

EDITORIALS.

LICENSING PROSTITUTION.

It is a very curious circumstance in this land of freedom, that while there are a great many persons who would willingly accept severe legislation to prohibit plural marriage, there are not a few persons, some of them the very same persons, who are in favor of licensing prostitution. How people can wish to make marriage illegal and prostitution legal, to have marriage prohibited and punished, and prostitution established and protected by law, and still claim the least shadow of consistency, is incomprehensible to us.

The *Woman's Journal* asks the newspapers of the United States to please republish a portion of an official report recently made, recommending the licensing of prostitution in New York State. So to accommodate the women, as is our custom, we proceed to so far comply with the above named request as to give an idea of the nature of the report.

It appears that the State Legislature of New York for 1875 appointed a select committee to investigate the cause of the increase of crime in the city of New York. The committee consisted of three democrats, Messrs. Thomas C. Campbell, Leo C. Dessar, and John T. McGowan; and two republicans, Mr. James W. Husted and Mr. Jacob Hess. The report, signed by all the committee but Mr. Husted, was presented to the Assembly and published, in a pamphlet of 130 pages. Among its topics is one upon the "social evil," the committee recommending the licensing of prostitution.

The following are extracts from the report, as published in the *New York Tribune*—

"Houses of prostitution, doubtless, must exist, and will continue to exist, whatever laws legislatures may pass, or whatever steps to enforce such laws police authorities may take. We shall discuss this question more fully later on, and call attention now to the fact that, while we do not doubt that prostitution necessarily will exist, we also do not doubt that the police authorities can prevent its open, indecent, and offensive manifestations. * * * Many of these houses are conducted for the purpose of having the most obscene exhibitions, a fact which cannot fail to be known to the police, and yet on account of which they are rarely interfered with. * * *

"The extraordinary contempt with which some of these people look upon any efforts to suppress them is well illustrated in the case of Sarah Meyers, whose name recurs again and again throughout the testimony taken on this subject before the committee. She lives in the Fifteenth Ward, and appears to be the proprietor and responsible manager of an indefinite number of disreputable houses in that neighborhood. She has been fourteen times indicted, and twice tried; on one occasion she received a sentence of four months in the penitentiary, which she served out; on the second occasion, the presiding justice, deeming her a fit object for mercy, suspended the sentence. The ramifications of her influence appear to extend in every direction; police magistrates let her go on parole; witnesses against her, whose names were sent in to the prosecuting officers, were not subpoenaed; and the burlesque of the whole matter is found in the remark of an attaché of the District Attorney's office, 'That it was a perfect piece of persecution against this poor woman.' * * *

"Among the other curious elements that enter into this subject of prostitution is the fact that a number of houses in the Eighth and Fifteenth Wards, which are let and occupied as low dens, are owned by highly reputable people, some of them pillars of the church and State. * * * Quite a number of these persons have been indicted, but the indictments appear to be mere matter of form, as one of the parties against whom these indictments have been found testified before the committee that he was then serving on the grand jury himself. It is not a pleasing subject for contemplation, that these

most disreputable houses should carry grist to the mills of highly reputable citizens, nor is it an agreeable thought for citizens of New York that an indictment stands on record against an ex-Mayor of the city for owning a house of prostitution. * * *

"In approaching a discussion of this subject, the committee are aware that it is a most delicate topic, and that the mere mention of it seems to many people an insult to the morality of the nation. * * * The evidence before them shows, what every man knows to be the fact, that there are large numbers of houses of prostitution in the city of New York, containing many inmates, and also a large number of individuals who, living in their own apartments, continue to prostitute themselves there; that these places are scattered all over the city, in many instances being found in some of the most fashionable and respectable quarters; that many of them are absolute eye-sores to their respectable neighbors, carrying on their infamous business not in quiet and obscurity, but flauntingly, openly, indecently, and offensively; and that attempts to check even this latter class are very irregular and very inefficient. The law, construed to its letter, looks upon all prostitutes as disorderly persons, and upon all houses of prostitution as disorderly places. They are under the absolute ban of the law, and no distinction whatever is, in theory, made between them. In consequence, the result flows which always flows from outlawry, a peculiarly hardened character, a singularly desperate life, and in addition to that, in the demoralized condition to which our police force has attained, it being within the power, and being in a strictly legal sense the duty of a captain of police to suppress every house of prostitution in his precinct, it has come to be a custom for the proprietors of these places to pay blackmail to captains in order to secure immunity. The committee do not wish to be understood as saying that this prevails without exception; they are assured to the contrary; but that in many cases such has been the result, and that so long as the law fastens an ineffaceable stigma upon every house of prostitution, the temptation must exist to lead to that result, the committee cannot doubt. * * *

