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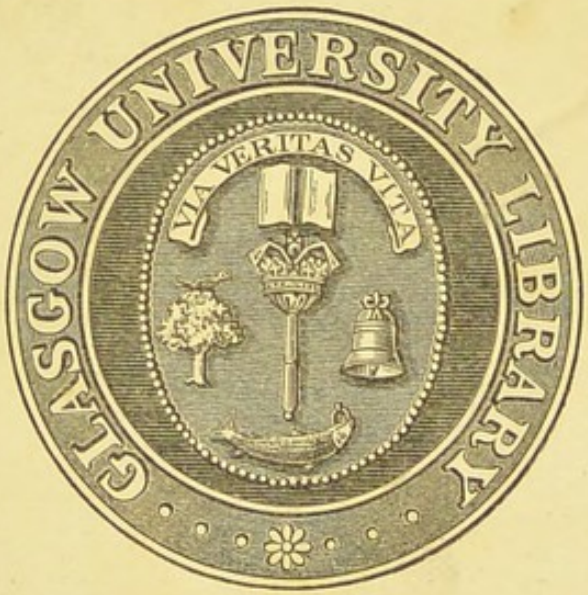

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OUR MORALITY

AND

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THE MORAL QUESTION:

CHIEFLY FROM THE MEDICAL SIDE.

BY

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TO

STUDENTS OF KING'S COLLEGE,

AMONG WHOM

THE AUTHOR HAS STUDIED AND TAUGHT

FOR NEARLY FIFTY YEARS,

THIS WORK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THIS little book is based upon suggestions and advice which the author has ventured to offer from time to time in his lectures at King's College, London. Though it lacks systematic arrangement and completeness, and is in many respects imperfect, it is hoped it may be the means of drawing further attention to one of the most pressing and complex questions of our modern life, and especially to the need of improved moral training for the young.

61, GROSVENOR STREET,
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MORALITY

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MORAL QUESTION.

MORAL offences and wrongs which would have been deemed disgraceful to humanity in its very childhood, and which are ever unknown among people who are guided by reason, simplicity, goodness, and honour, have been committed, if not with impunity, at least without vigorous protest on the part of those who lead and govern. And notwithstanding that it is admitted as certain that disgrace, misery, and ruin, with a long train of attendant horrors, must invariably follow any great departure from moral rectitude on the part of a considerable proportion of a community, no adequate means have yet been taken to reduce the evil or to deal with it at its source.

Not the least extraordinary fact, as regards the behaviour of a not inconsiderable section of modern society in the matter of moral offences, is, that indifference and apathy seem to constitute the chief punishment meted out to the deliberate destroyers of certain rights, as well as the prospects of happiness of others. Fortunately, the number of those, at least in this country, who set moral rights and laws at

open defiance during a considerable portion of their lives, and are influenced neither by reason, nor mercy, nor pity, is small—so very small, that it is surprising greater efforts have not been made by those who work towards different ends to confine within ever-narrowing limits the evil that is wrought, and wherever it is possible, check the ruin and all encouragement afforded to the spread of immorality and vice. While society rightly insists upon the capture and punishment of the wretched little thief who steals the meanest bit of property, it seems to allow, if it does not actually condone, some moral offences so very serious that, were they common, not only the Christian order of things, but modern civilization itself would be destroyed, and every effort contributed during centuries that have passed to the advancement of the human mind, and the making of nations great, would be lost; nay, a state of things would certainly result, in comparison with which savagery itself would be preferable and advantageous.

Even now it may be doubted whether many are not giving way to weak fancies of working good, and cheating their reason in respect of some moral questions. Legislation concerning morals is from time to time sternly but somewhat thoughtlessly demanded. Severe punishment is to be strictly enforced. But not a few who have well thought over the facts of the case, and who have had considerable practical experience in dealing both with the wrongers and the wronged, are of opinion that people cannot be made good, or moral, or just towards their neighbours, by the terrorising consequences of heavy punishment, or by the best of laws, or by the most ubiquitous espionage. The real remedy for evil opinions, vicious tastes, inconsiderate selfishness and cruel behaviour towards the weak, will never be found in Acts of Parliament, or the enactments of criminal law.

If only a considerable number of persons in a community will determine to earnestly strive and encourage

others to strive to attain to and preserve a high moral standard, the character of a continually increasing percentage of the people will necessarily be raised, and in the course of a moderate time national advance in goodness will be apparent. It is upon individual moral strength and virtue that we must rely for the inauguration and encouragement of national aspiration towards a higher ideal than has yet been reached.

On the other hand, there is irrefragable evidence that concurrence in looseness of view as regards morals on the part of many individuals, and the admission of theories of life and action characterised by disregard of the paramount necessity of a high and a continually advancing standard of morals, are certain to lead to physical as well as to moral degradation, and to widespread and at length to national failure.

I believe it will be found that the real progress of a people is dependent upon the moral strength rather than upon the intellectual power of its leaders and public men. And though examples of the combination of striking intellectual power with low morality can be pointed out in history, the prominence given to these exceptional instances by historians, shows that the proposition that human progress is very intimately dependent upon the preservation of a high moral standard is generally acknowledged to be true. National, like individual greatness, is not possible where the vital importance of moral principles is not acknowledged and acted upon, and where morality is discountenanced or despised.

Nor is it in any way an adequate objection to the conclusion just stated, that immorality and the consequent degradation following in its wake, though they proceed apace and afflict for a period a certain proportion of a community, need not necessarily infect all or cause the ruin and moral degradation of the nation at large. Undoubtedly it

is possible that atrocious ideas and practices may secretly spread through a clique or section of a people without the right-minded being polluted, or even aware of the canker threatening their destruction. It is possible that as soon as the discovery shall have been made the good may at once prevail over the evildoers, and thus a dangerous spread of corruption be stayed. Although that may occur, the risk incurred is tremendous, and too often has it happened that the strength of the good, after being gradually undermined, has proved insufficient to stem the torrent of corruption and wickedness, and the whole community has been tainted and has steadily retrograded.

In large cities where wealth and biting poverty touch one another, and where the last condition may succeed the first, even more than once during the lifetime of an individual,—in which the rich and reckless from every part of the world meet and congregate for the very purpose of gratifying their evil propensities and passions, and giving vent to their desires and appetites, moral faults and offences will prevail, and will from time to time acquire an intensity and impetus exceptional and very dangerous to the people. If, however, good men would but think of the disaster, the misery, the chaos, that must quickly follow the spread of unchecked vice, they would surely take steps to stop the gathering evil and enforce right, and prevent the progress of moral degradation before large numbers become sufferers from what was at one time an easily preventible misery.

Every class of society is disgraced by offences against morals, though it is doubtful whether the poor in this respect are as much at fault as the rich. But alas, neither riches nor poverty, early age nor the closing years of life, nor the ranks of the followers of religion or philosophy, are free from the disgrace of including among them moral delinquents. And while it is certain that at least in this country the total of human misery has been, and is continually being much

reduced, there can be no doubt that the wretchedness resulting from avoidable moral offences is much more intense and very much more widely spread than ought to be the case among a people so advanced in many respects as ourselves.

And in this connection some objection may no doubt be taken to the views concerning morals entertained by many of the clergy, schoolmasters, and some others concerned in the training of the young, who do not seem to realise the very complicated nature of the question, and that it may be impossible in a given case to determine how far the vicious tendency of the boy may be due to heredity and to badness acquired by ancestors, and how far to mismanagement on the part of parents, to the state of the home and environment, and how far to the training to which he is subjected in preparing for his work in life. The careful consideration of the above questions may help us to decide upon the principles which should guide us in our efforts to keep straight those who have not transgressed, and restore those who have erred to a state from which they may endeavour to rise to a higher moral condition. Such considerations too will lead us to pause before we decide to act upon the theory that the individual alone is to blame, and is entirely responsible for his badness, and has deliberately and wilfully determined to offend and to take a course which he knows to be wrong and injurious to all about him as well as to himself.

In times past, as well as now, moral offences have been chiefly condemned as offences against religion, but while it is certain that no truly religious man can be immoral, a man who discards every form of religion may be highly moral. Men who have passed in the world as very religious persons have grossly offended against morals. The fact that some men have discarded Christianity altogether and profess not to believe any form of religion, renders the argument from

the religious side of no avail, at least as respects persons of this class.

However strongly men may be opposed to any form of religious belief, they will admit that it is desirable that all should endeavour to attain to a high moral standard. Moreover, the most immoral will allow that it would be better for the world if all were moral, and it is certain that the cause of morality may be advocated upon grounds altogether independent of religion. And further, it is doubtful whether in these days very much can be gained for the cause of morals by threats of the severest punishment in another world for sins or indiscretions committed in this, at any rate in the case of those who claim to have satisfied or convinced themselves that as the idea of a future state, as well as the idea of future punishment, rests upon no facts of observation or reason capable of proof or demonstration at this time, or likely to be demonstrated in the future, decline to accept either, or to allow their conduct to be in any way influenced by such considerations. It will I fear be vain to expect to influence some minds on this subject by arguments from religion. And, lastly, it is felt that all that can be said from the religious side has been already many times said in the best way possible, and with all the force that eloquence can add to the brightness and purity of truth. Let us then submit to argue, and hope to convince, from a lower standpoint. Let us consider these most important moral questions from our special side, not indeed with any hope of convincing men who have determinedly pursued a vicious course, for such persons will not be turned aside until they shall have been overtaken by disaster, but rather with the view of testing the strength of our own position in advising and endeavouring to help in the most efficient manner possible those who need and wish for help from us.

Moral questions have not been so fully or so systemati-

cally considered from the medical point of view as, in the opinion of many of us, is desirable. Upon these, as well as upon some other grounds, I propose in this book to discuss moral questions altogether independently of their religious relation and bearing. By such a course I believe I shall strengthen the case of those whose views are based upon considerations of religion, while I venture to think that if my arguments do not convince, they will not be easily controverted by agnostics, atheists, or other unbelievers.

Of all things needful to the advance of the human race, and for the content and happiness of the greatest number, morality is of the first importance. Moral is soon succeeded by physical degradation, and a community the great majority of whose members have been pursuing immoral evil courses for a considerable time, must sink lower and lower in the scale of civilization until destroyed by a stronger race, or slowly vanish in consequence of fatal degeneration and decay.

Immoral Tendencies and Practices in Early Life.

The source of much moral evil is bad management and improper training during the very early years of life. Bad habits are acquired in some instances while the boy is yet in the nursery, and are not unfrequently due to ignorance or carelessness, and want of careful watching on the part of the mother and the nurse. The evil, if persisted in, may soon become a pernicious habit which is most difficult to cure. It is probably by boys who have thus suffered that the evil is sometimes introduced into junior schools, where one tainted individual is unfortunately only too likely to infect some hitherto innocent. Thus the evil may spread, and in a comparatively short time if proper vigilance is not exercised, a considerable number of boys may become victims.

This subject has received the most anxious consideration from the masters of our great schools, and earnest efforts have been made—sometimes successfully, sometimes without success—to detect the evil before it spread amongst the boys. It is, however, certain that the extent and intensity of the evil have been, of course unintentionally, greatly exaggerated, and many have been led to accept very erroneous views concerning it.

Many years ago the subject was very freely, I think too freely, discussed, and at considerable length, in the public journals, and great divergence of opinion was shown to exist both as regards the extent and urgency of the evil itself, and also as to the best means of preventing boys from becoming victims to this "besetting trial," and as to the mode of curing those who had already succumbed. I do not think the matter can be considered in any better way than will be afforded by a perusal of some of the remarks that were made at the time, and I propose therefore to give some extracts from a few of the letters, which will enable the reader to form an opinion concerning the evil as it then existed, or was supposed to exist.

In a letter to the "Times," Dr. Pusey said:—

"Fifty years ago, before the intercourse with the Continent had been much renewed, I have reason to believe that that sin was unknown at most of our public schools. Now, alas! it is the besetting trial of our boys; it is sapping the constitutions, and injuring in many the fineness of intellect." If such a statement were correct, or only in part correct, careful enquiry into the state of our public schools ought to have been instituted, while, on the other hand, if it was only a highly exaggerated account, the actual state of things ought to have been ascertained. I replied to Dr. Pusey's observations, and stated that I believed he had been misinformed, and had taken a very exaggerated and gloomy view both as regards the extent of the evil and

the seriousness and frequency of disastrous consequences ("Medical Times and Gazette," December 22, 1866).

The experience of the Rev. E. Thring, Head Master of Uppingham School, was opposed to Dr. Pusey's statements. Narrating his own personal experience as a schoolboy on the matter, he stated that he was three years at a small private school which from some circumstances was eminently calculated to foster such an evil, but yet he never became aware of anything of the kind, and during nine years' stay at Eton afterwards, the existence of Dr. Pusey's "besetting sin" was unknown to him. "In other words, no boy at Eton," in Mr. Thring's time, "was of necessity exposed to temptation, and betrayed in this way, at least without full means of escape." Of his later experience, as head master of a large public school, he says, "I have now been upwards of thirteen years head master here (Uppingham), perfectly alive to the possible existence of such an evil, and have never seen any reason to suspect its presence." . . . "One boy did consult me on the subject, but I deny that it has ever formed a definite temptation here. I have spoken to my medical adviser, and he unhesitatingly confirms this." Speaking of what means should be taken to prevent or cure the vice, Mr. Thring "unhesitatingly condemns any precautions implying suspicion and all approaches to individual treatment unless an individual entirely voluntarily asks advice."

As the following answers on the part of Dr. Pusey to the charge of having exaggerated the evil are representative of the arguments frequently advanced from that side, I think it desirable to insert them here. Dr. Pusey repeated his former statement and wished to God that he had exaggerated it. Since the correspondence in the "Times," the receipt of numerous letters from medical men and others confirmed Dr. Pusey in all he had said, and he wrote another letter in which he states the following facts :—

1. "I have been informed by one who knew it that the great success of one who had a considerable reputation for curing those who consulted him some years ago, and who did effect cures which surprised people, was in a great degree owing to this—that he brought the vice home to patients, and so by scaring them from it, as the cause of their bodily illnesses, checked the various illnesses which it entailed. 2. A physician of very great medical name and in large practice, recently told a friend of mine, that when he observed certain symptoms of debility of system, he always charged the patients with it and so cured them. 3. Many years ago I accompanied a person labouring under mental delusions to a lunatic asylum. The first question asked me by the resident medical officer was whether he had this habit. He told me that it had brought many there. (I have heard the like as to other lunatic asylums.) 4. The medical head of a lunatic asylum lately told a friend of mine that the person labouring under mental delusion whom he placed there was (I think) at least the *tenth* whom he had had from that cause from *one* large school. 5. The system then of "ignoring" the habit has failed. It is the very system under which it has grown up, from a time subsequent to my own boyhood, when at a very large public school, boys (except two of whom I heard afterwards that one died of it at the school, the other was a half idiot) were wholly ignorant of it. We did not understand the poor half idiot's allusion to it" ("Medical Times and Gazette," vol. XXXIV, 1866, p. 126).

With reference to "fact" 1, it is only necessary to remark that Dr. Pusey's informant begs the whole question, and it is surprising that such evidence should be regarded as of any value. The physician referred to under fact 2, should have stated what he meant by the vague term "debility of system," and what evidence he had that his patients were *cured*. Every practitioner is aware of the existence of this

habit. The question is concerning its extent and consequences. No. 4 is the most important of the "facts" adduced by Dr. Pusey, and should be very carefully inquired into—but is it not extraordinary that the period of time during which the ten cases were admitted is not stated, and that nothing is said as to the number of boys in the school from which the ten cases were taken? If the percentage of cases from one particular school was very high, commissioners ought to have been appointed to investigate the matter. It requires no prophet to say that the education pursued at that school would be found false and rotten to the very core. In 5, Dr. Pusey asserts that ignoring the habit has failed, but he advances no facts or arguments in support of the statement. The half idiot probably owed both the habit and his idiocy to one condition,—congenital defect in the structure of the central organs of his nervous system.

The very forcible remarks expressed at the time by Dr. Pusey and others may, I fear, have had the effect of leading some silly persons to place more reliance upon many of the statements in some disreputable books brought under their observation than the facts at all warrant. The exaggerated statements are calculated, most unnecessarily, to alarm parents. And I cannot help thinking that if those who were thus misled had been able to look upon the matter more from the medical point of view, they would have arrived at a conclusion more in accord with truth.

It is a very serious question to decide how far it is right to regard an indecent practice or vicious habit which has possibly been contracted at a very early age, and perhaps is the consequence of a physical deformity, as an offence of the most serious and terrible kind—as a sin against God. To make this moral error into a religious offence seems to me most objectionable. If, on the other hand, it is simply treated as an indecent and bad habit, and considered

physiologically—perhaps due to some derangement of health or to undue nerve excitement—it will in the great majority of instances be effectually cured without inflicting any lasting or irremediable sorrow on the mind of the boy, and without occasioning his relatives serious anxiety and alarm. Nay, are we not necessarily led by existing medical knowledge to consider this subject from the medical side, and to regard the objectionable habit as one likely to impair bodily and mental health, and to require treatment from us? It seems to me that it is our duty to explain to the parent the possible consequences of the boy persisting in the habit, and show how his general health might become deranged, and in what highly important points his nervous system might suffer; we should suggest the propriety of urging the boy to exercise self-control, and teaching him the necessity of acquiring mastery over this as well as over other weaknesses and evil tendencies of his mind.

To treat this matter purely from the religious side, as has been advised and practised by some, is a step which has always seemed to me to be fraught with serious risk. This course may result in consequences very disturbing to the religious convictions. Many of us object to use the religious argument at all, because we feel that we may be met with the objections that the vice originated in consequence of changes at a period of life long antecedent to that when the mind could have any very distinct conception of right and wrong as regards such habit, that at least in some cases the habit is contracted when the mind has no control whatever over such bodily actions, and that a high sense of religion and hopeful obedience to religious ordinances have not, alas, either prevented the patient from falling into the habit or enabled him to cure himself after it had been acquired. Lastly, I would remark, that however much men may differ as to the way in which those who have fallen into vicious and unfortunate practices should be treated, there can be

no doubt that if it is considered that the teachers of religion should instruct and advise the young concerning these matters from their side, it is still more necessary that we should endeavour to do so from the health side; and,—seeing that we are constantly engaged in studying and treating departures from the healthy condition of body and mind which, indeed, can scarcely be included among the duties of the clergyman, must it not follow that at least in many instances the patient will be more likely to receive help and benefit from judicious medical than from other kinds of advice?

The expediency of openly and publicly discussing many of the delicate questions which belong to this department of medicine, is open to grave doubt. Though of late this question has been decided in the affirmative, I venture to doubt whether the conclusion is wise, or likely to benefit the cause of morality. Is it not a serious risk to set at nought the natural feeling of the young, and wrong to attempt to shock the natural diffidence and repugnance which exists in both sexes to plain speaking about sexual matters? Plain speaking would be intolerable among grown up people, and even among the freest, loosest, and basest of mankind, metaphor is still largely employed in conversation about the relations of the sexes. The use of metaphor surely indicates that some natural shyness, if not shame, still lingers, and that the being is not yet quite lost in the depths of that slough of recklessness in which every aspiration towards good is quenched.

Such are some of the considerations which have led me to conclude that these, as well as many other cases where the mind and body do not healthily act and react upon one another, are more likely to be benefitted by sound medical advice than by exclusively religious or intellectual treatment. Medical practitioners are more likely to be of real assistance to the patient than the clergy, or secular, classic, or science

instructors. Our position as family advisers as regards bodily and mental health, and on the general hygienic management of the young would seem to point us out as the fit persons who should be consulted upon this important subject, and I feel confident that if in many cases the heads of schools would talk over the question with a sensible medical practitioner, they would obtain many valuable suggestions to assist them in practically dealing with the trouble should there be good reason to fear its presence amongst their boys; or possibly, after considering the facts from the medical side they might feel reassured and decide that it was not necessary to interfere.

Objections to Confession as a Remedy or Preventive.—The practice of confession has been strongly advocated as a means of preventing and curing this evil—but to the employment of confession for such purposes there seems to be grave objection. If the confession of weakness were an infallible and unfailing source of strength in all cases, all right-minded people would be ready to advocate confession. If a vow once taken was certain not to be broken the conferring and diffusion of goodness would be easy indeed; but it is the frequent failure of confession as of every other method of treatment resting exclusively upon religious principles which renders desirable the adoption of another course. And it must be borne in mind that the breaking of a sacred promise or vow leaves the breaker in a state far worse than he was before the vow was taken. Minds will, no doubt, under some circumstances, be in danger of being wrecked, no matter what efforts are made by the good to save them, and many minds will, it is to be feared, wreck themselves; but to be directly instrumental in wrecking a mind is exactly the part which every good man will do his utmost to avoid taking, and it is to be feared that the administering of vows has sometimes contributed to this sad result.

Judging from many of the cases which have been brought under my own observation, I should say that the system likely to foster and intensify this evil is the very one which has been recommended by some to counteract it. The temperament of many of the sufferers to which their unfortunate condition must at least in some measure be attributed, will benefit under the influence of circumstances very different from, if not the very opposite of, those advocated. Frequent self-examination, as deemed necessary by dismal despairing men who have been disappointed with the world, and who take a too gloomy view of everything,—habitual confession to melancholy persons trained to dwell upon the inherent wickedness of man,—the concentration of the whole mind upon one of the most mysterious and complex of all the phenomena of our being, are not under any circumstances supposable likely to benefit the majority of boys. These are antagonistic to their very nature, and their effect on the developing mind must be, at least in many instances, to cramp and distort it.

I believe that the practice of habitual confession on the part of children and young people, as has been advocated by some members of our church, is calculated to do irreparable mischief not only to the mind but through the mind to the health of the body. And I am sure that no physician who has studied the gradual development of the mental powers in young persons, and has carefully considered the influence which the mind has upon the bodily health and vigour, would advocate habitual confession as a desirable part of training of the young. An active minded, hearty, busy boy or youth, thinks seldom of the gloomy side of life. His mind is interested, and he is happily ignorant of every thing connected with immoral subjects. He will probably remain so till he grows up if his attention be well occupied, his life happy, and filthy books kept out of his way. He will instinctively shun the society of boys or young men

who discourse upon impurity—if with a good motive, I venture to think, certainly, with a mistaken view.

As highly sensitive nervous boys, and especially those of a retiring, contemplative, and shy and timid disposition, grow towards puberty, they may be troubled by frequent—too frequent consideration, sometimes accompanied by vague unreasonable anxiety and alarm concerning the sexual function. Judicious medical explanation and advice are in some cases sorely needed, but the natural reticence of the individual and the indisposition to converse upon such topics even to his most intimate friend too often prevent him from obtaining the help from those who know more than he does, and which would be gladly given.

Some of the worst cases of the class I am considering are possibly due to advice having been given to contemplate a condition of life very far removed from the ordinary state, and to dwell too much upon the deplorable weakness and wickedness of man. For the thoughts to be entirely taken away from real natural surroundings and to be entirely absorbed in the life of the soul may in the result be as bad as allowing the mind to be concentrated on and exclusively occupied by trivialities. In many of these cases there has been too much introspection, too much analysis of thoughts that come unbidden, but which ought not to be dwelt upon, or feelings or supposed sensations of an unusual kind, which do not trouble people generally, but which evidently trouble some unfortunate individuals, and result in the production of a disordered mind.

Confession and self-communing are not remedies for improving the health of minds addicted to thinking about and dwelling upon the many unpleasant sensations and experiences in different parts of the body. Those who thus act create for themselves wretchedness, from which, as time goes on, they will find it difficult or impossible to entirely escape. The habit of frequent introspection should be

guarded against, as it may lead to evil as serious as that opposite state of mind in which anything like quiet and repose appears to be impossible. The individual who permits himself to fall into one or other of these unfortunate mental extremes may gradually become a fidget, a bore, a hypochondriac, or a maniac. That many such, though often complaining of their aches and pains and their weak bodily health, or their depressed spirits, or the intensity of their sorrows and misfortunes, or their tendency to premature decay and early death, nevertheless live to be old, should be regarded as evidence sufficiently convincing to deter others from falling into the same unhappy course; but the race of self-made hypochondriacs is, it is to be feared, on the increase, while it is constantly receiving accessions from all classes of people; and but too often from among the intelligent and those who have highly distinguished themselves in intellectual competition, and who ought to have been aware of the mental discipline by subjecting themselves to which the misfortune might have been averted. Neither contemplation nor learning, nor art nor physical science, can alone be relied upon as a cure of this unfortunate condition or as a certain preventive of its development. Its origin in many cases is very obscure, but in some it seems to be due to a habit, acquired at an early age and afterwards diligently fostered, of dwelling upon any slight disturbance of derangement of mental or bodily function, and of allowing the thoughts to be too much concentrated upon morbid fancies. In consequence of constantly dwelling upon every slight disturbance of mental or bodily action,—the individual body or the mind may soon seem to the perverted imagination of its possessor to assume such transcendant importance, that all other minds, bodies, and outside things are completely overshadowed or blotted out. Environment is obliterated, horizon is lost, and the unsatisfiable ego is all in all.

Further considerations concerning the effects of impure habits upon the health, with suggestions concerning remedial measures.—In the majority of cases change of scene, variety in work, exchanging ideas with others of about the same age and in the same position, will prevent or cure the malady, and it must be borne in mind that there is hardly a department of duty or work, hardly a calling from which instances of this weakness are not drawn. Even successful athletes contribute their quota to the hypochondriacal host. Too much concentration of the mind upon any single object of desire or interest seems to foster and increase the malady, and especially is there danger of its rapid development when intellectual or physical efforts have been attended with great success in open competition. I am sure that the majority of these cases are preventible by the individual himself, if only he can be made to see at a sufficiently early period the evil tendencies of his mind. Some of them are, however, hereditary, and whenever such condition or any tendency in such direction should exist in the parents, the training of the children should be conducted with exceptional care. Moderation in everything should be enjoined. Nothing should be overdone. Over exertion is as injurious as an indolent life.

Over-eating will be productive of as much mischief as insufficient food. Irregularity in the time of eating and in daily work and habits must be avoided, and care must be taken to encourage free and regular action of the liver, if possible by diet, if not by the occasional administration of medicines which improve the action of that important organ. But although the greatest care may be taken to prevent the influence of any of the disturbing causes I have alluded to, and although by good management in early life the number of these distressing cases may be much reduced, we must, I fear, recognise the fact that from time to time some will be brought under our notice, and we must carefully consider

the best method of dealing with them. There are minds that must ponder and meditate whether their owners will or no, and if such minds are to be kept in health and under due subjection to the will, something harmless must be found for them to feed upon and think about. It is certainly in each man's power, and to a great extent in the power of those who train and direct the young, to provide subjects which can be dwelt upon without disaster and without risk of loss of mental health and strength.

Looking only from a physiological point of view, leaving for the moment the teachings of experience and the recommendations of the wise, as well as individual inclination, out of the question, there is no doubt that everyone by the time puberty is reached, and perhaps before as well as after this age, who desires to enjoy mental health, must have something to think about which will keep him from troubling himself concerning the sexual function, and which is not necessarily connected with his daily work and occupation. The man whose whole time is taken up in work which he is obliged to do is better off than the man who has no duty he is compelled to discharge, especially if the latter has not force of character, intelligence, or inclination to invent occupation and keep himself at work. Nay, it is doubtful whether the criminal undergoing punishment for his offences is not in all respects better off, and really experiences less suffering, than the unfortunate who, brought up in the bosom of luxury and surrounded by artificial amusements and so-called enjoyments, has nothing to do but to kill time which hangs so heavily. To a healthy well-developed mind what is generally considered amusement is often boredom. Men who are too rich, with neither brains nor training for the work they ought to do, and for gaining the position they ought to fill, have to serve life-long servitude under the restrictions of fashion, surrounded by dulness and ennui, and the simulacrum of satisfaction by which with the aid of

lavish expenditure some of the idle and incapable and apathetic among the wealthy partially succeed in appeasing the longing for real work.

There are many so-called hobbies which may be taken up by those who are not strong and able to play football and cricket, or to take severe exercise. Hobbies may be inexpensive, or extremely costly, according to the circumstances of the individual. But there is no doubt, as far as regards mental health, the object is as well secured by a hobby as inexpensive as a window garden as by a park—by a few domestic animals as well as by a zoological gardens. Nay, there is really more to engage the attention, and for the mind to ruminate upon, in the study of a few living forms, even so very small as those in a drop of water, or a single plant, than the owner of half a county will discover in his rambles, or a very Crœsus have at his command. For the mind's capacity for taking in is not unlimited, and although the pleasures of vast possessions are undoubtedly great, their greatness is not entirely due to the gratification they afford to the highest mental faculties. All that is required is that the mind should be interested as well as occupied, should have something more than material acquisition to think about during its waking state—something to engage it so that it shall not fall back upon the contemplation and analysis of every little nerve disturbance in organs of digestion, circulation, secretion, or generation, which may cause discomfort or worse, nor be exclusively concentrated upon the addition of money to money.

Tricycling and bicycling should be encouraged among all classes, because both body and mind are exercised. The tours which the young can thus take are likely to be of the greatest benefit. Cyclists have their own hotels where they can put up at moderate expense, and if the journeys undertaken are not too long, advantage to the health both of mind and body will result. No doubt it may be said that these

and many other pursuits and some favourite amusements entail some risk, and may be attended with loss of life; but it may be urged with reason that the risks incurred are as nothing compared with those which the same boys would run of suffering from deterioration of bodily and mental health, if instead they were subjected to a course of training in which active exercise formed no necessary part. All have not strength for hard muscular work, and those who are naturally weak ought not to be permitted even to attempt to play at games destined for the strong and vigorous only. It is then necessary to provide amusements which shall be suitable to weak as well as to strong boys. Arrangements should be made so as to permit each individual boy to study that particular department of human knowledge which excites in him keen interest. Carpentering, engineering, natural history should be encouraged among the boys, so that the boy life may be active and happy, and the entrance and spread of evil rendered almost impossible. In such circumstances there will not in fact be time for the introduction and spread of evil; for play, amusement, meals, and rest succeed one another with no interval between long enough for the mind to be leavened by evil or idle thoughts.

Intellectual work, interest, severe struggles, nay difficulties and hardship, may save the sufferer not a few serious troubles arising from nerve disturbances connected with the sexual function. In the case of a race like our own, it is probable that active exercise during boyhood and early youth have much to do with the vigour and wisdom displayed by a considerable percentage in manhood and old age, as well as with the self-restraint which characterises the majority, and is acknowledged as a duty by all. Nobody would for a moment deny that the appetite for food and drink ought to be kept well under the control of the will, not only on account of the individual's own interests as regards himself, but for other obvious reasons. Civilization

as it is could not be maintained if the majority of men just followed their inclinations and instincts, and allowed their appetites full swing. And yet there are instincts the rebellion of which against not only laws, but against good feeling, reason, taste, as well as the customs of every civilized race under heaven, if not actually condoned has certainly not been met by decided opposition by which it might have been checked before the better tendencies of the mind had been entirely vanquished.

The above considerations should, I think, secure more attention from the profession than has generally been accorded them. They have undoubtedly a most important bearing upon the management of many sad cases upon which we are often called upon to give advice. I think that the probability of the successful treatment of many, and their restoration to a healthy mental state will be greatly increased if the general surroundings of the patient during childhood and youth be carefully investigated and considered, and if a broad view be taken of the patient's mental and moral powers and of his capacity for intellectual and physical work, than if the physician's attention be solely directed to the particular derangement for which his advice is sought.

When an evil habit has been acquired it may be obstinately persisted in until the health is much undermined, and suspicion of the true state of things may be excited by the altered appearance and manner of the boy. Now I would ask who is most likely to be of the greatest use in ascertaining in the least objectionable manner whether the suspicion is correct, and if so, in suggesting what steps ought to be taken to break the habit and restore the boy to health of body and mind as quickly as possible? There is no doubt whatever as to what ought to be the answer to this question, although seldom or, at any rate, less frequently than would be for the interest of the patient and his parents,

is the proper action taken. The family medical adviser is clearly the person to appeal to for help, and to him application should be made by parents and guardians, and by schoolmasters who have reason to fear that some of their boys are addicted to the habit in question, or are suffering from some of its consequences.

Should young people be instructed concerning sexual matters, advised, and warned?—It has been strongly recommended that the young should be counselled as regards the high importance of "purity," and this recommendation, it is said, springs from extensive knowledge and experience on the part of those who have given it, and further, the general statement is made that many practical people have expressed concurrence in, and have acted upon, this view.

I cannot, however, recommend parents and schoolmasters to act in the manner advised, because the "counsel," at least in some instances, is calculated in my opinion to do harm instead of good. Some who differ from me in this view will perhaps discourse very seriously about "solemn duty," "grave responsibility," and the like, and will declare that they *must* be right, seeing that they have been engaged in the arduous, self-denying work of a holy crusade against moral sin and evil. To calm minds the intensity and vigour of some of these crusaders seem to be out of all proportion to the objects practically attainable by the crusade. It is also extremely doubtful whether the crusaders' counsels would, if followed, have the effect they anticipate. Although they are certainly serious and solemn enough, their seriousness and solemnity are not likely to have the effect they suppose upon the minds of boys and young men. They may even excite impatience and rebellion where they anticipate sympathy and submission.

