

STUDIES
IN THE
PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX

THE EVOLUTION OF MODESTY
THE PHENOMENA OF SEXUAL PERIODICITY
AUTO-EROTISM

BY
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PREFACE

THE present volume contains three studies which seem to me to be necessary *prolegomena* to that analysis of the sexual instinct which must form the chief part of an investigation into the psychology of sex. The first sketches the main outlines of a complex emotional state which is of fundamental importance in sexual psychology; the second, by bringing together evidence from widely different regions, suggests a tentative explanation of facts that are still imperfectly known; the third attempts to show that even in fields where we assume our knowledge to be adequate a broader view of the phenomena teaches us to suspend judgment and to adopt a more cautious attitude. So far as they go, these studies are complete in themselves; their special use, as an introduction to a more comprehensive analysis of sexual phenomena, is that they bring before us, under varying aspects, a characteristic which, though often ignored, is of the first importance in obtaining a clear understanding of the facts: the tendency of the sexual impulse to appear in a spontaneous and to some extent periodic manner, affecting women differently from men. This is a tendency which, later, I hope to make still more apparent, for it has practical and social, as well as psychological, implications. Here—and more especially in the study of those spontaneous solitary manifestations which I call autoerotic—I have attempted to clear the ground, and to indicate the main lines along which the progress of our knowledge in these fields may best be attained.

It may surprise many medical readers that in the third and longest study I have said little, save incidentally, either of treatment or prevention. The omission of such considerations at this stage is intentional. It may safely be said that in no other field of human activity is so vast an amount of strenuous didactic morality founded on so slender a basis of facts. In most other departments of life we at least make a pretence of learning before we presume to teach; in the field of sex we content ourselves with the smallest and vaguest minimum of information, often ostentatiously second-hand, usually unreliable. I wish to emphasize the fact that before we can safely talk either of curing or preventing these manifestations we must know a great deal more than we know at present regarding their distribution, etiology, and symptomatology; and we must exercise the same coolness and caution as—if our work is to be fruitful—we require in any other field of serious study. We must approach these facts as physicians, it is true, but also as psychologists, primarily concerned to find out the workings of such manifestations in fairly healthy and normal people. If we found a divorce-court judge writing a treatise on marriage we should smile. But it is equally absurd for the physician, so long as his knowledge is confined to disease, to write regarding sex at large; valuable as the facts he brings forward may be, he can never be in a position to generalize concerning them. And to me, at all events, it seems that we have had more than enough pictures of gross sexual perversity, whether furnished by the asylum or the brothel. They are only really instructive when they are seen in their proper perspective as the rare and ultimate extremes of a chain of phenomena which we may more profitably study nearer home.

Yet, although we are, on every hand, surrounded by the normal manifestations of sex, conscious or unconscious, these manifestations are extremely difficult to observe, and, in those cases in which we are best able to observe them, it frequently happens that we are unable to make any use of our knowledge. Moreover, even when we have obtained our data, the difficulties—at all events, for an English investigator—are by no means overcome. He may take for granted that any serious and precise study of the sexual instinct will not meet with general approval; his work will be misunderstood; his motives will be called in question; among those for whom he is chiefly working he will find indifference. Indeed, the pioneer in this field may well count himself happy if he meets with nothing worse than indifference. Hence it is that the present volume will not be published in England, but that, availing myself of the generous sympathy with which my work has been received in America, I have sought the wider medical and scientific audience of the United States. In matters of faith, “liberty of prophesying” was centuries since eloquently vindicated for Englishmen; the liberty of investigating facts is still called in question, under one pretence or another, and to seek out the most vital facts of life is still in England a perilous task.

I desire most heartily to thank the numerous friends and correspondents, some living in remote parts of the world, who have freely assisted me in my work with valuable information and personal histories. To Mr. F. H. Perry-Coste I owe an appendix which is by far the most elaborate attempt yet made to find evidence of periodicity in the spontaneous sexual manifestations of sleep; my debts to various medical and other correspondents are duly stated in the text. To many women friends and correspondents I may here express my gratitude for the manner in which they have furnished me with intimate personal records, and for the cross-examination to which they have allowed me to subject them. I may already say here, what I shall have occasion to say more emphatically in subsequent volumes, that without the assistance I have received from women of fine intelligence and high character my work would be impossible. I regret that I cannot make my thanks more specific.

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THE EVOLUTION OF MODESTY.

The Definition of Modesty—Modesty Based on Fear—The Sexual Factor of Modesty—In Animals and in Men—The Origin of the Attitude of the Medicean Venus—The Sexual Factor of Modesty Based on Sexual Periodicity—The Aptitude for Disgust as a Factor of Modesty—The Modesty of Savages in Regard to Eating in the Presence of Others—Why the Sacro-pubic Region is a Focus of Disgust—The Idea of Ceremonial Uncleanliness—How the Face Becomes a Focus of Modesty—Modesty and Coquetry—Ornament and Clothing—Modesty Becomes Concentrated in the Garment—The Economic Factor in Modesty—The Contribution of Civilization to Modesty—The Elaboration of Social Ritual—The Blush the Sanction of Modesty—As Civilization advances Modesty Tends to become Extended, but not Intensified.

MODESTY,—which may be provisionally defined as an almost instinctive fear prompting to concealment, and usually centering around the sexual processes,—while common to both sexes, is more peculiarly feminine, so that it may almost be regarded as the chief secondary sexual character of women on the psychical side. The woman who is lacking in this kind of fear is lacking, also, in sexual attractiveness to the normal and average man. The apparent exceptions seem to prove the rule, for it will generally be found that the women who are, not immodest (for immodesty is more closely related to modesty than mere negative absence of the sense of modesty), but without that fear which implies the presence of a complex emotional feminine organization to defend, only make a strong sexual appeal to men who are themselves lacking in the complementary masculine qualities. As a psychical secondary sexual character of the first rank, it is necessary before any psychology of sex can be arranged in order, to obtain a clear view of modesty.

The immense importance of feminine modesty in creating masculine passion must be fairly obvious. I may, however, quote the observations of two writers who have shown evidence of insight and knowledge regarding this matter.

Casanova describes how, when at Berne, he went to the baths, and was, according to custom, attended by a young girl, whom he selected from a group of bath attendants. She undressed him, proceeded to undress herself, and then entered the bath with him, and rubbed him thoroughly all over, the operation being performed in the most serious manner and without a word's being spoken. When all was over, however, he perceived that the girl had expected him to make advances, and he thus proceeds to moralize on his own feelings of indifference under such circumstance. "Though without gazing on the girl's figure, I had seen enough to recognize that she had all that a man can desire to find in a woman: a beautiful face, lively and well-formed eyes, a beautiful mouth with good teeth, a healthy complexion, well-developed breasts, and everything in harmony. It is true that I had felt that her hands could have been smoother, but I could only attribute this to hard work; moreover, my Swiss girl was only eighteen, and yet I remained entirely cold. What was the cause of this? That was the question that I asked myself. It was, perhaps, because she was too near to nature, because she had not those graces, that coquetry, those pretty little grimacing airs that women employ with so much art to seduce us. But do we then only love artifices and falsehood? Perhaps also we need, in order to irritate our senses, to define charms through the veil of modesty. But if in our manner of clothing, the face, which is open to every one, is that which is least important to our entire satisfaction, why is it that the face plays the principal part, why is it that by the face we fall in love, why by its testimony alone do we judge the beauty of a woman, and why do we forgive her when the parts which she conceals are not in harmony with her pretty face? Would it not be more natural, and, especially, more reasonable, and more advantageous, to cover the face, and to leave the rest of the body uncovered? In this way, when we fall in love we need only desire a physiognomy which corresponds to the charms that have attracted us. No doubt, that would be preferable, for we should only be seduced then by perfect beauty, and we should easily forgive when, on the mask's being raised, we found an ugly face where we expected to find a beautiful one. It would then happen that an ugly

woman, happy to seduce by the beauty of her figure, would be the only one who would never consent to unveil, while the beautiful ones would not need begging to show their faces. The ugly ones would not cause us to sigh long. They would be *facile* in order not to be forced to show themselves, and, if they consented to unmask, it would only be after having convinced us by enjoyment that man can be happy without the beauty of the face. It is, besides, evident that inconstancy in love only exists on account of the diversity of faces. If one never saw them, one would be always constant to, and even in love with, the first woman that one fell in love with. I know that all this reasoning will be called mad by many madmen, but I shall not be there to answer them.” (“Mémoires,” edition Garnier, vol. iv, pp. 393-94.)

“It is clear,” wrote Stendhal, “that three parts of modesty are taught. This is, perhaps, the only law born of civilization which produces nothing but happiness. It has been observed that birds of prey hide themselves to drink, because, being obliged to plunge their heads in the water, they are at that moment defenceless. After having considered what passes at Otaheite, I can see no other natural foundation for modesty. Love is the miracle of civilization. Among savage and very barbarous races we find nothing but physical love of a gross character. It is modesty that gives to love the aid of imagination, and in so doing imparts life to it. Modesty is very early taught to little girls by their mothers, and with extreme jealousy, one might say, by *esprit de corps*. They are watching in advance over the happiness of the future lover. To a timid and tender woman there ought to be no greater torture than to allow herself in the presence of a man something which she thinks she ought to blush at. I am convinced that a proud woman would prefer a thousand deaths. A slight liberty taken on the tender side by the man she loves gives a woman a moment of keen pleasure, but if he has the air of blaming her for it, or only of not enjoying it with transport, an awful doubt must be left in her mind. For a woman above the vulgar level there is, then, everything to gain by very reserved manners. The play is not equal. She hazards against a slight pleasure, or against the advantage of appearing a little amiable, the danger of biting remorse, and a feeling of shame which must render even the lover less dear. An evening passed gaily and thoughtlessly, without thinking of what comes after, is dearly paid at this price. The sight of a lover with whom one fears that one has had this kind of wrong must become odious for several days. Can one be surprised at the force of a habit, the slightest infractions of which are punished with such atrocious shame? As to the utility of modesty, it is the mother of love. As to the mechanism of the feeling, nothing is simpler. The mind is absorbed in feeling shame instead of being occupied with desire. Desires are forbidden, and desires lead to actions. It is evident that every tender and proud woman—and these two things, being cause and effect, naturally go together—must contract habits of coldness which the people whom she disconcerts call prudery. The power of modesty is so great that a tender woman betrays herself with her lover rather by deeds than by words. The evil of modesty is that it constantly leads to falsehood.” (Stendhal, “De l’Amour,” Chapter XXVI.)

An interesting testimony to the part played by modesty in effecting the union of the sexes is furnished by the fact—to which attention has often been called—that the special modesty of women usually tends to disappear with the complete gratification of the sexual impulses. This may be noted among savage as well as among civilized women. Viazzi (“Pudore nell ’uomo e nella donna,” *Revista Mensile di, Psichiatria Forense*, 1898), indeed, following Sergi, argues that men are, throughout, more modest than women; but the points he brings forward, though often just, scarcely justify his conclusion. While the young virgin, however, is more modest and shy than the young man of the same age, the experienced married woman is usually less so than her husband. She has put off a sexual livery that has no longer any part to play in life, and would, indeed, be inconvenient and harmful, just as a bird loses its sexual plumage when the pairing season is over.¹

Madame Celine Renooz, in a recent elaborate study of the psychological sexual differences between men and women (“Psychologie Comparée de l’Homme et de la Femme,” 1898, pp. 85-87), also believes that modesty is not really a feminine characteristic. “Modesty,” she argues, “is masculine shame attributed to women for two reasons: first, because man believes that woman is subject to the same laws as himself; secondly, because the course of human evolution has reversed the psychology of the sexes, attributing to women the psychological results of masculine sexuality. This is the origin of the conventional lies which by a sort of social suggestion have intimidated

¹ This comparatively evanescent character of modesty has led to the argument (Venturi, “Degenerazioni Psico-sessuali,” pp. 92-93) that modesty (*pudore*) is possessed by women alone, men exhibiting, instead, a sense of decency which remains at about the same level of persistency throughout life.

women. They have, in appearance at least, accepted the rule of shame imposed on them by men, but only custom inspires the modesty for which they are praised; it is really an outrage to their sex. This reversal of psychological laws has, however, only been accepted by women with a struggle. Primitive woman, proud of her womanhood, for a long time defended her nakedness which ancient art has always represented. And in the actual life of the young girl to-day there is a moment when, by a secret atavism she feels the pride of her sex, the intuition of her moral superiority, and cannot understand why she must hide its cause. At this moment, wavering between the laws of Nature and social conventions, she scarcely knows if nakedness should or should not affright her. A sort of confused atavistic memory recalls to her a period before clothing was known, and reveals to her as a paradisiacal ideal the customs of that human epoch."

In support of this view the authoress proceeds to point out that the *décolleté* constantly reappears in feminine clothing, never in male; that missionaries experience great difficulty in persuading women to cover themselves; that, while women accept with facility an examination by male doctors, men cannot force themselves to accept examination by a woman doctor, etc. (These and similar points had already been independently brought forward by Sergi, *Archivio di Psichiatria*, vol. xiii, 1892.)

It cannot be said that Madame Renooz's arguments will all bear examination, but the point of view which she expresses is one which usually fails to gain recognition, though it probably contains an important element of truth. At the same time it only reveals one thread in the tangled skein with which we are here concerned. The mass of facts which meets us when we turn to the study of modesty in women cannot be dismissed as a group of artificially-imposed customs. They gain rather than lose in importance if we have to realize that the organic sexual demands of women, calling for coyness in courtship, lead to the temporary suppression of another feminine instinct of opposite, though doubtless allied, nature.

