

To Mr. Frances Conway. CT 90

PRICE

SIXPENCE

with the Author's THE Compliments.

# CAUSE OF PROSTITUTION,

IN THE FORM OF A

## BOTANICAL STUDY

OF THE FINE OLD

"FAMILY TREE,"

# UPAS PROSTITUTIONIS.

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A "PAPER" READ BEFORE  
THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON. \*

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*Printed at the request of, and by Subscriptions from,  
the Author's friends,*

1880.

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NOTICE.—The Diagram designed to illustrate this Paper (a lithographed Drawing, 18in. by 12in.) will be forwarded if its price, 6d., and a stamped,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., addressed cover, be sent to the Author,

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### NOTICE I.

The *whole of the proceeds of the sale* of both this paper and of the diagram illustrating it, will be devoted to efforts to obtain the repeal of the Contagious Diseases (Women's) Acts, on grounds which are neither sectarian nor religious, but only because of their insufferably unjust, unchivalrous, *un-British* character.

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### NOTICE III.

This "Paper," had it been all read, would have exceeded the time allowed for it (about three quarters of an hour). Those portions which were omitted in the reading are here inserted in small type.

## GENERAL BOTANICAL OBSERVATIONS.

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The Upas Prostitutionis is a most remarkable tree. Like others of the same species its very shade is deadly, but like them it is also of the BREAD FRUIT tribe (*Artocarpacæ*) and many persons who are otherwise quite respectable are forced to make a living out of it. The living is generally short and seldom brilliant. When they cease to make a living they generally make a dying. The dying is often protracted and always gloomy.

The Roots of the Tree penetrate to an extraordinary depth and it draws its nourishment from the lowest subsoils of human nature. The following "Paper" is entirely devoted to a description of these roots, but, in order to make the "specimen" complete, we shall briefly enumerate them here. It has four great sucker roots. The first of these is OUR VANITY, which makes us forget we are *only animals*. The second is OUR BARBARITY, which makes us forget that *men and women are equals* in the composition of human society. The third is called Custom or, MADAME GRUNDY, who prevents the *education* of young people *as to sex*; and the fourth is Superstition, alias MOTHER CHURCH, who prevents the *respectable divorce of married persons* if they cease to love each other. These four combine two and two to form the great Branch Roots:—Thus Our Vanity and Madame Grundy unite to form one great branch root, which is THE BAD TRAINING OF THE -SEXES in all their relations to one another, and it penetrates the educational stratum of society's groundwork. Our Barbarity and Mother Church also unite to form the other branch root, which penetrates the law making stratum and is called THE LAWS WHICH DEGRADE WOMEN, and make them *things* to be kept by men, whether they like or not. Finally these two branch roots combine to form THE GREAT CENTRAL PROP,—THE TAP ROOT OF ALL PROSTITUTION which is THE DISAGREEABLENESS OF WIVES TO THEIR HUSBANDS. (Husbands are, it is true, also disagreeable to their wives, but, as is hereafter explained, that does *not* cause prostitution, it causes *only* adultery, quite a different thing, and only a small poisonous shrub in comparison with the huge Upas we are speaking of).

From these six roots, which penetrate the foundations of society, spring the Great Tree Upas Prostitutionis, and all of the branches and limbs above it, and as we have said it is a most singular vegetable, for, quite unlike any other, it thrusts into the eye of Heaven a mass of shameless, bare and barren branches. It is absolutely fruitless, flowerless, and even leafless. The only green things about it are a few miserable root saplings called TEMPORARY PLEASURES of which one is *the Charm of Naughtiness*, which is a slight temptation to some women, and another is *Short-lived friendships*, a similar temptation to some men.

The PARENT STEM is an ugly, gnarled bole, disfigured by the fungus of *disease*, the canker of *remorse*, and the rotten hollow of *disappointment*.

This Stem divides into three great families or main limbs, namely, LONELY WOMEN, SOLITARY MEN, and "HOUSES" WITHOUT LOVE, and from the two first are two little offshoots called respectively "GRASS WIDOWS" and HUSBANDS "FROM HOME."



We must here explain that the internal economy of this tree is most remarkable, for although all of the branches grow from, and are supported by the tree, it is not at all necessary that they should have passed through the phase represented in the parent stem, but, they are all due to the existence of the roots of this most wonderful tree, and are so closely bound up with it that if its roots were exterminated, the tree itself and its branches would also die, and fade away from society. We may also mention that there are one or two other trees in society's forests that produce some branches of a similar type and character, but not to anything like the same extent.

These three great families have a most numerous progeny who infest the Atmosphere, and obscure and hinder the Aspirations of society in its endeavours to reach the clear Upper Airs of Universal Happiness and Content. For the sake of clearness we have arranged our whole specimen with the male and female descendants on different sides, so these three families have six hideous girls and six detestable boys, namely:—

Wild Young Women.

Blue Stockings.

Cross Old Maids.

Mad Mamas.

“Naughty” Girls.

Dead Babies.

Reckless Young Men.

Club Life.

Crusty Old Carmudgeons.

Wicked Papas.

Bad Boys.

Deserted Children.

It is interesting to find Blue Stockings and Club Life in this ugly family, but neither of them could exist were it not for the roots of prostitution. Were it not for these most obnoxious roots even the grandest and oldest clubs in London would very soon be deserted or completely change their character. Cross Old Maids and Crusty Old Carmudgeons are also very interesting as the direct products of these same roots. As for the rest of this precious family we all know they greatly resemble their cousins, the product of another tree of the same species, called “The Upas of Intoxicating Liquors”

The offspring of these children are a motley crew of most miserable descendants, also cousins german to the descendants of the Upas of Intoxicating Liquors. They are a band of depredators far too numerous to mention, but here are a few of them as shown on the specimen:—Nameless Diseases, Shameless Manners, Idiots, Imbeciles, Abortions, Obscenity, Rape, Seductions, Jealousies, Adulteries, Murders, Suicides, Theft, Drunkenness, Lying, and Rascality.

This Motley Crew disport themselves in the Miasmatic vapours that overshadow the whole district for miles round about this and the other Upases of Society; and all that is left to penetrate into the upper air, are a few thin, nameless, rotten, broken twigs, which represent the grand results of human nature, when it passes through the fibres of this tree, and are a fit emblem of a nation ruined in physique and wrecked in character.

All persons interested in the welfare of society are of course anxious to see this deadly tree exterminated. On several occasions parties of these worthy folks, actuated by benevolent zeal, but without any of the necessary Botanical knowledge, have organised powerful raids against it, and with triumphant boldness have cut it down with a legal axe. But such easy, ignorant proceedings have always proved disastrous, because such is the vitality of the tree, that it immediately shoots up again in all directions, and is ten times more baneful than if it had been left alone. There is only one way by which trees of this kind can be exterminated and that is by exposing their roots to the air and sunshine, for it is a botanical axiom that no tree can possibly survive the frequent exposure of its roots. And in

this case the roots are not only very wide spreading, but also most wonderfully interlaced. The two roots called Our Vanity and Our Barbarity penetrate an exceedingly wide area of Human Nature, but the two called Madame Grundy and Mother Church have shaken hands on the subject and wound themselves into a sort of lovers knot about it, so of course they are the chief stay and support of the tree. One says young people shall not be instructed about sex. and the other backs her up by declaring that those who are so pig-headed as to persist in learning must be chained together *for life*, and as they can't break that chain, they break the laws, one eats the poisonous shrub called Adultery and the other encamps below the Upas Prostitutionis

All students of Social Botany should devote special attention to this most singular tree. No harm ever comes to those who earnestly and boldly examine it, and much good will be done by frequently discussing its roots, for there is really very little known in anything approaching a scientific mode about the tree, there being nothing but a vague superstitious dread of it. It is for the express purpose of assisting the earnest student in his researches that the following lecture has been prepared. and, this specimen thus carefully mounted, because it is quite possible the writer may be wrong in his nomenclature of the roots. If so, nothing will please him better than to be convinced of his mistake, by some one who knows more about them than he does, for such knowledge can only come by investigations similar to his own. It matters very little who is wrong, but it is only *such investigations* that can accomplish the extermination of the gigantic, deadly, and persistent tree, Upas Prostitutionis.