At the same time, there is no doubt that some of the mental and bodily derangements connected with the sexual function in the young are in part due to want of knowledge

on the part of parents and guardians of children and young people, and to an indisposition to touch upon these matters even with the family medical adviser. Actual malformations and structural defects sometimes remain unnoticed for years after the time when they ought to have been detected and brought under the notice of the practitioner. It seems to me strange indeed that such cases should continue unobserved till attention is called to them by very patent serious derangements. The circumstance seems to show that for some reason or other the medical adviser is not so generally regarded as the family friend and counsellor as in the interests of the public it is desirable that he should be. Whether it is that people have more confidence in their own opinions, or in those of their non-medical friends, than in the advice of sensible professional men I cannot say, but the cases that from time to time come under notice seem to suggest an extraordinary want of belief and trust in many well-trained and thoroughly reliable practitioners of large experience most difficult to explain or account for. Nay, sometimes the most obvious quackery and nonsense have prevailed where knowledge, sense, and very high moral qualities have not been recognised, or have been discarded or accounted as of no value, in comparison with the dicta of very pretentious but ignorant and inexperienced non-professional people who have been appealed to.

Public schools labour under some disadvantages in connection with this matter. Of necessity, a general system or plan must be made applicable to all, and, as in some penal systems, strong and weak are expected to do the same quantity of work and consume the same amount of food. The giant and the dwarf must eat alike, and work and play alike. Boys, like our soldiers and sailors, police and prisoners, are too often treated as if the strength, digestive power, and intellectual capacity were uniform, or nearly the same, in each individual. But in truth the cricket and foot-

ball, so valuable to most, are actually detrimental to some, while the quiet but excellent tastes of some fragile boys are quite discountenanced by the school authorities, and the yearning after certain very important kinds of knowledge is suppressed, and perhaps laughed at.

Schools and colleges may be very good as far as intellectual and technical training are concerned, but indifferent or hopelessly bad as regards morals. It is to be feared that moral training has of late years been falling behind, and it is certainly time that some improvement in this respect were effected. Children and young people are not fairly treated if they are sent out into the world without any moral training whatever, and in utter ignorance of the misery that may come upon them if they discard or rebel against rules for the guidance of behaviour, the importance of which has not been impressed upon them; indeed, which they may have been taught to laugh at as old world prudery or nonsense; although disobedience will certainly be visited by the most severe chastisement and penalties exacted by the new world society without mercy or pity.

Whether it is possible, as some assert, to warn boys against falling into bad habits without making remarks or suggestions calculated to excite curiosity concerning evils which perhaps have been in this way brought before the boy's mind for the first time, is doubtful. Thus warning the boy against falling into bad ways may be, and I think has been, the means of leading him astray. At the same time, I have no doubt there are exceptional cases in which judicious warnings may be of great use. With regard to most boys, I think it is better not to refer to the subject at all, or only in the most general way, as, for example, by urging boys not to be led to do anything when they are alone which they would be ashamed to do before others, or which they know their parents and those who love them would certainly condemn. And generally we may inculcate

the high importance of morals. We may persuade and encourage the young to preserve through life a high moral standard, without even alluding to sexual questions, or evils, errors, or bad habits connected therewith. In dealing with such delicate matters in the presence of the young it is of the first importance that the moral teacher should understand, and be able to sympathise with his pupils in the views they take of life. There are probably few things in which men of mature judgment are more mistaken than in the inferences they sometimes draw concerning the thoughts and mental working of the young. Some of the best intentioned and generous minded men of middle age or past seem to think that boys from ten, or younger, to fifteen and older, are for ever harping upon matters included under the general head of "impurity," when, in fact, ideas neither very pure nor very impure have perhaps presented themselves to the boy-mind. The boy may be supremely unconscious of the very serious considerations which many well-meaning mentors consider it necessary to bring under his notice, and it is possible that in some instances the first of a number of succeeding impulses excited in the mind towards evil may have been started by the officious efforts of an injudicious enthusiast to force him to behave, and to talk, and perhaps write, as if he were very good indeed. A high spirited boy, who would have gone right if let alone, may be so bothered and annoyed by the perpetual presentation of ideas of perfection utterly beyond his comprehension, that out of very perversity, or anger, or despair he will tend in an opposite direction. If let alone he would have been good enough, and perhaps by degrees might have gained thorough mastery over any evil propensities of his nature, and steadily progressed towards good. It is doubtful whether some excessively good, well-meaning people were ever actually boys themselves. Others, with good intent, seem wholly incapable of realising that their ideas in boyhood

were at all different from those of manhood, while a few seem to accept the cruel perversion of fact that all boys are bad.

A sensible master will, of course, study the character of his boys, and will take care to gain the confidence of any very retiring youth under his charge, especially the boy who desires to be very much alone, and who from diffidence, a retiring disposition, or from some other cause, shuns companionship and takes no part in the games and pursuits generally popular. In every school there are a few boys who are more or less out of place, and not in accord with the world in which they live. Some of these can be much improved by a little sympathy, and may thus be led to join after a time in the pursuits and games of the majority, instead of holding themselves aloof as at first.

The age of puberty in the case of girls.—As regards the condition of the other sex about the corresponding period of life, some of the remarks already made are in certain respects applicable. Of late years far too much has been said and published concerning certain derangements of bodily and mental health prone to occur at this time, and likely to be made worse by the concentration of the sufferer's attention upon them, as well as by the too frequently expressed concern of female friends and relations. Many of these derangements are most effectually treated by the help of a sensible mother or female relative, assisted in some instances by the instructions of the family medical adviser. Great judgment is required in order that a trivial malady, or, as often happens, what is no more than a supposed one, due perhaps to brooding over imaginary troubles affecting mind or temper, or to morbid oversensitiveness and low spirits favoured by the conditions under which the girl may have to live, should not be allowed gradually to attain ascendancy over all other ideas and dominate the reason

and the will. To produce some of these unfortunate states of mind and bodily health it is to be feared medicine itself has contributed. From want of knowledge, experience, judgment, or from extreme sensitiveness on the part of the practitioner, lest some grave malady escape detection, the error has been committed of making too much of a slight derangement or of nothing. Practitioners, and notably those who make the diseases of females their special concern, have, there is reason to think, in some instances actually contributed to increase the evil. By allowing too much attention to be given to slight congestions and slight nervous disturbance of mucous membrane or of nerves or nerve centres, connected with or governing some part of the sexual organs, they have possibly assisted not only in making invalids and in reducing or destroying much of the happiness of life, but indirectly in prospectively lowering the physical health and seriously marring the proper training of children, and diminishing their prospects of becoming strong, healthy, hard working, and useful members of society.

For one case in which that very great care, interest, and attention devoted to ovaries and other organs in the neighbourhood by some doctors, and demanded or acquiesced in by some mothers, is of real use, it is to be feared it is more than useless in many, and actually injurious, and in more ways than one, in the case of a not inconsiderable number of girls who really require no special medical attention. Operations have been performed which many practitioners of high reputation and large experience would have objected to as quite unnecessary in the particular case; and parts or organs have been removed upon assumptions concerning their influence in causing certain symptoms, and chronic, slight, or severe derangement of the health,—in short upon grounds altogether insufficient, in the opinion of many well qualified to judge, to justify surgical interference at all.

Generally, it is unquestionably our duty not to run risk of

encouraging by needless enquiries, or hints, or remarks, concentration of the mind of either sex upon sexual matters. Nothing can be more damaging to moral principles generally, or injurious to young girls, as being likely to disturb perhaps for a long time and seriously the healthy action of the brain and other parts of the nervous system, than examinations and operations connected with the organs of generation, it is to be feared, at this time frequently—far too frequently—recommended and practised in cases when there is no real necessity, and where no advantage to the health of the individual is to be expected from the interference, and in certain exceptional cases even with no strictly medical object whatever. It is much to be regretted that circumstances have rendered necessary the following very serious expression of opinion by the President of the Royal College of Physicians :—

"Speaking generally, and without regard to this special case, or to cases involving medico-legal questions before, or about to come before, courts of law, it is, in the opinion of the College, a grave professional and moral offence for any physician to examine physically a young girl, even at the request of a parent, without having first satisfied himself that some decided medical good is likely to accrue to the patient from the examination, and also without having first explained to the parent or legal guardian of the girl the inadvisability of such examinations in general and the special objections that exist to their being made. Moreover, the College feels that a young girl should on no consideration be examined excepting in the presence of a matron of mature age, and so far as the physician can know, of good moral character."

While every right minded practitioner will cordially approve the views expressed in these weighty words, it is most painful to have to record that now for the first time in our history it should be agreed upon all hands that such

authoritative public declaration had become not only expedient, but was rendered necessary in consequence of the acts, opinions, and teaching of some members of the profession. The step taken, though perfectly right and called for by the facts of the case, is calculated to wound the feelings of all who love professional and scientific freedom, but who have always bound themselves to obey the unwritten laws which have guided and governed the conduct and behaviour of all good men in acting for the public good and for the honour of the profession, and which not a few feel ought still to be the only laws required to control the moral and professional conduct of those who constitute the body of practitioners of medicine and surgery of the United Kingdom.

On the Action of the Glands and the Discharge of the Secretion.—Although the testicle is classed with the glands, and the spermatozoa and the medium in which they are suspended regarded as a secretion, both differ in essential respects from ordinary glands and secretions. Many contradictory statements have been made concerning the influence upon the bodily and mental health of the defective, ordinary, and excessive action of the glands and other parts concerned in the elaboration and expulsion of the fertilizing element. To minutely discuss a subject so large would be impossible in this little book, but there are one or two very important points bearing upon the special subject of the work which it seems very necessary to consider.

As is well known, the discharge of the secretion of the testicles is sometimes due to irritation of some part of the urinary apparatus or of parts or organs in its neighbourhood. Peripheral irritation may excite contraction of the organic muscle of the prostate gland and its ducts, the vesiculæ seminales, the urethra, and other parts, and thus a sudden discharge of the secretion be induced. The irritating cause may be an ulcerated or excoriated patch of mucous mem-

brane in the bladder, urethra, or even the pelvis of the kidney, a renal calculus, or crystalline grains of uric acid or oxalate of lime in the kidney, prostatic calculi, worms or hardened fæces or other irritating matter in the large bowel, or even inflammation accompanied by or independent of the formation of abscess. A superabundant prepuce, the accumulation of secretion between the prepuce and glans occasionally causes much irritation, which sometimes results in the contraction of the vesiculæ seminales and all the parts concerned in the ejaculation of the secretion. Anything that irritates the prostate, urethra, bladder, or neighbouring parts, may occasion frequent nocturnal discharge. It is possible that by frequent attacks of the kind improper habits may be excited and afterwards encouraged, and unless the patient is taught the great importance of exercising proper control over himself, he may become a sufferer from a state of mind and body which will necessitate medical help. A sensible young man will apply early for advice, if not to the family doctor or some medical friend whom he knows intimately, at least to some practitioner of known character and eminence, rather than to a reputed curer of what has been called spermatorrhœa, the favourite speciality of a not very charitable or self-denying class of advisers.

Periods of undue excitation of the nerve centres concerned in the expulsion of the semen are followed by exhaustion, and if very frequently repeated, whether it be from causes under control or not, serious structural damage to nerve tissue may result, and within a short time. Artificial stimulation of any kind of the nerves or parts concerned in the ejaculation of the semen is especially harmful. Like other bad habits and vices to which men give way, it tends to increase until weakness or paralysis from over-excitation of nerve centres may result. Discharge may take place involuntarily without the ordinary stimulus, and apparently

without any muscular contraction. It is this state of things which is sometimes brought under the notice of the practitioner, and in the treatment of which he may be of very great service to the patient. Evil habits, as already stated, are sometimes contracted at a very early age, and if persisted in they may produce changes in the nervous system which lead to impaired health. The boy may afterwards suffer as regards both mental and bodily development.

In the great majority of instances there is practically as little difficulty in discovering as in correcting the evil at a very early age. It is in early manhood that the help of the medical friend of the family or other sensible adviser and medical confidante is of importance, in order that the possibly injurious effects upon the future health may be properly explained to the patient, and suggestions offered which will enable him to get over the difficulty, and perhaps escape other troubles of a serious character. Upon this subject much that is at least injudicious has been written and largely circulated, not only by professional, but by non-professional and especially by clerical advisers, who, though their intention is good, often fail to produce the effect they desire, and sometimes so misunderstand the nature of the case as to do much harm, and really by their advice favour the increase of the trouble instead of effecting its cure, besides perhaps unintentionally assisting in placing the patient under a system of treatment which may do harm rather than good.

Spermatorrhœa.—Neither the occasional nor the frequent presence of spermatozoa in urine must be taken as evidence of the existence of that condition to which the name of "*spermatorrhœa*" has been applied—a term which I am sorry to employ at all, but which being in all the books cannot be abolished. There is, however, no *disease* to which this name can be correctly applied, for the secretion of the testicle, like that of other glands, must from time to

time escape, and when it is formed in undue quantity, and discharged too frequently, it is usually but one of a train of symptoms that may be due to mere exaggerated action of the nerves and nerve centres consequent upon wilful excitation, or to peripheral irritation, or to derangement of the general health.

Spermatozoa are very often found in great numbers in the urine of men in perfect health, and I have seen multitudes in the water of a hale old man above 80 years of age. This last was a decided case of spermatorrhœa in the sense in which the word is often used, and there is no doubt that if this old gentleman's urine had been examined by some of the people who pretend to make this condition a special study, he would have been favoured with a description of the frightful consequences of this escape of the secretion of the testicle, and have been subjected to a course of regular treatment for many months. I have long ago expressed my own opinion about the careless use of the word spermatorrhœa, and I have found no reason to change it; but as there is some difference of opinion in the profession upon this matter, it is perhaps well that the reasons upon which this view is based should again be put forward.

The occasional escape of semen and its presence in the urine is in fact perfectly harmless, and when the frequent discharge is, as is not uncommonly the case, followed by exhaustion, depression of the nervous system, and a low state of the bodily health, the nature of the case is clear, and if the patient cannot by the exercise of his own reason and will effect a cure, his usual medical attendant will advise him on the matter, and explain to him the steps to be taken in order to regain the healthy condition. The patient must not accept the exaggerated statements upon this matter that have often been made and published as facts. By such harm has been done not only to the pockets of patients, but to the cause of morality.

One author has complained that some of our hospital physicians have fallen into the "*error*" of making too light of this affection, spermatorrhœa, and that one or two in particular have even gone the length of ignoring its existence altogether. I am glad to say that I fall under this stigma, for I cannot hold that there is such a *disease* as "spermatorrhœa," as usually defined. It has been truly stated, that charlatans, for their own selfish purposes, too often work upon the fears of their patients, and exaggerate the evil consequences to be anticipated; but what encouragement does the practitioner afford, who, under the head of "consequences of spermatorrhœa," includes "*phthisis, cerebral congestion, epilepsy, general paralysis and insanity—lastly, enfeebled sexual power, and ultimately impotence*"? These have been stated to be consequences of "spermatorrhœa," but we are not informed whether "*possible*," or "*probable*." Spermatorrhœa has been defined to be "all losses of seminal fluid not occurring as the result of sexual intercourse." Impotence it is said is not an uncommon consequence of "spermatorrhœa." I have seen many cases which have been called "spermatorrhœa," but I never saw one which ended in any of the above terrible consequences. Impotence, not depending upon some congenital defect, or some obvious structural lesion, is a most uncommon affection; indeed, I have myself never met with a single case.

Many who have in early days given way to bad habits, coming across in later life the catalogue of horrors which are said to result, but which really only follow as a consequence of reckless profligacy, are, indeed, very likely to take an exaggerated view concerning the evils which are supposed to threaten them. From reading and re-reading the nonsense written, and getting into the habit of dwelling upon the miserable pictures drawn by humbugs, the matter may gradually assume proportions which appear really terrible, although, in truth, the whole thing is ridiculous. The

thoughts may be so concentrated upon the imaginary evils, that soon the unhappy victim can think of nothing else, and has continually before his mind the horrid list of troubles above chronicled, and which he becomes convinced are to be his portion. He can see before him nothing but unutterable misery, ruin, disgrace, inability to work,—and death the only possible escape.

Practitioners are well acquainted with the general nature of the cases included under the head of *spermatorrhœa*, and in the treatment of the condition the so-called specialist is not needed. Indeed a practitioner is required who will take a general view of the patient's mental and bodily state, and not think too much about the organs of generation. It is not necessary, and it would not be decent to allude to much that has been said upon the subject, or to recount the cruel and often useless means that have been proposed and carried into effect for the treatment of discharge of seminal fluid. It cannot be too widely known that the importance attached to this so-called disease is not justified by observation—that some of those who claim to have made a special study of the disease, and to have discovered means of cure unknown to the profession, are mere pretenders—and that medical practitioners are well acquainted with the state of things, and fully conversant with the treatment that ought to be adopted.

The injuries inflicted by charlatans, physically, morally, and commercially, seem to be irremediable. It is a disgrace that immoral exhibitions should be permitted to flourish in our midst. It is monstrous that it should be possible in law for an impostor to mulct a poor, foolish, labouring man of £5 or £10, for a dozen bottles of something closely allied to mucilage in composition, for the relief of an imaginary ailment; but all the law seems able to say is *caveat emptor*.

Charlatans, in all departments, well know that obstinacy, indolence, and wilful ignorance, form a part of the character of all dupes, and that in all classes of civilised society there

are persons with these mental characteristics in sufficient number to afford them a favourable reception, to court and patronise them, and to load them with flattery and liberal material support. Quacks well know that when their true character is found out, those who have been deceived by them will feel too much ashamed of themselves, and are generally too good-natured to expose the quackery, so that the utmost inconvenience that ensues to the quacks is the necessity now and then of changing the seat of their operations. The public prosecution of an extortionate rogue involves the public confession of folly on the part of the dupe; and although nothing is more common than for people to be imposed upon, it is rare indeed for an individual to confess that he has been a victim. If people generally were a little better informed upon physiology and the principles of medicine, they would be able to protect themselves successfully from the imposition of ignorant pretenders—medical, social, and therapeutic, but neither religion, art, literature, law or learning will help their judgment.

I have spoken of the all-importance of prevention and the general method to be pursued in the management of cases in which there is or has been much disturbance of function, with perhaps considerable derangement of the nervous system, and possibly also of digestion and general nutrition. It remains to consider whether assistance may also be obtained from medicines. Medicine alone cannot effect changes which may be due to inherited peculiarity, or to wilfulness, or to the circumstances under which the patient may have to live; but when the derangement in question is due to or is made worse by disturbances of the stomach, liver, or urinary organs, much may be done to help the patient. Even in cases where the indications for medicinal treatment are very clear and distinct, the practitioner must always bear in mind that he may be of the greatest service

to his patient if he will consider the points to which I have adverted concerning the moral and general hygienic management of the case, as well as by prescribing any medicines which are likely to be of service.

Many boys and young men who have acquired the habit are weak, nervous, excitable creatures, with little real energy or power of self-control, and little love for bodily or mental work, who want the help of a kind, sensible man. It is thought by some that for such cases spiritual advice and confession is the proper curative method. It is doubtful whether confession of such things to a priest is either good for the patient or for the confessor. Whether confession is right for a healthy vigorous-minded man I will not discuss here, but certainly it is not very likely to cure a hypochondriac or encourage a weak-willed, nervous, lazy, fanciful fellow, full of himself, to exercise self-restraint, and endeavour to do his work in this world honestly and well.

In many instances the habit is unquestionably self-taught. It not unfrequently affects weak sickly children, and is often to be traced to irritation about the prepuce or glans. Occasionally accumulation of secretion between the prepuce and glans seems to be the exciting cause, and sometimes a superabundant prepuce, eczema, or an over sensitive state of the delicate surface of the glans exist. In many of these cases a cure is easily effected by operation; and it has been remarked that masturbation is virtually unknown in Jewish schools, "Medical Times and Gazette," vol. XXXIV, p. 79, note. It sometimes happens that every boy in a family is born with a redundant prepuce, with an exceedingly small orifice, rendering surgical interference imperative.

As for those sad cases which pass into our lunatic and idiot asylums, there is great reason for thinking that any acquired habit so far from being the cause of their sad fate is but one of a long list of phenomena depending upon defects in the development of parts of the nervous system,

or resulting from disease originating there. In these rare cases it is as much the consequence of disease as is paralysis, loss of sight, or loss of memory or consciousness. Such cases, although incurable, are sometimes much benefitted by proper medical treatment carefully carried out for a considerable time. It is surprising how great a degree of improvement sometimes follows residence in a good hygienic locality under proper management.

When the presence of spermatozoa is pretty constant, and is accompanied by various symptoms, such as extreme nervousness, dyspepsia, loss of flesh, weakness, anxiety, and general disturbance of the health, the practitioner will be required to take the case in hand, but he must be very careful to exercise great judgment as to what he ought to say. The mere suggestion that spermatozoa are present in the urine may frighten a nervous patient who has studied quack books and visited demoralising museums in a way that is quite extraordinary.

By improving the health and strength we sometimes succeed in improving the morals of a patient, and enable him to look at things from a higher and better point of view. Tincture of perchloride of iron, phosphate of iron, or reduced iron with mineral acids, quinine, various preparations of Cinchona and Nux Vomica, are most useful in the treatment of these cases, especially where the health is low and the patient weak, and the digestive organs much deranged, as is not unfrequently the case. Mild purgatives are often required, and mercurials in small doses often act favourably. Like drinking, the habits in question are much under the control of the individual. If he *wills* to control them, he can do much, and it is important to exercise all the moral control we can and encourage him to make strong efforts to regulate his conduct. When he first comes under notice he may be in such low weak health that there is no hope of persuading him to exercise the control desirable,

but if we give tonics for a time and improve his general health, he will be able to follow our advice. We must do all we can to influence the patient for good, and we must get him to place confidence in us—and sometimes this is indeed a most difficult matter; while, strange to say, a very ignorant and perhaps very vulgar person may get such control over the patient, partly by threats, partly by persuasion, as to virtually get him completely into his power. What is most necessary is to find some means of thoroughly interesting the patient and occupying his thoughts till it is time to rest. We should instruct him so to arrange that the exercise he takes shall be sufficient to tire him a little. He should put the feet in warm water just before he goes to bed, in order that he may get to sleep as soon as possible. Such little points as these are of great value in the treatment of this class of cases, and should be borne in mind. The patient should be instructed to rise as soon as he wakes in the morning, when a glass of warm Hunyadi or other purgative water, or Epsom salts dissolved in warm water, should be taken, unless the bowels act freely without medicine.

Although there seems little connection between the general health and morals, while some of the strongest and most healthy are not remarkable for a very high moral tone, it is nevertheless certain that in many instances improvement in the moral character follows improvement in the general health. This is also true as regards large numbers of the people, improvement in the health and physical condition being almost invariably succeeded by advance in morality.

Marriage.

Probably all wise men, and not a few who would not be called wise, agree that when the age of puberty is reached, or some time between that period of life and middle age, it is desirable that people should marry. As has often been said, the married state is greatly to the advantage of the bodily and mental health of both man and woman, and, at least under the usual conditions of existence in highly civilised society, conducive to the well-being and happiness of both. Married life has been proved in a thousand ways to comprise all the good which through all the ages has been claimed for it, and it is, in the highest sense of the word, sanctified.*

Marriage it may be said is, physiologically speaking, the best state for most men, and, upon the whole, certainly offers the best prospect to the married of the attainment of the healthiest, and perhaps the highest, condition of mind and body possible, at least in the case of the majority. And, certainly looking at this great question from the lowest standpoint, physiological, which is the one specially taken in this work, it may be truly said that it is well that in marriage the majority should be bound.

It must not, however, be inferred that by the above remarks it is intended by implication to condemn, upon physiological or other grounds, the unmarried state. And I would remark here that, notwithstanding very strong assertions to the contrary, and by authorities who profess to have thoroughly studied the question, no sufficiently valid objec-

* I commend the reader's attention to the two following works by Mr. Francis Burdett Money-Coutts: 1. "The Training of the Instinct of Love; with a Preface by the Rev. Edward Thring, Head Master of Uppingham." 2. "The Marriage Ring; or, The Mysteriousness and Duties of Marriage."—Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co.

tions have been established upon reasonable grounds, or upon facts of physiology and health, to living, nay to passing the whole life in a state of celibacy.

The real objections to marriage in particular cases are of a different order altogether. There is ample evidence extending over a period of many centuries to prove that the constitutional health and vigour, and the capacity for intellectual and mechanical work are not injuriously affected by celibacy, while the power of thought, of concentration of the intellect upon a definite thing, and of high devotion and self-sacrifice, appear to have in some instances attained to a maximum when the mind has not been permitted to be disturbed by thoughts of love and marriage, or by the anxiety or interests of family, and the thousand littlenesses of the ordinary successful life, or the miseries consequent upon failures, disappointments, and hardships. The greatness of some characters it is true seems to have been promoted, if not occasioned by early marriage; but generally, at least in the case of certain departments of art, literature, and science the high approach to perfection reached has been due to such concentration of the whole mind as is impossible, except in the rarest cases, in married life.

The teachings of experience also seem to be conclusive. At every period of history we have evidence of the same truth, and while it may be wrong, unwise, and contrary to human interests to raise celibacy or asceticism to the highest pinnacle of self-denying virtue, it is a hundred-fold more wrong to scoff at those who decide to embrace it, or to assert that there is anything belonging to human body or mind that renders obedience to the dictates of feeling, reason, or circumstances in this particular, wrong and deserving of condemnation by the wise. Abnormal defects, accidents, disease, unwise or injudicious management in early life may render such a life desirable and right. Neither the state of celibacy nor the married state conflicts in any

way with the highest aims and brightest hopes of man. Were a life of celibacy wrong or cruel to the individual, or to be justly condemned, as not a few in our time have strongly hinted, asserted, and professed to have proved it to be, how dreadful would be the lot of sufferers from certain accidents, forms of disease, abnormal defects—nay, the possessors of some of the highest mental endowments—that mere pity would move society to take such action as would be unendurable to the highest and most thoughtful minds, as much opposed to the highest religious principles the world has known, as contrary to the first principles of civilisation, and to every philosophic conception of the greatest minds of any age.

Those who are not well acquainted with, or have been misinformed concerning the physiological aspect of the question, must be careful not to allow themselves to be misled by general statements made by writers who are prejudiced. They must remember that thousands of the best of men have admirably discharged all the duties of life, attained to eminence in various departments of intellectual and bodily work, have enjoyed good health and strength, have been thoroughly hopeful, amiable and happy, and have lived to be very old without ever having departed from a state of celibacy. We must upon this question decline to be influenced by any statements based solely upon an atheistic, a materialistic, an agnostic, or a socialist view of life and its aspirations.

Of the Organs of Generation and of Controlling their Action.—The so-called glands or secreting organs connected with the generative function are in one respect different from all other glands. Their activity is not an actual necessity. The discharge of their function is not, for instance, like that of the organs of circulation, respiration, or secretion, of vital consequence, while it is certain that the highest of all the work of the body, intellectual action, can be discharged,

and most efficiently discharged, without the co-operation or action of the organs in question.

These special organs, whether destined to discharge their office or not, must be kept under the control of the mental powers, and their influence may be held in complete abeyance without detriment to other faculties, nay, in cases to their advantage, and without any necessary derangement of the health or sacrifice of bodily vigour.

While they exert a very powerful influence upon the mind, absorb the thoughts, and dominate the will, their action is more under the control of the mind and will than that of any other organs in the body. If, as in some cases it may be truly said, they dominate the whole being, it is equally true that in others they are so absolutely dominated by the higher faculties of the mind as to be in complete subjection, while in all cases they may be kept under control if their owner wills.

If the chief difference between animals and man was the divergence that relates to the sexual function only, this alone would be more than sufficient to establish man's absolute separation. There is so far little to justify the conclusion that the multitudinous forms of organisms necessary to establish anything like a gradational transition from the lowest to the highest have existed, and have followed one another generation after generation in never-ceasing series of orderly and gradual change of structure, function, habit, but have left no traces behind them whereby the truth might be established.

A careful comparison between man and animals cannot fail to convince any unprejudiced person that, as regards his sexual functions at any rate, man is apart. For in man these functions are entirely under mental control. Man's will is dominant over his instincts, and if he so determines these instincts are kept in abeyance. Of all the living forms in nature man is the only one of which as much can be

said. He is also alone in possessing the power of imposing upon himself self-restraint, and alone in feeling—in having a complete conviction—that he ought to exercise self-restraint, and alone in the consciousness of committing wrong and of suffering self-degradation if he does not restrain his animal instincts. That such power may have been acquired and intensified as age succeeded age it would be wrong to deny, but that it already existed in what is called the childhood of the world, and in the long pre-civilised ages, there can be little doubt.

Of the Objections to Marrying Too Early in Life.—The many collateral considerations bearing upon the question of marriage so enormously preponderate in importance over the mere desire to marry, and the so-called instinct of love, as it has been termed, as to render it unwise and indeed inconsiderate, if not wrong, on the part of any one to endeavour to convince the young of either sex that marriage should be regarded as the necessary state in which life should be passed, and as a goal to which every young man and young woman should look forward from the first, and endeavour to reach. Rather would it appear, however, to some of us that the life's work should be looked forward to altogether independently of the marriage question; and while work and the excelling in work are regarded as the fulfilment of duty, and right and necessary, the question of marriage belongs to a different category altogether, and should be decided upon grounds and considerations of another kind.

The arguments against marriage and the objections raised to it apply not so much to the condition itself as to the attendant circumstances under which marriage is contracted. The real objection, and this, in but too many instances an insurmountable one, is that the man cannot earn enough to maintain a wife and family as well as himself. Modern life is so complex that this, like many other questions bearing

upon our happiness, cannot be considered simply on its merits, because so many circumstances, so to say, of an accidental character have really so much to do with action as to dwarf the real question, and to result in an altogether artificial and conventional mode of determining it. The question itself may even assume so small a proportion as to be almost lost sight of in the multitude and strength of incidental considerations. However much an individual may have accustomed himself to exercise frugality, it is obvious to every thoughtful person that the most successful economy and care must break down at a certain point, and that virtue itself cannot hold its own if the necessities of life can only be purchased for a sum considerably in excess of that which the married persons possess, or can earn at the time when they marry.

At least as regards most of us, there is so much in life that must needs be borne patiently and trustfully that a time of preparation is required, and by putting off for some years the time of contracting marriage, a man gains in after life by the training of self-denial to which he has learned to accustom himself in early years. It is also certain that most men gain in intellectual power by not entering too early into the married state. Their education is more thorough, and they will certainly be better able to bear the work and strain, as well as the misfortunes and disappointments that may fall to their lot, than if they suddenly pass from the ease and comfort of home or college, to the responsibilities and anxieties of married life. Moreover, there is better prospect of the health and strength being well established if the hard money earning part of life is put off till the third decade is completed, or nearly completed, than if it be encountered as soon as puberty is reached. Neither is any loss incurred by waiting for some few years after marriage has been determined upon before it is carried out. Indeed, it seems to me that upon the whole, certainly as regards the male sex,

it will generally be found an advantage not to marry at so early a period of life as would be suggested if natural promptings, inclination, and instincts were implicitly followed.

The man who determines to wait till he has attained the age of thirty or thirty-five will probably become in all respects a higher character, and is more likely to bring happiness to his wife and family than the man who cannot or will not allow his reason to prevail over his inclinations, and who contracts marriage while yet a boy, before his judgment is matured or his mind sufficiently developed and charged with knowledge, or trained by observation and experience to understand and realise, much less discharge, the duties and responsibilities of the head of the home and the father of a family.

I do not therefore think that, as some hold, it would be wise to make it a principle in training the young to lead them all to look forward to marriage, at any rate during the early years of manhood. Especially in professions, not only is there a huge difficulty as regards income, but in many cases success is so intimately dependent upon working very hard for nothing during the early years, that the responsibility of an engagement might act upon many anxious minds in such a way as to mar the prospects of success. A man who would attain a position in the higher ranks of his profession, unless his intellectual powers are very exceptional, must work on for years, calmly devoting himself to the department he has entered, and must endeavour to exclude every disturbing influence possible. He ought not to marry until the position is won which brings remuneration, or will certainly yield it in the near future.

Considerations of the kind suggested, except in those fortunate instances where the individual or his friends have considerable means, render it necessary that the idea of marriage should not be allowed to obtain hold over the

mind too early in life. Much then as early marriage is to be desired on general grounds, it is certain that in many instances patient waiting is an advantage in strengthening the character, and in many cases the self-denial of the early years is amply compensated by the increased comfort and happiness enjoyed in middle life and old age.

