

own daughters and sisters to fill up the rank. What we are not prepared to do ourselves we have no right to ask other women to do. Whenever we look upon a victim, however degraded, we say, "She's somebody's daughter, you know."

The other suggestion is the issue of prophylactic packets. These, we are told, are necessary that a pure manhood may return to our shores. Evidently Miss Rout thinks that if a man does not contract venereal disease he is a pure man, fit to mate with a pure woman, and be the father of her children. That may be her idea of purity, but it is not ours. Is the soldier who wastes the vigour of his young manhood upon the "strange woman" as physically fit (even if free from venereal diseases) as the young man who by a noble self-control has conserved his life forces?

And what about the moral atmosphere such a man will bring back with him? This letter is pure and unadulterated materialism. It is the morality of the barnyard. But is chastity the evil and impossible thing which Miss Rout supposes it? Dr. N. Bishop Harman, M.A., F.R.C.S., author of "Staying the Plague," says: "Chastity is not injurious; and chastity of long duration in no way impairs the sexual powers. . . . There is no risk in chastity. The risk lies all with the contrary practice. Those who persuade themselves that immoral practice is justified by physiology believe a lie; whilst those who shelter their evil practices behind some "doctor's orders" of apocryphal origin merely expose the grossness of their deceit."

In sharp contrast to Miss Rout's utter pessimism, come these optimistic tones from men like Dr. Arthur and Lord Kitchener, who know what they are talking about, which we feel convinced this lady does not. Can she not feel the utter infamy of appealing to New Zealand mothers for the money by means of which their sons are to be debauched?

Dr. Arthur, Chairman of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, addressing the non-commissioned officers of the Australian Forces, doubts very much whether good would follow the issue of prophylactics to men, and says:

"Farther, there is the more serious objection that if the powers that be sanction and tacitly give their appro-

val illicit intercourse by providing means to carry it out with a guarantee of immunity from physical consequences, it not only encourages men to indulge who might otherwise refrain, but it robs any appeal to their higher instincts of all its force, and makes it a hypocrisy and a farce.

"On the other hand, it is sometimes maintained that it is the duty of the authorities to provide what are called 'clean women' for the use of the troops. It has been held that, by medical inspection of prostitutes, those diseased can be segregated, and so prevented from communicating the malady they are suffering from. This is a century-old controversy, but the modern trend of expert opinion is to the effect that the system known as 'regulation' has failed in what it was intended to do. This view has become more and more prominent at the last two International Conferences on the suppression of venereal disease, and in the latest book on the subject by Abraham Flexner, who was sent by the American Bureau of Social Science to investigate the problem in Europe, the writer, after a most exhaustive investigation, comes to the conclusion that, as carried out in France and Germany, regulation is of little or no value as a hygienic measure. It is recognised that, to be effective, every city would require a large staff of medical experts, microscopists, bacteriologists, and pathologists, and that daily examination of the women and of their clients would be necessary. It is admitted that even then certain cases would escape the medical scrutiny, while the whole problem of clandestine prostitution—wherein lies the greater danger—would remain untouched. Here again the guarantee of delusive immunity by the State, with consequent slackening of moral authority, comes in as a factor in intensifying the evil.

"Nor do I admit the assumption that the sex instinct cannot be controlled. The claim that the impulse is irresistible in civilised man is not true. If it were, rape and other sexual offences would be common, and could not be regarded as crimes.

"Even in savage races promiscuity is not the rule, and sexual intercourse is controlled by taboos. It has been left to the German Army to revert to the sexual bestiality of the ape and the cave man, and I only hope that I am not doing the ape an injustice by comparing him to the Prussian officer.

All authoritative medical opinion proclaims that continence for a long period is not only possible, but that no injurious effects whatever result from it. It is the rule for thousands of the manliest of our young men.

"It must be admitted that, strong as the sexual instinct is, it is no more strong than that other great natural instinct, the instinct of self-preservation. This 'will to live' regulates men's actions in ordinary life. They cling to life under conditions in which it would seem that death would be welcome. But we constantly find that this instinct of self-preservation is dominated by a higher and more altruistic motive. Take the famous British tradition of 'Women and children first.' From the Birkenhead to the Titanic and the Lusitania the rule has been that no man except the crews shall enter the boats until all the women and children have been provided for. Be he millionaire or pauper, man of world renown or unknown wastrel, he subscribes cheerfully to the last great sacrifice he is called upon to make. Truly death is swallowed up in victory—the victory of the human spirit over itself.

"Lay before the soldiers clearly and frankly the dangers of illicit intercourse; inform him of the hideous effects of venereal disease, not only on himself, but on his future wife and children; point out to him how thousands of his predecessors—who were equally as anxious as he to strike a blow for the Empire and for liberty and justice—have spent the time they should have been in the trenches with their comrades, in detention hospitals; emphasise the ignominy of being returned to Australia, not to receive the welcome and applause of their friends and admirers, but to be rushed off to a venereal compound—there to fret out their long days in a vain regret.

"And lastly, appeal also to the inherent chivalry which lies latent, I believe, in nearly every man, and urge him not to injure or degrade any woman by word or deed. Ask him, were he marching through the conquered country of an enemy, would he feel free to act as the Germans have done in Belgium, and ravage and outrage as he went? He would answer indignantly that he would scorn so to do, however often and freely the opportunity might offer. Then put it to him, why should he take advantage of innocent girls in his own country, or force fallen