monogamy, but sterility as the result of venereal infection was doubtless the earliest and will ever be the most potent factor in the perpetuation of monogamy. It will act unconsciously and be attended by immeasurable errors and hardships. It will rarely be recognized in its true significance. Like many other factors in the evolution of human life, it is susceptible of artificial guidance or restraint. Such interference, however, is temporary, local and transient.

THE GUARANTEE OF SAFETY IN THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT.*

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The most important function of the human body, biologically, is reproduction. Behind this function the Creator placed a dominating, imperative, sexual impulse to insure its activity. This is the animate magnet which attracts and mates the opposite sexes. Through this magnetic force marriage came to be and must forever remain the most sacred and important institution in human society.

The supreme importance of woman in these relations is apparent when we consider her office in prenatal existence; her roll as the nourishing mother; her place as the very foundation stone of every hearth and home, and her life as the vital center about which cluster families and tribes and nations. Around the sexual life of woman are grouped the most potential factors in the perpetuity, development, and highest good of the race, physically, morally and mentally. Around the sexual life of woman also are grouped some of the most adverse and perplexing questions of all time, involving the double standard of morals, divorce, prostitution, and the plague of venereal diseases; questions which seem almost as difficult of practical solution as the problem of perpetual motion.

The welfare of society depends far more on the physical, moral and intellectual excellence of woman than on that of "mere man." In a certain spirit of chivalry, not always free from a selfish bid for her favors, man pays tribute to her great and supreme worth. By the right of might, not always free from injustice and tyranny, he has constituted himself her physical guardian. Her safety then in the marriage contract, which binds them both in a common destiny, should be his most sacred care.

Slowly but surely, coming down through the ages, the leaven of the gospel of the lowly Nazarene is working out a more just solution of the equities of woman in her social, political and property rights. Even for her most unfortunate sister, Magdalene, at whom society casts stones to this day, the Savior had no words of condemnation, but viewing her in compassion, so deftly did he shift the sin on the shoulders of her accusers, that while he stooped to write in the sand they stole away like conscience-smitten cowards.

The progress of man from barbarism to the highest and best types of civilization has no better gauge by which to measure its development than the degree of debasement or exaltation of woman among the different races and nations of men. This uplift of humanity through a better recognition of the inherent rights of woman and her protection in the enjoyment of these rights has been greatly accelerated in our own country during the last half century.

It is a far-away cry from the concubinage of woman under patriarchal rule, when her husband was proprietor of her body and soul, if, indeed, she was credited with a soul, up to the higher ideals of her relations to her consort and to the state.

Animated with a sense of justice in some of these higher ideals we plead for certain sanitary measures, without which it is impossible to guarantee the safety of woman in the marriage contract. In this alliance there are risks from various physical and mental ailments which are shared alike by both parties to the contract, but there are diseases which peculiarly menace the bride at the marriage altar which may and do often transform it into a sacrificial altar, on which health and life itself are immolated. The great prevalence and gravity of venereal diseases, and their communicability during indefinite periods of chronicity and latency, among males of marriageable age, have been set forth with increasing emphasis from the epoch making publications of Noegerath and Neisser down to those of Sanger and Morrow. It is evident that marriage under these circumstances becomes a frequent means of spreading these infections with dire results to innocent wives and their offspring. Only the briefest allusions to the statements of authoritative observers on the baneful effects of these diseases in the home can be made in this paper. Pathologists tell us of their power to maim, blight and destroy human life. Gynecologists estimate that from 60 to 75 per cent. of their operations, chiefly on married women, are made necessary through gonorrhea. Joseph Tabor Johnson says: "The effects of gonorrhea on the female generative organs have been so destructive that no successful contradiction is feared when the belief is expressed that no disease in modern times has caused so much indirect mortality, mutilation and suffering, both mental and physical, as gonorrhea." Matthew D. Mann says: "Practically every case of pus tube is of gonorrheal origin." Joseph Price says that 95 per cent. of his abdominal sections for pelvic inflammation were from gonorrheal infection. Prince A. Morrow says that 70 per cent. of all the women who present themselves for treatment at the New York hospital, under his observation, "were respectable married women who had been infected by their husbands." Thus we are flooded with proof that however unfortunate the effects may be on the male offender, the pathologic relations of gonorrhea to the pelvic organs of helpless wives is a stupendous calamity. If this one disease could be eliminated from wedded life, gynecology as a specialty would shrink to small proportions.