Question of Physiological Necessity. — But whether marriage is to be early in life, during middle age, later, or not at all, it is to be earnestly hoped that we shall hear no more of those apologies and false excuses for, nay encouragement of formal or informal marriage on the plea of physiological necessity. Very much that has been said upon this subject of late years here and in other countries, is not only a disgrace to the intelligence of our time, but regarded practically, looks like an attempt to lead innocent persons into error, sorrow, and misery, it may be for life, while in too many instances the health of descendants is jeopardised. The argument that if marriage cannot for various reasons be carried out, it is nevertheless necessary, upon physiological grounds, that a substitute of some kind should be found, is altogether erroneous and without foundation. It cannot be too distinctly stated that the strictest temperance and purity is as much in accordance with physiological as moral law, and that the yielding to desire, appetite, and passion is no more to be justified upon physiological or physical than upon moral or religious grounds.

The doctrine that for physiological reasons people should drive themselves, or be driven by others supposed to be wiser than themselves, into matrimony is as false and wrong as that other doctrine which has been advanced by a very different set of persons, who hold that union of the sexes being a natural or physiological law throughout nature, must be submitted to by man. Though this universal law has been charged with certain conditions imposed by

man, and modified from time to time in the course of his long and changing history, it must nevertheless, it is argued, be obeyed in its integrity and essence. And if, as some would maintain, the restrictions and the limitations connected with its observance in civilised life at any time unduly fetter the freedom or mar the happiness and prosperity of the people, these restrictions should be removed or modified according to the prevailing views of a majority, in order that the action of the natural law may not be interfered with.

But this suggestion, strongly condemned as it is to be hoped it would be by most of us, has, as it were, a virtuous side. Some would insist that that should be considered marriage which is not now so regarded either by religion or law or by public opinion. That this view in some exceptional cases might be right cannot be denied, but every thoughtful person will feel that if the step in question were practically taken, and the view above referred to concerning the union of the sexes at all generally adopted, the new order of things would very soon result in evil, wrong, cruelty, and misery infinitely more serious than any which now exists. Only think of the abuses that would soon arise, of the traps and pitfalls that would be laid by the wicked to catch the unwary, of the many kinds of wrongs that would be perpetrated, and for which there would be no redress, and which would have to be endured by the victims.

It scarcely requires one gifted with prophetic power to foretell some of the many evil consequences which would follow such a change in the marriage laws. Strange, nay more than strange, would be the changes that would be effected in our manners and customs, as the public recognition of the new principle became general, that henceforth everyone who according to the new system had followed the promptings of instinct, was to be bound for life, no matter what cogent reasons might be advanced in favour

of an alternative course! And what curious alterations in practice would be rendered necessary! Among these would be, what to us would indeed appear the strange custom of not allowing our sons between the ages of ten and fifty, or more, to go about unattended by a nurse or some responsible female friend of mature age and unquestionable propriety; and how dangerous would it be to permit young men to travel without proper protection! Obvious and serious as are the objections to such alterations as the one in question, it has nevertheless been proposed in sober earnestness.

While it will be freely conceded that the man ought to bear the full responsibility, and it may be penalty of the course he has voluntarily taken, it is doubtful whether anything could exceed the injustice, nay cruelty, that would in many cases be inflicted if such a principle as the one referred to were acted upon. Whether it would be practicable to live in a country where this principle had been carried into practice, is doubtful. Is it indeed possible to conceive that it really could be acted upon for any length of time without the effect being so very bad that it would be gladly abandoned by common consent, and some complete change enforced by a stringent law introduced in its stead?

Few of those who have claimed to have discovered panaceas for curing or mitigating some of the social difficulties under which we labour, and have laboured, seem to have thought it necessary to consult the records of history upon the subject. Had this been done, it would not unfrequently be found that the radical change proposed had been thought of and actually carried into practice perhaps more than once, and that it had invariably ended in disaster. New social and political experimentalists always express implicit confidence in their new proposals, and no small contempt for what are called the teachings of experience, as

well as for the judgment and views of those who are more experienced than themselves, and generally for all ancestral thoughts, acts, conclusions, and principles whatever. And yet what short work has been made of many of the so-called improvements attempted in our moral system, and of the supposed new principles which were to regenerate and perfect social life!

Are we yet agreed concerning the elementary principles by which we should be guided in the training of the moral character, and in the instruction of the young in their relations and behaviour towards one another? Have we even been able to decide as to the kind or the amount of ordinary knowledge, or the proper rate at which it ought to be introduced into the minds of the young?

Of Parental Advice as regards Marriage.—It seems very doubtful whether parents, much as they may desire that their children should marry, should venture to say much to influence their minds upon the question. It is so very difficult to say what it may be well to say without saying too much, that young minds are apt to be unduly influenced and perhaps led into mistakes owing to not clearly understanding the remarks concerning the exact views entertained by their seniors on these matters. Unfortunately, a too strongly expressed desire on the part of parents that a particular course should be taken sometimes excites in the mind of the child a longing to do the contrary. In short, unless the greatest judgment and care be exercised, and a correct appreciation of the tendencies of the mind we desire to influence be taken, instead of raising feelings in favour of matrimony, we may unconsciously excite distaste or repugnance. And though some may regard this when it occurs as evidence of mere wilfulness on the part of the youth or maiden, it should be borne in mind that a disposition to take a line contrary to that suggested or advised by seniors is often hereditary, though by the time when the advised

becomes adviser he may have quite forgotten how he felt inclined to act and to rebel when he himself was young.

But is it quite certain that it is the duty of parents to get their children married? I know many think that this is so, if the ways and means render it possible. The question is a very large one and removed from the subject of this work, but it is one which should receive more careful consideration than it has met with, at least in recent times; and I cannot help thinking that the health, the temperament, the degree of mental vigour and of intellectual power attained, and the mental tendencies and tastes of the child should be much more thoroughly considered than is usual before any advice to marry is given. To instruct the young of both sexes to exercise self-denial and to endeavour to control their desires, to teach them to work hard from motives higher than mere gain, and to be satisfied with moderation in the way of success, is the way to help them to make themselves good and useful members of society, whether their life is to be passed in the single or married state.

Some have, I think, very erroneously assumed upon the mistaken ground that as the generality of men will give way to their passions, it is far better that they should be made to marry when young than that they should run the serious risk of falling into evil ways, and perhaps be overwhelmed or lost by taking some imprudent step; or what would be worse, by falling into some vicious course of life from which extrication would be difficult or impossible. The opinion of some good people seems to be that the choice is between marriage and vice, and that immorality of some kind or other is the only alternative of marriage.

This gross view of the matter is, however, altogether inadmissible. It is an assumption which, if correct, even as applied only in a very limited manner, would imply that the number of men who would turn out most undesirable husbands is so great that no young woman of any sense would run

the tremendous risk of consenting to marry. Such a notion further involves the utterly false imputation that youths in general are unable or unwilling to exercise sufficient control over themselves to keep in moral paths, and if this were so is it likely they would voluntarily encounter all the troubles, vexations, disappointments which in greater or less measure almost invariably have to be endured by the married, even in the case of those considered by the world to be exceptionally well off? In short, arguments based upon false assumptions are seized upon for the purpose of encouraging people to be more than imprudent and to yield to their desires, and then it is said that the yielding was inevitable, and due to the operation of physiological law, and therefore ought not to be regarded as evil or wrong. In this way the married are degraded, evil is sanctioned, and impurity and a low moral standard condoned.

Neither man nor woman unaccustomed to self-denial will be happy in married life. Although it is one of the brightest sights to witness the continual exercise of this virtue by one only of the contracting parties, it is hard indeed that virtue which deserves reciprocity should be spent and exhausted in the mere prevention of disaster, or, as sometimes happens, worn out in hope against hope, or illused and beaten to the death.

We are now, it is to be feared, face to face with a terrible spread of immorality, immoral thoughts, opinions, practices, and tendencies, which must produce a harvest of evil and crime in the near future. Not a few of those who have been guilty of immoral acts have perhaps been brought up and trained on some of the new free and enlightened principles, based upon a consideration of man's intellectual aspirations, and unfettered by any of the drawbacks imposed in times past.

It seems, however, that we have still to discover some of the elementary truths which will enable us to train the

young under the new conditions, that they may stand the best chance of growing into moral men and women. And yet one would have thought that such very simple matters would have been decided upon long ago. So far from this having been done, however, it is doubtful whether, as regards the moral training of the young, we are not at this time actually receding, while it is possible that we may experience considerable difficulty, and have to expend much valuable time and labour before we succeed in reacquiring the degree of practical success actually arrived at two or three generations ago.

Changes in our Views concerning Morality.—The false arguments advanced upon these serious questions have no doubt deceived many, and have probably had much to do in bringing about a looser moral view, as well as considerable changes in moral opinion and practice. Various offences against morals have been differently regarded, and public opinion concerning them has certainly much altered during the past thirty or forty years. And while there is no doubt that the standard of morality held by many is higher than it was two generations ago, we are little better able to decide concerning familiar moral problems than our predecessors were. And when moral questions are considered from a religious or philosophical standpoint, there seems to be less chance than ever of arriving at a general consensus of opinion upon which any decided practical action can be grounded. The subject is eminently medical in more than one of its aspects, and it seems not improbable that arguments exclusively medical and physiological may influence minds which are not likely to be affected by considerations of a less material character. A man who believes in matter and its forces only is not likely to be convinced as to the practical course that should be taken by arguments based on spiritual or metaphysical, psychical, religious, or philosophical data or speculation.

I conceive that nothing can be more shocking to those whose opinions and conduct are influenced by truth and sound principle, than the extraordinary suggestions which have been freely spread of late years, not only as to the desirability of making divorce more easy, but even for doing away with marriage laws altogether. It is even claimed that the contract should only take effect as long as the parties concerned agree that it shall continue in force. That having been made by mutual agreement, it should be permissible to dissolve it at any time, according to the will or wish of the contracting persons. A state of life and society more uncertain or wretched than that which would result after such a system as that suggested had been acted upon for a generation or two, it is difficult to imagine. The annihilation of home, the utter wretchedness of children and the complete extinction of their rights, would form but a small part of the miseries and cruelties entailed by such a state of things.

Of Marriage in the Abstract.—It is possible, if marriage be regarded from a very high but perhaps, as some would consider it, a purely theoretical or abstract point of view, that we might be inclined to doubt whether there really ought to be any need of a stringent marriage law. Mutual affection and trust and the pledge that was given should surely be complete, as it were above and beyond all law. Nay, is it not absolutely certain that the greater proportion of those who have married would of their own free will be true and faithful to the end, and clearly this ought to be so, but might it not be so in nearly all? To the great majority of the married the thought of being bound only by law would be intolerable. Is not law made for the few bad? Could not the many good do as well without the law as with it? Though, as we say, practically necessary, law can hardly be regarded as an advantage philosophically, inasmuch as it is badness, not goodness, or the bad treatment

of the good by the bad, that seems to be the source of the demand for law.

Hints and suggestions have been made by some as to the real character of marriage not having been duly apprehended, and the idea has been advanced that it is not advisable to think too much of the religious service side, or even of the civil contract side of the question, but rather to give the greatest consequence to the fact of the two persons being united by mutual consent. Conditions may be conceivable under which such an idea as the all sufficiency of the consent might be entertained as complete in itself. But, taking life as it is, can it be thought of as adequate if the probable results in many cases of the practical application of the theory are duly considered? While no one who thinks over the matter will believe that the probability of misery being reduced is *greater* than of it being increased if such an idea were practically acted upon. Those who suggest these tremendous changes in our system should acquaint themselves with the results of many dreadful experiments of the kind, which have been actually tried, happily only on a small scale, but which have almost invariably culminated in disaster, misery, and horror to all concerned.

Probably the very persons who have for years devoted themselves to the consideration of the ways in which it is possible the relations of the sexes which were determined in the early days of human existence, and have with little modification been acted upon ever since, might be altered, would admit that the views they regard as practicable would not be applicable under all circumstances, or to all the members of any community. A very cursory examination of the arrangements which have been actually proposed or carried out will convince any one that, in fact, the objectors to the existing order of things desire an alteration not so much for the advantage of people in general as for themselves in particular. They desire to occupy a particular and

special position different from that held by the multitude. Regarding themselves as exceptional persons, they consider that people generally may be bound while they remain free to do as they like and act according to their fancies. Upon further and more thorough investigation of the principles lying at the root of their contentions, it will too often be found that the only strength of their position lies in the postulate that it is right that one set of persons should take and enjoy what another set has obtained by work and self-denial, and perhaps with great difficulty. Many it would seem are to exercise self-denial and work hard during life, in order that a few may be reckless and idle. Many are to be careful, that a few may dissipate, and that which it has taken a generation of wise and good to produce, it is meet should be squandered in a few months by the wicked and foolish. In short, that the interest of the many good should be sacrificed in order that the few bad may make themselves worse. The greatest happiness of the greatest number theory leads in practice to the subjection of the many, in order that a small number may be wicked and a few succeed in gratifying the lowest and most selfish of their passions and desires, and thus promote a rapid advance towards a state of things that would ensure the ruin of all.

Want of Consideration for the Interests of Others Characterises the New Aspiration.—I think that careful investigation will show that those who encourage and support, and defend immoral tendencies one and all act upon the principle that there is one law for themselves and a different law for other people, or else that the same law which binds others leaves them free.

It is quite extraordinary that some men never seem to think about the injustice and cruelty they may be inflicting for the gratification of desires that are easily controlled. To such it never seems to occur how slight an effort of self-restraint upon their part would enable them to avoid the

commission of cruel wrong, and perhaps crime, which may bring ruin and early death to others, and possibly to themselves.

The hopelessly reckless harum scarum class, which seems to live for the sake of wrecking themselves, ruining others, and destroying happiness all round, pass by gradations into the moderately reasonable and good, and these into the self-denying, excellent persons who work for others, or for a cause, sacrificing what seems to be their own interests. And these last are followed by a very small exceptional class, the members of which appear to act upon the theory that the evil and wickedness of the world can only be compensated or neutralised by the complete abnegation of self, and the entire devotion of life to asceticism by a privileged few.

It is a favourite theory with some bad that the evil that is in them was born there, and that they are no more to blame for their bad actions than they are able to control themselves and steadily work for good, as the majority do. But this theory is utterly contradicted in practice, and it is quite certain that the most impulsive and reckless among us is able to exercise self-control if he will try to do so, and is capable of gradually gaining more and more hold over himself, so that the recklessness and impulsiveness displayed for a time may, if a strong effort be made, be thoroughly mastered.

Licence during Youth Allowed and Justified.—Why, it has been enquired with Mephistophelian solicitude, should not the young yield to the desires and instincts implanted in them by nature? Why are they to exercise self-restraint contrary to the commands of nature and the order of the universe? What right can civilization, or society, or bodies of men wielding for a brief space an authority purely artificial, have to insist that the laws of nature be resisted or opposed, or, for even a moment suspended in their operation? Such questions seem to have presented themselves

to many minds in recent times, and to have been answered immediately and without hesitation, and in such a way as to leave no doubt that the answer was true, and the only one that any reasonable being could accept without doubt and without distrust. The new answers to these old questions involve the acceptance of many fallacies and assumptions.

It has never been proved that human "young" are, in the respects suggested, on a parallel with the "young" of animals. Certainly we are absolutely distinct from all the lower animals in respect of the instincts in question, and the law which applies to animals is not the same law under which human instincts have been on the one hand fully gratified, or, on the other, kept under the control of the individual will, or held in subjection according to certain principles agreed upon and submitted to by human societies.

Does not man claim for himself a long inheritance of the power of exercising self-restraint? Has he not from the beginning, or at a later time, claimed, and does he not now claim, and will he not for ever claim the right, unknown to other living things, of exercising dominion over his instincts and passions? But for this his condition would be hopeless, helpless, and forlorn indeed. In the course of a few years, but for the exercise of self-restraint man would soon be dethroned from the state of power he enjoys, and within a moderate time would cease to be.

For would not the unbridled exercise of these and other so-called instincts soon result, in the case of man, in illness and death? Truly, if he will, man can scatter to the winds, and defy and overcome the influences by which the instincts of the animals are kept in check, but in doing so he compasses his own destruction. In throwing over self restraint he overcomes all the controlling forces of his nature, and he soon suffers for so doing. It is altogether a mistake to suppose that man can submit to what is called the ordinary laws of nature which govern animal instinct.

His intellect, his will, his discernment, his judgment, place him in a different category to that which includes any animals, and if they do not make him independent of many of the forces of nature, he is at any rate enabled to use natural forces as he will, to direct and control them as no other living form can do. In man's case the argument from nature is completely changed, and, as regards sexual matters, it is one of the falsest, if it is not the vilest, ever ventured. It can only be used for the purpose, or at any rate with the result of misleading the foolish and making the wicked more wicked still.

The above questions could only in seriousness be asked by one who was either quite ignorant of human physiology, or so utterly demoralised by long continued evil and abandoned ways of looking at things, that his opinions could have no weight whatever in the consideration of any question concerning nature or civilization.

The worst men in the worst times have hardly dared to give expression to the false views upon which they had been led, or had determined, to act. The application of such monstrous and untenable propositions has never been suggested till recent times. For the first time we are taught to believe that man's sexual instincts so closely resemble those of animals that they are not to be curbed, or resisted, or disobeyed. If this were true man would certainly be worse off than any animal, and as regards these instincts would soon be relegated to a very low position in the scale of created beings. Man, unlike animals, is not entirely at the mercy of his environment. He has a hand in the making of his own environment. Nay, it is debatable whether man does not exercise more influence upon his environment than this upon man.

The Moral Bearing of the Laws of Evolution.—Some will suggest that the ideas contended against being in accord with the laws of evolution, must be accepted, quite

irrespective of any consequences that may flow from their acceptance, on the ground that they are true. But here lies the difficulty. How are we to convince ourselves of their truth? Have evolutionists yet offered a definition of any form of evolution? Such concentrated moral wisdom as is conveyed in the information that "the fittest survives" and "the weakest goes to the wall," being regarded as the very acme of philosophical induction, it would, no doubt be bad manners, and perhaps bad policy to question. But, nevertheless, it requires more self-restraint than I can venture to boast of possessing, to omit the remark founded upon observation and in accord with the experience of many,—that those that survive do not in all cases seem to be very fit, while the "fittest" don't seem always to survive. Do not very "unfit" often survive? Many who are not weak "go to the wall," while many of the very "weakest" don't go there, or take so long a time to go, that it is quite reasonable to suppose they never will get there at all, though, according to all reasonable views, and in obedience to facts, law, observation, and experiment, to say nothing of scientific justice, they ought to have gone to the wall soon after birth and never to have come away ever afterwards.

The popular conclusions, sanctioned by high scientific authority concerning the fittest and the weakest, seem hardly likely to assist in raising the moral standard, while their precise relation to justice and mercy has not been explained by evolutionary authorities. Moreover, no one has yet shown how the views in question are made to harmonize with the inculcation of self-restraint and respect for the rights and interests of others. It is true that the new hypothesis makes "nature" responsible for what is generally termed, by ordinary people, the crime of overpowering the weak by the strong. We are, however, assured that this is fully justified and explained by the "law of the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence."

It is casuistically suggested that if such and such a change happened and persisted in a manner, and under circumstances in which it never did happen, and according to all the teachings of experience can never be expected to happen, a fact that cannot be accounted for would be easily and adequately accounted for. If peculiarities of animal structure which occur and can only be perpetuated under unnatural and exceptional conditions occurred and were passed on and perhaps intensified generation after generation under natural and ordinary conditions, the differences which lead us to give one name to one kind and other names to different kinds of animals, would disappear, and our views concerning all nature would be greatly modified. And in the same possible, but most improbable contingency, it is argued we should have to alter our views concerning will, moral feeling, conscience, duty, right and justice, and the whole nature of man, present, past, and future.

By asserting that morality has resulted by evolution from certain low animal instincts, a plausibility is given to conclusions which are entirely contrary to broad facts, and then excuses or apologies are offered for evil acts which nevertheless at this time are generally regarded as inadmissible and wrong. The evil acts, notwithstanding the conclusions of evolutionists, are at present contrary to human law, and those who commit them may be punished by the judges.

It is surely difficult to conceive anything much more cruel towards humanity than those suggestions that a possible "may be" is an actual truth, and to be dealt with as such. In this way stupid and bad people are led to act upon hypothetical suggestions, and commit indiscretions or wrongs which, if not punishable in law, must in any case bring life-long misery not only to themselves, but possibly to numbers of perfectly innocent, and perhaps estimable persons.

The attempt to popularize fanciful ill-defined conjectures

and hypotheses, and by calling them natural laws, to compass their being acted upon in practical working life to guide us in our relations with one another, and to influence our acts in a thousand ways in spite of the teachings and practice of centuries, is as monstrous as some of the worst acts of the worst characters in history.

From the modern science side, nothing can be more deplorable than the suggestions that have been offered in the name of physiology, or more grandly in that of philosophy and of nature, by persons who seem to have perversely read all the lessons they have attempted to learn upside down, and indeed to have really learnt little, except the method of perverting facts, so as to make that appear plausible which is untrue. Morals destroyed, morality no longer taught, and though still practised by some, the principles by which they profess to be guided not yet to be found in the new philosophy or in evolution. Until something more positive has been demonstrated, it will probably be safer for society to allow the marriage laws to be acted upon—to permit for a time at any rate the carrying out of marriage as heretofore. From the evolution standpoint, many will regard it merely as a temporary and provisional expedient to be permitted to operate only during the short time our imperfect state of intelligence persists—until that happy time in the near future is reached, when all will be changed, and the efforts of narrow-minded bigots will no longer hamper our never-ceasing progress to perfection.

Self-restraint.—Discarding the doctrine of evolution in its supposed application to morals, it will be found that whether we look from a religious, a purely philosophical, or a scientific or rational standpoint, the acquirement of self-restraint is the beginning and end of all true human endeavour in the interests of humanity. The earlier in life self-training begins to work, the better for the individual. Thoughtful parents are ever anxious that, above all things,

their children, while very young, should be taught self-control, which leads on to the exercise of self-restraint, self-command, self-denial, and self-regulation of conduct, which is the principle, as well as a source, of true happiness in modern civilized life. It is the aim of all thoughtful and well-trained minds, and its development and spread amongst an ever-increasing number of the population is much to be desired. On this acquired, and in some instances self-taught mental endowment, it may almost be said human progress is, in fact, absolutely dependent.

Against this exercise of self-control, too many rebel during the early years of puberty—too many treat with scorn the advice of those who have themselves learnt in the hard school of adversity; and how bitter is the punishment which those who refuse to profit by the teachings of their own observations and experience, or by the advice and instruction of others have to suffer in after years!

Wisdom is of slow growth, but it is scarcely too much to say that it originates in self-control. How, it has been often asked, is self-restraint to be inculcated during the early years? Some say, by religious teaching; others, by teaching based upon mere reason; while some consider that no special teaching or advocacy of particular principles is required, and that the young are constantly teaching to one another this invaluable mental attribute, or that each individual finds out for himself that he must exercise self-restraint. Some in early manhood seem to refuse to be influenced by any considerations of the kind, confident that their fate will be different from that of others who have been wrecked by reckless disregard of the ordinary rules of conduct. Some plunge headlong into a course which leads straight to ruin: nay some, though conscious of the result that must ensue, yield to the temptations of the moment and for the gratification of an evanescent whim, sacrifice it may be years of happiness. Neither good laws, nor excel-

lent customs, nor religious observances, will supersede the exercise of self-restraint on the part of high and low, rich and poor, old and young, intellectual and dull; and it is doubtful whether there is any better measure of the strength of a community than the percentage of individuals who have practised and continually practise self-restraint; whether self-restraint originated in the course of natural selection and became gradually perfected by inheritance, has not been conclusively determined, but it is one of those virtues of which the germ only, and that perhaps a weak one, seems to exist in the great majority of modern children. Partly by will and partly by exercise and encouragement, strength may be acquired, and gradually that which at first seemed scarcely to exist, becomes the most remarkable characteristic of the man, by which he is distinguished, and at length most widely known among his fellows.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that remarkable instances are occasionally met with of persons so eminently endowed with the power of governing and even of opposing self, that it seems to be almost natural to them to invariably act in opposition to their inclination. Instead of having to compel themselves to exercise self-denial, this to them seems almost a natural proceeding. Some such minds would seem to have but one object in living—that of denying themselves for the advantage of others, and acting against desires and impulses to which some are not only much too ready to yield, but allow themselves to be wholly dominated by. In short, the sole mental gratification of those who carry self-denial and self-effacement to extreme lengths seems to be afforded by the act of compelling themselves to take a course the reverse of that which desire, inclination, and even judgment indicates as the proper one. Such would appear to be the state of mind which, strengthened by practice and carried to extraordinary lengths, has created some of the most remarkable characters in history, and con-

tinues to characterise some distinguished ornaments of more than one of the churches, and which in varying degree is found in every walk of life and every sphere of intellectual work. To attempt to destroy this love of self-sacrifice and self-denial would be wrong. With it would disappear much of the goodness and virtue which leavens society, and prevents its complete subjugation by frivolity and evil.

Neither new discoveries in science nor advanced philosophical enquiry, nor the hope or belief in that new order of things which is soon to prevail according to the prophetic inspirations of some very confident seers, sanctions the conclusion that the conditions under which the union of the sexes has been encouraged or permitted during many centuries can be changed without the greatest risk of the most serious consequences to civilization.

And lastly, it is extremely doubtful whether, if people were perfectly free to inaugurate new arrangements, to begin as it were afresh, having the advantage of the accumulated wisdom and experience of centuries to guide them, any change could be carried out which would afford a more reasonable prospect of happiness to the majority than the existing system. In other words, if the number of those who would regulate their conduct according to the principles by which the best have been actually guided and governed, few indeed would have to complain of the existing order of things as regards the marriage laws, and still fewer would feel so dissatisfied as to strike a blow at the foundations upon which they are based.

So far the one unchanged perhaps unchangeable human ordinance in the midst of ever-changing system, custom, fashion, is marriage. While all else alters from age to age, marriage alone retains its primitive character as handed down to us from the dawn of history. It is probable that the marriage rite, even in an unbelieving and atheistic age, would be the last stronghold of divinity, and in it through ages

yet to come, will perhaps be sheltered from destruction, the last remnant of the divine destined possibly to increase and spread, after its extinction seemed complete, and again and again to confer its benign and glorious influence upon the deeds and thoughts and lives of men.

Prostitution.

Prostitution, with its attendant and far-reaching evil consequences, is by many regarded one of the necessities or consequences of civilization, and up to this time, I believe, no modern nation or government has succeeded in preventing or curing this most terrible social evil. Prostitution causes the destruction and ruin of thousands and tens of thousands annually. It will be obvious to everyone who considers the question that at least it is possible that the evil might be lessened. Surely no reasonable person would maintain that in London, for instance, the precise degree of the evil which now obtains must continue, and in an exactly increasing ratio according to the increase of population. Such a contention appears well nigh absurd, for it implies that out of the children born an exact proportion must of necessity be thus lost; while, on the other hand, it is certain that if the training and management of the young during childhood and early youth improved as compared with the method adopted in the early days of preceding generations, the number would vary in one, and if the system of training deteriorated, in the opposite direction.

It would almost seem that so far from being lessened by the highest civilization and the increase of intelligence and refinement, prostitution, and of the worst kind, sometimes attains a very high degree of development in countries where those inestimable advantages are enjoyed. But no one who considers the question will infer that these and prostitution stand in the relation of cause and effect.

If we hold that under certain conditions it would be possible to reduce the degree of prostitution now prevalent, —and who will deny the reasonableness of this contention? —we shall feel compelled to admit that the reduced number would be capable of still further reduction, and without doing much violence to our reason, we might hold that like some other preventible evils and sins of a bygone era, prostitution may be doomed to disappear from some civilized communities altogether; and certainly looking from a purely rational standpoint, it is hard to see why it should be maintained that prostitution is an evil which must of necessity exist. Thousands are born, live their life, and die though evil is continually in their environment, and are no more contaminated than if the evil were not. And, if some, why not a larger number? Is the supposed necessary evil really necessary for a part only, for a very small part of the population? If so, we surely ought to endeavour to determine in what respects the members of the small section differ so mightily from the rest, as to render it necessary that for them only the existence of a curse, from which the great majority are perfectly free, should be promoted or permitted? Will the most violent necessitarian dare to insist that the evil is preserved at a certain fixed and unalterable standard by that unchangeable mysterious agency which he calls law? He will surely allow that it is possible it might be worse than it is; and unless he is false to his reason, also, that it might be better. There can be no doubt that prostitution, on the one hand, might be increased, and, on the other, reduced: nay, it is certain that of late in some places it has shamefully increased, not in consequence of the operation of any natural law, but by the evil exercise of human will. If it were determined upon the part of society that morals should improve, there is no doubt that a favourable change would soon be brought about. And it may be fairly asked whether it is not conceivable that life might

be carried on for generations without prostitution? Is it not supposable that a community, amounting at any rate to some thousands, might exist without this evil among them, and, if thousands, why not tens of thousands? In all cases it seems that prostitution exists for the few, and but for these few, the evil might be lessened or cease. Are these few so constituted that evil principles must be permitted to prevail for their benefit only, although of necessity the effect of the evil must be degradation and disgrace not only of the culprits, but of innocent persons far outnumbering the actual evil doers? Again, I would ask, what is there in the mental or bodily characteristics of the few that makes such an evil as this a necessity for them, while the great majority pass through life as if there was not and never had been such a state of things? Is it reasonable that the greatest evils should be encouraged, because a few, however powerful they may be, choose to decree against reason and experience that such evil is a necessity of existence? If we are to submit to this sort of dictation and tyranny, what is to prevent us from submitting to many more equally cruel and unreasonable enactments on the part of the few bad? As other tyrannies have been swept away, may not this, it may be asked, some day meet with a similar fate?

In modern social life few things are more remarkable than the immense power wielded not only by minorities, but by minorities contemptible in number and in principle. An immoral minority has succeeded in demoralizing large numbers, and has even succeeded in imposing to some extent certain of its bad manners, customs, and opinions upon those who are opposed to it in every way. When we come to go more minutely into the question of the cause of the submission of the good, we shall find that "expediency," an indisposition to oppose that which is advocated with great persistence and energy, is the only answer and has been the ever-prevailing excuse. Private life is invaded, and

in many ways, by fashions which seem to have originated among depraved and degraded members of society, and the majority seems to be so weakened and demoralized as to be unable to object; and so the taint of evil is too often to be detected among those who seem to be completely removed from the sphere of its operation. Each successive convert to immorality easily persuades himself that most are at least as bad as he is himself, and that all life is tainted—that purity is a fabrication, an imagining of the pharisee who masquerades as good, but who is at least as bad as the rest. Some are, in truth, ashamed of themselves and their surroundings and utterly disappointed with life,—but, being bad, are interested in winning recruits to the course of life they have themselves followed. They appeal to the conceit and vanity of the young and silly.

Bad bringing up in the home, bad example, and bad management at school have at least as much to do with a bad moral result as regards victim as well as aggressor, as the inherent badness of disposition, though the last may have been transmitted through several generations, and, as sometimes happens, has been intensified in its passage. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt, even in the extreme of misfortune just supposed, that it is possible—nay, I believe in most cases certain—that under proper training no departure from a high moral standard would have occurred.

In the case of those who go wrong, if we subtract the weak designedly led astray by false friends, those who fall of intent, those who succumb from disappointment or wine, or from the intoxication induced by undeserved success or mere chance, how many would remain to represent the victims of "natural law" and "physiological necessity," and inherent inability to control their passions?

It has, however, been assumed that it is almost impossible for many of the young to fully restrain and keep under proper control their passions, and thus a sort of apology

has been invented for the protection, if not the encouragement of vice. Such an assumption is nonsense, and has been controverted by facts over and over again, and at every period in history. Men who have really seen much of boys and young men and have succeeded in gaining their confidence and sharing their thoughts, must feel that evil tendencies of a difficultly repressible character are the exception; while in the great majority of bad cases evil tendencies of a really dangerous intensity can scarcely be said to exist. The weaker feelings and evil passions are so overshadowed by the growing daily interest and by the prospects of greater interest and gratification in store, that the mind is, as it were, pledged in advance, and the lower passions and appetites absorb so insignificant a portion of the thought as to be inappreciable in their influence upon the character.

Many of the statements concerning what has been called the necessity of self-indulgence are abominable. Those who wilfully propagate such assertions must be hopelessly evil themselves, for although they know that the assertion is untrue and utterly unjustifiable, they make it and repeat it. Even of the reckless and degraded only a small minority plunge to the lowest depths of degradation. The assertion that vice in any form is a necessity is as cruel as it is false. Thousands and tens of thousands of lives in every age have proclaimed the contrary, and it is the most reckless perversion of truth on the part of a few unprincipled renegades to insinuate that of those who appear pure to the world, many are anything but pure in reality, and to give it out that purity in actual life is a fancy, a chimera, a delusion, a sham. It is pitiful to hear a poor senseless prig, pretending to be proud of evil doing, brag about the results of his experience and observation of the world, while really he is incapable of observing a fact or of seeing anything as it actually is. Such miserable specimens of humanity, as they become older, become more false and more cunning, and do infinite harm

among their friends and associates. The chief office such persons seem to discharge is to swell the general mass of corruption and misery, and add to the terrible difficulties of dealing with it in the present, and mitigating it in the future. It is wonderful that anyone believes them, or is influenced by the doctrines they enunciate. The badness of the bad is however goodness itself compared with the intensity of evil concentrated in those who, though themselves hopelessly depraved, advisedly corrupt the innocent minds of the vain, the stupid, and the sensual. The marvel is, that there should be creatures so silly and so weak as to be corrupted by corruption so despicable.