The significance of such an inquiry becomes greater when we reflect that to the reticences of sexual modesty, in their progression, expansion, and complication, we largely owe, not only the refinement and development of the sexual emotions,—“*la pudeur*,” as Guyau remarked, “*a civilisé l'amour*,”—but the subtle and pervading part which the sexual instinct has played in the evolution of all human culture¹

I have not, however, been able to find that the subject of modesty has been treated in any comprehensive way by psychologists. Though valuable facts and suggestions bearing on the sexual emotions, on disgust, the origins of tattooing, on ornament and clothing, have been brought forward by physiologists, psychologists, and ethnographers, few or no attempts appear to have been made to reach a general synthetic statement of these facts and suggestions. It is true that a great many unreliable, slight, or fragmentary efforts have been made to ascertain the constitution or basis of this emotion. Many psychologists, including Sergi, have regarded modesty simply as the result of clothing.² This view is overturned by the well-ascertained fact that many races which go absolutely naked possess a highly-developed sense of modesty. These writers have not realized that physiological modesty is earlier in

¹ “It is hard to find all the causes of modesty and shame,” remark Stanley Hall and Allin, “but it is certain that very much of what is best in religion, art, and life owes its charm to the progressively-widening irradiation of sexual feeling. Perhaps the reluctance of the female first long-circuited the exquisite sensations connected with sexual organs and acts to the antics of animal and human courtship, while restraint had the physiological function of developing the colors, plumes, excessive activity, and exuberant life of the pairing season. To keep certain parts of the body covered irradiated the sense of beauty to eyes, hair, face, complexion, dress, form, etc., while many savage dances, costumes, and postures are irradiations of the sexual act. Thus reticence, concealment, and restraint are among the prime conditions of religion and human culture.” (Stanley Hall and Allin, “The Psychology of Tickling,” *American Journal of Psychology*, p. 31, 1897.)

Groos attributes the deepening of the conjugal relation among birds to the circumstance that the male seeks to overcome the reticence of the female by the display of his charms and abilities. “And in the human world,” he continues, “it is the same; without the modest reserve of the woman that must, in most cases, be overcome by lovable qualities, the sexual relationship would with difficulty find a singer who would extol in love the highest movements of the human soul.” (Groos, “*Spiele der Menschen*,” p. 341.)

² More recently, however, Sergi has emphasized the coincidence of the sexual with the excreting centres as leading to a fear of causing disgust, “*Dolore e Piacere*,” 1894, pp. 209-212.

appearance, and more fundamental, than anatomical modesty. A partial contribution to the analysis of modesty has been made by Professor James, who, with his usual insight and lucidity, has set forth certain of its characteristics, especially the element due to “the application to ourselves of judgments primarily passed upon our mates.” Westermarck, again, followed by Grosse, has very ably and convincingly set forth certain factors in the origin of ornament and clothing, a subject which many writers imagine to cover the whole field of modesty. More recently Ribot, in his work on the emotions, has vaguely outlined most of the factors of modesty, but has not developed a coherent view of their origins and relationships. The subject is, indeed, complicated by the difficulty of excluding closely-allied emotions—shame, shyness, bashfulness, timidity, etc.—all of which, indeed, however defined, adjoin or overlap modesty.¹ It is not, however, impossible to isolate the main body of the emotion of modesty, on account of its special connection, on the whole, with the consciousness of sex. I here attempt, however imperfectly, to sketch out a fairly-complete analysis of its constitution and to trace its development.

In entering upon this investigation a few facts with regard to the various manifestations of modesty may be helpful to us. I have selected these from scattered original sources, and have sought to bring out the variety and complexity of the problems with which we are here concerned.

The New Georgians of the Solomon Islands, so low a race that they are ignorant both of pottery and weaving and wear only a loin cloth, “have the same ideas of what is decent with regard to certain acts and exposures that we ourselves have”; so that it is difficult to observe whether they practice circumcision. (Somerville, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 394, 1897.)

The semi-nude natives of the island of Nias in the Indian Ocean are “modest by nature,” paying no attention to their own nudity or that of others, and much scandalized by any attempt to go beyond the limits ordained by custom. When they pass near places where women are bathing they raise their voices in order to warn them of their presence, and even although any bold youth addressed the women, and the latter replied, no attempt would be made to approach them; any such attempt would be severely punished by the head man of the village. (Modigliani, “Un Viaggio a Nias,” p. 460.)

Man says that the Andamanese in modesty and self-respect compare favorably with many classes among civilized peoples. “Women are so modest that they will not renew their leaf-aprons in the presence of one another, but retire to a secluded spot for this purpose; even when parting with one of their *bod* appendages [tails of leaves suspended from back of girdle] to a female friend the delicacy they manifest for the feelings of the by-standers in their mode of removing it amounts to prudishness; yet they wear no clothing in the ordinary sense.” (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, pp. 94 and 331, 1883.)

In Australia “the feeling of decency is decidedly less prevalent among males than females”; the clothed females retire out of sight to bathe. (Curr, “Australian Race.”)

“Except for waist-bands, forehead-bands, necklets, and armllets, and a conventional pubic tassel, shell, or, in the case of the women, a small apron, the Central Australian native is naked. The pubic tassel is a diminutive structure about the size of a five-shilling piece made of a few short strands of fur-strings flattened out into a fan-shape and attached to the pubic hair. As the string, especially at *corroboree* times, is covered with white kaolin or gypsum, it serves as a decoration rather than a covering. Among the Arunta and Luritcha the women usually wear nothing, but further north a small apron is made and worn.” (Baldwin Spencer and Gillen, “Native Tribes of Central Australia,” p. 572.)

¹ Timidity, as understood by Dugas in his interesting essay on that subject, is probably most remote. Dr. H. Campbell’s “morbid shyness” (*British Medical Journal*, September 26, 1896), is, in part, identical with timidity, in part with modesty. The matter is further complicated by the fact that modesty itself has in English (like virtue) two distinct meanings. In its original form it has no special connection with sex or women, but may rather be considered as a masculine virtue. Cicero regards “modestia” as the equivalent of the Greek *λωφροδύνη*. This is the “modesty” which Mary Wollstonecraft eulogized in the last century, the outcome of knowledge and reflection, “soberness of mind,” “the graceful calm virtue of maturity.” In French it is possible to avoid the confusion, and *modestie* is entirely distinct from *pudeur*. It is, of course, mainly with *pudeur* that I am here concerned.

Of the Central Australians Stirling says: "No sense of shame of exposure was exhibited by the men on removal of the diminutive articles worn as conventional coverings; they were taken off *coram populo*, and bartered without hesitation. On the other hand, some little persuasion was necessary to allow inspection of the effect of [urethral] sub-incision, assent being given only after dismissal to a distance of the women and young children. As to the women, it was nearly always observed that when in camp without clothing they, especially the younger ones, exhibited by their attitude a keen sense of modesty, if, indeed, a consciousness of their nakedness can be thus considered. When we desired to take a photograph of a group of young women, they were very coy at the proposal to remove their scanty garments, and retired behind a wall to do so; but once in a state of nudity they made no objection to exposure to the camera." ("Report of the Horn Scientific Expedition," 1896, vol. iv, p. 37.)

In Northern-Queensland "phallocrypts," or "penis-concealers," only used by the males at *corrobborees* and other public rejoicings, are either formed of pearl-shell or opossum-string. The *koom-pa-ra*, or opossum-string form of phallocrypt, forms a kind of tassel, and is colored red; it is hung from the waist-belt in the middle line. In both sexes the privates are only covered on special public occasions or when in close proximity to white settlements. (Walter Roth, "Ethnological Studies among the Northwest-Central-Queensland Aborigines," 1897, pp. 114-115.)

Among the western tribes of Torres Straits, Haddon remarks, the men are naked, the women wear a tuft of grass or split pandanus-leaves in front, and passed between the thighs to be fastened to another piece behind, and sometimes, especially for dancing, a short petticoat of shred pandanus-leaves over this. (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, pp. 368, 431, 1890.)

The Papuans of King Wilhelm's Land must not be seen during coitus; anyone so seen is regarded as imbecile or mad, a special word being used for this madness. (Schellong, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, H. 1, p. 18, 1889.)

In the New Hebrides "the closest secrecy is adopted with regard to the penis, not at all from a sense of decency, but to avoid Narak, the *sight* even of that of another man being considered most dangerous. The natives of this savage island, accordingly, wrap the penis around with many yards of calico, and other like materials, winding and folding them until a preposterous bundle 18 inches or 2 feet long and 2 inches or more in diameter is formed, which is then supported upward by means of a belt, in the extremity decorated with flowering grasses, etc. The testicles are left naked." There is no other body covering. (Somerville, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 368, 1894.)

In the Pelew Islands, says Kubary, as quoted by Bastian, it is said that when the God Irakaderugel and his wife were creating man and woman (he forming man and she forming woman), and were at work on the sexual organs, the god wished to see his consort's handiwork. She, however, was cross, and persisted in concealing what she had made. Ever since then women wear an apron of pandanus-leaves and men go naked. (A. Bastian, "Inselgruppen in Oceanien," p. 112.)

The Maoris, whose cold climate encouraged them to clothe abundantly, saw nothing to be condemned when the girls in public removed their garments in order to swim. The men always stripped naked for work or for fighting. (A. Sutherland, "Moral Instinct," vol. i, p. 206.)

In Rotuma, in Polynesia, where the women enjoy much freedom, but where, at all events in old days, married people were, as a rule, faithful to each other, "the language is not chaste according to our ideas, and there is a great deal of freedom in speaking of immoral vices. In this connection a man and his wife will speak freely to one another before their friends, and perhaps indulge in a little chaff. I am informed, though, by European traders well conversant with the language, that there are grades of language, and that certain coarse phrases would never be used to any decent woman; so that probably, in their way, they have much modesty, only we cannot appreciate it." (J. Stanley Gardiner, "The Natives of Rotuma," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, May, 1898, p. 481.)

In Queensland, also, Roth remarks (*op. cit.*, p. 184), there is both a decent and an indecent vocabulary: while one word for vulva can be used in the best aboriginal society, another, meaning the same part, is considered most offensive.

The men of Rotuma, says the same writer, are very clean, the women also, bathing twice a day in the sea; but "bathing in public without the *kukuluga*, or *sulu* [loin-cloth, which is the ordinary dress], around the waist is absolutely unheard of, and would be much looked down upon" (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 410, 1898.)

At Tahiti, which was one of the chief centres of Polynesian culture, nakedness was almost a religious cult. There was a nude funeral dance and a nude wedding-dance. On the wedding-day, also, the marriage was consummated in the presence of the public. (Tautain, "Ethnographie des Iles Marquises," *L'Anthropologie*, p. 546, 1896.)

In ancient Samoa the only necessary garment for either man or woman was an apron of leaves, but they possessed so "delicate a sense of propriety" that even "while bathing they have a girdle of leaves or some other covering around the waist." (Turner, "Samoa a Hundred Years Ago," p. 121.)

After babyhood the Indians of Guiana are never seen naked. When they change their single garment they retire. The women wear a little apron, now generally made of European beads, but the Warraus still make it of the inner bark of a tree, and some of seeds. (Everard im Thurn, "Among the Indians of Guiana," 1883.)

The Indians of Central Brazil have no "private parts." In men the little girdle, or string, surrounding the lower part of the abdomen, hides nothing; it is worn after puberty, the penis being often raised and placed beneath it to lengthen the prepuce. The women also use a little strip of bast that goes down the groin and passes between the thighs. Among some tribes (Karibs, Tupis, Nu-Arwaks) a little, triangular, coquettishly-made piece of bark-bast comes just below the mops veneris; it is only a few centimetres in width, and is called the *uluri*. *In both sexes concealment of the sexual mucous membrane is attained.* These articles cannot be called clothing. "The red thread of the Trumai, the elegant *uluri*, and the variegated flag of the Bororó attract attention, like ornaments, instead of drawing attention away." Von den Steinen thinks this proceeding a necessary protection against the attacks of insects, which are often serious in Brazil. He does think, however, that there is more than this, and that the people are ashamed to show the glans penis. (Karl von den Steinen, "Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens," Berlin, 1894, pp. 190 *et seq.*)

Other travelers mention that on the Amazon among some tribes the women are clothed and the men naked; among others the women naked and the men clothed. Thus, among the Guaycurus the men are quite naked, while the women wear a short petticoat; among the Uauphás the men wear a loin-cloth, while the women are quite naked.

"The feeling of modesty is very developed among the Fuegians, who are accustomed to live naked. They manifest it in their bearing and in the ease with which they show themselves in a state of nudity, compared with the awkwardness, blushing, and shame which both men and women exhibit if one gazes at certain parts of their bodies. Among themselves this is never done even between husband and wife. There is no Fuegian word for modesty, perhaps because the feeling is universal among them." The women wear a minute triangular garment of skin suspended between the thighs and never removed, being merely raised during conjugal relations. (Hyades and Deniker, "Mission Scientifique on Cap Horn," vol. vii, pp. 239 and 347.)