There is another dark chapter in the rôle that venereal diseases play in the marriage relation, by which its supreme object is defeated. These vipers of venery which are called "clap and pox," lurking as they often do, under the floral tributes of the honeymoon, may so inhibit conception or blight its products, that motherhood becomes either an utter impossibility or a veritable curse.

Vedeler investigated 310 sterile marriages and found that 75 per cent. of them were directly or indirectly due to gonorrhea in the husband. The *ein kind sterilität* so-called by the Germans, in which the reproductive powers of the female are extinguished with the first pregnancy, through the extension of the infection previously confined to the cervix uteri, is of common occurrence, while gonorrheal endometritis is perhaps a more frequent cause of abortion than syphilis itself. The ban placed by venereal diseases on fetal life outrivals the criminal interference with the products of conception as a cause

* Read in the Section on Hygiene and Sanitary Science of the American Medical Association, at the Fifty-seventh Annual Session, June, 1906.

of race suicide. To this chapter we must append the postnatal effects of blindness, deformity and degeneracy that fill our charitable institutions with their unfortunate victims. Is the picture overdrawn? The "half has never been told."

From marital dangers of this sort the lords of creation consider themselves reasonably safe through the expected virginity and chastity of their intended wives. Through voluntary extra-marital exposures only do they have apprehensions of venereal contagion. On the other hand, "my lady," the innocent, unsuspecting bride, without defense or recourse, too often reaps the "wild oats sown by her husband," which may invalid her for life, deny to her the joys of motherhood, carry her to the operating room or tragically terminate her existence. Let us suppose the tables could be turned for a time, and the husband had to bear the heavier penalties of these diseases to which his wife might lay him liable through the marriage contract, what then? We believe it would not be long till he found a way to guarantee his own safety. It is possible that this guarantee of safety may not be generally assured to woman until she becomes a real American citizen, and through the ballot also becomes a law maker. I venture to say that, if any of the animal industries of our country should suffer from such a scourge as the venereal diseases place on the human family every resource would be taxed to eradicate it speedily and completely.

What barriers are raised to stay this tide of disease and degradation? Practically none. We hide our heads in shame and prudery before the naked truth of it. In silence our tongues cleave to the roofs of our mouths lest we violate the proprieties by the mention of these things, while the suffering and mutilation and slaughter of the innocents goes relentlessly on. It is a disgraceful anomaly in state medicine in the United States of America that the most persistent of all contagions, the most prevalent of all excepting measles, the most costly and dangerous of all in the aggregate, barring none, should have no official existence. It is a fact that no national, state or civic boards of health or sanitary commissions are taking any account of venereal contagions. No appropriations of money or measures are made for their suppression. We can learn much of the Scandinavian nations who handles these matters more effectually. Over thirty years ago they placed gonorrhea and syphilis among the reportable contagions and required physicians to make weekly returns concerning them; with the result that during this period these social pestilences have been reduced by 34 per cent.

The day must come when the suppression of the gonococcus shall rank in sanitary importance with the destruction of the mosquito; when the culture beds of the "red light districts" shall be looked after as carefully as the drainage of stagnant and polluted waters.

We may now more intelligently consider measures which will go a long way toward guaranteeing safety in the marriage contract.

