

# The Double Standard of Morals

—and—

## The Social Diseases.

“The social evil” really means prostitution and its consequences, and prostitution by women is the practice of offering their bodies to indiscriminate sexual intercourse for hire. The practice depends, of course, on that lust in men which induces them to hire the bodies of women for such use.

Prostitution always brings about the moral and physical ruin of the women who pursue that trade, and also frequently produces in the men who resort to prostitutes one or both of two terrible diseases, syphilis and gonorrhoea.

These diseases are highly contagious; and though they may be apparently cured, they are liable to break out again in the once-cured individual, even after years of apparent health. They are contagious not only in coition, but through the contact of syphilitic or gonorrhoeal discharges with the abraded skin or mucous membrane of a well person. Thus, a syphilitic sore in the mouth may infect another person through an abrasion on the lips or face. The fact that these diseases may long remain latent increases their malign influence. Thus, a man who has suffered from either of them can never be sure that he may not infect his innocent wife on or after marriage.

Both diseases are transmissible to children through an infected mother; and both are such pervasive diseases that, when inherited, they may affect the whole constitution, and are liable to cripple children in a great variety of shocking ways. Only physicians understand these horrors. It is impossible to exhibit to an assemblage of ordinary men pictures or photographs of the sores, distortions, and malformations produced in children by inherited syphilis without making many of them sick with disgust and fear.

It used to be supposed that although syphilis was a terrible disease, gonorrhoea was but a trivial disorder; but medical science has now demonstrated through the development of bacteriology that the consequences of gonorrhoea are quite as formidable as those of syphilis.