

pains, she be banished altogether, we resurrect the twin demons of seduction and adultery to fill her place.

(3) *In the event of prohibition failing to accomplish its object, what measures are most likely to limit the evil of prostitution, and to curtail the misery and disease it engenders?*

Before attempting to furnish a direct answer to this important question it is necessary to deal with the arguments of those who condemn all regulative measures. The *laissez-faire* idea has a great many advocates, and in reference to them some terse sentences from Dr. Beardsley's article will not be out of place:—"The importation of cholera is intercepted, variola aborted, yellow fever vigilantly patrolled, pestilence of any form no longer stalks among us without being hotly chased, but a disease which lacks not a whit the type of a plague, and which, upas-like, infects nation after nation, contributing generously to their charnel-houses, nestles among us and travels on friction wheels. Hundreds are honest, ardent in their researches after some antidote to this virus, but never essay to stop or modify the evil. Prophylaxis against venereal suffering sounds to these but balderdash. To quarantine a syphilitic is passing strange. The experiment is ridiculed as if the evil was self-limited, or repudiated as contending against a dispensation from heaven, to meddle with which was to befriend a crime. The stench of this leprosy already fits our nostrils, but no mettle is sounded in our legislators to face the railings of those who hate truth, and are timid at every revolution. To qualify a wrong is not to endorse it. The health and longevity of the race are paramount to the defence of ethics or rude platitudes in morals. If life is jeopardized, sacrifices are imperative. Individual prejudices, dogmas however dear, the faith of ages, all must unloose their hold when the perpetuation of a perfect species is called in question. If the arm of the law is powerless to stay the gratification of our passions, if the admonitions and misfortunes of others do not dissuade us from the same snare, if the whore will ply her vocation, is it criminal to disarm her of her sting? Is it not conniving at the practice to suffer that foul doxy to parade her goods and pollute a neighborhood? The time is nigh when this vapid sentimentalism in religion—this morality which dubs every dissenter from creeds an anti-Christ, and translates the license of prostitution as free love, should be undone. The social evil cannot be remedied without some compromise.

It is a monster too huge to be smothered, and we must curry favor with it to lessen its depredations."*

Mr. Solly, whose reputation as a surgeon is not confined to his native country, at a meeting of the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society some years ago, gave utterance to sentiments that, more than any other, have inspired the vehement opposition encountered by reformers in their efforts to meet this evil by legislation. Said he:—"Far from considering syphilis an evil I regard it, on the contrary, as a blessing, and believe that it was inflicted by the Almighty to act as a restraint upon the indulgence of evil passions. Could the disease be exterminated, as I hope it cannot, fornication would ride rampant through the land." It is quite within the limits of truth to say that this doctrine is responsible for the barbarous refusal to admit syphilitic patients into the public hospitals of London, not a great while ago, and prevented the erection of special hospitals for a still longer period. It is this same enunciation of the Creator's "intentions" that condemned the use of anæsthetics in midwifery, and like interpretations of God's "will," carried to their legitimate conclusions, have obstructed many a needed reform in social customs.

At one period in its history the Royal Free Hospital magnanimously devoted the whole of 26 (!) beds to diseased prostitutes, but, says the report, "the venereal wards have been for some time untenanted, owing to loss of funds occasioned by the outcry raised against this hospital in one of the medical journals." This issue is now almost a dead one, but, it might be asked, if we follow out Mr. Solly's argument, is not pneumonia a disease inflicted by the Deity upon the indulgence in thin slippers and low-necked dresses? Are not typhoid fever and diphtheria penalties imposed by God on civic uncleanness? Are we justified then, in view of the fact that it is hardly possible to do away with their causes, in trying to cure these serious troubles? Rejecting the theory that syphilis was imported from the newly discovered American continent by Columbus, we may suppose it first showed itself in Europe about the beginning of the fifteenth century. How then did the Lord punish licentious Europeans before that time? What penalty paid the worshippers at the shrine of Venus Mucbeia, or of that beastly old

* "Chartered Brothels." *New Orleans Med. and Surg. Journal* for Sept., 1880.