

## INTRODUCTION

Major Wilbur A. Sawyer, of the United States Medical Corps, in the United States introduction says in part:

"The years of the great war have brought a sharp awakening of the American people to the need for facing the greatest present day problem of public health. Almost over night we seem to have changed from a nation with its eyes shut and its ears stopped into a country alert, interested, and on the road to the full accomplishment of what has hitherto been declared impossible.

"In endless repetition the advocates of the doctrine of laissez faire have told us of the antiquity of prostitution and of the certainty that it would be with us forever in undiminished prevalence. They have said likewise that syphilis and gonorrhea and chancroid—that group called venereal diseases because of their commonest method of transmission—would never come under public health control, because they were "secret" diseases and "different from other diseases." Therefore, the sufferer must be left undisturbed, to spread disease to others and to decay in self-neglect, unless chance information or intuition made him seek and appreciate the advice of a conscientious and skilled physician.

"Under the system of the past the physician could treat the patient as little or as much as he saw fit, and be accountable to no one for the protection of society against the refractory or careless patient. The patient, on the other hand, could stop his treatment and ignore precautions against the exposure of others whenever the whim seized him. Up to the time of the war, the American health officer, with his brilliant record for conquering such lesser evils as yellow fever, typhoid fever, small pox and malaria, felt that the venereal diseases were entirely out of his field. He accepted the dictum that they were "different." As a result, venereal diseases maintained their prevalence and the cases were not even counted. Society paid for its neglect in wrecked homes, childless marriages, invalidism, blindness and deformity. And still venereal diseases were "different."

"Out of the war, along with all the suffering and destruction, has come much good. One benefit has been a change of this attitude and the creation of an American plan for banishing the vast amount of ill-being and pain and death caused by venereal diseases. This American plan is an entirely new concept. It is not new in any one part, but new in its combination of all the consistent, worth-while methods, and new in that it squares with the highest American standards of upright living. And it is sound in its sociology as well as in its preventive and curative medicine.

"If the American plan is to live and develop steadily into a better and still more effective plan of the future, the people of America must understand it. The silence of the leaders must be broken and their mouths must utter the truth with understanding. The lawyer and the statesman, the teacher and the clergyman, need more than the selected data which are scattered about with popular propaganda. They should have ready access to those fundamental facts about venereal disease on which successful methods of control must rest. To present these facts Dr. Stokes has pre-