

20 JUL 1961

SUMMARIED REPORT

to the

Council of

THE CALCUTTA VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION

for the

years 1928-1931.

by

MELISCENT SHEPHARD

Representative in India

of

The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene

(founded by Mrs. Josephine Buttler)
being the British Branch of the International
Abolitionist Federation.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR MORAL
AND SOCIAL HYGIENE
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REPORT.

December 1928 to March 1931.

*My Lord Bishop, and Members of the
Calcutta Vigilance Association,*

I beg to present, at your request, a summarised statement of the work I have been privileged to attempt since coming to India in December 1928.

It will be remembered that I was sent out from England, at the request of the Calcutta Vigilance Association, from *The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene*. (founded by Mrs. Josephine Butler.) To the generosity of that Association any work I may have been able to do in India is due. Not only have the Committee supplied the funds for my stipend, but they have also most generously given an extra grant to make the tour in South India and Ceylon possible, in addition to much prompt and accurate information upon legal and international questions.

The *aim* before me in India was definitely outlined, in the Resolution asking for a worker. He or she was "to conduct an investigation into the tolerated vice areas, with a view to their abolition, and to promote an educational campaign upon the whole subject."

The *principles* for which Mrs. Butler stood and which are embodied in the articles of her Association, were also definite and fundamental: they apply to all races at all times. These principles include justice, freedom for all unless legally condemned, the equal and high standard of sex-conduct, and the upholding of the dignity of the human spirit, whether in man, woman or child. Such customs as tolerated or registered areas, jalpani, devadassis, child-marriage; the apathy of the public conscience; the buying and selling of mere children; unnatural vice: the

outcasting of young girls for ceremonial loss of chastity: the blindness which does not teach the truth about sex-matters, and which also refuses to provide free treatment under skilled and courteous doctors for those suffering from the social diseases: all these were points which called for most careful study and consultation with those who were good enough to give me guidance.

Amongst the latter, I should wish specially to mention—The Bishop of Calcutta, the Rev. P. E. Lee, Mr. H. K. Mukerji, and Rev. Herbert Anderson. With the maps and records from Mr. Anderson's years of study, I have been able to build up some constructive suggestions. He also kindly took me to certain Indian vice areas, for investigation, before going Home for furlough.

INVESTIGATION.

As I reported at the beginning of the Cold Weather, 1929, much time had been spent in making personal investigations, by day, and at night, into the various brothel areas, (European, Indian, Japanese, and Chinese). These enquiries were spread over several months, as friendship with women was my aim, in order to get real, and not biassed, information. I think it is true to say that the women gave me their confidence, and I can only repay that confidence by refusing to abuse it. To print harrowing stories would be an abuse of that confidence. But this should be said, and I hope the significance of this sentence will sink deep down into the minds of those who may hear it: I did not meet one woman who did not wish to get out of the life if she could do so, and who wished to protect other women from entering it. This was not true at first when they did not know me well. But as friendship grew, they spoke from their hearts—and some of the girls I have been privileged to help have been those sent to me by older women.

The Police also, specially those in charge of the registered European area, and heads of the special departments at Lal Bazar have been most courteous and helpful.

As the whole system of segregated vice areas and registered women depends upon the profits made by the trade, I would submit that special thought should be given to the question of the

source of those profits. It is because the ordinary man is prepared to pay for indulgence that the buying and selling and registering of women and girls continues. The demand creates the supply.

LEGAL.

During the year 1929, in preparation for the *Legal* side of the Calcutta work, I made an exhaustive study and summary of the laws in connection with the Traffic in Women and children, as at present operative in India, Ceylon, and Burmah. This summary, constantly amended, was of considerable service when, towards the end of the second year, the *Legal Sub-Committee* was formed.

Having made a study of the statistical returns of the 1921 Census, and in connection with the deductions from these figures, I visited the Police, the Education and Medical and Legal Departments, and Medical authorities of the Corporation. A short table of urgent Amendments to the Calcutta Immoral Traffic Act was submitted—and an application to the Educational Department for a grant in aid of the educational work carried out at Govinda Kumar Home, Panihati, was made. We urged the Surgeon General to co-operate with us in arranging lectures with lantern slides and films of a positive and constructive character.