# THE CAUSE OF PROSTITUTION,

BEING A BOTANICAL STUDY OF

THE FINE OLD FAMILY TREE,

## UPAS PROSTITUTIONIS !

ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE

DIALECTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

*February 4th, 1880, by*

CLAU D WARREN .

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MR. CHAIRMAN, & LADIES & GENTLEMEN OF THE DIALECTICAL,

I cannot appear before you without expressing my astonishment at my own audacity in venturing to do so, because, first, I never did any thing of the kind in my life; secondly, I am not at all accustomed to debating in any shape or form; but, thirdly, it was only after this paper was actually written that I discovered that your Society includes several learned professors, great scientific men, and many celebrated public characters, and it does seem decidedly presumptuous in me to address such an assembly on any subject. But, the subject I have had the temerity to select is a particularly difficult one to handle under any circumstances, and even that is not all, for, although you may not, so far as I know, have had it brought thus pointedly before you, I find that ideas on this and kindred subjects, nearly identical with those I am now about to enunciate, have often been under discussion in this Society.

However, I make it a rule of life never to turn back, or indeed to turn at all, unless I be driven, so, having offered to read "a paper," here I am!

I fear you will find this paper not at all the sort of thing you are accustomed to. I expect you will pronounce it more shallow, showy, and superficial, than you would like, and not so deep,

logical, and argumentative, as it might have been. If you do find it so I hope it may merit the small praise of being a change from your ordinary mental diet ; and, just as any "dear old lady" is always interesting in a new dress, so I trust that ideas, already old familiar friends to you, may acquire a new interest from the novel garb in which I venture to present them.

The title of this Paper is "The Cause of Prostitution." The cause of that which has been named The Social Evil. Now I know that this Society is celebrated for the calm philosophic, scientific, and perfectly fearless manner in which it discusses, or I should rather say attacks, every kind of Social Evil. Therefore I have ventured to assume for the nonce a purely scientific rôle, that, namely of Professor of Social Botany, and I invite you to accompany me on a Botanical expedition into the deep recesses of the forests of Society, where I propose to "lecture" to you about a strange growth to be found in these woods—the huge, poisonous, deadly tree—Upas Prostitutionis. You will find that it is indeed a fine old Family Tree, whose hideous parent stem has a most respectable Pedigree, and bears aloft into the very eye of heaven a swarming progeny, perfectly regardless either of the Rev. Mr. Malthus or of the practical Dr. Drysdale.

Suppose then you have accepted my invitation, and agree to join me in this purely Scientific expedition. I think it very desirable to tell you while while we are still, as it were, *en route*, the reason why I have asked you—the Dialectical Society—to accompany me.

You cannot imagine for a moment, that I would take this trouble and still less ask you to take it, merely to satisfy an idle curiosity about a remarkable, or as some might think it a funny specimen. Scientific studies are never undertaken with such a paltry object, and those who expect nothing more from a study of Social Botany are most unworthy students. If there be any such here, I advise them to turn back and amuse themselves with the sensational stories of old-fashioned romancers about this kind of Upas Tree, written, nominally to terrify, in reality to tickle the weak minds of the purient and the inwardly unclean.

The reason is this, and you must excuse my saying a good deal about it, because it is really the principal cause of my having ventured to address you at all. I have lately had occasion to study a most remarkable document. I think you will consider it quite unique when I tell you it is actually to be found among the laws of the British Kingdom and in the Reign of a Queen, namely the *British WOMEN'S Acts*. They are generally known as those Contagious Diseases Acts, which are directed against Women. The other kind of Contagious Diseases Act being directed against the lower animals. Women, you observe, *and* the lower animals



being considered, by an exclusively *male* Legislature, as their only fellow creatures capable of such an iniquitous crime as Contagious Disease !

Our Women's Acts are directed nominally against a disease of the Human Body, in reality they are claimed to be directed quite as much against a disease of Human Society. We are confidently assured that the Nation believes they mitigate both kinds of disease, but the Nation has been most carefully kept in the dark about these Acts, for they do nothing of the kind. Perhaps they may be said to mitigate the bodily disease a very little, but any purely British, chivalrous, and honestly Sanitary Act, could not possibly fail to do quite as much in that direction, and as for the foul disease of Society—the very thing we are here to examine—the greatest of Social Evils, they directly foster and encourage it.

Now this sad mistake of our Legislature is due to the fact that our social doctors are totally wrong in their diagnosis of the complaint. It is exactly as if a surgeon on entering an infirmary ward said to his students "You perceive a bad smell here—that is the cause of all these accidents and diseases." Indeed, I may liken our Legislators in this matter to rivals of my own. They are *Professors* of Social Botany, but they are timid investigators, dainty drawing-room philosophers, who, staying snugly at home, *evolve* their ideas from what they fancy, or would like to be true.

Let me, however, tell you that the science of botany cannot possibly be learned without many a long and weary tramp, in rain and sunshine, to discover and examine the objects of study in their own local habitat.

Now it is peculiarly the case in regard to the very specimen we are in search of, that most of my rival professors, who are really far better versed in other branches of Social Botany than I am, are in mortal terror about this species ; they have a miserable superstitious dread of its "reported" shade, a dread quite unworthy of the Scientific Investigator. Still there is some show of reason in it, for, to cut, to disturb, to, more especially expose the roots of this tree, too often means, social degradation, the imputation of unworthy motives, of badly acquired knowledge, in fact almost social death to those who venture to touch it. But in spite of that I have for some time been quietly investigating this species of Upas, and I find there has been a strange confusion between its roots and its branches, indeed a total ignorance about its roots. This confusion and this ignorance are in my opinion the sole cause of its existence, the only reason for the abortiveness of all attempts to eradicate prostitution from the soil of Humanity.

And, I know very well there are very few societies that would agree to accompany me on this, our present expedition.

There are very few indeed who are sufficiently in earnest to get at the real truth about things, to listen quietly to what most people consider only disagreeable, and therefore, as they say, unnecessary disclosures.

The Dialectical Society of London is, however, one of the right sort. You are particularly well qualified not only to estimate the honesty, truthfulness, and value of my conclusions, but also, if they be found correct, to give them some practical effect; or, at the least, to try to diffuse through the community a knowledge of any unrecognised facts I may be able to disclose, and thereby help, in a very practical way, to eradicate this vile and most pernicious growth from the fair woods and gardens of society, all of which it literally ruins.

That, Ladies and Gentlemen, is how I came to address this Society.

And, now, here we are at our Upas Tree. By and bye I shall tell you all about it. I hope to give you a complete and carefully mounted specimen, every part of which shall be properly labelled with scientific precision, from its tiniest sucker-roots far down in the subsoils of Human Nature, up to the scraggy rotten twigs of its blasted head, which it thrusts into the very face of Heaven.

