion from the teacher. They may ask questions which necessitate immediate lessons on the mammals and human beings. If they do not seem to crave such information, that can be postponed till a later stage. At least they have received a foundation of biological fact and a scientific attitude which will direct their thoughts along the paths of truth and beauty.

Another angle from which these matters may be discussed is the Scripture class. A teacher of Class IV once came to the writer for advice, as follows:

'To-day we were reading the Ten Commandments, preparatory to learning them for memoriter. I did not know what to say about the Seventh. I tried to pass over it but the children demanded an explanation. They were very curious to know the meaning of the word 'adultery'. What would you say?'

'What did you say?' I asked.

'I told them that was a matter which they could

not understand now. They must wait till they grew up. Just as they cannot hope to understand Geometry and Algebra and other Sixth Form subjects now, they cannot expect to understand this. Later they will learn about it.'

'And were they satisfied?'

'I don't think so. They looked at each other, and one or two giggled. But I went on with the lesson and paid no attention.'

The frank question showed that there was an atmosphere of freedom in the class. It was a crisis in the minds of the children, but the teacher was taken by surprise and did not rise to the occasion. The moment passed with curiosity increased. Probably the ones who giggled regaled the others with all sorts of gossip at the first opportunity. Together we planned a new attack on the Ten Commandments in an effort to repair harm done, also to prevent trouble in future. We decided to turn each negative commandment into a positive one, with the children's help, something as follows :

1. There is one God.
2. Worship Him as a Spirit.
3. Honour His name.
4. Work six days of the week and keep the seventh day holy.
5. Children, honour your father and mother.
6. Respect the life of others.
7. Husbands and wives, be loyal to one another.
8. Respect the property of others.
9. Speak the truth about others.
10. Be content with what you have.



The further explanation of Commandment 7 was to be something as follows :—

‘You have all been to weddings and have heard the solemn vows which the bride and groom take. They promise before God to love and cherish one another, “for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part.” Where they are loyal to that promise there is a happy home. But sometimes, as you have heard, either husband or wife breaks the promise. The husband may run away and leave his wife to support the children. The wife may run away and leave her children motherless, forsaking her husband. What a sad home that is! How sad it is when husband and wife forget their marriage vows and are faithless to one another! Such disloyalty is referred to here.’

Such an explanation is essentially truthful, and it is enough for children. It satisfies them and stops further questions until they are older. Unless the seamy side of life has been forced upon their attention by local gossip we need not go into further details as yet. Moreover, if we are going to encourage children to read the Bible for themselves, they are sure to come across this word. It is better to give the word some meaning which they can understand.

## **In the Middle School.**

In the Middle School stage, between Forms I and III the girl normally passes through all the changes that accompany puberty. She needs individual attention at the first menstrual period. The hostel-manager or matron or her teacher should have a

private talk with her, since she is separated from her mother. The newness of the experience renders her particularly sensitive to the attitude of her adviser. A simple explanation of the changes which have taken place in her body, given in a matter-of-fact way, will help to take her mind off herself because she will come to regard this as just another normal function. The Indian custom of dressing a girl up and putting flowers in her hair and in other ways making the matter public, is to be deplored because it increases her self-consciousness to a painful degree. Now that a knowledge of hygiene proves that this is only one stage and by no means the final stage in a girl's development, sensible parents are treating the occasion more lightly. It is far more important to teach her to take proper care of herself and to help her form habits of scrupulous cleanliness. The boarding-school should teach and demand a high standard of decency, and provide suitable facilities for cleanliness. Prudish reticence on the part of those in charge of schools has sometimes led girls into filthy and insanitary habits simply because they were ashamed to mention their needs.

### **Class Instruction.**

Along with the advice given privately, there should occur class instruction, so that if a girl leaves school at the end of Third Form she is fairly intelligent with regard to the facts of life. As in the lower classes this is best correlated with her Science. After studying the Digestive System, the Circulatory System, the Respiratory System, etc., of plants, lower animals and mammals in comparison with that

of man, it is quite logical and natural to go on to the Reproductive System in the same way. Following is the outline we have used with many a Third Form Science class when coming to this point :

## Reproduction.

### 1. Its meaning and significance :

What would the world be like if all the plants and animals died without leaving another generation to follow?