Among the Crow Indians of Montana, writes Dr. Holder, who has lived with them for several years, "a sense of modesty forbids the attendance upon the female in labor of any male, white man or Indian, physician or layman. This antipathy to receiving assistance at the hands of the physician is overcome as the tribes progress toward civilization, and it is especially noticeable that half-breeds almost constantly seek the physician's aid." Dr. Holder mentions the case of a young woman who, although brought near the verge of death in a very difficult first confinement, repeatedly refused to allow him to examine her; at last she consented; "her modest preparation was to take bits of quilt and cover thighs and lips of vulva, leaving only the aperture exposed. . . . Their modesty would not be so striking were it not that, almost to a woman, the females of this tribe are prostitutes, and for a consideration will admit the connection of any man." (A. B. Holder, *American Journal of Obstetrics*, vol. xxv, No. 6, 1892.)

"In every North American tribe, from the most northern to the most southern, the skirt of the woman is longer than that of the men. In Esquimau land the *parka* of deerskin and sealskin reaches to the knees. Throughout Central North America the buckskin dress of the women reached quite to the ankles. The West-Coast women, from Oregon to the Gulf of California, wore a petticoat of shredded bark, of plaited grass, or of strings, upon which were strung hundreds of seeds. Even in the most tropical areas the rule was universal, as anyone can see from the codices or in pictures of the natives." (Otis T. Mason, "Woman's Share in Primitive Culture," p. 237.)

Describing the loin-cloth worn by Nicobarese men, Man says: "From the clumsy mode in which this garment is worn by the Shom Pen—necessitating frequent readjustment of the folds—one is led to infer that its use is not *de rigueur*, but reserved for special occasions, as when receiving or visiting strangers." (E. H. Man, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 442, 1886.)

Of the Garo women of Bengal Dalton says: "Their sole garment is a piece of cloth less than a foot in width that just meets around the loins, and in order that it may not restrain the limbs it is only fastened where it meets under the hip at the upper corners. The girls are thus greatly restricted in the positions they may modestly assume, but decorum is, in their opinion, sufficiently preserved if they only keep their legs well together when they sit or kneel." (E. T. Dalton, "Ethnology of Bengal," 1872, p. 66.)

Of the Naga women of Assam it is said: "Of clothing there was not much to see; but in spite of this I doubt whether we could excel them in true decency and modesty. Ibn Muhammed Wali had already remarked in his history of the conquest of Assam (1662-63), that the Naga women only cover their breasts. They declare that it is absurd to cover those parts of the body which everyone has been able to see from their births, but that it is different with the breasts, which appeared later, and are, therefore, to be covered. Dalton (*Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Bengal, 41, 1, 84) adds that in the presence of strangers Naga women simply cross their arms over their breasts, without caring much what other charms they may reveal to the observer. As regards some clans of the naked Nagas, to whom the Banpara belong, this may still hold good." (K. Klemm, "Peal's Ausflug nach Banpara," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, H. 5, p. 334, 1898.)

Mrs. French-Sheldon remarks that the Masai and other East African tribes, with regard to menstruation, "observe the greatest delicacy, and are more than modest." (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 383, 1894.)

At the same time the Masai, among whom the penis is of enormous size, consider it disreputable to conceal that member, and in the highest degree reputable to display it, even ostentatiously. (Sir H. H. Johnston, "Kilima-njaro Expedition," p. 413.)

Among the African Dinka, who are scrupulously clean and delicate (smearing themselves with burnt cows' dung, and washing themselves daily with cows' urine), and are exquisite cooks, reaching in many respects a higher stage of civilization, in Schweinfurth's opinion, than is elsewhere attained in Africa, only the women wear aprons. The neighboring tribes of the red soil—Bongo, Mittoo, Niam-Niam, etc.—are called "women" by the Dinka, because among these tribes the men wear an apron, while the women obstinately refuse to wear any clothes whatsoever of skin or stuff, going into the woods every day, however, to get a supple bough for a girdle, with, perhaps, a bundle of fine grass. (Schweinfurth, "Heart of Africa," vol. i, pp. 152, etc.)

Lombroso and Carrara, examining some Dinka negroes brought from the White Nile, remark: "As to their psychology, what struck us first of all was the exaggeration of their modesty; not in a single case would the men allow us to examine their genital organs or the women their breasts; we examined the tattoo-marks on the chest of one of the women, and she remained sad and irritable for two days afterward." They add that in sexual and all other respects these people are highly moral. (Lombroso and Carrara, *Archivio di Psichiatria*, vol. xvii, fasc. 4, 1896.)

"The negro is very rarely knowingly indecent or addicted to lubricity," says Sir H. H. Johnston. "In this land of nudity, which I have known for seven years, I do not remember once having seen an indecent gesture on the part of either man or woman, and only very rarely (and that not among unspoiled savages) in the case of that most shameless member of the community—the little boy." He adds that the native dances are only an apparent exception, being serious in character, though indecent to our eyes, almost constituting a religious ceremony. The only really indecent dance indigenous to Central Africa "is one which originally represented the act of coition, but it is so altered to a stereotyped formula that its exact purport is not obvious until explained somewhat shyly by the natives. . . . It may safely be asserted that the negro race in Central Africa is much more truly modest, is much more free from real vice, than are most European nations. Neither boys nor girls wear clothing (unless they are the children of chiefs) until nearing the age of puberty. Among the Wankonda, practically no covering is worn by the men except a ring of brass wire around the stomach. The Wankonda women are likewise almost entirely naked, but generally cover the pudenda with a tiny bead-work apron, often a piece of very beautiful workmanship, and exactly resembling the same article worn by Kaffir women. A like degree of nudity prevails among many of the Awemba, among the A-lungu, the Batumbuka, and the Angoni. Most of the Angoni men, however, adopt the

Zulu fashion of covering the *glans penis* with a small wooden case or the outer shell of a fruit. The Wa-Yao have a strong sense of decency in matters of this kind, which is the more curious since they are more given to obscenity in their rites, ceremonies, and dances than any other tribe. Not only is it extremely rare to see any Yao uncovered, but both men and women have the strongest dislike to exposing their persons even to the inspection of a doctor. The Atonga and many of the A-nyanga people, and all the tribes west of Nyassa (with the exception possibly of the A-lunda) have not the Yao regard for decency, and, although they can seldom or ever be accused of a deliberate intention to expose themselves, the men are relatively indifferent as to whether their nakedness is or is not concealed, though the women are modest and careful in this respect." (H. H. Johnston, "British Central Africa," 1897, pp. 408-419.)

In Azimba Land, Central Africa, H. Crawford Angus, who has spent many years in this part of Africa, writes: "It has been my experience that the more naked the people and the more to us obscene and shameless their manners and customs, the more moral and strict they are in the matter of sexual intercourse." He proceeds to give a description of the *chensamwali*, or initiation ceremony of girls at puberty, a season of rejoicing when the girl is initiated into all the secrets of marriage, amid songs and dances referring to the act of coition. "The whole matter is looked upon as a matter of course, and not as a thing to be ashamed of or to hide, and, being thus openly treated of and no secrecy made about it, you find in this tribe that the women are very virtuous. They know from the first all that is to be known, and cannot see any reason for secrecy concerning natural laws or the powers and senses that have been given them from birth." (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, H 6, p. 479, 1898.)

"The women at Upoto wear no clothes whatever, and came up to us in the most unreserved manner. An interesting gradation in the arrangement of the female costume has been observed by us: as we ascended the Congo, the higher up the river we found ourselves, the higher the dress reached, till it has now, at last, culminated in absolute nudity." (T. H. Parke, "My Personal Experiences in Equatorial Africa," 1891, p. 61.)

"There exists throughout the Congo population a marked appreciation of the sentiment of decency and shame as applied to private actions," says Mr. Herbert Ward. In explanation of the nudity of the women at Upoto, a chief remarked to Ward that "concealment is food for the inquisitive." (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 293, 1895.)

In the Gold Coast and surrounding countries complete nudity is extremely rare except when circumstances make it desirable; on occasion clothing is abandoned with unconcern. "I have on several occasions," says Dr. Freeman, "seen women at Accra walk from the beach, where they have been bathing, across the road to their houses, where they would proceed to dry themselves, and resume their garments; and women may not infrequently be seen bathing in pools by the way-side, conversing quite unconstrainedly with their male acquaintances who are seated on the bank. The mere unclothed body conveys to their minds no idea of indecency. Immodesty and indelicacy of manner are practically unknown." He adds that the excessive zeal of missionaries in urging their converts to adopt European dress—which they are only too ready to do—is much to be regretted, since the close-fitting thin garments are really less modest than the loose clothes they replace, besides being much less cleanly. (R. A. Freeman, "Travels and Life in Ashanti and Jaman," 1898, p. 379.)

At Loango, says Pechuel-Loesche, "the well-bred negress likes to cover her bosom, and is sensitive to critical male eyes; if she meets a European when without her overgarment, she instinctively, though not without coquetry, takes the attitude of the Medicean Venus." Men and women bathe separately, and hide themselves from each other when naked. The women also exhibit shame when discovered suckling their babies. (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, pp. 27-31, 1878.)

In Algeria,—in the provinces of Constantine, in Biskra, even Aures,—"among the women especially, not one is restrained by any modesty in unfastening her girdle to any corner" (when a search was being made for tattoo-marks on the lower extremities). "In spite of the great licentiousness of the manners," the same writer continues, "the Arab and the Kabyle possess great personal modesty, and with difficulty are persuaded to exhibit the body nude; is it the result of real modesty or of their inveterate habits of active pederasty? Whatever the cause, they always hide the sexual organs with their hands or their handkerchiefs, and are disagreeably affected even by the slightest touch of the doctor." (Batut, *Archives d'Anthropologie Criminelle*, January 15, 1893.)

“Moslem modesty,” remarks Wellhausen, “was carried to great lengths, insufficient clothing being forbidden. It was marked even among the heathen Arabs, as among Semites and old civilizations generally; we must not be deceived by the occasional examples of immodesty in individual cases. The Sunna prescribes that a man shall not uncover himself even to himself, and shall not wash naked—from fear of God and of spirits; Job did so, and atoned for it heavily. When in Arab antiquity grown-up persons showed themselves naked, it was only under extraordinary circumstances, and to attain unusual ends. . . . Women when mourning uncovered not only the face and bosom, but also tore all their garments. The messenger who brought bad news tore his garments. A mother desiring to bring pressure to bear on her son took off her clothes. A man to whom vengeance is forbidden showed his despair and disapproval by uncovering his posterior and strewing earth on his head, or by raising his garment behind and covering his head with it. This was done also in fulfilling natural necessities.” (Wellhausen, “*Reste Arabischen Heidentums*,” 1897, pp. 173,195-96.)

Mantegazza mentions that a Lapland woman refused even for the sum of 150 francs to allow him to photograph her naked, though the men placed themselves before the camera in the costume of Adam for a much smaller sum. In the same book Mantegazza remarks that in the last century travelers found it extremely difficult to persuade Samoyed women to show themselves naked. Among the same people, he says, the newly-married wife must conceal her face from her husband for two months after marriage, and only then yield to his embraces. (Mantegazza, “*La Donna*,” cap. iv.)

“The beauty of a Chinese woman,” says Dr. Matignon, “resides largely in her foot. ‘A foot which is not deformed is a dishonor,’ says a poet. For the husband the foot is more interesting than the face. Only the husband may see his wife’s foot naked. A Chinese woman is as reticent in showing her feet to a man as a European woman her breasts. I have often had to treat Chinese women with ridiculously small feet for wounds and excoriations, the result of tight bandaging. They exhibited the prudishness of school-girls, blushed, turned their backs to unfasten the bandages, and then concealed the foot in a cloth, leaving only the affected part uncovered. Modesty is a question of convention; Chinese have it for their feet.” (J. Matignon, “*A propos d’un Pied de Chinoise*,” *Archives d’Anthropologie Criminelle*, p. 445,1898.)

It must be added that Chinese women are said to be extremely reticent in showing any part of the body; but there is no doubt that the chief focus of modesty is in their feet. It is only with great difficulty, I am informed, that they can be persuaded to show their feet even to persons of their own sex, and in their pictures of naked women, regarded as most indecent, the feet are still surrounded by a little silk frill.

“In Japan (Captain—— tells me) the bathing-place of the women was perfectly open (the shampooing, indeed, was done by a man), and Englishmen were offered no obstacle nor excited the least repugnance; indeed, girls after their bath would freely pass, sometimes as if holding out their hair for innocent admiration, and this continued until countrymen of ours by vile laughter and jests made them guard themselves from insult by secrecy. So corruption spreads and heathenism is blacker by our contact.” (Private communication.)

“Speaking once with a Japanese gentleman, I observed that we considered it an act of indecency for men and women to wash together. He shrugged his shoulders as he answered: ‘But these Westerns have such prurient minds!’” (Mitford, “*Tales of Old Japan*,” 1871.)

Dr. Carl Davidsohn, who remarks that he had ample opportunity of noting the great beauty of the Japanese women in national dances, performed naked, points out that the Japanese have no esthetic sense for the nude. “This was shown at the Jubilee Exhibition at Kyoto. Here, among many rooms full of art objects, one was devoted to oil pictures in the European manner. Among these only one represented a nude figure, a Psyche, or Truth. It was the first time such a picture had been seen. Men and women crowded around it. After they had gazed at it for a time most began to giggle and laugh; some by their air and gestures clearly showed their disgust; all found that it was not esthetic to paint a naked woman, though in Nature nakedness was in no way offensive to them. In the middle of the same city, at a fountain reputed to possess special virtues, men and women will stand together naked to let the water run over them.” (Carl Davidsohn, “*Das Nackte bei den Japanern*,” *Globus*, No. 16, 1896.)