"Human nature is so constituted that prostitution will continue in the future as it has in the past, no matter what laws are formulated against it, and no matter how strictly they are sought to be enforced. * * *

"Brought face to face with this fact, the question remains for the legislative body of this State to decide whether or not it is wise to continue the nominal, legal ban under which prostitution is placed. * * *

"Whatever may be the odium incurred by the suggestion among honest people who have not mingled with the world, who are ignorant of its passions and of their fatal effects, the Committee are willing to take it upon themselves in earnestly recommending to the Legislature the regulating, or permitting, or, if the word be not deemed offensive, the licensing of prostitution. They are met at the outset with the suggestion that this is licensing crime, and in fact there seems to be, even in the mind of so intelligent a person as the Superintendent of Police, an objection to the word 'license.' As to terms, the Committee are not tenacious. If anybody's conscience can be soothed, his moral doubts assuaged, by dropping the word 'license' and using the word 'regulation,' the Committee have no earthly objections. * * *

"Now, what would be the good effects of placing prostitution in the city of New York under police regulation? In the first place the houses could be located; the keepers could be required to remain in certain localities. Respectable people, living quietly in their homes with their families, would no longer be annoyed by disreputable neighbors, and would be no longer constrained to run from police captain to police court, from police court to district attorney, from district attorney to police commissioner, and back again throughout the circle, as the witnesses before the committee have testified that they have been compelled to do, without obtaining redress in the end. In the second place, the whole temptation as to bribery of police officers would cease at once. Prostitution being indirectly recognized by the

law, the houses and inmates being registered, the police captains' only authority over them would be to see that they lived harmlessly and in obedience to the law. At the same time, such a system would prevent all street-walking, all indecent exposure of every kind, all offensive demonstrations from windows. Any prostitute who was guilty of such an offense should have her permit taken away, should be sent to jail, and every house whence such demonstrations issued should have its permit taken away and its inmates dispersed. In addition to these reasons, the institution should be under medical supervision. * * *

H. B. B., in the *Woman's Journal*, commenting on this report, says—

"We find it difficult to restrain our indignation at this villainous proposal, and at the peculiarly abominable character of its details. These four men have earned for themselves an infamous immortality, and if the women of the Empire State do their duty will go through life with a brand upon their foreheads as much blacker than that of Cain as a cold-blooded immolation of thousands of helpless women would be worse than the hasty slaughter of a single man. * * *

"Pass this law, and every poor working girl in New York will be at the mercy of every base policeman. Any one of these men, 'almost all' of whom are assumed by these commissioners to be now living upon the wages of sin, will be able to blast the reputation of any friendless woman, may take advantage of a single act of indiscretion, of an accidental association with doubtful companions, or even of a refusal to listen to his own base propositions, and may ruin the future life of a woman by classing her with these outcasts, who are to be forever placed beyond the pale of reformation, in a pillory worse than death. African slavery never had anything in it more horrible than this. The Inquisition was never half so cruel. So monstrous a proposition can emanate only from men thoroughly brutalized. * * *

"Women of New York, save your sex from degradation, and society from legalized pollution, by denouncing this villainous suggestion. Learn the names of these four men by heart, and whenever they are named—denounce them, as the authors of an infernal plot against virtue and decency. * * * 'If the well being, the decorum and the decency of society' can only be maintained by legalizing human slavery in its most shocking and repulsive form, then re-elect these men to the Legislature. But if not, then dig their political and social graves so deep that nothing can ever give them resurrection. * * *

EDITORIAL NOTES.

