

THE CATHOLIC SUFFRAGIST

Organ of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, 55, Berners Street, London.

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which *you* shall give,
Daughter of the newer Eve?

—Francis Thompson.

THE DOMINATION OF WOMEN.

BY ISABEL WILLIS.

A little time ago I noticed the phrase which forms the title of this article in a letter addressed to a weekly paper. The writer, classing female suffrage with other "fads" which he enumerates, goes on to declare that the great majority of women who have rendered self-sacrificing service to their country during the war are unalterably opposed to the "domination of women," and that it "would be monstrous to reward their patriotism by subjecting them to female control." This assertion in itself is too monstrous to be worth refuting, or indeed a moment's thought; but the expression "domination of women" kept repeating itself in my mind, and it appeared to me possible that it might express crudely and roughly an idea existing vaguely in the minds of many persons far less prejudiced than the newspaper correspondent. If this is the case it may help us to understand—what otherwise it is so very hard to do—why every woman is not a Suffragist. We must, of course, put aside at once the idea of the majority of women war-workers being opponents of the Suffrage for any reason whatever; because as a matter of fact we know quite well that the great majority of the women who are giving self-denying service to the country at the present time are actually members of the various Suffrage Societies. When the war began they laid down, indeed, their own special work, and took up others which seemed more important for the moment; but any action on the part of the Government threatening injury to the Suffrage cause at once brings them into line again. There can be no doubt whatever as to the feeling of the majority of

women war-workers, and any assertion to the contrary is simply ludicrous.

Behind these, however, there is still a large body of what we may call ordinary stay-at-home women, who for the most part are not in the habit of taking very wide views on any subject, and who, consequently, are very likely to be impressed by any such shibboleth as "domination of women," and to feel shocked and fearful as to what it may imply. A Catholic writer has lately been pointing out the urgent necessity there is for converting every woman to a belief in the need for the Suffrage; because, he says, were all the women in the country agreed in insisting upon the claim, no Government could withstand them. Our duty, therefore, clearly is to exert to the utmost our endeavours to bring to our side every woman at present hostile or indifferent; and, as even a very small thing may sometimes be a very real obstacle in the way of progress, so it seems to me that it is quite worth while to try to remove the sort of vague fears that may be caused in some minds by the idea of what may be implied by the expression "domination of women." At first, perhaps, we may be disposed to deny the statement altogether, and say that there can be no question of women's domination, either over men or over other women; because what we have demanded from the beginning has been simply an equal share in the duties and rights of citizenship. This is true, and yet the truth seems to me to go deeper than this at the present time from the fact of the altered conditions, amounting to a great upheaval of Society, caused by the war. There is a sense

in which we may justly use the words "domination of women," and we Catholic Suffragists should use it with the utmost gratitude and joy; accepting it as meaning no less than the bestowal on women by Almighty God of a great honour and a great mark of favour. Can we feel anything short of this when we look back to where we stood less than three years ago? We had been struggling for fifty years and more—not for the right to the vote alone, but for the right to be ourselves—that is, to make the best possible use of the faculties with which we were sent into the world. Almost every profitable occupation was closed to us, and an ordeal of mockery and insult had to be gone through by those who tried to force their way in. One well-paid occupation certainly was open—the stage—being the one where women could be of use to entertain men. All the time, indeed, the amusement and pleasure of men were to be ministered to by women, and we all know too well the frightful results. The struggle for the Suffrage meanwhile had been going on, and at the time when the war broke out had reached such an acute point that one dreaded to think to what the next step might lead. Then came the war, and with it the greatest revolution for women that, perhaps, has ever taken place in our country. To see how we stand to-day—with what was formerly men's exclusive work not only allowed us, but actually thrust upon us, with compliments paid us daily by the Press and by public men, instead of the sneers to which we had become so accustomed as to take them as a part of the usual order of things—it is all a marvel, and we can but accept it thankfully as a direct answer to the call upon God which has gone up from women for so long. Taking then as a gift from Him this juster treatment which is now coming to us from men we need not be afraid if even a certain amount of what may be called "domination" also follows. We should be prepared for it, and have no fear as to its good results, either to those whose part it may be to dominate, or to those who may have to accept the domination. Already we begin to see the new conditions at work and how women are being benefited by them. Let us take as an example the munition factories. Here, where thousands of women are employed, we see