“Among the Lydians, and, indeed, among the barbarians generally, it is considered a deep disgrace, even for a man, to be seen naked.” (Herodotus, Book I, Chapter X.)

“The simple dress which is now common was first worn in Sparta, and there, more than anywhere else, the life of the rich was assimilated to that of the people. The Lacedæmonians, too, were the first who, in their athletic exercises, stripped naked and rubbed themselves over with oil. This was not the ancient custom; athletes formerly, even when they were contending at Olympia, wore girdles about their loins, a practice which lasted until quite lately, and still persists among barbarians, especially those of Asia, where the combatants at boxing and wrestling matches wear girdles.” (Thucydides, “History,” Book I, Chapter VI.)

“The notion of the women exercising naked in the schools with the men . . . at the present day would appear truly ridiculous. . . . Not long since it was thought discreditable and ridiculous among the Greeks, as it is now among most barbarous nations, for men to be seen naked. And when the Cretans first, and after them the Lacedæmonians, began the practice of gymnastic exercises, the wits of the time had it in their power to make sport of those novelties. . . . As for the man who laughs at the idea of undressed women going through gymnastic exercises, as a means of revealing what is most perfect, his ridicule is but ‘unripe fruit plucked from the tree of wisdom.’” (Plato, “Republic,” Book V.)

According to Plutarch, however, among the Spartans, at all events, nakedness in women was not ridiculous, since the institutes of Lycurgus ordained that at solemn feasts and sacrifices the young women should dance naked and sing, the young men standing around in a circle to see and hear them. Aristotle says that in his time Spartan girls only wore a very slight garment. As described by Pausanias, and as shown by a statue in the Vatican, the ordinary tunic, which was the sole garment worn by women when running, left bare the right shoulder and breast, and only reached to the upper third of the thighs. (M. M. Evans, “Chapters on Greek Dress,” p. 34.)

Among the Greeks, who were inclined to accept the doctrines of Cynicism, it was held that, while shame is not unreasonable, what is good may be done and discussed before all men. There are a number of authorities who say that Crates and Hipparchia consummated their marriage in the presence of many spectators. Lactantius (Inst. iii, 15) says that the practice was common, but this Zeller is inclined to doubt. (Zeller, “Socrates and the Socratic Schools,” translated from the Third German Edition, 1897.)

“Among the Tyrrhenians, who carry their luxury to an extraordinary pitch, Timæus in his first book relates that the female servants wait on the men in a state of nudity. And Theopompus, in the forty-third book of his ‘History,’ states that it is a law among the Tyrrhenians that all their women should be in common; and that the women pay the greatest attention to their persons, and often practice gymnastic exercises, naked, among the men, and sometimes with one another; for that it is not accounted shameful for them to be seen naked. . . . Nor is it reckoned among the Tyrrhenians at all disgraceful either to do or suffer anything in the open air, or to be seen while it is going on; for it is quite the custom of their country, and they are so far from thinking it disgraceful that they even say, when the master of the house is indulging his appetite, and anyone asks for him, that he is doing so and so, using the coarsest possible words. . . . And they are very beautiful, as is natural for people to be who live delicately, and who take care of their persons.” (Athenæus, “Deipnosophists,” Bohn’s translation, vol. iii, p. 830.)

Dennis throws doubt on the foregoing statement of Athenæus regarding the Tyrrhenians or Etruscans, and points out that the representations of women in Etruscan tombs show them as clothed, even the breast being rarely uncovered. Nudity, he remarks, was a Greek, not an Etruscan, characteristic. “To the nudity of the Spartan women I need but refer; that Thessalian women are described by Persæus dancing at banquets naked, or with a very scanty covering (*cf.* Athenæus, xiii, c. 86). The maidens of Chios wrestled naked with the youth in the gymnasium, which Athenæus (xiii, 20) pronounces to be ‘a beautiful sight.’ And at the marriage-feast of Caranus the Macedonian women tumblers performed naked before the guests (Athenæus, iv, 3).” (G. Dennis, “Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria,” 1883, vol. i, p. 321.)

In the second century the physician Aretæus, writing at Rome, remarks: “In many cases, owing to involuntary restraint from modesty at assemblies, and at banquets, the bladder becomes distended, and from the consequent loss of its contractile power it no longer evacuates the urine.” (“On the Causes and Symptoms of Acute Diseases,” Book II, Chapter X.)

Apuleius, writing in the second century, says: “Most women, in order to exhibit their native gracefulness and allurements, divest themselves of all their garments and long to show their naked beauty, being conscious that

they shall please more by the rosy redness of their skin than by the golden splendor of their robes.” (Thomas Taylor’s translation of “Metamorphosis,” p. 28.)

Christianity seems to have profoundly affected habits of thought and feeling by uniting together the merely natural emotion of sexual reserve with, on the one hand, the masculine virtue of modesty—*modestia*—and, on the other, the prescription of sexual abstinence. Tertullian admirably illustrates this confusion, and his treatises “De Pudicitia” and “De Cultu Feminarum” are instructive from the present point of view. In the latter he remarks (Book II, Chapter I): “Salvation—and not of women only, but likewise of men—consists in the exhibition principally of modesty. Since we are all the temple of God, modesty is the sacristan and priestess of that temple, who is to suffer nothing unclean or profane to enter it, for fear that the God who inhabits it should be offended. . . . Most women, either from simple ignorance or from dissimulation, have the hardihood so to walk as if modesty consisted only in the integrity of the flesh and in turning away from fornication, and there were no need for anything else,—in dress and ornament, the studied graces of form,—wearing in their gait the self-same appearance as the women of the nations from whom the sense of *true* modesty is absent.”

The earliest Christian ideal of modesty, not long maintained, is well shown in an epistle which, there is some reason to suppose, was written by Clement of Rome. “And if we see it to be requisite to stand and pray for the sake of the woman, and to speak words of exhortation and edification, we call the brethren and all the holy sisters and maidens, likewise all the other women who are there, with all modesty and becoming behavior to come and feast on the truth. And those among us who are skilled in speaking speak to them, and exhort them in these words which God has given us. And then we pray, and salute one another, the men the men. But the women and the maidens will wrap their hands in their garments; we also, with circumspection and with all purity, our eyes looking upward, shall wrap our right hand in our garments; and then they will come and give us the salutation on our right hand wrapped in our garments. Then we go where God permits us.” (“Two Epistles Concerning Virginité”; Second Epistle, Chapter III, vol. xiv. Ante-Nicene Christian Library, p. 384.)

“Women will scarce strip naked before their own husbands, affecting a plausible pretence of modesty,” writes Clement of Alexandria, about the end of the second century, “but any others who wish may see them at home shut up in their own baths, for they are not ashamed to strip before spectators, as if exposing their persons for sale. The baths are opened promiscuously to men and women; and there they strip for licentious indulgence (for, from looking, men get to loving), as if their modesty had been washed away in the bath. Those who have not become utterly destitute of modesty shut out strangers, but bathe with their own servants, and strip naked before their slaves, and are rubbed by them, giving to the crouching menial liberty to lust, by permitting fearless handling, for those who are introduced before their naked mistresses while in the bath study to strip themselves in order to show audacity in lust, casting off fear in consequence of the wicked custom. The ancient athletes, ashamed to exhibit a man naked, preserved their modesty by going through the contest in drawers; but these women, divesting themselves of their modesty along with their chemise, wish to appear beautiful, but, contrary to their wish, are simply proved to be wicked.” (Clement of Alexandria, “Pædagogus,” Book III, Chapter V. For elucidations of this passage see Migne’s “Patrologiæ Cursus Completus,” vol. vii. It appears that Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, and Severus endeavored to put a stop to promiscuous bathing. It was forbidden by the early Apostolical Constitutions, but Cyprian found it necessary to upbraid even virgins vowed to chastity for continuing the custom. In Rudeck’s “Geschichte der öffentlichen Sittlichkeit in Deutschland” an interesting chapter, with contemporary illustrations, is devoted to the custom of men and women bathing together naked, a custom preserved in Europe, at least to the end of the last century.)

“Women,” says Clement again, “should not seek to be graceful by avoiding broad drinking vessels that oblige them to stretch their mouths, in order to drink from narrow alabastra that cause them indecently to throw back the head, revealing to men their necks and breasts. The mere thought of what she is ought to inspire a woman with modesty. . . . On no account must a woman be permitted to show to a man any portion of her body naked, for fear lest both fall: the one by gazing eagerly, the other by delighting to attract those eager glances.” (“Pædagogus,” Book II, Chapter V.)

In the Gnostic “Judas Thomas’s Acts” we are told how a bride, a king’s daughter, and her bridegroom were converted by an apparition of the Lord in the bridal chamber, and passed the night in continence. “And in the

morning when it was dawn the king had the table furnished early and brought in before the bridegroom and bride. And he found them sitting the one opposite the other, and the face of the bride was uncovered, she was sitting, and the bridegroom was very cheerful. The mother of the bride saith to her: 'Why art thou sitting thus, and art not ashamed, but art as if, lo, thou wert married a long time, and for many a day?' And her father, too, said: 'Is it thy great love for thy husband that prevents thee from even veiling thyself?' And the bride answered and said: 'Truly, my father, I am in great love, and am praying to my Lord that I may continue in this love which I have experienced this night. I am not veiled, because the veil of corruption is taken from me, and I am not ashamed, because the deed of shame has been removed far from me.'" (Wright, "Apocryphal Acts," from the Syriac.)

James, Bishop of Nisibis, in the fourth century, was a man of great holiness. We are told by Theodoret that once, when James had newly come into Persia, it was vouchsafed to him to perform a miracle under the following circumstances: He chanced to pass by a fountain where young women were washing their linen, and, his modesty being profoundly shocked by the exposure involved in this occupation, he cursed the fountain, which instantly dried up, and he changed the hair of the girls from black to a sandy color. (Jortin, "Remarks on Ecclesiastical History," vol. iii, p. 4.)

Procopius, writing in the sixth century after Christ, and narrating how the Empress Theodora in early life would often appear almost naked before the public in the theatre, adds that she would willingly have appeared altogether nude, but that "no woman is allowed to expose herself altogether unless she wears at least short drawers over the lower part of the abdomen." It is said that this is the first reference to this theatrical garment, which thus replaced complete nudity by "an innovation of Byzantine decadence." I may add, however, that there were certainly earlier attempts to abolish the public exhibition of feminine nakedness. Male athletes were entirely naked, but Chrysostom mentions, at the end of the fourth century, that Arcadius attempted to put down the August festival [Majuma], during which women appeared naked in the theatres or swimming in large baths.

"In the years 1450-70 the use of the cod-piece was introduced, whereby the attributes of manhood were accentuated in the most shameless manner. It was, in fact, the avowed aim at that period to attract attention to these parts. The cod-piece was sometimes colored differently from the rest of the garments, often stuffed out to enlarge it artificially, and decorated with ribbons." (Rudeck, "Geschichte der öffentlichen Sittlichkeit in Deutschland," pp. 45-48. Groos refers to the significance of this fashion, "Spiele der Menschen," p. 337.)

"The shirt first began to be worn [in Germany] in the sixteenth century. From this fact, as well as from the custom of public bathing, we reach the remarkable result that for the German people the sight of complete nakedness was the daily rule up to the sixteenth century. Everyone undressed completely before going to bed, and in the vapor-baths no covering was used. Again, the dances, both of the peasants and the townspeople, were characterized by very high leaps into the air. It was the chief delight of the dancers for the male to raise his partner as high as possible in the air so that her dress flew up. That feminine modesty was in this respect very indifferent we know from countless references made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It must not be forgotten that throughout the middle ages women wore no underclothes, and even in the seventeenth century the wearing of drawers by Italian women was regarded as singular. That with the disappearance of the baths and the use of body-linen a powerful influence was exerted on the creation of modesty there can be little doubt." (Rudeck, "Geschichte der öffentlichen Sittlichkeit in Deutschland," pp. 57, 399, etc.)

"It was at the epoch when Calvinism began to flourish that the nude was first proscribed from custom, and took refuge in art, which alone preserved the tradition of it. Formerly, as still in the days of Charles V, there was no public festival without a scheme of beautiful naked girls [it should be added that these were usually prostitutes]; nakedness was so little feared that adulterous women were led naked through the streets, and there can be no doubt that in the Mysteries such parts as those of Adam and Eve were played by persons who were without the hideous luxury of tights." (Remy de Gourmont, "Le Livre des Masques," p. 184.)

"At Cork," says Fynes Moryson, in 1617, "I have seen with these eyes young maids stark naked grinding corn with certain stones to make cakes thereof." (Moryson, "Itinerary," Part 3, Book III, Chapter V.)

"In the more remote parts of Ireland," Moryson elsewhere says, where the English laws and manners are unknown, "the very chief of the Irish, men as well as women, go naked in very winter-time, only having their privy parts covered with a rag of linen and their bodies with a loose mantle. This I speak of my own experience." He

goes on to tell of a Bohemian baron, just come from the North of Ireland, who “told me in great earnestness that he, coming to the house of Ocane, a great lord among them, was met at the door with sixteen women, all naked excepting their loose mantles; whereof eight or ten were very fair, and two seemed very nymphs, with which strange sight, his eyes being dazzled, they led him into the house, and then sitting down by the fire with crossed legs like tailors, and so low as could not but offend chaste eyes, desired him to set down with them. Soon after Ocane, the lord of the country, came in, all naked excepting a loose mantle, and shoes, which he put off as soon as he came in, and entertaining the baron after his best manner in the Latin tongue, desired him to put off his apparel, which he thought to be a burthen to him, and to sit naked by the fire with this naked company. But the baron . . . for shame durst not put off his apparel.” (Part 3, Book IV, Chapter II.)

