

Not preventive treatment for people who are not yet prisoners, not "a fence at the edge of a precipice," but compulsory treatment for prisoners—another "ambulance in the valley.")

Leaving the philanthropists the women sought eminent counsel. But their eminences were well on guard. "Here is no sex discrimination, only wise State interference with certain wage-earners engaged in carrying on a dangerous trade. Their wares must be inspected and certified. Moreover, it is an error to assume that two persons of different sexes are equally involved in this industry, for, before the law, there is no such thing as a male prostitute. The woman who sells or offers to sell is the prostitute; the man who buys or offers to buy is not one."

Other eminent counsel were less intrepid; they, in short, crawled away with amazing rapidity when approached; visits could not find them, nor letters reach them.

Fortunately there are women lawyers. One had been retained from the first, and presently, going forth alone like the stripling David, she met the giant and overthrew him in the first round in the courts. From England the women wrote: "How glorious that you have women lawyers. Had it been our case, no such salvation had been possible. Here women may study, but may not practise law."

I think it will be correct to say that, before this first legal victory was gained, the men of importance whose open support could be relied on might easily have been numbered on the fingers of one hand. History repeated herself; it had been so in England during her twenty-year experiment. The clergy were no braver; to seven hundred letters to the men of God, asking moral aid, came—how many replies? Not so many as would need two figures to record them. A strange pusillanimity seemed to seize upon most men, and also upon some women, conventional women (as a rule, those who denied the right of a self-poised life, the justice of the ballot, the capacity for independent thought, to their sex) at the very mention of the subject.

Fearless and outright on the contrary were the self-respecting majority of women. From club and league, from city, state, and national associations came protests and resolutions denouncing the outrageous measure and demanding its repeal. In all, some forty odd organised groups of women have shared in one way or another, either by donations or resolutions, or some kind of service in the work of opposition to the odious clause, and such testimonials came from all over the country. The *Woman's Journal*, published in Boston by Alice Stone Blackwell, brought its whole strength to the cause. That journal, with *The New York Call*, waged active war upon Clause 79.

It has been an inspiring and a profoundly stirring evidence of the loyalty possible from woman to woman, as the evidence of wrongs done to women and permitted, heretofore, by women, comes to light in to-day's fuller knowledge. And, if money talks, there are volumes in the fact that, so far, of the funds collected as sinews of war, ten dollars

have been contributed by the men of New York.

Judge Bischoff's decision acted potently in crystallising wavering opinions. Thereafter, in their crusade the women found readier response, and more numerous allies among men. They carried their appeal to the trades unions, and right brotherly and frank was their reception. They had counted upon this being so. In foreign countries working men have often declared for one single moral standard, and in England during the struggle to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts it was the working men who lined their thousands into the fight against legalised prostitution. The Counsel for the Page Commission said publicly in the Courts that Clause 79 was designed to benefit the poorer classes of men. May all working men resent this lying imputation that they agree to the ruthless destruction of girl life that is called prostitution.

Although the case is still before the courts it may be said that the regulation of prostitution has been condemned by public opinion.

Treatment based on a prison sentence is not humane; civic degradation is always inhumane. Humanity is outraged at the sight of young girls dragged by policemen into a night court, and, before the jeering eyes of curious onlookers, pronounced diseased and branded by the shameful fingerprint. Humanity despairs to see healthy victims replaced upon the streets, there to remain until their inevitable doom of disease overtakes them. These at least might have been saved if any purpose really obtained except a cynical care for the interests of profligate men.

Those few medical men who still teach the doctrine of "physical necessity" will soon be classed among the curiosities of medical superstition, of which the shelves are full. The simple truth is that promiscuity of sex relation is an abuse of the reproductive organs just as gluttony is an abuse of the digestive tract. What medical man prescribes gluttony?

Self-respecting ones will not even treat gluttons unless they first agree to give up their indulgence. Excessive sexuality affects the mind, and gives a cast of craziness to much of men's discourse on sex matters. I have read medical dicta that are evidently not sane; pretending to be scientific, they are really only monstrosities of thought.

The political inferiority of women is the most immediate and cruel handicap in her struggle to escape from sex degradation. She is now doubly handicapped, for she not only suffers the economic disabilities of men, but has her own special form of slavery as well. The immediate effect of the ballot will be to give her a potential dignity. She will rise in popular respect and her new capacity of self-protection will be recognised. She will inevitably move more decisively and more swiftly toward our common goal, the extinction of poverty, than men have done, because her natural instinct for the guardianship of life will lead her there. Give her the ballot, and let her rise to her destined place in the care of that higher human type that will evolve when economic slavery and sex subjugation shall have been relegated to the dark ages of the past.

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