### 2.—Various methods of reproduction :

- (i) By cell-division : the amoeba.
- (ii) Asexual : yeast.
- (iii) Sexual, in plants : study of a lily or other large flower.  
Compare papaya trees.  
Study of the fern, for both types, is interesting if ferns are available.
- (iv) Sexual, in animals :
  - (a) Where the eggs are fertilized outside the body of the mother : *fish* and *frogs*. This is studied in more detail than in the lower classes where it was just a story. The word *fertilize* is explained first in regard to soil and seeds, then cells.
  - (b) Where the eggs are fertilized inside the body of the mother : poultry, birds, mammals.
- (v) Meaning of Instinct : the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction.

### 3. The Human Reproductive System :—

- (i) A diagram and description of the reproductive organs of the woman. The fact that men have different organs, which produce the fertilizing fluid, may also be mentioned.

- (ii) Meaning of the menstrual flow. Hygiene of menstruation.
- (iii) Effect of bodily changes upon a growing girl's mind and temper,—moodiness, hysteria, and other characteristics of adolescence. If a girl understands and expects these symptoms, she will be on her guard to form the habit of self-control.
- (iv) Meaning of marriage and motherhood.

All of the other biological studies have led up to this short talk, which requires the utmost tact and good sense on the part of the teacher. The vocabulary which has been used again and again in the study of plants and animals makes it possible to touch on the physical aspect without crudity or embarrassment. At the same time the teacher should hold up very high ideals before her girls. Without the 'mush of sentimentality' of which such talks are accused, she can give them an idea of the beauty and sacredness, hence privacy, of these relations.

- (v) The Beginnings of Life :

Conception and pregnancy. Pre-natal care of the child. (*N.B.*—Keep this study objective rather than subjective; i.e. 'How can I help my mother or my sister to take good care of herself when she is expecting a baby?')

#### 4. The Process of Birth : Very brief and general description.

Emphasize the importance of sending mothers to the hospital for the best care. How does a trained nurse take care of a new-born baby?

#### 5. A new Instinct,—the Mother-instinct.

Compare with birds and animals.

Show how the mother-instinct makes girls good teachers and good nurses. Hold up the unselfish ideal of being a mother to all children, not only one's own.

## 6. The Care and Training of Babies and Small Children.

Since this does not come strictly under our topic, we leave this subject as merely a heading. It is important to study this before the end of Third Form as it may be the only chance to reach the girl with this information. Even though she forgets the details, she will retain general principles, and at least be interested enough to seek for advice when the need comes later. When one views the statistics of infant mortality one feels the urgency of raising up a new generation of intelligent mothers and mothers-in-law!

### **Advisability of Warnings.**

It is always a matter of great doubt whether to give Third Form girls any instruction regarding adultery or venereal disease. Probably one must be guided by one's knowledge of that particular group of girls, their home-conditions and their probable future. They are sometimes mere children, who are sure to go on in school for two or three years more. In such a case why trouble them with the seamy side of life until they are older? There are, on the other hand, much older groups, especially in vernacular schools, who may go into Government Training Schools or teach or marry at once, or be insufficiently protected even in their own homes. Such girls are in need of definite warning and advice. The instruction in itself is not enough to save them from sin