The Evil from the Religious Side.—It is probable that much that has been said upon this matter, both from the very good side as well as from the very bad side by clergymen and by laymen, is grounded upon the experience of a limited few whose moral mental state is anything but that of a *tabula rasa*. When such persons speak of the difficulties in the way of being moral, and the strong resolution required, they probably refer to the strength and determination requisite for regaining ground that has been lost, for conquering passions that have been permitted for some time to run riot, rather than to the difficulty of keeping in check passions that have never been permitted to prevail and gain ascendancy over the mental faculties which naturally ought to keep them under control. Such, it need scarcely be remarked, are by no means dispassionate judges, nor can they be the best counsellors.

Possibly well-intended help from the religious side sometimes fails from the utter inability of the young, especially if careless by nature, to take a sufficiently serious view of life when the bright future created by their imagination rises before them. On the other hand, those who endeavour to persuade them to see and resist the evil of the world are very likely gloomily surveying a sea of disappointments

and sorrow, now calm, but in which they themselves had been tempest-tost. An attempt to benefit and improve the young by encouraging a desponding or despairing view of life is not more likely to be advantageous than an attempt to persuade them that old age is the time of life to which everything by them considered as pleasure and enjoyment should be postponed. And it is futile to think that youths of immoral tendencies, or those who have already had a taste of immoral practices, will be diverted from their course, or persuaded to change it, in consequence of such teaching and advice.

The calling upon church and state to check immorality is surely a mistake, because the evil is one with which, at least in the majority of instances, neither church nor state can practically deal, or lay hold of, or ameliorate. For the most part the evil lurks in obscure corners, out of the light of day. Individual churchmen and statesmen may be of the greatest use to individual evil-doers, but in their corporate capacity I fear they can do little besides advising, counselling, recommending, appealing, hoping. And although laws and police regulations may exercise some influence over the vicious, it is too much to suppose that vice can be much diminished or extirpated by such means.

The clergy and teachers of religion generally, with whom medical practitioners ought naturally to work hand in hand for the improvement of the moral and physical health of the people, are not always, in matters medical and moral, the most trusty confidants, the wisest counsellors, or the most judicious coadjutors. Their very enthusiasm for good, and their unalterable conviction that there is but one way of making bad people good, and that the only way in which they can or will work, sometimes completely ruins the object in view, and may even destroy all hope of being of use in a particular case. Even in sanitary matters, and in their views about tea, coffee, and tobacco, wine, and beer, the

village clergyman and the village doctor sometimes differ, while such questions as vaccination, vivisection, contagious disease cannot be broached without raising irreconcilable differences in opinion. Sermons on evolution and sexual selection, or on the laws of nature, do not always satisfy the medical mind, while the illustration of the Christian order of things by reference to the law of the survival of the fittest, and the enunciation of the doctrine that the weaker must go to the wall, that old religious principles must be modified to suit new scientific hypotheses, that some bugbears as miracles, fitted only to deceive bygone ages, must be abandoned, and that religion like everything else must progress and be modified and made to accommodate itself to the altered wishes, desires, and impulses of the times, do not invariably excite sympathy in the medical mind, and may not fully satisfy the contemplative doctor, or increase the prospect of co-operation between religion and medicine in the practical work of improving the mental and bodily health of the people. It is also doubtful whether the effort on the part of some to make religion more scientific has been more successful than the attempt to make science more religious, and certainly the description of fanciful science and speculative religion sometimes dispensed for the benefit of unusually intelligent flocks is perhaps more likely to inflame the scientific against religion, and the religious against science, than to teach the ignorant and the simple, to help the unfortunate, or persuade the wicked to mend their ways. Moreover, the very different point of view from which many moral offences would be regarded by the clergyman and the doctor does not increase the probability of their co-operation, while in some cases it may render action on the part of the doctor alone very difficult, or practically impossible.

The medical profession could, and I think would, do much to improve the morals, to check prostitution, and to

mitigate its attendant evils if public opinion permitted them to do so, but so far it is doubtful whether the public have sufficient confidence in medical judgment, or would afford practitioners the support which would enable them to act for the advantage of the people.

The medical practitioner who knows much of the offenders against morals will hardly look for sudden conversions to a better state of mind. He knows full well that though moral descent may be sudden, moral improvement and advance if it occurs will be gradual, and often very slow, and he would place more reliance upon constant and very careful attention and advice given by people of sense and judgment, than upon the possibility of any sudden awakening to the evil of immorality and a sudden call to newness of life.

Teaching and Warning the Young.—For the effectual resistance of evil, restraint has to be taught early, and to be exercised by the individual over himself all through life. Evil thoughts and ideas have to be controlled by the higher faculties. All evil tendencies require great watchfulness, for they are of a different character at different periods of life, and will require different management if the individual is to maintain full control over himself, and avoid yielding to evil impulses. To contend successfully, the judgment and will require careful and constant training and exercise from the very beginning. Those who early discover and foster the natural predominance of the higher mental endowments over the lower instincts have an easy task, for they soon reach a state in which there is little risk. Complete mastery is acquired and exercised so quietly and so perfectly that their conduct seems to be naturally or instinctively wise and good, and not to require any regulation or control whatever. Many regard such persons as born good and innocent, and with no disposition or capacity for evil-doing or thinking—a view which is probably in most cases very wide of the truth. In other words, it is certain that many of the best

men were by no means very good by nature, but were made good by being well trained by others, and by the self-training and self-control to which by the exercise of their own wills they subjected themselves. To teach an individual to exert self-control who has been allowed from a very early age to do as he likes is indeed difficult, and requires that quiet influence which, by the exercise of patience and care and judgment, a good man may gradually acquire over a weak or bad one.

Some people seem to think that boys of twelve or thirteen ought as they say to be "solemnly warned" in order that they may escape being corrupted. What a sad picture must such persons have formed of the wickedness of their fellow creatures. Harmless boys are to "be warned" when they go to school of the evils and terrible dangers to which they will be exposed. In this way many a poor little fellow has to suffer needless torture for at least many days of his early school life. His rest is disturbed by imaginary horrors which have been explained to him in language too indefinite for him to understand, but far too definite not to frighten him whenever he thinks over the "solemn warnings" he has received.

As to this recommendation, often most confidently made, of warning the young, I would remark that it is scarcely possible that boys and girls can reach the age of even thirteen without understanding what is wrong-doing, both as regards behaviour towards themselves, towards their own and the other sex. That either boys or girls require to be specially warned concerning evils to which they are exposed and the bad habits into which they may fall, or to have explained to them the precise relations they hold towards one another at different periods of life, and under various circumstances, seems to me almost an idle thing to discuss. One might as well urge that "warning" ought to be specially given as to indecent habits, indelicate manners, and the

many habits and customs and behaviour which are the characteristics of modern civilization. That some young people will not take advice—will not follow the example of those whose judgment must be better and more matured than their own, who will be guided solely by their own fancies, and who have deliberately determined to yield to impulse, to follow their own inclinations and passions, is perfectly true; but such persons would not believe though one rose from the dead.

Nor is it easy to feel at all confident that those so thoroughly determined to take an evil course would be deterred by any efforts a few good people might make, because it is not conceivable that such characters would join them and submit to their system merely because they were asked or persuaded to join. If evil persons would alter their ways so easily we should have little to complain of our moral state. If the reckless who form the chief part of the miserable drinking hosts would but enter the temperance and teetotal societies, what a blessing it would be! But the majority who actually join would probably go on equally well without such aid. Of those who require assistance and need the help and encouragement afforded by becoming one of a party actuated by a common principle and working for a common purpose, it is difficult to believe many would join. Such persons could alter their ways if they wished to do so by the simple act of willing; but at the same time, if by joining a number of people forming a society or guild, and subscribing to rules and accepting dicta laid down, individual effort is strengthened and assisted, one would say by all means let those who feel that this would be the case join.

As to the advantage regarded as likely to result in our efforts to reclaim evil-doers by warnings however solemn, it too often happens that those who allow themselves to be converted to the new moral or immoral systems of our time

have already discarded warnings, advice, and persuasion. It is only by painful experience that such will be convinced. They will not be prevented from making mistakes, through possible remorse at their own wilfulness and folly, or by the penalty they will have to suffer. Experience of their own they have determined to have. They have decided they will judge for themselves. They will not be influenced by the advice or experience of others.

In some instances, no doubt, where advice and suggestions concerning caution are neglected or spurned, there may have been some want of judgment in the manner in which they were given. It must be remembered that the arguments respected by some will not be listened to, and perhaps not be understood by others. But in a great number of instances evil course is deliberately taken, and there is reason to think that good itself would fail. That advice and example, and training and persuasion might have succeeded at an earlier period of life is perhaps as certain as that such efforts, however well directed and judiciously employed, will fail now.

Contagious Disease.—The subject of contagious disease (syphilis) is so closely connected with that of prostitution, that it is difficult to discuss one without frequent reference to matters which seem to belong to the other.

There is not an organ of the body, not a tissue which may not be temporarily deranged or permanently damaged by that very serious, and in its effects the most lasting, of all contagious poisons, the contagion of syphilis. Its destructive influence reappears sometimes long after the disease seems to have been eradicated. Children born many years after the disease was contracted by the parent may seriously suffer, and may not only carry to the grave the defects resulting from its ravages, but be the means of transmitting baneful consequences onwards to succeeding generations.

The very first effort made by anyone who was acquainted with the ravages of this preventible if not unnecessary "contagious disease," would be to cure it, and to prevent its spread in every case. The importance of curing such a disease and checking its distribution far outweighs every other consideration. The careful examination of every individual supposed to have been attacked would seem to be the first step to be taken, and would be strongly advocated by every one who knew the facts. Strange, however, as it may appear, there has been very strong, and unfortunately very successful opposition to this rational course. Upon grounds chiefly fanciful, sentimental, and speculative, and in some respects entirely erroneous, the proceedings necessary for the discovery and proper treatment of the malady in its early stages have been objected to and condemned as cruel and wrong. Laws have been passed. Parliament interfered, first to check the spread of the disease, and afterwards carried measures to undo what had been previously done, the practical result of this subsequent action being to sanction and permit, if not to encourage the spread of the disease.

Much of the opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts is, I have no doubt, sincere, but of those who have opposed them, few are acquainted with the facts, or have enquired of members of our profession, and fewer have had practical experience of the disease. The Acts were calculated to enable medical practitioners to place the sick at once under proper treatment and care, and were thus instrumental in checking the spread of disease so dreadful that the misery very frequently resulting from it existed during many many years. The contingent troubles, affecting not only the individual but his offspring, cannot be thought of without dismay. That there should be a party in the country so powerful as to be able to give practical effect to its extraordinary doctrines that the ravages of the disease ought not to

be stopped, that the disease should be allowed to spread, that those who contract it should be permitted to suffer, and that those who expose themselves to its influence, and suffer from its ravages, are but deservedly punished is indeed extraordinary. The compulsory clauses of the Contagious Diseases Acts passed in 1864 were abandoned in May, 1883, in consequence of a party vote, supported by Mr. Gladstone, and carried by 182 to 110, numbers which seem to show the very moderate estimate of the importance of the question formed by the largest half of the members of the House of Commons.

The practical part of the question is no doubt most difficult to grasp and legislate upon by persons who are unacquainted with the nature and course of the disease, and who have not seen the results of its ravages in all classes of society. But surely those who strongly object to interference ought to be able to ground their opposition upon something more substantial than sentimental ideas, which are not shared by those who have experience and practical knowledge of the patients themselves, and considerations of supposed injustice and cruelty that may be inflicted, or perhaps more correctly, conceived by the imagination as having been inflicted upon women by those whose duty it was to carry out the professional examination ordered by the Acts in question.

The Contagious Diseases Acts not only facilitated and expedited cure of the sick, not only secured for the wretched patients proper care and kindly treatment during their illness, but indirectly effected much for the improvement of morals. Through their beneficent agency not a few have been snatched from degradation, ruin, and death ; hope and work soon taking the place of despair and the prospect of ever intensified misery.

How statesmen could have read the evidence as some have done it is difficult to understand, but of this we may

feel sure—that the opponents of the Acts can know very little of the disease itself, and have been utterly mistaken and misled concerning the feelings and views of the poor subjects of it. I believe the opposition to these Acts rests upon a foundation as shadowy as that upon which anti-vaccinationists seek to justify their efforts to encourage the spread of small-pox. But as regards this, and perhaps some other medico moral mistakes, we doctors are possibly at least in some measure to blame, in that we have been too reticent and submissive in allowing, without strong and clearly expressed protest, the publication and diffusion by political coteries of erroneous views, which have been accepted by ignorant people who have thus been misled, and encouraged to oppose the laws passed by authority after full consideration, and imposed for the public good. It is inconceivable that intelligent men, having practical knowledge and experience of disease, could have arrived at conclusions other than those which have been accepted by many of us, and acted upon. Of the opponents of the Contagious Diseases Acts some are not only medically ignorant, but not inclined to treat with respect those who are better informed upon the subject than themselves. They profess to mistrust the profession, and some of them deny the facts upon which our advice is based. Possibly it was our duty long ago to have taken care that the public should be properly instructed upon some of these matters, and correctly informed as to the facts, in order that they might be able to judge for themselves, and thus escape being misled by prejudiced and ignorant persons, bent upon carrying into practice crotchets not consistent with the public good.

It seems to me that our action rests upon the broad principle that it is our duty to relieve, and if we can, cure the sick as quickly as possible, irrespective of other considerations. If it is admitted that in our general conduct towards the sick we should be guided by this great principle, there

will be no question as to its application to the particular form of disease under consideration.

But of late years the injunction to relieve the sick as soon as possible has been received with qualification, or objected to on the ground that if we relieve without payment we degrade and pauperise the working classes. And although we have not yet been told that it is our duty to ascertain whether the patient has the money to pay for our advice before we prescribe for him, such action is undoubtedly the practical outcome of the views adopted by many who evidently regard themselves as infallible in determining all questions relating to the relief of the sick and poor.

Every person suffering from syphilis should be placed under medical treatment, and should be properly cautioned as to the contagious nature of the disease. I venture, therefore, to press the broad principle under which action should be taken in the case of a disease known to be so easily spread, and proper arrangements ought to be made in order that there may be as little delay as possible in relieving the sufferers, and isolating them till they are well.

Whether the above conditions can be fulfilled by acting upon other principles and by other means than those proposed in the Acts is of course open to consideration and discussion, but until such shall have been determined it would seem to be right to act according to a plan that has upon the whole been proved to work well. Efforts should be made to convince Parliament of the grave importance of such legislation as will ensure the quick detection of cases and their proper treatment and isolation, and which at the same time affords reasonable hope of leading to the reduction of the number of cases.

There is evidence of the advantageous working of the Acts, not only as regards the detection and cure of the disease, but in reducing the number of brothels and dispersing their occupants, in diminishing juvenile prostitution,

as well as in discovering and curing and preventing the spread of contagious disease. Reference to the Blue-books will probably satisfy anyone of the beneficial working of the Acts in such towns as Portsmouth, Devonport, Plymouth, and Aldershot, and it is only reasonable to infer that an extension of the principle would be followed by greater benefit.

By the action of Mr. Stansfeld and those who support him, all this is changed, and prostitution is left to run its course. Terrible disease, which for some years past has been checked in the localities where these Acts were in force, is again to be permitted to spread far and wide.

That injustice might have been inflicted must of course be admitted, but that it was likely to be inflicted by those whose duty it was to carry out the directions of the Acts is not to be thought of. That such has been or would be the case if the Acts were revived is not more probable than that the governors of prisons and others in positions of authority would exercise their powers unjustly, and be cruel and capricious in their behaviour towards those who are temporarily placed under their control.

In the opposition to these Acts is there not evidence of the same sort of spirit which characterises some of the opponents of vaccination, and those who exhibit such tremendous animosity in their condemnation of investigations upon living frogs and other animals?

As soon as a question can anyhow be made to assume a political character, all hope of its being treated upon its merits is over. No one who desires to act solely for the advantage of the public and of the country desires that sanitary, medical, and scientific questions should be allowed to assume political importance, for when this is the case they soon become degraded to party questions, and all chance of fair consideration and discussion is at an end. Temper, interest, prejudice, caprice, will exert far more influence in

determining how they shall be settled than facts. The rights and reason of the thing are soon overshadowed by the requirements of mere party agitation and warfare, and it is to be feared that legislation, if any is determined upon, is more likely to prove unfortunate and wrong, than to be wise and right—for in all agitations the many who talk loud and vehemently are sure to prevail over the few who think and endeavour to base their action upon facts.

Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts.—"The pity of it! After opening up a way of return and providing a place of repentance for the most pitiable lost class of our great mixed community, and extending the blessings of the healing art to those who have perhaps the very least claims on the sympathy and help of their fellows, a rampant spirit of that self-righteousness which affects to find an excuse for refusing to do good lest evil should come has succeeded in undoing all that mercy has achieved. The crazy and fatuous agitators against the Contagious Diseases Acts have clamoured at the office doors of a weak Government and profited by the impressibility of a sentimental majority in a scratch House of Commons. Henceforward, forsooth, that we may not run the risk of seeming to countenance vice by dealing kindly with the vicious, disease and immorality in their most revolting forms are to riot in the midst of our army, navy, and the civil population of garrison towns! When will the weak-minded sentimentalists of this nineteenth century cease to worry the life out of humanity with their whimperings? It is too late to treat this subject as involving a question for serious argument. It has been conclusively demonstrated that the Contagious Diseases Acts were of marked value to the interest of health and morals. It remains only to bemoan the fatuity which has allowed them to be set aside."—*Lancet*, March 20, 1886.

Immoral Literature.

The moral progress of individuals is often jeopardised, even at a very early age, by books of a thoroughly disgraceful character falling in their way, and being only too carefully read. Of all the evils the good have to contend against in endeavouring to promote the spread of good, this is probably at the same time the greatest and the most difficult to deal with. There is not a section of society, not a craft, not a calling, that is not deluged with vice in some form or other from the printing press. Not even the young are spared. It is only too obvious that one bad book may very quickly counteract the patient labours of many good men, which have been conducted with great care. From childhood onwards there is danger of corruption from this cause, and it is grievous to think of the intellect and the ingenuity which are brought to bear by the bad, apparently with no other object than that of neutralising the endeavours of the good. Perhaps there never was a time when greater efforts were made to poison the minds of the young than in these days, and when one comes to consider what may be the motives of the subtle poisoners, it is most difficult to offer any suggestion by which their acts could be adequately accounted for. It is obvious that by the spread of evil no one gains, while the loss both to corrupters and corrupted is patent enough. But strange as it is, to badness there is no end, and not a little is introduced into the mind of the innocent by books which profess to be good. Of evil tendencies, evil suggestions, evil hints calculated to excite curiosity, and of evil finger-posts directing the unwary along the roads which lead to wickedness and vice there is no limit.

The number, the activity, the clever persuasiveness, the ingenuity of those who seem to be devoted to helping harmless though possibly very stupid people to be wicked, are

astonishing. No doubt, of persons who abandon themselves to counteracting the effort of those who work towards good, it would seem as if some had always before their minds the evil wrought by those who have been called good, and whose lives have been spent in what was called good, and then acting on the assumption that all who work in the same direction—nay, that all who think according to the same lines, ought to be opposed as if they were false and hypocritical, and their efforts checked and supplanted by very different principles, tendencies, and actions. The antagonism of these opponents it seems is not likely to be softened, or their opposition reduced in intensity. The parties seem at last to gravitate, the one to the ever-existing religious bodies, the other towards those whose aim it is to root out every kind of religious thought and feeling. In this never-ceasing strife, however, no onlooker will fail to be struck by the contrast exhibited between the advocates and supporters of religion and those of the opposing views, of, say over fifty years of age. I wonder Mr. Galton has not given us the compound likenesses embodying these two opposite types for comparison.

To stop this overflowing evil current, to change it by direct effort, is, it is to be feared, no more possible than to stem the torrent, or check the eternal progress of the glacier. It is to be feared that the only real way to stop the evil is that slow process which consists in encouraging the taste for what is different. In this way the demand for loathsome demoralising books will be lessened or destroyed, and it will no longer be worth the while of disreputable authors and publishers to contaminate the world. To look for remedies from the law, from the Church, or from the State, seems hopeless. Authority is practically powerless. Taste must be satisfied, and until taste changes the demand will be supplied.

Pamphlets, books, and periodicals of every kind are the

media for the diffusion of evil thought, and of them there is every degree of baseness, from the almost harmless skit or gentle satire to catch the neophite, to the vile, abominable, coarse, and wicked suggestions to suit those whose minds have long been hopelessly depraved, and are only to be excited or interested by the blackest creations of the vilest imagination, and it is to be feared they will continue to do their horrid work as long as the taste for pernicious literature and its evil offspring exists.

That the fair name of science should be used as a means of moral deterioration and ruin of the mind is disgraceful and wrong, but what can be done? Under the cruel pretence of "teaching" physiological facts, a number of the most pernicious doctrines, evil recommendations, and vicious thoughts are marshalled before the harmless reader, who may, probably for the first time in his life, be introduced to thoughts and acts not to be exceeded in vileness, and calculated to destroy every tendency to good in his mind.

Terrible mischief is wrought by publications which ought not to be allowed in any community which claims to be influenced by feelings of decency. The publication of the exact statements made by the unfortunate victims of practices all are ashamed of, ought to be protested against and prevented. In some instances the statements have no foundation in fact, but are the creation either of a nasty or a morbid and imaginative disposition only. The cruel plan of publishing in detail symptoms experienced by a few wretched patients undoubtedly suggests to many the notion that they are suffering or are about to suffer from the same horrid half-dreams. Years ago it was not considered right thus to act, and the plan was only adopted by those who thought rather of their own, than their patients', or the public good; but now, I regret to say, writers not unknown to science, and in high position in cities of scarcely less importance in the world than London itself, have revived the

injurious fashion, and have written works published at a very cheap rate, and which are no doubt only too widely diffused among English-speaking people. Should one of these books fall into the hands of a young man not in the medical profession, I trust he will burn it without reading it. The thing is a disgrace to all, and especially to those whose duty it is to judge whether what is written for the public to buy is decent or not. The authorities responsible for public morals attempt to excuse themselves for not interfering, on account of fanciful difficulties about freedom of expression, and the literal statements requisite for professional information, and such like. They ought to reflect not only upon the harm these things do, but on the fact that by non-interference they practically favour and support books containing much that is disgraceful, cruel, and wrong. All that is needed seems to be a committee of half a dozen well-known persons in whose judgment and discrimination and sense of justice the public would have full confidence, but from whose decision there should be no appeal. Such a committee should be instructed to condemn anything which encouraged immorality, upon the same principle that the performance of an indecent play is not allowed.

In this matter the law ought to act, and works which convey information tending to encourage immorality ought to be suppressed. It is really too bad to permit indecencies and the seeds of vice and immorality to be sown broadcast among the people on the ground that suppression would be considered arbitrary and tyrannical. It is doubtful whether the tyranny of spreading evil among a people is not the worst and most far reaching of all the forms of tyranny which have ever been invented by the most cruel and ingenious of oppressors.

In America public opinion seems to allow, if it does not actually encourage, the free diffusion and discussion of matters which at least in England have till now always been

treated with extreme care and gentleness. Certainly it has been abundantly proved by professional experience that harm results from a premature knowledge of questions concerning the relation of the sexes on the part of boys and girls. Some of the most melancholy examples of the poisoning of individual minds, and of mental and moral wreck, seem to have had their origin in information derived from published books, and cases are not wanting in which the most terrible misery has been caused by young people having been led to take views upon complex physiological problems which are quite opposed to facts and to reason, and are contrary to the teachings of history, and to the conclusions arrived at by persons of experience in the world. But the real hollowness of the profound knowingness and superior wisdom aped by these vain and silly people, who in their mistaken intellectual security of new knowledge set at nought the laws of God and man, is often only too clearly shown. Ere the monstrous theories have been acted upon, real life will have opened in misery never to be alleviated or forgotten. The vilest thoughts which by the aid of great literary skill can be conveyed by language, are publicly diffused to corrupt and ruin the stupid and the weak, though they can only disgust the sensible and the strong, because it is held to be doubtful whether public opinion would sanction the suppression of the teachers or their works, while, if it did, there would be the greatest difficulty on the part of those armed with power to decide precisely where the process of purgation and purification was to stop. At present public opinion seems to rely upon the law, while the law awaits the mandate of public opinion. So it comes about that questionable or abominable acts which may irreparably damage or destroy individuals, and would, if allowed to prevail unchecked for but a few years, undermine and ruin the strongest society, and render certain the deterioration and downfall of the most vigorous race, are permitted

in our midst. In these matters many seem to be capable of learning only from their own painful experience. It is the same story generation after generation. The young in too many instances decline to regulate their conduct according to the advice of their friends, their teachers, or those senior to them, who are more experienced than they can be. It seems impossible to prevent the occurrence of some cases of individual misery, though it is certain that the number is many times greater than it need be under conditions even if worse than those which actually exist.

We have knowledge more than enough as well as the results of the experience gained by this and many preceding generations, to justify far stronger repressive measures than have yet been carried into practice. It is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when better counsels will prevail, and the public sense of what is right induce men to insist that a way shall be found by which the vile shall be prevented from wrecking so many of the innocent and foolish, or by which at least the process shall be made far more difficult and risky than it is at this time.

It may be freely conceded that by excessive refinement, exaggerated sentiment, and an artificial mode of life, the most unhealthy views concerning the questions under consideration may be created and fostered, and too much unoccupied time is allowed in which the imagination may feed upon love, or rather upon fancies which masquerade for love, and thus the way for the professors and workers of malevolence is prepared. But still all this is preventible. By encouraging the love of ease and luxury, and dislike of work, a morbid development of tendencies resulting in a lowering of the standard of morality, and an unhealthy way of regarding offences against morals, are almost of necessity engendered. Thus the standard of morality by degrees is lowered, and the nation itself suffers. The vigour and progress of a race may be estimated by its moral force, and its

advance among nations will almost depend upon the moral standard which it has reached.

From the view that matters having reference to sexual organs in both sexes can be publicly treated of in books in the plainest language without doing harm I entirely dissent, and I feel confident that even among ourselves and in our lectures to medical students, not only is it not necessary or desirable to do more than make general reference to matters of the kind, but that any minute consideration of the details is calculated to do great harm, and in more ways than I care to dilate upon. To give good advice upon these matters it is not necessary or desirable to go into all the nauseous details of terrible cases of obstinate determination, to enumerate the working of evil imaginations, or the base promptings of the basest and vilest of degraded man and womanhood. The righteousness of self-restraint has but to be taught through childhood, and inculcated with care and assiduity till the individual mind is sufficiently mature to understand and acknowledge the reasons upon which the teaching was based.

The question is so far apart from matters of ordinary knowledge and conversation, that many a young imagination, after being contaminated by hints, allusions, and suggestions of evil, is allowed to feed in solitude on miserable horrors of its own creation, or on the abominable misrepresentations in some literary productions of the lowest and most degraded minds. Many of these, written avowedly for his assistance, are likely to add to his confusion and misery; and it is to be hoped that those induced to buy these bad books may have strength of mind to see the bearing of the suggestions, and courage to discard them.

It has never been determined how far it is wise and right, and for the advantage of the young, that they should be instructed as regards details connected with the procreative faculty, and the relations of the sexes. Injudicious or too

detailed allusion to such matters is apt to move the pupil to extend his knowledge, and encourage him to read books he ought not to see. Many think that upon the whole it is better that these matters should not be broached, lest they stimulate curiosity, or perhaps take entire possession of the mind. Many active-minded youths, there is reason to think, would find no great difficulty in exercising self-control, if only their minds had been concentrated upon something harmless of absorbing interest. In such cases it would therefore be needless to think of warning them, or of informing them on the subject. It is probable that by far the great majority of youths would fall under this category.

Some have thought that the true way of preventing the young from falling into sin, or adopting a course so imprudent as marriage without the means to keep a home, and thus thoughtlessly courting failure and perhaps despair, was to give them proper instruction in sexual physiology, and matters connected with the relations of the sexes. With this pretence works of disreputable character, and conveying false and worthless information, have been published. The most correct physiology alone could not make people wise or prudent, good or moral, and still less would false physiology have such a result. Discretion and judgment are slowly acquired, and cannot be taught like the multiplication table.

Of late years the responsibility of training the minds and guiding the conduct of the young has not rested only upon parents and ecclesiastical authorities, as was formerly the case. Not only is much training and education entrusted to lay hands, but vast numbers of people actually decline to be guided in opinion by members of any church or religious body whatever, and of these it is to be feared not a few repudiate every form of religion, maintaining that neither our conduct towards one another nor our duty as citizens need be governed or influenced by religious considerations

of any kind. The choice of the literature introduced among the young becomes under these considerations an enormous difficulty. Whatever differences of opinion there may be on this matter, and they must needs be considerable, there will be thorough concurrence in the view that purity and a high standard of morality are essential to the well-being, to the happiness, and to the real progress of the community. Nay, this might be almost considered as the true test by which the value of systems and institutions, whether political, philosophical or religious, was to be determined.

It is to be hoped that public opinion, formed upon the views and experience of the best and wisest of our time, and which has already done such incalculable good for the rising generation of the upper and middle classes, will insist upon the immediate adoption of the same principles as regards the moral training of the mind as well as the physical training of the body, in respect of the working populations, especially those of our large manufacturing cities, that have contributed so much to the making of middle class England what it is at this time. The principle which has been inculcated in every public school, and which has guided and regulated the conduct of every boy who has grown into a good man, is self-restraint. Had the progenitors of our working population learnt the meaning of that magic word, understood it and acted upon it, how different might have been the moral standard of the people in these days. Held up for general admiration at this very time, is a principle far enough removed from self-restraint. Under the fair name of liberty, licence and wrong have been inculcated.

In the political world how often it is to be observed that men skilled in dialectic go beyond the verge of what is right, and even revel in that region where acts which seem to be but the practical outcome of words held to be harmless, at length prove to be against law, as they are obviously op-

posed to good feeling and right, and those who have been led on to act according to the logic of their leaders, have to bear the infliction of severe punishment and suffer disgrace for doing what they were assured by persons supposed to know better than themselves, they might certainly do.

In the moral world in these days people seem to be led on and even encouraged to proceed in a direction which if followed far enough must lead them and those who are led by them to ruin, and involve all in irretrievable disaster. Certain books and periodicals, ostensibly published for imparting instruction and good advice to the young, contain suggestions and hints of the most improper and misleading kind, conveying false views concerning the actual state of the society of our time and as to what is right and advantageous for the individual. Too often an evil course, suggested as desirable and affirmed to be natural, is adopted by the unwary, who find too late that they have been misled and deceived, and while as they thought, though consciously acting contrary to good feeling and custom, they were only conforming to fashion and following the example of men of the world, discover when too late that they have acted against law, and have even committed a criminal act when they only essayed to be wicked and vicious.

Purity, and Purity Societies.

Of late public attention has been but too frequently directed to the subject of sexual sins and wickednesses of various kinds, and it is not wonderful that many anxious to do good should have suggested plans for improving behaviour and ameliorating evil. Efforts based on the principle of continually expanding associations of persons who have agreed to adopt and inculcate certain canons and rules of action have been formed. Some of these associations met with very remarkable success.

The main object of the societies is to establish a higher moral standard in society generally, and to persuade and encourage each individual to attain to and to preserve through life an unimpeachable moral character. The very close relationship between purity and religion has been recognised and accepted as a principle by more than one of the societies that have been constituted within the last few years.

In some not only has the religious principle been very pronounced, but it has assumed a very warlike character. A somewhat violent crusading spirit has taken the place of that quiet persuasive unobtrusive disposition which has distinguished some of the most lasting manifestations of Christian purity, and which is undoubtedly associated in idea with this silent virtue.

Many societies and guilds have been established for supporting and spreading a high standard of purity among all classes of the people, in consequence of immorality of various kinds having been greatly on the increase, but if their laudable object should be gained and the moral state of the people greatly improved, there would no longer be need of them.

Any course or system which helps people to be moral and encourages the spread of morality among the young, which tends towards virtue and discourages vice, which assists in checking and detecting criminal immorality, must be approved by all good men. No curse can be more terrible, whether we look at its present effects or future consequences, than immorality. Although the sin of drink, or that of gross immorality, may exist independently of one another, as a fact they are undoubtedly often associated, and the recklessness of character and disposition induced by the one not uncommonly leads to the commission of the other, while in some instances if one of these sins could be overcome, the other would disappear.