The above-ground parts the parent stem, and the branches and twigs are supposed to be pretty well known. I do not think they are, on the contrary I have ascertained, beyond all doubt, that other Professors of this Botany have ascribed to various other trees certain well known branches of the community, which are most certainly the offspring of the Upas Prostitutionis, and of none other. They have in fact been afraid to trace them to their true origin, because, being dependent on their students' fees, they are afraid to offend them by boldly revealing unpleasant facts. But I am not at all afraid of my students, and I assure you, whether you like it or not, that there are a great many beams and planks in *every* house, and a large number of oddities and funny old carvings in Society, which are cut directly from the branches of this gigantic Tree, but are never recognised as the sole product of a vegetable so deadly, so universally destroying. For the present, however, I shall say nothing about these branches, I can only recommend you to study them, or rather their connection with this tree, by, and for yourselves.

My object is to show you the *cause* of prostitution. Clearly this is equivalent to digging down to and exposing the roots of the tree under whose branches we are now arrived. But, anxious as we are to get at them, you know very well that no tree in a

forest can be dug up, until we have cleared the ground round about the stem. Such preliminary delays are always vexatious, but they are quite unavoidable, and when properly done save a great deal of trouble afterwards.

That is to say it is absolutely necessary, but more especially in this Society, to define precisely the meaning I attach to certain words. We all know that nearly all the quarrels, wars, and bloodshed in the world have been caused by want of definition, by people not understanding precisely what one another meant by the words they used. Indeed not only wars and bloodshed, but even a considerable amount of good is caused by this same want of definition, that is, people often imagine they are doing some grand good because it has a fine sounding name, whereas it is really quite a trifling benefit, when the real meaning of that name is thoroughly investigated. In other words there are a great many moral, religious, and even charitable societies, which flaunt magnificent high sounding titles in the face of the public and are largely supported only because of their names; but if any one ventures to ask the real meaning of these fine names he gives mortal offence, is promptly snubbed and told that he ought to know. I have just experienced this sort of thing in the cases of three very celebrated "moral" societies. I object to it most exceedingly and should be extremely annoyed if I led any one to suppose that I intended one thing by a word or phrase which in reality meant something quite different.

I therefore propose to define what I, at present, mean by certain words and phrases. It is not necessary that you should perfectly agree with my definitions, but it is quite necessary that you should clearly understand what my definitions are.

Moreover, I desire to caution you that I propose to give only calm, cold, philosophical, scientific definitions, because the popular meanings of the things I have to speak of are not only sufficiently well known already, but are clearly of such a nature that to enlarge upon or describe their intrinsic essence would be a most unnecessary encroachment on the domains of indecency, indeed some people (who, however, don't know the meaning of words) might be apt to call any such descriptions "obscene," and they conceiving that to be the most fearful vice, would think I require "suppressing." It might, indeed, be an enviable position to stand, as it were, along side of Edward Truelove in the cause of absolute Truth, however unpalatable Truth is to most people, but in the present case it is not at all necessary, because our present investigations are purely scientific, and Science is herself so perfectly pure that she is wholly unconscious of that indecency, which is for ever pricking, and irritating the minds and consciences of those who know so much about it.

Therefore my definitions will be most strictly scientific, and altogether such that he, or she, must have a singularly purient mind, and a coursey obscene immagination, to be able to twist them round into something indecent, "suggestive," or improper.

The first thing we encounter, as we approach the Tree, is this guardian,—Well! we can hardly say "Guardian Angel," suppose we say only chaperone of the whole district round about it. This very well known individual "a Prostitute." Now, *What* is a

Prostitute? (By the way you will please to observe very carefully that this is quite a different enquiry from *Who is a Prostitute?* We are not at present called upon to answer that question, but if we did, it would cause the hair of not a few very excellent people, to stand right on end). Our question is only—What is the *Scientific definition* of a Prostitute? And it is not at all necessary to go minutely into the subject, because, surely every one present will know and acknowledge that a *Pro—stitute* is one who places himself or herself before, or, in the place of another, is in fact a vicar, a substitute. Also, it is unnecessary to say that no vicar, no substitute, was ever known in this world's history to assume that position except *for a reward* of some kind or other. Therefore a Prostitute is a person who, for the reward that is set before him—or her—endures the shame, or other penalty, due to the position thus assumed. [Hebrews xii. 2.]

But this does not define *the Sex* of a Prostitute as that term is *now* understood. This, however, is easily determined, because there is no country in the world governed by Women. If there were such a country all the Prostitutes in it would be men. Also, there is no country governed *equally* by men *and* women. If there were any such country there would not—there could not—be any Prostitutes at all in that country. Therefore, as there is no country governed *equally* by men *and* women there are Prostitutes; and, as there is no country governed exclusively by women, Prostitutes *are women*, and women only.

Of course every one knows there have been exceptions, but the Prostitution of men may be likened to a short lived, unproductive, and almost solitary *lusus Naturæ*. The Prostitution of Women is as old and nearly as universal as Human Society.

(Observe, therefore, in passing the extreme difficulty of dislodging it from the soil of Humanity, a difficulty that never can be overcome by cutting that down with a legal axe at the surface which has flourishing, prolific, and inextinguishable roots far down in the subsoil.)

Thus, then, we have the definition of a Prostitute, namely, a Woman who puts herself in the place of another person in consideration of a certain reward.

Our next impediment is a curiosity about this woman's business. What is *Prostitution* as now understood? An examination of this matter brings us at once face to face with the evil, bad, or as some people call it, "Wicked" features of a Prostitute's character; that is, we have imported the idea of Animal lust, of Sexual Intercourse. We shall have to clear that away presently, but in the meantime it is enough to define Prostitution in plain and simple words,



namely, Sexual Intercourse without Love.

That is the exact scientific definition of Prostitution, *Sexual Intercourse without Love!*

So then, combining the original concrete thing (the woman), with the abstract modern idea (of her business), we arrive at the full scientific definition of Prostitute, namely,

A Prostitute is a *woman* who takes the place of another woman for the purpose of *Sexual Intercourse* in consideration of a **REWARD INSTEAD OF LOVE.**

And we have also the full scientific definition of Prostitution, namely

Prostitution is that *System*, organised and approved (although nominally condemned) by Society, through which an unflinching supply of these *substitutes* is provided for the use of *men*.

The next thing that impedes our investigations carries us into the region of the Geologist, it is in fact a great boulder of very valuable ore, which, strangely enough, is found even under the shade of the Upas Prostitutionis. This boulder has many fine names, but in plain English it is called *Love*. Thousands of volumes have been written about this most precious mineral, but in none of them do I find a definition sufficiently Scientific for our present purpose.

What, then, is the cold, Scientific definition of Love?

Love is the *mutual, equal, and complete* amalgamation of the *two* constituents of Humanity into *one* homogeneous, harmonious, and acquiescing *Being*.

This amalgam is begun under the fires of personal admiration and of mental affinity. It is completed by the frequent, ringing strokes of Pleasure, and perfected by occasional thuds from the sledge hammer of Adversity.

That's Love! Society detests and ridicules the manufacture so that specimens of it are very rare, and, when found, priceless. She, however, tries to palm off an imitation of it, but her imitation is largely adulterated with *Gold*, which, being Society's most precious metal, she fancies must add to its value. It, however, makes the imitation dirty, streaky, unequal, and very brittle. The genuine article contains *only* Human Nature; it is pure, solid, tough, and everlasting.