—Even New York City, that hot bed of municipal corruption, is making a show in the direction of public economy. The salary of the mayor has been reduced to \$8,000, city attorney ditto, city controller ditto, and that of the dispenser of public charities has been reduced from \$5,000 to \$4,500. How those poor men will contrive to eke out a miserable existence on those pitiful sums is an open question.

—Interviews with "bosses" and workmen in New York are said to reveal that since 1872 fully 25 per cent. of the skilled mechanics have been driven away, either across the ocean or into other States, that of those remaining more than one-half have had nothing to do during the past winter, and that it is expected that one-third will fail to get employment the coming season. Most of the unemployed men have passed through long apprenticeships, have lived in crowded tenements during the winter, in some cases in the greatest destitution, and have been glad to do any kind of work.

—There are rings and rings. The *New York Sun* relates an instance of an accomplished musician, Mr. Horsley, organist of St. John's Chapel, New York, who died of a "broken heart," and it came to pass in this wise—a new organ was wanted for the chapel, Mr. Horsley consulted a builder, and obtained plans and specifications for an organ for \$6,000; the vestry met and one of the members was authorized to have a similar instrument built for \$12,000; the organ was built and the \$12,000 was

paid. In regard to other construction and repair matters, one member had the painting in charge, and he wanted to get his margin out of it; other members had the carpentry, mason-work, etc., in charge, and they must make their margins out of the same; then in the payment of the choir, a little margin had to be made out of that, which Mr. Horsley opposed, bad feelings resulted, then an attempt was made to abolish the choir, until petty persecution wore out the life of the poor organist.

—The *Omaha Bee* says, "It is sometimes sad to note the wonderful changes of human events. To see a man who but a few days ago had the direction of the movements of the whole army of the United States in charge, now caged in his own residence and guarded by policemen, is a humiliation that few care to observe, and yet such a course is sometimes, as in Belknap's case, necessary for the public good. * * *

—The *Philadelphia Times*, discussing the question, "Shall the republic endure?" concludes that it shall, notwithstanding that "there are those among true lovers of their country, appalled by the sudden fall of a corrupt cabinet minister, who, doubtless, view the approaching dissolution of the administration with profound anxiety and alarm, fearful that once prone in the dust of her ruined temples, America will never rise again." The *Times* says, however, that, as the country is "humiliated at this moment at the feet of a world that delights to condemn us, so only can we accomplish our purification and renew our spirit," that "nothing but a revolution can preserve" the republic; that "in 1776 we were a nation battling for our liberties, in 1876 we are a nation struggling to subdue ourselves," and that "physical strength achieved our independence then, moral strength must secure it now. * * *

—According to the *Charlotte (N. C.) Observer*, a colored gentleman of that place approached a citizen, and inquired if it would be a great sacrifice on his part if he would accept an office, "For," continued the scion of Africa, "we niggers wants somebody for mayor what'll let de cows run loose, what'll let de bar-rooms stay open on Sunday, and what'll let de gamblers raise hell every night if dey wants to, and you is just de man dat we wants." Come to think of it, that is just the kind of men that certain parties are dreadfully anxious to have foisted upon Utah, in official capacities.

—Dr. Zukertoft is a wonder at chess. He played twelve games of chess, blindfolded and without any board or help, against twelve picked chess players of the West End Chess Club, London. The doctor won eleven, and one was a drawn game. Time, eight hours. If the Doctor is equally clever at something largely useful, he is a prizeable prodigy.

—The *New York Graphic* says—"The bitter and wholesale denunciations of President Grant for the sins and shortcomings of his subordinates are so manifestly unfair that they will hardly be sustained by the deliberate verdict of the country. They overshoot the mark. They show a temper which partly neutralizes their present effect. The bitter attacks of some of our prominent papers on an Executive who, on the whole, deserves well of his country, and whose splendid service in the war entitles him to lasting gratitude, will eventually react damagingly upon themselves. Their editors will hardly care to read some of their present articles ten years, if even ten months, hence. * * *

—The venerable Peter Cooper, and a writer on flax, says the *New York Herald*, recently presented samples of flax from Ohio and Louisiana to Messrs. Miller & Fleming, flax merchants of Dundee, Scotland, who use 5,000 tons of flax annually. Mr. Miller said he would take this year \$1,000,000 of flax like the sample, and he had no idea that America could raise such quantities and at a much lower price than Russia does. He also spoke well of the sample of jute shown—he would not wish any better if he was in the trade.