The question of special societies for inculcating virtue and detecting and punishing vice is a very wide one, and involves many issues, some of which are well worthy of examination.

Many facts unquestionably point to the conclusion, which, however, is by no means certainly established, that in recent years there has been comparatively little advance in moral training, and it is to be feared that many of the young who are now approaching maturity, and not belonging to one class of society only, have received little or no instruction to fit them for resisting immoral tendencies. It must, I think, also be admitted that for some time past there has been in many sections of society an indisposition to encourage religious training. This tendency has received further impulse by the circumstance that some of those who train boys even in large public schools, are not only not in orders, but though eminently moral and advocates of a high standard of morals, are opposed to every form of religion.

In every development of the religious idea, morality has occupied a very conspicuous place, and has been regarded as a cardinal point of the highest practical consequence. An age that is opposed to religion will almost certainly—though not in consequence or of necessity—be an immoral age. Irreligion and immorality have prevailed at the same times in history, and although it may be truly said that a people might be moral without being religious, such a state has not been known in the past, though no one can say it will not be in the future. When a public evil or crime attains a certain pitch of intensity, if any strength and vigour be left a way of improvement will be found, and some few of those who remain good will struggle with all their might to leaven and improve the mass, and they will succeed. At last the great importance of morality will be acknowledged, and careful moral training will be advocated, and people will band together for the purpose of improving morals.

Moral thoughts and acts will become the fashion. Great efforts will be made to keep people good, and to prevent the weak from falling into habits that are evil, and possibly in some cases injustice may result from mere excess of zeal in the cause of goodness and purity. Some of the societies constituted for the purpose of winning over and saving those whose tendencies are doubtful, and for restoring those who have already fallen into evil ways, cannot be altogether acquitted of carrying their crusading spirit in the cause of morality a little farther and with more intensity than the more lasting interest of morality demanded.

What has been termed social purity is undoubtedly a matter of the greatest public consequence, and concerns every section of a civilised community. It is one which every church in the world deems it a duty to take in hand and the most unphilosophical of atheistic or theistic sects acknowledges to be of paramount importance. All engaged in teaching the young are well aware of the necessity of earnest care and vigilance, and the numerous communications on chastity and social purity to various meetings and conferences and congresses, the appeals in confirmation addresses, the establishment of purity societies, such as the Church of England Purity Society, the White Cross Army, and of special guilds, and other societies for inculcating purity, bear witness to the practical efforts to encourage and raise the standard of social purity at this time.

Among the many memoirs which have been recently written upon this highly important matter, particular reference may be made to the paper, "On the best means of raising the Standard of Public Morality," by the Rev. E. Thring, M.A., Head Master of Uppingham School, read at the Carlisle Church Congress, 1884.

So much attention has been given to the subject that the effort to improve morals has almost become a business or a calling, to which some people entirely devote themselves.

Their interest seems to be concentrated in those who have fallen from good into evil ways. Anxiety to discover those who are lost, or nearly lost, seems to fill the whole being, and to these desires everything else in life is to be sacrificed. There are enthusiasts who seem to concern themselves only with the wicked and foolish, and those who have strayed from the paths of virtue, and who, perhaps, have knowingly abandoned themselves to evil. To such extent has this view been allowed to gain possession of the mind, that little or no notice is taken of those who are good, or of the multitudes of our fellow creatures who are neither so good nor so bad as they might be.

Not a few, however, of those who have been much engaged in medical practice among the wicked think the question may be viewed from another side. From their training and from their experience among the evil and forlorn, doctors are likely to study the whole question from a somewhat different standpoint. And when the question of the best way of practically dealing with the matter comes to be considered, the divergence in opinion between members of the medical profession and many of those who originate and support associations or societies for the improvement of morals becomes most marked.

It is impossible to doubt the goodness of motive of those who have devoted themselves to making the bad less bad than they were, while the patience and self-denial displayed by them, to say nothing of money expenditure, are deserving of the gratitude of good men. It must, however, be admitted that the zeal and enthusiasm exhibited by some most earnest in reforming the wicked have sometimes led them to propose corrective expedients more severe and more general in their application than the facts appeared to warrant. Many such persons in thought and act naturally tend towards undue intensity. They are determined to crush out wickedness and stamp out sin. They would

strangle evil and annihilate crime. The religious martial crusading spirit that is in them sometimes bursts forth in language needlessly strong and vehement. The very intensity of their longings to do good seems to lead them to commit a little, and sometimes more than a little injustice. Wrongs have been often made to appear far greater than they really are, and persons supposed to have condoned evil have been wrongly accused of having actually done so, and have been suspected of having committed acts which deserve to be called base, and merit the heaviest punishment. Crimes occasionally committed have been spoken of as if they were not uncommon, and evil opinions actually held by one here and there, or only a few, have been attributed to many, and even thousands have been ungenerously and unjustly condemned because one or two misguided individuals have done wrong, and having disgraced themselves, have succeeded in getting others to follow their bad example. Exaggeration seems to be necessary for some reason or other in discourses for the defence of purity. At any rate it is too frequently indulged in by speakers and writers who advocate the cause of purity as well as that of total abstinence.

The Bishop of Truro, at the Truro Diocesan Conference, said :—"I could give instance after instance in which a doctor has recommended a young man to sin—shame upon him for it !—that the health might be preserved." It is a terrible pity that men in the position of the Bishop of Truro should make sweeping statements like the above—"instance after instance !" May I be permitted to ask him to state exactly how many? In thirty-five years, during which I have had exceptional chances of having such cases brought under my notice, two, perhaps three, such instances have occurred; but not one of so definite a character that I should have been justified in writing to the doctor and saying, "as you advised so and so to sin, will you give me the grounds upon

which you consider such advice justifiable?" The medical profession has been often vaguely and falsely accused of this and other objectionable things. As a fact, I dare say here and there such bad advice has been given from ignorance of the real facts and their true bearings. The suggestion that such advice is not unusual, for otherwise "instance after instance" could not be given, I believe to be an utter mistake. The phrase "instance after instance" ought not in common fairness to have been used unless at least five could be adduced. I feel constrained to put the question—Does the Bishop of Truro refer to more or less than five? I am quite certain that an enormous majority of the profession would give very different advice. Not a few of us have given public expression to our views, which have not been attacked or called in question. The following quotation from Sir James Paget's "Clinical Lectures and Essays" probably expresses the general opinion of the medical profession upon this matter:—"Many of your patients will ask you about sexual intercourse and expect you to prescribe fornication. I would just as soon prescribe theft and lying, or any thing else that God has forbidden. Chastity does no harm to mind or body; its discipline is excellent; marriage can be safely waited for; and amongst the many nervous and hypochondriacal patients who have talked to me about fornication, I have never heard one say that he was better or happier for it." (Quoted by Dr. Hime in his work on "Morality.") Should these remarks come under his notice, I hope the Bishop will take some early opportunity of limiting the application of his highly objectionable remarks to the exact number of persons he includes in the assertion "instance after instance" which he says he could give.

Remarks condemnatory of views supposed to be held generally by the members of the medical profession are sometimes rather recklessly indulged in by persons of emi-

nence in a sister profession, and it is quite time that some of us should take notice of the fact, and beg the public not to be influenced by such general vague and unsupported accusations. Such attacks on the part both of bishops and judges upon us will seem to any one who is acquainted with the relative positions of the accusers and accused not a little cowardly. The remarks, being vague and general in their application, cannot be answered. The public position of those who charge us gives them an advantage that we do not enjoy, and but for the accident of this, the condemnatory remarks often heard, even if deserved, would be delivered in a somewhat milder tone. Certainly it is the duty of those who are zealous in the cause of purity and other virtues to take great care not to do wrong for the sake of illustrating or accentuating their views and forcing attention to them for the sake of promoting the cause. If a number of innocent persons are to risk being falsely charged and held up to public censure, it may be questioned whether the punishment thus inflicted upon the good does not more than counterbalance any advantages likely to accrue in warning and reclaiming the wicked.

One of the most remarkable facts in connection with movements towards good in modern times is the multiplicity of new efforts perpetually being made to supplement or intensify efforts already in force for fulfilling the very same object. No matter what the aim may be, it seems to be the opinion of many that by new arrangements, by acting upon somewhat different lines, the desired result is more likely to be attained than by any of the methods already in operation. One set of people devote themselves to some good work. In a short time another set soon start to outdo the first in the same line, and claim to be able to achieve more than they had even attempted. No wonder that amid all these competing efforts for good, the older and quieter ones experience difficulty in obtaining

support, and many an old and thoroughly well-organized charitable work is starved and swamped by a number of very recently established movements, the supporters of which are well versed in the method of bringing their claims before the public and in the art of making the most of their own good intentions. No wonder that among the multitude of efforts and restless determination to improve or perfect the world, the interests of some movements should clash with those of others, or vigorous attempts to diffuse good in one way should be disturbed by efforts as vigorous to spread it in some other way. Every set of philanthropists is so thoroughly confident that its proposals, if only acted upon, would be more efficient than any measures ever adopted and carried into practice by any other set, present or past, that they are most anxious that no time should be lost in adopting the new suggestions, and affording to the persons for whose benefit they have been made, the inestimable advantages sure to flow from their practical operation.

It is no uncommon thing to find many good works altered several times, and even the principles upon which institutions and movements were based changed more than once in the course of a few years, as this or that view gains ascendancy with the public. This very process of curing certain ills creates others that were not foreseen when the new plan was first introduced. Had this objection presented itself, the promoters would have hesitated, and the new suggestions might have been left in abeyance, and safer and better tried lines of action followed out instead, with more advantageous results.

The best treatment of the moral question, as it confronts us in these days, has been the subject of much discussion. Many remedial measures have been suggested and many have been carried into practice, and though undoubtedly some good has been done, it cannot, I fear, be said that there is yet a general consensus of opinion in favour of any

one measure, and authorities not only widely differ as to the principles by which we ought to be guided, and the means most likely to be effectual in dealing with this terrible evil, but the differences are so great as to endanger the carrying into effect of any measure which affords a fair prospect of reducing the evil in any great degree.

It is to be regretted that many of those for whose benefit great efforts have been made, difficulties surmounted, and expense incurred, make short work of the good intentions, the advice, and the corrections proposed. The young of both sexes not unfrequently treat with indifference, or disdain, or scornfully disregard customs long acquiesced in and adopted by society,—customs which have been sanctioned and supported by the experience of many generations, as safeguards for the benefit and protection of youth. Not a few young people think they are quite as well able to take care of themselves as their seniors can be to take care of them, while some are determined to do as they like, notwithstanding the best intentions of advisers they regard as grandmotherly. In too many instances the mistake they have made is only discovered by them when it is no longer possible for them to retrace their steps, or to escape the suffering which must follow. In our days it is the fashion to give up old and tried principles and act upon new and untried theories of life, though failure and sorrow and misery are the portion of many who allow their conduct to be regulated according to inclination or impulse, or the promptings of evil counsellors.

As regards morals and moral principles, there seems to be such wide divergence of opinion upon first principles, that it is doubtful whether it would be possible to formulate anything for the guidance of the young which would be accepted with confidence, or would be generally regarded as helpful and advantageous for the regulation of the conduct of those inexperienced in the ways of the world.

There is in these days a tendency on the part of members of a large association or body of persons to reduce their power of doing good by forming small select associations or coteries. This probably originates in a feeling on the part of a small number of something wrong or imperfect or inadequate as regards the principles upon which the community professes to rest, and to imperfections in the application of laws for the preservation of right. Amongst Christians we have Christians who consider the ordinary and general Christian profession and practice so inadequate that they constitute themselves into a body acting up to more strict principles and guided by rules more rigid and exact than the general mass obey. A select body or association or society more temperate, more pure, more charitable, and generally better, thus springs into being, and its members must needs care more for those working with them than for those who, though general Christians, do not belong to their particular special Christian department or section.

Every Christian Church, every Christian body, seems to be dividing and subdividing itself into knots of persons, each knot with special hopes, aspirations, and professions of its own. Thus it comes about that new standards of piety, self-sacrifice, purity, temperance, nay kindness, are raised amongst a body of people whose very constitution is based upon the acknowledgment and practice of these virtues, and it is to be feared that in some instances those who follow the new standard look down upon those who do not, and instead of trying to help any in need of help, try rather to gain allies and zealous supporters of the Christian section to which they belong. Some even look down on those who differ from them in opinion as to the best way of contributing the help required. It has even happened that the differences between some of these sections have been more keen and more pronounced than the differences between

the Christian and other religious bodies, just as the differences and sometimes, alas, the animosity, between sects and subsects are often more intense than the differences between widely divergent systems ; and in some cases it would seem that tolerance varies almost directly as the degree of difference in opinion. Indeed, in the desire to gain popularity for certain views and carry particular measures into practice, it has happened that the fundamental principles of action of the original body have been forgotten or lost sight of. Nor is it wonderful that in the confusion of thought and work in these days we sometimes find Christians led on from one point to another until at last in their zeal to be better than ordinary Christians they actually cease to be Christian altogether. The attempt to interweave with Christian principles such doctrines as the fittest survives and the weakest goes to the wall may result in the abandonment of Christianity itself. To harmonize such notions with moral principles is impossible. Moral teaching and morality cannot be admitted, for is not the very essence of moral action the protection of the weak and the acknowledgment of the right of the weak to exist? The weak are not only to be permitted, but to be helped and encouraged to survive. In no moral or Christian code can the dictum that the fittest must survive and the weakest must go to the wall have a place.

Every successive standard of good action has its cry, and though there is no doubt that good has resulted from some of these cries, it is doubtful whether more good might not have been effected without them. The circumstances above referred to remove, I think, to a great extent objections that might be raised to our considering various matters purely from our own medical standpoint. Amongst us there is certainly a very high percentage of worthy men, that is. men who give much of their time and are content to do so, and perhaps for no remuneration at all, and devote them-

selves heart and soul to help others. There are, I think, many amongst us who, perhaps from training, circumstances, and surroundings, some of which may be accidental, have felt indisposed to join societies for the improvement of morals, not from any objection to the object in view, but rather from a conviction that we might be more useful in dealing with individual cases according to our knowledge of the particulars, and if free to act how, when, and where we might think best, without being trammelled with the views and rules of bodies, however influential and powerful. And surely a man who, for example, is and has been in principle and practice most temperate, may reasonably object to join a crusade against every form of intoxicating liquor, because a few exceed. It may freely be granted that many cannot take intoxicants without risk of going altogether to the bad. But even this does not indicate that it must be right, or to the advantage of civilization or truth, to treat every member of the whole community as if not one could control his appetite. The argument that because there happens to be a percentage of drunkards or gluttons the amount of food and drink taken by everyone ought to be strictly limited by law, will not be accepted as conclusive. Surely it is a farce at this period of our history, in the very pride of our freedom, to advocate action so narrow if not tyrannical. Are education, moral training, legal ingenuity, so utterly impotent that society must be placed and kept in leading strings because here and there a man behaves like a fool? Why should we not direct our attention to restraining and reforming the fool, instead of endeavouring to bind every person, reasonable and unreasonable, with fetters? Our legislators, forsooth, do not like to interfere with the liberty of the subject. In other words, the liberty of the one person not fit to be free is to be protected, while the liberty of the majority, who have every right to enjoy it, is to be taken away. The interests of the many are to be

sacrificed to the few, and the happiness of the greatest number rendered impossible because here and there an exceptional being exists who will not behave himself properly, and cannot or will not exercise self-control, exceptional proceedings being necessary to keep this one individual straight.

Like some of the associations and societies whose aim it is to obtain as many converts as possible to the cause of total abstinence, purity societies are largely concerned in proselytizing, and not only from among those who have taken to evil ways, but among the good, or at any rate among those who have not shown any proclivity towards evil, and have not experienced any difficulty in the path of good. Many of these societies rest avowedly on a religious basis, and all or nearly all follow what may be called a religious method. For the most part they are supported by persons of strong religious views. They are, therefore, not very likely to win over sceptics, or to restrain from evil those who ignore or deny every form of religion. But as far as the interests of society and the welfare of the State are concerned, it is quite as important that irreligious as that religious persons should be moral, while there is good reason for thinking that conversion to morality should, at least in many cases, precede and prepare the way for religious conversion. It would seem, therefore, desirable that to carry out the object in view, purity societies should be established upon a non-religious basis, or that there should be non-religious as well as religious purity societies. The fever for making everyone better than he is, and for regenerating everything, sometimes runs so high that scarcely a duty or an interest can be mentioned that it is not considered necessary to place under the protection and care of some special society or association which, we are confidently assured, will certainly aid in the attainment of perfection, or at all events render certain, improvement and advance which could not

be looked for if we relied upon the ordinary means of promoting good as carried into practice by average Christians. There would appear to be some mysterious charm and power in corporate capacity, by virtue of which a society, a guild, or association is enabled to achieve much more than the constituent individuals are capable of carrying out. It is by societies and associations that we are to be provided with highly skilled professional detectives, who are to hunt out and capture professional vagabonds, and otherwise regulate and improve morals. The administration of means for assisting the poor and necessitous is supposed to require a special training, which is not afforded by the State or by ordinary educational institutions, and cannot be acquired by individual experience and observation. The nominees of associations or organizations only are to be allowed to decide, for instance, whether a person who has been starving for some days ought or ought not to be relieved, and it has been found that to determine this question according to principle, in many cases a prolonged exhaustive enquiry must be set on foot, perhaps entailing some days more starvation before the report can be acted upon. Ordinary persons, by promptly relieving, might do harm, their interference perhaps encouraging imposition, besides degrading and demoralising the hungry and necessitous. In like manner we are to be favoured with moral vigilance committees, the members of which are to hunt out and seize every offender or supposed offender, and thus supplement the ineffectual attempts of the State to direct and punish, and to prevent the spread of immorality and crime.

To the persons who discharge these self-imposed and onerous duties and to those who support them, of course every success affords lively satisfaction, and in this way they obtain some reward for their labours. Imposition discovered and punished, fraud detected, and immoralities tracked and brought home to the perpetrators, seem to be

to some minds what shooting, hunting, fishing, trapping are to the sportsman, the newly discovered fact to the scientific investigator, or the feat for the first time accomplished to the athlete. Devotion and enthusiasm tempered with wisdom, discretion, and steadiness of purpose, must unquestionably be placed among the highest of human endowments. But in the absence of regulating and controlling agencies and sensible guidance, harm instead of good may result, and it is obviously possible that inexperience and want of judgment and care on the part of our over-zealous and over-confident detectives may end in the infliction of injustice and wrong where good only was intended and desired. In the zeal to give intensity to some bitter cry, or to obtain some horrible example for convincing people as to the existence of a terrible form of social evil, or for proving or illustrating intense wickedness and sin which prevails in our midst, it is even possible that a parent might be publicly but falsely accused of selling to infamy his own child.

When many persons constitute themselves into a society, corporation, or caucus to supplement or to supersede the existing agencies to detect crime, it will be inferred that proof has been afforded that the law and its administration have long been most defective, for otherwise it would follow that the members of the detective societies, however good their motives may have been, have interfered in matters which could have been better dealt with by those who were appointed to discharge the duty. When such amateur disciplinary bodies, in order to gain influence and power, endeavour to attract considerable numbers to their standard by declaring that they are engaged in a crusade which is holy, their efforts are open to the suspicion that in practice decisions would display evidence of intemperate zeal rather than calm judgment. Instead of promoting the cause of morality the efforts referred to may have an opposite effect. Anything approaching espionage and persecution may do

harm and may develop recklessness of disposition, or precipitate wickedness instead of fostering and encouraging self-restraint and goodness.

Both as regards individuals and multitudes of men, ill-judged efforts to enforce goodness and to make people virtuous have had the contrary effect, and some who had not manifested any marked tendency towards vice seem to have been almost driven to vicious courses in consequence of injudicious determination on the part of enthusiastic advisers and teachers to make them inordinately good at once as it were, by effecting a complete and sudden transformation of character and disposition, habits and surroundings. For all men to be as good as certain "holy crusaders" are, or suppose themselves, or are supposed to be, is possible in the existing order of things to a small percentage only. And it must be borne in mind that "goodness" itself is sometimes counterfeited in these evil days, and there are instances of the public having been expected to assent to acts as evidence of goodness which those well acquainted with the facts have been compelled to regard in a very different light and to pronounce bad, while the principles which have permitted or have led to the execution of the acts must be condemned as faulty or wrong.

Particularly as applied to the treatment of the young are some of these violent crusading efforts open to suspicion. It is very doubtful whether "holy crusaders" are in any way calculated to make the general run of naughty boys good and moral; and it is also doubtful whether those who have come to the conclusion that boys require holy crusades to do them good, are upon the whole the persons most likely to produce an influence for good in the bad boy's mind. The fighting, conquering, militant crusading disposition is perhaps not the one most certain to gain the respect and affection of children, or to win the sympathy of the erring, the weak, the bad, the careless, the selfish.

Some enthusiasts in the cause of morality are so absorbed in saving the bad that they can see virtue only in vice. To restore the wicked, to reclaim the vicious, to them seem to be the only motives worth living for or working for. Some evil persons have been made quite famous, and have been extolled in terms never employed to encourage the moderate bad to be good, or the moderate good to be better. This it is to be feared is a most dangerous habit of mind, for it not only fosters a morbid and altogether artificial sympathy for vice and crime, but it establishes imperceptibly a new code, the morality of which is open to grave doubt, and which, while suppressing one form of immorality, may lead to the commission of other forms. Besides which, some of those who accept and teach this new code sometimes seem to be skating upon the thinnest moral ice which occasionally cracks and the skater finds himself immersed. There are moralists who at last seem to have very little interest except in some form of wickedness or crime. The probability of a mind thus changed and distorted successfully removing from or mitigating evil in other minds is not great.

The life-long devotion of a certain number of estimable persons to the correction of error, the improvement of the wicked, and the winning back of the fallen, has naturally persuaded others to imitate their example and join in similar praiseworthy efforts. Nor is it surprising that the success gained should result in the inauguration of associations, societies, leagues, and guilds for the special correction or suppression and removal of almost every existing sin, error, weakness, or evil afflicting modern society, for redressing every wrong, for encouraging and strengthening the feeble to persevere in goodness, for defending the patient and weak against the strong and aggressive, for helping the necessitous, feeding the hungry, for allaying or mitigating hardship, for assisting those who have not been fortunate in life's

struggle, as well as the slaves of dissipation, and the victims of moral degradation found among every civilized community if not actually necessary accompaniments of modern civilization.

Some of the devotees of these never-ceasing efforts of reclamation and care are so completely absorbed in the work of their choice as to appear to live in a world apart from that in which most men live and work. Those who do not belong to their particular favoured league or association, and who do not actively support them and spread their views, as well as those who do not cordially sympathise with the special movement and object in view, are in danger of being condemned as guilty of dereliction of duty and of playing a useless and selfish part in a world of sin and suffering, where they ought to do all in their power to support and forward the best and greatest of all Christian work, the reclamation of the fallen, the diminution of crime, and the lightening of the burthen of misery and sin. That association and co-operation, pledges, and vows help many to gain moral ascendancy over others, as well as to increase their own moral strength, is certain; but at the same time is it not strange that in matters moral it should have to be confessed that men generally really require the support, the society, and direct encouragement of others to enable them to acquire sufficient self-control and courage to resist temptation and avoid being led away by vicious example, although it is generally believed that such elementary principles are taught and thoroughly inculcated in childhood, and that a well-trained child ought to have imbibed moral strength enough to enable it to resist evil counsels and ordinary temptation?

Do not those who join a society for improving morals or for the encouragement of purity thereby acknowledge that they themselves are exceptionally wanting in self-command, uncertain as regards self-control, and conscious of requiring

external aid and the support of others to enable them to act aright? But would not a little quiet thought upon the principles embodied in Christian life, on our relations to one another, and on the rights of others, enable a man of average intellect and brought up among Christians, to pursue the right course without external aid? Nay, would not mere regard for the interests and good of others lead anyone possessing reason and intelligence, the power of reflecting, and ordinary courage, to keep himself from committing wickedness and wrong without resorting to the artificial support afforded by pledges and vows, and the constant reminder of his allegiance to a party or to an authority?

Vows and pledges are, as it were, crutches, by the aid of which some of the morally weak manage to walk erect. These are also, as of old, instruments by which a few weak succeed in dominating many strong, and are enabled to rule instead of, as would seem more natural, being ruled.

Although some seem to think that by a vow some mysterious charm or power is infallibly imparted to the irresolute, it is by no means clear that a little consideration on the part of the individual would not have enabled him to gain the same end as by taking a vow or making a solemn declaration, while he might at the same time have succeeded in really strengthening his mind for further progressive wise resolve, and thus rendered easier and more certain future advance towards good. But however this may be, the contention on the part of some of these weak people who depend upon artificial support, that they are to dictate to and domineer over their stronger brethren who experience no difficulty in walking and working in the world without the aid of such expedients as they have found it necessary to adopt is intolerable. Upon the same principle the weak may claim to lead and govern the strong—the halt and the

lame to force upon those who need no artificial help whatever, the instruments they require for limited progression, the stupid to instruct the wise, and those bereft of reason and the weak-minded to dictate to the sane the terms upon which they were to be permitted to live.

In some departments the attempted tyranny of the confessedly halt and lame, who are proud of the artificial assistance they need, would be quite ridiculous were it not a power, and indeed a rapidly increasing means for assailing the foundations of liberty and civilization, and threatening some of the very principles of Christianity. Not a few of those who commend such paraphernalia of weakness and deformity as the source of real strength, will not rest satisfied until all have been deceived into the belief that they need the same instruments of support, and that such assistance is a necessity of modern existence and ought to be universally adopted, and if needful enforced by law upon those who are indisposed to accept their principle. Such persons seem to live and work for the purpose of placing the whole human race in leading strings. Possibly they may justify themselves by the argument that the arms of man having been foolishly withdrawn from their natural work owing to ignorance or in defiance of evolutionary laws on the part of our predecessors, their proper use ought now to be resumed. No one, we shall be assured, can now fail to see that arms were clearly designed to assist the lower limbs in progression, as in all other examples of the quadruped type, while their length and position in man as clearly prove that they were evolved solely for carrying and working crutches for the assistance of the legs!

If, however, by taking a vow or pledging himself to observe a formula, or by agreeing to place himself under the direction and control of an individual or of persons who constitute a league or a society, a man can effectually prevent himself from following or continuing to pursue a

vicious course of life, by all means let him take the step. But he by no means thereby acquires the right to impose a similar course and the same sort of restrictions upon his friends, or upon any who have not fallen into bad ways, and are able to exercise control over themselves. Neither has he any right whatever to preach the doctrine that the course he has been impelled to take is the only one by which evil becomes preventible, and that therefore it should be imposed upon all whether they have need of artificial help or not, and whether or not they like it or believe in it.

Without questioning the usefulness in many cases and in many ways of some of these societies, the same object might be gained in what many of us believe to be a better and more permanent, though it may be a slower way. In favour of this contention it might be urged that a higher and more generous estimate of our fellow men is taken. We desire to influence their reason and so prevent them from transgressing, rather than threaten them with punishment or pledge them to obey a mandate. The system of vigilance committees and the espionage and hunting for offenders is upon many grounds most objectionable, if not altogether beyond the rights of anyone to enforce. Such action seems to me inconsistent with the principles of even the broadest forms of the Christian system. Persuasion, instruction, suggestion, appeal may be adopted, but many of us are opposed to the aggressiveness of goodness and to the punitive threats which characterise some of those who take part in movements for the best objects, and no doubt with good motives. But no form of coercion will promote the true interests of morality any more than such tactics can favour the spread of Christianity. There is an exaggeration about many of the speeches in which the aims and interests of societies are pressed forward for public support with which many equally anxious for the advance of morals and goodness cannot agree.

In a measure no doubt the societies have been established to stem the tide of existing immorality which has been swelled by defective teaching upon mistaken principles, and downright prejudice and narrow false expositions of truths and moral principles. But religious truths, if they be truths, are for all, while the best of societies, guilds, and the like are founded for the advantage of a very few, and have not even the means of insisting that those most in need of help should receive it at their hands. While for the most part there are objections of the same order as those which obtain against sanctioning vows or furthering any particular system tending to encourage each individual mind to repose upon the dictates, the orders, the dogmas, or the caprices of another or others, rather than upon its own sense of that which is right and reasonable, and has been shown by support of time and numbers to be for the good of all. Associations, societies, coteries, parties, guilds, seek to make men agree with and follow in one or more particulars those who lead, instead of helping them to determine the principle of right conduct and to acquire by self effort the strength of mind and will to act upon it. Instead of making each individual life a progressive aspiration after the good and the true, they adopt a formula or a cry, and try to make the mind content with that particular aspect of goodness or virtue which the leaders of the party decide shall be followed, and which they decree shall be the goal of everyone who joins them, and shall be regarded as the real—nay, as the only attainable form of goodness and truth, as absolute perfection to be looked up to, to be believed in by all, and to be beyond analysis, criticism, or controversy. Differences in opinion regarding principle would break up, as they have broken up, many a society, and therefore all doubt and questioning as to the reasonableness or need of the pledges, vows, or asseverations can no more be per-

mitted than open disobedience to the rules upon which the society is based. If the difficulties or doubts rising in the mind of an actual member cannot be overcome or set at rest by the explanations vouchsafed or by the punishments inflicted by the heads of the association, the resignation or the expulsion of the offender is the alternative of disruption. Not only is the working of individual conscience and judgment suspended or stopped, but inquiry is trammelled, thought suppressed, the mind reduced to the action of a mere mechanism governed by the will of the engineer. The whole being becomes a part of a huge and ever growing machine under the control of its conductors and owners. Originality and individuality are suppressed to the utmost. The tendency is to reduce each individual thinking, hoping, living being to a mere unit of a vast colony whose every movement and action is governed and controlled by rules and regulations enforced by authority and carried out by unthinking unquestioning agents.

It may no doubt be said that the subordination of individual desires, and in some cases interests, to what is for the good of all, is desirable, if not necessary for the very existence of civilization and perhaps even human beings. There is, however, in such necessities of submission to what is for the general good something very different from that cramping of individual action, that prying into all the littlenesses of daily life, our goings out and comings in, that suppression of the individual and desire for its subjugation by and fusion into the constituted unthinking corpus which it is the aim of societies, associations, and sections and parties large and small to effect.

Let it not be suggested, therefore, that the objections to special societies or institutions, or sections or subsections, each with its special objects and cries, its vows, oaths, rules, and arbitrary government, equally apply to every form of government, spiritual and secular, under which millions live

and work. There is the greatest difference in the two cases, and the difference is not a mere difference in degree. The last form of government rests upon great principles to which men often of the most diverse disposition, character, sensitiveness, and taste may submit and contemplate and discuss without the least dislike or doubt or opposition to it rising in their minds. Such government seems a condition of existence, a necessity which must be assented to. It may be changed or modified in detail in its application to periods or to peoples without in any way weakening the great central eternal principle from which its operations flow. This central principle or very essence existing in all forms of government seems to be a necessary attribute of humanity, if it is not of still higher origin, and its absence is not conceivable in thought.

And while it is obvious that there must be general government of some kind by an individual or by a certain number of persons bearing a very small proportion in numbers to the rest of the governed, it by no means follows that the benefits and advantages of government increase by multiplying the responsibility or by dividing it among several heads, or by constituting a number of co-ordinate bodies each to preside over a particular department of governmental duty. By supplementing the central authority, we do not necessarily extend or strengthen it, but it may be found that we have established a condition of things which may result in the development of an antagonistic and incompatible system.

It would seem that at this time there are two systems struggling for supremacy in ruling men in matters political, moral, social, religious. One seeks to rule upon very broad general principles, which it is the function of government to see acted upon, and if necessary enforced, and which may be modified from time to time without being destroyed. The other would have authority conferred upon hundreds or thousands of small bodies, each of which in its own

department would be supreme. In practice these two systems will come to be at variance, if not irreconcilable and antagonistic. For while the one allows and encourages the growth and the widest extension of individual liberty, the other would establish the means for taking cognizance of and regulating every individual act. Supposing this last to prevail and to continue in work and to progress, people under its benignant and far-reaching influence would be no longer free agents. Every moment of existence would be subject to miserable and petty enactments, and no individual could escape through the narrowing meshes of its widely extended net. If the latter system were perfected, man would cease to be free. His proper place and duties in the world would be found for him and assigned to him from the first. And every act of his life from the cradle to the grave would be ordered by properly-constituted organizations, from whose mandates there would be no appeal, and he who rebelled would rebel at his peril. For of necessity each newly constituted society, or caucus or institution or organization, whether political, moral, or religious, endeavours to gain support and to increase in numbers until its powers shall become irresistible? It may aspire to move multitudes to change opinion, to alter the race, to make all bad men good, to move the world. And it seeks to do so first by persuading, and then by compelling men to conform to the most narrow, and in some cases the most ridiculous enactments, and to submit to the most rigid restrictions. By constant watching and interfering and persuading, it gains power and money. It concerns itself with the most minute details of daily individual life, and even the management of the domestic circle is to feel its fostering care and profit by its protection. Some whose minds run in these narrow grooves would go so far in regulating diurnal duties as to insist, for example, that the age of the child who fetches our beer from the public-house

shall be fixed to a day by Act of Parliament. Such petty enactments are strangely believed by some law-making enthusiasts to tend in the direction of increased freedom and to further the glorious cause of liberty. While clearly destroying all liberty and encompassing the degradation of man, they boastfully maintain that they are helping to establish that reign of reason which is to destroy for ever the further need of arbitrary authority in the government of the world.

