

contains a mass of information upon this subject. This I have carefully studied, and the policy I propose is largely based upon the report of that very able Commission.

I shall now indicate what I think should be done in this country for the purpose of grappling with these diseases. I have already indicated that I do not propose anything in the nature of a renewal of the Contagious Diseases Act.

(1.) I do, however, propose to take power to enact by regulations an amendment of the Police Offences Act that the one-woman brothel shall be placed upon the same footing as a brothel which has more than one inmate. As the statute law stands at present, there must be two women residing in a house and conducting immoral lives in order to constitute the place a brothel. By the by-laws of the Cities of Auckland and Wellington, a one-woman brothel comes under the law, and I propose to make that provision general throughout the Dominion. (2.) That every woman who is proved to be leading an immoral life shall, on conviction upon a charge of vagrancy, be subject to medical inspection, and if found to be diseased shall be detained until cured of that disease. (3.) That every man who is convicted of consorting with known prostitutes and is found to be diseased shall in the same way, on conviction as a vagrant, be held by the State until cured of the disease. To clear up all doubt, let me say these are the only classes I propose to segregate—namely, male and female prostitutes. The procedure would be as follows: (a) Arrest as a vagrant having no lawful means of support; (b) conviction; (c) medical examination; (d) if proved to be diseased the prisoner would be held until cured. (4.) The great difficulty, however, is found in dealing with casual or clandestine prostitutes of both sexes. This class is undoubtedly far more numerous than those who have given their lives up to immoral courses. How to reach these and bring them under the healing influences of medical science of their own volition is one of the most difficult problems attaching to this question. The British Commission is opposed to notification of the disease, and, although syphilis has become notifiable for about 33 per cent. of the total population of England and Wales, I am satisfied that any attempt to make venereal diseases notifiable in New Zealand would result in driving these diseases underground, and the very order for notification would thus defeat its own object. I think, therefore, that the course to be followed should be on the following lines:—

(1.) That it be made a criminal offence for any person but a legally qualified medical practitioner to treat venereal diseases. This should have the effect of preventing quacks and chemists of any class whatever from medicating patients or endeavouring to diagnose these diseases. I cannot stress too heavily the importance of early treatment, which is regarded by all the authorities as of the most importance in order that in the earliest stages, by bacteriological examination, by the Wassermann and Noguchi tests (which I need not explain), the patient may be acquainted with his or her real condition. Where matters of such serious importance are involved as the future health of a man or woman and their offspring, quacks of any kind or incompetent and untrained persons should be strictly forbidden from attempting to treat or heal.

(2.) The next step should be the establishment of clinics for treatment of venereal diseases. Here I do not advocate the establishment of separate institutions. These from their very nature would, if established, prevent persons from going to them for treatment. The mark of shame would be placed at once upon every one who was seen to approach the building night or day. The only way is for venereal disease to be treated at our public hospitals as one of the ordinary diseases for which they exist, and in view of the importance of this matter I propose to ask the House to enable me to pay subsidies to Hospital Boards of 75 per cent. instead of 50 per cent. towards the cost of the treatment of venereal diseases. This, I may say, is being done in England at the present time, and I think we cannot do better than follow their example. If by these means we can secure that persons who have any doubt as to their condition will present themselves for examination I see no reason why we should not assist them in the earlier stages of the disease to have it treated and healed. If possible, my policy would be female doctors for women and male doctors for men at these institutions. To be effective the hospital clinics established for this purpose should be open in the evening as well as during the day.

(3.) Another and most important aspect of this matter is an educational campaign. There can be no doubt that an enormous amount of good can be done in this direction. With this end in view I propose to print from the report of the Royal Commission, in all their hideous nakedness, the descriptions and evil results of venereal diseases. With the assistance of the medical profession of New Zealand, which I feel sure will be willingly granted me, I propose to have lectures by male and female doctors available for the different sexes, in order that full information may be given of the danger of promiscuous intercourse, and that those who may be suffering may be induced to visit the hospitals for treatment. I think also that the Bishops and clergy of the Dominion may well be invited to assist in the educational work, and that in our high schools and to the children of the higher classes in the primary schools (to quote the words of the Royal Commission) "more careful instruction should be provided in regard to moral conduct as bearing upon sexual relations." Head teachers should also be encouraged to have private interviews with pupils before they leave school in order to give moral instruction and offer warnings against probable temptations. Advantage should also be taken of the evening classes at our technical schools, and especially should the professors at our universities be enlisted as agents in the educational propaganda. I propose also that it should be made obligatory upon all doctors who treat syphilis and gonorrhœa in institutions or privately to hand cards of instruction and warning to their patients. These cards I propose to print at the Government Printing Office, and to make them available to every medical man either in private practice or in hospital service who applies for them.

Special effort should be made to carefully train students in our training colleges to enable them to deal with these subjects. I hope to secure the assistance of the Press of the Dominion