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Addresses

CRIMINAL ABORTION IN ITS BROADEST SENSE.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE SECTION ON OBSTETRICS AND DISEASES OF WOMEN, OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, CHICAGO, 1908.

WALTER B. DORSETT, M.D.
ST. LOUIS.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the members of this, one of the most important sections of the American Medical Association, for having chosen me as their chairman. This honor comes to but few of us in a lifetime, and when I was selected I could not but feel that the honor carried with it a great responsibility. In accepting the position, it will probably be remembered, I said: "The success of a year's work would not be accomplished by the chairman but by the work of each individual member."

In looking over the program one must be impressed by the wealth of subjects to be discussed, as well as the names of the authors of the papers. This certainly should convince us that we are to enjoy a treat seldom offered in bodies of this character. Should I attempt to add anything of a scientific nature, I fear it would rather detract from than add to its interest. I have, therefore, concluded to present a subject that concerns us not alone as obstetricians and gynecologists, but as citizens of a great republic—"Criminal Abortion in Its Broadest Sense."

It is high time we should have a heart to heart talk.

The accepted definition of the word "crime" is "a breach of law, whether divine or human." Laws are rules, whether human or divine, for the government of the human race, and are enacted for the good of mankind. While the subject may be viewed from many standpoints, still there is a common ground on which we all must stand in order to view the subject in its composite form. It is reasonable to assume that the infraction of a law should carry with it a penalty; whether that law is human or divine, else it would be useless to enact laws; and no law holds good that does not have attached a penalty, which should be commensurate with the importance of the law. While there is probably no one in this audience who would deny that criminal abortion is fast becoming more and more common, still there may be many who may not be willing to take a decided step toward its suppression. The question may be asked: "Does it concern us as physicians? Does it concern us as members of the American Medical Association and of this section? Does it concern us as citizens of this, our beloved country?"

It is a rule in law that no case can be prosecuted without first obtaining sufficient information from those

who possess it. The abdominal surgeon sees almost daily the results of the work of the abortionist, and the obstetrician can not be blind to the practice of the disreputable midwife and the unprincipled doctor. Admitting, then, that these statements are true, who should be concerned in this matter?

Possessing the information that we undoubtedly do, should it not be our duty as citizens, as well as physicians, and members of this important branch of the great American Medical Association, to suggest some means for the suppression of an evil that threatens such an onslaught to our civilization? When I say possessed with the information, I say it advisedly. Each and every member of this section can at this moment relate sad death-bed scenes that fairly make the blood run cold. Beautiful women are robbed of their lives, beautiful babes made orphans, and whole families wrecked, by a conscienceless scoundrel who goes free and unpunished by the law of our land.

It is useless to expect ecclesiastic intervention. The clergy do not seem to be at all concerned. To furnish with this information is to throw away your time. Few sermons are preached from the pulpit for fear of shocking the delicate feelings of a fashionably dressed congregation, and the begging for money to save the souls of the far away heathen seems of more importance. They can not but realize the enormity of the crime from knowledge gained at the bedside of the victim of the abortionist. Yet they do not possess the moral courage to express their convictions to those to whom they are "called" to minister. Their education along biologic lines has, I am certain, in many cases been sadly neglected.

Young people marrying deliberately agree not to be parents for two or three years. They prefer to enjoy life by getting into and keeping in the social whirl. They may be, and often are, considered good and respectable people—possibly church-going people.

Self-induced abortion, or abortion produced by a fashionable or fad doctor, is, as we know, a fruitful cause of the horrible pus cases in which we are now and then called to operate. This fad doctor is one with a lucrative practice, and is often "the lion" at social functions. He it is who empties the uterus in cases of emesis gravidarum without first racking his precious brain in trying all recognized remedies and methods to check the vomiting. He it is who finds so many cases of contracted pelvis where it is utterly impossible to do anything but an early abortion to save the woman's life. He it is who finds so many cases of retention of menses, that require dilatation and curetment. He it is who finds the urine "loaded with albumin," necessitating an immediate emptying of the uterus to prevent death from Bright's disease. Such men and women prostitute the profession of medicine and should be exposed.

