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# Ford Hall Folks

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## BREEDING MEN\*

### The Problems of Sex Education

By DR. HUGH CABOT

**W**ILL not take up your time or mine with the argument whether or not we should discuss sex education. If people believe in the policy of silence they do not believe in democracy, which is based fundamentally upon the right of each one of us to know the fact. Unless we believe in the ability of the average man and woman to come to a sound opinion, then we do not believe in the policy to which this country is committed, or that we ourselves are to be trusted.

There are many problems in this topic which I should like to discuss. Only a few of them, however, can I take up tonight. First, how shall we go at this business? Very little education in the concerns of sex has ever been attempted. It is that, in fact, which makes many draw back upon the brink of this great undertaking.

We may divide our methods of education into three lines of attack, based upon those whom we wish to reach. First, there are the adults, the actual or potential fathers and mothers, who at present do not know many of the vital questions concerning the sexes and abuses of the sex instinct. These people can be reached best through public meetings or lectures in the public schools at the public expense (Applause), and through literature—books, pamphlets and leaflets—even if many of these must be discarded at first.

Then there are the children under 12. They should have a thorough training in biology. Our difficulty in the past has been that sex questions have been isolated and therefore unrelated. Finally, there is the

been futile. We need public opinion privately active among the people. We have seen the failure of the Wisconsin marriage law.

But, in spite of such failures, this movement has a sound basis, even if we do not comprehend it. The trouble is, we dive at various manifestations of the subject instead of at the subject itself. For instance, we attack prostitution or venereal disease, and then get discouraged because we fail. But we fail because today we have a twentieth century economic situation and an eighteenth century personal relation situation. When we get a twentieth century personal relation situation, all will be well.

#### THE SCOURGE OF VENEREAL DISEASE.

By Dr. DeWitt G. Wilcox.

**L**ET us for a few moments make requisition upon our imaginations and picture a scene fraught with danger. An ominous ship, flying the flag of an unknown nation, has sailed into our harbor. From it come shafts of smoke which strike various sections of the city, and there resolve themselves into noxious gases. Wherever they strike, men and women go reeling from the fatal spot, blind, crippled or insane. Even the onlookers discover that when the victims breathe upon them, they too are visited by this strange malady, which they in turn communicate to others. A half-dozen battleships are lying in the

of a race of syphilitics. All over the world we are facing a deadly disease as old as time, with victims far in excess of those of war or famine. Shall we meet this by a policy of silence, or, as citizens should meet it, by crushing it?

To give you an idea of the spread of this disease, let me give you a few statistics. The daily average number in the American army for one year of those sick with syphilis was larger than that of those sick with all other important diseases combined. And the record of the army is no worse than the record of civil life. The medical officer of London reported in 1910 that two and one-half times as many infants under one year of age died from congenital syphilis as from cholera infantum, and four times as many as from diphtheria. The same year it was reported that 31.8 per cent. of the disabilities of the English army were from venereal diseases. From 1900 to 1909 the English army recruiting stations rejected 1516 applicants because of syphilis as against 725 because of tuberculosis.

The time has come for action; we must do something. Abraham Lincoln, when as a young man he saw the sale of slaves in the South, said: "God helping me, I will smash this iniquitous thing." When fathers and mothers say the same of this thing, the social evil will be smashed as slavery was. (Applause.) Our treatment of tuberculosis has decreased it greatly, and meanwhile syphilis has greatly increased. We spent thousands of dollars to check the bubonic plague, of which two persons died last year, and nothing to check syphilis, of which over 5000 died. Why do we not try to treat syphilis as we do other diseases?





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We may divide our methods of education into three lines of attack, based upon those whom we wish to reach. First, there are the adults, the actual or potential fathers and mothers, who at present do not know many of the vital questions concerning the uses and abuses of the sex instinct. These people can be reached best through public meetings or lectures in the public schools at the public expense (Applause), and through literature—books, pamphlets and leaflets—even if many of these must be sent at first.

Then there are the children under 12. They should have a thorough training in biology. Our difficulty in the past has been largely that sex questions have been isolated and therefore unrelated.

