

17. Dr. Sutton strongly supported the giving of such instruction to young people. A most interesting contribution to the debate came from Dr. A. H. Hallen. Though surrounded by nations where profligacy was an adjunct of religion, and prostitution received State sanction, the Jews, though they fell often into dissolute habits, never gave prostitution State recognition, and Dr. Hallen stated that when he was a young man, practising in London, he attended at a dispensary where he came into contact with great numbers of pauper Jewish emigrants, who had fled from persecutions in Russia, Poland, Germany, and other States. He was struck by the fact that venereal disease was most uncommon among them, and that the standard of sexual morals was much higher than in the classes among which they lived. He says: "My enquiries drew information that the absolute moral sexual superiority of these people was due directly to the fact that at puberty it is the custom for the parents, assisted by the Rabbi, to put their children through a prescribed form of instruction, or catechism elaborated on an ancient basis, which antedates by hundreds of years the foundation of Christianity. I cannot doubt that Christian peoples could adopt this system with material advantage in the reduction of venereal diseases, prostitution, and their complex, social, and racial injuries."

I have but touched the fringe of this subject, and in conclusion I wish to draw your attention to a memorandum issued by the British Medical Association, and printed in full in the supplement of the "British Medical Journal" of May 8th, 1915.

The Association has taken a lively interest in the work of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease, nominating witnesses who were, in the opinion of the Association, able to give special assistance to the Commission on the prevalence, and most recent methods of diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases. The memorandum deals with the subject from the point of view of the private practitioners and touches many points. The concluding paragraph contains these words:—

"Finally, the Association has little faith in the methods of direct attack on these diseases which have been proposed in various quarters, namely, compulsory notification, compul-

sory detention of patients, and prevention of the marriage of persons who have once suffered from venereal diseases until they can obtain a certificate of cure. Such suggestions appear to the Association to be impracticable in view of the moral stigma they would impose. The Association has much more hope of the indirect methods which resolve themselves into the better education of the public as to the serious nature and wide spread incidence of these diseases, and the grant of easy access to the best treatment."

At the conclusion of the paper the following resolution was carried unanimously:—

"In view of the fact that the expert medical evidence given before the Royal Commission on venereal diseases in England, unanimously recommended free voluntary treatment for all persons affected by these diseases, and seeing that this recommendation is strongly endorsed by the British Medical Association, and as it is most necessary that medical aid should be given in the earliest stages of these diseases when they are most infective and yield most readily to curative treatment, this convention earnestly urges the Government, in the interests of public health, to open immediately evening clinics in the four centres at least, where all sufferers affected by venereal disease, whether guilty or innocent, can secure the best advice free of cost, without unnecessary publicity, and that provision be made for a certain number of beds in general hospitals for the use of such persons when necessary."

HEARD IN PARLIAMENT.

When our legislators sit in council assembled to discuss the weighty affairs of the nation, it is permitted to the gentler sex to sit and listen to the words of wisdom which fall from their lips. And truly "The House" viewed from the ladies' gallery presents a marvellous sight at times.

One favour is granted to lady visitors. They are allowed in for prayers, while gentlemen are not allowed in till prayers are over. One's first thought is why do members "air so much eloquence when apparently nobody is listening to them." Members wander to and fro, and hold confer-

ences with their friends, not always "sotto voce." When these asides become so pronounced that one cannot hear the member who is supposed to have the floor, then the voice of Mr Speaker is heard, "Too much conversation," and for a time the buzz ceases. A young collegian remarked, after his first visit to the gallery, "They behave worse than a lot of schoolboys when the master is out of the room."

One thing always strikes a woman in listening to their debates, and that is how differently an assembly of men view many questions from what women do.

As a case in point, during a discussion on the registration of illegitimate children, the suggestion was made that it be compulsory to register the name of the father as well as that of the mother. At once several members protested vigorously, pointing to the fact that in many of the cases alluded to the father was a married man, and what a wicked thing it would be to place his name on a register, where his wife could find out the fact.

Now, how differently a woman would have viewed this question. She would see that in the case of a married man and a young girl the greater fault was the man's, and there would be no justice in compelling her name to be placed upon the register and not his.

Then the injury done to the wife was quite overlooked. She is to be treated like a child, kept in ignorance of her husband's crime, both against her and against another woman, in order "that the home might not be broken up."

We wonder were these members practising the golden rule? Would they, as husbands, like to be treated as they were pleading for these wives to be treated? Would they like to be kept in the dark by legal enactment in order that they might continue to live with an immoral wife? A wife has a right to know the character of her husband, and the right of choice should be hers as to whether she forgives him or separates from him. Moreover, would not the knowledge that his name would be registered cause such men to take a more serious view of a crime like this, and so act as a deterrent? Is it not time that women were heard in Parliament, and their views placed before members, instead of having only one side of the question stated?