A careful review of our medical college announcements fails to furnish sufficient evidence of properly taught medical ethics, or medical jurisprudence (I say medical jurisprudence in contradistinction to legal medicine) to justify us at this time in hoping that we may receive much help from them toward the control of criminal abortion.

The average student is not impressed by precept or example with the enormity of the crime, and coming into practice, often a poor young man, is first shocked when he is asked to procure an abortion; but after the wolf has howled at the door for a time he yields to the temptation and often drops into the practice. Far from the Hippocratean teaching of the ancients have our colleges wandered by their utter disregard as to the morals of their students.

The secular press, that for money consideration, carries the offensive advertisements of abortionists and manufacturers of abortifacients in direct violation to our municipal, state and federal laws, will be slow in responding to a call to suppress criminal abortion, and not until the filing of information with officers of the law will they cease to carry into your household the filthy announcements as to how and where the pregnant mother can most easily and safely rid her womb of the products of conception.

Much has been said by the chief executive of our nation on race suicide, and much has been reiterated by other right thinking people; still, little has been done toward the enactment of new laws or the enforcement of those already on the statute books to punish those guilty of the crime. The prevalence of the crime is so patent, that few physicians can say that they are not frequently importuned by what society calls the "respectable element" to commit abortion. Pleas of limited income, the exacting demands of the social world, the desire to travel, the already too large family, and numerous other "reasons" are to you stories "too oft told" to be repeated here.

In an editorial in the *Illinois State Medical Journal*, March, 1908, attention is drawn to a statement of Justice John Proctor Clark to the effect that 100,000 abortions are annually committed in New York.

In a paper read before the Chicago Medical Society by Dr. C. S. Bacon it was estimated that from 6,000 to 10,000 abortions are committed annually in the city of Chicago, and that from 20 to 25 per cent. of all pregnancies terminate in abortion and that of this per cent. one-half are from induced abortion.

With feticide among our best element, and with a constantly increasing influx of degenerates from foreign countries, what can be expected of us as a nation a few generations hence? We, physicians, above all others, are best prepared to answer the query.

It is not my purpose to institute utopian plans, through or by which criminal abortion can be suppressed, still some suggestions may be in order.

1. The obligatory teaching of medical jurisprudence and medical ethics in its true sense in our medical colleges. This should be statutory, and medical examining boards should be empowered to enforce the laws of their states, and declare all schools not requiring a full course in medical ethics not in good standing and their graduates ineligible to practice medicine.

2. The enactment of good and sufficient laws and the amendment of insufficient laws now on our statute books.

This may raise the question as to how this can be done. Or by some it may be asked, are not our laws good and sufficient as they stand? In order to answer the last question, I propounded the following questions to a very able lawyer and had him prepare by way of answer a digest of the now existing laws in the several states and territories.

QUESTION 1.—Is the woman herself guilty of any crime? In how many states is she and how many is she not?

ANSWER.—In nine states a woman who solicits, submits to or performs an abortion on herself is guilty of a felony. In seven states the above offense is a misdemeanor, and in the remaining states and territories, viz., thirty-five, the woman is guilty of no crime.

QUESTION 2.—What is the charge and penalty for giving away, selling or advertising abortive drugs and drugs or appliances to prevent pregnancy?

ANSWER.—The charge is a felony in but twelve states and territories out of fifty-one, and the penalties vary from imprisonment for from one to ten years, and in some states a fine ranging from \$20 to \$5,000. In twenty states the offense is only a misdemeanor. In thirty states and territories there are no laws on this subject.

QUESTION 3.—What is the charge and penalty as dependent on the age of the fetus?

ANSWER.—In four-fifths of the states and territories the age of the fetus is immaterial.

QUESTION 4.—What is the effect of death of the woman operated on as to charge and penalty?

ANSWER.—If the death of the woman results from the operation, in eighteen states and territories out of fifty-one the crime is murder and the punishment is death or imprisonment for life. In six states it is murder in the second degree, and the penalty is imprisonment for life or for a term of not less than three years.

