

EVERYWOMAN'S WORLD

Canada's Greatest Magazine

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Editor

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SOCIAL HYGIENE

THE publicity which has of late been given to the subject of Social Hygiene, marks a change of attitude toward this question which is by no means confined to our own country. There is a world-wide campaign in progress to arouse people everywhere to the necessity for an organized defence against a general menace.

To this end the Health Departments of our Federal and Provincial Governments have taken up the problem very seriously and there has also been established in this country the Canadian National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases.

The progress of the work so far is marked by the increasing facilities for dealing with the medical side of the question; active research, the scientific direction of various branches of the work, the establishment of free clinics, are definite results.

But these measures strike only at effects. The real battle lies in detecting and combating causes.

Such discussions as we may hear upon the grave economic side of the question or upon the terrible toll upon life and health levied by social disease, impress us with the need for scientific investigation, for government action. But if we grant that the root of real betterment must strike deeper than these, that it lies in the development of the greater moral strength which alone can govern and control so vast an evil—then we sound a challenge for every community, for every home, for every citizen. That challenge is for Education.

THE improvement and the safeguarding of the home influence, is the special phase of the problem which presents itself to every parent. The new dangers in the changed world which we realize about us, have made the early home training more vital than it has ever been and have increased the importance of those precious years when the guidance of a child's thought, the moulding of his character, are laying the foundations of future thought and action. And over and above the actual future of that individual is the inestimable total of his influence in the world—either as a source of the strength by which the good he meets is strengthened, or of weakness by which the weaknesses of others are augmented.

It is upon this ground that the scientist, the

medical man, the nurse, the social worker, the religious teacher, the legislator, meet.

Education—training—prevention—these are the real weapons in the Social Hygiene Campaign.

This planting and developing of moral principles falls first upon the parents and later upon the teachers and the whole community, as the field of the child's activities widens. In our search for causes, we find our personal responsibilities increasing, for it is clearly demonstrated to us that there is a certain very definite influence traceable to such things as the living conditions of young people, the opportunities for entertainment and recreation, the scope for youthful energy and enthusiasms, the whole question of environment and interests and the exercise of proper authority and wise restraint.

IN his article this month, Dr. Byron Stauffer recalls the fate of the house of Eli—the chief priest, whose house was to be cast down "because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not."

"And the terrible sentence which the Almighty meted out to this degenerate family is worth our serious notice," Dr. Stauffer continues, "for it is so exactly in keeping with the laws of eugenics that it seems as if it had been written in our own twentieth century, instead of three thousand years ago. Not only were these young men to be deprived of a part in the government, but they were to be punished for their lechery by a bodily and mental deterioration which would leave their offspring weak and degenerate. 'There shall not be an old man in their house,' declared the prophet who carried the news to the derelict priest.....no fine, white haired ruddy-faced old gentlemen would be among them. 'They shall die in the flower of their age,' was the stern sentence. They shall be a hideous-looking set of fragile, twisted, grinning fellows, 'to consume thine heart and grieve thine eyes.' Social disease plays havoc with the expectancy tables of the life insurance company."

Social disease is playing havoc to-day amongst our Canadian population—mental, moral and physical havoc horrible beyond description.

Here, indeed, is a broad field for work in every community. Statistics prove that the need is everywhere.

THE EDITOR.

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