when temptation comes, but at least it may help them to count the cost and be on their guard, also to appreciate the importance of Indian ideals of dignity, modesty and adequate chaperonage for girls. If there are girls of both types in one class, perhaps they could be in separate Scripture classes throughout the year, on the pretext of different needs for different ages. The emphasis, in the studies of the older class, could be on the overcoming of temptation through the power of Christ. All common temptations could be taken up and discussed, in connection with school and home life, and Bible stories and passages could be related to each. In connection with the sin of impurity, they might take up the story of David's sin and Psalm 51, Hosea's forgiveness of Gomer, the changed life of Mary Magdalene, Jesus' attitude to the woman taken in adultery. If there is an atmosphere in the class of free and frank discussion, girls may tell of cases of which they have heard, and there is then a chance to influence their attitude keeping always the thought, How can I help others? Such *objective* discussions of definite cases are far wiser than long platitudinous sermons and warnings directed at themselves. We must use our powerful weapon of *suggestion* with the utmost care, always suggesting that they will do right, rather than that they are sure to do wrong. Their biological study leads them to recognize that certain sex-feelings and reactions are perfectly natural. Their religious and moral training shows them that the sin is not in the natural feeling, but in the yielding to it at the wrong time. The following illustration has impressed many

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## A Class Discussion.

'Is it a sin to be hungry?' Of course not. Suppose a dog is starving, and it runs through a bazaar street where there is food exhibited. What it can get, it will snatch and take, to satisfy its hunger. A starving man comes through that same street. He is strongly tempted to do just what the dog did, but he is a man, not an animal. He stops to think, no matter how hungry he is. If he is one kind of man, he thinks: 'If I steal that food, will anyone see me? Yes, there is a policeman. He will catch me and take me to jail. I am afraid to do it.' He thinks of consequences, and he controls himself for fear of consequences. He counts the cost. Another man will reason differently: 'That food smells delicious, and I am starving for it. But it is not mine. I have no money to buy it, and it is wrong to take it. I must wait until I can pay for it, and take it in the right way.' He also controls himself, but not out of fear. He obeys his conscience. Which is the higher type of self-control?

There are people, however, who rise no higher than the dog. What they want at the moment, they snatch, with no thought of consequences. They are animals, not human beings. On the other hand there are people who are never hungry. When they walk through the bazaar it is no credit to them if they do not steal, because they are not tempted. It is the person who resists a real temptation, that is strong.

Now, these sex-feelings of which we have

spoken, are an appetite, like hunger. The feeling is natural. Some have it far oftener than others. To some the temptation comes suddenly, like an unexpected, passionate fit of anger in which we say and do things which we regret a little while later. The tempted one should stop and think: 'Do I want to be an animal or a human being,—a child of God? Am I going to be a slave to that passion or by God's help, am I going to master it while I stop to count the cost, considering, Is this going to hurt anyone else? What will be the result of this act? Is it right?'

### **Other Angles of Approach.**

Anyone who has dealt with girls of the Middle School stage knows what romantic little people they are. They thrill to tales of adventure. It is these fourteen and fifteen-years-olds who start secret ardent correspondences with boys, or meet them when they shouldn't, or work out some exciting code for communication. Boys take these infatuations less seriously. They have been known to join in a group under a false name and invent love-letters to a trusting girl who took them as eternal pledges. The girl was sincere and earnest. The boys received her increasingly affectionate replies with roars of laughter. When it all came out she was 'a sadder and a wiser girl'. Now how is one to deal with this sort of thing? Certainly one should not suggest evil by attributing to the child all sorts of bad motives which never occurred to her. Call her 'a foolish girl', not 'a bad girl'. Some such comment as this on the above incident may help her



to be more sensible in future, also the girls who knew of it who can profit by her experience :

'We never appreciate anything which we get easily and cheaply. If there is a younger girl in school who follows you about and forces her affection on you, do you value her love very much? Don't you sometimes come to dislike her? You have much more respect and love for the girl who is more reserved, whose affection is harder to win. In writing letters to this boy, you lavished your affection on the first bidder, whom you had not even seen and of whom you know nothing. If you throw it all away in the beginning like this, what will you have left for other friends whom you find more worthy later on? Moreover you have simply cheapened yourself in the eyes of that boy and his friends. He may think it is fun to play with you, but he won't have the respect for you that makes him want you as a real friend. You don't want your name to become a joke, do you? You want respect from your friends. Don't bestow your affection so lightly and easily. When your parents and teachers ask you not to correspond with boys at this age, they are wiser than you. They are trying to save you from such humiliation as this. They long to have your name held high in everybody's esteem.'