QUESTION 5.—May the offending physician or midwife have his or her license revoked?

ANSWER.—The license may be revoked in only fifteen states out of fifty-one. In thirty-two states there are no laws that can be invoked successfully for the purpose of depriving a physician of his license for this cause. In other words, he may successfully murder indefinitely and go unmolested.

QUESTION 6.—Is a physician who gives subsequent treatment allowed to testify, or is his information privileged?

ANSWER.—There is only one state, Missouri, in which it is provided by statute that a physician is allowed to testify as to facts learned while attending a woman on whom an abortion has been performed.

Are not these answers startling? I think they show conclusively that our laws are inefficient and inadequate in most, if not all, of our states. Now arises the question, how can new laws be enacted and inefficient laws be amended? My answer is, through the influence of the American Medical Association, through its House of Delegates. Let us, the members of this section, through our representative in the House of Delegates appeal to this body and request the president of the

1. Section 2635a (Revised Statute of Missouri): In prosecutions for abortion or for manslaughter occasioned by an abortion or miscarriage, or by an attempt to produce either, or attempted abortion, or for any crime of which abortion or miscarriage may be a part of the essential facts to be proved, the dying declarations of the woman whose death is charged to have been caused thereby shall be competent evidence on trial of any person charged with such crime, with like effect and under like limitations as applying to dying declarations in cases of felonious homicide; provided, that the party offering such declarations shall first satisfy the court by competent testimony that such woman was of sound mind when said declarations were made; and provided, further, that no conviction shall be based alone on such declarations unless corroborated as to the fact that an abortion or miscarriage has taken place, and in all such prosecutions aforesaid any physician or medical practitioner who may have attended or prescribed for such woman shall be a competent witness in said cause to testify concerning any facts relevant to the issue therein, and shall not be disqualified or held incompetent by reason of his relation to such woman as an attending physician or surgeon.

American Medical Association to appoint a committee to be known as the Committee on Criminal Abortion, whose duties shall be to see that the state societies have appointed similar committees, whose duty it shall be to enlist the interest of their state legislatures in the enactment of good and sufficient laws against criminal abortion, and that this committee of the House of Delegates report annually as to the status of laws on criminal abortion in the different states, as well as what suggestions they may have to make in the prosecution of the cause.

Each state has an attorney-general, whose office is at the capital of the state. He is paid a salary by the state, and he, above all others, ought to be interested in the enactment and enforcement of wholesome and useful laws in his state. It is the duty of the attorney-general and his assistants to follow up the convictions of the lower courts for the various crimes. A man is tried in the circuit court or criminal court of one of the counties, and if convicted he appeals to the supreme court of the state. The county prosecuting attorney does not follow the case to the supreme court but the whole record of the case is written up and forwarded to the supreme court and it is the duty of the attorney-general to use his best efforts to uphold the conviction. He studies the case, writes a brief for the state and argues it in the supreme court. Many times he finds that he can not uphold a conviction because of some uncertainty in the wording of the law, or on account of some blunder made by the man who wrote it and got it passed in the legislature. The more convictions the attorney-general gets upheld, the greater reputation he gets. He is, if a studious man, better able to decide than the ordinary lawyer, whether a proposed law will meet the requirements of the state constitution and whether it will be held a valid law.

It might be suggested that this committee, or the state committee, acting in accord with the national committee, draft a bill, submit it to the attorney-general of the state and ask suggestions from him as to the proper wording of the law before first submitting it for passage by the legislature. When they are sure the law is in good form, then printed copies of it should be sent to every member of both houses of the legislature, and this should be followed by letters from influential physicians in every county of the state to representatives and senators of their respective counties, or by personal interviews, explaining the object, need and purpose of the law proposed, and they should be urged to vote for it. There is no doubt but we can in this way do much good. Let's do it.

DISCUSSION.

