

free Hospital, University College, the Westminster and the Metropolitan free Hospital, are crowded with venereal applicants, for those admitted as in-patients are not numerous. In 1865 the syphilitics, aided in these hospitals, were 1,846.—(*Lecour*). It is besides calculated that 20 per cent. of those having affections of the eyes, presenting themselves at the Ophthalmic Hospital, have syphilitic infection as the cause. The Harveian Medical Society of London published in 1867 a report, in which was shown the great abundance of venereal affections and syphilis in that city. In the Hospital for Children it was seen that, in 1,000 surgical cases, 93 boys and 106 girls were syphilitics.

“We have now seen that venereal diseases, and especially syphilis, abound in those places where prostitution is free and unwatched, but it may appear a paradox that these diseases multiply and assume aggravated form still more in those countries in which prostitution has been persecuted, and, if we should judge from appearances, abolished. I have already spoken of Rome, a city in which syphilis has made great ravages, and if any one desires to know what occurred there in the years from 1849 to 1870, he needs but to read the report of Dr. Jacquot, physician of the hospitals of the French army of occupation, in which he writes thus: ‘Miserable creatures prostitute themselves nightly in the dark angles of houses, under the less frequented porticos, on the seats and borders of walks, and even in front of St. Peter’s.’ And what is certainly still worse: ‘Prostitution in Rome is carried on in all parts, and, disgraceful to relate, frequently in the interior of families.’ The city of Munich presents to us another example: in 1811 the Bavarian parliament passed a law by which severe penalties (from one month to two years’ imprisonment) were inflicted on all women following prostitution. All the houses of tolerance were immediately locked up, and all visitation and medical inspection ceased; well, what followed? Whilst in the two preceding years the number of men and women with venereal disease admitted to the hospitals had averaged 1,006 yearly, in the five succeeding years the average rose to 1,500, and in 1866 it reached to 1,835,—almost double the number of diseased, and the houses of tolerance were closed and visitations suspended!

“These facts teach us another lesson, which relates to the proportion of venereal cases in the sexes. During the period of the tolerance and vigilance of prostitution, there entered the hospitals 203 men affected with syphilis for every 100 women, but when visitation was suppressed the figures rose to 335 men for every 100 women, which shows that the women did not voluntarily go to the hospitals when they were diseased, but continued spreading the contagion, regardless of the sad consequences. The director of the Syphilitic Hospital of Hamburg also states in his report, that after the suppression of the houses of tolerance, syphilis extended more among men than among women, as was observed in Munich. In January, 1876, there were in the hospital 63 men and 127 women, but in the corresponding month of 1877, five months after the suppression, there were in the establishment 104 men and 98 women. Visitation is then necessary under a hygienic point of view, principally for the woman, as a syphilitic man may infect only a small number of women, whilst a woman may transmit the disease to many men. Further, it is rare that a syphilitic man does not seek for treatment, but this fact is not observed in women; consequently as the prostitutes are not subjected to sanitary visitation, and in its place the system of absolute liberty, or that of prohibition is adopted, we see, under whichever of the two, how disastrous are the results both to hygiene and to morality.

“We must now give our attention to another gratuitous assertion, which has been made by the optimists of the Federation, and reproduced, I say it with concern, by some medical men: it has been affirmed with extreme flippancy that there is in reality nothing to be feared from syphilis, that it has lost the malignity which it had in the 15th century, that it is seldom mortal, and, in fine, that it is diminishing and has become very rare. What substantiality is there in these optimistic ideas? Let us examine the facts. It appears from the report of Dr. Bruckner, presented to the Reichstag in February, 1877, that during the year 1876, there were detained by the police in Berlin 16,168 women, of whom 879 had syphilis. In the same year 895 soldiers of the Prussian army affected with syphilis entered the hospitals, and in 1873-4, 2,982. Among the members of the societies of operatives in Berlin, there were 5,817 syphilitics in