the Government calling in the aid of other women to dominate these workers. What sort of domination is it? It is of such a sort that a male writer uses the word "Mothering," to describe it. "Mothering the Workers" is the title of his article. He speaks of them as "the very able women who act as supervisors of war-work at big munition factories, and whose duties are to regulate the work of women workers and see that their output is maintained. . . . Whilst being sympathetic and encouraging in their attitude towards the women under them, these supervisors are firm enough in their manner to obtain perfect discipline, and are well-liked by the women they control." Besides these supervisors there are others employed called Women Welfare Workers, and of these he says, "Their work is regarded as increasingly important, for they have to do with the food and health conditions of thousands of women workers. Their employment has given such good results that in almost every munition factory of any size they are being introduced."

There does not seem anything here to alarm the most nervous anti-suffragist. The very word which is now becoming the formal title of these institutions within the factories should show women what kind of treatment they can look for at the hands of their fellow-women, for they are named "Welfares." It is interesting to notice in passing how "the whirligig of Time brings its revenges." for men, having, by first setting up factories, deprived women of many kinds of work formerly done in the home, are now obliged to call upon women, not merely to work in, but to take the position of house-mother in these same factories.

This is the description given by another male writer of one particular dominating woman. "It is not perhaps too much to say that from one end of the land to the other she has brought succour to underpaid women and girls in a hundred occupations. Hours have been shortened, wages improved for tens of thousands of sweated women almost entirely through her efforts."

I need not go into the work done by leading women in setting up hostels and canteens for the benefit of girl and women workers, because it is well known, and also because the

(Continued on page 109).

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Suffragists are anxiously awaiting the results of the Speaker's Conference. Meanwhile, another great Canadian province has enfranchised its women, the referendum on the Suffrage has resulted in a big majority for the women of British Columbia. This is the fourth Canadian province to grant the Suffrage within the last few months. Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, are the other enlightened provinces. This victory should spur the Mother Country to show proper confidence in her women. The cry that the Colonies have no voice in international matters will lose all point after the war, for there is little doubt that they will be invited to take their share in the nation's councils. The right can scarcely be denied them.

At the recent conference of the Catholic Truth Society held in Manchester, his Grace the Archbishop of Glasgow is quoted in the *Tablet* as saying that he hoped the votes of women would be included in the new suffrage that was coming. We rejoice that his Grace is found among the supporters of suffrage. There was a splendid sale of the *Catholic Suffragist* outside the various halls where the Catholic Truth Society meetings were held.

In view of the manifesto signed by a number of distinguished ladies demanding compulsory notification of venereal disease, it may be as well to remind our readers that the Imperial Conference of women convened by the British Dominions Suffrage Union, and held in London, last August, passed unanimously the following resolution: "That in the opinion of this Conference compulsory measures of legislation dealing with Venereal Disease aggravate rather than lessen the evil to be dealt with." Women's organisations from all parts of the Empire sent delegates to the Conference, which was supported by many societies of the United Kingdom, and fifteen Suffrage Societies, including the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. The Royal Commission, the National Council for combating Venereal Disease, the British Medical Association, and the Association for

Moral and Social Hygiene are also opposed to compulsory notification. We print in another column a statement issued by the latter Society, which we have received from the Hon. Secretary, Dr. Helen Wilson, and which gives the reasons why compulsory notification is condemned by all experts who have specially studied this question.

Mr. Hughes, the Australian Premier, receiving a deputation of Suffragists in South Africa, is quoted in *Jus Suffragii* as saying: "That the women's vote had been of the greatest influence and benefit to the child life of Australia, and he hoped that the women of South Africa soon would gain the franchise, as nothing but good could follow the enfranchisement of the women of any country." And Judge B. Lindsey, quoted in the *Woman's Journal*, says: "The case for equal suffrage could well afford to rest on the record made by the voting women. In no single state have they failed to bring a better, cleaner and more independent note into politics; and there is not a statute book on which women have written that does not contain more 'humane laws as a result.'"