Of these two systems, one seems to have its source in the best thoughts and aspirations of the wisest and best men of the past, and to have had the support of good men during centuries; while the other is based upon the fanciful hypothesis of a few enthusiasts who came into power but yesterday, perhaps to be replaced to-morrow by others equally confident in panaceas of a different kind. The one appeals to each man's highest faculties and directs him towards the highest attainable ends. The other seeks to establish artificial organizations, with rules so strict and definite that every act in life may be regulated by them and made to conform to given directions. The method of the one is that of science, of philosophy, of wisdom and goodness, while the other seems to be based upon the lines of the drill-hall. The one encourages an ever-expanding freedom and elevation of soul, the other restricts individual action, checks original thought, hates investigation, and tends to crush out every individual aspiration.

Moral Christianity.

Amid the never ceasing conflict of opinion as to what is good and right and the multitude of movements for inculcating the highest good, is to be noticed an earnest desire to teach and practise Christian virtues and to act according to Christian practice, without any form of reli-

gious dogma, principle, or belief whatever being acknowledged. The precepts first inculcated as an essential part of Christianity are now by some dissevered from all Christian system and belief, and, stranger still, Christianity itself is sometimes condemned as being defective in or not giving due weight to some of the many principles upon which it rests, and by which it is distinguished from every other religious creed. The result is a morality, it may be a high morality, on Christian lines without acknowledgment of Christian doctrine—a Christ-less, though perhaps not an altogether God-less Christianity.

While it will be fully admitted that people may be moral without accepting or believing in or acting according to any form of religion, it is certain that no one can be in any true sense religious who is not moral, and whose life and conduct do not conform to sound moral principles. But does not religion occupy, so to say, a far higher place in thought and work than morals? The religious life can hardly be said to have commenced until long after moral obligation has been felt and acknowledged, and has, as it were, become a part of the being. Our conduct as members of civilized society must be moral, but whether or not it is influenced by religious convictions or made to conform to any particular religious standard is another matter. A man could not be a good citizen who was immoral, but he might be opposed to religion, and nevertheless be at least in many respects a good citizen.

It might even be contended that the argument in favour of morality would be weakened, instead of being strengthened, if morality be made to rest upon a basis of religion, inasmuch as it may be rightly insisted upon that members of a community *shall* be moral, while it must be left to each individual to decide for himself whether or not he will accept any form of religion. A man might indeed, without bursting the bonds of reason, decline to be influenced by

moral considerations if morality involved the acceptance of religious doctrine. Society must enforce morality as being necessary to its very constitution, but it is at least very doubtful whether it ought to compel every one to acknowledge some form of religion, or to insist that every member shall belong to a philosophical or religious society of some kind. While it may be clearly shown that civilization involves morality, it is certain that a very high form of civilization is not only conceivable, but has existed and might exist at least for a very long period without any form of religion. Nor is there any doubt that many of the very highest moral characters have declined to accept any kind of religion, though whether they were really so uninfluenced by religious ideas or so averse from religious practices as they maintained is an open question, and must remain so.

All must admit that moral restraint is an absolute necessity, for it is obvious that if every one acted as those who refuse to exercise any moral restraint whatever are inclined to do, civilization would soon be extinguished, and probably the race would within a moderate period of time be destroyed. If then it be admitted as conceivable that modern civilization might be maintained at its present standard or further developed without the assistance of religion, it is perfectly certain that society would fall to pieces if morality were allowed to share the same fate. Moral principles must be maintained in any case, and generally, where religion fades, moral laws will have to be very strictly enforced, and the punishment for moral offences will become more severe. And since it is certain that men's conduct will be more effectually governed by their own sense of what is right and by the recognition of religious principles than by fear of laws, penalties, and police supervision, it seems to follow that the loss of the influence of religious belief will be detrimental to morality. This may be in part perhaps the explanation of the decadence

of moral principle, which, according to many, has unquestionably occurred during recent years.

While then, on the one hand, the Christian faith has of late years been supplemented by many small organizations for the enforcement or encouragement of certain of its special objects, on the other, under the name of, in the interests, and for the promotion of what has been called practical Christianity, there is much reason to fear that belief in Christian teaching and principles has of late years declined, and is yet further declining. Dogma is strongly objected to, and in the minds of many for it is substituted a vagueness and uncertainty of statement which conveys nothing very definite either as regards principle or practice. Change in view as to the exact meaning of the word Christian, and wide differences both as regards principle and practice, are among the circumstances which of late have led men to form groups for the enunciation and diffusion of precepts which can be traced clearly enough in the earliest Christianity. But the groups in question, though pledged to certain views and practices in their origin Christian, are in part composed of persons who deny and are opposed to Christian doctrine generally. Agreement on one special matter seems to have suggested to men who disagree in the essentials of belief, that they should endeavour to find a common ground, and then to combine and promote some practical scheme for the correction of some grievous wrong, or for the support and diffusion of some virtue. Not only so, but not a few of those whose position in public estimation is very high, have deemed agreement and accommodation so essential that they have almost lost sight of principle in their exaltation of expediency. The performance of good deeds has been in a yet broader way raised above doctrine, above belief, above piety. And although among the members of one Christian body ideas which by some Christians have been regarded as super-

stitious, have prevailed and have been generally received and acted upon through a long life as the real truth, which is above all else, it nevertheless seems that in these days respect for an individual or for a society is felt rather for the practice adopted than for the principle, doctrine, or belief acknowledged and taught. There is room for much difference of opinion as to whether these changes in our views concerning the relative importance of principle and practice are calculated to increase or diminish the number of good men in the future, and whether they will be more effectual in restraining the progress of vice and immorality than the older notions according to which conduct was in a way regulated,—whether they will encourage or discourage the exercise of self-restraint, whether they will strengthen or weaken those amongst us who are more likely to be drawn or to drift towards the bad than towards the good.

However gratified they may feel at the advance of what has been called practical religion and practical or non-doctrinal Christianity, thoughtful men will look with some doubt and anxiety as to the consequences of the wider spread and more general acceptance of vague and ill-considered, ill-defined views concerning the fundamental principles of religion and philosophy, and of our moral duties and responsibilities. Doubt as regards the paramount importance of inculcating self-denial, and confusion of view concerning the duty of teaching and persuading the young to resist the inclination to yield to passion and impulse have prevailed; and many of the young have grown up to manhood without having had their attention directed to the vital necessity of the constant exercise of self-restraint as the very source of happiness in life, and the beginning of wisdom. While there are no doubt many who, notwithstanding the absence of every kind of religion or philosophical instruction in youth, would be adequately governed

by feelings of regard for the interests of others, it is not easy to see why this sentiment should continue permanently to influence men's conduct, the principles upon which the actions inspired by generous feelings are based being no longer taught. Moreover, it is to be feared that the sense of what is right upon the part of very many is scarcely strong enough to induce them to regulate and constantly control their conduct, so as to keep in complete subjection their desires and passions for their own and the common good.

While "practical Christianity" is undoubtedly characterised by much Christian goodness and kindness and self-denial, and affords real help to many in need, the phrase is sometimes applied in cases where Christian ideas, doctrines, and principles have been entirely absent. Judging solely from what we see going on to-day in many communities, and to some extent among ourselves, it may be regarded as certain that if the influence quietly but persistently exercised by the few good men upon the many bad were withdrawn, self-denial would soon be abandoned, and the principles by which conduct has been guided would soon be forgotten, and it is doubtful whether the special societies, associations, and leagues formed for the purpose of maintaining a high moral standard would not soon cease to have the power to exercise that control over men's conduct which, during many centuries, has been beneficently exerted by the silent but irresistible influence of Christianity. The aggressive disposition and action of some of those who are among the most active supporters of the movements and efforts to supplement or replace the Christian system is so marked, that it is difficult to feel sure that no destroying, conquering instinct long pent up, and with no means of gratification and expression as is granted, for instance, in war, lurks behind the apparently amiable self-denying disposition upon which all true enduring efforts for raising the standard of morality really depends, and mars its beneficial influence.

Public Morality.

Are we more moral than our fathers were? is a question that would be differently answered by different persons, and possibly an answer that would be true as applied to one class of society would not be true in the case of another. There is also room for considerable difference of opinion as to the answer that would be correct at this time. The views of many upon moral questions are as some would say, much broader and more liberal than those held by men of average virtue thirty years or more ago, and there will be considerable difference of opinion as to whether the change towards a more liberal form of morality is a public advantage or the reverse. Those who think we are going too fast and too far will be rebuked for their timidity, and assured that their views are not in accord with the spirit of the age, whatever this may be. The moral spirit of the present age is scarcely in all respects satisfactory, even though it be regarded as "advanced" in the same sense as our material prospects and intellectual progress.

Whether the mighty efforts to make people good and to enforce the exercise of self-restraint and self-denial have been rewarded with success as considerable as was anticipated is open to doubt. In spite of all that has been done, can we feel at all sure that we are upon the whole better and more moral, or that we act more conscientiously than our predecessors?

I fear it is by no means certain that the incentives to go wrong, the encouragement to yield to evil impulses, are not even stronger than they were. As of old, among the young the everlasting conflict is waged, and with varying results, between the struggle to act rightly and to resist evil and the tendency to go wrong and the inclination to yield to impulse; and where virtue prevails and good wins, the victory is by no means easy, or always decisive or final. If thought and

opinion, and the principles upon which the training of the young is conducted continue to proceed upon the same lines for some years to come, it may be yet harder for the good to hold their own and persuade others to join them.

The never ceasing exhortation to improve, the ever banding together of enthusiasts whose main object in life is to win back the vicious to the cause of virtue, and to raise the fallen, would have no meaning unless things were so bad that incessant effort and devotion was needed on the part of the good to save many from moral wreck,—unless, in fact, the very principles upon which we relied for the moral training of the young were an admitted failure,—a not very satisfactory conclusion concerning the state of existing morals, or indicative of much improvement in the near future. Neither is such an admission likely to satisfy thoughtful persons that the tremendous efforts now being made are likely to be soon followed by commensurate results for good. In some respects the new methods which have been inaugurated with great confidence for the improvement of public morals are less reliable than those which they replace. But the existing state of things is so bad that "something must be done," a conclusion which, although evidence of a consensus of opinion, is by no means certain to result in the wisest or most reasonable treatment of the moral disease in the newest advanced forms.

It is perhaps doubtful how soon the wave of opinion now passing over society in England will be succeeded by another of a different kind. It is scarcely conceivable that the exacerbation of very loose moral theory and low morality—which has for some time afflicted us—will long continue without remedy. The disastrous consequences, the intolerable disgrace endured by some, will be so widely spread, and prolonged sorrow brought to so many homes—that, unless matters shortly mend, remedial measures of a very decided character will certainly have to be taken.

It is scarcely probable that the London public will much longer endure the scandalous scenes which occur evening after evening in our public thoroughfares, and the open flaunting of all that is disreputable in the light of day. Twenty years hence an accurate description of the Strand of to-day will read like an invention of a vicious fancy, and will be held to be a gross and unfair exaggeration of the facts. Admitting the badness of the times, it will be said that the state of things recorded was obviously untrue. The correct answer to the question, Are we improving or deteriorating in morals? is difficult to obtain. Indeed, for any one to discover the exact truth as regards morality at any particular time is well-nigh impossible, and I doubt whether we have the means of instituting a comparison between the moral condition of the people at different periods of history by which results approaching accuracy could be secured.

Of this, however, I think there can be little doubt—not only that immorality is more widespread, and goes deeper into society than was the case thirty years ago, but that it is a worse kind of immorality. In some places there is an unblushing effrontery about it which is as disgraceful as it is hopeless. Whereas coarse and immoral behaviour was confined to shade and darkness, it is now so daring and boastful that it hesitates not to obtrude itself in open day and in almost any place under almost any circumstances. In many public places the manners of some boys and girls are anything but creditable, or in accordance with the advance claimed, and that is in some respects observable among the wage-earning classes during recent years. Just at this time one of the most cruel and unpardonable forms of immorality seems terribly prevalent. Mr. Justice Hawkins stated from the bench in June, 1886, that within six months he had tried 120 cases of indecent assault upon children. How many cases have occurred in the rest of Europe and in America during the same time?

Although attempts have been made to bring moral offences under the laws of average, so far no one has succeeded in determining the precise percentage of the immoral in a population at any given time No one has discovered the laws by which the ratio of the immoral to moral in any of the several classes of society is preserved, or caused to vary, now towards one extreme—now towards the other. Nor have any of those skilled in discovering and computing laws of averages, or the circumstances and conditions which determine necessary and inevitable badness, yet succeeded in showing why we reach a particular degree of badness or goodness at any special time, or why we were not at that time somewhat better or worse than was actually the case. Who can say whether we might not have been better under existing circumstances than we are, or why our moral state is not actually worse than it is? What change in circumstance or condition would have intensified or mitigated our present moral evil? Might we not be very easily made a little less bad than we are? Would not a very trivial change in fashion, or taste, or custom, brought about by perhaps but one important person changing his mind or his dwelling-place, or modifying his habits—nay might not alterations in a street, or in a few buildings, produce change? Articles in newspapers, comments in the courts by judges or magistrates on cases brought before them, necessarily exert an important influence upon public morality.

The tide of immorality, at least in this country, ebbs and flows in an extraordinary manner, and not always in accordance with assignable reasons. No doubt the ever-changing winds of fashion have something to do with the rise and fall of the moral barometer. Has not profligacy been rife in different sections of society of various countries at different times, now among the aristocracy and the highest in the realm, now in the wealthy and reckless section of the so-

called middle class, now among the highest in the land, now among the lowest and most degraded of the poor; and, alas, sometimes among those who claim to be the exponents of everlasting truth itself, the disciples of pure reason, of science, of philosophy? But, worst of all, immorality of modern, like that of ancient civilization, is not without its apologists and even its defenders. Among these are to be counted men who claim to be physiologists and philosophers, but who do not hesitate to inculcate belief in a necessitarian view of the matter, and to declare that acts which are regarded by some as flagrantly immoral are really a necessity—a condition belonging to existence in states of the highest civilization and culture. Immorality has thus received a sort of licence, sanction, or even justification, although immoral acts are and have been publicly condemned and made punishable by law in all times and in all ages. Immorality in our own time has been by some persons condemned, discountenanced, or forbidden in so half-hearted a fashion that in the reproof uttered, in the condemnatory sentiments expressed, it has not been difficult to detect lurking in the thoughts behind the words something very like pity, sorrow, or even sympathy if not sanction. Nay, instances are to be found where so pleasant a gloss has been conferred upon evil itself that it has seemed to walk arm-in-arm with virtue, and sometimes has come off the best in the alliance, particularly where it had on its side the advantage of good nature, good manners, good looks, good form. Evil has not infrequently been the winner in the evolutional race, and has oftentimes been pronounced by very high authority as more fit to survive in the struggle for existence in our world as it is, than good itself.

For some time past a number of circumstances seem to have helped to blunt or deaden the public conscience towards more than one class of offenders against morals, so that there can be little hope, at any rate for some time to

come, of any rapid advance in the direction of a higher appreciation of moral rectitude. It is doubtful whether at this time adultery itself is generally regarded as a sin, or as a crime so serious, or even as a disgrace of such gravity as to be unpardonable. And while in some classes there are not wanting indications of a change in opinion towards good, on the other hand cases are not rare in which both law and distinguished society have succeeded in establishing circumstances of an extenuating character not discoverable by ordinary minds, but which at once reduce the offence to one that may be forgiven and soon forgotten.

Different forms of sensual indulgence have long been very differently regarded by people belonging to different classes. An opulent person who gets frequently drunk, or is habitually fuddled and stupid, is soon shunned or turned out of good society, but opulence squandered in the perpetration and encouragement of worse vices may scarcely excite notice, much less strong condemnation, though the injury inflicted may be a thousand times greater. In the first case ruin and degradation may be limited to the individual, or to the family, while in the last, misery, horror, disgrace, ruin, disease, may be spread far and wide. How far, or for how long, or how many successive generations may be injured by the reckless selfishness and unbridled licence of a single individual, happily will never be known, but the glimpse now and then obtained of the far-reaching, deep-seated, irremediable misery, perhaps rendered more shocking by a glamour of sham luxury and enjoyment, is sad enough. In the interest of society and national progress, all excesses in the direction under discussion should be checked by a firm hand. But the check ought to be public opinion, which should discountenance all fashions and customs likely to foster and encourage immorality. In no class of society should boys and girls be allowed to masquerade as men and women, and everything should be

done to prevent early marriages when the means are small, and the prospects of the man being able to earn enough to keep a home not good.

So bad is the state of morals becoming among the young in certain sections of society, that some fear that things pertaining to immorality have not yet reached the worst, and that little hope of improvement can be reasonably expected for some time to come. It would seem that at any rate the degree of badness when right-minded men feel forced to interfere and put forth their strength, and declare that the evil state of things shall no longer be, has not yet been reached. Preventible moral evil and dissipation of serious kind prevail, and public opinion seems to permit, if it does not actually encourage, the silly, the reckless, and the wicked to ruin the weak and harmless and stupid, as well as to degrade and destroy themselves,—and this notwithstanding the circumstance that we have had during the last few years an unusual amount of new legislation affecting the private life and concerns of the people.

Although I think it certain that there is, so to say, a collective belief among all classes in the righteousness of self-control and self-denial, it is not so pronounced as it ought to be, nor is it acted upon in the teaching of the young. Putting it in another way—the kindness and mercy shown towards the careless and reckless and those who fall, far exceed in degree the approval expressed as regards those whose moral conduct has been irreproachable, though they may have been placed under circumstances of great difficulty. And I fear it must be admitted that in public opinion an agreeable person known to be immoral would as a fact occupy a better and more pleasant position than a very upright as well as highly moral person who for different reasons might be generally regarded as not agreeable or interesting. In short it almost comes to this, that while public opinion no doubt inclines to the side of good, a little

dash of the "disagreeable" associated with the good might cause it to incline the other way. Possibly the agreeably bad would, as in many novels, be more highly prized than the disagreeably good. Popular judgment is, in fact, not only mistaken but provokingly wrong in the verdict it often gives on this matter, and public opinion with regard to it seems still to be more influenced by sentiment than by reason, and whether "the public" is as much influenced by real goodness as it sometimes pretends to be is even doubtful.

In these days ideas which are evil are propounded, puffed into popularity, spread far and wide, and accepted sometimes even by persons of intelligence. Clothed in well-chosen words, and expressed with consummate art, it will be found that in the views in question are often successfully hidden and masked, principles which would not be tolerated by persons who are far from being over sensitive upon the subject of morals. With the utmost skill is spread amongst the people, especially the half-educated, moral as well as political and religious poison. Thoughtless persons may be wrecked before the more careful and thoughtful have had time to prepare and administer the antidote, and many minds may be deceived and perverted although the rottenness of the propositions or suggestions is apparent to any one who studies them, and might be clearly exposed without difficulty and rendered evident to all.

But those who have gradually acquired during youth a knowledge of sound principles, and have gained self-control, will not be liable to be thus misled and deceived, and will be able to repel the efforts made to humbug and delude them by wretched creatures whose chief mission in the world seems to be the deplorable office of ruining as many of their fellow creatures as possible, and of spreading misery among men.

In the sacred name of freedom moral as well as political

cruelty has been perpetrated, and tyranny and injustice have been inflicted in defiance of every individual right and interest, and if not with the sanction and connivance, at least with no very determined resistance or opposition on the part of the majority. As time goes on, the chivalrous sentiment which used to be potent in the defence of the weak against ill usage, moral and physical, on the part of the strong, dwindles, and in a generation or two will probably have become extinct. Let us hope that something will be found to take its place, and to preserve men from the fate of those lower animals which are destroyed by their more powerful brethren as unfit to survive.

Although, no doubt, too easily obtained wealth may be, and in fact often is, answerable for some of the moral wickedness of our modern world, riches certainly cannot be shown to be the source of the most fatal of the evil views which are now prevalent, and which seem to be penetrating but too deeply into the heart of modern society. The looseness of view as regards moral theories and practices is a misfortune of gradual growth, and the fashion of aiding, abetting, and condoning sins and offences which used to be regarded as serious, but which are now but too often classed with trivial or minor errors, is calculated to undermine the public moral sense and render nugatory the work of those who are struggling to raise the standard of public morality. Now and then what deplorable instances of inexcusable wickedness are paraded in our law courts and published in detail in the highest and lowest of the public journals. Men who at the very time they held high and responsible positions, perhaps actually framing laws for regulating and controlling the conduct of their weaker and poorer brethren, being themselves steeped in the lowest depths of profligacy and crime.

Neither wealth nor inherited badness of disposition, nor the condition of things created by or flowing from wealth,

recklessness, and a natural tendency to evil combined, could make men accept and believe the propositions concerning their duties to themselves and others which many have accepted and acted upon. Wrong-headedness, a low form of selfishness, a studied disregard of the hopes and interests of others, will alone account for the facts. Such terrible disqualification for being of any use in the present state of civilization can only result from a combination of evil within and without, fostered for years, and favoured by the circumstance of a considerable number of low class minds having had the opportunity as well as the means of spreading their views, and enjoying a sufficiently high position in society to render them popular and powerful.

There is, I fear, to be noticed in some sections of society a silly carelessness of disposition, not unfrequently associated with a stubborn determination not to think or reason concerning our relations and duties to one another on the simplest of moral questions, which ill accords with the ever increasing instruction concerning the nature of things living and non-living, or with the marvellous development of art and science and culture, and the constant increase of comfort and luxury and material refinements which contribute to make our modern life so different from everything which has been before, and which fill the mind with grave fears as to what the moral state of the people may be in the future. While it is undoubtedly true that knowledge is spreading at a greater rate, and more widely and more deeply than at any previous time, it is doubtful whether the disposition to think over important questions is as general as it was, while that invaluable mental acquisition known as judgment is probably more rare than in times when information and knowledge were less widely diffused. Those pursuits which involve much intellectual labour are not only becoming less popular, but are losing their hold upon the higher and middle classes, while those which may

be expected to yield larger and more easily acquired money returns, and which can be pursued without mental strain, are more attractive than ever among the youth of the upper and middle classes. Members of the rising generation seem exhausted by the early efforts required to pass their examinations, and instead of hopefully looking forward to a life of work and intellectual effort, are casting about to discover some haven of rest where they can make enough to live comfortably with a very moderate expenditure of mental effort, and where periods of complete ease and holiday alternate with not very arduous or very lengthened periods of work and duty. It seems possible that the never ceasing activity of the examination capacity, although sharpened by practice and by improvements successively introduced and hereditarily transmitted, is already beginning to produce an influence in lowering the mental vigour and weakening the intellectual endurance of the offspring. It is not unlikely that in the future the number of years during which the mind can be made to work will be reduced, and the power of exercising sustained effort and determination and will lessened as time goes on, and in a gradually increasing percentage of the rising generation. If this be so, it is probable that moral strength and self-control, as well as judgment and endurance, will deteriorate, though it is to be hoped not in a sufficient number to produce any national change before steps are taken to mitigate the evil.

Whatever may be the explanation, it is to be feared that the intellectual activity of the past thirty or forty years has done little to advance public morals. Some think that the great advance in intellectual pursuits has exerted a direct influence upon the decline in morals. As far as it can be estimated by articles in our journals, public opinion seems to be still in favour of a high moral standard, and perhaps if we were really as we seem—if public thoughts and acts were such as public professions would lead us to suppose

them to be, there would have been little complaint to make, and no need of the strict laws which it has lately been deemed necessary to pass in order to keep gross immorality within bounds. But is there not a certain hollowness to be noticed in the high-sounding indignation expressed in the case of certain individuals whose careers have been well known to be tuned to low standard? It may be fairly urged that public opinion during the past twenty years or more, general agreement as to public behaviour, ordinary customs and fashions, ought to have been all sufficient without the enactment of any new laws for the control of immorality. If opinion were really what it seems to be, it might be argued that the new laws would not have been required, and the offences and crimes they are intended to punish would not have been committed. What is most curious is that although a man may be well known to be acting disgracefully, he is admitted into society, and even made much of, until his acts become so numerous, so flagrant, and so very bad that the law interferes, and then, as soon as a conviction is pronounced, the righteous indignation and the cries for moral purgation know no bounds. The conscience of society seems to be very sensitive if evil is laid very bare, and though blind to the thing itself, terribly shocked and scandalised if it is published and talked about.

Is it not extraordinary that in these days of advancement we should require new and strict legal enactments regarding first principles of civilization that one would have thought would have been determined upon long ago? What is it in recent modern life which seems to have rendered necessary the imposition of bonds which our predecessors did not need? Are we worse than our less intelligent and less tutored ancestors, or is it that the moral standard to which we aspire is so much higher than any believed to be possible of attainment in times past as to render desirable the imposition of new restraints, and make more severe the

penalties of disobedience? Or have new circumstances arisen, or have old restraints been removed, which render necessary the imposition of exceptional measures?

During many years past it must be admitted that circumstances have continued to favour the revival and spread among all classes of ideas concerning moral rights and duties of a novel and most pernicious kind. And it has happened in this, as in some other instances, that these, like some other views and doctrines of evil tendency, were long confined to those who merely thought and speculated. Thus they remained mere theories or philosophical fancies, which even the worst and wildest seldom dreamt of acting upon. So they did, or seemed to do, but little harm; but now that the fancies and speculations of the closet have been spread among the rougher but more practical and less speculative intelligences, and selfish men have become aware that such views may be defended and supported, they are occasionally carried into practice and acted upon. The philosophical theorists who had been long speculating on the advantages which would result if their hypotheses could be carried to the practical stage, without thinking or dreaming of the consequences that must follow, become seized with dismay and horror, and are as anxious as the most punctilious moralists to stem the torrent they have made to flow, and correct the views which have been fostered by, if not entirely due to, their foolish teaching. The nonsense that some of these people talk who want to make us believe that man is anything but what he has proved himself to be is deplorable. That their silly vapourings should be allowed to pass without criticism till numbers of poor people have been ruined by trusting in their evil councils is a disgrace to us. What is the use of our daily miles of writing if thoroughly evil views, social, moral, political, and religious, are allowed to poison people's minds without remonstrance from those who must

be well aware of what the effect will be? It would appear that in these matters we are acting on a principle which seems to obtain in the working of our criminal law—that it is not our duty, as it is not within the province of the law, to deter a man, or even to try to prevent him from committing an offence, but rather to carefully watch his proceedings till the offence shall have been actually committed, in which case we are bound to catch him if we can and bring him to justice. A tithe of the intellect, trouble, and expense employed in the detection and in obtaining proof of the crime, in the conviction of the offender, and in executing the punishment awarded by law, might, if applied at the proper time, not only have prevented the commission of the crime, but possibly have interfered with numerous acts which led up to it, while very probably the prevention of this particular offence would also have been of the greatest service in preventing the commission of crimes of a similar kind by other persons. So, in offences against morals, if good men had been allowed and encouraged to teach people in such a manner that before they were grown up they would have learnt to exercise self-denial, there would be at this time far less moral evil to punish, and less need of increasing the severity of the law, than has been deemed necessary under the existing state of things.

With reference to the immoral acts which have led to recent legislation, it must be remarked that a sad amount of exaggeration has been introduced into the question. Horror and wrath have been excited by the shameful deeds and abominations that have been made public. It has been affirmed that betrayal and ruin have been going on all around us. It has been said that children disappear, and that many have been ruined by brutes who fatten on the girlhood of England. Such sensational remarks have been very freely indulged in of late, but sober persons ought to bear in mind that language which may be true, although

applied by an indignant enthusiast to an isolated case, or to small numbers of cases, is anything but true if advanced as a general statement, and made to apply to large numbers of people, or propounded as a general or universal proposition. But it must be admitted that the facts disclosed of late concerning the spread of immorality, allowing much for the exaggerated and occasionally ridiculous statements of people striving to make their fellow creatures blacker than they are, certainly ought to have led to serious efforts being taken on the part of the public to correct as far as was possible the existing evil, and to resist by every means in their power its further progress. The indignant protests of some, and the studied apathy of others, would alone have suggested the necessity for thorough enquiry and careful investigation into the alleged facts. Those to whom the duty of keeping order in our public streets and places of amusement has been committed should have been consulted, and steps ought to have been taken to stem the torrent of vice, and at least make things less publicly disgraceful than they now are and have been for years at all hours of the night and even by day. It is not surprising that what has been deemed the supineness and apathy of authority has almost driven some enthusiastic in the cause of good to constitute themselves voluntary associations, the object of which shall be to suppress, or at any rate to actively endeavour to cope with, the immorality of the time. New machinery to supplement or supersede that of the State has thus been instituted by voluntary effort on the part of a few whose views as to the magnitude and serious nature of the evil (any more than the methods they propose to cope with it), have not, however, so far been shared or assented to by the people generally. Vigilance committees have been at work in the interests of morality, and cases of one of the worst forms of crime, which in all probability but for their intervention would have been unknown to the

law, have been sought out, brought to justice, and the offenders have received punishment they have long deserved. Whether in the long run voluntary and private efforts to help or supersede public officers and supplement the work of public departments are calculated to be of permanent public usefulness, and whether amateur criminal investigation should be permitted, are questions upon which there will be great difference of opinion. But that by these particular efforts public feeling has been for the first time for many years past very properly roused, and that attention has been at last directed to a very serious public danger, as dreadful as it is preventible, is certain. This calamity even threatens the very foundations of civilized society, and it is of vital consequence and in the best interests of the public that efforts should at once be made by some of us to cope with it, if only to prevent its further and rapid growth, of which there are not a few or doubtful indications. Laws of a kind which ought not to be required in any community which has attained the state of civilization reached by us have been perhaps too hastily agreed to and passed. However great the necessity for paternal legislation of the kind may be, it is to be deplored, for it may tend to keep people in leading strings, and to postpone, if not to destroy, the hope of the early inauguration of that new reign of chivalry to which so many good men have long been hopefully looking forward.

It is not improbable that some of the most pressing public evils of the class under consideration have been actually created by looseness of thought about liberty, and silly observations concerning the rights of man. Stupid people have wilfully misinterpreted many of the hypotheses and speculations of the closet, and have attempted to carry into practice theories of the most demoralizing tendency. To counteract the evil, steps have been taken and laws have been passed which savour of something very far removed

from liberty. If in the name of freedom but a very few misguided people indulge in licence and behave cruelly to those who are weak and foolish, and in many ways abuse the liberty hitherto enjoyed by all, it is not surprising that in our very defective and timid system of legislation new laws should have to be passed which to the innocent majority appear cruel, exasperating, and unnecessary, and to the intelligent, degrading and retrograde. They cannot be justified except upon the ground that a terrible falling back in civilization has unquestionably occurred; but if this be really true, the fact of the falling back can be due only to the most cruel and culpable negligence on the part of those whose duty it is to discover and at once to check the slightest moral step in a backward direction. Anything, even coercion and cruel laws, is better than successful rebellion against righteousness. But when there is any risk of such a catastrophe in a civilization like our own, it must be clear to everyone who thinks the matter over that the real wrong was committed long before the necessity—if there was a necessity—for repressive legislation arose. In sanctioning such legislation, society virtually confesses its failure, and admits before all the world not only that the teaching and bringing up of the young have been terribly at fault, but that such training of the people as has been attempted in the very first principles of their duty towards one another has been attended with results in certain cases which would not have been tolerated by the ancients, and some of which could not occur in the very imperfect system of government among savage nations.

Of course it will be admitted that the laws which have been passed will only be needed for a brief period, and that a better order of things will prevail when the present generation of children shall have reached maturity, and that such laws obviously apply to only a very degraded vicious set among us. But the necessity, the very existence of the

vicious set in question, establishes and exposes the failure of our modern system of training in respect of morals; and to establish and preserve public morality is surely one of the very first and greatest necessities of civilized life. If public immorality is allowed to prevail, we must admit not only that our first elementary educational principles have been essentially defective, but that we have been unwilling or unable to discover any certain means of correcting immoral tendencies in youth. And our desire for more stringent laws is an indication that we have felt obliged to deal with the faulty state of things as it presents itself rather than with the circumstances which have given rise to it—in short, that we are reduced to putting trust in repressive measures in the case of offences which could not be committed in a society the members of which had been properly brought up and trained to control their evil tendencies.

We may indeed hope that the time during which the new laws are required will be short, and that they will become obsolete as soon as the evil and vicious of the present and preceding generations shall have passed away.