The next thing to be cleared away is a plant of the Strawberry kind, which over-runs all the soil of Human Society. Your Botanical books will give you no end of names and descriptions of it, but for the present we shall, in its case also, adhere to the plain English name, which is *legitimate* Sexual Intercourse. What is its *scientific* definition in terms of Social Botany?

*Legitimate* sexual intercourse is the evidence and proof of the perfect amalgamation of the two elements of Humanity. It is the complete achievement of a love—*already known*—to be true. It is first the Dawn, and then the Sunshine of the day of Life. It is the climax of perfect Faith. It is the Fuel of Human Existence.

Moreover, it is *absolutely necessary* for the complete physical development, as well as for the perfect mental growth of the individual.

Society has always interfered with Sexual Intercourse. She thinks it right *only* if *she* calls it "*legal*," but in nine cases out of ten that which is "*legal*" is *not* legitimate, that is not according to the law of Nature.

Now, then, we may get ready the picks and spades and commence our digging, for there remains only one thing more to be removed, and it, too, requires to be dug up. It is a small tree, little more than a shrub, which is constantly confounded with the Upas Prostitutionis, because they do happen to have certain features and characteristics in common, although no really Scientific Botanist would ever be guilty of such an atrocious blunder as to confuse them. The plain English name of this shrub is Adultery.

What is the Scientific definition of Adultery in the language of Social Botany?

Adultery is The Transit of Venus—The Eclipse of Faith—The Exhaustion of our Coal Mines.

In well-regulated worlds it is a very rare—indeed, an almost impossible occurrence. But, if a human being finds one or more erratic Venuses flitting across his, or her, Sun—if Faith is often darkened,—if the Fire on the hearth goes out,—that individual should not only be allowed, but encouraged, nay! even compelled, to remove quietly to another world—to bask in other sunshine—to get warmed at another fire.

That's Adultery. In Society's particularly ill-regulated world it is common enough, but she persistently refuses to recognise the possibility of its occurrence, because it *ought* to be very rare. Therefore, she makes no kind of adequate provision for the event, which, when it does happen, is in consequence a great deal more disastrous than it need be.

So!—that finishes our clearing of the ground, and we may now commence our excavations to get at the roots of the tree we are studying. The first part is easy enough, for it does not take long to shovel up and penetrate the upper crust,—the every day life as it were, of Society, and that done, we expose to view *The* cause, the sole and solitary cause of all Prostitution; the grand central prop, the tap root of the Upas Prostitutionis. Now, this tap root

is so very peculiar, and indeed so very ugly, that I must ask you not to let yourselves be disgusted by its appearance but to reserve your judgment, and your patience, till you have seen the branch-roots and prongs below it which account for its existence ; because it is surely quite clear, that although this Tap Root is *the* thing, we are most anxious to uncover, our task would be ridiculously incomplete, and altogether perfunctory, if we stop short at it. We are bound do disclose the minor causes of the one great cause, we must dig up the whole specimen, and shake out even its sucker roots which feed the tree from the lower subsoils of Human Nature.

Well! What is this great tap root of the Upas Prostitutionis, the sole and solitary cause of all Prostitution? Simply this!

WIVES ARE NOT PLEASANT, AGREEABLE, SOCIABLE, COMPANIONS TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS.

A strange and remarkable tap root for the tree, is it not?

So curious and unexpected is it, that many unscientific Social Botanists refuse to acknowledge that it *is* the great root of the Tree. Some even say it is not a part of the tree at all, and others make the still worse mistake of calling it a branch of the tree. A brief examination of these objections will at once expose their fallacy.

Some say that the incapacity of wives to be agreeable companions to their husbands has nothing to do with Prostitution, because say they, Prostitutes are wild, young, ignorant girls, and those who use them are beardless boys, in the first flush of their *premiere jeunesse*, goaded on by newly-acquired instincts, by uncontrolled and selfish passions. Now, those who say this, or anything like it, betray at once their ignorance, their cowardice, and their stupidity. They are the timid stay-at-home people, the dainty drawing room philosophers we spoke of—those fine ladies and grand gentlemen, who, from lofty halls, softly cushioned and carpeted, and studded with every conceivable device of luxury and refinement ; or, it may be, from the snug family pew, similarly furnished, and redolent of fashionable sanctimonious Piety—thunder forth their anethemas against things and persons they know nothing whatever about. *These* are the cursed hypocrites who damn the Prostitute on one hand, and deliberately wink at Prostitution on the other. They are are such abject cowards that they dare not even hold up their heads in the presence of Truth in any guise, and as for naked truth, they are so exquisitely superfine that they could not venture to look—*publicly*—at any thing in that condition. But it is quite well understood that this is only their elegant way of putting it, the plain English being

that they are inwardly so deeply conscious of their own exceeding liability to guilt—as they call it—that they dare not make an honest personal investigation. Nay, such is their personal terror of being even supposed to know about it, that they make tremendous haste with their curses, in case the said thing should by any chance come openly before them.

Now the honest, plain Truth is, that beardless boys in the Woman-market are quite the exception. All authorities, of whom there are several, are unanimously agreed that the purchasers in that market are almost exclusively *married* men, and men who *would* be married *if*, first, they had any faith in the pleasantness of Wives, and, secondly, if they could not get Prostitutes with infinitely less chance of ruining the happiness of their existences.\*

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\* In answer to a question by a gentleman present, the writer said he had been prepared for that question, and proceeded to answer it as follows:— I strongly urge upon any of those present who doubt that Prostitution is supported by married men, and men who would be married if they could not get Prostitutes, that it is their duty to make another Botanical excursion to the great forest of this Upas Tree which is always open to the public at the appropriate hour of midnight on the flags of the most celebrated and most wonderful Woman Exchange in the world, namely in Piccadilly Circus. The mere shade of this genus of tree is reported to be unhealthy, but that of this species is only dangerous to those who are tempted to nibble at the only green things about it—its root saplings. Those who are proof against such poor allurements need fear no evil, and will certainly gain much knowledge and without personally, and even painfully acquired knowledge no real lasting good can ever be accomplished in anything. If you do undertake this excursion you will find that the Woman Exchange is just like every other similar place of business, there are of course a few “beardless boys” “larking about,” but by far the larger number are men fully grown up and not a few positively old. Moreover, there is happily a large residuum of levity in the genus homo, and just, as there are plenty laughing and lots of fun on the Stock Exchange, the Cotton Exchange, the Hop Exchange, so on the Woman Exchange, but it will be quite impossible for you not to recognise that the chief object of every one present is “business,” business which cannot be transacted elsewhere. Could the business of any Exchange be transacted satisfactorily and permanently by “beardless boys?” Do as I recommend, visit the place and see for yourselves, that’s by far the best way of acquiring knowledge. If, however, you wish the opinion of other observers, there are at least two celebrated authorities on “Prostitution”—Dr. Acton and Dr. Sanger, of New York I shall be delighted to direct any one to their books in the British Museum. I shall give you two short quotations from Acton’s book. At page 14 he says “The frequenters of brothels are often elderly, sometimes married;” and at page 41 he says “Take a gentlemen, A or B, in any position able to support two. Friends remark he never settles, but the man in truth is already settled, his real bower of rest is in some unpretending retreat, a suburban cottage, a London lodging” “That is of course with a Prostitute, and at page 165. he says, “one of the causes of Prostitution is the artificial state of Society



I assure you it is a total and fatal error to imagine that prostitution is supported, in any way, but by full grown *men* who are dissatisfied with *wives*.

