

to relieve itself of this enormous cost, and, what is still more to be considered, this almost infinite mass of suffering. This is certainly an anomalous condition of things for a generation that claims above all things to have "common sense" and to be "practical." It is also true that we do not utilize, in the way of the prevention of insanity, all the knowledge that we already have. We know, for instance, that insanity is remarkably hereditary; that the children of insane parents, or even the children of those in whose family insanity exists, are very liable to become themselves insane. This knowledge, so far, has produced little practical result. Such persons still marry and bring up families, being restrained neither by their own conscience nor by any interference of the State, which issues marriage licenses impartially to those who may reasonably expect to bring up healthy children, and to those who are morally certain to produce diseased offspring.

The object of marriage is to produce men and women to carry on the work of the world, and not to produce syphilitic, tubercular, and insane persons. We call ourselves civilized and religious, and claim to have common sense, yet our Governments license and our Churches bless unions, the offspring of which are foredoomed to idiocy, imbecility, lingering illness, or premature death. I don't mean to say that the church and State combined could prevent children being born of the class of people of which I speak, neither can they prevent altogether murder, theft or prostitution; but they do not sanction these, and neither should they countenance what is as bad as any of these—that is, the bringing into the world imperfect and diseased children, who must necessarily be, all their life, wretched themselves and a burden to the world at large. Nor do I say that any special laws should be made against such unions as I speak of; all I claim is that the community, through its Government and Churches, should cease to countenance what is notoriously wrong. No marriage license should issue, nor any marriage ceremony be performed, ex-