We call our readers attention to the advertisement of the International Suffrage Shop, which appears in this issue. If friends of suffrage would order all the books they buy at the Suffrage Shop, it would be of great assistance during these difficult times. The Suffrage Shop has rendered the most valuable help to our cause, and we earnestly hope that all our members will give it their loyal support.

We appeal to our members not to forget our stall at the Christmas Sale organised by the United Suffragists. See page 107. The sale will take place on Saturday, December 2nd, at the Central Hall, Westminster, 3-9. Admission, 7d. from 3-6, from 6-9 free. Tickets bought in advance, before December 2nd 6d. only, the United Suffragists paying the war tax. The sale will be opened by Lady Forbes Robertson.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY,

Office: 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON.

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DOWNWARD PATHS.

Before setting out to remedy an evil, it is essential to have sound knowledge of that evil, the extent to which it flourishes, the conditions which give rise to it, what attempts have been made in the past to combat it. With some such ideas in view a body of women have been engaged in investigating the problem of prostitution, and in Downward Paths (Bell, 2s. 6d.) have given us the results of their enquiry. The writers, who desire that their names should not be disclosed, have no theory to prove, they have approached and completed their task with an intellectual detachment which is the more admirable, inasmuch as their subject is one which makes intellectual detachment supremely difficult to maintain. They have made a systematic enquiry into the motives which induce women to enter the only trade in which seemingly the supply never exceeds the demand. "The women who write," says Miss Maude Royden in her introduction, "are not Pharisees writing about Publicans, but human beings seeking to understand and enter into fellowship with the outcasts of their sex, on the basis of a common womanhood—a common humanity." And the writers tell us that in investigating this problem we must disregard the repulsiveness of the subject, and ask the same questions as we would ask in investigating any other offensive and dangerous trade. The numbers employed, the conditions of employment, remuneration received, and motives for adopting that particular trade.

In telling us that the first question is unanswerable in Great Britain the writers say: "We have no State Regulation of Vice as on

the Continent, though, since no regulated city succeeds in registering more than a proportion of the regular prostitutes, and hardly ever registers a clandestine prostitute, this is no great loss."

Here they strain impartiality to breaking point; regulationists cannot claim the faintest statistical value for their lists, no one who has studied Flexner can doubt that. In fact they are of more use to abolitionists as being one more proof of the utter futility of the iniquitous system. As Flexner says: "The enrolment is at the best unimportant, and at the worst, altogether negligible." (Prostitution in Europe, p. 145). It is, I think, safe to say that all investigators of this problem are agreed that the pitiful army of women is recruited practically entirely from the poorer classes. There must, therefore, be something radically wrong with the conditions under which the poor are compelled to live. The housing question, the herding together of young men and women, girls and boys, so that decency is impossible. The desecration of children; the drab monotony of a life of unceasing toil, which drives young girls to snatch at any promise of pleasure or adventure. All these are causes of prostitution. "That the loss of modesty due to overcrowding is a primary cause of prostitution is the opinion of most people who have studied the subject, though, as Mr. J. R. Macdonald points out, it is still more potent as a cause of illegitimate births." In support of this opinion the writers quote, amongst others, Mr. Holmes, formerly a Police Court Missionary:

"I will say with great emphasis," said

Mr. Holmes, in an interview, "that the housing and sleeping and feeding, and the loss of parental control due to the housing conditions, has led very largely to prostitution. From among that class (the overcrowded) the girls slide into it, so to speak, on account of their environment. When you know how many of the people of London live, and the children are born, and the mother dies in the same room, and little children know all the mysteries of life and death, and boys and girls sleep together like little animals, you understand that squeamishness goes." (p. 22).

We could not afford to improve our housing system, but we can spend millions a day on the war.

Further on in dealing with the desecration of children the authors quote, amongst other authorities, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, who says: "I wish to record my solemn conviction that the extent of this evil, the assault and corruption of girls, who are young children, is infinitely greater than is at present realised. On one occasion I made a careful enquiry into the antecedents of prostitutes and was astonished to find in what a large proportion of cases their ruin had taken place in youth, often when quite young, and in many cases within the shelter of their own homes." (p. 27).