## **Literature and Art.**

It is impossible to prevent romantic thoughts from occupying the girl's mind at times, however much we may try to fill her time with lessons and games and other interests. The most beautiful literature in the world, both in English and in the

Indian languages, is full of romance, and we should read it with her and let her read it,—let her act it, too, in plays. Some have objected to plays of Shakespeare because they 'put ideas into Indian girls' heads'. I venture to doubt whether they put anything there that was not already there. More probably they gave clean and noble expression to some of her secret desires,—otherwise why does Shakespeare appeal so strongly to the youth of India? Such English plays are for the High School boy and girl, but there are beautiful love-stories in Indian literature where especially high ideals are held up for Indian women, whatever may be our opinion of the men of those same tales. In the Middle School she should read and, if possible, act the stories of Savitri, Damayanti, Sita, Chandramathy, Padmini and others, as well as Ruth, Esther and other romances from the Bible. In these years of adolescence the development of her emotional side renders her very responsive to beauty in nature, in poetry, in music and in art. We should try to give her plenty of it, cultivating as far as we can the ability to discriminate between what is tawdry and sentimental and what is really fine and noble. The great thing is to get her to 'think right'.

In talking to a class about 'marriage and motherhood', as indicated in the above outline, it is a great help to read a poem or a Scripture passage that lifts the subject to a spiritual plane. The translated poem, 'Husband and Wife', given in Mrs. Macnicol's 'Poems by Indian Women' is a great addition to such a talk, for it emphasizes spiritual union. In describing the growth of the child in the

uterus, nothing can create more of a feeling of reverence than to read Psalm 139 : 13-18. One's debt to one's mother is well expressed in Masfield's 'C.L.M.', which was prescribed as a poem to be memorized by all candidates in the Madras School Final examination two or three years ago.

Still another angle of approach to our problem is the Domestic Science class. There we are definitely preparing a girl to keep house. By our every effort we must impress upon her the dignity and importance of the 'home-maker'. The complaint is often made that education only leads a woman to neglect her home duties in order to earn money by a profession, and unfortunately there are many separated families to give point to this criticism. We can only hope to counteract the lures of high salaries by convincing the girl in her impressionable years that children need their mother's constant care and training far more than they need the clothes and extras she can buy for them. This type of 'vocational training' for girls is fortunately coming to the front.

### **In the High School.**

The High School girl, through her study of English, is able to read more for herself. If the library contains some of the finest novels and plays, she can share the literary heritage of the English girl. For class study we may choose works of prose and poetry which will influence her attitudes and open the way to class discussion. We have found Scott's 'Ivanhoe' and Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' as well as parts of Tennyson's 'Princess' very

well adapted to Indian girls of about Fifth Form. Customs regarding women in mediaeval England, as seen in 'Ivanhoe', are very similar to those of conservative India, so that Rebecca and Rowena greatly impress Indian girls by their dignity and modesty and force of character. The ideals of chivalry exhibited in the stirring tales of 'Gareth and Lynette' and 'Launcelot and Elaine' also make an impression, and those poems are read with great eagerness and interest. Lynette, Elaine and Guinevere are types of women to be found in every land. The stories of Guinevere's disloyalty to her husband, and of Elaine's 'chasing after' Launcelot, have started long and heated discussions in every class that read of them. One gets at the ideas and ideals in the girls' minds through these discussions, and is able by a 'word in season' to help form a mind-set in the right direction. It is also valuable to discuss frankly the difference between eastern and western customs regarding friendship between men and women. 'Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good' is a sane rule to follow in these days when traditions are losing their hold. So often Eastern girls get into trouble because of a mistaken idea that they are being 'up-to-date' like Western girls, not realizing the foundation of co-education and home-training on which the comradeship between Western boys and girls rests. One longs, too, to save the girl of New India from some of the excesses of her contemporary in the West. Free and frank discussion is a great help in moulding ideals for conduct during these adolescent years when compulsion or too great repression is disastrous, and such