Coryat, when traveling in Italy in the early part of the seventeenth century, found that in Lombardy many of the women and children wore only smocks, or shirts, in the hot weather. At Venice and Padua he found that wives, widows, and maids walk with naked breasts, many with backs also naked, almost to the middle. (Coryat, “Crudities,” 1611. The fashion of *décolleté* garments, it may be remarked, only begun in the fourteenth century; previously, the women of Europe generally covered themselves up to the neck.)

In northern Italy, some years ago, a fire occurred at night in a house in which two girls were sleeping, naked, according to the custom. One threw herself out and was saved, the other returned for a garment, and was burnt to death. The narrator of the incident [a man] expressed strong approval of the more modest girl’s action. (Private communication.)

Lady Mary Wortley Montague writes in 1717 of the Turkish ladies at the baths at Sophia: “The first sofas were covered with cushions and rich carpets, on which sat the ladies, and on the second, their slaves behind them, but without any distinction of rank in their dress, all being in a state of Nature; that is, in plain English, stark naked, without any beauty or defect concealed. Yet there was not the least wanton smile or immodest gesture among them. They walked and moved with the same majestic grace which Milton describes of our general mother. I am here convinced of the truth of a reflection I had often made, that if it was the fashion to go naked the face would be hardly observed.” (“Letters and Works,” 1866, vol. i, p. 285.)

Edwards, describing a stay among Brazilians in the Para province, says: “The Senhora Henriquez made a little picnic party for our entertainment, which passed off delightfully, and much as such a party would have done at home. But there was one feature that distinguished it from any pleasure-party I ever participated in amid civilization and refinement, and that was the bathing at the *finale*. In this there was little fastidiousness, although perfect decorum. While the gentlemen were in the water, the ladies upon the bank were applauding, criticising, and comparing styles, for there were almost as many nations of us as individuals; and when, in their turns, they darted through the water, or dived, like streaks of light, to the very bottom, they were in nowise distressed that we scrupled not at the same privilege. They were all practiced and graceful swimmers, but the senhora particularly,—as she rose with her long hair, long enough to sweep the ground when walking, enshrouding her in its silken folds,—might have been taken for the living, new-world Venus. We never saw, as some have asserted is the case, both sexes promiscuously in the water. (W. H. Edwards, “A Voyage up the River Amazon,” Chapter XV, 1846.)

Taine points out that it was in France during the eighteenth century that the idea developed that modesty, like dress, is a convention. He refers to Mme. d’Epinay’s “Memoirs” and the conversation between Duclos and Saint-Lambert at Mlle. Quinault’s; also to Rousseau’s “Confessions,” Part 1, Book V, and the principles taught by M. de Tavel to Mme. de Warens [the latter reference is, however, scarcely to the point, since de Tavel’s principles seem to have been merely professed in order to seduce Mme. de Warens]. (Taine, “Les Origines,” tome i, “L’Ancien Régime.” I may also refer to Diderot’s “Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville.”)

Mary Wollstonecraft quotes the following remarks: “The lady who asked the question whether women may be instructed in the modern system of botany was accused of ridiculous prudery; nevertheless, if she had proposed the question to me, I should certainly have answered: ‘They cannot!’” She further quotes from an educational book: “It would be needless to caution you against putting your hand, by chance, under your neck-handkerchief; for a modest woman never did so.” (Mary Wollstonecraft, “The Rights of Woman,” 1792, pp. 277, 289.)

In the present century a knowledge of the physiology of plants is not usually considered inconsistent with modesty, but a knowledge of animal physiology is still so considered by many. Dr. H. R. Hopkins, of New York,

wrote in 1895 regarding the teaching of physiology: "How can we teach growing girls the functions of the various parts of the human body and still leave them their modesty? That is the practical question that has puzzled me for years."

In England the use of drawers was almost unknown half a century ago, and was considered immodest and unfeminine. Tilt, a distinguished gynecologist of that period, advocated such garments, made of fine calico and not to descend below the knee, on hygienic grounds. "Thus understood," he added, "the adoption of drawers will doubtless become more general in this country, as, being worn without the knowledge of the general observer, they will be robbed of the prejudice usually attached to an appendage deemed masculine." (Tilt, "Elements of Health," 1852, p. 193.)

Prof. Irving Rosse, of Washington, refers to "New England prudishness," and "the colossal modesty of some New York policemen, who in certain cases want to give written rather than oral testimony." He adds: "I have known this sentiment carried to such an extent in a Massachusetts small town that a shop-keeper was obliged to drape a small, but innocent, statuette displayed in his window." (Irving Rosse, *Virginia Medical Monthly*, October, 1892.) I am told that popular feeling in South Africa would not permit the exhibition of the nude in the Art Collections of Cape Town.

An American physician, Dr. Green, referring to the modesty of women who refuse to submit to rectal examination, remarks: "This feeling does not prevail exclusively among women, but men also sometimes declare themselves averse to any such procedure. On one occasion a prominent Western physician, who had suffered several years from a painful rectal trouble, continued to endure the disease because of the great repugnance he always had felt even for an ordinary examination. Patients in dispensary practice often run the gauntlet of rigid examination in almost every department, and yet harbor distressing and even dangerous diseases rather than submit to rectal examination." (*Medical Standard*, 1896.)

Recently (1898) it was stated that the Philadelphia *Ladies' Home Journal* had decided to avoid, in future, all reference to ladies' under-linen because "the treatment of this subject in print calls for *minutiæ* of detail which is extremely and pardonably offensive to refined and sensitive women."

Lombroso and Ferrero mention, as noteworthy, that "strange, vicarious form of modesty observed in many prostitutes who are ashamed to be examined in the sexual organs when not clean, or during the monthly periods, displaying sometimes in this respect a resistance greater than that offered by the modesty of respectable women." (Lombroso e Ferrero, "La Donna Delinquente," p. 540.)

With reference to the advice given by an authority on midwifery regarding the washing of the external genitals before childbirth, a doctor writes to a medical journal: "No doubt this is necessary, and might be done with an educated person; but as we descend the social scale, it is astonishing to find the great amount of mock modesty, and I am afraid few women would allow themselves to be exposed as Dr. Jardine advocates. I remember one case in which the woman was so hypersensitive that it was with the greatest difficulty that I was even allowed to make a digital examination under the clothes. [It is, however, unreasonable in this connection to speak of *mock* modesty.] (*British Medical Journal*, September 24, 1898.)

"A man, married twenty years, told me that he had never seen his wife entirely nude. Such concealment of the external reproductive organs by married people appears to be common. Judging from my own inquiry, very few women care to look upon male nakedness, and many women, though not wanting in esthetic feeling, find no beauty in man's form. Some are positively repelled by the sight of nakedness, even that of a husband or lover. On the contrary, most men delight in gazing upon the uncovered figure of women. It seems that only highly-cultivated and imaginative women enjoy the spectacle of a finely-shaped nude man (especially after attending art-classes and drawing from the nude, as I am told by a lady artist). Or else the majority of women dissemble their curiosity or admiration. A woman of seventy, mother of several children, said to a young wife with whom I am acquainted: 'I have never seen a naked man in my life.' This old lady's sister confessed that she had never looked at *her own* nakedness in the whole course of her life. She said that it 'frightened' her. She was the mother of three sons. A maiden woman of the same family told her niece that women were 'disgusting because they have monthly discharges' The niece suggested that women have no choice in the matter, to which the aunt replied: 'I know that; but it doesn't make them less disgusting.' I have heard of a girl who died from hemorrhage of the womb, refusing,

through shame, to make the ailment known to her family. The misery suffered by some women at the anticipation of a medical examination appears to be very acute. Husbands have told me of brides who sob and tremble with fright on the wedding-night, the hysteria being sometimes alarming. E., aged 25, refused her husband for six weeks after marriage, exhibiting the greatest fear of his approach. Ignorance of the nature of the sexual connection is often the cause of exaggerated alarm. In Jersey I used to hear of a bride who ran to the window and screamed 'murder' on the wedding-night." (Private communication.)

At the present day it is not regarded as incompatible with modesty to exhibit the lower part of the thigh when in swimming costume, but it is immodest to exhibit the upper part of the thigh. In swimming competitions a minimum of clothing must be combined with the demands of modesty. The regulations of the Swimming Clubs affiliated to the Amateur Swimming Association require that the male swimmer's costume shall extend not less than eight inches from the bifurcation downward, and that the female swimmer's costume shall extend to within not more than three inches from the knee. (A prolonged discussion, we are told, arose as to whether the costume should come to one, two, or three inches from the knee, and the proposal of the youngest lady swimmer present, that the costume ought to be very scanty, met with little approval.) The modesty of women is thus seen to be greater than that of men by, roughly speaking, about two inches. The same difference may be seen in the sleeves: the male sleeve must extend for two inches, the female sleeve four inches, down the arm. (Daily papers, September 26, 1898.)

"At —, bathing in a state of Nature was *de rigueur* for the *élite* of the bathers, while our Sunday visitors from the slums frequently made a great point of wearing bathing costumes; it was frequently noticed that those who were most anxious to avoid exposing their persons were distinguished by the foulness of their language. My impression was that their foul-mindedness deprived them of the consciousness of safety from coarse jests. If I were bathing alone among blackguards I should probably feel uncomfortable myself if without costume." (Private communication.)

"A woman mentioned to me that a man came to her and told her in confidence his distress of mind: he feared he had *corrupted* his wife because she got into a bath in his presence with her baby, and enjoyed his looking at her splashing about. He was deeply distressed, thinking he must have done her harm and destroyed her modesty. The woman to whom this was said felt naturally indignant, but also it gave her the feeling as if every man may secretly despise a woman for the very things he teaches her, and only meets her confiding delight with regret or dislike." (Private communication.)

In a study of one hundred and twenty-five American high-school girls Dr. Helen Kennedy refers to the "modesty" which makes it impossible even for mothers and daughters to speak to each other concerning the menstrual functions. "Thirty-six girls in this high-school passed into womanhood with no knowledge whatever, from a proper source, of all that makes them women. Thirty-nine were probably not much wiser, for they stated that they had received some instruction, but had not talked freely on the matter. From the fact that the curious girl did not talk freely on what naturally interested her, it is possible she was put off with a few words as to personal care, and a reprimand for her curiosity. Less than half of the girls felt free to talk with their mothers of this most important matter!" (Helen Kennedy, "Effects of High-school Work upon Girls during Adolescence," *Pedagogical Seminary*, June, 1896.)

Much the same was true of England some years earlier, if not now. Thus, Tilt, writing in 1852 ("Elements of Health and Principles of Female Hygiene," p. 183), stated that from a statistical inquiry regarding the onset of menstruation in nearly 1000 women he found that "25 per cent. were totally unprepared for its appearance; that 13 out of the 25 were much frightened, screamed, or went into hysterical fits; and that 6 out of the 13 thought themselves wounded and washed with cold water. Of those frightened . . . the general health was seriously impaired."

The foregoing selection of facts might, of course, be indefinitely enlarged, since I have not generally quoted from any previous collection of facts bearing on the question of modesty. Such collections may be found in Ploss and Max Bartels "Das Weib," a work that is constantly appearing in new and enlarged editions; Herbert Spencer, "Descriptive Sociology" (especially under such headings as "Clothing," "Moral Sentiments," and "Æsthetic Products"); Rudeck, "Geschichte der öffentlichen Sittlichkeit" *passim*; Alwin Schultz, "Das hofische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger," B. 1; A. Franklin, "Vie Privée d'Autrefois," especially volume on "Hygiène," appendixes;

Mantegazza, "Amori degli Uomini," Chapter II; Westermarck, "Marriage," Chapter IX; Peschel, "Races of Man," pp. 171 *et seq.*; Letourneau, "L'Evolution de la Morale," p. 126 *et seq.*; G. Mortimer, "Chapters on Human Love," Chapter IV; and in the general anthropological works of Waitz-Gerland, Ratzel, and others.

That modesty—like all the closely-allied emotions—is based on fear, one of the most primitive of the emotions, seems to be fairly evident.¹ The association of modesty and fear is even a very ancient observation, and is found in the fragments of Epicharmus. Modesty is, indeed, an agglomeration of fears, especially, as I hope to show, of two important and distinct fears: one of much earlier than human origin, and supplied solely by the female; the other of more distinctly human character, and of social, rather than sexual, origin.

A child left to itself, though very bashful, is wholly devoid of modesty.² Everyone is familiar with the shocking *inconvenances* of children in speech and act, with the charming ways in which they innocently disregard the conventions of modesty their elders thrust upon them, or, even when anxious to carry them out, wholly miss the point at issue: as when a child thinks that to put a little garment round the neck satisfies the demands of modesty. Under civilized conditions the convention of modesty long precedes its real development. It may fairly be said that this takes place at the advent of puberty.³ We may admit, with Perez, one of the very few writers who touch on the evolution of this emotion, that modesty may appear at a very early age if sexual desire appears early.⁴ We should not, however, be justified in asserting that on this account modesty is a purely-sexual phenomenon. The social impulses also develop about puberty, and to that coincidence the compound nature of the emotion of modesty may well be largely due.