The problems of the social evil which is the great hotbed of these vile diseases we must pass over, with the expression of our conviction that the dismal failure of relementation everywhere, in limiting venereal diseases, lies in the simple fact that the chief offender, the male purveyor of venereal diseases, is completely ignored in the reckoning and is allowed perfect freedom to scatter his private pestilence wherever he chooses. Neither can we discuss here the educational measures for the prevention of venereal diseases, except to express the belief that

our public school instruction should include the physiology and hygiene of the sexual organs as of equal or of greater importance than those of the digestive organs. This instruction of our youths should begin at puberty, when the sexual life is in bloom and its susceptibility to the dangers of venereal parasites has begun. These and all other truly prophylactic or curative measures to diminish the evil are indirectly important in guaranteeing safety to the family, but there is a more vital and strategic point of defense, one portal where the infected male can be halted. To ensure a sanitary marriage it is imperative to establish a quarantine station before the marriage license window over whose gate should hang this legend: *No Health Certificate, No License!*

Every woman who would enter matrimony has the inherent right to do so without the hazard of bodily contamination from already existing contagion in her intended husband. Manifestly, the state is the only power capable of protecting her in this right. It declares marriage to be a civil institution, it places certain restrictions as to who may enter this relation, by whom the ceremony may be performed and on what grounds the bonds may be dissolved. It has the might and the right also to add to these restrictions. We believe no higher obligation rests on the state than to extend its power to protect the vital interests of wives and mothers and offspring by safeguarding the entrance to matrimony from infectious diseases. A few states, North Dakota, Michigan and Indiana, have enacted laws for this purpose; similar bills have failed to pass before many other state assemblies. The first and one of the best enacted is the Creel bill of North Dakota (1899), which requires all applicants for the marriage license first to present a certificate from a medical examining board of three physicians, appointed by the county judge, showing freedom from venereal disease, habitual drunkenness, insanity and tuberculosis. A vital defect of the Indiana bill (1905) is its lack of any provision for medical examination. It requires the State Board of Health to furnish a form of application for license to marry (Sec. 2) and denies the license "where either of the contracting parties is afflicted with a transmissible disease" (Sec. 3). "No license to marry shall be issued except on written and verified application" (Sec. 1). So far as the bill goes this verification may be the sworn statement of the applicant, who is incompetent to determine whether he has a "transmissible disease" or not. Clearly this inspection should be thorough and impartial and made by medical officials of the state under efficient modern clinical and laboratory tests when necessary. Only in this way can there be any adequate guarantee of safety in the marriage contract. Our medical education to-day is fully equal to such demands and could have no more worthy or humane employment.

In this great symposium on the "Duty of the Profession to Womanhood" her safety in wedlock should make a strong and sympathetic appeal to the physician, who in all ages has been woman's high priest, to whom she has always turned for ministrations in her helpless hours of distress and pain. He alone has an adequate knowledge of the specific cause, the channels of transmission, the manifold pathology and the deplorable sequelæ of venereal diseases. By these tokens, such a knowledge carries with it a responsibility he may not honorably evade. It reaches further than his private office. It carries him out aggressively onto the higher plane of preventive medicine, of which marital sanitation should certainly constitute its most important field.

Let similar methods of popular education concerning these diseases and their prevention be followed up, which are proving so successful in the campaign waged against tuberculosis. The public must be taken into our confidence in this matter, to secure its co-operation, without which our knowledge is the talent hidden away in a napkin. We must meet it, face to face, in the open. The American Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, under the lead of Prince A. Morrow, has instituted just such a move, to interest the laity in the discussion of every phase of venereal diseases and their prevention. There is an immoral side to these diseases which complicates their discussion beyond that of all other contagions. The fact that they are contracted and imparted chiefly through a voluntary act invests them with a criminality in proportion to a knowledge of the possibilities of such an act. Every man, therefore, who infects his wife or taints the blood of his children is more or less a criminal. If we as physicians fail to impart to the public our knowledge of these dangers and means of prevention we become *particeps criminis*. When the public is better informed, intelligent legislation will follow, and wifehood, maternity and progeny will be freed of much of the peril of contagions contracted and imparted by the volitional acts of man.