Finally, there is the most difficult class to reach—young people at the adolescent age. Here there is the greatest difference of opinion. Few parents know enough to instruct their children, and many who do know hesitate before the task. Therefore, while I believe that to the parents in the first instance belongs this instruction, I cannot but recognize that there will be many cases in which that instruction, if left to the parents, will not succeed. The large number not taught by parents can be reached through the churches, the Y. M. C. A., and the boys' and girls' clubs, which are the safest methods of attack at present. But the day will come when we shall equip ourselves to teach sex in the public schools. Today we are not prepared to take that step; we have not the machinery, the teachers, or a convinced public opinion. Until these conditions exist we should court disaster in attempting it.

As much for direct methods of attack. Among the indirect, there is first of all the law. It is characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon mind that when in doubt it gets a law passed. But law must be supported by public opinion. To attempt to create public opinion by means of law is impossible. Legislation on the subject of sex so far has

The questions and the questions and answers reported by Miriam Allen de Ford.

By Dr. DeWitt G. Wilcox.

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malady, which they in turn communicate to others. A half-dozen battleships are lying in the Charles town yard. They are well equipped and manned. But the officers and crew are sitting idle on the deck, watching the enemy, and make no attempt to fire a gun. Why? The answer is: "We do not know to whom the strange ship belongs, and we fear that by firing we may injure a friendly nation."

My friends, a situation as bad as that, or worse, is threatening us. And you and I and all right-thinking citizens are standing by just as foolishly idle as was that imaginary crew. Tonight, in Boston, there will be spread a noxious venom which will send disease all over the city; 9431 prostitutes will tonight make possible the infection of 10,000 immoral men. Of these 10,000 libertines a large percentage are or will be infected with a disease which they will hand down to their mistresses, their wives, their children and their children's children. And how does that affect you? Wait till one of these young men asks for your daughter in marriage, and makes you the noble ancestor

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Segregation and registration of prostitutes do no good, but rather harm. Then what can be done? First, there is the cure of those already infected. The cure of gonorrhoea and syphilis is very difficult, but it is possible. Public opinion must be aroused to overcome the things that make possible these diseases. The greatest hopefulness of race betterment lies in prevention rather than cure. Dr. Cabot has outlined the methods of preventive education, especially of youth. When self-control is taught, as the Spartans taught it, it will become a sixth sense.

Then we must have one standard of morality for men and women. (Applause.) And when a man falls from that standard he should be meted out the same social punishment that now is given to the woman alone.

Finally, we must have full publicity. The time has come in which venereal diseases should be reported, for the greatest good of the greatest number. Physicians used to hesitate to report tuberculosis, but now we have found it is better that the few should suffer than that great numbers should be exterminated, and that is true of venereal disease also. Every respectable physician would endorse a law requiring this reporting, putting the patient, as it were, on pa-

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# THE QUESTIONS

Q: Isn't it true that neither sex education nor a marriage certificate will prevent these evils while economic slavery continues?

A (Dr. Cabot): It is true that as long as we do not see the relation of the parts of the community to each other we shall not see the relation of certain flaws in the public health to the affairs of the community. But you refer to economic slavery, and I to intellectual.

Q (Same): Will not sex education stir the boys and girls to an undue interest which will take their minds from their other studies?

A (Dr. Wilcox): Not if it is presented rightly. It may for a time, while it is novel.

Q (Same): Doesn't the woman know the law against adultery, and if so, why does she break it?

A (Mr. Cummings): There is no answer to that question that would cover all cases. There is not enough economic pressure in heaven or hell to cause the fall of some women.

Q: Wouldn't the evil be greatly lessened by a change in economic conditions permitting everyone to marry young?

A (Dr. Wilcox): I think that would do a very great deal to lessen it.

Q: Is it possible to procure a law in advance of public opinion, and isn't law itself one of the best ways of keeping morality up to a certain level?

A (Dr. Cabot): Laws are passed constantly without public opinion behind them, and they always become dead letters.

Q: Will you explain more fully the importance of associating the study of sex with the study of biology?

A (Dr. Wilcox): Only as pertaining to these diseases. We are simply feeling our way along this subject as to what is best.

Q (Mr. Victorson): Is not the difference of morality between the sexes rather organic than otherwise?

A (Dr. Cabot): The essential differences of the sex instinct are responsible for certain conditions which we find today. We must manage the manifestations differently in the different sexes. But we are entitled to expect the same level on both sides, even if we arrive by different methods.