MEDICAL.

From the *Medical* point of view, the survey proved the urgent need for a Scheme of free treatment for venereal diseases. A Resolution, with an accompanying draft Scheme, was therefore sent forward to the Calcutta Corporation, and the Bengal Branch of the British Social Hygiene Council.

When it is realised that the Medical Department of the Corporation admit that three out of every four infantile deaths in Calcutta are due to syphilis, that the infantile death rate in Calcutta is higher than in any other city in India: when the registered number of beggars, procurers and prostitutes in the 1921 Census was—for Calcutta and suburbs—Hindus 33,674.

Moslem, 5,137,

Other religions, 346

it will be recognised that the medical aspect of the question is one of considerable urgency.

The Scheme sent up by the Calcutta Vigilance Association was presented in September 1929. Although summoned on three occasions to the Medical Committee of the Corporation, and in spite of Dr. T. N. Mazumdar's kind help, the Scheme is still in abeyance, and no decision has been made.

The labour conditions in Mill areas, the methods of engaging and housing labour, and the provision of educational and welfare centres, I have also studied, with the help of the Department of Industry and of certain Welfare Workers in Mills.

RESCUE WORK.

It will be remembered that during the early months of 1929, the removal to Panihati of the Greaves Homes took place, and for two years, I have tried to help in the Ladies' Advisory Committee with the management and staffing problems of the Govinda Kumar Home, Panihati.

From the first I urged that the Calcutta Vigilance Association should sub-divide its activities, certain groups, with specially elected expert membership, to be responsible for the following departments :-

1. *Finance* : to collect and disburse the necessary funds.
2. *Social Study and survey* : which should include not only a catalogue of the existing agencies for social service, but also critical observation of the recreations of the areas concerned : (i. e. films, dancing halls, billiard halls :) the censorship of book-shops, advertisements, drug shops. To this group would also fall the duty of circulating to the youth movements notice of the opportunities for varied service. It is important to train the leisured and cultured to share their culture with those less fortunately placed. Guides, Toc. H. Scouts, Y. W. C. A., Y. M. C. A., all need young men and women to come forward for service : and in Social Purity work also there is plenty of scope for educated men and women who will give time, thought, and patience to the sympathetic handling of the difficulties involved.

3. *Education and Propaganda*, which would include the promotion of conference and study circles, translation of smaller books and papers, circulation of suitable books on loan, and the arrangement of a panel of speakers. Under this section would come the enquiry into the present methods of teaching moral and social hygiene, including sex, in schools, and the compilation, if necessary, of suitable handbooks on moral hygiene.

4. *Legal work*. This would include a comparative study of the various laws in India, Burma, and Ceylon, the drawing up of necessary amendments, and the careful watch upon intended legislation, to prevent measures passing into law which would penalise the women only.

5. *Investigation*. This group, which would necessarily be small, would conduct an enquiry into the vice areas, and the registration and other systems in operation in the areas studied.

6. *Rescue work and after-care*. This Committee would supply the Rescue Homes needed, maintain and organise their internal management, and take interest in the girls' rescued, especially with regard to their after-welfare when leaving the Homes. The *Medical* aspect could also be included if necessary ; or a separate committee could be formed.

In the *Calcutta Vigilance Association* area, it is encouraging to notice that—of the above groups—the following are functioning :-

(a) *Legal Sub-Committee*. During the cold weather, six meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee have been held, the following members having attended :

Mr. T. Y. Roxburgh ; The Rev. Herbert Anderson ; Mr. S. C. Mukerji ; Mr. H. K. Mukerji ; Mr. J. N. Basu ; Mr. Justice M. N. Mukerji.

The various suggestions for amendments received through members of the Legal Sub-Committee were collated and compared, and finally the draft Bill has been prepared, which it is hoped will be accepted by the Legislative Council at the next Session. The main provisions of this Bill are :—

(1) To make brothels illegal and to punish brothel keepers, managers, or owners, or landlords who knowingly let their premises for the purposes of prostitution.

