

This duty is incumbent in the first place upon the legislative power, which owes to society the enactment of repressive laws, and then upon the civic and municipal authorities, entrusted with the enforcement of these laws within the limits of their attributions.

But two currents of opinion have been for a long time face to face, in the civilized world, in connection with the hideous sore of prostitution, which is constantly preying on the vitals of society.

On the one hand, are the *regulationists*, adherents to the doctrine that public prostitution is a *necessary* evil, which must be tolerated, while subjecting it to severe rules and to measures of prophylaxis, lest debauchery should invade the whole social body and disturb it by disorders of all kinds. Such is the doctrine which has prevailed in France for almost a century, especially in Paris, which has triumphed in Germany and particularly in Berlin, where, by a strange anomaly, prostitution is prohibited by the law and tolerated by the police, and which has been adopted in many other continental countries of Europe.

On the other hand, their opponents claim that the authorization given by the administration to disorderly houses and to prostitutes, by inscription or regulation, is but a pact made with vice, but an official recognition of a shameful crime, and to use the very terms of a recent author, "is, in fact, the permission given to certain women to do all possible evil without being disturbed, to corrupt the body, to deprave the mind, to over-excite all bad inclinations, to sow and propagate in the world many crimes and infamies, to be vile, cynical and filthy, and to cause all mothers to shed bitter tears by poisoning the heart of their children."

The *regulationists* have no reply to make to this terrible arraignment, and content themselves with invoking the necessity of protecting public health against the dangers of syphilis, and with affirming that, without the inscription of prostitutes and their submission to medical visits, called for by regulation, it would be impossible to prevent the terrible disease from spreading and decupling its ravages. To this the abolitionists reply: the regulation of prostitution, which, it is admitted, is contrary to morals and to the dignity of the State, would therefore only be a necessary expedient. This expedient should not, at least, be contrary to the laws. But is this alleged contract, which the inscribed girl, in Paris, for instance, passes with the Prefecture of Police and whereby she imposes upon herself certain obligations, really in accordance with the law, which does not recognize a contract the object of which is illicit. (Code Napoléon, Art. 1133)? A necessary expedient which is therefore both immoral and illegal!

And as to public health, does it actually benefit by inscription, regulation and medical visits? There are in Paris from three to four thousand inscribed prostitutes (also called *submissive* prostitutes), while the number of uninscribed or unsubmitive women exceeds 30,000 (and even reaches 100,000 according to some pornographers). The Prefecture cannot hunt out all the unsubmitive prostitutes and cannot force them to submit to inspection. It can only have the submissive prostitutes visited regularly. See the proportion of visits compared with the entire population of loose women!

After a temporary and unsuccessful test of the system of inscription and regulation, England definitely abandoned it in 1886; the United States have always refused to adopt it. Germany is now dissatisfied with its results and is endeavoring to do away with it, while in France the abolitionist campaign is upon the point of triumphing.

The Brussels Conference (1899), the London Conference (same year) and the Congress of Lyons (1902) have recently put face to face the adherents of these two doctrines, and