

male superiority is unjust and futile. But things are changing, and the stigma will be removed from the woman and applied to the man. It was to overthrow this belief in a different standard for the sexes that we worked so hard for Woman Suffrage, and not for ourselves only, for we knew that other countries would not give the franchise till England did.

That regulation is worse than futile is the conclusion also of police officers, many of whom are compelled to administer a system of which they do not approve.

If then, we believe that the methods hitherto tried are futile, if we consider Miss Rout's suggestion utterly wrong, what do we suggest? The remedy that is put forward by scientists and by doctors, namely, that continence is not bad for the health of a man but the reverse. If indulgence were absolutely necessary, if the oft repeated phrase, "ministering to a man's necessity" expressed the truth rather than "ministering to a man's vice," then we ought to honour the prostitute who thus sacrifices herself for the sake of the man's necessity. But the latest medical opinion is quite opposed to the old ideas. Continence is regarded now as feasible and good, as conducive instead of damaging to the health.* Most men can get on all right without sexual intercourse. So we want to say to our boys: Purity is possible. This power is intended by nature for reproduction, and that alone. If you break this law you will suffer. But this is only a low ground to take. Teach our young men that disease is certain to spring from promiscuous intercourse, but teach them also the absolute power of right thought. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Think you can do a thing, and you can; despair of your ability to do right, and you forthwith lose it. God does not lead us into temptation, but He does deliver us from evil. Alas, that we have so misunderstood Christ, and His teaching! He who bid His followers to be perfect even as the Heavenly Father is perfect, meant that we can be perfect. It is for us to believe this, and to base our lives on this eternal truth.

*In this connection all should procure from the Literature Department, and study, the leaflet, "A Man's Question and Its Answer," by Mrs Harverson.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

PROPHYLACTIC AND ABORTIVE TREATMENT.

(Copied from "British Medical Journal," 16th February, 1918).

In the House of Commons on January 22nd, Mr Macpherson, Under Secretary of State for War, was asked by Mr Peto:—Whether it was proposed to take any further steps to stop the spread of infection by venereal poisons among British troops; whether there was any Army Order which forbade or discouraged the necessary prophylactic medical measures, and whether it was proposed to issue an Army Order instructing army medical officers of superior rank the necessary action as a part of their regular medical duties. Mr Macpherson, in reply, said that there was no Army Order authorising the use of such preventives or forbidding them. The answer to the last part of the question was in the negative. In reply to a further question, Mr Macpherson expressed the opinion that this was really a national question, and not so much a military question.

On February 1st, Mr Peto asked a further question with regard to a War Office letter to General Officers Commanding, dated March 18th, 1916, which stated that the Army Council could not accept suggestions with regard to prevention which would imply the adoption of any system of prophylaxis which might be said to afford opportunities for unrestrained vice, whether this deterred army medical officers from taking steps to prevent the spread of venereal disease in the army, and whether the Army Council would now withdraw any restrictions which prevented effective measures being taken to avoid the waste of man power in the army from this cause. Mr Macpherson declined to add anything in his answer of January 22nd, and in reply to a further question, stated that he could not give accurate statistics of the number of men who passed through hospital suffering from venereal diseases in a year, and who were at any one time incapacitated from that cause. He added that it was not to be inferred that medical officers were prevented from taking every possible step to cure the disease.

We have asked Mr E. B. Turner, Chairman of Representative Meetings of the British Medical Association, and Representative of the Association on the National Council for Combating

Venereal Diseases, for an expression of his views, and he has replied as follows:—

"I have been asked by the Editor to furnish him with a statement from my personal knowledge of the matters referred to by Mr Macpherson with regard to prophylactic treatment of venereal disease, and the orders issued by the Army Council relating thereto.

"I have given lectures on venereal disease ever since the commencement of the war, and I have been distinctly directed and ordered by the authorities not to introduce into the lectures any description of chemical personal prophylaxis, or in any way advocate its use. The lecturers are allowed to impress upon the men the importance of the earliest possible treatment if they find themselves infected, and also the wisdom of consulting their medical officers with regard to preventive or abortive early treatment if they have run the risk of infection, but do not yet know whether they have been infected. Thus far the lecturers have been authorised to go by the Army Council.

"With regard to the whole question of the issue of prophylactic outfits my personal opinion is that it might not be of much real use in diminishing the actual number of cases of venereal disease occurring in the army. In the first place no one can say that the methods afford absolutely certain and sure protection from the infection either of gonorrhoea or syphilis. Figures are always fallacious, but in the cases which have come under my personal knowledge, the percentage of failure has been very high, and this can be easily understood when one considers the conditions under which infection generally takes place. The principle medical officer of one of the largest hospitals for venereal diseases in London lately traced the source of infection in the last 100 cases admitted into that institution; he found that of these 100 men only 28 had got the disease from professional prostitutes; the remaining 72 were the victims of what might be described as the amateur flapper. It therefore stands to reason that in many cases the necessary precautions to avoid infection would have to be taken not in the "ordered circumstance of a harlot's room" but in the open air, in barns, copses, or commons, or behind a hedge, and therefore unless a man was extremely sober, very cold-blooded and skilful with his fingers, the chances are that he might fail to protect himself effi-