(2) To punish those over the age of 16 years who knowingly live on the earnings of the prostitution of another person.

(3) To safeguard public places from acts constituting the business of prostitution, which is defined.

(4) To punish procurers or traffickers of either sex.

This Bill has been most carefully drafted by the kindness of one of the members of the Legal Sub-Committee, and has been framed after an exhaustive study of the laws in other parts of India, Burma and Ceylon. The recent Ordinance passed in the Straits Settlements gives a precedent which may make it possible for this suggested Calcutta Bill to serve as the basis later of an All India Bill.

Mr. J. N. Basu has kindly promised to sponsor the Bill.

(b) *After-care of Minor Girls*, which has met several times, and has issued a report. Fuller co-operation of ladies willing to be responsible for the future marriage, or work, of individual girls is urgently needed.

(c) *Finance*. In the month of December 1929, I spent three weeks visiting the different European firms, with a letter of introduction from the Metropolitan, asking for financial help. The Hon. Treasurer's reports will have given the results of that effort.

(d) *Rescue work*. The report of the Ladies' Advisory Committee in the Calcutta Vigilance Report will be found to give a full account of their work.

Second Year. The second year of my time in India has been largely occupied with visits, at the suggestion of members of this Executive Committee and at the request of the authorities, to Madras, Bangalore, Ceylon, Simla and Lahore.

MADRAS.

In Madras I found a group of interested and keen men and women workers, largely concerned, under the guidance of Dr. Muthalaksmi Reddi and Mr. Sessa Aiyanger, in working for the

passing of a Devadassi Bill, and for the Amendments required for the Immoral Traffic Act. These two Bills needed further publicity, and I was asked to speak at eleven meetings. I also saw several Indian-run rescue Homes, Industrial Schools and Hospitals, and was encouraged by my interviews with Members of the Legislative Council, to whom Sir Ramaswamy Aiyer and the Bishop introduced me. The Amendments included a strong clause against women procurers, a penalty for the third party living on the earnings of prostitution, and for landlords knowingly letting their premises for immoral purposes. I felt that the Bill was still lamentably short of the ideal, as there was no clause penalising the keepers of brothels, which would have struck at the root of the whole trouble. As a result of the publicity gained, the Devadassi Bill was referred back for further expression of public opinion, and finally passed in March 1930 for the Madras Presidency, and the amendments to the Immoral Traffic Act were passed, shorn of much of their usefulness by the omission of the clause against third party living on earnings. The clause penalising women procurers was also turned down, at the instance of the Home Member. The usefulness of having a peg on which to hang educational propaganda was abundantly apparent, as the local press filled its columns with leaders, reports and correspondence on the whole question of the necessity or otherwise for the abolition of the tolerated brothel system.

BANGALORE.

In Bangalore, after speaking at one meeting and seeing Miss Pillidge, who was just starting a group to study the question of initiating a Moral Welfare Association, I unfortunately fell ill with dengue and was not strong enough to continue the work there, except by personal discussion with Miss Pillidge. She agreed to the idea of six Sub-Committees and we talked out the possibilities. She came to see me ten months later in Calcutta and it was very encouraging to hear that, throughout the year, six sub-committees have been working hard, that they already have a good deal of literature available in Kanarese and Tamil, that their propaganda sub-committee has bought a cinema and is travelling about with

useful films and slides, giving lectures in the different villages, and that the schools are welcoming a Social Hygiene handbook which has been prepared by this sub-committee, under the guidance of Dr. Innes.

The Medical Sub-Committee has a free Venereal Disease scheme in co-operation with the expert in Madras, Dr. Happer, and study groups and Social Survey Committees have been continuously meeting during the time which has elapsed since my visit in February. A group has also been started in Mysore where several of the officials are much interested in the movement.

CEYLON.