DR. W. H. WATHEN, Louisville: No subject could be brought before this Section which is of more vital importance in a moral, and I might say in a pathologic sense, than this. We who are doing abdominal and pelvic surgery know how frequently we are compelled to operate because of the induction of abortion. In a moral sense it is offensive to every honest doctor and to every honest citizen. This offense is not any more an offense on the part of the woman on whom the abortion is committed, be she married or single, than it is on the part of the person who commits it. I believe that in most of the cases in which I operate for pelvic trouble resulting from induced abortion, the abortion has been induced on the advice of a physician or done by a physician, and I have seen many cases in which abortions have been induced by members of reputable medical colleges. The matter is disguised by the fact that a woman six weeks or two months pregnant is often

taken to a hospital for the purpose of curettage. Her uterus is curetted and the product of conception removed. In order to secure legislation there must be impressed on the profession the belief that, if there is any moral offense in destroying the life of an unborn child, the moral offense is just as bad four weeks after conception as if the child were killed at eight months. From the moment of conception the child is a spiritual being. Let us all join in our efforts to educate the people, the women and the men, of this country concerning the immorality of having abortions produced at any time and let us join in our efforts in a determination to ostracise any man who will produce a criminal abortion. Let us also join in efforts to have laws enacted that will make it a criminal offense, punishable by such penalties as the state sees fit to inflict, death or a sentence to the penitentiary, for any man producing an abortion.

DR. J. H. CARSTENS, Detroit: Laws have been enacted all over the country concerning murder, but still people commit murder. We have laws in some states concerning abortions, but people produce abortions just the same. With the peculiar development of our civilization, with the rapid bringing up by a very rapid process of evolution of people from a lower stratum of society to a higher, people have not grown morally as fast as they have otherwise. They think that there is nothing earnest in this world, that it is just made for them and for their pleasure, and everything that interferes with that pleasure they object to and try to do away with. This question of abortion involves the lack of moral responsibility and the superficial education of our girls all over the country. They are not impressed with the true import of life and the responsibilities of married women. They are not taught that a woman does not exist for social pleasure alone, or that she can take her place in society and have pleasure, but that she should still remember her moral responsibility and that it is good and noble and great to be a mother. If we can impress this idea on the minds of the people we can do something to prevent the committing of abortion. If we do not we shall never accomplish much by law. I believe that it is the duty of the medical profession to emphasize this view of the matter, to develop this view of moral responsibility, to try to induce women to have a love for children.

DR. HELEN C. PUTNAM, Providence: I want to support what Dr. Carstens just now said about education. For the American Academy of Medicine during several years I have been visiting our public schools to investigate the teaching of physiology and hygiene. I have included in that investigation inquiry concerning how teachers feel, and what they are doing, with reference to teaching the physiology and hygiene of sex. I have found many instructors anxious about the matter because they see in the schools the need of such teaching. I have found a few trained in biology doing admirable work which I wish to bring to the attention of the medical profession, hoping that physicians will encourage such teachers and will find more, especially in their own communities, to do similar work. These women trained in biology begin with children at about 8 years of age, and include those up to 14 or 15. They instruct through direct personal observation (the "laboratory method") concerning the origin and functions of life in plants and animals. After a year's work, especially if the children are 13 or 14 years of age, they give a frank "sex talk," telling them of the importance of life as they have seen it in plants and animals and comparing it with human life before birth and after. The children's minds in their course of study have traced evolution in Nature, and when they have this sex talk by the teacher they are not startled, but receive it as naturally as they learned of plant and animal reproduction. Parents are not offended with startling stories, for the children have grown to the subject naturally. The school committee is not disturbed, because there is no complaint from any source. If any wish to know more about what a few teachers are doing to create a changed public sentiment which shall support our views with regard to abortion, I refer you to the detailed reports which the Academy is publishing in its bulletin. While it is not possible to have such instruc-

tion in all the schools at once, we can begin with one teacher in a school in each community: see that she has a good training in biology and have her do good work in her school as an object lesson to others. If personal effort were made in this way I believe that within ten years we should have accomplished a great deal in changing the public attitude toward sex matters and the sacredness of parenthood that would do more than laws to reach the result we want.