Deliberate choice, homelessness; seduction and desertion; compulsion and exploitation—these are some of the chapter headings of this valuable enquiry, showing the thoroughness with which the writers have done their work.

But it must be confessed that they have at times expressed themselves with a vagueness, which is open to grave misconception. For instance, in speaking of the injustice of supposing that girls are irrevocably degraded by their early lapses, the writers say: "This binding down of the child to her rash choice is only one aspect of the larger question as to how far the high ideal of sexual conduct held up to women manufactures prostitutes." (p. 40). I gather that this singularly infelicitous phrase means that women known to have lapsed from this high ideal are treated with such harshness that often enough they sink lower and lower until they lose their self-respect, humanly speaking, beyond recovery. Have not Catholic social workers told us that the harsh treatment

shown to an erring girl in Ireland not infrequently brings her to the streets of our northern cities? For this harshness there is no sanction in Our Saviour's example, but the writers could not well have chosen a more unfortunate way of expressing themselves. We can learn much from books like this, we can learn, too, from the pages of history, but there again we need intellectual detachment, enquirers must be intent on one thing only, that from the blunders of the past, and the experience, we may draw wisdom for the present and the future.

The conscience of the world is awakening to this problem. "Civilisation," says Flexner, "has stripped for a life and death wrestle with tuberculosis, alcohol, and other plagues. It is on the verge of a similar struggle with the crasser forms of commercialized vice. Sooner or later it must fling down the gauntlet to the whole horrible thing. This will be the real contest,—a contest that will tax the courage, the self-denial, the faith, the resources of humanity to their uttermost." (Ibid, p. 402).

But no Christian can doubt that humanity, putting faith in God, can win.

L. DE ALBERTI.

CHRISTMAS SALE AND JUMBLE SALE.

Please don't forget that we want a large number of useful gifts for our stall, and we earnestly hope our members will respond generously to this appeal. We hope our Branches and country members, many of whom are unable to help us in paper-selling and in other ways, will send gifts for the sale. Please send to Miss Whately not later than November 30th (and as early as possible before that date) to the office, 55, Berners Street, London.

Miss Whately is also organising a jumble sale, and would be very grateful for old clothes, boots and shoes, underclothing, etc.; men's and children's clothing sell especially well. Also carpets, curtains, pots and pans, and household crockery. Please send in not later than Saturday, November 25th.

We are much in need of funds to carry on our work, postage and stationery have greatly increased in price, and we rely on our members to help us to realise a good sum from these sales.

IT WAS WORTH IT.

When Miss Barry asked me to accompany her to Manchester to sell papers at the Catholic Truth Society Congress—I was only too pleased to say yes—but it was certainly somewhat of a shock when I heard from Miss Barry that she was ill and unable to come, and I had therefore to undertake the work alone.

I travelled up to Manchester on Friday, October 6th, went to the Midland Hotel, and from there to my first meeting, which I saw on the handbill was at Pendleton. After a certain amount of difficulty I found the place and took up my stand outside the Hall. It was just 7 o'clock, and as soon as anyone appeared I called out "*The Catholic Suffragist*, one penny." Before long I had sold out, and having fetched a second supply sold all these also—and this was typical of all the nine meetings or Church Services that I sold at.

The work was extremely tiring, but the people were extraordinarily kind, and the paper roused immense interest. Not one person taking part in the Congress but was obliged to see me, and I can truthfully say nearly all bought a copy.

Priests and people in large numbers came up to buy, and many told me they had no idea such a paper existed, one or two asking me was I sure it was not on the Index!!

Among others, the Secretary of the Catholic Truth Society complimented me on my zeal and expressed regret that I was not working for them. On the Sunday some of our Liverpool members very kindly came over to help me, and we were able to have sellers at all the big Catholic Churches in the city. Miss Jervis, of Manchester, also helped me, and later on the local members entertained us for lunch.