On leaving Bangalore, I visited Ceylon, staying with the Acting Colonial Secretary and his wife, in Colombo, and later going to Kandy, a tea estate at Pussellawa, and to Nuwara Eliya. I spent two months in Ceylon, and had many interviews and visits of inspection, and attended many committees. In Colombo, owing to the efforts of Mr. Human, Mr. Hogg and Mr. John Cowen, the law abolishing the segregated brothel areas was passed in 1913, and it was a relief to find, in consequence, that the traffic in women and girls is much less, and that the moral tone of the various communities is, on the whole, quite high.

It became apparent that the great need in Ceylon is *education* on matters of Social, Domestic and Sex Hygiene. There is real demand, especially from the Tamil and Singhalese communities. There is also a need of protective work amongst the Burgher girls, who are becoming industrialised, an emancipation which is too rapid in many cases. It was therefore decided to adopt my suggestion of the appointment of a trained worker from England for a period of five years, and I heard recently that the money for the passage and the first year's salary and expenses is already in hand. The scheme for a worker has materialised, and Miss Ida Dickinson, for 17 years in Bombay, has been engaged for this educational work and starts her service in July.

Dr. Rutnam has provided a Social Hygiene Handbook which has been approved by the Government, and is used in all elementary

and secondary schools receiving a Government grant. On Dr. Rutnam's syllabus we hope to adapt a scheme for elementary schools here and to suggest it to Government.

Three outstanding points from Ceylon could influence our methods of work in Calcutta.

- (1) (a) The most cordial co-operation of the Medical Officer, Dr. Assarappa, who placed the resources of his department at the disposal of the worker, and who promised cordial co-operation for an approved set of lectures and financial help.
- (b) The co-operation of *all* Christian Churches, as well as Buddhist and Hindu, in the raising of money for the worker.
- (1) The public-spirited social service, given by the senior boys in certain colleges, (especially in Kandy at Trinity College,) where groups of boys voluntarily undertake spare time service in the town, such as jail visiting of lads, minor accidents clinic, mosquito scourge campaigns, sanitation squad, a slum children's club, and games centre, and the friendly settling of differences between landlord and tenant etc., together with the compilation of a handbook of Social Service information.
- (3) The Street Boys' Club, which provides a free meal every evening, clean sleeping accommodation, opportunities for washing and bathing and cooking a morning meal, for street boys of Colombo.

It is under these and similar influences that the street boys will learn selfrespect, personal cleanliness, and honesty.

EDUCATION.

Perhaps I might say that I feel that the great need in Bengal in *educational work*, by which I mean, the endeavour to teach people to think rightly about the fundamental principles underlying all attempts to promote personal and social righteousness: i. e. justice, the equal human dignity and status due to woman as to

man: the right of the Child to be protected, educated, helped, so that he or she may have full development of body, mind and spirit.

On my return from Ceylon in May 1930, I invited Dr. Mrs. Tarlton, Mr. Sen of the Education Department, Miss Rivett and Mr. H. K. Mukerji, to discuss the various schemes I have found to be in operation in other places, notably in Bangalore, and in Ceylon for girls' schools and colleges.

Finally, on my nomination, Mrs. Tarlton was asked to become a member of the Bengal Presidency Council of Women, for the purpose of exploring the present position, and promoting such schemes for teaching mothercraft and social hygiene as may seem desirable. Mrs. Tarlton's Committee (of which I am a member,) has made considerable progress. Lectures are being given by lady doctors in three girls' schools, and considerable interest has been aroused in Training College.

I am hopeful that, with Col. Coppinger's promised co-operation, we may be able to Indianise certain films and so help lecturers needing visible pictures to explain the points of their remarks.

Lectures to women by Mrs. Roger, and to girls by Mrs. Miller are being given. I myself gave three talks to the Bishop's College students last year, and also to Hindu and Moslem men on the Christian idea of marriage. In addition, I have amassed detailed statistics and other information which should form the basis for a series of propaganda pamphlets, had I the time or the clerical help or the money to produce them!

As you know, the Metropolitan did issue a "Statement for Chaplains" last year, which would appear to have been useful: it certainly was the ground for much discussion in Simla.