DR. R. W. HOLMES, Chicago: I have had the misfortune for three years to be a sort of mentor on criminal abortion work in Chicago. During this period I have presided over a committee of the Chicago Medical Society to investigate, and to attempt to eradicate the evil; I have come to the conclusion that the public does not want, the profession does not want, the women in particular do not want, any aggressive campaign against the crime of abortion. I have secured evidence. I have asked different physicians, who either had direct knowledge of crime against the prisoner before the bar or who could testify as to her general reputation, to come and testify. They promised to come, but when the time for trial is at hand no one appears. On the other hand, so-called reputable members of our Chicago Medical Society regularly appear in court to support the testimony of some notorious abortionist. A Chicago attorney has told me that it is not possible to get twelve men together without at least one of them being personally responsible for the downfall of a girl, or at least interested in getting her out of her difficulty. I am convinced that legislation is not needed, at least, in Illinois. We have as good a law as perhaps can be made. It is the enforcement of law that is needed. What can you expect when a member of our legislature is backing financially and politically one of the most notorious abortion hospitals in Chicago? It is necessary to go back and educate the boy and girl concerning the meaning of sexual life. The fact should be taught that life begins with conception and not with quickening. Then perhaps in the coming centuries we shall have reached a time when there will not be abortions. I believe that half of the midwives of Chicago get their support from criminal abortion work, as I know definitely a quarter do. One midwife took out a license to help out the family exchequer. For one week she had a sign up; then the husband said that they could not run the risk of the police coming down on them. In that one week there were ten applicants for criminal abortion and not one for a confinement. I do not think that it is a good thing for the woman to be held criminally. Morally she is a criminal. If she is legally a criminal you can not get any evidence of it. I have evidence of this every day. I have repeatedly taken antemortem statements, with the express provision that if the woman recovers nothing shall be done, that only if she dies shall the person be prosecuted. I have positive evidence that prominent men in Chicago—and Chicago is not different from other cities—will commit abortion. What can one do? In a certain county society complaints were lodged with the censors concerning three physicians known by reputation and deed to be professional abortionists, and the censors refused to take action.

Fundamentally it is a matter of education which should be begun in the medical school. Until three years ago the school with which I am connected did not have any systematic instruction on criminal abortion. It had a little lecture by a lawyer who did not present the actual facts. Every medical school should have a course on that subject. There should be impressed on the men before they take up their work the dangers to the woman, to themselves and the moral responsibility assumed in the matter of abortion. If also the boy and girl in school are taught something of this they will grow up with moral stamina not easily overcome. They will know facts and will live accordingly. Many now make themselves believe that there is no life until the movements are felt. When the false teaching in this respect is put aside good will be accomplished.

DR. EDWARD T. ABRAMS, Dollar Bay, Mich.: For the past two years I have been a member of the Michigan legislature and also chairman of the committee on public health of that

body. One of the bills which came before the legislature was drawn, I think, by the committee on legislation of the state medical society, and bore directly on the first question raised by our chairman to-day—whether or not the woman should be made a party to the criminality of the act. I introduced the bill at the request of the committee, and within twenty-four hours after I was called before the judiciary committee, which was composed entirely of lawyers, to answer the question whether or not I favored abortion. I received half a dozen letters from half a dozen circuit judges in the state of Michigan who were my friends, asking me how long since I had turned over a new leaf. I was assured by the best legal authority in our state that there would be no more powerful inducement for the concealment of abortion than to make the woman a party to the criminality of the act, because it would destroy absolutely the method of getting evidence. All the lawyers told me that. Per contra, we had absolutely no trouble in adding an amendment to our medical act giving the board of registration an absolute right to take from any practitioner his license to practice within the borders of the state after he had been convicted by due process of law of having committed an abortion without requiring further evidence than the records of the court.