Q: Is there not already a law in Massachusetts obliging physicians to report these diseases?

A (Dr. Cabot and Dr. Wilcox): I do not know of any.

Q: Isn't the practice of polygamy the real cause of the venereal disease germ, and if not, what did cause it?

A (Dr. Wilcox): We do not know; the disease is as old as time.

Q: What do you think of the educational value of "Damaged Goods?"

A (Mr. Cummings): I cannot answer personally, but I have found from others that the effect was educational and deterrent.

Q: Do you think the teaching of sex hygiene in co-educational schools would be effective and desirable?

A (Dr. Cabot): Not in the present state of our machinery. We may come to it.

Q: When we have settled all these questions of sex, will we not be in danger of being overrun by a surplus population?

A (Dr. Cabot): Quality rather than quantity is what counts. I should not be much afraid.

Q: Could any ordinary person recognize the symptoms of gonorrhoea in others?

women catering to the worst elements of men? (Applause.)

A (Dr. Cabot): I believe that the present styles are undesirable, but they are merely temporary. We must train our men and women to realize the connection of sex with all of life.

Q: If after maturity young men and women are kept apart, isn't there danger that they will practise self-abuse?

A (Dr. Wilcox): I do not think so, especially. Those things are begun before puberty when indulged in at all.

Q: Will the granting of woman suffrage have any effect on the moral question?

A (Mr. Cummings): I think it will drive some pretty undesirable people out of politics. (Applause.)

Q: Could not the doctors cure syphilis by salvarsan if it were put at a more reasonable price?

A (Dr. Cabot): It costs 75 cents or more to be treated today. I don't believe we could cut it below that, because some people pay \$2 for every treatment.

Q: What do you think of the efficacy of Christian Science in curing diseases? (Laughter.)

A (Dr. Cabot): You are out of order. I will say that I don't see how anything could cure something. (Laughter and applause.)

Q: Wouldn't Ellen Key's doctrine of free love help solve these problems?

A (Dr. Cabot): I don't understand Ellen Key teaches free love. (Applause.) She seems to me to have added nothing to the proper understanding of the relation of the sexes, and I think it is first-class stuff.

Q (Mr. Sackmary): Isn't there more prostitution among the so-called higher society than among the poor?

A (Dr. Wilcox): I don't know; how do we determine?

Q: Isn't the Catholic church making a mistake in opposing sex education?

A (Dr. Cabot): I don't know that



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A (Dr. Cabot): Laws are passed constantly without public opinion behind them, and they always become dead letters.

Q: Will you explain more fully the importance of associating the study of sex with the study of biology?

A (Dr. Cabot): The point is this: if we undertake to teach sex simply as the manifestations of sex in the human race we try to teach something too difficult and complicated by emotion. On the other hand, children brought to the study of sex through the study of biology see it as a thing easy to understand.

Q: What proportion of syphilitic cases come outside of sexual causes?

A (Dr. Cabot): The so-called accidental cases are 15 or 20 per cent., and they may be higher when we include the mildest cases.

Q (Mr. Cosgrove): How do you hope to throw light on this subject when men are suffering from ecclesiastical tyranny? (Laughter.)

A (Mr. Cummings): All you have to do is to come down to my church. There is plenty of room.

Q: Don't they keep the army in ignorance so that they will be willing to kill their fellow-beings, and isn't it this same ignorance which causes them to contract venereal disease?

A (Mr. Cummings): You have put your finger on a real fact. The question is a fair one. (Applause.)

Q: Have we any evidence to show that the atmosphere of impurity in the public schools is improving?

A (Dr. Wilcox): It is like a great many diseases which we think are on the increase because we recognize them more. It is more apparent than real.

Q: Do you honestly mean that it would be wise for physicians to do away with privileged communications, and what would be the result?

value of "Diseased Goods?"

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Q: When we have settled all these questions of sex, will we not be in danger of being overrun by a surplus population?

A (Dr. Cabot): Quality rather than quantity is what counts. I should not be much afraid.

Q: Could any ordinary person recognize the symptoms of syphilis in others?

A (Dr. Wilcox): If he were instructed, it would not be difficult to recognize certain stages.

