SEEKING THE REMEDY

Dr. Justin Hayes Favors the Most Stringent Laws Against Abortionists.

Arguments by Doctors and Laymen Bearing Upon the Moral, Judicial, and Medical Phases of the Evil.

The Proposition to Found a Lying-In Hospital Where Applicants Must Show Diplomas Obtained Is Ridiculed Too Easily.

TO THE EDITOR: When I received your postal inviting me to support THE TIMES in the great work it had undertaken in exposing abortionists I had an appreciation of the work, more or less, but not enough to call it out of its lethargy. I am convinced that you are in the main right in the four vigorous attacks on the criminals. It must be gratifying to have so many of our eminent physicians contribute so freely and so generously to your columns. There is no profession that gives more to the poor than the medical profession and yet there is such a prejudice against them among a class of people that they will scarcely have justice done them even on a civil suit before a jury.

I am in favor of the most stringent laws that can be passed for the punishment of abortionists. Educate the people to a higher standard of morality on this subject, making the enormity of the crime more profound, and there will be a reward worthy the effort. Mothers have a right to look to the Honorable physicians have always had a great work to do in advising and instructing those who are determined, whether married or unmarried, to resort to interference on their offspring. When they appeal to the physicians for aid they should instruct them in the great danger to their own health and life, and above all things else let the law of humanity be fulfilled.

The father, whether a married man or not, who desires the death of his child should be held by necessity and by law equally as guilty punished by the severity of the law. There are times when physicians are upheld by the code and ethics of their profession and the laws of the land in producing miscarriage or taking the life of the child when the mother's life can not be saved without it. I am happy to say this is the great exception to the rule.

Twenty-six years ago I was called by a husband to visit his young wife who had been encinate three months. When a child she had hip disease (morbus coxarius) which had deformed the pelvic bones. After an examination I said that it was considered where miscarriage had to be produced that three months was the best time for the operation. She replied that she would let her full time, then "she would know whether God would have a living child or not. I was called when labor commenced and at once sent for a physician to assist me. At the end of forty hours the child was removed by craniotomy. For most of the time during thirty-six hours she was under the influence of chloroform. She made a good recovery without any sequel of the operation, and to-day she still continues in good health to the present time. I offer this case as evidence against premature operations. JUSTIN HAYES, M. D., 99 Wabash avenue.

Dr. Loring.

TO THE EDITOR: Being a member of the regular profession I have watched with more than passive interest your efforts to discover as well as to abolish the now everyday occurrence of criminal abortion. You have made public a practice and a crime which has long been an open secret to the profession. And since you have done so in such conspicuous manner it remains to be seen what the results will be. But of one thing be assured, that the practice is by no means of recent date, since it was practiced if not quite co-extensive with civilization, or at all events since knowledge of how it could be done with any degree of safety was possessed.

If your efforts are followed by any legislative actions rigidly enforced which will result in the suppression or lessening the crime I am sure you will have my co-operation, together with all the respectable members of the profession. If this crime could be abolished I believe it would bring about a moral and social revolution unequaled for good by no combined effort ever made for the benefit of this country. But if the guilty are allowed to go unpunished after giving the subject such publicity I can certainly see that not only no good will come of it but on the contrary great harm, as what has been said will tend to advertise the parties who for a paltry sum will be guilty of such murderous deeds, and has instructed others who are equally as devoid of scruples how they can practice when the occasion requires. In other words I am of the opinion that the making of crime public without punishment only tends to make criminals more criminal and teaches others the art of committing crime.

I also see that the remedy is not so easily obtained as at first would seem apparent. Dr. Belfield's suggestions are good and so are Dr. Byford's. But if one or both of their suggestions were carried out in full I doubt if the result in the aggregate would be materially changed. A lying-in hospital should certainly be provided in all great cities and would no doubt afford a refuge for many unfortunate women where they might bear their shame without committing additional crime. If the crime was limited to cities, such an institution would seem to meet the indications. But the practice, I think, is as universal in small towns and rural districts as in large cities. And hence lying-in hospitals in cities, even though they open their doors to all unfortunates, would be of little or no aid to a great many who would prefer to hide their guilt, as in absence from home and a residence in the city without some plausible excuse would of itself convict a girl of questionable conduct; to be more fortunate if not more virtuous, sister.

Still the practice of criminal abortion is by no means limited to the unfortunate, so called, or the unmarried. But it has become the too common practice in many families whose social standing and reputation is unquestioned, and the crime is as great in one class of cases as in the other. Many young married people are unwilling to lose their place in society or assume the increased duties of bringing up a family will resort to almost any means in their reach to avoid it. The facts are they do not, or, at least, many of them do not, believe that it is a crime if done as early as the second month. You can not teach them that a fœtus one day old is as much a separate being as a fœtus six months old, and that the destruction of one is as much a crime as the other. They will often construe the arguments used to convince them that it is a crime as a means employed to evade compliance with the request. Thus they will go from one physician to another until they find some unscrupulous villain who will do the work. The physician who has once fallen a prey to some influence of this kind, and is induced to commit abortion, is a ruined man who has once sacrificed her virtue. They generally thereafter become easy and often willing victims.

But how to stop this is the question, a People are born with certain traits, and physicians are only men after all, and if they are not naturally strong moral men, and hold strong moral views on all such subjects, I doubt that it will be in the power of society to make them honest, decent, moral men. Society can't teach them that education tends to make people more criminal in many instances, or create in them a disposition to be honest. Knowledge is power, but while a power for good when unrestrained by a strong natural moral tendency may become equally so for bad.

The medical profession is now crowded to its utmost capacity and our medical colleges are still using all their means at command to induce young men to enter the profession. And a diploma is recognized as evidence that the holder is a man who possesses a good moral character as well as skilled in the duties required of him in his profession, while in fact it takes take them in the aggregate they are evidence of neither.

Medical institutions are institutions, whose purpose should be limited to imparting instruction. The state should reserve to itself the right to pass upon a man's moral character as well as professional attainments; in other words, no diplomas should be received as evidence of any of the qualifications a man should possess to enter upon the profession of medicine. Every applicant should be required to pass examination before a state board, as well as submit evidence in proof of moral qualifications, and the state board should be given authority to revoke license at any time and for any cause that in their opinion they deem just. The offer in the way of special advertisement of nostrums or any secret remedy or method should be prohibited under the severest penalties of the law. To evoke license. Burial permits should be required in all cases of, death and in every case where the evidence should any suspicion of foul play exist the coroner and coroner's jury should be empowered to investigate the case, and no corpse should be laid away in the grave or cremated in the crematory without a certificate from the coroner. Such that time the enormous fees of physicians has immediately been with a view to competition would be done away with. As it is at present physicians are frequently called to attend families, and after waiting days and nights, and perhaps weeks, in the sick room, are finally informed that their services are no longer required. The wife in this case is much pleased with the physician, for she can now afford to lose any time waiting on her family more than she can afford. It is not a question of morals with her, but of economy. It is a question of economy with the husband, and he can not afford to view it, necessarily. The upper classes do all they can to aggravate the situation. An instance I recently heard of a few days ago. The family physician was running an elevator for $12 a week. His family were living on that amount and his wife finally got tired of living on such low fare. Another man applied for his situation, offering to run the elevator for $8 a week and put the job. His wife was looking at the matter from a different point of view. They had no family, the other man had. The employer could have afforded to pay the family man the higher wages, but ought he not to do so? Would it not be a premium for a man to get married? Would it not be a step in the direction of encouraging the increase of population? Would it not be a step in the direction of encouraging the increase of population? Would it not be a step in the direction of encouraging the increase of population