DR. W. O. HENRY, Omaha: I believe that the medical profession should feel responsible for the education of the boys and girls in the public schools concerning this question. These boys and girls should be taught two things: First, the physical wrong and injury that results. Many do not know this until they have passed through the experience. In the second place, they should be taught the moral wrong. In a measure we should depend on the clergy for this latter. I believe that the clergy should be informed concerning the physical injury and the moral as well. I should be glad to see work carried out along the lines of education on this matter in the high schools, seminaries and colleges, and among men and women of the country through the medical men and the clergy.

DR. DENSLOW LEWIS, Chicago: It is well and good to enact laws and to punish the criminal practitioner and midwife, but what good does that do to the girl, and how does it save the next girl? I believe, as I have believed for many years, that this matter of education of the young in sex relationship and also regarding venereal infection is our sovereign duty and should be our chief privilege. I am delighted that at last the American Medical Association has created a Board of Public Instruction in medical subjects, but I am astonished to find in the report of this Board of Public Instruction, made yesterday, the statement that gynecologic subjects and matters pertaining to sexual questions can best be taken up through circular letters to physicians and carefully prepared monographs by some first-class authority in the medical profession. This is well, but action in this very important matter should be immediate. The girl requires no monograph from a first-class authority to learn the truth. She needs to know that impregnation and conception often follow the sexual act. Those of you who, like myself, have had charge for years of maternity hospitals, know that many young girls seen there have submitted to the sexual act without the slightest knowledge of the probable result. For that reason it is incumbent on us to urge on this Board of Public Instruction immediate action in the hope that another year may not pass without something being done so that every girl may know the consequence of indiscretion. The boy should know the dignity of virility and his duty and honor toward every woman. He should be taught the healthfulness of continence and the advisability of sexual control.

PROF. AUGUST MARTIN, Berlin, Germany: I believe that in Germany and everywhere all agree in condemning criminal abortion. It is forbidden by law; it is forbidden by the professional code of ethics. Laws have been issued in numerous communities to try to suppress criminal abortion, but I do not know of any which have had success. Our laws themselves place great difficulties in the way of legal action by forbidding us to speak about professional secrets. When we are called in a case of criminal abortion we are not allowed to give evidence unless the parties interested in the case give

us permission, and frequently this permission can not be given, as the poor patient is dead. But when a good chance is offered to give evidence then, indeed, in every case our courts condemn criminal abortion with the utmost severity. Joint efforts in condemning criminal abortion as on this occasion by and by will contribute to restrain the evil among professional men.

DR. R. S. YARROS, Chicago: To formulate laws and have them enacted is comparatively easy. To enforce a law is an entirely different thing. You can not enforce laws, as some of the speakers have already said, with which the public has little sympathy. Even if we could enforce anti-abortion laws, the problem would not be solved. I find that among the poor there is very little danger of race suicide. They have not learned yet to practice prevention, nor do they frequently resort to abortion. Their great love for their children is a factor in the situation, and in this respect the higher classes might well take a lesson from them. Unfortunately, they often have too many children, and one is inclined to preach moderation and restraint without regard to race suicide. The rich, on the other hand, go to the other extreme. They frequently have no better excuse than that it is inconvenient to have a child at this or that particular time. They have no difficulty in securing professional services to help them out of their difficulty. As for the unmarried victims, it is the disgrace that society has imposed on them, as well as the economic inconvenience, that drives them to commit abortion. It seems to me, therefore, that the most stringent laws and their enforcement would not remedy the evil. The proper education of the public on the subject is the most important duty before us. The blame should not always be placed on the woman. It should be realized that there are two parties. I do not want the woman not to take her share of the blame, but I want the man to take his. We all know that men frequently encourage the woman to have an abortion produced, and are willing to pay any amount of money for such services. In this city there has been considerable education carried on among women of the dangers of infection following abortion and the sex problem in general. The work has met with sympathy and enthusiasm, on the part of the women. We hope that the same kind of work will be carried on among men with the same success.