Q (Mr. Sagerman): Would not licensing prostitution reduce the disease?

A (Dr. Wilcox): No.

Q: What proportion of blindness arises from venereal diseases?

A (Dr. Wilcox): About 40 to 60 per cent. of congenital blindness.

Q: Have we any statistics as to whether prohibition in Maine has reduced venereal disease?

A (Dr. Cabot): I do not believe there are any figures, though I am strongly of the opinion that alcohol is one of the most potent stumbling blocks which leads downhill to venereal disease. (Applause.) (Dr. Wilcox): I think what Dr. Cabot has said is emphatically true.

Q: How do you explain that our forefathers have been preaching morality for 4000 years, and immorality today is worse than ever?

A (Mr. Cummings): I don't think it is.

Q: Would not reporting venereal disease cause more people than ever to stay away from the doctors?

A (Dr. Wilcox): No doubt a certain number would do so. It hasn't worked out that way with tuberculosis.

Q: If you instruct children only when they ask for information, will you not start a curiosity which will be satisfied wrongly by other children?

A (Mr. Cummings): You can make wrong use of good information, but there is no other way of heading off the worst results.

Q: Isn't the present style of dress among

love help solve these problems?

A (Dr. Cabot): I don't understand. Ellen Key teaches free love. (Applause.) She seems to me to have added much to the proper understanding of the relation of the sexes, and I think it is first-class stuff.

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A (Dr. Wilcox): I don't know; how we determine?

Q: Isn't the Catholic church making a mistake in opposing sex education?

A (Dr. Cabot): I don't know that it opposes it.

Q: Aren't the up-to-date dances responsible for a lot of immorality?

A (Mr. Cummings): I believe in the value of dancing; I run two or three dance halls in connection with the Benevolent Society of Churches, and I have a good deal of dancing in my church. I am sorry that some of the dances which have come in since I became enthusiastic on the subject are perfectly inexplicable to me. I don't see why anyone should want to do them.

Q: Do you think Darwin would consider the higher or lower animals, in view of the absence of these diseases except among human beings?

A (Dr. Cabot): I never asked him. (Laughter.)

Q: In view of your idea that law is good unless backed up by public opinion, what do you think of the wiping out of the red-light district in Washington?

A (Dr. Cabot): There is plenty of public opinion behind that bill. You can't get out segregated districts and the whole thing is back of it.

Q: Doesn't the child-bearing function of the woman justify stronger condemnation on her in going astray than on the man?

A (Mr. Cummings): Historically, yes, in my own opinion the moral weight is entirely in the other direction. The man is always the aggressor, and the woman suffers vastly more than her share even under the most satisfactory circumstances. (Applause.)

Q (Miss Smith): If education is the greatest preventive, why don't doctors set a higher standard of morality?

(Continued on Page. 4.)

Dr. Cabot's point was very well taken. You do not believe in democracy if you are not willing to trust the people with full knowledge of these things that are vital to their well-being.

What a fine thing it is that Ford Hall can so readily command the services of leading men, such as spoke to us last Sunday night, and without money and without price!

If you want to discover how much surplus income you have to go to the Ford Hall Town Meeting, register as a citizen, and levy a tax on yourself based upon your own unexpressed confession. Can you beat that for pure democracy and unadulterated delicacy?

We have voted to publish a double sized anniversary number of this magazine as soon as the editors can get it ready. It will cost about twenty dollars more than the regular issue. Mr. Fraser, the old gentleman who carries a cane and sits on the platform, started a subscription for that issue by paying a dollar for twenty extra copies to circulate among his friends. Mr. Foster made the second subscription. We need eighteen more. Who is next? You can count on Editor Dreier to make that issue something worth while.

Sunday, the 22d, is within one day of the sixth anniversary of these meetings. How wonderfully we have been blessed, and how thankful we are! Eagerly and joyously we step forward into our seventh year. The pathway grows more interesting all the time. We are all agog now to know what there is in store for us around the next turn of the road. Is our next venture to be a Credit Union? And what after that—the co-operative store perhaps. What delightful prospects!