In the case of old and hardened offenders the machinery of the law is no doubt more likely to be effective than persuasion, public opinion, or any mild form of interference or remonstrance. And, it must be admitted, for the detection and conviction of this class of offenders almost any steps are justifiable. But it must not, however, be forgotten that laws however stringent, police supervision however effective, vigilance committees, private enquirers, amateur detectives and the like, are at least likely to do harm as well as good. For not only are these means non-curative in their operation, but it is to be feared that occasional injustice instead of justice results from legal processes, that it is even possible mistakes may occur, and that justice may miscarry altogether, and innocence be punished while guilt escapes. Indeed in several of the

cases reported in this department of criminal law the evidence as it reads is by no means conclusive, and although it is certain that judge and jury do their duty, and take the utmost pains to ascertain the truth, the difficulty now and then seems to be almost insurmountable, and is often increased by the circumstance that some of the perfectly innocent resemble the guilty in look and demeanour, while the very innocent expression and behaviour successfully assumed by the intensely wicked and very guilty may sometimes mislead the most just and discerning of practised minds. That innocent persons should be wrongly convicted and punished for criminal offences is terrible. We must sincerely hope that it is the rarest of rare events, and is perhaps possible only under a concurrence of circumstances that cannot happen many times. Terrible as it is that monsters of iniquity should escape with impunity, is it not infinitely more to be deplored that one person should be accused and convicted of a horrid crime of which he was innocent not only in word and deed, but even in thought? If then we must consider that we have been really forced to legislate in spite of all these drawbacks to legislation of the kind, no stone should be left unturned to establish, and as quickly as possible, a higher standard in public morals in the future than the public of the present can lay claim to. Whatever may be the true explanation of the fact that in recent years there has been an evil tendency affecting an increasing number of the young towards immorality of various kinds and degrees, it must be admitted that of late years forms of criminal immorality have been committed, and have in many cases escaped detection and punishment, which it is on all grounds better not to refer to more particularly, and which could not have occurred either if the individual culprits had been properly trained, or if their environment during youth and early manhood had had any pretension to moral health.

The state of morals, either in the large or small populations, is not that which a Christian, a theist, an agnostic, or even an atheist would sanction or tolerate, and seems incompatible with the high degree of civilization reached in other respects. Further steps must be immediately taken if the evil tendencies of a considerable number of the young, and not only of the young in rich and prosperous populous centres, are to be kept within bounds. That some degree of success has really begun to attend the latest efforts to cope with the difficulty is to be sincerely hoped, but it is by no means certain that any decided impression has yet been made. To reduce in ever so slight a degree the flow of the immoral tide is encouraging. To check it, to prevent it from again attaining the force it has acquired in our time, seems to be scarcely within the range of the possible. Still the effort must be made. But besides dealing with the existing evil, preventive measures are most urgently required in the interests of the young of both sexes, especially in manufacturing districts. These preventive measures are of equal, if they are not really of greater importance than measures for the repression of existing immorality. For this most desirable object the machinery is of a very different kind from that required for repression, and only needs good will, courage, patience, and energy on the part of a number of good men, and the permission of the public to allow the teaching of virtue. Preventive measures are sure to be successful, but little can be done without the early inculcation of good, and the public acknowledgment that it is at least as important that children should be taught to control themselves, to behave rightly towards others, to be decent, in short, to be human, as that their intellects should be sharpened, and their minds stuffed with so-called knowledge.

At this time the public seems to consider that the most successful way of contending with the evil is by strong

repressive measures. Think for a moment of the time, energy, and intellect, to say nothing of the considerable amount of money continually bestowed upon what is called rescue work. As year succeeds year the necessity for this work seems to increase apace. And so far, the work done in this way is terribly small in proportion to the need. But if an equal effort had been made in prevention, what enormous benefits would have been conferred, though we should not be able to reckon the numbers saved, or give thrilling accounts of repentant sinners.

The utmost that can be expected from repressive legislation is temporary good. Repression cannot cure the evil or in any way actively raise the standard of public morality. Not even the disgrace attending conviction and punishment for criminal immorality is likely to produce a deterrent influence upon others and prevent them from falling into evil as long as certain forms of immorality are condoned, or, at any rate, regarded by a numerically considerable public as scarcely disgraceful, or looked upon as offences of a pardonable and not very serious kind. The conclusion is forced upon the mind that the only true remedy is preventive, that public opinion must be trained to recognise this and support it, and that gradually must be inaugurated among all classes of the people, and in every part of the country a system of moral training commenced at a very early period of life when education begins and continued till adolescence and afterwards. For is it not certain that if only the young could be made to feel the importance of self-control they would soon, and without difficulty, conquer any evil tendencies of their disposition, whether due to inheritance or acquired by vicious teaching or evil example?

How many young persons have been conscious as they reached adolescence of lack of self-control and want of moral strength who, perhaps, after having fallen in a degree, have become suddenly conscious of the terrible mistake

they have made, and by supreme effort have successfully battled with evil, acquired more and more control over themselves until they had successfully combated and conquered evil even in thought. Having thus freed themselves from bondage, and forced themselves to do right when the outlook seemed well nigh hopeless, they pass through life doing their utmost for the cause of good, and hoping much to the end and working hard. Had such persons had the advantage of early moral training, would not a state of mind have been established which would have rendered self-control almost a habit, so that if exposed to temptation they would have been able to resist almost without conscious efforts, and instead of living in a struggle to prevent a falling back, their life might have been devoted to continual moral progress in themselves and all about them?

It is in the direction of prevention that greatly increased work ought to be insisted upon by the State, for surely if it be the duty of the State to see that all children are taught to read and write and calculate, it is much more its duty to take care that they are taught how to get their own living, to be honest, true, and good, to insist that morals should be inculcated, that children should be taught proper behaviour to their own and to the other sex, to their parents, and generally that in all schools teachers should at least be told to regard it as part of their duty to encourage each succeeding generation of children to look forward confidently towards a new age of chivalry that is to be.

It is not possible with the little experience we have in moral teaching to state precisely in what manner the young are to be systematically instructed, in order that when grown up they shall certainly be able to exercise self-control and withstand any temptation to which they may be exposed, and resist evil influences however attractive, and whatever may be the form in which they are presented to the mind. But it is certain that neither the strictest laws nor the most active

societies, nor the sharpest members of vigilance committees, any more than vows or confessions or solemn warnings, or even certain forms of religion will be effective substitutes for moral teaching.

It is moral teaching alone or moral teaching in conjunction with other kinds of teaching, to which at least most of us there is good reason to think are indebted for establishing in the mind the capacity for self-control. Each individual child has somehow or other to be made a moral creature, either by home tuition and example, or by school, or by his own inherent goodness, or by imitating those around him, or by acting contrary to what he sees day by day. He has to learn how he may teach himself to control his passions, and how he may exercise self-restraint, first under slight, then under considerable, and at length under great temptation. Good example, healthy recreation, homes healthy as regards moral as well as physical conditions, no doubt, in many instances, do bring about this desirable mental state without special moral teaching, but how many children born into the world are practically entirely dependent upon what they learn during school life for their moral training? Indeed many a man feels grateful for the power of judgment, self-guidance, and the government and direction of his conduct by sound sense, which have been communicated to him, or at any rate the germs of which came to him during his school life.

If the change suggested in favour of moral training could be carried out in all board schools, even at the cost of half a standard, there is every reason to think that in a generation or two the greatest difference would be observable in public morality, and therefore in national goodness and greatness, not only as regards one or two classes of the people, but all. Changes would quickly follow in fashions, customs, amusements, habits of thought, which would advance all. The majority of young people would be

moral, as a rule, as a matter of course. and the immoral individual would be as exceptional as people who cannot read or behave like the majority. At length possibly a condition of public opinion might be brought about which would lead to the flagrantly immoral being consigned to asylums for a time, until they might be trusted without constant moral police supervision to live in the world without injuring and wronging or ruining any of their fellow creatures.

Instruction in morals ought to begin very early in life, probably before other kinds of mental training commence, and should be steadily pursued until the individual himself is of an age and has acquired sufficient strength of mind to carry on the process and further develop the moral powers of his mind. Moral self-training must be pursued long after the training of the intellect, at least as it is conducted during the early years of life, is supposed to be concluded. The moral teacher must, therefore, take into account the more extended characters of the training required, and the slower progress as compared with that observed in purely intellectual subjects. Moral training must be kept up year by year. A young man is more likely to fall back in his moral than he is in his intellectual capacity, and the deterioration may be sudden and incurable. Not only so but sometimes exceptional intellectual activity and achievement seems to be associated with deterioration of moral strength. What may be the precise connection between the two orders of mental phenomena cannot be considered here. The end of all moral teaching is to increase the power of self-control, and so imbue the mind with the sense of moral rectitude that it will of its own accord and by its own desire endeavour to retain and further strengthen any moral qualities it may have been successful in acquiring.

Moral, unlike other kinds of intellectual training, cannot be wholly conducted in class, but it ought to form an essential and necessary part of every description of intellectual

instruction and systematic education in all schools and colleges. The moral teacher has to instruct each child, and must study the nature and individual character of each pupil, for in moral training it is principally by the direct influence of one mind upon another that real moral progress is to be obtained. It is this very influence that is wanting in many departments of modern education. A lecture or a lesson is given, the duty over, the pupil like the teacher is free. The so-called technical education is sadly deficient in the way of moral training. Whatever may be the explanation, and very different causes are assigned by different observers and thinkers, there is no doubt that both religion and morals have occupied a lower level and less important position among the subjects of value for mental training during the past thirty or forty years, and this is noticed in the education of all classes of the people. Morals and religion are considered by many at this time as fit only to be relegated to the nursery to be taught by the nurse. Others look upon them as superfluities or needless intellectual encumbrances. By some they are regarded as positively harmful and calculated to cramp and confine the growing intellect, and to retard or prevent the free expansion of the intelligence; and by not a few they are left out of consideration altogether, and not as much as thought of when the particular course of training to which a child is to be subjected is discussed. Religion and morals are sometimes taught to order by persons who may be neither religious nor moral, at any rate in feeling and disposition. But whatever may be the degree of temporary degradation to which these subjects are doomed to suffer as regards the theories of some and the actions of others, religion and morals will in time regain their high place in public estimation, and there can be little doubt that the further and more steadily civilization advances along true lines, the higher will be the position assigned to religion

and morality in the courses of training arranged for the young of every class of society.

Parents are now by many teachers considered to be wholly responsible for any moral and religious training which they may consider requisite. The child may turn into a man almost without any consciousness of the need of self-restraint, or any knowledge of respect for the rights of others; and yet there cannot be a doubt that moral teaching is of advantage not only during the state of childhood, and while the intellect is being developed, but that it exerts an important and highly advantageous influence in the forming of the mind and the directing of the will, in evoking energy as well as strengthening the power of self-control in all departments of work and effort, and by influencing even the ordinary everyday acts and thoughts all through life.

Unless special care is taken to guard against it there will be some danger, and in a climate like ours and under the conditions and opinions which prevail here, and in special cases an extreme danger of the young persons who are well off being induced to adopt pursuits and gain positions in society which weaken, instead of helping to strengthen, the moral faculties. Wealth injudiciously managed and success and prosperity very easily acquired without risk or anxiety, self-denial or hard work, increase this tendency, and but too often create and foster customs and fashions so powerful that, however bad they be, for a time they exert an invincible influence, are adopted by thousands and admired by tens of thousands who from want of money cannot follow the example.

Theoretically one would have supposed that each man's natural ambition to discharge his duties as a citizen, and as the head of a family, would have prevented fathers from falling into evil ways, and have saved men in such a position from moral deterioration, at least until they had

arrived at a period of life when various influences become potent, to induce them to take part in the maintenance and spread of morality.

Upon the whole, interest in politics and work in the political world are most desirable in the case of young men who are independent, or almost so; but, alas! in England the number of those who might devote themselves to a political career is sufficient to constitute many houses of commons far larger and possibly better than our own. But even political interest not stimulated by place or by some definite work soon wanes. As indicated and measured by each individual's voting power, political interests and duties are so ridiculously small and of such little real consequence that many of those who think can hardly be induced to look upon the thing seriously at all. It is often a question whether it is worth while to take a side, while on the other hand by declining to join either party in politics, and by devoting the whole energy to diffusing rational ideas among the multitude which will help them to exercise their judgment for the good of the State, an intelligent and patriotic person may possibly exercise a real influence in originating and carrying measures for the advantage of all. Considering what goes on, and the way votes are angled for and given, it seems to be the most gratuitous affectation of conscientiousness to call an intelligent man to account for not giving a vote.

One of the greatest of all questions at this time is the question of public morality, and those next in importance to this are questions very closely related to it, such as housing and humanising and feeding and keeping in health. Serious thought upon the matter is likely to engender a rather despairing state of mind, if not to create an overwhelming consciousness of the powerlessness of the wisest and most self-denying to do more than mitigate the evil. The only bright spot that appears in the mental picture of the exist-

ing state of things is the mighty strength and intensity of individual effort for good, now fed by faith, now by philanthropy, now by reason, to which no previous period in our history offers a parallel. Splendid and unaided individual effort and self-denial often succeed in stopping some of those tending towards an evil career, as well as preserving the good in the right course. Efforts of the kind will doubtless bear fruit in the years that are to come, though possibly not until long after those who have sown the seed and prepared the way have ceased to be. It is only by this never-ceasing struggle for improvement that the proportion of the good to the bad in the world can be increased, and it is to be hoped that such efforts to raise the standard of morality will continue and progress, until a high standard becomes the rule, and characterises individuals, classes, and masses, and is universally recognised as a necessity of civilised life.

A high standard of public morality is invariably marked by national prosperity and steady progress and advance in any section of the people, while the least falling back in moral status is certain to lead to further decadence not only in morals but in worldly advantages. It has been shown many times in history that a low and declining moral standard has often preceded, if it has not actually occasioned, national decay and disaster.

For some time past the most false and pernicious views have been allowed to be publicly diffused among our people by means of the most disgraceful kinds of cheap literature. It will be said that this evil always has prevailed and always must prevail, but it is to be borne in mind that the question is not simply as to the existence of the evil, but as to the degree of its prevalence, and it is certain that never before in the history of nations were so many circumstances favourable to the diffusion of false doctrines among a people as at this time, and it is terrible to think that error

is to be wilfully disseminated, and the young corrupted right and left, because it is no one's special duty to interfere. The time is coming when the people must either interfere or suffer terribly for their apathy, not only in conscience and credit, but in material prosperity and position.

The feeling now seems to be that anything may be taught or said in public, and even that individuals may be allowed to advocate or proclaim anything they like,—that they may even oppose the State by word or ridicule it, in short, that any of us may speak for or against anything, at any time, and during any length of time, so that no obstruction is created in any public place or thoroughfare. Such method of procedure can, however, hardly be regarded as evidence of a strong and healthy public intelligence, anxious to uphold and promote all that is good and to condemn and stop what is evil, and to resist any attempts on the part of individuals to diffuse among the people what is false and wicked. Rather it would seem to be a clever subterfuge for gaining an end which is desired by all anxious to promote the welfare of the people without attempting to solve the real difficulty. The State seems to decline to decide what ought and what ought not to be allowed to be said in a free country like our own. The practice based upon the theory that streets and public thoroughfares must be free for all to traverse is in accordance with reason, but unfortunately the principle recognises no difference between good and evil teaching, and from a police point of view both are equally deserving of condemnation if an obstruction is created, and both equally harmless in the opposite case.

Some of our new theories concerning individual and public liberty and the rights of all are calculated if carried into practice by numbers to wreck society. At this time we not only decline to admit the principle that it is the duty of society or of the State to take care that the young are brought up in belief in morals, but we allow immoral

views and immoral teaching to be diffused right and left without let or hindrance. While it is not any one's special duty to teach that which is likely to be of great advantage to the young in helping them to control evil tendencies and to regulate their conduct, every one and any one seems to have the right to instruct them individually, if not in class, in that which is clearly to their disadvantage, and which, if the teaching was acted upon, might compass their ruin.

As regards education, morals seem to be included in the same category as religion. While admitting that it is its duty to insist that every child shall be instructed at least in the means of acquiring certain elements of intellectual knowledge, the State not only declines to insist upon religious instruction, but seems to have decided that it is no part of its duty to take care that the people are not instructed in atheism, or taught to believe that all religion is bad, and opposed to intellectual progress.

In fact it seems to come to this, that while any form of irreligion or anti-religion may be freely taught to the people wherever the teacher can find pupils, teachers of religion are placed under restrictions. If they teach in the public schools they must teach only in a certain way. As I understand, they are permitted to teach historical facts, but must not show how these ought to influence our conduct in these days. Facts, and not opinions or views of facts, or suggestions concerning facts, are to be instilled into the minds of the young. In some countries not far from us little children are taught that the benefactor to whom they owe all the blessings they enjoy is their "country," but what they are to understand by their country is not explained to them. Here I believe the school board child is permitted to acknowledge if it likes to do so that it is indebted to God. The State, however, seems to think that it is an evil of a less serious kind, that the developing mind of the child should be influenced against all kinds of

religion, than that it should run any risk of becoming prejudiced in favour of any one, and the practical inference seems to be that an inclination to atheism is preferable to an inclination to embrace the tenets of any particular denomination; and that while it is necessary to take steps to prevent the encouragement of any inclination exhibited by the child mind towards a particular set of religious views, or in favour of any set of religious teachers, it is not needful to interfere with any inclination of the mind towards atheism or infidelity. Efforts to destroy all religions are to have free play, but inclinations towards any special religious system are to be repressed. Moreover, some religionists seem to consider, or at any rate act, as if they considered the evil of teaching children religious views differing perhaps only very slightly from their own, was greater than the evil of teaching no religious ideas at all, or teaching against all religion. But it is certain that any religion that acknowledges God must be far in advance of the stupid dictum that affirms there is no God. Those who believe in religion, by too much accentuation of their differences in respect of modes of worship and other matters, actually help the cause of irreligion and anti-religion. The most enthusiastic supporters of religion sometimes by the very intensity of their ill-balanced zeal may drive large numbers of people to abandon every form of religion. Religion would seem to be the most disastrous of all past forms of warfare, and the wounds inflicted by its weapons have been among the most difficult to heal, while the death of a victim, so far from having brought peace, has lighted up the torch of war in new generations, and prepared for misery and death in future time.

Millions of people might be unanimous in their belief in God, and even agree in the main attributes of the God all acknowledged, but rather than permit God to be worshipped in a way that commended itself to the majority, but was not approved by many of the sections into which the

worshippers of God had divided themselves, the principle advanced by a very small minority entirely disbelieving in God might be accepted and acted upon. The millions of God-worshippers unable to agree in small points, prefer to submit to the dictator of a few items that profess to disbelieve in and ignore God altogether, rather than yield their own special view or modify their doctrine in any way. Thus the unbelieving items enjoy an immense advantage over the believing millions. They are free and are permitted to spread their views, while no section among the millions is allowed either to teach its views to the rest, or in any way interfere with the principles or interests of any other section, or to try to make unbelievers believe in anything. The theory seems to be that there shall be a fair field and no favour for all the religions and all the philosophies of the world, but the practice which comes to be adopted seems to operate in a manner very different from that which would be suggested by the theory. The diffusion of good among the people is rendered difficult, while on the other hand, the teaching of much that does not in any way tend to good is favoured.

Surely if the State accepts the responsibility of the secular education of its youth and refuses to allow any form of religion to be taught in its schools, it is certainly incumbent upon it at the very least to take care that the young shall not be corrupted by those who are the enemies not only of all religion but of morals, of peace, of civilisation. For if the State declines this degree of protection there can be little doubt that in, say, a century, evil will predominate over good, for however obvious it may be that self-restraint is a blessing and a supreme advantage, the exercise of it being against the natural inclination of the majority, there will always be danger of its being rejected as a needless coercion of nature, if the good influence of the virtuous minority who work only for good is suppressed or with-

drawn. Our newest theories of liberty seem to involve the proposition that evil communications no longer corrupt, and may therefore be freely made. The teaching of good is so trammelled and fettered with limitations and conditions as to render it a difficult process. In practice the teacher of evil seems to be free, the teacher of good bound.

But we may feel sure that within the next few years public opinion will be much changed as regards the importance of moral teaching in youth, and whether our views concerning the relation of Church and State be modified or not, if all State teaching is still to be on a purely secular basis, morals will form an essential and necessary part of the school work of all classes of children.

While all the great problems connected with the mystery of being remain the same, ever being investigated but never solved, the way of looking at these and the views entertained by the thoughtful concerning them continually vary from age to age, and in a very considerable degree. New ideas are often advanced, and not unfrequently a view of a bygone age held in disfavour for many generations is revived, and for a time regarded by a considerable number of persons as a new revelation. Particularly in religion do we find striking and frequent changes in the way of regarding unchanging principles, and our views on moral questions undergo such great alterations, that conduct which would be punishable at one period is scarcely objected to by the public of another. From time to time the public conscience suffers a rude shock, which finds expression perhaps in new restrictive measures of the severest kind, which are applied for a time, and lead to a complete modification of public opinion, or at any rate the opinion which is publicly expressed. But soon the case becomes again changed, the measures are found to press unfairly, perhaps the crime for which they were imposed is found to have been exaggerated, perhaps they act unequally and are

occasionally imposed upon those who are not the most guilty. For these and other reasons the public attention soon becomes otherwise occupied, and with the decline of the particular form of immorality, for the repression of which they were introduced, the measures taken become neglected and in a time forgotten. But it by no means follows that public immorality has been cured. As old forms disappear, new and unsuspected ones rise up and obtrude themselves upon the world. The hopeful who supposed that in their time improvement had really at last been established, are disappointed to find that though changes for the better have taken place in certain directions and in certain places, the standard of public morality is far below what it ought to be, lower than they had supposed it to be and lower than it easily might be.

The future of England probably depends far more upon the views concerning morality entertained by the people and generally acted upon, than upon our progress in intellectual matters or the discovery of new comforts or amusements, entertainments, or upon greater facilities for locomotion, and for increasing unrest. It is to reduce the number of those who may fall from the right moral standard in the years to come that great effort should now be directed. Far too little thought has been given to moral training during these last years than the subject deserves, and unless morals are regarded as being at any rate equal in importance with technical and other instruction, further falling off may be expected, and in time the people will deteriorate in all that makes a nation really great. And not only will deterioration proceed, but at an increasing pace as one generation succeeds another. If the intelligence and energy of the majority are absorbed in the discovery of or in using means by which material advantages may be gained, or luxury, ease, enjoyment, amusement from hour to hour, and the gratification of the craving to see and to be seen more

readily secured, it is only in very exceptional cases and during a short period that such a nation will continue to prosper and advance. Those who can afford to buy the work of others are not very likely to take the trouble to work themselves, and too often it gradually comes about that the daily surroundings of such persons are amusement and gossip, and their chief duty to eat good food and drink wine and enjoy themselves in ease and luxury, until well-merited ailment or disease appeals to their blunted reason, and for a time at any rate a change in bad habits is reluctantly submitted to. Such persons contribute little to the improvement or advance of their fellow creatures. When it unfortunately happens that power falls into such hands, and is retained by representatives of this order, national deterioration will soon make itself evident.

With us, however, it is believed there is happily little prospect of untoward disaster from such cause, at any rate in the near future, for although the strivers after good may be numerically few, among them are people of such intense and enduring energy, that their views are quite certain to be made known, to gain for the cause of patriotism and self-denial a sufficient number of converts to prevent the progress of national deterioration for any great length of time. But it is to be hoped that in the near future the standard of morality will not only be prevented from falling lower, but that it will reach a height when it will be secure, and from which there will be no prospect of fall.

The real strength and growth in strength of a country depends upon the constant ascendancy of the good over the bad in the several classes of the people which make up the nation, and its prospects of holding its own, and the further advance of its influence in the world, are far more intimately related to its moral condition than is generally believed or acknowledged.

If the old form of chivalry has done its work and passed

away with the circumstances and conditions which fostered it never to return,—the age of helping those who are not strong enough to help themselves, of doing good, of saving the bad from themselves, of taking care that the weak and stupid are not beguiled and preyed upon by the selfish and cunning, the age of encouraging self-denial, of the dominion of good, of the rational enjoyment of the advantages of civilised life, with health of mind and body, the age of the discovery of the way in which each may make the best of himself and the circumstances and position of life in which he is placed, and be of the greatest service to the commonwealth, and so contribute his portion to the health and progress of the whole nation, in short the age of national happiness has not passed away. The age of real human hope and progressive work and ever-enlarging principle can never cease. The age of true chivalry looked forward to in the imagination of the hopeful and generous is yet to be established, and how near it may be perhaps depends more upon the time when a very high standard of public morality shall be attained than upon any other circumstance.

Medical Opinion and the Moral Question.

In discussions concerning public morality, and the remedies for checking immoral tendencies and practice, the voice of the profession is scarcely heard. Partly from the feeling of uncertainty and almost helplessness experienced by those among us who are familiar with the facts and well acquainted with the difficulties of dealing with the various forms of immorality, partly from disapproval of the exaggerated statements and sensational remarks on the part of many who put themselves forward as moral champions, and partly on account of the difficulty experienced in bringing the facts before the public in any but an objectionable shape, the profession appears to have felt indisposed to

take a prominent part in considering the moral question, or to offer further suggestions for practically dealing with the evil as it exists.

Possibly many of us think that it is the duty of those in authority to ascertain our views before any decision is arrived at upon the matters connected with medicine and hygiene. There are, no doubt, good reasons why medical opinion upon moral questions of doubt and difficulty should not be voluntarily offered. Our advice should be sought, or we should be requested to take the matter into consideration and report concerning measures likely, in our opinion, to mitigate evil.

But whatever may be the reason, the disregard of medical opinion is to be regretted, inasmuch as in the exercise of our calling we are necessarily made acquainted with many aspects of the moral evil which can scarcely be presented to persons who are not engaged in medical work. And it is only reasonable to suppose that our familiarity with the details of the question, and our being frequently brought into contact with those who commit offences against morals, places us in a very advantageous position for ascertaining the real facts upon which alone a correct judgment can be based.

Many questions relating to public morals, obscene literature, the regulation of lodging-houses, prostitution, the moral training of the young, the medical management of large or small bodies of young people of both sexes in schools, factories, and the like, especially in cases where females are the operatives, the immoral tendencies of certain employments and trades, in short, all questions connected with the proper bringing up and employment of the population, and many other matters, may be fairly said to be in part medical, and ought not to be legislated upon until full enquiry has been made from the medical side.

Much has been done for the advancement of the people

by the medical profession, but so far good has mainly been effected through individual effort, and sometimes, notwithstanding decided opposition, on the part of those having authority. The good that we have succeeded in effecting might have been many times greater if only we had had the public actively with us instead of against us, and we should probably have been supported by public opinion in many of the measures we have advocated if only we could have succeeded in convincing and gaining the support of the intelligent and cultivated at the head of affairs. When we consider what wonderful opportunities many of us have of acquiring a thoroughly practical knowledge of what is required, and in all the details, we cannot but doubly regret the apathy and even opposition we sometimes meet with. During illness, it need scarcely be said, we have abundant opportunity of learning and judging of the facts and of investigating the circumstances which have led to the commission of offences against morality. As the object of our attention is to relieve and cure the patient, we are not regarded with suspicion, and are more likely to be able to receive a true account of the actual facts than those who make enquiries from the purely moral or religious rather than from the medical side.

In venturing to express my own convictions on some of these very difficult and debatable questions, I do not advance any opinions as being sanctioned or supported by members of the profession generally, or as in any way representing the general conclusion which has been arrived at. Neither do I wish to induce others to adopt any of my opinions or suggestions. Rather do I desire to put the matter before my readers so that they should be led to freely discuss the questions, and carefully consider in what manner the evils complained of can best be dealt with. The whole enquiry into the state of our morality at this time is of the utmost consequence, and while nothing should be done in a hurry and without full deliberation, the evil

may soon attain such magnitude that it must be dealt with, for the more widely immorality spreads the more difficult will it be to reduce and remedy the evil. But while I am loth to unduly press upon attention my own convictions, I cannot accept the views of others merely because they are popular, or because hundreds or thousands may have decided in their favour. The real question is, not what is fashionable or popular, but simply what is true, what is right, what is the evidence in favour of this or that proposition? Can we obtain more information from medical men or from others which will help us in our endeavour to form a correct judgment and suggest efficient remedial measures?

The first step towards advance in morals among the less successful wage-earning classes is clearly the improvement of the conditions under which they live, and the early detection and isolation and proper treatment of all cases of contagious disease. The medical profession has been struggling for many years to help in this good cause. Much has, undoubtedly, been done, but the improvement which has taken place bears a very small proportion to the results that might have been achieved if the efforts of the profession had received the public support they deserved. Even now our attempts meet with less consideration and encouragement at the hands of influential persons than is desirable, and we have literally no voice in suggesting legislative changes in connection with matters which are really medical.

And yet it is doubtful if any other body of men, whether judged by the work they have attempted of their own free will without fee or reward, or by the results they have actually achieved, can be said to have done as much for the people as medical practitioners. Not only have the efforts of our predecessors to improve the health and general condition of the population largely contributed to make the.

nation what it is to-day, but doctors have done and are doing many things in various directions which help to make life in every part of the world more endurable, even better, purer, and of greater promise for the future. Although we have no public status, and are absolutely without political power, members of the medical profession are not unfrequently selected for confidential conference upon matters of high consequence. This indicates that the doctor, at any rate in his individual capacity, is appreciated. Indeed concerning our individual influence there is no doubt, but our collective, our professional power is still scarcely recognized. It would have been to the advantage of the country and of humanity if it had been admitted long ago, and if more opportunity had been afforded to medical knowledge of conferring its benefits upon the people.

In spite of all the enlightenment of our time the efforts of the profession to advance the health and improve the physical well-being of the people are still sometimes practically ignored by legislators. There have been occasions upon which the House of Commons has adopted measures bearing upon the management of disease of serious character, in a sense contrary to the almost unanimous opinion of the profession. It may, however, be freely conceded that many of the questions upon which we are specially informed relate to matters which are by no means exclusively medical, and may be profitably considered and debated upon by intelligent men who have little or no medical knowledge. Sound conclusions might be arrived at as to the best measures to be taken, and even good laws might be framed by not professional persons. But this opinion cannot be entertained as regards many of the questions that have been legislated upon even during recent years, not only without professional opinion being taken or asked for, but in spite of the views held by medical men—notably was this so in the case of the Contagious

Diseases Acts. It must not, however, be supposed that I am advocating the view that matters relating to disease or the health of the people should be determined by us exclusively, or that a doctor should have conferred upon him administrative powers, but simply that some medical body or bodies should be consulted or asked to deliberate and advise upon public questions of this kind, and that their recommendations should be officially considered and published before any conclusion is arrived at or legislation carried by Government.

Many aspects of the moral question are medical, and a correct judgment is more likely to be arrived at by medical men than by persons, however well informed, who are not medical. But not a few circumstances have contributed to prejudice the public against us, and though there is no reason whatever to suppose that intelligent people repose less confidence in the profession than formerly, the attacks not unfrequently made, no matter how unjustifiable, repeated with interest by the press, are not calculated to raise the profession in public esteem.

It may be doubted whether we have yet held the position to which as a profession we have long been entitled, and which probably would have been accorded to us but for our number, and consequently the low money value at which our services are appraised. Our work is hardly understood or fully appreciated even by those who are acquainted with its nature and closely associated with us. It is therefore not surprising that when matters of great medical importance are under the consideration of legislators, we are not referred to, and the views of the profession are almost ignored.

Any want of public confidence in us and the low general estimate of professional opinion cannot be attributed to any rigidity or indisposition on our part to please, to modify our views in accordance with those of others, or to adapt our conclusions to the changing circumstances of the time.

Rather may they be due to a tendency on our part to follow too readily the least change in opinion or prejudice than to try to lead. Not a few doctors are prone to acquiesce in whatever fancies may have taken hold on the public, or dicta which a very active or noisy, and possibly not very scrupulous, clique may have adopted to catch the weak and foolish.

The administration of alcohol as a medicine encourages drinking, therefore alcohol is not to be prescribed medicinally. Stimulants are declared against, and no one upon any pretence is to take any form of alcohol. Many members of the profession soon discover that a great mistake had been made by a large number of their body, and affirm that diseases can be treated better without alcohol than with it. Not a few having convinced themselves that everyone can live without alcohol, declare that it invariably does harm, and consider that it ought to be abolished by Act of Parliament. At another time it is declared that all medicine is bad, and all ailments are to be cured by diet or by water, if only the directions of the dietetic or aquatic authority are implicitly carried out. The exact temperature, strength, time of infusion of a cup of tea are to be carefully noted as of the utmost importance to the patient, and not one of the minute directions given on these matters is by any means to be neglected. The exact quantity of the infusion to be allowed, the exact number of sips to be taken per minute, are to be accurately laid down, and upon no account are the directions given to be departed from,—and so on as regards the several substances to be taken at each meal throughout the day.

