

and liberty, so that the whole nation might once more testify its belief in truth and holiness, in the expression of its public opinion."

Dr. Mary Murdoch: "Those who have all their lives inhabited comfortable, well-lighted, well-ventilated houses cannot even imagine the dens in which the workers of the land are huddled together. And yet it is these workers, so closely huddled together, who are the propagators of the majority of our race."

"Alcoholism is a disease, not a sin. While the lower classes had some excuse for intemperance, the well-to-do upper classes had none. If wine and whisky were banished from the tables of the rich, the example would have a very telling effect upon industrial drinking."

Dr. Marion Andrews: "The most pressing reform is the formation of a sound national conscience. There is no effective public opinion apart from the women of the nation."

"There has been a conspiracy of silence towards women with regard to certain facts most intimately associated with their own and their children's health. The truth on these matters (venereal disease) should not be withheld from them. If it were known, there would be such an awakening of public opinion among them that they would not rest until one social evil at least, productive of untold misery and disease, had ended."

Dr. Elizabeth Sloane Chesser: "The great evil of the British prison system is that it is punitive, not reformative, especially in regard to women. Feeble-minded women should be separated and treated medically. The chief lesson to learn is the importance of interesting educated women and obtaining their assistance in dealing with women prisoners."

Dr. Devon: "The chief difference between the criminal and the non-criminal is that he has been caught, and they have not. Once a thief always a thief is not true. There should be no time limit to the cure, but I believe in the abolition of the prison altogether."

Mrs. Heitland: "The Press is no longer the didactic force it was. It has descended from its throne to scramble for coppers, and has lost its throne in so doing. Its eyes are constantly fixed on the returns for sales and advertisements. The Press ignores the existence of women, save as purchasers and consumers."

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#### SOCIETY OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS.

The Annual Meeting of the Society of Women Journalists will be held at the Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych, W.C., on Wednesday, November 1st, at 3 p.m. After the meeting there will be a Reception and Tea. Guests' tickets, 1s. each, may be obtained from the office, 10, St. Bride's Avenue, Fleet Street, E.C.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

### THE FRUITFUL VINE.\*

The charm of Mr. Hichens' style cannot be gainsaid; he is at all times brilliant, fascinating, absorbing, and, just because of this, we must sound a warning note. This is emphatically not a book for indiscriminate reading, this is not an age when fresh motive for martial unfaithfulness needs to be supplied; and, yet that is the theme that persists through a romance of no common order.

Boldly suggested, hideously accomplished, the unnatural sin of Dolores Cannyng is put in a perspective out of all proportion to its enormity; yet it cannot justly be said that it is not recognised as such. The title of the book gives the clue to its subject, which is a distasteful one, treated with unnecessary coarseness. Two English families in the diplomatic service, living side by side, in the best society in Rome. One family blessed with children; Dolores, the wife of the ex-diplomat Sir Theodore, childless. The men have been close friends all their lives, and Sir Theodore, secretly longing for children of his own, makes much of those of his friends, the Denzils.

And Dolores, his beautiful young wife, is jealous. "For she loved Theo, for she believed indeed, felt sure that he loved her, not as he had once loved her, in eager hope and glorious expectation, but, nevertheless, as he loved no other woman."

At the operation for cancer on Denzil's throat, and subsequent death, Nurse Jennings is introduced to the reader, a woman, though not of cultivated speech, possessed of a strong personality, and a self-reliance which she has the supreme gift of imparting to others.

Dolores makes the terrible confession to her that the child at last about to be born to her is not her husband's. "She had sinned for Theo." Nurse Jennings had, of course, spoken words in accordance with her character. She had stated certain facts; and the facts had gone over the spirit of Dolores as a travelling wind goes over grass, leaving it just as it was when the world was still.

The natures of the two women were very dissimilar; and, in that dissimilarity, Dolores found the path that sustained her feet in her confession.

She knew the nurse accepted her; and often she remembered the simple words: "I am all for you." "Couldn't you nerve yourself to tell your husband?"

"But I told you! It's my husband I love. He would never speak to me again. That's how men are."

And Nurse Jennings, after an instant of silent reflection: "I suppose it's how they are; God help them!"

The birth of the child, for which Dolores had sinned so hideously, results in her death, and an awful revelation to Sir Theodore.

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\*By Robert Hichens. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

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