Mr. Victorson made a remark at the last Folks' Meeting that pleased me immensely, although I disagreed with what he was saying. He feared that if we attempted to have any business dealings with each other we might jeopardize the beautiful spiritual fellowship that has grown up among us. I said I didn't take much stock in any spiritual force that wouldn't stand the strains incident to the necessities of daily living. But



## A UNIQUE TAX.

By James P. Roberts.

The Ways and Means Committee of Ford Hall Town Meeting has been facing for some weeks one of the most difficult problems in all government—that of laying a just tax. The committee believes the solution was found last Thursday evening.

The Meeting estimates that, for the balance of the season, at the least it should raise and expend \$170. All the citizens feel and demand the right of participating in these expenses. How to assess ourselves equitably or, rather, how to contribute to the cause in a manner that shall take on the forms of government taxation, is the problem. And, as happened before, the initial suggestion toward its solution comes from an old friend of Ford Hall, Mr. George B. Gallup. As worked out, it is this:

A weekly poll-tax would not be just as it bears unduly upon those whose incomes fall below the average; it means nothing to "malefactors of great wealth" if any are skulking about the Meeting house. Again, a uniform tax on all income, regardless of a person's expenses, is also not quite just—as it will be seen that a young lady earning, say, \$10 weekly, may be able to save more than many a married man with a family who is receiving \$25 per week. Therefore, a tax on surplus; upon what each may be able to lay by from his weekly stipend, may be the solution of the problem. So the Meeting adopted a "tax on surplus incomes" as its ideal of a just form of taxation.

And, when you stop to analyze it, that is about what the new Federal income tax amounts to; for its \$3,000 and \$4,000 exemptions give even the rich man a chance to deduct his living expenses—if he really cares to live within these amounts.

Ford Hall, too, is not so suspicious as Uncle Sam; for each citizen is to be allowed to decide upon his own surplus income, is to take counsel with his own conscience and then fix his own weekly tax—as the Lord hath prospered him. No inquisitions, no affidavits, no oaths—just a personal contribution of the

possible agencies for reform could be brought to her; and if she reverted to her old habits she should be imprisoned.

Let me repeat, we are facing a position threatening our physical and moral stability. Are we going to hide our heads in the sand, or join that great army whose slogan shall be to fight this beast to its death?

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTHOOD.

By Rev. Edward Cummings.

**B**ECAUSE I feel that I have absolutely no right to come before this great meeting to bring you nothing but generalization with which to meet our responsibilities as actual or potential parents, I am going to use five minutes of my time to call your attention to the ways in which we can meet the responsibility of being well informed ourselves and in a position to inform those over whom we act as guardians.

(The speaker then commented in detail on the reading list of the Massachusetts Society for Sex Education.) Here I consider there is a definite answer as to how we are to meet our responsibilities until public opinion has moulded itself in law. The

Society for Sex Education is ready to give all the available information in the best form.

When I was in London, at Toynbee Hall, it was at a time when all the city was terrorized by Jack the Ripper. I was put on a vigilance committee of residents to patrol certain streets in which these crimes had

of the larger family of city and state nation—above all, the prototype of the vocation of the strong to the weak has given us all our progress and alone can prevent weakness and make weak strong and the strong stronger the whole world better and better.

## LAST WEEK'S TOWN MEETING

(Continued from Page 3.)

The newspapers have been very kind to the Town Meeting, and with the assistance of our publicity committee we are beginning to have a good many notices. Miss M. gave us a fine write-up in The American and at last week's meeting Miss Gurney's The Post became a citizen.

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When our income tax has got into working order a large part of it is to be used to help make Ford Hall Folks the organ of the Town Meeting as well as of the Sunday meetings. Watch for the results of our activities!

\* \* \*

Women citizens of the Town Meeting are to be the sergeant-at-arms, whatever the duties of the report, and REMOVE YOUR HATS.

## THE QUESTIONS.

(Continued from Page 1.)

A (Dr. Cabot): I believe on the whole the medical profession is far freer from the taint of venereal disease than any other group of people. In medical schools less than 2 per cent.—far less than in other colleges.

Q (Mr. Bodfish): What would you suggest to change our 18th century perceptions to 20th century?

A (Dr. Cabot): A free discussion of the ample knowledge of that upon which personal relations depend.

Q: Do you think prolonged discussion of this line is curable, and what do you think of the patent medicines which profess to cure it?



