THE EVENING NEWS.

Friday, - - - October 20, 1871.

LIFE AT WASHINGTON.

ATTEMPT AT REFORM.

[From the Washington Chronicle.]

[CONTINUED.]

Mary (As much her real name as the one she bears). It is only a little while ago the police made a raid on our house, and I tremble every time the bell rings. The man who made the trouble also made the complaint, and when they took me to the police court I couldn't tell how it happened. I was so frightened and so ashamed, I could only cover my face and cry. Besides, they would not have believed me. You know our testimony is not good in law.

Mrs. Y. And the men who visit you can testify against you

Mary. O, yes; you see it ain't our regular business we're taken up for, usually—it is only for making a noise; and it is generally the men who have been drinking who make the noise; and if we order them to leave, or don't do what they like, they can go out, and get us "raided."

Mrs. Y. But don't you have friends among the policemen?

Mary. O, yes. They visit all these houses, but that doesn't make any difference. If they come to see our girls the next night, they know we dare not refuse to let them in.

Mrs. X. You don't seem to like this business. How did you come to follow it?

Mary. O, I had a child when I was eighteen years old. I was engaged to its father when I was sixteen, but he never spoke to me after the baby was born. I never could get anything to do, with a baby, of course, except this, and when it was old enough to go to school I took it away. My daughter is now at a boarding school, and she don't know what I do for a living. I send her money every quarter. That's what made me feel the worst when the raid came, and it took all the money I could borrow to pay the fine. We don't make so much in summer time when Congress isn't in session.

Mrs. X. I suppose you would like to have your house licensed, would you not?

Mary. Certainly I should. It ought to be licensed. The restaurants are all licensed; and if the fathers and mothers of Washington only knew what happened to their young daughters in those places, they would call our houses respectable.

Mrs. X. If you helped to make the laws, I suppose you would have things more evenly balanced?

Mary. I'll tell you what I would do. I would help to make the law that every man who seduced a young girl should be imprisoned for life, (her face white and rigid as she spoke,) and that every gentleman who invited a lady into a restaurant should be fined for insulting her, unless it could be proven that she understood all about it, and was willing to go.

Mrs. X. You would make a very safe law-maker, notwithstanding your business. Do you agree with Nina in believing that if such houses were closed, all women would be seduced?

Mary. No, I know they wouldn't. There would not be time for that. They would be knocked down on the street. If you only knew what we do, you would agree with us.

Mrs. Y. You believe the social evil is a physical necessity then on the part of men?

Mary. I know it.

Mrs. X. But a physical necessity cannot be a moral wrong. Do you not think then that you are right in keeping such houses, and men in visiting them?

Mary. Well, yes; I think it is better to keep a nice respectable house like this, than to have all women ruined.

Mrs. X. Do you not think the fact that this is a physical necessity on the part of men should be explained to women generally, so that they could not blame their sons and husbands for visiting you, and so that society might do you justice?

Mary. Women never would believe it until they have suffered as we have. Call us what they will, nothing could make us such brutes as the men who visit us.

Mrs. X. But why should you be given over to infamy that men may be supplied with a merely physical want? Of course the finer part of man's soul don't come into this discussion at all.

Mary. But, it protects good women, you see, and it earns us our living.

Mrs. Y. Let "good women" take their chance. The Lord never made one-half of the human race with necessities that demanded the destruction, soul and body, of a portion of the other half, that the majority of women might be "protected." We say let that old tradition be put to the test, and let women see whether men are men or monsters.

Mrs. X. And we would also like the other tradation put to the test, and let the whole race see whether the virtue of women depends upon the forbearance of men, or upon their discretion in visiting you, instead of ruining their neighbors' wives and daughters. Would you not like to see whether these praying untempted women could manage to take care of themselves if men were going to and fro in the earth, and up and down in it, seeking whom they may devour? Besides there is'nt any such danger to apprehend. Don't you know that it is the opportunity at hand, the perverted training that men give themselves, and the thoughts and conversation that they indulge in, that make this seem a necessity? If the law made other crimes so easy as this would not every crime in the calendar become a physical necessity?

To be continued.

MRS. M. RIPLEY,
CERTIFIED MIDWIFE.
Residence at S. S. Anderson's, West end Prospect St., 8th Ward.
REFERENCE—W. F. Anderson, M. D., and Mrs. Janet Hardin.
d279 7t

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