Over 500 copies of the paper were sold during the week-end, and I could have disposed of several hundreds more, had I had them, to the crowds waiting to go in to the public meeting at the Free Trade Hall on Monday night, but after the success which I had met with on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, there were only two or three dozen papers left to sell at the last meeting. All round the people were handing out pennies,

which I had to refuse, telling them I had entirely sold out. Only those who have stood for long hours trying to sell a Suffrage paper with little or no results will be able to appreciate what it was like to have people on all sides anxious to buy and no papers to offer them. It was a mixture of disappointment and triumph in one.

I cannot speak too highly of the courtesy that was shown me by everyone—and it was only on one occasion that I received any rudeness.

Quite a lot of people took away membership forms, and I am hoping to hear from Miss Barry of many new names on our file of members.

On the 26th October I went on the same errand to Oxford, namely, to sell our paper at the Catholic Social Guild Conference. Though the whole affair was very much smaller than the one at Manchester, I got on extremely well, several of the Priests who had been at the Catholic Truth Society Conference came up and spoke to me and bought again, at the same time speaking very highly of the spirit of Suffrage workers. One of our Bishops, when I asked him to purchase the paper, told me he had it regularly. An Anglican Bishop was also one of my customers. I sold altogether at nine meetings, Church Services, etc., in Oxford, and have to thank several of our members, who were staying there, and came forward so nobly in spite of the drenching rain to help me in my work on the Sunday. We have, I hope, interested several influential people in our cause, whose names it would be at present premature to disclose.

Now a word to our members before I close this report. Come forward as paper sellers one and all. If you could realise, as I have realised, the wonderful work we are able to do for our cause, you would not hold back for one second. Everyone who comes forward and stands with the paper is a lamp of truth with which to lighten the darkness of prejudice and ignorance, and to each one is given the power of profoundly influencing public opinion—truly a great responsibility, and one which surely we shall not dare to push lightly aside.

MR. STEPHEN GRAHAM ON THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

Under the auspices of the Church League for Women's Suffrage, Mr. Stephen Graham delivered a lecture on Russia and the Russian Church, at the Church House, Westminster, on October 28th. The Rev. R. J. Campbell, who was in the chair, spoke of a closer union which might be established between the Anglican and Russian Churches; it was difficult to see how matter-of-fact England could unite with mystical Russia, but it was not impossible. Mr. Graham spoke with much feeling of the religious atmosphere of Russia, which had been greatly misunderstood in this country. Catholics in the audience must have felt that Mr. Graham had taken a quite unnecessary long journey to make some of his religious discoveries. Any of his Catholic countrymen could have told him that it is quite usual to wear a cross or medal under, or even above, one's clothing to show that one is consecrated to Christ; that it is an ordinary Christian custom to name children after saints—rather than by the names of battles or flowers—that they may have the protection of the saints. Any Catholic repository could have supplied him with a calendar marked not only with numbers, but with the festivals of saints. Indeed, though it may only remind him of his rent, the most aggressive Protestant will still speak of Lady Day and Michaelmas—those pledges of the past. Had Mr. Graham ventured into a Catholic home he would have discovered statues and crucifixes, and with luck even a lamp burning before a shrine, and on enquiry he would have been told that this is not superstition or idolatry, but a reminder of heavenly things. Catholics have been explaining that to their fellow countrymen some hundreds of years. Continuing, Mr. Graham said that as the meeting was convened by a women's society he must say something of the devotion and veneration shown to the Mother and Child. According to the lecturer we must go to Russia to see a really spiritual representation of Our Lady—the Latin madonnas, however lovely, have no soul, their message is dead. Shades of Raphael, Murillo and kindred spirits! Oh, Mr. Graham, what devil wast that thus has cozened you at Hoodman blind? But perhaps, poor man, you have not seen the works of the Latin masters? We would fain believe so.

(Continued from page 104).

women who are cheerfully giving their time and money for carrying them on may be described rather as serving than dominating. It becomes, indeed, very hard to discriminate between the two, and the more one thinks of what rightly-used domination must imply, the more clearly one sees that all truly great women, past or present, have been serving whilst they dominated. When the Suffrage is granted and our opportunities for dominating thereby increased, we need only keep this in mind to feel sure that neither our fellow-women nor men can be anything but gainers by the fresh calls that may come to us to "go up higher."

"Who knows the gifts that you shall give, Daughter of the newer Eve?"