The sexual factor is, however, the simplest and most primitive element of modesty, and may, therefore, be mentioned first. Anyone who watches a bitch, not in heat, when approached by a dog with tail wagging gallantly, may see the beginnings of modesty. When the dog's attentions become a little too marked, the bitch squats firmly down on the front legs and hind quarters. She assumes, that is to say, an attitude which is exactly equivalent to that which in the human race is typified by the classical example of womanly modesty in the Medicean Venus, who withdraws the pelvis, at the same time holding one hand to guard the pubes, the other to guard the breasts.⁵ The essential expression in each case is that of an intention to defend the sexual centres against the undesired advances of the male. This is so obvious—though not, I think, generally recognized—that it seems needless to insist upon it. The sexual modesty of the female animal is rooted in the sexual periodicity of the female, and is an involuntary expression of the organic fact that the time for love is not now. Inasmuch as this fact is true of the greater part of the lives of all female animals below man, the expression itself becomes so habitual that it even

¹ Fliess ("Die Beziehungen zwischen Nase und weiblichen Geschlechts-Organen," p. 194) remarks on the fact that in the Bible narrative of Eden, shame and fear are represented as being brought into the world together: Adam feared God because he was naked.

² Bashfulness in children has been dealt with by Professor Baldwin; see especially his "Mental Development in the Child and the Race," Chapter VI, pp. 146 *et seq.*, and "Social Interpretations in Mental Development," Chapter VI.

³ Professor Starbuck ("Psychology of Religion," Chapter XXX) refers to unpublished investigation showing that recognition of the rights of others also exhibits a sudden increment at the age of puberty.

⁴ Perez, "L'Enfant de Trois à Sept Ans," 1886, pp. 267-277. In the same passage Perez has some interesting and suggestive remarks pointing out the natural basis of the love of the obscene.

⁵ It must be remembered that the Medicean Venus is merely a comparatively recent and familiar embodiment of a natural attitude, which is very ancient, and had impressed sculptors at a far earlier period. Reinach, indeed, believes ("La Sculpture en Europe," *L'Anthropologie*, No. 5, 1895) that the hand was first brought to the breast to press out the milk, and expresses the idea of exuberance, and that the attitude of the Venus of Medici as a symbol of modesty came later; he remarks that, as regards both hands, this attitude may be found in a figurine of Cyprus 2000 years before Christ. This is, no doubt, correct, and I may add that Babylonian figurines of Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, represent her as clasping her hands to her breasts or her womb.

intrudes at those moments when it has ceased to be in place. We may see this again illustrated in the bitch, who, when in heat, herself runs after the male, and again turns to flee, perhaps only submitting with much persuasion to his embrace. Thus, modesty becomes something more than a mere refusal of the male; it becomes an invitation to the male, and is mixed up with his ideas of what is sexually desirable in the female. This would alone serve to account for the existence of modesty as a psychical secondary sexual character. In this sense, and in this sense only, we may say, with Colin Scott, that “the feeling of shame is made to be overcome.” The sexual modesty of the female is thus an inevitable by-product of the naturally aggressive attitude of the male in sexual relationships and the naturally defensive attitude of the female, this again being founded on the fact that, while—in man and the species allied to him—the sexual function in the female is periodic, and during most of life a function to be guarded from the opposite sex, in the male it rarely or never needs to be so guarded.¹

It is on this fundamental sexual factor of modesty, existing in a well-marked form even among animals, that coquetry is founded. I am glad to find myself on this point in agreement with Professor Groos, who, in his elaborate study of the play-instinct, has reached the same conclusion. So far from being the mere heartless play by which a woman shows her power over a man, Groos points out that coquetry possesses “high biological and psychological significance,” being rooted in the antagonism between the sexual instinct and inborn modesty. He refers to the roe, who runs away from the stag—but in a circle. (Groos, “Die Spiele der Menschen,” 1899, p. 339; also the same author’s “Die Spiele der Thiere,” pp. 288 *et seq.*)

This fundamental animal factor of modesty, rooted in the natural facts of the sexual life of the higher mammals, and especially man, obviously will not explain all the phenomena of modesty; it fails to account for ornament and clothing, and it scarcely appears to furnish an adequate basis for modesty in the male. For this we must, in large part at least, turn to the other great primary element of modesty, the social factor.

We cannot doubt that one of the most primitive and universal of the social characteristics of man is an aptitude for disgust, founded, as it is, on a yet more primitive and animal aptitude for disgust, which has little or no social significance. In nearly all races, even the most savage, we seem to find distinct traces of this aptitude for disgust in the presence of certain actions of others, an emotion naturally reflected in the individual’s own actions, and hence a guide to conduct. Notwithstanding our gastric community of disgust with lower animals, it is only in man that this disgust seems to become transformed and developed, to possess a distinctly social character, and to serve as a guide to social conduct. The objects of disgust vary infinitely according to the circumstances and habits of particular races, but the reaction of disgust is fundamental throughout.

The best study of the phenomena of disgust known to me is, without doubt, Professor Richet’s.² Richet concludes that it is the *dangerous* and the *useless* which evoke disgust. The digestive and sexual excretions and secretions, being either useless or, in accordance with wide-spread primitive ideas, highly dangerous, the genito-anal region became a concentrated focus of disgust.³ It is for this reason, no doubt,

¹ I do not hereby mean to deny a certain degree of normal periodicity even to the human male; but such periodicity scarcely involves any element of sexual fear or attitude of sexual defence, in man because it is too slight to involve complete latency of the sexual functions, in other species because latency of sexual function in the male is always accompanied by corresponding latency in the female.

² C. Richet, “Les Causes du Dégofit,” *L’Homme et l’Intelligence*, 1884. This eminent physiologist’s elaborate study of disgust was not written as a contribution to the psychology of modesty, but it forms an admirable introduction to the investigation of the social factor of modesty.

³ It is interesting to note that where, as among the Esquimaux, urine, for instance, is preserved as a highly-valuable commodity, the act of urination, even at table, is not regarded as in the slightest degree disgusting or immodest; Bourke (“Scatologic Rites”) mentions that it is frequently the duty of the host’s daughter to attend the needs of guests in this respect

that savage men exhibit modesty, not only toward women, but toward their own sex, and that so many of the lowest savages take great precautions in obtaining seclusion for the fulfillment of natural functions. The statement now so often made that the primary object of clothes is to accentuate rather than to conceal has in it—as I shall point out later—a large element of truth, but it is by no means a complete account of the matter. It seems difficult not to admit that, alongside the impulse to accentuate sexual differences, there is also in both men and women a genuine impulse to concealment among the most primitive peoples, and the invincible repugnance often felt by savages to remove the girdle or apron is scarcely accounted for by the theory that it is a sexual lure.

In this connection it seems to me instructive to consider a special form of modesty very strongly marked among savages in some parts of the world. I refer to the feeling of immodesty in eating. Where this feeling exists, modesty is offended when one eats in public; the modest man retires to eat. Indecency, said Cook, was utterly unknown among the Tahitians; but they would not eat together; even brothers and sisters had their separate baskets of provisions, and generally sat some yards apart, with their backs to each other, when they ate.¹ The Warrua of Central Africa, Cameron found, when offered a drink, put up a cloth before their faces while they swallowed it, and would not allow anyone to see them eat or drink; so that every man or woman must have his own fire and cook for himself.² Karl von den Steinen remarks, in his interesting book on Brazil, that, though the Bakairi of Central Brazil have no feeling of shame about nakedness, they are ashamed to eat in public; they retire to eat, and hung their heads in shame-faced confusion when they saw him innocently eat in public. Hrolf Vaughan Stevens found that, when he gave an Orang-Laut (Malay) woman anything to eat, she not only would not eat if her husband were present, but if any man were present she would go outside before eating or giving her children to eat.³ Thus among these peoples the act of eating in public produces the same feelings as among ourselves the indecent exposure of the body in public.

It is quite easy to understand how this arises. Whenever there is any pressure on the means of subsistence, as among savages at some time or another there nearly always is, it must necessarily arouse a profound emotion of anger and disgust to see another person putting into his stomach what one might just as well have put into one's own. The special secrecy sometimes observed by women is probably due to the fact that women would be less able to resist the emotions that the act of eating would arouse in onlookers. As social feeling develops, a man desires not only to eat in safety, but also to avoid being an object of disgust, and to spare his friends all unpleasant emotions. Hence it becomes a requirement of ordinary decency to eat in private. A man who eats in public becomes—like the man who in our cities exposes his person in public—an object of disgust and contempt.

Long ago, when a hospital student on midwifery duty in London slums, I had occasion to observe that among the women of the poor, and more especially in those who had lost the first bloom of youth, modesty consisted chiefly in the fear of being disgusting. There was almost a pathetic anxiety, in the face of pain and discomfort, not to be disgusting in the doctor's eyes. This anxiety expressed itself in the ordinary symptoms of modesty. But, as soon as the woman realized that I found nothing disgusting in whatever was proper and necessary to be done under the circumstances, it almost invariably happened that every sign of modesty at once disappeared. In the special and elementary conditions of parturition,

during meals.

¹ Crawley (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, May, 1895, p. 439) gives numerous other instances, even in Europe, with, however, special reference to sexual taboo. I may remark that English people of lower class, especially women, are often modest about eating in the presence of people of higher class. This feeling is, no doubt, due, in part, to the consciousness of defective etiquette, but that very consciousness is, in part, a development of the fear of causing disgust, which is a component of modesty.

² *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vol. vi, p. 173.

³ Stevens, "Mittheilungen aus dem Frauenleben der Orang Belendas," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, H. 4, p. 167, 1896.

modesty is reduced to this one fear of causing disgust; so that, when that is negated, the emotion is non-existent, and the subject becomes, without effort, as direct and natural as a little child. A fellow-student on similar duty, who also discovered for himself the same character of modesty—that if he was careful to guard her modesty the woman was careful also, and that if he was not the woman was not—remarked on it to me with sadness; it seemed to him derogatory to womanhood that what he had been accustomed to consider its supreme grace should be so superficial that he could at will set limits to it.¹ I thought then, as I think still, that that was rather a perversion of the matter, and that nothing becomes degrading because we happen to have learned something about its operations. But I am more convinced than ever that the fear of causing disgust—a fear quite distinct from that of losing a sexual lure or breaking a rule of social etiquette—plays a very large part in the modesty of the more modest sex, and in modesty generally. Our Venuses, as Lucretius long since remarked and Montaigne after him, are careful to conceal from their lovers the *vitæ postscenia*, and that fantastic fate which placed so near together the supreme foci of physical attraction and physical repugnance has immensely contributed to build up all the subtlest coquetries of courtship. Whatever stimulates self-confidence and lulls the fear of evoking disgust—whether it is the presence of a beloved person in whose good opinion complete confidence is felt, or whether it is merely the grosser narcotizing influence of a slight degree of intoxication—always automatically lulls the emotion of modesty.² Together with the animal factor of sexual refusal, this social fear of evoking disgust seems to me the most fundamental element in modesty.

It is, of course, impossible to argue that the fact of the sacro-pubic region of the body being the chief focus of concealment proves the importance of this factor of modesty. But it may fairly be argued that it owes this position not merely to being the sexual centre, but also as being the excretory centre. Even among many lower mammals, as well as among birds and insects, there is a well-marked horror of dirt, somewhat disguised by the varying ways in which an animal may be said to define “dirt.” Many animals spend more time and energy in the duties of cleanliness than human beings, and they often show well-marked anxiety to remove their own excrement, or to keep away from it.³ Thus this element of modesty also may be said to have an animal basis.

It is on this animal basis that the human and social fear of arousing disgust has developed. Its probably wide extension is indicated not only by the strong feeling attached to the constant presence of clothing

¹ We neither of us knew that we had merely made afresh a very ancient discovery. Casanova, a century ago, quoted the remark of a friend of his, that the easiest way to overcome the modesty of a woman is to suppose it non-existent; and he adds a saying, which he attributes to Clement of Alexandria, that modesty, which seems so much more deeply rooted in women, only resides in the linen that covers them, and vanishes when it vanishes. The passage to which Casanova referred occurs in the “Pædagogus,” and has already been quoted. The same observation seems to have appealed strongly to the Fathers, always glad to make a point against women, and I have met with it in Cyprian’s “De Habitu Feminarum.” It also occurs in Jerome’s treatise against Jovinian. Jerome, with more scholarly instinct, rightly presents the remark as a quotation: “*Scribit Herodotus quod mulier cum veste deponat et verecundiam.*” In Herodotus the saying is attributed to Gyges (Book I, Chapter VIII). We may thus trace very far back into antiquity an observation which in English has received its classical expression from Chaucer, who in his “Wife of Bath’s Prologue” has:—

“He sayde, a woman cast hir shame away,
When she cast of hir smok.”

I need not point out that the analysis of modesty offered above robs this venerable saying of any sting it may have possessed as a slur upon women. In such a case modesty is largely a doubt as to the spectator’s attitude, and necessarily disappears when that doubt is satisfactorily resolved. As we have seen, the Central Australian maidens were very modest with regard to the removal of their single garment, but when that removal was accomplished and accepted they were fearless.