The "Statement of Policy" drawn up in 1929 was the fruit of much hard thinking, and only agreed to after considerable discussion. I do not know if any use has been made of that for propaganda purposes. Personally, I feel that the time is ripe for a public challenge. The woman's Movement is eager for service, and if we could harness that latent energy to this cause, India will one day have a conscience awakened and enlightened on the true and just principles which underlie the world movement for moral equality.

ALL-INDIA VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION.

Through the efforts of the Y. M. C. A. Secretary, Mr. H. W. Bryant, in Bombay, an All-India Vigilance Association has gradually come into being, and in July 1930 I was honoured by being elected the joint Honorary Secretary of this All-India work. The following places, with representatives from each, have joined the All-India Association; Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Rangoon, Lahore and Ceylon. Representatives appointed from Calcutta are Mr. J. N. Basu and Mr. H. K. Mukherji.

Objects. The objects of the all-India Vigilance Association are:-

- (a) To secure and distribute information regarding the various international movements for the Suppression of the traffic in women, and children, including the activities of such bodies as the International Abolitionist Federation, and Moral Welfare Associations in various parts of the world
- (b) To educate the public conscience by public meetings, literature and by other means to promote constructive measures for the moral welfare of both sexes.
- (c) To co-ordinate the efforts of the Vigilance Associations in India to secure united action as regards legislation, central and provincial, dealing with commercialised vice, and its causes, and cognate Social measures, and
- (d) To arrange for, and organise, conferences of Vigilance and rescue workers from local Vigilance Associations in India.

At the suggestion of the Metropolitan and on the invitation of the Bishop of Lahore I went to Simla and Lahore.

SIMLA.

At Simla I was most kindly received by the Army Authorities, who discussed with me the present position and their official policy. As is well known, after the Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Dixon's work in 1908, the Military Authorities have definitely laid it down that no regulated and medically inspected brothel may be allowed in cantonments or in the vicinity of barracks. I saw the Adjutant General, the Director of Medical Services, Sir William Birdwood,

and the Permanent Medical adviser to the Commander in Chief, Major Rankin, and stayed with Sir Cyril and Lady Deverell (Chief of Staff) and with Lord Irwin at Viceregal Lodge. Lord Irwin most kindly asked the Legal Adviser to Government, Sir Brajendra-Lal Mitter, to meet me, and Sir Brajendra Lal promised his support and co-operation when the stage of drafting an All-India Immoral Traffic Act is reached.

It now remains for us to circularise the other Provinces who have joined in the All-India Association, to secure their comments on the proposals for an All-India Bill, and then to promote knowledge of the principles behind such a Bill throughout the country.

In Simla I spoke to certain representative groups, and individual members have since corresponded with regard to literature and policy.

LAHORE.

On leaving Simla I went to Lahore, and spoke at three meetings, called at short notice, but representative of every community and interest, Indian and non-Indian. Sir Mahammed Shafi's married daughter most kindly invited some Indian ladies to meet me at her house, and we finally arranged to found a Lahore Vigilance Association, with Miss D. J. Mackenzie as Honorary Secretary, and a fully representative Executive with six sub-committees. This Lahore Association is joining the All-India Vigilance Association. Sir Abdul Qadir and the Bishop of Lahore were the two Chairmen of the Public Meetings, and Lady Qadir took the Chair at the Purdah Meeting.

After leaving Simla and Lahore, and after one month's holiday in the Simla Hills, I returned to Calcutta in time for visits from the workers in Rangoon, (Miss Niccoll-Jones), and from Bangalore, (Miss Pillidge). It was interesting to learn of the tendencies in their own areas, and of the great strides made in both areas in educational work and of the better understanding of the principles underlying the whole movement.

The American Enquiry Commission, under the auspices of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, have sent three representatives to Calcutta. These members of the Commission have spent several days with me, and I hope that they will have gained some

insight into the many-sided complications of the moral welfare problem in Calcutta.

The Social Service enquiry in connection with the Albert Kahn fellowship also occupied time.