DR. FLORUS F. LAWRENCE, Columbus: Moral problems can not be settled by statutory enactments. A certain amount of restriction can be had and a certain amount of educational value must follow every statutory enactment, provided that enactment is enforced. It has been mentioned that there has been great difficulty in obtaining evidence to enforce the statutes in question. In Ohio one of the greatest stumbling blocks has been the question of viability. The courts determined that there was no great legal responsibility unless the fetus were of viable age. If our statutes are to accomplish the results they should we must first educate the public mind and morals to the belief that conception means human life, and that the interruption or destruction of that conception means murder just as much as if the child had been murdered with a blade after it had been delivered into the world. Anything less than that is a mere travesty on the truth and on true morality. Something more must be considered if we are to accomplish that which we hope in these matters. There is an insidious psychologic element constantly at work in the pseudo-medical journalism of the country. Every now and then a journal which has been, or has purported to be under ethical management, passes into the hands of the most blatant charlatans of the country. One such within the past few months has passed from ethical management in to the hands of one who has made "peruna" a household word, and who has fought serum therapy and everything which modern truth and science have established as valuable in the saving of human life. Sixty thousand of his journals are to-day being distributed among the laymen of the country to educate the public against the truth and to believe that the doctors when they stand for truth stand for some selfish purpose. The time has come when we must educate not only the doctors but the laymen. We must reach the layman in a way that will go

home to him and cause him to respect the teaching as he listens to the priest or reveres his Bible. The truth must go to him in such a way that he will not look on such teaching as an advertising scheme for the physician, but as truth and as something for which he pays. Then he will accept it. We have all learned that the man who gets something for nothing appreciates it not. We must start with a higher moral conception among medical men. We must realize our own professional responsibility to the laity. In our consideration of criminal abortion we must not feel that we are referring to abortion among unmarried women alone, but of abortion as it is found in general to-day.

DR. WALTER B. DORSETT, St. Louis: The city of St. Louis has not been remiss in her duty in this regard. A paper was read recently in one of our meetings by Dr. John Grant of St. Louis on the subject of criminal abortion. The meeting was attended by many of the laity and clergy. One clergyman, who was much interested, promised to preach a sermon before his congregation, but his board advised against it. It seems to me from this that things have come to a bad pass. In order, however, to show you what has been done and what can be done, not only in the enactment of laws but in the enforcement of them, I will quote from a letter which I received from Dr. Wheeler Bond, the health commissioner of St. Louis, in response to an inquiry I made of him. He said that when he accepted the position of health commissioner there were licensed physicians and midwives who concealed illegitimate under the pretense of legitimate practice, and charlatans who without any authority proclaimed themselves doctors and waxed fat on abortions. There were also lying-in institutions which advertised that they accepted only legitimate confinement cases, but which gave out the understanding that all cases would be received. The St. Louis Medical Society found on investigation no less than three of these abortion shops in which young women who came there to await their confinement were kept as prostitutes to pay for their confinement. During the following year many of these were put out of business. By the enforcement of the federal laws also we have in St. Louis dealt with a number of the advertising quacks. We must have good laws before we can expect results, and therefore I believe that we ought to take some action on the question.

IN MEMORIAM: NICHOLAS SENN; THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOUR.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN BEFORE THE
SECTION ON SURGERY AND ANATOMY,
CHICAGO, 1908.

RUDOLPH MATAS, M.D.
NEW ORLEANS.

Distinguished Guests and Fellow Members: I feel, as your presiding officer, that I would be remiss in the discharge of my duty and grievously at fault with my own sentiments, if I failed to notice that this day is made sadly notable by the absence of one who for more than a quarter of a century was a Titan in our midst and whose voice, now stilled forever, thrilled and swayed our assemblies with the fervor of his eloquence, the magnitude of his accomplishments, the stimulus of his example and the vast power of his exhaustless energy—Nicholas Senn.

Vir præclarus et ornatus—Senn, the incomparable teacher, the peerless clinician, the scrutinizing pathologist, the perennial investigator, the faithful historian and charming raconteur; the world traveler, the philosopher, soldier, patriot and organizer; Senn, the philanthropist, the citizen of Chicago and of the world; Senn, one of the greatest masters of our art—will remain an imperishable name in the great pantheon of American surgery. His passing out of this community,