² The same result occurs more markedly under the deadening influence of insanity. Grimaldi (“*Il Manicomio Moderno*,” 1888) found that modesty is lacking in 50 per cent. of the insane.

³ For some facts bearing on this point, see Houssay, “Industries of Animals.” Chapter VII. “The Defence and Sanitation of Dwellings”; also P. Ballion, “*De l’Instinct de Propreté chez les Animaux.*”

on this part of the body—such constant presence being quite uncalled for if the garment or ornament is merely a sort of sexual war-paint—but by the repugnance felt by many savages very low down in the scale to the public satisfaction of natural needs, and to their more than civilized cleanliness in this connection;¹ it is further of interest to note that in some parts of the world the covering is not in front, but behind; though of this fact there are probably other explanations. Among civilized people, also, it may be added, the final and invincible seat of modesty is not always around the pubes, but the anus; that is to say, that in such cases the fear of arousing disgust is the ultimate and most fundamental element of modesty.²

Another factor of modesty, which reaches a high development even in savagery, is the ritual element, especially the idea of ceremonial uncleanness. It may be, to some extent, rooted in the elements already referred to, and it leads us into a much wider field than that of modesty; so that it is only necessary to mention it here. Ritual tends to crystallize around any act of life on which men expend deliberate attention, and the duties of modesty among savages are a sufficiently serious part of life to constitute a nucleus for ritual. No doubt, offences against ritual may be regarded as more serious than offences against modesty; but they are so obviously allied in early culture that the one reinforces the other, and they cannot be easily disentangled. All savage and barbarous peoples who have attained any high degree of ceremonialism have included the functions of sex and of excretion more or less stringently within the bounds of that ceremonialism. It is only necessary to refer to the Jewish ritual books of the Old Testament, to Hesoid, and to the customs prevalent among Mohammedan peoples.

At an early stage of culture, again, menstruation is regarded as a process of purification, a dangerous expulsion of vitiated humors. Hence the term *katharsis* applied to it by the Greeks. Hence also the mediæval view of women: "*Mulier speciosa templum ædificatum super cloacam,*" said Boethius. The sacro-pubic region in women, because it includes the source of menstruation, thus becomes a specially heightened seat of taboo.³ According to the Mosaic law (Leviticus, Chapter XX, v. 18), if a man uncovered a menstruating woman, both were to be cut off.

It is probable that the Mohammedan custom of veiling the face really has its source solely in another aspect of this ritual factor of modesty. It must be remembered that this custom is not Mohammedan in its origin, since it existed long previously among the Arabians, and is described by Tertullian.⁴ In early Arabia very handsome men also veiled their faces, in order to preserve themselves from the evil eye, and it has been conjectured with much probability that the origin of the custom of women veiling their faces may be traced to this ritual precaution.⁵

So far it has only been necessary to refer incidentally to the connection of modesty with clothing. I have sought to emphasize the unquestionable, but often forgotten, fact that modesty is in its origins independent of clothing, that physiological modesty takes precedence of anatomical modesty, and that

¹ Thus, Stevens mentions (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, p. 182, 1897) that the Dyaks of Malacca always wash the sexual organs even after urination, and are careful to use the left hand in doing so. The left hand is reserved for such uses among the Jekris of the Niger coast also. (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, p. 122, 1898).

² Lombroso and Ferrero—who adopt the derivation of *pudor* from *putere*; i.e., from the repugnance caused by the decomposition of the vaginal secretions—consider that the fear of causing disgust to men is the sole origin of modesty among savage women, as also it remains the sole form of modesty among prostitutes to-day. ("*La Donna Delinquente*," p. 540.) Important as this factor is in the constitution of the emotion of modesty, I need scarcely add that I regard this exclusive theory as altogether untenable.

³ Durkheim ("*La Prohibition de l'Inceste*," *L'Année Sociologique*, p. 50, 1898), arguing that whatever sense of repugnance women may inspire must necessarily reach the highest point around the womb, which is hence subjected to the most stringent taboo, incidentally suggests that here is an origin of modesty. "The sexual organs must be veiled at an early period to prevent the dangerous effluvia which they give off from reaching the environment. The veil is often a method of intercepting magic action. Once constituted, the practice would be maintained and transformed."

⁴ Tertullian, "*De Virginibus Velandis*," cap. 17.

⁵ Wellhausen, "*Reste Arabischen Heidentums*," p. 196.

the primary factors of modesty were certainly developed long before the discovery of either ornament or garments. The rise of clothing probably had its first psychical basis on an emotion of modesty already compositely formed of the elements we have traced.¹ Both the main elementary factors, it must be noted, must naturally tend to develop and unite in a more complex, though—it may well be—much less intense, emotion. The impulse which leads the female animal, as it leads some African women, when found without their girdles, to squat firmly down on the earth, becomes a more refined and extended play of gesture and ornament and garment. A very notable advance, I may remark, is made when this primary attitude of defence against the action of the male becomes a defence against his eyes. We may thus explain the spread of modesty to various parts of the body, even when we exclude the more special influence of the evil eye. The breasts very early become a focus of modesty in women; this may be observed among many naked or nearly naked negro races; the tendency of the nates to become the chief seat of modesty in many parts of Africa may probably be thus explained, since the full development of the gluteal regions is often the greatest attraction an African woman can possess.² The same cause contributes, doubtless, to the face becoming, in some races, the centre of modesty. We see the influence of this defence against strange eyes in the special precautions in gesture or clothing taken by the women in various parts of the world against the more offensive eyes of civilized Europeans.

But in thus becoming directed merely against sight, and not against action, the gestures of modesty are at once free to become merely those of coquetry. When there is no real danger of offensive action, there is no need for more than playful defence, and no serious anxiety should that defence be taken as a disguised invitation. Thus the road is at once fully open toward the most civilized manifestations of the comedy of courtship.

In the same way the social fear of arousing disgust combines easily and perfectly with any new development in the invention of ornament or clothing as sexual lures. Even among the most civilized races it has often been noted that the fashion of feminine garments (as also sometimes the use of scents) has the double object of concealing and attracting. It is so with the little apron of the young savage belle. The heightening of the attraction is, indeed, a logical outcome of the fear of evoking disgust.

The contention of Westermarek, that ornament and clothing are in large part due to the desire to give, not concealment, but prominence, to the sexual organs, and that modesty is a result, rather than a cause, of the use of clothes, may certainly be accepted, so long as we realize that it is not the whole of the truth, and that it is far from offering a complete explanation of the phenomena of modesty.

It does, however, undoubtedly rest on a psychic basis. Among some Australian tribes it is said that the sexual organs are only covered during their erotic dances; and it is further said that in some parts of the world only prostitutes are clothed. "The scanty covering," as Westermarck observes, "was found to act as the most powerful obtainable sexual stimulus. Hence the popularity of such garments in the savage world." It is undoubtedly true that this statement may be made not merely of the savage, but of the most civilized world. Dr. R. W. Felkin remarks, concerning Central Africa, that he nowhere met with more indecency than in Uganda, where the penalty of death is inflicted on an adult found naked in the street. (*Edinburgh Medical Journal*, April, 1884.) Nakedness is

¹ It is possible, as some ethnographers have observed (e.g., Letourneau, "l'Evolution de la Morale," p. 146), that intercrural cords and other primitive garments have a physical ground, inasmuch as they protect the most sensitive and unprotected part of the body, especially in women. We may note in this connection the significant remarks of K. von den Steinen, who argues that among Brazilian tribes the object of the *uluri*, etc., is to obtain a maximum of protection for the mucous membrane with a minimum of concealment. Among the Esquimaux, as Nansen noted, the corresponding intercrural cord is so thin as to be often practically invisible; this may be noted, I may add, in the excellent photographs of Esquimaux women given by Holm.

² In Moruland Emin Bey remarked that women are mostly naked, but some wear a girdle with a few leaves hanging behind. The women of some negro tribes, who thus cover themselves behind, if deprived of this sole covering, immediately throw themselves on the ground on their backs, in order to hide their nakedness.

always chaster in its effects than partial clothing. A study of pictures or statuary will alone serve to demonstrate this. As a well-known artist, Du Maurier, has remarked (in "Trilby"), it is "a fact well known to all painters and sculptors who have used the nude model (except a few shady pretenders, whose purity, not being of the right sort, has gone rank from too much watching) that nothing is so chaste as nudity. Venus herself, as she drops her garments and steps on to the model-throne, leaves behind her on the floor every weapon in her armory by which she can pierce to the grosser passions of men." Burton, in the "Anatomy of Melancholy" (Part III, Sect. II, Subsect. 3), deals at length with the "Allurements of Love," and concludes that "the greatest provocations of lust are from our apparel." A friend points out to me that an admirable poetic rendering of this element in the philosophy of clothing has been given by Herrick, in "The Lily in a Crystal." The artist's model is less exposed to liberties from men when nude than when she is partially clothed. This impulse, in the presence of attempts at apparent concealment, is founded on the fundamental attitude of the sexes toward each other. In this connection, also, it is worth noting that Stanley Hall, in a report based on returns from nearly a thousand persons, mostly teachers ("The Early Sense of Self," *American Journal of Psychology*, p. 366, 1898), finds that of the three functions of clothes—protection, ornament, and Lotzean "self-feeling"—the second is by far the most conspicuous in childhood. The attitude of children is testimony to the primitive attitude toward clothing.

The great artistic elaboration often displayed by articles of ornament or clothing, even when very small, and the fact—as shown by Karl von den Steinen regarding the Brazilian *uluri*—that they may serve as common motives in general decoration, sufficiently prove that such objects attract rather than avoid attention. And while there is an invincible repugnance among some peoples to remove these articles, such repugnance being often strongest when the adornment is most minute, others have no such repugnance or are quite indifferent whether or not their aprons are accurately adjusted. The mere presence or possession of the article gives the required sense of self-respect, of human dignity, of sexual desirability. Thus it is that to unclothe a person is to humiliate him; this was so even in Homeric times, for we may recall the threat of Ulysses to strip Thyestes.¹ When a civilized European woman is naked in the presence of others, her fundamental feeling seems usually to be, not "I am ashamed because I am naked," but "I am ashamed because I am unadorned." She feels, not that she is revealing her beauty, but that she is revealing herself deprived of her weapons of seduction. On the whole, all the motives already noted combine to concentrate modesty on the garment.

When clothing is once established, another element, this time a social-economic element, often comes in to emphasize its importance and increase the anatomical modesty of women. I mean the growth of the conception of women as property. Waitz, followed by Schurtz and Letourneau, has insisted that the jealousy of husbands is the primary origin of clothing, and, indirectly, of modesty. Diderot in the last century had already given clear expression to the same view. It is undoubtedly true that married women are often alone or chiefly clothed, and that the unmarried women, though full grown, remain naked. In many parts of the world, also, as Mantegazza and others have shown, where the men are naked and the women covered, clothing is regarded as a sort of disgrace, and men can only with difficulty be persuaded to adopt it. Before marriage a woman was often free, and not bound to chastity, and at the same time was often naked; after marriage, she was clothed, and no longer free. To the husband's mind, the garment appears—illogically, though naturally—a moral and physical protection against any attack on his property. Thus a new motive was furnished, this time somewhat artificially, for making nakedness, in women at all events, disgraceful. As the conception of property also extended to the father's right over his daughters, and the appreciation of female chastity developed, this motive spread to unmarried as well as married women. It probably constituted the chief element furnished to the complex emotion of modesty by the barbarous stages of human civilization.²

¹ "Iliad," II, 262. Waitz gives instances ("Anthropology," p. 301) showing that nakedness is sometimes a mark of submission.

² The Celtic races, in their days of developed barbarism, seem to have been peculiarly free from the idea of proprietorship in

This economic factor necessarily involved the introduction of a new moral element into modesty. If a woman's chastity is the property of another person, it is essential that a woman shall be modest in order that men may not be tempted to incur the penalties involved by the infringement of property rights. Thus modesty is strictly inculcated on women in order that men may be safeguarded from temptation. Immodesty being, on this ground, disapproved by men, a new motive for modesty is furnished to women. In the book which the Knight of the Tower, Landry, wrote in the fourteenth century for the instruction of his daughters, this factor of modesty is naïvely revealed. He tells his daughters of the trouble that David got into through the thoughtlessness of Bathsheba, and warns them that "every woman ought religiously to conceal herself when dressing and washing, and neither out of vanity nor yet to attract attention show either her hair, or her neck, or her breast, or any part which ought to be covered." Hinton went so far as to regard what he termed "body modesty" as entirely a custom imposed upon women by men with the object of preserving their own virtue. While this motive is far from being the sole source of modesty, it must certainly be borne in mind as an inevitable outcome of the economic factor of modesty.

The chief new feature—it is scarcely a new element—added to modesty when an advanced civilization slowly emerges from barbarism is the elaboration of its social ritual. Civilization expands the range of modesty, and renders it, at the same time, more changeable. The French seventeenth century and the English eighteenth represent early stages of modern European civilization, and they both devoted special attention to the elaboration of the minute details of modesty. The frequenters of the Hotel Rambouillet, the *précieuses* satirized by Molière, were not only engaged in refining the language; they were refining feelings and ideas and enlarging the boundaries of modesty. In England such famous and popular authors as Swift and Sterne bear witness to a new ardor of modesty in the sudden reticences, the dashes, and the asterisks which are found throughout their works. The altogether new quality of literary prudence, of which Sterne is still the classical example, could only have arisen on the basis of the new modesty which was then overspreading society and literature. Idle people, mostly, no doubt, the women in *salons* and drawing-rooms, people more familiar with books than with the realities of life, now laid down the rules of modesty, and were ever enlarging it, ever inventing new subtleties of gesture and speech, which it would be immodest to neglect, and which are ever being rendered vulgar by use and ever changing.