During the Cold Weather, 1930-1931, I was convenor of a series of five Conferences under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Calcutta. These Conferences were attended by representatives of the Government, of the Police, of the Department of Public Instruction, the medical, legal, nursing and social workers of Bengal, together with educationalists, and heads of youth organisations. By the steady interest and attendance maintained, it would seem that these Conferences have supplied a meeting place and a discussion ground for mutual problems, and the fact that members of all religious denominations attended is also indicative of the friendly spirit in which Calcutta is trying to face the social evils. Bengali, Anglo-Indian, and European problems were discussed.

As one result of these Conferences, a smaller group has been called to discuss the next step with regard to educational policy in schools. This was felt to be specially urgent in Bengali boys' schools under non-missionary supervision.

The Conferences also forwarded a Resolution to Government, urging the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry into the avenues of employment for the Anglo-Indian community, and the consequent educational policy of its schools.

The Catholic Association of Bengal has also formed a Calcutta Social Study Club for men, with the object of discussing modern movements and social problems in the light of Catholic principles.

Another meeting, called by the *Public Questions Committee* of the *Diocesan Council*, was attended by representatives of every Christian body, to consider the challenge of the Moral Welfare of Youth to the Christian Church. I was asked to put the question of the present position with regard to prostitution before this meeting, and some discussion followed. The fact that books to the value of 27 rupees were afterwards bought from the small bookstall provided, showed that some interest would appear to have been awakened.

I was also privileged to speak to the *All-Indian* and the *All-Asian Women's Conferences* in Lahore on the Resolutions which urged the members present to:—

(a) Promote in their own areas adequate legal protection for women and children, and punishment for procurers and traffickers of either sex.

(b) To study the best educational methods appropriate to India for teaching the principles of a high standard of conduct as between the sexes and

(c) To provide an organisation which should establish rescue homes and free medical treatment for those suffering from the social diseases and to arrange for fuller representation of women as magistrates, probation officers, &c.

The Committee of the All-India Conference allowed me to circulate a short pamphlet, setting out the aims and objects (with the local secretaries' addresses) of the All-India Vigilance Association, and the speeches made are to be printed in the reports of the Conferences.

GENERAL PROPAGANDA.

In addition to these Conferences, articles have been invited and accepted by the All-India Women's Medical Journal, The Indian Medical Gazette, the Women's Outlook, Bangalakhmi, Calcutta Diocesan Gazette, The Lahore Diocesan Journal, The Lucknow Journal.

In Vishal Bharat, through the kindness of Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi, a series of six articles is appearing, in Hindi: copies of these can be obtained free of cost—from myself, or from H. W. Bryant Esq. V. M. C. A., 12 Wodehouse Road, Fort, Bombay. Similar articles, (especially one entitled "A Challenge to Men," have been printed in "Newachetan" in Gujerati: in "Arjun" published in Delhi; in "Prabasi" and "The Modern Review."

PERSONAL WORK.

Throughout the two years of my service in India, I have been privileged to help, at the request of Sir Charles Tegart, certain English, French, Australian and American women, who have been in difficulties. With the co-operation of other social workers,

especially Sister Eleanor of the Fendall Home, I am hoping that a certain amount of preventive work has been accomplished.

FILMS. AND CENSORSHIP.

In India The Indian Cinemetagraph Act and the Indecent Advertisements Act are the two Acts under which films, books posters, postcards etc, can be dealt with. The Cinemetagraph Act does not cover posters.

Censorship is arranged by Government, three Censorship Boards having been appointed, in Calcutta, Bombay, and Rangoon: these Boards are responsible for censorship of all films to be shown for the first time in India or Burmah. In addition, Local Boards, such as those in the Punjab and Madras, have the right to refuse display of any film even though it may have been passed by one or all of the Government Boards.

The Calcutta Government Board consists of nine members, Mrs. Stanley representing the Calcutta Vigilance Association. The general public could help this Board greatly if members of audiences would take the trouble to write to the Calcutta Censorship Board, Hon. Secretary, Writers' Buildings, Calcutta, criticising the films displayed. The Board complains that there are no complaints of films made *to the Board*, where such complaints would receive attention.