discussions come about most informally and naturally as a by-product of reading together. The parallel reading of Indian poems and books that give similar or entirely different ideals for women, will be still more stimulating. Western women who teach Indian girls should be very careful to get the Indian point of view. The English-educated girl is in a hard position sometimes, between her radical teachers and her conservative parents. One such, when informed of an imminent betrothal, asked her Western teacher, 'What about the "two hearts" that should "beat as one"? I have never even seen him. I refuse to marry him.' No amount of persuasion or wrath could shake her, and unmarried she remained. Since Indian men have too much pride to risk refusal, such independence is apt to be punished by spinsterhood.

At some time during the three years of the High School course, in connection with Physiology or Domestic Science, there should be a more thorough and scientific study of the same topics which were taken up in connection with Sex Hygiene in the Middle School. The girls will now be older, more intelligent and more balanced. They can read for themselves some of the books mentioned in the bibliography. They can look at the problem more in its *social* aspects by considering such matters as the causes of infant mortality. This will lead to some instruction about venereal disease and its effect upon innocent children of the next generation. A talk on Eugenics is also illuminating. To realize the importance of marrying a person of good habits helps a girl to be more willing to accept the advice of

her parents. The whole question of Temperance is introduced through this discussion. This course should not be an end in itself, but an introduction to the serious study of how to care for and bring up children, which is the most important 'vocational training' which we can give in school. By regular visits to a local hospital or Baby Welcome home or nearby villages, the girl can observe much that will inspire her to dedicate her life to the task of making life safer and sweeter for all children, whether her own or others.

### **In the Training School.**

The Training School student needs instruction from two points of view. First, she needs knowledge as a protection. Her profession, like that of the nurse or doctor, may necessitate her living independently of her family or of any older people who take an interest in her. She has to walk long distances to school, perhaps, and work under men colleagues. In Corporation and Board Schools this sometimes gives rise to difficult situations. A girl, suddenly set free like this after years of sheltered school and family life, may very easily lose her head. One pretty young thing, when she returned for a visit to her Training School, told us of her first month's experiences thus : 'When you talked to us last year when we were Seniors, I didn't pay much attention, but now it has all come back to me. I am living in a room with an older woman who is a stranger, and I walk a mile through the bazaar streets to school, all alone. Just as you warned us, I forgot that I was not in the school compound, and

after washing my hair I went out one day with it partly loose, before putting on oil. I bought some flowers, too, and put them in my hair. That day boys spoke to me and talked about me behind my back, and followed me as far as the school. They were so funny that I laughed at first, but when they followed me I got frightened. All that you told us came back to me. I tried to look at them 'as if they were trees', and I went on with as much dignity as I could. I thought I should never reach the school. When I came out at four they were there. I waited an hour and then took someone with me. I'll never go out with my hair loose again. Now I am very, very modest and dignified !'

Many girls have much worse experiences, especially in some localities where the women-teachers of the municipal schools have in the past been the mistresses of their employers. Christian women of integrity are winning respect for themselves and their religion in such places, while some of a different type sink to the level of their surroundings. Until all men are trained to higher standards of chivalry, the girl who must stand alone needs all the help and inspiration and advice that we can give her. It may not be sufficient to keep her from falling, but at least we shall have done what we can.

The second aim of such instruction in the Training School is to teach the teacher how to answer the questions of her children wisely, and how to correlate some of this teaching with Nature Study. The most important thing is that her own mind shall be clean and her own attitudes right, for that counts more than all the biological information.

Medical students and nurses in training need help along the same lines as training students, with even greater temptations to face, but it is not within the scope of this pamphlet to deal with them.

