

By such methods are we made the accomplices of the abortionist ; and it is not easy always to avoid the complication. As I have said, some physicians declare that if they find their patient to be the victim of a criminal abortiqn, they leave the house at once. That is virtuous and noble on their part, but what is to become of the patient? Is she to be left to hands that may be less deft and experienced? "Oh, well!" they say, "she has made her bed, and must lie in it ; she shall take her chance." I argue this stand to be wrong. We find a woman suffering and in danger ; our professional honor requires us to succor her or provide a trusty substitute. We are not the judges of her morals, nor are we to execute punishment of her sins. Such refusal only unloads the work, the anxiety, the responsibility, on shoulders which may be less broad, and quite as reluctant, if more sturdy than our own. Because the poor girl has got herself into a scrape, and in her bewilderment or her ignorance—for all such patients have not been warned of consequences—she is not to be left to die, as Dean Swift said he was, like a poisoned rat in a hole, because all skilled men and women will not go near her by reason of their superior virtue. This reasoning does not apply to our friend above mentioned who engaged the nurse, for he was not called in to confront a surprising and unwelcome condition, but had made the road smooth for the abortionist. Nor need it prevent our threatening the patient that we will not attend her, for menace is usually potent enough to prevent the crime. A few more leads in this direction would land us in the position of declining cases of specific disease because of their origin in lapses of virtue, which would be a regrettable loss to science and to our bloated bank accounts, besides delivering the victims into the hands of the advertising hobgoblins.

I do not blame some women for going wild when they find themselves pregnant. A large family, narrow means, a drunken or stingy or surly husband, ill health, may—all or some—make the burden too hard to bear. But though some seem to be almost irresponsible at the time, nearly all are amenable to reason. More than once have I asked a happy mother, who, in the first months of her gestation, had begged and prayed to be rid of her load, What she would take for that baby now? The flash of gladness and the hug of maternal love were answer enough.

If there are any here who have not ignorantly procured an abortion, I congratulate him or her. Twenty-odd years ago I attended a young matron for amenorrhea. I was particularly careful about vaginal examinations, fearing to do harm if she were in the family way. As she did not gain fast, I sent her into the country. The change of