

brave words set flowing the current of ideas now moving the leaders of the medical section of the societies of prophylaxis.

One Superintendent wrote that she determined that a system of very plain teaching should be substituted for the extremely fragmentary method that formerly prevailed. The lecturer on skin diseases had previously given some instruction on the subject of syphilis, but he had handled the subject so gingerly that most of the facts she desired emphasised were not touched upon. This year a woman physician was asked to give the lectures and demonstrations, describing the way infection was carried, its effect on the organs and offspring, the causes of sterility, and finally the social aspect. Her manner of handling the subject was particularly fine, and her manner of gentle dignity quickly brought the class from a tense strained attitude to one of interest and attention.

In general, however, it seemed clear that the training school for nurses had a far more reserved mode of teaching venereal disease than other infectious diseases. Details regarding tuberculosis, its cause, transmission, and, above all, its prevention, were now published everywhere with copious fulness, and almost shouted from the house-tops, and in the case of nearly every other infectious disease the mode of propagation of the germ, and prevention, are held to be of the most absorbing interest. Pupils in nurse training schools needed also to be taught that venereal diseases had causes that were perfectly understood, that they were propagated by the base use of the generative organs, and spread broadcast by our social institution of prostitution. Also that the cause and dangers being perfectly well known to medical science, so, too, is prevention perfectly well understood, and that this whole class of hideous menaces to health and happiness *could* be made to disappear from the face of the earth; above all, they needed to be taught the unmitigated falsity and immorality of the double standard of morals in matters of sex.

Miss Dock said that many nurses did not even know enough to protect themselves from infection. She recalled two distressing cases where nurses caring for private patients were virulently infected, one losing an eye by gonorrhoeal ophthalmia and the other's usefulness being destroyed by loathsome symptoms of syphilis. In these cases the physicians had not given the nurses the smallest hint as to the nature of the cases they were exposed to, yet nurses were not expected to diagnose, and these unfortunates evidently did not.

Miss Dock said some might demur, and suggest that precaution against infection was all nurses need be taught; she earnestly insisted they should be taught everything there is to know. They were women, and it was most urgent that all women should know the whole truth in regard to venereal diseases at the earliest possible time and to the fullest possible extent. Only when all women and men knew the truth in its fulness could we hope for a reduction of prostitution to its lowest possible limits, and only so could prevention be attained.

Prostitution was a subject so appalling and hideous that if one concentrated all one's thoughts upon it, especially on that branch called the white slave traffic, one could easily become deranged; yet in the efforts at the prevention of sexual diseases it could not be put aside.

It was estimated that there were in the United States about 600,000 prostitutes. Their average life was ten years, many dying after three to five years. Thus, to keep up the supply, about 60,000 fresh and once pure and healthy women were annually drafted into this death-dealing business. Such a toll by an infectious and avoidable malady was heavy enough, but the true menace to the innocent women and children outside that number came from the male prostitutes, who were too often left entirely out of consideration. It was said that it took on an average five men to support one prostitute, and they had horrible evidence in the social settlement where she lived that some of these poor creatures were visited by many more. In some houses of ill-fame there was a system by which women were paid by brass checks, which they afterwards exchanged, and one woman received eighteen of such checks in one night. It was the men who visited these women who carried venereal infection into their own homes and distributed it amongst their wives and children.

The control and prevention of venereal disease lay in the control and prevention of prostitution, and Dr. Morrow, President of the American Society of Moral and Sanitary Prophylaxis, said: "Efforts should be directed not to making prostitution safe, but to prevent the making of prostitutes."

Miss Dock said that her conviction, and that of many others wiser than herself, was that this was only possible through the attainment by all women of power and authority such as could only be obtained through the possession of the franchise. Women must have the power to make laws and enforce them; it was not enough to help to administer those made by a masculine, law-making body. Women must attain the capacity to legislate for the making and remaking of social conditions of work and labour, wages and salaries, education, home, business, and public life. Only by far-reaching changes in these basic things could prostitution be undermined and minimised, just as it was chiefly by the preparation of the soil that the farmer controlled his crops. Direct legislation against prostitution—*i.e.*, the various systems of policing and licensing—had been shown to be futile, and to those who argued that men cannot be made moral by law we must reply that conditions which made women immoral by necessity must be altered by law.

First, society should be so organised that no woman need be unwillingly forced into prostitution. The President of the National Vigilance League in America, a physician of high standing, stated in a moderate, carefully weighed speech that of all the prostitutes in that country only 20 per cent. were willingly such. The other 80 per cent. had been tricked, betrayed, forced, kidnapped, or actually bought and sold for money into this slavery. Leaving moral and humane conditions aside, if this 80 per cent. were not forced into this life the

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