Some people, however, will on the mention of this great Tap root consider themselves clever if they retort snappishly, "But *women* are just as much dissatisfied with husbands." To this the reply is,

"Just so! I never said they were not, but I do say we are talking about Prostitution, and the dissatisfaction of women *with men* does not lead to Prostitution."

To illustrate this we must suppose the case of a married couple in which the man is perfectly pleased with his wife, but she is not satisfied with him. What happens in such a case? One of two things. She may insist upon leaving him, but mark you—that places him in the same position as all other men who use prostitutes—it makes *him* dissatisfied with his wife. If she does not leave him he continues pleased with her, and then, what does she do? Ten to one she satisfies herself with *some other* man, but, observe, that is not Prostitution, it is *only* Adultery, and as I have carefully defined both it is unnecessary to say more about the difference between them.

But some other objectors may exclaim "all this mutual dissatisfaction of wives and husbands is only a branch of Prostitution, because the *women* in such cases become Prostitutes." Such an opinion betrays total ignorance of the subject, because *no* woman, not even the most degraded of all the thousands in London, or any where else, would for one moment—knowing all the consequences—consent to become a Prostitute if she had what *she* considered a sufficient provision in any other way; so that if her husband, or any one else, provided sufficiently for her comforts, *no* woman would ever dream of *selling* her own body. If she were unable to satisfy herself with any one man she might indeed commit adultery all round, but—*not for a reward*—for friendship, for a short-lived, immature, irregular love, and that is *not* Prostitution. It is an evil—a great evil if you will—but

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which makes early marriages difficult, if not impossible, and another is the unwillingness of many who can afford it, to submit to its restraints." Another instance may be mentioned, it cannot be called authoritative evidence, but it is notorious and uncontradicted hearsay evidence. The police of Liverpool once made a raid on a very famous first class brothel kept by "mother Davis." In her books were found a large number of "accounts" against many of the most respectable *married* men in the town. Take this at any value you please, but do you honestly think it could ever have been said if these places were supported only by beardless boys?

quite insignificant, and quite easily cured, in comparison with *the Social Evil*.

Thus I have, I think, shown you the Tap Root of the tree and convinced you that I have called it by its right name ; so, now, we shall go on with our digging which presently enters the stony gravelly strata of the Soil of Society, where it divides into two great main branch-roots. One of these passes into the Personal Development, and the other into the Community Organizing side of Society's groundwork, that is the Educational and the Law-making Departments.

The name of the first is, **THE DEPLORABLY BAD TRAINING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR RELATIONS TO ONE ANOTHER.**

The Badness of this Training is just beginning to be perceived by Society because of its other evils, but it is not as yet appreciated at one-tenth part of its real effect, and I at least have never heard it deliberately accused of being one of the strongest supports of Prostitution, although beyond all doubt it is so. Surely it is perfectly evident that men and women are intended to live in daily, nay hourly companionship with one another, and yet, from cradle to the grave, they are carefully kept apart, and absolutely forbidden to learn or know anything about one another,—one another's aims and objects, likes and dislikes, work and pleasure. So universal and so peremptory is this unwritten command that the few individuals who venture to break it are at once held *Guilty*. If a man professes any knowledge about women's affairs he is ridiculed and despised, and the woman who knows about men's business, or pleasures, is instantly pronounced a strange, if not a bad character. In fact, the unvarnished truth is, that men and women are practically considered to be individually and personally useful to one another, for the single, solitary purpose of Sexual Intercourse, so that, if a man and a woman are ever seen together, or ever heard of as having been together, in circumstances where such intercourse, or its concomitants, were even remotely possible, they are immediately suspected of "keeping company," for that purpose and for nothing else. Consequently on the principle of—"give a dog a bad name and hang him"—they must punctiliously avoid one another, *except* for this purpose, either "lègal" or illegal, and what are the results ?

One result is that there are, I daresay, five hundred thousand men in London only, who live solitary lives in lodgings, and, this Badness of Training we are speaking of, makes it necessary that not one woman among all their friends shall for a moment dream of visiting them, because clearly—so says society—if she did, it could not possibly be for any but an impure and improper purpose. But Nature drives these men to seek female company,

so they sooner or later go out to get it—in Piccadilly Circus, or some similar forest of our Upas Tree and *that* company being distinctly for little else but Sexual Intercourse—that intercourse ensues—which is Prostitution. But had these men and their female friends known anything about one another, known how to amuse and entertain one another, they would have done so, and thus our Upas Tree would have lacked one of its greatest branch-roots.

That is one result as it affects unmarried persons. Another is equally clear in regard to married men. For instance—Here we have a lately married couple joined, but only in what is called “Holy Wedlock,” and presenting what is also called a picture of “wedded *bliss*” Well! after toiling and worrying all day among ledgers and bank accounts, “Home comes our guid man at ee’n—and home comes he—and he finds a silken dress where nae sic dress should be”; and he is at once saluted with characteristic energy by his enthusiastic spouse, from inside the said dress, with the exclamation “Oh don’t touch me, for goodness sake! but, look Dear is it not charming—do look at this flounce—how do you like the frilling—is it not splendidly gored? and just see how neatly this gusset—. Why bless me what’s the matter with the man, where’s he off to without even looking at me?” Who does not know what the matter is? His head is in a whirl of invoices and financing, and the beloved wife of his bosom salutes him with “gored-frilling, and gussets,” things he never heard of in his life. The said darling wife is naturally offended because he will not stay to admire the splendidly gored dress which cost her so much trouble, and he is inwardly disgusted to find that his wife is perfectly incapable of advising him about a certain promissory note, and—there you are. It is simple mockery to say that these two are fit and proper companions for one another, that they are friends. They know nothing at all about one another, they are only fellow slaves, chained to the same oar, doomed to pull together, but they do it only in terror of the lash of Society, pitied and despised by those who are free, and with a rankling jealousy that each does not do a fair share of the said pulling; companionship is impossible under such circumstances and the want of company at home tempts men to seek it abroad—that is under the shade of Upas Prostitutionis.

But by far the worst and most universal result of this Bad training is, that the complete separation of the sexes which it causes, is not confined to what may be called their every-day business, it is even more complete in their every day amusements and pleasures. For—tell me if you can?—what is there in the way of ordinary pleasure that men and women can actually *do* together? What is there in which both sexes can personally “assist?” Really if you think of it there is absolutely nothing whatever except looking at, or listening to, what *somebody else* is doing, and at the most, that is *amusement* not pleasure, for *pleasure* implies bodily exercise, physical exertion, animal—purely animal enjoyment. Of course, everybody knows that for those who are abundantly rich, and have grand country houses, there *are* a few sports and pastimes in which women can personally “assist,” but even in regard to them it is quite a recent innovation for women to share in them. For the *rich*, however, there are Lawn Tennis and Billiards, Rowing and Skating, Hunting and Picnics,



and even Shooting and Fishing, in all of which our "Sweet girl graduates with golden hair," those charming creatures immortalized by our boudoir Laureate, can come into personal contact and rivalry with men, while "on pleasure bent." But, I confess I am myself an example of the bad training I complain of. For, what on earth the millions of women who are *poor* and live in large towns do, in the way of pleasure, entirely baffles my comprehension. As far as I can see they have only one single resource, and that is *cruel work, et hoc genus omne*. But men do not understand women's "cruel work," and, I am perfectly certain of this, they neither act a part in it, nor do they consider it pleasure.