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Ford Hall, too, is not so suspicious as Uncle Sam; for each citizen is to be allowed to decide upon his own surplus income, is to take counsel with his own conscience and then fix his own weekly tax—as the Lord hath prospered him. No inquisitions, no affidavits, no oaths—just a personal contribution of the 5, 10 or 25 cents that the Town needs from each citizen to close the year without a loan order.

Mr. Gallup also proposed a unique envelope system by which the taxpayer alone will know what his tax is, and this, too, was adopted.

It will be interesting to watch the Treasurer's reports and see how a tax based on honor and loyalty works in the most progressive Town on earth. An attempt to raise \$17 per week among one hundred of Brookline's "best" citizens wouldn't produce an earth tremor of interest to anybody; but at Ford Hall it will be a matter for world-wide comment and study.

#### THE SCOURGE OF VENEREAL DISEASE.

(Continued from Page 1.)

If the drinking of alcoholic beverages were absolutely abolished the social evil would be ripped up the back and its spinal cord severed. If sensuality and alcoholism were today abolished from the face of the earth chronic invalidism, deformities, premature deaths, blindness, feeble-mindedness and insanity would be as rare in the human race as they are now among lower animals. role, under the doctor's supervision. Moreover, the clerk having charge of marriage certificates should have to consult the list of those thus on parole, and grant no certificates to those on it until their names had been removed. (Applause.)

I believe every prostitute should be regarded as diseased, and taken to a hospital for cure. During her stay there, the best



Society for Sex Education is ready to give all the available information in the best form.

When I was in London, at Toynbee Hall, it was at a time when all the city was terrorized by Jack the Ripper. I was put on a vigilance committee of residents to patrol certain streets in which these crimes had been committed. We discovered that a lamp-post was worth several policemen and didn't cost nearly so much. Crime and vice, we found, flourished in the dark, and light killed them.

And that is precisely what the people in the Society for Sex Education have been doing for us—turning on the light. To be sure, revolting things are disclosed at first. But keeping things dark is playing into the devil's hands. Having once eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there is nothing to do but to have more knowledge—more light. The effect of the sunlight of truth upon these vices is germicidal, destroying many of them, and it stimulates besides the wholesome growth of virtue. When more courageous physicians like these have talked to more eager people like you, those virtues will become strong and vigorous.

We need not feel that we are destroying romance and chivalry by turning on the light. Quite the contrary; they are being killed and blighted by the darkness of ignorance, which brings into our homes these causes of suffering and disease. It is our duty to see to it that our children have this information; that we have the information ourselves; because it will add new dignity and beauty and worth to love and the marriage relationship. Parents then will realize that the responsibility for the future rests upon them. The home will be ennobled, and become more than ever before the great, vital unit of society, out of which society must be built, and the great image

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(Continued from Page 1.)  
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Q (Mr. Bodfish): What would you suggest to change our 18th century perceptions to 20th century?

A (Dr. Cabot): A free discussion of the ample knowledge of that upon which personal relations depend.

Q: Do you think prolonged disease of this line is curable, and what do you think of the patent medicines which produce it?

A (Dr. Cabot): It is practically curable. Patent medicines probably cured anyone.

Q: Is it possible syphilis could be transmitted in the individual and appear in children?

A (Dr. Wilcox): Syphilis when contracted gives very definite indications of its presence, but it may be so slight as to be overlooked or forgotten.

Q: What good would it be to have a lot of laws against prostitution?

A (Mr. Coleman): Nobody here would care.

Q: How many women become prostitutes of their own accord, and aren't there a dozen men to match every woman who falls?

A (Dr. Wilcox): I think in the large majority of instances it comes back to the ignorance of the girl, and that is the reason we urge this education.

Q: Wouldn't it be a good idea to have Tolstoy's "Resurrection" to the list of books of the Society for Sex Education?

A (Mr. Cummings): Yes, I think so.

Q: Do you believe enforced registration of venereal diseases would be a good weapon?

A (Dr. Cabot): Not in the present state of public opinion. We do not want to give these fellows to the quacks and the clerks. I think with Dr. Wilcox that we are getting there.

Q: Which is the greatest crime, robbery, or sex immorality?

A (Dr. Wilcox): That is for the audience to answer. (Laughter.)