In this respect, it is encouraging to be able to report considerable interest shown by the Toc H. Movement, and by the Rotary Clubs in India, especially in Lahore. As the Government has now removed the Custom's Duty on Educational Films, it would be easier to insist upon a greater number of such films being shown.

In this connection, the circulation of undesirable catalogues, the advertisement pamphlets of quack medicines, and the display of obscene pictures or suggestive posters, has received attention. The police have been most helpful, and it is urged that action should be taken by all who wish to protect the general public from annoyance of this kind. Such catalogues or incidents should be reported to the Deputy Commissioner, C. I. D., Lal Bazar.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER GROUPS.

I have been elected a member of The National Committee of The Young Women's Christian Association of India, Burma, and

Ceylon : a member of the National Christian Council Committee to investigate the incidence of venereal diseases and to promote prevention by social and educative measures : a member of the Public Questions Committee of the Bengal and Assam Christian Council : of the Diocesan Council, and its Sub-Committee on Public Affairs : of the Bengal Presidency Council of Women.

I still remain a member of the Archbishops' Advisory Board, (by correspondence), and of the British Social Hygiene Council, and have been invited to send a paper this year to be read at the Imperial Social Hygiene Congress, in England.

MEDICAL SCHEMES.

The scheme for the free treatment of venereal diseases, submitted to the Corporation in September 1929, has now been handed over to the Medical Sub-Committee with Hindu, Moslem and Marwari membership. It is much hoped that a small experimental treatment centre may be started in Park Circus area, if the necessary money is forthcoming. It is important to avoid compulsory methods for the continuation of the necessary treatment, and it is only by the establishment of a large number of small centres where skilled treatment is courteously given, that the scheme for combatting venereal diseases will be launched. Through the kindness of Maulana Akram Khan, of "Mohammedi", copies of the scheme were printed free of cost, and can be obtained on application from Mr. H. K. Mukerji, 86, College Street, or from myself.

RESCUE WORK.

During the two years under review, I have shared with the Vigilance Committee, and the Ladies' Advisory Committee, in the management and staffing of the Govinda Kumar Home at Panihati. It is important to point out that, however well such a Home may be managed, the real crux of the situation arises when the minor girl who has been protected, trained, and educated up to the age of 18 years, is then free to choose what she will do with her future. Unless these Hindu girls can be re-absorbed into their own communities, and marriages arranged, there is very little safe work which, under present conditions, they can undertake.

PREVENTIVE PROPAGANDA.

With regard to the Indian brothel areas, I would refer to a successful experiment which has been made in Beirut, where similar areas exist. There, a medical man has secured a room at the entry to the vice area, which is open every night of the week with qualified men present to talk to any men who may come in, to furnish them with scientific information and literature, and to appeal to the best in them with a view to leading them to a decision to adopt a new mode of life. At the Beirut centre the report shows that an average of 133 men have attended this room every night. This group has been composed of all ages, nationalities, and social conditions, all sects and religions being represented. Pictures supplied by the American Health Movement, with the titles translated into the vernacular, have helped to start discussions, and certain lies which gain currency amongst men have been definitely fought by the issue of a scientific pamphlet to any who wish to receive it. If any in Calcutta would care to hear more of such a movement, they are invited to communicate with the Secretary to the Calcutta Vigilance Association.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I would point out that the principles on which this work is undertaken are those of justice, scientific truth, and reverence for human personality. Wherever the work has taken me, I have found an eagerness to understand these principles, a readiness to consult and to co-operate in such a many-sided work. In this cause, all aspects of the work are equally necessary, whether legal, medical, educational or redemptive. There is a sense of relief amongst enquirers that neither political opinions, racial or religious differences need be any bar to service.

Full reports are set out in The Special Indian Number of "The Shield" for January 1931 from The Association for Moral & Social Hygiene, Livingstone House, Broadway, Westminster, London Price one shilling.

MELISCENT SHEPHARD.

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