## **The Problem of Self-Abuse.**

In some schools one or two girls of bad habits teach others and start the custom of self-abuse. It is a most difficult problem to deal with, because if it exists in a school, it is very hard to find it out. If one talks about it in a general way in a class there is great danger that the mere mention of it will lead girls to experiment out of curiosity. We have occasionally referred to it in a class of Sixth Form girls, attempting to keep it objective by asking: 'Have you ever noticed anything like this among the younger girls? You are the oldest, and you must be sure to report it if anything like this goes on. I shall tell you why it is harmful, so that you may know how important it is that we should not let such habits get into our school.'

## **Homo-sexual Relations.**

The infatuation of one girl for another is a serious problem in all boarding-schools. This does not mean the ardent 'hero-worship' so natural during adolescence, which does no harm and can do great good if the one worshipped uses her influence wisely. There are in girls' boarding-schools and women's colleges the world over, girls who are subject to violent attachments for other girls. In lesser or greater degree these are perversions of the sex-instinct. They are not only morally harmful but



they sap the physical strength of at least the weaker of the two, and absorb the attention of both to such an extent that lessons and all normal interests suffer. Such attachments cannot be given the noble name of, 'friendship' for they are purely physical, while friendship is intellectual and spiritual. In the West they are teasingly referred to as a 'crush' or a '*grande passion*'. Women-teachers themselves, through the necessity of spending many years in a colony of girls and women, are perhaps the most tempted to fall into this sort of relationship with another woman or, worse yet, with a younger girl whom they should guide in better ways. It starts, perhaps, with an attempt to comfort, by ardent affection, perfectly natural cravings for marriage. The pity is when, growing more and more ungovernable, these physical cravings demand a satisfaction which no such unnatural relationship can give. The two parties concerned think themselves happy, but their estrangement from all others is not really made up for by their absorption in one another. The day comes when they have a sudden revulsion of feeling and become bitter enemies.

This sort of attachment, once it is in full swing, is almost impossible for any authority to stop. The more one protests to the parties concerned, the more they cling in so-called 'loyalty' to each other. One can put out a fire much more easily. The only way to get at the problem is through the whole life of the school. Both girls and teachers must be so taken up with worth-while, active interests, that there is little time for brooding. They should be so healthily tired that sleep comes the minute that they

touch the pillow. Diet, sleep, cleanliness, exercise and all physical conditions should keep the body at its best, while studies, clubs, music, art, books, plays, and all sorts of other interests occupy the mind and imagination. A high ideal of friendship should persistently be held before the school,—the kind described in I Corinthians xiii. Especially should girls and teachers alike realize that many, many friends enrich one's life far more than only one. Selfish exclusiveness and jealousy are the death of true friendship. Moreover, as has been said, a friendship that depends on holding hands, hugging and kissing alone, is not worthy of so high a name. Real friendship does not depend on bodily nearness. Even thousands of miles apart real friends remain friends. If a girl finds herself tempted to fall into a less spiritual conception, she needs to be on her guard and to make a great effort to mix with many others besides the one who attracts her. It is, once more, the problem of *self control*. If there is in the school a girl or teacher who is over-sexed, who cannot and will not curb her passions, it is better that she should be sent home rather than that many innocent girls should be led astray.

### Testimony of Old Girls.

Some may still have doubt in their minds as to the effect of teaching social hygiene to the young and innocent. We asked quite a large group of old students whether they would advise our continuing this plan of instruction. Without exception they urged that it be continued, and testified to the help it had been to them. Three admitted in private that

they had been spared from serious trouble by the timely warnings. Of course there are those who have fallen despite the warnings, and the majority have not communicated their opinion one way or another. The attitude of the girls in the classes, their gratitude at having puzzling questions answered and mysterious matters made plain, and their instant response to the high ideals suggested, convince us that we should do wrong to withhold the teaching. A good deal depends on the place and the person.

