

I do hope the Senate will be good enough to introduce a bill, if it is only a gesture of legislation along this line, because it is so tremendously needed. And to continue with Dr. Harper's views: "Even in its present imperfect form I am prepared to recommend it for adoption in other states on the ground that a more desirable law would probably be hard to pass at first. It is true that no examination will detect the presence of a venereal disease with certainty, but it is better to detect 85, 90 or 95 per cent of the cases where infection exists than to have no law and detect no cases whatever.

"One of the most valuable results has been the publicity attendant upon the bill's introduction and the later attack upon the constitutionality of the law. An appropriation of \$100,000 for educational propoganda concerning the dangers of infection from venereal diseases could have done no more."

The newspapers were full of it; the medical societies discussed it, and the people for the first time in Wisconsin realized that venereal diseases were a scourge. The educational end, alone, justified in itself the importance of the passage of the law. How does it affect the minds of the people? Dr. Harper states: "Many men have written to the State Board of Health or have called at its office because they wished to be sure that they were in a safe condition to marry. The law has also caused men who were planning to marry, but not in the immediate future, to go to private physicians for examination. Even men who live outside Wisconsin have come to the State Board's office for examination before marriage in their own states, although no laws there required such examinations. The improved condition of the state in recent years in the matter of infection from venereal diseases is in part due to this law. During the war Wisconsin had one of the smallest percentages of venereally diseased men examined for military service."

That information comes from a man in Wisconsin who should know more than anybody else concerning the operation of the law, because he was in charge of health in that state.

As to the other men who conducted the survey, allow me to read their conclusions. I would suggest that this complete work should be read by all, but at this time I will merely point out the major conclusions: "The law has had marked educational value"—and remember, this statement is made after getting evidence of 1,110 medical men and social workers, and those in charge of various organizations. "The law has had marked educational value, first through newspaper discussion in the early years of its history, and continuously through the fact that large numbers of men receive a warning as to the dangers of venereal infection at the time when they are most likely to heed it.

(2) "The law has been a real factor in inducing men who expect to marry to make sure that they are fit, even before applying for a medical certificate. This has perhaps been the greatest gain attributable to the measure.

(3) There are also indications that to some extent "the required examination has revealed contagious conditions and has caused postponement of marriage."

And there follows thirteen major conclusions. As far as such findings are concerned, they are findings to substantiate the fact that the law is worth while.

I have another document here where three states were studied—Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana. In Michigan the law does not require a physician's certificate, but merely has a general provision forbidding the marriage of persons infected with venereal disease.