Here, let me make a hurried note of an observation I made lately which I believe will interest this Society. I have not often occasion to go to the east end of London, but I did one day lately, when, suddenly, I found myself under the shadow of a famous "Hall," and was, at the same time, transfixed with astonishment at its most remarkable sign-board, which runs thus, "Hall of Science, Club, Institute, *and* (in very large letters) *DANCING* Academy."

"By George!" I said to myself, and am delighted to repeat it aloud now, "By George! that is a most extraordinary combination, and what is more it is a charmingly bold, delightfully laconic, and profoundly deep lesson to every passer-by, and most especially to those noodle-pates, the magistrates of London. 'Hall of Science *and* Dancing Academy!' never anywhere have I seen a more delicious and splendid declaration of the grandest and most hidden truths of Social Science."

And so I passed on to moralise—to moralise on the miserable, weak, cowardly, ridiculous, and really most deplorable, and diastrous notion, of the magistrates of London, that they can abate one iota of Prostitution, by shutting up such places as Cremorne and the Argyle Rooms.

Why is it these places were so bad? Simply, because they were the *only* places of the kind. So they came to be the special rendezvous of those who have only one, and that the very lowest idea of animal enjoyment. Those places could not fail to become the sole property (as it were) of those who make their living out of animal pleasure, and who therefore irresistably monopolised for their own actual existence a *solitary* opportunity of indulging any animal instinct.

If the magistrates of London knew anything at all about Human Nature, instead of withdrawing the licenses from these places, they would have encouraged their unlimited multiplication, they would have licensed fifty Cremornes and a hundred Argyle Rooms. Why? Because one of the grand causes of Prostitution,



one of the strongest roots of the Upas Prostitutionis, is, just because men and women have not the least idea how to enjoy themselves *together*. The whole instruction deliberately conveyed by this fearfully narrow-minded, bigoted, goody-goody, man-by-pan-by, puritanical, pharisaical Bench of Magistrates, their teaching of the people by this singularly impertinent action, is precisely equivalent to saying to the public of London :—

“Hear! Ye men and women of London! You are a base, degraded lot; if you ever go near each other, if you venture to touch each other, it can *only* be for the purpose of gratifying your lowest animal instincts, *solely* to lead up to Sexual Intercourse. That is highly improper, so we cannot think of allowing you to *dance* together. But, we are really very fond of you, so you may *drink* together. We will shut the Dancing Saloons, where you were always under the eye of one another, and of the police, but behold! we have **8,973** public houses, in them you can enjoy yourselves *ad libitum* and privately, and breed like turned out rabbits.”

And *thus* it is “They all do it.”

In other words I say to the Dialectical Society—and to everybody else—any means, any plan, any system, that will enable and instruct, and encourage men *and* women to enjoy themselves, by physical exercise, by animal pleasure in *one another's company*, will do far more than anything else to strike the death knell of Prostitution. *Dancing* is one of the very best of these means, and, therefore, the truly splendid, practical excellence of the Freethinker's Social Science, as proclaimed on the sign-boards of their celebrated Hall.

I have said a great deal about this Bad Training of young people in their relations to one another, not only because it is one of the strongest roots of the tree we are describing, but also because it is evidently one which we can all help to destroy by our own personal exertions, if we only resolve to set the example, by cultivating intimate relations and companionships with our friends of the other sex, which will do a great deal more than is at all generally believed to eradicate the Upas Prostitutionis.

I have not nearly so much to say about any of the other roots; in fact I can do little more than name them, and thus supply you with a little food for thought, with an inducement to study them more fully for yourselves.

The other great main root penetrates, as I have already said, the law-making side of the ground-work of Society. It is to be found in the fact that, as *little* children are treated quite differently by the School Board, because of their *sex only*, so, we, “children

of a larger growth," are also treated quite differently by the *legal bench*; for the same reason, and this root is THE LAWS AFFECTING WOMEN. We need not say much on this subject because it is notorious, and well known, particularly to this Society—that, in addition to their own special and peculiar Act already mentioned, there are a great many laws of this country directed expressly *against* women. Many people manage, somehow, to call these acts "kind" and "considerate," and speak of them as "protecting" women, who, they say, are "dear darling pets that ought to be taken care of." Quite so! they have been made "pets," there is no doubt about it. But, *where* is the pet that is free? Where is the pet that is not forgotten in all the great moments of life? Where is the pet that is not ruthlessly discarded whenever it ceases to please? or to be of *use* to its *owner*? From the little dickey bird in its cage to the gigantic dray-horse in its stable, they are all in "*durance vile*," useful only for some temporary purpose, for some purely, selfish, personal indulgence; perfectly useless as an advisor, despised as a companion and never thought of as an intimate friend. A woman who is a pet or what is the exact equivalent, a drudge, a pet made to do work; cannot possibly please her husband *always*, and whenever she ceases to do that, he will at once hunt up another—a substitute. Thus, all laws which establish the inferiority of either of the indispensable elements in the formation of a complete Human Being, are one of the main supports of the system which provides *substitutes* for discarded pets and drudges, that is, of Prostitution.

Here then we are arrived at a considerable depth in our excavations. The light upper soil of every day life, and the gravelly beds of Society's Ground-work have been turned up and shovelled off, and now let us have the picks and the mattocks, for we are entering upon the stony, hard, rugged strata of the subsoil of human nature. We shall pursue our researches by tracing downwards the first of the great branch roots we spoke of—by enquiring—*Why* is the training of young people so bad? which, as already explained, is one of the strongest supports of the tree. We very soon find that this root divides into two minor fangs or prongs, each of which is supplied with long fibrous suckers reaching to the deepest depths of Human Nature. The first of these minor prongs is called—The ancient and unparalleled *VANITY* of the Human Species, which prompts us to declare and invariably to act as if we believed that we are something quite different, and altogether superior to all the other animals in Nature. It is this inveterate and long-inherited pride that causes man to pat himself on the back and say—

“Ha! here you are! look at me! I am the image of God Almighty—‘divinely tall and most divinely fair.’ I am an altogether superior, ethereal, mental creature, infinitely above those miserable brutes that perish, poor degraded beasts, driven by low vulgar instincts.”

And so, first he persistently blinds himself to the inevitable fact that he *is* an animal, and, although superior, *only* an animal, with a great many purely animal instincts.

And, secondly, he calmly neglects to prove his superiority by *educating* his young ones about those very animal instincts which he knows will certainly develop themselves, and when they do, *must* be obeyed, and are the greatest, and most binding link between himself and those same brutes he affects to despise.

It is because of this most contemptible Vanity that the education of young people is absolutely wanting in even the faintest hint of that which is technically called Sex, a branch of learning, observe! *of learning*, infinitely more important to Society than any other that can be named, and of vastly more consequence to the welfare of the individual than this miserable Vanity of Society permits her to imagine. This is the fundamental reason why it is that a man and a woman are *never* so carefully prepared, so instructed about one another, as they ought to be, in anticipation of that which should, and always would, be a perfectly inseverable link, an absolutely indissoluble bond between them, *if* they had been *prepared* for it *calmly* instead of being *driven* to it *madly*.

The other prong of this branch-root is, the strange and fanatical *worship* paid by Society to one of her greatest and most cherished dieties, the great goddess *Custom*, alias *MADAME GRUNDY*. This imperious diety absolutely forbids, and such is the terror with which she is regarded she effectually prevents the few who might be disposed to educate their children as to Sex from attempting such an *unusual* course. “What!” says Madame Grundy, “tell your pure-minded, simple, innocent girls, about that low, vile, vulgar thing, Sexual Intercourse? Never! Oh fie! such a thing, my dear! is *never* done.”