I do not say for one moment that paper selling is always a joy—it is not. There are moments when one feels, oh, so tired and often depressed, when one becomes appalled at the wilful ignorance of one's fellow creatures—who are only too pleased to live on in a fool's paradise—but it is worth it—the fatigue, the heartache, nay, anything—so long as we can truly say that we have done our bit to help the Cause in which we believe—surely one of the greatest causes the world has ever known. The cause which is going to give to women the power to purge away some of the degradation, filth, and misery of which this world is so full, and thus make a better and happier place for men and women, the children of God.

MONICA WHATELY.

LONDON AND BRANCHES.

Office: 55, Berners Street, London. Hours, 3-30 to 5-30. Saturdays, 10-30 to 12-30. Library books 2d. per volume. Holy Mass will be offered to the intentions of the Society at St. Patrick's, Soho, at 10-30, on Sunday, December 3rd. We call the attention of our members to the appeal in another column for gifts for the Christmas Sale and Jumble Sale.

MANCHESTER.—Hon. Sec., Miss Sullivan, 163, Queen's Road, Harpurhey, Manchester. A most successful paper-selling campaign was carried on during the recent Catholic Truth Jubilee celebrations, held in Manchester. Miss Whately, assisted by members of the Liverpool and Manchester Branches, did good work, particularly on the Sunday, when all the principal Churches were visited. The Manchester members entertained the visitors to lunch at the Grand Hotel and had an enjoyable time together, warm thanks being given to the local members for their hospitality. After lunch all adjourned to Churnet Street, as a meeting was being held in Churnet Street Hall. Business was exceptionally brisk after the meeting and the sellers were in good spirits. The evenings being dark somewhat hindered the business at night, but the results as a whole were highly satisfactory and much good is certain to accrue from this campaign, the paper has had a splendid advertisement and the members of the various associations represented had an opportunity for useful discussion.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT.—Hon. Sec., Miss T. M. Browne, M.A., University Hall, Fairfield, Liverpool. A meeting was held on October 10th, at 18, Colquitt Street. Miss Whately, who had come up from London for the Catholic Truth Society's Conference in Manchester, gave a most stimulating account of her work during the week-end. She also spoke of the general aspects of the Suffrage question with regard to present conditions, and urged all suffragists to show an untiring energy for the cause. Many interesting points were raised by members in discussion afterwards. Several of the Liverpool members went over to the Conference on the Sunday to help with paper-selling. The results were splendid. Thanks to their efforts and to Miss Whately's hard work at the other meetings, over 500 papers were sold. Our hearty thanks are due to the Manchester Branch for arranging hospitality.

COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION AND TREATMENT OF VENEREAL DISEASE.

(Communicated by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene).

Since the Memorial in favour of compulsory notification appeared in the press the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene has been urged by a number of representative people to issue a statement, giving the reasons why notification and detention are undesirable weapons in the fight against venereal disease.

The people who oppose compulsory notification are generally supposed to do so because they do not sufficiently realise the great prevalence and terrible effects of these diseases. This, however, is not the case. The truth is that compulsory measures are opposed by practically the whole body of informed opinion, both medical and administrative. The opposition to compulsory notification does not come from ignorance of the facts. It comes from knowledge of them, and a recognition of administrative difficulties involved.

Perhaps there is nobody who has a better knowledge of the whole subject than Dr. Newsholme, Medical Officer to the Local Government Board. In his Memorandum presented to the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, he says:—

"Notification of individual cases of disease is not a sanitary measure in itself. It may be a means to this end, and from this standpoint must be judged by its capacity to assist in preventing the spread of infection and in securing adequate treatment. It is unlikely that direct notification of single cases of venereal disease, either with or without the names and addresses of the patients, would, under the present circumstances, be useful or even practicable."

The Royal Commission adopted this point of view, and the Report has dealt quite definitely with the matter (page 50 of Report).

