

men there must be to keep all this up, and of the amount of money that must be spent in this vice. They talked of the money spent in gambling and in drink, but more money was spent in this vice than in any other, because the magnificent houses which they saw could not be maintained otherwise. They talked of commercial depression. He would take every opportunity he could to refute any statement of this kind, because there could be no commercial depression with the amount of money spent in gambling, drink, and this terrible vice. At the close of his visit to the twenty-four houses he asked his friend, What is the beginning of the lives which these girls lead? He replied that they began perhaps in the suburbs by going out late at night—going out to parties and out to dances every night, staying late at night, and going home with men whom they had never seen before, and liberties were taken and allowed, and the girls gradually sank to their life of degradation. He (Mr. Monro) believed that this was one of the reasons. He would like to mention that there were in Auckland what were called brothel-agents, who laid themselves out to entice girls to ruin, and to get hold of men to go to these houses. There were married men who sent their wives out on the streets, and lived by their prostitution; there were mothers who sent their daughters out on the streets, and lived by their prostitution. He and the detective had visited the houses of some of these people. And there was no remedy for this state of things. They had no Magdalen Institution or other institution of this kind in Auckland to reach this class. They had the Salvation Army doing work.—(A voice: “Mrs. Cowie’s Home.”)—Mrs. Cowie’s Home did not reach this class at all; it was for servant girls who happened to be unfortunate, and who went in there for a time, and then went away again. The Church could not get into these places of which he had spoken; there were chains on the doors, and they could not get in unless they went as he had gone. A minister could never get in unless he went in secret. He had learned from a warehouse chemist that the disease which went along with this vice, with which God had branded this vice—that that disease had increased to an enormous extent, because the sale of medicines had increased. If all these facts were correct, what was their duty in regard to them? Were they to shut their eyes and fold their arms and do nothing? His purpose in visiting these places had not been curiosity; he had gone to see the evils, and to endeavour to discover the remedy. He believed one of the causes was what he had stated—this staying out late at night, and these dances; and he believed that the Christian Church ought to take a very definite stand in regard to this, and denounce it in unmeasured terms. There were other reasons—for instance, the climate, or if a number of men-of-war vessels came into this port a certain class of girls crowded into Auckland. Another cause might be found in the great amount of flesh that was eaten here, heating the blood and causing sensuality. There were, then, two kinds of remedies—legislative and moral. As to the legislative remedies, many of them had no sympathy with the C.D. Act.—(Mr. Carrick: “Certainly not.”)—Well, he (Mr. Monro) had had no sympathy with it for a long time. He had, however, gone every month to the Lock Hospital, to speak to the inmates—he believed he was the only minister in the city who had done so, outside of Mr. Brakenrig. When he first went there were twelve or fourteen girls there; when he last went there were four or six. The inference from this was, that the disease was being lessened. Half a loaf was better than nothing, and if the disease was being lessened by the existence of that Act he would support the measure. Of course they knew the argument—his own argument—that it made vice easier for men. Well, if these facts were right the C.D. Act lessened prostitution and disease; and at present the girls of that class were swarming the city, and even soliciting by day. It might be said that the police could stop this, but the police could not do it; the police were powerless unless they awakened public opinion, and the police could not go into these houses unless they were disorderly. As they knew, the age of consent had been raised, but he thought they might insist upon some more stringent measures in this direction. Then, there was the literature which existed. Again, if they went into the streets of this city they might see in tobacconists’ shop-windows pictures that awakened at once evil desires. Mr. Monro mentioned a letter which had been received from the Ministers’ Association of Invercargill, containing a warning against a book recently issued there, and put forth as a classical work. He went on to point out that it was through evil literature and pictures such as those he had mentioned that a great deal of what he had spoken of was fostered. He would like very much to see established in Auckland a reformatory for those beginning that life—girls of thirteen or fourteen years. For those who had been living in that way for a long time, there was, humanly speaking, very little hope. They had no Magdalen Institution here, as in Glasgow and other large cities. He would put a hypothetical case. Supposing a girl went to the police office, and wanted to see a medical man; she was suffering from this disease; where is she to go? She is sent to the Hospital, to take a bed in the open ward, and she may be put next to a pure and most respectable woman. Was this a right state of matters?—(No.)—He maintained that it was not. Thoughts might be put into the mind of that pure and innocent woman which she might never otherwise have known, and it was absolutely necessary in cases of this kind that there should be isolation. The Church folded her arms, and matters went on, and the evil was increasing. Mr. Monro apologized to the Presbytery for his remarks, saying that he had gone further into details than he ought to have done.

The Moderator agreed with Mr. Monro, that measures should be taken for the punishment of the men, who were really the cause of it all. He would save the women and punish the men, if he could.

The Rev. R. Sommerville said that, as he was the means of bringing Mr. Monro out, it fell to him to say that it was a wise thing that Mr. Monro had been drawn out. The statement he had made was of great value, and he had not said a word out of place.—(Hear, hear.)—That very morning, when he (Mr. Sommerville) was coming to town, he saw displayed on the walls great placards, which he found mentioned a certain medicine. These placards were exceedingly suggestive of the state of immorality in Auckland. They would agree that Mr. Monro had taken a very wise course in making himself familiar with this subject. It was a bold thing for him to do, and he deserved not only their thanks, but the thanks of the whole community, for the manner in