

which the papers ever and anon record, are surely useless or worse: they can only sink the miserable inmates of the houses to a lower depth of degradation, and aggravate the evil in every respect. But what is to be done? That is the terrible question, and it is one which concerns not the offenders alone, but beings wholly innocent of the offence, as every one who has looked at the children in an English workhouse or reformatory must know. It concerns the public health, in the most serious sense of the term; and the source of our fearful perplexity is, that in this case the interests of the public health seem to be diametrically opposed to the interests of public morals. As a rule, in all matters connected with the prevention of disease and the alleviation of human suffering, the dictates of medical science are the dictates of morality; but, in the present instance, to what would obedience to the dictates of medical science lead? There is no use, however, in taking any view of human nature which is not practical and consistent with reality. The propensity which gives birth to this evil is not like the propensity to homicide and theft, unnatural and wholly criminal: it is only the presence in excess, and without due control, of the mighty force by which nature sustains the race and creates the affections which have their central source in home; though here, as elsewhere, she metes out rough measure, with little regard for special situations. In the social circumstances which preclude early marriage the fault often lies fully as much as in the man. Moreover, when by laws, sufficiently sharp, you have once put down homicide or theft, all is done: but when you have closed the brothel, all is by no means done. The malady suppressed on the surface may only be driven inward with effects of the direst kind. Let the rational moralist and the man of science confer, that we may be helped, if possible, out of the fearful dilemma: we shall not be helped out of it by sermons, however eloquent and sincere the preacher may be, or by legislation in the style of Lord Angelo.

—The Franchise Bill, like the Bills for the Redistribution of Seats and all measures on such subjects emanating from a party