It was at this time, probably, that the custom of inventing an arbitrary private vocabulary of words and phrases for the purpose of disguising references to functions and parts of the body regarded as immodest and indecent first began to become common. (Vocabularies of this kind are, however, found even among savages. Thus Zache [*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, p. 213, 1899], states that the Swahili women of Africa have a private metaphorical language referring to sexual matters.) Such private slang, growing up independently in families, and especially among women, as well as between lovers, is now almost universal. It is not confined to any European country, and has been studied in Italy by Niceforo ("Il Gergo," 1897, cap. 1 and 2), who regards it as a weapon of social defence against an inquisitive or hostile environment, since it enables things to be said with a meaning which is unintelligible to all but the initiated person. While it is quite true that the custom is supported by the consciousness of its practical advantages, it has its primary source in an almost instinctive desire to avoid what is felt to be the vulgar immodesty of direct speech. This is sufficiently shown by the fact that such slang is chiefly concerned with the sacro-pubic sphere. It is one of the chief contributions to the phenomena of modesty furnished by

women. Their women were highly honored, and, moreover (as represented in the Celtic poems), they usually took the initiative in matters of love. In French lyrical poetry of the twelfth century, largely infused by the Celtic spirit, Dowden remarks that "love was an affair for the woman; it was she alone who made a confession of the heart" (Dowden, "History of French Literature," p. 25). In view of what has been said above as to the predominance of the social-economic factor of modesty during barbarous periods of civilization, it is thus interesting to note that it was probably among the Irish, always distinguished by tenacious adherence to the spirit of racial and national customs, that the habit of nakedness was longest preserved among the upper social classes in Western Europe.

civilization. The claims of modesty having effected the clothing of the body, the impulse of modesty finds a further sphere of activity—half playful, yet wholly imperative—in the clothing of language.

It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that this process is an intensification of modesty. It is, on the contrary, an attenuation of it. The observances of modesty become merely a part of a vast body of rules of social etiquette, though a somewhat stringent part, on account of the vague sense still persisting of a deep-lying natural basis.

Modesty thus comes to have the force of a tradition, a vague, but massive, force, bearing with special power on those who cannot reason. It has become mainly transformed into the allied emotion of decency, which has been described as “modesty fossilized into social customs.” The whole emotion has been devitalized, and yields more readily than in its primitive state to any attack supported by a sufficiently-strong motive. Even fashion in the more civilized countries can easily inhibit anatomical modesty, and rapidly exhibit or accentuate, in turn, almost any part of the body. But the savage Indian woman of America, the barbarous woman of some Mohammedan countries, can scarcely sacrifice her modesty in the pangs of childbirth. Even when, among uncivilized races, the focus of modesty may be said to be eccentric and arbitrary, it still remains very rigid. In such savage and barbarous countries modesty possesses the strength of a genuine and irresistible instinct. In civilized countries anyone who places considerations of modesty before the claims of some real human need excites ridicule and contempt.

It is, however, impossible to contemplate this series of phenomena, so radically persistent, whatever its changes of form, and so constant throughout every stage of civilization, without feeling that, although modesty cannot properly be called an instinct, there must be some physiological basis to support it. Undoubtedly such a basis is formed by that vasomotor mechanism of which the most obvious outward sign is, in human beings, the blush.¹ All the allied emotional forms of fear—shame, bashfulness, timidity—are to some extent upheld by this mechanism, but such is especially the case with the emotion we are now concerned with. The blush is the sanction of modesty.

When the Brazilian offered Karl von den Steinen some food, which he ate immediately in public the Brazilian hung his head. Whether or not he blushed, he was certainly conscious of that capillary turmoil of the face, of which the shock of offended modesty is the cause and blushing the most visible sign.² It is scarcely an accident that, as has been often observed, criminals, or the antisocial element of the community,—whether by the habits of their lives or by congenital abnormality, blush less easily than normal persons.³ The importance of the blush, and the emotional confusion behind it as the sources of modesty is shown by the significant fact that by skillfully lulling emotional confusion it is possible to

¹ The blush is, indeed, only a part, almost perhaps an accidental part, of the organic turmoil with which it is associated. Partridge, who has studied the phenomena of blushing in one hundred and twenty cases (Pedagogical Seminary, April, 1897), finds that the following are the chief general symptoms: Tremors near the waist, weakness in the limbs, pressure, trembling, warmth, weight or beating in the chest, warm wave from feet upward, quivering of heart, stoppage and then rapid beating of heart, coldness all over followed by heat, dizziness, tingling of toes and fingers, numbness, something rising in throat, smarting of eyes, singing of ears, prickling sensations of face, and pressure inside head.

² With regard to the phenomena of blushing among different races, see Waltz, “Anthropologie der Naturvölker,” B. 1, pp. 149-150. Since this study was written I have read Melinand’s excellent article on the psychological cause of blushing (“Pourquoi Rougit-on?” Revue des Deux Mondes, 1 Octobre, 1893). This author points out that blushing is always associated with fear, and indicates, in the various conditions under which it may arise, modesty, *pudeur*, timidity, confusion,—that we have something to conceal which we fear may be discovered.

³ Kroner (Das körperliche Gefühl, 1887, p. 130) remarks: “The origin of a specific connection between shame and blushing is the work of a *social selection*. It is certainly an immediate advantage for a man not to blush; indirectly, however, it is a disadvantage because in other ways he will be known as shameless, and on that account, as a rule, he will be shut out from propagation. This social selection will be specially exercised on the female sex, and on this account women blush to a greater extent, and more readily, than men.”

inhibit the sense of modesty itself. In other words, it may be said that we are here in the presence of a fear—to a large extent, a sex-fear—impelling to concealment, and this emotion naturally disappears, even though its ostensible cause remains, when it is apparent that there is no cause for fear.¹ Thus, it is, to some extent at least, true that people are modest because they blush or because they feel the possibility of blushing, rather than that they blush because they are modest. In the same way we may explain the curious influence of darkness in restraining the manifestations of modesty, as many lovers have discovered, and as we may notice in our cities after dark; it is true that the immodesty of a city like London at night is largely explained by the prevalence of prostitution at this time; prostitutes, being habitually nearer to the threshold of immodesty, are more markedly affected by an influence to which most women, at all events, are to some extent susceptible.² It is curious to note that short-sightedness, as well as blindness, naturally, though illogically, tends to exert the same influence as darkness in this respect; I am assured by short-sighted persons of both sexes that they are much more liable to the emotions of shyness and modesty with their glasses than without them; such persons with difficulty realize that they are not so dim to others as others are to them. To be in the company of a blind person seems also to be a protection against shyness.³ It is, of course, not as the mere cloak of a possible blush that darkness gives courage; it is because it makes impossible a too-detailed self-realization, such conscious self-realization being always a source of fears, and the blush their definite symbol and visible climax. This mechanism of blushing thus runs parallel, on the physiological side, with that fear of evoking disgust to which I have already referred. It is to the blush, also, that we must attribute a curious complementary relationship between the face and the sacro-pubic region as centres of anatomical modesty. The women of some African tribes who go naked, Emin Bey remarked, cover the face with the hand under the influence of modesty. Martial long since remarked (Lib. iii, LXVIII) that when an innocent girl looks at the penis she gazes through her fingers. Where, as among many Mohammedan peoples, the face is the chief focus of modesty, the exposure of the rest of the body, including sometimes even the sacro-pubic region, and certainly the legs and thighs, becomes a matter of indifference.⁴ When, also, as among ourselves in gynecological practice, examination of the sexual organs is required, women frequently find evident satisfaction in concealing the face with the hands, although not the slightest attention is being directed to that part of the body.⁵ All such facts—to which might be added a reference to the marked modesty

¹ The same result is attained when the consciousness of nakedness is accompanied by a consciousness of perfect propriety, as well in the naked person as in the by-stander. A pupil of Ingres tells that a female model was once quietly posing, completely nude, at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Suddenly she screamed, and ran to cover herself with her garments. She had seen the head of a workman on the roof gazing inquisitively at her through a sky-light. The modesty of men is also very sensitive to any such inquisitiveness on the part of the opposite sex. To this cause, perhaps, or possibly also to the fear of causing disgust, may be ascribed the objection of men to undress before women artists and women doctors. I am told there is often difficulty in getting men to pose nude to women artists. Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson was recently compelled to exclude lady members of the medical profession from the instructive demonstration at his museum “on account of the unwillingness of male patients to undress before them.” A similar unwillingness is not found among women patients, but it must be remembered that, while women are accustomed to regard men as doctors, men (in England) are not yet accustomed to regard women as doctors.

² The influence of darkness in inhibiting modesty is a very ancient observation. Burton in the “Anatomy of Melancholy” quotes Dandinus—“*Nox facit impudentes;*”—connecting this influence with blushing.

³ “I am acquainted with the case of a shy man,” writes Dr. Harry Campbell in his interesting study of “Morbid Shyness” (British Medical Journal, September 26, 1896), “who will make himself quite at home in the house of a blind person, and help himself to wine with the utmost confidence, whereas if a member of the family, who can see, comes into the room, all his old shyness returns, and he wishes himself far away.”

⁴ When Casanova was at Constantinople, the Comte de Bonneval, a convert to Islam, assured him that he was mistaken in trying to see a woman’s face when he might more easily obtain greater favors from her. “The most reserved of Turkish women,” the Comte assured him, “only carries her modesty in her face, and as soon as her veil is on she is sure that she will never blush at anything.” (“Mémoires,” vol. i, p. 429.)

often shown in some respects by prostitutes—serve to show that, though the forms of modesty may change, it is yet a very radical constituent of human nature in all stages of civilization, and that it is, to a large extent, maintained by the mechanism of blushing.

It may still be asked, finally, whether, on the whole, modesty really becomes a more prominent emotion as civilization advances. I do not think this position can be maintained. It is a great mistake, as we have seen, to suppose that in becoming extended modesty also becomes intensified. On the contrary, this very extension is a sign of weakness. Among savages modesty is far more radical and invincible than among the civilized. Of the Araucanian women of Chile, Treutler has remarked that they are distinctly more modest than the Christian white population, and such observations might be indefinitely extended. It is, as we have already noted, in a new and crude civilization, anxious to mark its separation from a barbarism it has yet scarcely escaped, that we find an extravagant and fantastic anxiety to extend the limits of modesty in life and art and literature. In older and more mature civilizations—in classical antiquity, in old Japan, in France—modesty, while still a very real influence, becomes a much less predominant and all-pervading influence. In life it becomes subservient to human use, in art to beauty, in literature to expression. Among ourselves we may note that modesty is a much more invincible motive among the lower social classes than among the more cultivated classes. This is so even when we should expect the influence of occupation to induce familiarity. Thus I have been told of a ballet-girl who thinks it immodest to bathe in the fashion customary at the sea-side, and cannot make up her mind to do so, but she appears on the stage every night in tights as a matter of course. Modesty is a part of self-respect, but in the fully-developed human being self-respect itself holds in check any excessive modesty. We must remember, moreover, that there are more definite grounds for the subordination of modesty with the development of civilization. We have seen that the factors of modesty are many, and that most of them are based on emotions which make little urgent appeal save to races in a savage or barbarous condition. Thus, disgust, as Richet has truly pointed out, necessarily decreases as knowledge increases.¹ As we analyze and understand our experiences better, so they cause us less disgust. A rotten egg is disgusting, but the chemist feels no disgust toward sulphuretted hydrogen; while a solution of propylamin does not produce the disgusting impression of that human physical uncleanliness of which it is the odorous constituent. As disgust becomes analyzed, and as self-respect tends to increased physical purity, so the factor of disgust in modesty is minimized. The factor of ceremonial uncleanliness, again, which plays so urgent a part in modesty at certain stages of culture, is to-day without influence except in so far as it survives in etiquette. In the same way the social-economic factor of modesty belongs to a stage of human development which is wholly alien to an advanced civilization. Even the most fundamental impulse of all, the gesture of sexual refusal, is normally only imperative among animals and savages. Thus civilization tends to subordinate, if not to minimize, modesty, to render it a grace of life rather than a fundamental social law of life. But an essential grace of life it still remains, and whatever delicate variations it may assume we can scarcely conceive of its disappearance.

⁵ It is worth noting that this impulse is rooted in the natural instinctive acts and ideas of childhood. Prof. Stanley Hall, dealing with the "Early Sense of Self," in the report already mentioned, refers to the eyes as perhaps even more than the hands, feet, and mouth, "the centres of that kind of self-consciousness which is always mindful of how the self appears to others," and proceeds to mention "the very common impression of young children that if the eyes are covered or closed they cannot be seen. Some think the entire body thus vanishes from sight of others; some that the head also ceases to be visible; and a still higher form of this curious psychosis is that when they are closed the soul cannot be seen." (*American Journal of Psychology*, vol. ix, No. 3, 1898.) In the adult woman the associated idea has died out, but the satisfaction felt in the act still persists.

¹ "Disgust," he remarks, "is a sort of synthesis which attaches to the total form of objects, and which must diminish and disappear as scientific analysis separates into parts what, as a whole, is so repugnant."