Some people maintain that medical training, the intelligent observation of the sick, the investigation of their ailments, are all needless. An adviser who would not pass the simplest medical examination is the one sometimes selected by important and influential members of society as

best qualified to treat their complaints. His marvellous "cures" are contrasted with the miserable failures of the regular practitioner. Great surgeons fail to detect and cure dislocations and fractures which are at once set to rights by the "bone-setter," who may know nothing about the anatomy or action of any joint or bone in the body, but as he "cured" this and that terrible case for which the most distinguished doctors could do nothing, he is to cure everything. Rubbing, pressing, squeezing, poking, hammering, stretching, or pricking become highly fashionable. In short, the men who have been spending half a lifetime among the sick, and have been devoting themselves to the study and relief of disease are dismissed, and the profession generally discountenanced by many who assist in an important degree in forming what is called "public opinion."

We are not even to be allowed in all cases to fulfil our mission to heal the sick. There are ailments which some people think are deserved, and are directly intended as a punishment for the offence of contracting them. In this way the suffering produced may have a deterrent effect upon others and thus act advantageously. But the advocates of pathological retribution forget that contagion has no sense of justice, and ruins and destroys innocent and guilty alike. We might, if we were allowed, so act as regards all contagious diseases as to greatly reduce the chance, or perhaps prevent the communication of disease from one to another,—but there are cases of a special form of contagious disease which an influential set of persons considers we ought not in fact to be permitted to detect or cure, because to render detection and cure efficient, it would be necessary to place the patient under proper care in hospital, and not allow the right of refusal—in short, to interfere with the liberty of the subject for the subject's good.

What can be more discreditable in these enlightened

days than that we should still have to deal with epidemics of small-pox, and from time to time have to make arrangements for the treatment of a large number of cases? Nothing but utter disregard of medical knowledge and contempt for the profession and its recommendations can account for such a fact. The idea of the public actually allowing, it would be almost justifiable to say encouraging, the preservation of such a disease as this. It is the same with syphilis—the same with certain fevers. Our Government seems as powerless to carry out legislation for reducing these and other diseases to a minimum as it is to ensure our soldiers having the best gun to fight with or the best sword that can be made at the time. It is ridiculous to say there are difficulties in the way arising from differences of opinion among authorities and those who represent different departments of the services, that render it almost impossible to arrive at a correct decision. Anyone well acquainted with the subject, if he were allowed to act according to knowledge, could ensure the gradual reduction in number of the sufferers from the diseases in question, just as he can with certainty prevent himself from contracting the disease. And within a decade or so the cases might easily be reduced to extreme rarity or be extinguished. Any one who was acquainted with the method of testing the weapons could be quite as certain of getting a good gun or a good sword. But these as well as many other matters which have nothing to do with politics are made party questions, and may become the cause of political animosity, instead of being calmly discussed and legislated upon in accordance with modern medical and scientific knowledge.

Even the usefulness of vaccination has been roundly denied. In spite of all the evidence by which its efficacy has been proved again and again, a considerable number of people have been persuaded to set their faces against vaccination, to defy the law, and expose their children to the

ravages of small-pox. Vaccination has become a political question, and the candidate who will oppose the vaccination laws receives the votes of the anti-vaccinationists. It is even within the possibilities of modern practical politics to enact that the desire that vaccination shall no longer be compulsory, might become law. It is also conceivable that such a result might be obtained by the efforts of a number of persons, not one of whom had ever seen a case of small-pox or studied the subject of vaccination. Men in very high position have expressed doubt as to the efficacy of vaccination, and more than one minister of the Crown has intimated that under certain circumstances which he can imagine he might deem it right to decide to advocate further enquiry as to the advantages and efficacy of vaccination, in other words, that the whole question of vaccination should be reconsidered and the propriety or necessity of legislation discussed afresh.

Thus is life needlessly risked or lost, progress checked, and time wasted. Principles which are well known to be established upon the most conclusive and irrefragable evidence, and which have borne the test of repeated experiment during many years, are called in question. It is sometimes affirmed and in the most positive manner by persons whose only title to do so is extraordinary confidence in themselves and in the infallibility of their party dicta, that principles upon which the profession has acted for years are a mistake, and must be revised or abandoned and replaced by new ones altogether.

Not only is the profession not consulted when matters concerning the health and physical condition of the people are under consideration, but sometimes men in high official position go out of their way to throw stones at us—not of course at individual doctors, but at the profession generally, or at medical opinion in the abstract. In reference to lunacy decisions, what tremendous volleys have been dis-

charged at us from time to time from the press, from the bar, and even from the bench. Because in a few instances the proprietors or medical officers of private lunatic asylums have acted injudiciously in cases in which it was extremely difficult to decide as to the best course to adopt, or because mistakes, perhaps very soon corrected, have occasionally been made, medicine has been denounced, and the whole profession has been unjustifiably condemned. Positive, and sometimes very reckless, assertions have been ventured and opinions given by anonymous writers who know little of the facts, and are quite ignorant of the nature of the many difficulties with which those who have to advise often have to contend. In many cases these confident persons would be quite unable to decide whether a patient was sane or insane. Rather than run the slightest risk of placing a sane person under temporary care and control, they would permit many a lunatic to range the world at large to maim and murder according to the promptings of his deranged mind and perverted imagination.

The "Times," waiting on the popular or fashionable prejudices of the time, concurs in forming a very low estimate of the profession, or at least of that branch which is specially concerned with mental disease. It concludes a leading article on the management of the insane in asylums with the following words:—"We have done for ever with the theory that every one with a vacant stare may be locked up" (August 19th, 1885). The writer surely was well aware when he penned the sentence that no one was ever locked up because he stared, and that it has never been suggested, save by his own fertile imagination, that any one could be so treated for a vacant or any kind of stare. The only purpose served by such a suggestion is to increase the prejudice of the public against the profession. The remark seems to imply that a medical man may take advantage of his position to do a most cruel and abominable thing, and

it has been more than hinted that some doctors have been persuaded by a bribe or in some other way to illegally and wrongly take away the liberty of a fellow creature upon grounds that are wholly false and wrong, to serve the private aims of some interested and evil-disposed person. Such observations could hardly be made if there was not an impression that the medical profession is not to be trusted as, for example, the legal and the combatant professions are to be trusted, or as the police is to be trusted. At any rate it is difficult to understand how anyone could make the remarks unless some such view had full possession of his mind.

But it does seem hard that lawyers should hurl their thunderbolts at us. Considering the very secure and powerful position they enjoy as compared with our exposed and defenceless state, one might have expected lawyers would have shown some mercy towards us. They are always entrenched behind the law and the decisions of courts, while we are condemned to search after truth in the open, and do our best with neither law nor custom to help us, and no authority to appeal to. Or can it be that lawyers are a little jealous of our modesty, and the often unremunerated simplicity with which we perform our duties and tender our help where help is required? The little influence and power we possess are due to our experience, reason, intelligence, care, attention. Our wigs and pigtails and gold-headed canes that gave us such consequence in former days have long been discarded, and not even a gown or other special article of attire adds dignity to our office, or awe and mystery to our decisions, or serves to distinguish us from ordinary citizens.

What can be more unfair than the system of which we are the victims? Lawyers on one side procure medical witnesses to give an opinion, or more than an opinion, in favour of their contention, while the legal advisers on the opposite side procure other doctors to contradict the first set. By this

extraordinary process it is supposed that somehow or other truth is ultimately elucidated. The question to be decided is perhaps one of great scientific difficulty, upon which it is not possible that any definite decision other than a legal one can be arrived at. Members of a liberal profession—skilled witnesses, swear against one another because they are bid to do so, while law and justice are supposed to distil the truth from the affirmations and contradictions. And lawyers on all sides agree in abusing the medical profession and swear that doctors can be got to swear anything for a fee.

But notwithstanding the difficulties and drawbacks in the way of getting the public and the Government to act upon advanced medical knowledge, and the obstacles by which we are prevented from being of as much use in the world as we might be, the profession will not be deterred from striving to do its utmost to still further advance medical knowledge and get measures carried which will promote the welfare and moral progress of the people. It is to be hoped that ere long more confidence will be placed in our views than has heretofore been the case, and that our efforts to make all classes more healthy and more powerful in mind and body may be more popular and more successful. So far much of what has been achieved has been carried out under difficulties, and not unfrequently in spite of persistent opposition of the most powerful kind. Consider for a moment what might have been the physical, intellectual, and moral condition of the people at this time, if the struggles of those who preceded us had met with more general sympathy, and the measures proposed had been carried into practice many years ago. Even now there is good reason to believe that if only for a decade or two ordinary hygienic measures could be more widely adopted, and the homes as well as the conditions under which people live improved, as might be done without the smallest difficulty if only the will and the determination upon the part of

the leaders of opinion existed, what striking improvement would soon characterise not only the health but the mental and moral powers of all classes.

Medical knowledge and experience are, and have been, far in advance of the practical measures adopted, and there is good reason to think that the standard of public morals would long ago have been higher than it now is if public confidence had been reposed in us, and our influence had been sufficiently powerful to have enabled us to get measures carried for the proper treatment and management of the lowest class of the unfortunate persons suffering from some of the worst and most serious forms of contagious diseases of modern times. Had the patients been placed under our care we should often have been able to be of great service in the cause of morality, and might have assisted in their reclamation from evil at the same time that we were endeavouring to restore them to health. It is found that the worst and most abandoned members of society are more likely to be reclaimed, or at any rate influenced, so as to become decent, by the doctor, who brings relief to their bodily sufferings, than by any one else. In this and in many other ways members of the profession would be of the greatest service to the cause of morality if only the public desired it and reposed sufficient confidence and trust in us to allow us to act.

But if we are not permitted in our collective capacity to do as much as we might do, and long to see accomplished, in the cause of moral regeneration, and while regretting that we have not the authority that a large and intelligent body of professional men should command, we must continue as heretofore to act individually and endeavour to convince every one of influence we meet of the vast consequence of sanitary and hygienic measures as a necessary preliminary to raising the moral standard. Each of us must endeavour to gain people one by one to the cause of

progress, and do his best to support and extend those wise measures which were years ago inaugurated by our predecessors, and which have already conferred such vast benefits upon the workers in many trades as well as upon the public at large. Notwithstanding the vacillation of opinion concerning the principles which should guide all who desire to see the nation stronger and better than it is, some progress, some advance is being made. Though not content with the slow rate of improvement, we may be in a measure satisfied, inasmuch as we at any rate have been doing all we can to raise those who are in a state of degradation as well as suffering from disease.

And whatever censures may be passed at a future time upon the conduct of those who are doing no work at all for improving the physical well-being or the moral condition of the lowest and most degraded of their fellow creatures, it is quite certain that posterity will acknowledge how much it is indebted to us for the blessings of good health and strength of mind and body, and for the discovery and practical working of means by which the advantages then enjoyed may be further increased for the benefit of the new generations which will succeed.

Practical Suggestions as regards Moral Training and the Improvement of Morals.

In considering what practical measures can be proposed with the best prospect of checking the spread of moral evil, and by what means we may hope to raise from year to year the moral standard, it will be necessary to recapitulate some of the observations already made, and discuss how they may be turned to practical use.

No one suggests that by any laws or alterations that can be devised and carried into practice, can all or nearly all people be made at once to tend towards good, but by

recognizing well-established truths, and acting upon principles proved to be sound and trustworthy, it is certain that we might largely increase the percentage of good men in the population. There is good reason to think if the methods referred to had been as generally and as widely applied as was desirable, there would not have been at this time the very urgent need of exceptional interference which is undoubtedly requisite to prevent the increase and further spread of moral evil.

The great, and possibly the greatest, obstacle met with in endeavouring to gain the end we all desire, is due to a greater amount of evil teaching than was ever carried on in time past,—teaching attractive to the young of all classes because it aims at the gratification of their desires and encourages obedience to the promptings of untrained nature. But when it is declared with all the force that eloquence can add to scientific authority claiming infallibility, that the so-called moral laws to which we submit are an unfair restriction, and an unreasonable and gratuitous check upon the gratification of desires implanted in us by nature, and to which nature demands obedience, is it wonderful that dispositions reckless by nature should become more reckless, or that weak, selfish, and silly people should applaud the new sages as deliverers who emancipate them from their thraldom and allow them to follow the bent of their inclinations and passions? Unless such senseless evil teaching and the further spread of the outrageous doctrines alluded to are soon checked, moral degradation and misery will increase, and evil will certainly be more and more difficult to deal with, as abandoned people increase in recklessness and in number.

If only half of the intelligence, labour, and expense employed in the discovery, conviction, and punishment of offenders had been spent in preventing the formation and training of criminals and the growth and spread of immorality, an impression would long ago have been made.

What a gain would have resulted to the nation, and what a number of persons would have been saved from falling into hopeless and helpless degradation and crime!

Whatever differences of view may be entertained concerning the most practicable way of spreading among all classes of the people a conviction of the inestimable importance of a high standard of public morality, it must be allowed that the cause of morality, at any rate in recent times, has received little assistance from minatory appeals which have been made in its interests. Threats of future punishment or suffering appear to exert less influence than in former times. There is no convincing evidence that fear of punishment has distinctly led to the reclamation of the immoral, or has induced many to change their ways and become moral, while it is doubtful whether it has aroused in many minds ideas which have led to the exercise of self-control. The system of threatening punishment has been tried during centuries, and I fear it must be admitted that neither this nor any other plan that has been hitherto adopted, has been attended with success sufficient to justify us in relying upon it for effecting real and progressive improvement. An efficient moral system, besides exerting a good influence upon the bad, will render the young who have been brought up under it secure as against the ordinary temptations to which they may be exposed. They will be moral not from fear of threats or penalties, but from high motive and belief in the righteousness of morality.

It will be found that appeals in favour of moral behaviour on account of health penalties will not have much effect. Medical like other threats are soon forgotten. Not even the sight of those suffering, or the terrible ravages of dire diseases due to an immoral course of life, will persuade those bent on an evil course to mend their ways; nor, indeed, will anything we can urge regarding the diseases caused by immorality have the effect of raising the standard

of public morals. Put before offenders all the horrid consequences of sins against morals as clearly and graphically as you may, you will find that the diseases, the weakened health, the enfeebled intellect, nay the probability of early death, will exert, in the great majority of instances, surprisingly little deterring influence. The punishment, the suffering, however great, do not immediately follow on the sin, and the period of bad health may be far off. Decades perhaps must pass before old age or the time of disease will be reached, and the reckless are absorbed in the present, and care nothing for what suffering may be in store for them in the future. Besides, there is the chance which, however small, is enormously magnified by the imagination of the dissipated, who soon convinces himself that he will be lucky, and escape all pathological suffering.

Strong is the tendency to evil when once recklessness and the gratification of the passions have been permitted to gain ever so slight an ascendancy. While after a period of frequent yielding, so irresistible become the impulse and desire that the abandonment of the whole being to their gratification is almost sure to follow. Regarding the question from this side we shall be led to the same conclusion as has been arrived at from considerations of other matters connected with the enquiry—that special measures are required to prevent the further deterioration of public morals and to encourage the adoption of a higher standard of public morality.

Probably in a community like our own, the only practicable method of raising the moral tone and making the people better is the slow but sure process of so training each individual mind that it will be able to control itself, and will gradually bring itself into a condition in which it will be able, as we say, to resist any temptation to which it may be exposed. Really the mental state in question seems rather to be one in which the mind does not

experience, or rather is not conscious of temptation,—a state in which the right course is chosen without the mind feeling that it is first drawn towards the wrong, and then on reflection determines to resist the tendency. Some seem to think that whenever the individual goes right there has been a severe struggle, and that it has been with great difficulty and only after battling with himself that he has succeeded in conquering his evil tendencies. On the other hand, I believe this to be a rare and exceptional state of things, and think that it would be much nearer the truth to conclude that the great majority of minds tend to good, and would turn out well at least as regards morals if only they were not placed under unfavourable conditions, and were not induced, persuaded, or stimulated by others to go wrong. Many things favour the learning of evil, and it is not even certain that some of the broad principles taught with the idea of making the young good are quite as sound as they might be. Occasionally, children themselves detect inconsistency and fallacy in what is represented to them to be perfect and right.

It has long appeared to me that the advice often given as regards temptation was wrong. Thus we have been told, and by very high authority, that we should do our utmost to remove temptation out of our own way and out of the way of others. If this advice were restricted to childhood it might be accepted and considered to be sound and good, but are we to look upon our fellow creatures as perennial children who are never to be able to take care of themselves? Is it not this mistaken view that temptation should be removed, which has led many to fall when exposed to its influence? If we cannot so train the mind that it will be able to resist temptation to which as we all know it must from time to time be exposed, of what avail is our teaching? In many cases it is obviously impossible to remove the temptation out of the way. It is perfectly clear that

we ought not to lead ourselves and others into temptation, but if, as must indeed happen from time to time, a person finds himself placed under temptation, he ought to feel that he is well able to resist it. And surely we shall be more likely to successfully resist if we are fully conscious of the possibility, and have long had before the mind the probability of our being subjected to temptation some time or other. Some would remove all the evil, just as they would remove all the alcohol from the world, so as to render it impossible that people could be tempted. Such a panacea, however, is not easily carried into practice, but were it possible to do so, no real and lasting good would result. New temptations would arise one after another, and the weak would succumb.

Some have concluded that there are certain persons in the world who are almost bound to err, and if the usual source of temptation were removed, they would find new means of falling and going wrong. But if we could succeed in teaching them to resist one kind of temptation, the mental training they would have received would probably be found sufficient to enable them to withstand other kinds; and if by nature they are not very weak indeed, they will gradually acquire power to resist any form of temptation that may fall in their way.

Moral training begins, or ought to begin, in childhood. Steps are taken very early in infancy to inculcate habits of decency, and these in some sort seem to be the earliest lessons in morals. And it is best for the child, and causes the least amount of suffering, if attention be given at the earliest possible moment, in order that it may fall into habits which experience has proved may be more easily taught in infancy than later on.

In cases, unfortunately not rare, in which the mother is indisposed or incompetent to give the early instruction required, the infant school is of incalculable benefit in this

respect, and is probably the most potent of all our means of civilizing the children of the classes who resist civilization. Too much importance cannot be attached to this early teaching, and great efforts should be made to improve the infant school system to the utmost.

Nothing can be more foolish than to pity young children because they are subjected thus early in their career to proper discipline, and made to conform to regularity in their daily habits. No doubt the children would prefer to have their own way, and not to be subjected to any discipline whatever. It has been said that it was unfair and unnatural to subject unfortunate children thus early to the influence of our artificial system. But human life is necessarily artificial, and the sooner the child is brought under control, the easier will it be for it to learn to be happy under the artificial conditions of existence.

Moral teaching in childhood and early youth should be so conducted that each child as he grows older will be led to think over the matter for himself, and gradually learn to guide his own conduct according to right principles, and slowly acquire confidence in himself, and rely upon his own judgment for guidance should he be exposed to temptation and placed in a position of difficulty. Such training will also lead him to educate his tastes, and thus contribute to establish one of the conditions essential to happiness in life.

All who consider this most serious moral question from the practical standpoint will, I think, come to the conclusion that the true and indeed the only way of dealing with it, is by individual influence. So far, it is to be feared, no method which has yet been carried into practice seems to have effected much in the way of curing immorality. Perhaps one by no means the least important reason of this is that the efforts are too ambitious. Wholesale cure is aimed at. Numbers of the wicked are to be regenerated, and the change is to be effected at once. But, in truth,

real good is effected slowly and quietly by influencing individuals one by one. No organization, no general system, that has ever been attempted for influencing numbers of children or young people at the same time, has been attended with success. The real influence for good is that of mind upon mind, carefully exercised during a considerable period of time. In this way, a healthy public opinion might be gradually formed, and the standard of public morals would be raised. Of late years this principle of influencing individuals has been much neglected. Considerable energy and means have been devoted to associations, organizations, societies, crusades, and that vague, wholesale, indefinite doing of good which has been so highly systematised of late, just as if peccant human beings were so many pieces of mechanism that had gone wrong, and could be set right again by a new wheel or two which could be produced in any number by the machinery put up by the association, and placed in the stead of old ones when required.

There are, however, not a few individuals who seem to be naturally moral, and do not manifest any tendencies to evil which require effort to conquer. My own impression is that in these cases such evil tendencies as existed were conquered very early in life, and imperceptibly to the individual himself. Those who seem to be moral by nature, in most instances owe their advantages to the anxious care of a sensible mother, who led them towards right. Perhaps they were not even once corrected. Going wrong was prevented, and imperceptibly and unconsciously to themselves they were not only directed in the right course, but their power of keeping themselves right was gently exercised, and thus sagacity, honesty of purpose, and judgment were developed as the mind was being formed under the constant influence of a wise and healthy environment—a sensible mother.

Are mothers upon the whole becoming more sensible, or less sensible, in this country as time goes on? This question is a very delicate one to answer or to discuss. While we may feel sure that upon the whole British mothers far excel the mothers belonging to other nations, there are many who are not so good in all respects as they easily might be, and considering the examples set by mothers in the past, it is doubtful whether the average of maternal excellence is as high as one would expect it to be.

When the early moulding of the moral faculties is very defective, or altogether wanting, it is to be feared the disadvantage is seldom compensated, or the error repaired in school life. Nothing can take the place of a watchful sensible mother who sees and studies the disposition of the growing child from hour to hour, and moulds it for good. Of late years the need for moral training seems to have been ignored or forgotten by those whose duty it is to determine educational details; and amid the chaotic information which educational authorities have determined shall be forced upon the understanding, and for which the means of instruction shall be provided, it is not wonderful that morality should be forgotten.

Of moral teaching in schools one hears little now save that it is neglected. In this conclusion persons of the most diverse general views agree. Morality is not one of the subjects included nowadays among those of any standard. No one has to "pass" in it, and it is not even an extra or optional subject.

A great defect characterises every form of school and class training which rests upon the assumption that every child is alike, and that by teaching all in the same manner similar results ought to be obtained, while in fact we are well aware that children differ widely, and it would be very near the truth to affirm that in a large class there were not two alike as regards capacity for learning. It is not possible to

remedy this obvious fault in principle, but it is doubtful whether we have done all that might be advantageously and easily carried out to lessen the disadvantage. Nearly every child requires somewhat different treatment to produce a like result in all. In practice this is impossible, as it would almost entail a teacher to each child. It is, however, by no means impossible for teachers to study the individual characteristics of children far more than they have done hitherto. A little sympathetic recognition of the individuality he is shaping on the part of the teacher often excites an immediate response on the part of the child, who perhaps from being slow, dull, and stupid becomes lively and intelligent, and from that time gets on quickly.

It must, nevertheless, I think, be admitted that, with all its defects, ordinary school life is more favourable for the inculcation of moral principles than technical and scientific training. And it is well worthy of our consideration whether judgment, wisdom, self-restraint are not more likely to gain an entrance into the developing child mind occupied by the study of the humanities than into a mind prematurely concentrated upon mathematics or the various branches of physical science, or some special branch of art, manufacture, or commerce.

There is undoubtedly much practical difficulty in teaching young children the elements of morals if the moral teacher is not allowed to teach any system of religion ; but if it is decided that religion shall not be taught, some means out of the difficulty must be found. Practical moral instruction suitable to the comprehension of young children must take the place in education formerly held by religion, if religion is to be banished. To attempt any so-called philosophical moral system at a very early age would be ridiculous, and to keep a young child without any moral teaching during early youth would be cruel, inasmuch as the child as it grew up would find itself in a world for which it was unsuited, and

with which it was not in accord. Moral and religious teaching cannot be safely left out of the school course on the ground that they ought to be provided for at home, if only for the reason that in many homes not only teaching but example tends in a different direction, while in some it is to be feared the mind of the child, without some strong counteracting influences, would soon be made almost incapable of receiving moral or religious ideas.

If a child is not shown the meaning and importance of moral principles, it will be far more difficult for it as it grows up to teach itself self-control than if it had received moral instruction in early youth. The child has somehow to bring itself to conform to its environment, or make its environment conform to it—an alternative which need not be considered. Conformation to environment is, in fact, a necessity, and is the more easy the earlier in life the process begins. Determination not to conform means either misery, disappointment, and slow death, or banishment to parts of the earth's surface where the kind of environment is very different, but where nevertheless conformity of a kind becomes an absolute necessity, for starvation and death would soon put an end to all opposition. To allow children to be so taught that they will object to conform to their environment is the very height of premeditated and useless cruelty.

Although religious teaching may henceforth have to be conducted on broader lines, and will by some be objected to altogether, our duties towards one another, consideration for the weakly and sick and helpless, as well as some degree of chivalrous feeling, must needs be inculcated in early youth in order that the conduct may be regulated by principles not opposed to those generally received. Otherwise when the children grew up they would have no better chance of life than wolves or other life-destroying creatures. The principles upon which some of the new forms of old ideas

are based, at least as I understand them, so far from being truly broad and generous, and conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number, are very narrow and arbitrary, and in practice would certainly lead either to the exercise of tyranny or to general destruction. The population would begin to decrease in number as soon as they began to be acted upon, and the rate of diminution would proceed in continually accelerated degree as the older gave place to the newer system.

Can anything be more unprincipled or more cruel than to allow the young to be brought up on principles or according to views which cannot be acted upon in after life, unless and until the existing order of things be completely changed? Of course it is possible that the change contemplated might soon be effected, in which case the children who had been trained according to the new order would undoubtedly have an advantage over those who had not. But, at any rate, parents should have the option of deciding whether their children should be trained according to an old and tried system, or a new and experimental one. And is it not a little hard upon the rising generation to pass laws which shall compel children to be brought up on the hypothesis that religion and morals, as we understand the words, will be totally changed or completely extinguished by the time the child reaches maturity? It is, however, very uncertain whether such change can last for any length of time, especially as those who advocate the new laws are too old to see them in practical operation, and in all probability would not have passed them had they carefully considered how they would act. Neither can it be right to allow children to be taught views in early life which will necessarily lead them to desire to live in a state of society which shall be adapted to them, the great majority of those who constitute society being opposed to the new views, and quite determined that no such change shall be made, if they can by any possibility

prevent it—a change which, in short, a considerable majority would oppose with determination; indeed they would prefer to fight and even to die rather than submit. And when one considers that the proposed new order of things is not sanctioned by the teachings of history, or by a full consideration of the facts of our own time, it seems a strange measure indeed for any government to put in practice a system that would give great advantages to the few who are at war with the existing order of things, if not with every kind of civilization, rather than to the many who are contented or at any rate not discontented. Are we not now within measurable distance of a freedom tolerable, if not thoroughly satisfactory, to most thoughtful persons? If government cannot inaugurate a moral system upon new lines, it seems almost unjust upon its part to ordain that the old system shall be banished, and children allowed to grow up without any moral teaching whatever—to have to adapt themselves as best they can to an order of things very different from that which their early training would have suggested to their minds—to find themselves in a world very different from that which, by their teaching, or want of teaching in childhood, they were led to expect—to have to live amongst people who believe and act upon principles very different from any which they were taught to admire,—and in consequence of not being properly enlightened as to the facts of life, to be dangerously exposed to evil teaching and bad example, and prone to accept fallacies,—and liable to be led into error and to commit sin destructive of happiness,—in short to be trained in one kind of world and to have to live and work in another.

Possibly morals may have no place in the culture of the future. Even now the idea of laying much stress upon the teaching of goodness, innocence, judgment, consideration for others, seems to take us back into another age of pedagogy, to an antediluvian period of education long

antecedent to the discovery of the universal law that the weakest goes to the wall. This vast generalization has already superseded ancient ethics, and provides us with an excellent maxim to govern our conduct and duty towards one another, and a never-failing argument to which one of two persons having irreconcilable differences can always appeal with the utmost confidence of success.

Parents are, of course, most anxious that their children should be well brought up, but too often is their desire accompanied by an expenditure so lavish that all chance of this object being attained is destroyed. Not a few consider themselves very hardly used, if not actually imposed upon, by those who have undertaken the training, if to their disappointment their children do not turn out good and virtuous, as well as successful in the examinations they have to pass. In not a few instances the child's home, as well as his school management, is adapted to make him thoughtless, selfish, careless of all interests except those which may be regarded as his own, and to unfit him to meet upon equal terms those of his contemporaries whose minds have been trained upon more economical principles. The two systems of training children for what is really the same work in the world, necessarily result in the production of adults whose ideas will be very different. Those who have been subjected to an extravagant system will be led to despise and dislike those who have been taught according to different principles. The scorn and contempt with which the successful but moneyless modern intellectual of all the standards and much more regards the wealthy ignoramus whose money gives him unfair advantage in the world, but who could scarcely pass in any one, can only be exceeded by the scorn and contempt which the latter entertains for the former.

Nor is college life in the case of the wealthy calculated to evoke or strengthen moral control when it is naturally, or

in consequence of previous bad training, weak. In some instances it would seem as if almost everything for the advantage of the man in process of evolution had been deliberately and intentionally neglected, while comparatively trivial matters connected with behaviour and social intercourse, recreation, amusement, and sport had been provided for with the most minute attention and care. Whether the growing man is to gain control over his desires, appetites, and passions, or to run riot and be driven by his friends along the road to ruin, appears to be a question of such little consequence that it may be left to be determined by circumstances, or the inclination of the individual as he grows, or by accident or fate.

Looseness of view, vagueness of opinion, confusion of thought as regards first principles, do not contribute to strengthen the moral character. Nor is the cause helped by advocacy of religion in most exaggerated language by the same person who, lest he be deemed "narrow" by society, takes care to express his assent to popular scientific doctrines incompatible with any form of religion. During early manhood, various weaknesses even excite admiration rather than rebuke, and in some spheres the encouragement of individuals who have little or no regard for mere facts or the exact meaning of words, and who act upon doctrines of their own, not shared or acquiesced in generally by moral persons, concerning the rights of others, appear to be regarded by not a few if not as actual virtues at least as faults meriting sympathy rather than blame.

Perhaps of all the theories ever propounded that work against righteousness in modern life, the most influential has been the theory which regards aquiescence in general as one of the greatest of the virtues. This view has been carried to such lengths as to practically amount to encouraging insincerity. It almost leads to the false

denial on the part of the denier of principles which he believes and which have actually guided him in his course. It seems to be held by some that if the course that is clearly right does not happen to be that which is expedient, it must at least for the time give way, that which is expedient being preferable to that which is right.

In religious matters this love of acquiescing, and the wild longing to harmonise differences and to reconcile opposites, excites among persons not enthusiastic for religion, something approaching contempt for what passes for belief, and has endangered belief itself. It is in fact calculated to destroy conviction. Nor is it surprising in an age when implicit belief and uncompromising disbelief in God and a future state are to be "reconciled" that it should be considered bad taste, or vulgar, or evidence of an impracticable habit of mind, to sternly censure immorality or to raise objections to anyone being on terms of intimacy or friendship with men who are well known to be notoriously immoral and bad, and whose conduct every right-minded person would regard as disgraceful, and would declare to be utterly unendurable if many instead of only a very few practised it. But what is most remarkable of all is that whether a given course of action is generally considered to be disgraceful or not seems to be determined not so much by the judgment arrived at concerning the facts themselves as by the consideration whether the individual has been found guilty by a court of law, in which case society would also condemn him.

It is a question whether at least among some classes as age advances there is not much in social intercourse which tends to encourage the lowering of the moral standard rather than its elevation. And there can be little question that some of the so-called enjoyments are calculated to weaken rather than to strengthen self-restraint. The striving after the good and true, which is professed to be an

object of high endeavour on the part of most, is rendered impracticable or actually discountenanced by sections of society calling themselves fashionable.

Cases of immorality occurring in middle life or later are most difficult to deal with, for neither advice, nor misfortune, nor such punishment as it is considered expedient to inflict, seems to exert much influence of a deterrent character, or to prevent the bad example from being followed. Many of these cases seem to be quite incorrigible, and in some there is little hope of reformation. In bad cases of the class repression is the only course, and the time will probably come when such persons will be treated as lunatics and placed under proper restraint, so that they can no longer injure themselves or other people and disgrace human nature.

One of the most cruel and inexcusable forms of crime which has ever disgraced and degraded society, seems to be on the increase. One can hardly take up a paper without finding cases of horrible assaults upon children and some of them very little children. It is almost impossible to believe that the great majority of the ruffians who perpetrate such crimes are sane. But unquestionably the protection of the weak as well as the rights of civilization demand that the offenders, sane or insane, should be placed under proper restraint for a longer period of time than the law as at present administered deems advisable.

If some years ago efforts worthy of the times in which we live had been made, a higher standard of public morals, perhaps higher than any the world has yet known, would have been attained by this time. If only men could be persuaded to think over the moral question, a healthy change in idea would occur, and would soon be followed by change in practice. The good impulse which had been sufficient to raise the standard of morality would suffice to maintain it and to cause it gradually

to rise higher. The young of each succeeding generation would continue to improve in moral attainments as compared with previous ones, and all that advances the welfare and prosperity of the state would be assured. The tens or hundreds of good self-denying men who by virtue and strength of mind are now striving to prepare the way for a better state of things, would be reckoned by thousands and would soon number tens of thousands. A nearer approach to happiness and consequently to goodness would be manifest among the people, and we should now be steadily advancing towards a high moral standard instead of struggling to obtain a more general recognition of the importance of morality, and the admission that it ought to be taught to the young.

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