The duty of the physician seems plain in this matter. He should work, in season and out of season, in private office and in public function, in medical societies and in law-making bodies, until aroused and intelligent public sentiment enacts measures to restrict and to suppress the contagious perils of venery. Only when we have accomplished this can we count on a reasonable guarantee of safety for women in the marriage contract.

EDUCATION AS A FACTOR IN THE PREVENTION OF CRIMINAL ABORTION AND ILLEGITIMACY.*

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Illegitimacy can be prevented only by education and the development of self-control in the young. Naturally, it is a slow process so to educate and train the masses that illegitimacy shall cease. The home training, it seems to me, is where the trouble lies at present. The father does not explain to his sons, nor the mother to her daughters, the secrets of reproduction, and the result is, they learn it from some ignorant person and sexual thoughts are given a vicious direction. They hear from others still more and are coaxed and urged to practice the sexual act, and thus easily fall by the wayside. If the mother would explain the physiologic process to her daughter, there would be very little illegitimacy.

If, however, pregnancy has taken place, the crime of abortion must be strongly impressed on the individual, but somehow or another the religious teaching has been very weak on this point. People with the highest moral principles, otherwise, think it perfectly right to produce abortion or to have it produced on them. We can easily see how the unmarried woman becomes desperate and loses her fine sense of right, but for the married woman it is absolutely inexcusable. Appealing then to the moral sense without avail, we must call attention to the great immediate danger and the resulting chronic invalidism in many cases. We must do more, we must help the un-

fortunate unmarried by showing them a way to avoid exposure and shield them and take them to institutions where they can be safely delivered.

The whole question seems to me more deep-seated than all this. It is our whole social fabric that must be improved. One of the principal causes I think is late marriage. The women will not get married unless the man is rich or has a good income. A man can not have a good income until he has had experience, that is, he must be older. The man does not marry young because the woman puts on too much style and he can not afford it on a small salary, hence marriage is deferred until later in life. The sexual passion is strong, as nature intends it should be, and many fall. Hence, I must conclude, that the lessening of illegitimacy and abortion can be only brought about by home training and early marriages.

EDUCATION AS A FACTOR IN THE PREVENTION OF CRIMINAL ABORTION AND ILLEGITIMACY.*

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A distinguished physician once said to me that he did not understand why there was implanted so strongly in both sexes the passionate desire for sexual relationship, while at the same time its gratification was hedged about by so many dangers and penalties.

I suppose this thought has been prominent in the minds of all wise men during the history of the race, from savagery to the present. Many-sided views have been expressed by previous speakers. Few questions pertaining to the civilization of the present are more important or have a greater influence for good or bad on the higher development of man.

EDUCATION THE NEED.

The only thing which I wish to emphasize at present is that every young man and young woman should be intelligently taught during the period of education, commencing at puberty, the meaning and possibilities of the sexual relationship. The inherent forces of Nature compel each individual to give heed to these desires and it is the duty of a wise training that a correct interpretation be made of them. It is easier to write a book on such a subject than to give definitions which are not misleading in the limit of a paper of this character.

I assume, although there are many who will not agree with me, that if the individual can be taught to accept and fully to believe in a mode of living that shall give him the longer life, the less suffering and the greater happiness, this will be the one way of living from which he will not depart.

I assume that a young man or woman just entering life, with ordinary intelligence, looks down through the vista of the coming years, actuated with the desire of "how can I make the most of this life and extract therefrom the greatest pleasure and profit?" And just here is where the education should rightly begin; and it is the duty of those who are experienced to teach the inexperienced and of those who are wise to teach the ignorant.

"No new thought," you say, and you may justly quote the instruction of one of the wisest of the old writers, who said, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

* Read in the Section on Hygiene and Sanitary Science of the American Medical Association, at the Fifty-seventh Annual Session, June, 1906.

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