

THE COMPULSORY SURGICAL EXAMINATION OF WOMEN BY THE STATE.

SOME LEGAL ARGUMENTS.

We must **protest without cessation against all such examinations in prisons, or workhouses, or any place of compulsory detention, or under threat of compulsory detention**, remembering at all times, that "consent" given to such examinations, under such conditions, is, according to English constitutional law, "**consent given under duress,**" which is no consent at all.

In Mr. Gerard's "My Four Years in Germany," he records on page 278 the incident where, after diplomatic relations had been broken off, he was practically kept a prisoner for a fortnight by the German Government, and whilst in that position had a treaty brought to him by the German Foreign Office to sign. He indignantly refused, and said, "Why do you come to me with a proposed treaty after we have broken diplomatic relations, and ask an Ambassador who is held as a prisoner to sign it? Prisoners do not sign treaties, and **treaties signed by them would not be worth anything.**"

The attempt to make a prisoner furnish evidence against himself or herself is also a most deadly blow against all constitutional law.

All human liberty depends upon **the legal rights** of an immoral woman, equally with that of an immoral man, being treated with the same respect as that of an Ambassador.

SOME CHRISTIAN ARGUMENTS.

It has been a constant help to myself, during the thirty-five years that I have been engaged in this work all over the world, to remember the incident recorded in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, where the Lord Jesus Christ discusses great affairs

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courteously with an outcast woman, as a gentleman would with a lady.

There needs to be a great revolution in all our minds on this question, amongst women as well as amongst men, for be it remembered, that Jesus Christ was talking to the woman at the well of Samaria on this occasion, in the heat of the noon-day sun, because she would have been chased away with stones by the "respectable" women, had she come for her water at the usual time, in the cool of the evening.

Our minds need revolutionising on the question of V.D. too. Jesus Christ healed all who came to Him, or who, too helpless to come, were brought by their friends. He healed them freely without regard to their character or the cause of their malady. He **forced** no one to be healed. Such a policy is in the highest degree scientific, when applied to V.D. So complicated are the ramifications of the social, moral and spiritual causes of V.D., that to attempt to heal a small and down-trodden and despised section of the victims by means of the iron hand of the policeman (and the police-women) and the magistrate and the prison, is like trying to mend a watch with a sledge-hammer. It cannot be done.

The Christian method is to deal with V.D. in the kindest possible way, and as an entirely separate matter with the social, moral and spiritual causes of it, with special reference to **the deep moral responsibility of men**. Nearly every New Testament passage referring to sexual morals emphasises with special weight the man's side of the question.

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