And therefore—God save the mark! because—only because this antiquated oracle says it, it never is done, and so the said sweet girl graduates—and boy graduates too for that matter—remain untaught about that which they *must* learn. So, being driven by an irresistible force they find out a teacher for themselves, namely, our great original instructor, Mr. Satan, and, in nine cases out of ten, the fruit of knowledge is their banishment from Eden, and the *curse* of their whole lives; Or, *if* they do manage to resist the Devil they *remain girls*; and, as you will

observe, figure as such among the upper branches of the great tree we are speaking about.

Thus the deplorable Vanity of Humanity, strengthened by our absurd reverence for our great goddess, Madame Grundy, combine to prevent the proper education of boys and girls about one another, which is *half* the work of making them unfit to be companions when they grow to be men and women.

The other half is—(as already said)—accomplished by the law-making tendencies of the *genus homo*, so we shall now turn to the other great branch root, and follow it down to the subsoil. In other words we must discover *why* it is that the laws of this and other countries, establish an intrinsic difference between men and women. We presently discover that this great root has also two prongs penetrating with their net-work of suckers to the lower subsoils of our nature.

The first of them is the remnant of *BARBARITY* in Society, by which we still regard *women* as altogether inferior creatures, *belonging* to men. It is this barbarity which makes us, and our laws, distinctly declare that a woman *and all* of her property, indeed even her name, are things to be taken and *kept* by a man. All that the law does is to specify and define what is to be considered as a *legal keep*, the *lawful* keeping of a woman and her property. But, according to the law of Nature no *keep* is legitimate. By the law of Nature it is simply a matter of *mutual* consent. By the grand old universal law of Nature *any* connection between *any* members of the human race, which is not sanctioned *and* maintained by mutual desire, is illegal, wicked, and abominable, all the legalizing of man notwithstanding.

“Oh no!” says this Barbarity, “If a man does so and so, and so and so, he may *keep* and *use* any woman that he can *catch* or *buy*.”

The other fang of this great branch-root is, however, by far the most abundant and generous feeder of the Upas Prostitutionis, and curiously enough, it is another of the favourite dieties of humanity—the great immortal goddess, *Superstition*, before whom the *genus homo* has in all ages, till now, prostrated itself in abject adoration and most loving reverence. Indeed, the modern personification or exponent of this great diety is known to us of the nineteenth century by the endearing title, *MOTHER CHURCH!*

The arrogance and presumption of this goddess in regard to marriage is perfectly astounding, and amounts to an assumption of authority that is sacrilegious in the extreme and positively



blasphemous. For what does she do? *She* calmly arrogates to *herself* the sole right to superintend and sanction *all* marriages; and then, in regard to every one of them, she extends her sanctimonious paws, and says with pious unction, "What *God* hath joined together let no man put asunder." In other words, she Mother Church, without making the faintest whisper of an enquiry as to their fitness for one another, calmly binds together (in her "holy wedlock"), a man and a woman who are often notoriously indifferent to one another, and after being so "united" live "like cat and dog!" But if asked to separate them, she Mother Church smoothes down her sacred apron, shakes her antiquated pate, and declares—"God did it! God did it, my beloved brethren! I—no one—dare undo *his* work!"

So, failing at the "mercy seat" of God, the parties repair to the temple of the Devil, who kindly and promptly helps them to the best of *his* ability. He "assists" the woman to a little quiet Adultery, and provides the man with abundance of *substitutes*—and there you are!—Prostitution!

Indeed, were it not for the truly absurd and altogether contemptible ideas of the community as to the separation of married persons there would be absolutely no Prostitution whatever. This—the difficulty, and more especially the *disgrace*, of divorce—is *far and away* the most abundant feeder of the tree we are speaking about. Cut that—make divorce *quite* easy and *perfectly* respectable, and our fine old family tree, Upas Prostitutionis, would in a remarkably short time dry and wither up, because, although it *has* other roots, it is this one which secretes and furnishes the peculiar juices that are at once the elixir of its own life and the poison that permeates its veins.

Permit me to remind you that we are at present *discussing* the cause of prostitution. In doing this we are of course called upon to *mention* the remedies, but not, I think, to *discuss* them. I mention this because the mere proposal of easy divorce is a veritable red rag to many people, who would be apt to seize upon that, and confine the discussion to it. It is for you to decide how much or how little shall be said about this remedy. For myself, I am very far indeed from shirking it. I am always delighted to enter the ring with anyone on this subject, because I almost think I could convince any really honest—not bigoted—thinker that easy divorce would in a wonderfully short time lead to almost no divorce at all, and certainly to very many fewer *causes* for divorce than we at present have among us. That, however, is not our present object.

We may now lay down our tools and rest from our labours, for I have uncovered for your inspection all the wonderful roots of this great tree. But before we step out of the excavations we have made, I must direct your attention to the very remarkable disposition of its lower roots, which I believe is quite unique, and

is not to be seen in even the most deadly and persistent Trees, either of Nature or of Society. You observe that the two outer roots, called the *Vanity* and the *Barbarity* of the human race, spread *outwards* in a rational and natural manner, but the two *inner* ones, called *Madame Grundy* and *Mother Church*, are friends far too dear to be separated, so they curve unnaturally towards each other, and have tied themselves below the centre of the tree, in what *they* call a "true-lover's knot." By this most wonderful connection they are the greatest stay and support of all the boles, branches, limbs, and twigs above them, and, by a very singular coincidence, are the chief cause and origin of an enormous multitude, whose most conspicuous and distinguishing characteristic is that they are *not true lovers*.

It should be the aim of *this* society, above all others, to cut this most unholy bond.

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, our task is ended; let us shoulder our tools, and get out of this hole we have been digging. I greatly fear that this pernicious tree is of such extraordinary vitality that all my probing and shaking of its roots will not injure it much. But if we do not fill in the earth behind us it will be more likely to do so, and if we leave the roots exposed, perhaps other excursionists into these forests of society may be tempted also to explore among these curious roots for themselves. If so, this will do great harm to the tree, because it is a Botanical axiom that *no tree can survive the frequent exposure of its roots*.

Therefore, to this end I have the satisfaction of being able to give to such of you as care to have them, specimens of this profoundly interesting tree,\* to serve as a kind of memorandum of this evening's Botanical studies. The specimen has the advantage of containing all the parts of the tree—those above ground, as well as the roots—much more than we have had time to examine. I may also state that the whole of it has been arranged with some attempt at scientific precision and scientific method, which is done on purpose to strike the attention, and so be more easily retained in the memory. And if any of you are ever called upon to undergo an examination in Social Botany, I trust that a study of this specimen will enable you to pass with honours in your endeavours to instruct others, about one of the most deadly and indestructible growths that run riot among the pleasant copses, and in the deeper recesses of Society.

Those of you who appreciate the very wide-spread injury, and

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\*The Diagram referred to in the "Botanical Observations," page 4.

the exceedingly mournful effects of this Upas Tree, I recommend to discant upon it on all reasonable occasions. The above-ground parts may be referred to as curious and interesting, and their connection with the Tree as well worthy of independent corroboration.

But it is the *Roots* you should fearlessly uncover and discuss. I ask you on the one hand to ridicule Society's miserable *Vanity*, which tempts them to ignore the fact that they and their children are after all *only* animals, superior—as superior as they please—but never any thing else *but* animals; animals hungering for companionship, and so very thirsty for *real* love that they greedily swallow (owing to their ignorance) the vilest poison *if* only it be labelled with that magic name.