### **The Place.**

When we first began this instruction, we called the girls apart into a private corner of a private room and talked with them in hushed tones. We soon found that they were embarrassed, as we were, especially when other classes greeted them with meaning smiles as they left. Now all instruction is given in the broad light of day in the familiar classroom, amidst all the usual clatter of school. It is all just 'Science', and there is no more to-do about it. It is harder for the teacher to be casual than for the children for she realizes the importance of her presentation. Her matter-of-fact manner sets the tone of the whole class. The more intimate topics are apt to remain in their minds and cause brooding or talk if they come at the end of the day, so this class is always put into the middle of a busy morning with at least two periods of Mathematics or History or other unrelated subjects after it. This is far more effective than commanding them not to think or talk about it! When they do think back at the close of the day, the perspective is just of one among many

interesting lessons. When the time of need comes, the whole lesson flashes back to mind. This I assert from my own personal experience as well as from the testimony of a number of our former pupils.

### **The Person.**

Another moot point is, who shall give the instruction? Many delay because of their uncertainty. In some schools a doctor or other outsider is invited in. This may be good if she can come often enough to know the girls. Possibly a specially qualified visitor can lecture on certain aspects of the problems to older girls, but it is someone who *knows* the girls who can best get at their minds. The specially qualified visitor may not be available at the psychological moment, or she may be too technical or too difficult to understand. If the Science teacher can be trusted to have a sane and sensible outlook, she can impart the teaching much more naturally and casually than anyone else in the class. If she is very young, an older person such as the Principal, can get her opportunity to supplement her by teaching Scripture or Domestic Science. If possible avoid a change in the routine on account of this subject. Plan for it from the beginning. Any sudden, unexplained change rouses the girls' suspicions and makes the matter too mysterious.

### **Conclusion.**

Enough has been said to prove that it is not only the direct biological instruction that is important but all the various influences that come to bear on the impressionable mind of the growing girl. We want

her to think on the things that are 'true, pure, lovely and of good report.' We want to inspire her to prepare, by small unselfish acts, for a life of service to others. Similarly we aim to train her will so that, by small self-denials and small victories of self-control, she hardens her moral fibre against the day when she must fight greater battles. Mere instruction does not give strength of character. The source of the strength that wins, in the hour of testing, is not in herself. We must try to help her to gain, by the habit of prayer, the power of the indwelling Christ Who alone can be 'her strength and her shield.'

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following books are recommended.

### I. FOR TEACHERS

1. *High Schools and Sex-Education*. A manual published by the United States Public Health Service. Obtainable at the North India Christian Tract and Book Society, Allahabad and at the Association Press, 5 Russell St., Calcutta. This shows how social hygiene teaching can be integrated in some study on the curriculum. Price 12 annas.

2. *The Biology of Sex*. For parents and teachers. By T. W. Galloway, Ph.D. Heath & Co., Publishers. Can be had at the Association Press or the North India Christian Book and Tract Society. Deals especially with the methods and spirit of sex-instruction and its biological, social and moral foundations. Paper covers, Rs. 1/14. Cloth about Rs. 2/4.

3. *Anandi's Question*. For parents of little children, by B. C. Oliver, M.D. Published in English by the Christian Literature Society, Madras. Price 5 annas. The same in Kanarese at the Wesleyan Mission Press, Mysore, 4 annas and to be published in Malayalam and Hindi shortly.

### II. FOR TEACHERS AND PUPILS

1. *Plant and Animal Children and How they Grow*. By Ellen Torelle. Published by Heath, Boston. Price 96 cents. Obtainable at the Association Press, 5 Russell St., Calcutta. Useful nature

study material on reproduction in plants and animal. Can be read to children.

2. *A Clean Heart or Lessons on Motherhood*. By Mrs. West, B.A. Published by the Christ Literature Society, Madras. Price 6 annas. It had also in Hindi, Telugu, Marathi and Bengali.

3. *For Girls and the Mothers of Girls*. By M. G. Hood, M.D. Published by Bobbs Merriam Indianapolis, \$1.75. Obtainable at the Association Press, 5 Russell St., Calcutta. Presents the facts of life for girls in the early years of adolescence in a simple and dignified way. This could be purchased for the school library.

A longer list of helpful books and inexpensive pamphlets obtainable in India, can be had on application to

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