

1. A small diminution in the number of registered prostitutes and a large increase in that of clandestine prostitutes; the decline of the brothel and the enormous multiplication of the grisette.

2. A marked increase in the number of men indulging in the vice, on account of diminution of fear of infection, and what is even more potent, removal of all risk of interference by the police, of arrest in some "raid," and the consequent possibility of publicity in the police-court.

In short, it puts the stamp of safety and respectability upon the whole business for both sexes. A Parisian or a Viennese "takes a woman" just as naturally and as frankly as a New Yorker or a Londoner takes a cigar or a dinner, and the prostitute of the former cities has almost as much self-respect and pride of station as the married woman.

3. It diminishes the marriage-rate of the community by rendering concubinage in some form safe, popular and economical.

4. It increases the ratio of illegitimate births, by obvious causes. Paris, the Mecca of this system, has the highest illegitimacy-rate in the world, twenty-six in the one hundred births or one-fourth of all.

Finally, it does not even diminish venereal disease, first, because the most fruitful breeding-ground of syphilis and gonorrhœa is *not* among prostitutes but among "clandestines," so-called "sempstresses," waiter-girls, chamber-maids, etc., and "amateurs" of all descriptions, and secondly, because the most rigid and skilful inspection can find no trace of disease in a woman who may develop well-marked primary or secondary symptoms before nightfall, and infect a dozen men before morning. In short, from the theological, the legal, and the philanthropic standpoint the case appears not only ruinous but well-nigh hopeless.

When, however, we turn and approach it from a medico-economic point of view, its aspect alters completely, and I venture to claim it as one of the grand selective and eliminative agencies of nature and of highest value to the community.

It may be roughly characterized as a safety valve for the institution of marriage. This, of course, does not imply approval or endorsement of the process, for though the escape of a certain amount of steam is beneficial to the engine, it is "a very cold day" for the steam that escapes.

It is simply a huge sewer, a garbage dump, a crematory, into which are hurled the least desirable elements of both sexes, degenerate men and degraded women, for conversion into more useful and less odorous materials.

I think it would be hard to find a subject upon which there is a more "plentiful lack" of reliable information and data of real scientific value.

This is unavoidably inherent in the nature of the case for obvious reasons. After a brief but bootless search through the authorities, I decided to appeal directly to the only class of men who possess both the information and the training to qualify them to speak with authority. I accordingly sent out a number of letters containing a list of questions to the leading physicians of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago, San Antonio, and San Francisco, also to a number of practitioners in smaller towns, thus including every section of the Union. Although the number of replies is small, about thirty, scarcely one-sixth of the total number of letters sent out, yet there is such a substantial harmony through them all that they form at least a most suggestive "straw" to indicate the direction of the current of professional opinion on this question. And this straw assumes the dignity of an indicator when we further add, that these thirty were those that felt themselves competent to speak definitely out of one hundred who replied to my letters, and that the list included such names as Gihon, Parvin, Edson, Price, Hare, Bolton, Bangs, Bernays, Dudley, and Chassaignac.

The first point to be considered in an economic study of this question is the motive which induces women to enter this profession. By this term I mean, of course, the dominant motive. It is freely recognized that no *one* cause alone impels any woman to this pursuit.

The following is the average obtained from all answers on this point:—

Love of display, luxury, and idleness . . .	42.1	per cent.
Bad family surroundings	23.8	"
Seduction, in which they were innocent victims	11.3	"
Lack of employment	9.4	"
Heredity	7.8	"
Primary sexual appetite	5.6	"
	100.0	

This makes a showing strikingly similar to that