"We recognise that notification might, in some cases, assist towards better initial treatment, which is most important. We realise also the powerful educative influence of notification, and the means it would provide, assuming that it could be universally applied, of obtaining statistical information now lacking. We are, however, impressed with the difficulty of obtaining complete notification and we recognise the inequity of a partial system. We consider also that any system of compulsory treatment might defeat the object we have in view, which is to secure accurate diagnosis and adequate treatment at the earliest possible moment for the largest number of sufferers. We have come to the conclusion that at the present time any system of compulsory personal notification would fail to secure the advantages claimed, and we are of opinion that better results may be obtained by a policy of education regarding the importance and serious nature of venereal diseases and the adoption of the measures we have already recommended for increasing largely the facilities for diagnosis and treatment."

It should be recognised that this is the opinion of specially selected men and women, who have considered the problems of venereal disease for over two years, and have heard evidence from most of the recognised experts.

Compulsory measures are only effective when it is really possible to compel. Our object is to bring the diseased person under efficient medical treatment at the earliest possible moment. These diseases are more easily cured in the early stages of infection; they are also more infectious in the early stages than at any other time. The effect of compulsory notification by a doctor will be to deter people from treatment just at the time when they are most in need of it, and so defeat the object we all have at heart.

It is quite futile to compare venereal diseases with scarlet fever or small-pox. Doctors and patients alike are quite willing to notify small-pox because the patient is obviously and acutely ill, is highly con-

tagious, and needs great care, which often can only be suitably given in an institution. In such a case all are sorry for the sufferer, and his illness calls forth nothing but kindness, skill, and sympathy. How different is the case of the venereal patient. Even when the disease is innocently acquired, the diseased person, under present conditions, is made conscious of shame, degradation and suspicion. If he knows that putting himself in the hands of a doctor will mean notification to local authorities, compulsory treatment and control exercised over his movements, he will put off going to a doctor until the last possible moment, in fact until he is no longer easily curable. The essence of the practical objection to compulsory notification is that for the one person notified and detained there may be twenty newly-infected people deterred from applying for medical treatment and so driven into the hands of the quacks. Further, notification alone is useless. It is often referred to as if notification were in itself a cure; but obviously it could only be useful if followed up by immediate treatment. Until the scheme of the Royal Commission is in full working operation, that treatment is not available. Facilities for the treatment of venereal disease are at the present time *practically non-existent*.

It is assumed in the above argument that notification would be strictly impartial and would apply to men and women in all classes of society, but it is idle not to recognise that in the present state of public opinion, it may be directed chiefly against women suspected of prostitution, with the possible addition of male prisoners and paupers. If this is the case, we should be making disease a crime for prostitutes and paupers, thus attacking the most defenceless classes in the community. For the women this would be practically a return to the C.D. Acts, and would place them once again under the control of the police and military authorities.

There is every reason to believe that such a measure would meet with the greatest opposition from almost all organised womens associations, and while it would be little or no use in diminishing disease it would deter infected women from seeking medical treatment and would go far to wreck the whole scheme which the Royal Commissioners have so wisely adopted.

It cannot be too often pointed out that the real source of venereal disease is not necessarily the prostitute. It is true that contagion is conveyed to innocent people and into the family, but it is not conveyed there by the prostitute. She cannot bring disease into innocent families, because she is almost completely isolated from them. It is her partner who is the direct link between diseased women and the family: it is he who is the great danger to public health and who is chiefly responsible for the infection of the innocent and the unborn. Until the community as a whole believes and acts upon the view that "impurity in men is as reprehensible as it is in women" it is impossible to get very far in the fight against venereal disease.

The real fight against venereal disease must be a fight, not against prostitute women, but *against prostitution itself in both men and women*. No scheme can be of ultimate value which only seeks to make prostitution healthy. This Association welcomes the medical scheme for treatment; it rejoices that it is a non-compulsory and humane provision for the cure of diseased men and women, but it asserts, with all the experience of forty-seven years of study of these questions, that venereal disease cannot be eradicated by medical measures alone; the problem is ultimately a moral one and can only be effectively dealt with by the inculcation of individual responsibility and self-control.

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Wed., 29th Nov. 8 p.m.—"Women and the Church." The Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Kensington. Chair: Miss Maude Royden.
Wed., 6th Dec., 7-30 p.m.—House Dinner. "The Advantages of Careless Parents." Mr. Arthur D. Lewis. Chair: Mrs. Corbett-Fisher.
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