

The CHAIRMAN: In Wisconsin there is a law—I shall be corrected if I do not state this aright—which provides that a certificate is necessary, but such certificate can be given by a physician without resorting to the Wasserman test or to any other bacteriological examination. It may consist only of the production of his own opinion—the statement that in his opinion the party seeking a license to marry is free from venereal disease. We have heard rather favourable reports on the working of this particular law. Though of course it does not stop all cases, it stops quite a few. As you, Doctor, remarked a moment ago, the man who knows that he is syphilitic and knows also that he has to go to a physician to secure a certificate to the effect that he is free from syphilis, may be hindered from doing so because he fears that he will be discovered, and then it will be worse to have to convey to the would-be bride that he cannot marry, on account of his visit to the doctor. He may hesitate before he decides to marry at all. We have heard that this law has accomplished a good deal in the prevention of marriage. Outside of that, there are a number of states which, we heard the other day, have laws more or less drastic in this regard, the most drastic being that of New Mexico.

*By Hon. Mr. Daniel:*

Q. The testimony we had the other day was somewhat to this effect, that while some of the states in the American Union have a law, it so far applies only to the male.—A. Yes.

Q. And the female is not examined at all. The gentleman who was giving this testimony thought that, while it did not cause a perfect result, it was as an educational measure a good thing to have a law requiring only the male to be examined. Now, what would be your opinion with regard to such a law as that?—A. I think that might be a very good law.

Q. Do you think it would be more likely to take, say, in your province than a law including both sexes?—A. I think so. I think there would be a great upheaval of public opinion against the female being included.

Q. Yes, of course we understand the objections that everybody would have to what might be called the forcible examination of the young girl who is going to be married.—A. Quite.

Q. You think that the compulsion might be applied only to the male?—A. Yes.

Q. And that, while not being a perfect law, it would be the commencement of what might terminate in a more nearly perfect law and become at least a law of great educational advantage?—A. I think so.

Q. As well as material advantage in preventing some syphilitics, at all events, from getting married?—A. I think so.

Q. Do you think that such a law would be a preferable one to this?—A. I think so. I think it very wise to include the epilepsy in this.

Q. How about those who are called mental deficient?—A. Oh, if there were some way of—

Q. Drawing the line?—A. Drawing the line.

Q. Yes, that is it; and there is no such way.—A. No. There are so many of the epileptics that do become mentally defective later on.

Q. But with regard to epileptics there would be, of course, the evidence of the epileptic convulsions, would there not?—A. Yes. I have come across two or three instances where the family have taken means to prevent the convulsions. That is, they have had their son under treatment to prevent that during the progress of courtship.

Q. Yes?—A. And the bride would never know that he had ever had a convulsion until some time after marriage. And of course it was a great shock. Then so often that sort of thing is hereditary.