On the other hand—boldly assert the original, intrinsic, and essential equality of the Sexes in the composition of Society, and especially insist upon the right and title of *every* woman to *possess* both *herself* and her property. Clearly this implies that it is the duty of *all* women to learn how to take care of themselves, and how to acquire property *for* themselves. If they knew that—if they could do this --is it in the remotest degree probable that they would *sell themselves*, or cast their property before swine?

But between these two—dexter and sinister—lies the nombril point. I'd have you charge straight at it, and go bang through it, that is, burst asunder that false lover's knot concocted between Madame Grundy and Mother Church. I'd have you boldly demand of everybody if *either* God or Nature *ever* "joined together" two persons, who, for *any reason whatever*, wish to be separated. I'd have you strongly affirm that the chaining of them together is a vile and abominable contrivance of Mother Church for her own personal aggrandisement—that Madame Grundy (dear simple soul) has only to move her fingers, still held in the grip of Mother Church, to appreciate immediately, the nervous twitch of supreme selfishness which has always characterized this old hag's embrace.

Thus, by attacking our *Vanity* on the one hand, and our *Barbarity* on the other, and resisting our *slavery* between the two, we shall arrive at *perfect* and intelligent *independence* in the matter of *affection*; we shall enthrone and thoroughly establish the reign of *Real Love*, which will of course be the death of *Not Love*,

Which is Prostitution.

## CONCLUSION.

(Read after the "discussion" of the paper by the members present.)

I told you at the outset of this paper that I knew nothing about *debating*, and I am afraid that if I commenced to "reply to" the remarks of the various speakers, I would be likely to do so in such a clumsy manner that I would not only tire your patience, but also greatly weaken the effect of all that has been good in what has been said. Therefore I shall ask you to allow me to read (for 8 or 10 minutes) the few remarks with which I should like to close this discussion.

I must ask you to call to mind the reason why I invited you to undertake this investigation of Prostitution—namely, that it appears to be, nay, that it is, most disastrously misunderstood and mismanaged, even in the highest official quarters. It is indeed *universally* taken for granted that Prostitution is *only* a most abominable and obnoxious thing for which *any* treatment is good enough, and, above all things, that it is so very dreadful that the less said about it the better. Now permit me to remind you that this is exactly the sort of thing that was said 10 or 20 years ago about drains and cesspools, and so on, in our houses. All these sort of things were far too shocking to be mentioned in ears polite. But, with the advance of science and education, how are they treated now? Why, you have only to go a hundred yards or so to 22, Berner's-street, and you will find one of the most splendid institutions of the day—an association, with no grand flourish of trumpets, but an exceedingly practical one—of *ladies*, the very highest and most refined in the world, who have banded themselves together for the express purpose of instructing women about all sorts of private sanitary matters, which a few years ago would not have been so much as whispered.

That is precisely what I want to see—what must be done—in regard to Prostitution. Prostitution is most truly a *cesspool* of



*society*, and it is the maddest of all mad follies to suppose that we can get rid of it, and its effects, by ever so carefully *cementing down the cover*. If we intend to get rid of it, it *must* be spoken about—spoken about plainly, openly, and everywhere.

Moreover, let me tell you that the application of disinfectants to any kind of cesspool is at the very best a mere temporary “dodge”—a dodge in itself most offensive, and, *if* it mitigates the evil a little, only serves to draw attention to what might have passed at least unnoticed. Now these illegal Acts of Parliament I spoke of, called the “Contagious Diseases Women’s Acts,” are simply *the carbolic acid of prostitution*. And there is no ordinary man or woman who has any knowledge, whatever either of carbolic acid or of Women’s Acts, to whom they are not equally loathsome, abhorrent, and disgusting, equally redolent of the most nauseous and sickening associations.

But, that is not all, for this abominable disinfectant so loudly praised by its own makers, is not only useless, but actually fosters, encourages, and protects this vile, repellant disease of Society called Prostitution, and besides that, is so utterly revolting to every sentiment of justice and above all so diametrically and dangerously opposed to all of the ancient fundamental laws of this country, that it first sickens and then intoxicates to violent indignation, every honest, chivalrous, and independent Briton who has chanced to inhale any quantity of it.

Therefore if you wish to get rid of this unspeakable stench of this most vile concoction, at present applied by your government to this disease, your first duty is to learn something about it, and also about the disease it is applied to. I have been telling you about the disease. I have been explaining to you the great original causes of this disease in our Social System, and I have indicated the proper remedies.

But, as for this cursed and positively disgusting disinfectant applied by *you*,—Oh yes! by you, for until each particular one of us raises his or her voice against them we are all responsible for the Acts of our government,—as for this abominable concoction, I have by the leave of your society invited the representatives of the makers of this precious compound, and of those who detest and abhor it, to supply you with information about it.

That is to say I, having, like yourselves the greatest possible objection to setting only one view of any important question before an audience, invited, by the leave of your society, both the promoters of, and the objectors to these Women’s Acts, to be present here and to distribute their literature among you on perfectly equal terms, and I strongly advise you to embrace the

opportunity of learning what is said by both parties in reference to these Acts.\*

And now, to conclude the whole matter, let me urge upon you that if it is possible to have a greater Social Evil than Prostitution itself, it must be that which encourages and protects it. Therefore, the first step of all to eradicate Prostitution, is to sweep away that hideous machinery which so greatly supports it. And what I desire to say to this Society by way of climax to the whole of this harangue, is, that as far as I can see the opposition to these acts, at present so vigourously, and admirably, and worthily conducted is for all that deplorably weak, because by far the most essential and conspicuous feature of it is the religious ground on which it takes its stand. But all the world knows that in spite of, nay in conjunction with, the loudest professions of it, nine-tenths of the community are totally indifferent to the calls of religion when anything practical is demanded, and, most justly so, because religious people must always have an inward feeling that all that happens does so by the will of God, and that if not blasphemous, it is at least presumptuous, and quite unnecessary for them to interfere when God himself is content to let things remain as they are. Therefore the present opposition to these insufferable and insulting Acts, is singularly weak and ineffectual.

Now it need hardly be said that if the persons composing the majority of this Society could be roused to a sense of the true character of these Acts they could, although immensely inferior in numbers, organize an Opposition which would be enormously more powerful in its ground of attack, this ground being the deliberate infringement of British law, the scandalous and shameful injustice, the cowardly and cruel punishment, and lastly, the black and hideous immorality which are the outcome of this monstrous and diabolical legislation.

The whole object and intention which *I* had in view in offering to address this Society was, first, to point out the real causes of Prostitution, and, secondly, that *I*, as an outsider, might have an opportunity of coming to you, and entreating you as persons well-known, nay even notorious for your thorough-going independence

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\* The invitation was issued to both in precisely equal terms, only one came, the Secretary of the National Association for procuring the repeal of the Contagious Diseases (Women's) Acts. The other was J. B. Cungenven, Esq., Surgeon, &c., 11, Craven Hill Gardens, Honorary Secretary for the Association for promoting the extension of these Acts, who prudently (that is weakly) stayed away.

of opinion, and for your fearless patriotism, entreating you I say to organize an Opposition, which if it be humble in numbers could not fail to be most practical and so thoroughly heartfelt as to be powerfully eloquent against a species of *foreign legislation* which is in every particular totally opposed to every British instinct which is an insufferable insult to every Woman in the land, and a black dishonour to every man in this country. Can *you* not organize an independent and strenuous Opposition to these most abominable "Contagious Diseases (Women's) Acts?"

CLAUD WARREN.