—A German writer says that the peasantry of Russia are in a worse condition than they were when Alexander II., abolished serfdom fourteen years ago. They do not live so well, and idleness, drunkenness, tramping, blood-

shed, and arson have increased to a frightful extent.

—Prof. Crooks, of London, has weighed the light of a candle by means of throwing candle light upon a fine glass thread in a tube, and by other appliances registering the revolutions and tensions of the thread which is very sensitive. The result proved that the light of a candle weighs nearly the two-thousandth part of a grain. Taking this as an approximate starting point, an exchange calculates the light thrown out by the sun on the earth is equal to about thirty-two grains to the square foot, or fifty-seven tons to the square mile, or 3,000,000,000 tons on the whole earth, a force that, but for gravitation, would drive our planet into space.

PATRIOTS AND PROFITS.

A PHILADELPHIA correspondent of the *New York Herald* mentions a few of the ways in which the patriots of the country are preparing to profit by the great centennial.

One man offers \$50,000 for the privilege of sweeping the floors of the exhibition building. Another man pays \$12,000 for the privilege of hiring the Bath chairs at fifty cents an hour, with \$40 on each chair over 300, the supposition being that he will need 150 more, making total payment \$18,000. Another man gives \$30,000 for the privilege of dispensing soda water during six months of the exhibition, with a royalty of 20 cents on every gallon sold, which is expected to produce \$32,000. Nagle & Co. pay \$100,000 for the privilege of printing and selling the official catalogue. There are further figures. For right (not exclusive) to sell cigars and tobacco at five stands in the grounds, \$18,000. Six restaurants, \$6,000 each, also a Jewish restaurant. Privilege of taking photographs and making pictures in the grounds, \$3,000, also ten per cent. of gross receipts over \$8,000. For exclusive right of selling guide book within the enclosure, \$5,000. For sale of milk products in a building on the grounds, \$3,000. For exhibiting a small tobacco factory, \$3,000. Austrian bakery, \$3,000. Glass-making concern, \$3,000. Confectionery manufactory and sale of chocolate, candy, etc., \$5,000. Bank establishment, \$5,000. Ten cafes (cold dishes), \$50,000. Safe for deposit of valuables, \$5,000. Sale of popcorn, \$7,000. The peanut man was rejected, with his \$1,000 offered, because of his shells. Royalty on malt liquors sold, 10 cents per gallon, which it is thought will bring \$50,000. Estimated receipts from tower elevator, \$10,000. Estimated receipts from machine shops (for repairs), \$2,000.

MARRIAGE OF A DUKE'S DAUGHTER.

THE marriage of Lady Elizabeth Harriet Grosvenor, eldest daughter of the Duke of Westminster, K. G., with the Marquis of Ormonde, Hereditary Chief Butler of Ireland, of Kilkenny Castle, was solemnized, Feb. 2, at the parish church of Aldford, about a mile and a half from Eaton Hall, the Cheshire seat of His Grace. That our readers may see how a wedding in high life is observed in England, we subjoin a few particulars. In this instance, however, in consequence of late bereavements in the family of the bride, the ceremony was more private than usual, and many family and popular demonstrations of rejoicing were forborne by request of His Grace.

The day was bright and genial. The church was adorned with ivy and floral decorations, and greenhouse plants. A cloth canopy or awning, with flowers, and carpeted with crimson cloth, extended from the church to the highway. Upon either side were ranged the school children of Eccleston and Aldford.

The ceremony commenced at half past ten a. m. punctually. The bridegroom's "best man" was Lord Arthur Butler, his brother. The bride entered the church leaning on the arm of her father, and was dressed in white satin, with Brussels lace, orange flowers and myrtle, a veil of Brussels lace, and