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of human bisexuality, showing forth the possibility of a sensitive, harmonious balance between the heterosexual and homosexual components of human nature, and the artificiality, the crudity of the view which insists that a man must be either the one thing or the other, either a lover of men or of women, when the truth about him is that the completest man is he who freely and with sincerity loves both. At the same time, Mary Renault shows us a world in which both exclusive heterosexuality and exclusive homosexuality were tolerated and respected. It was not supposed that the sexual needs and tastes of all men were, or ought to be, the same. In the second place, the quality of a man and the quality of his beloved mattered more than the sex of the individuals.

The most dubious thing about the homosexual cause is that it is forced to defend sex for sex's sake with no qualitative distinctions between honorable and dishonorable modes of loving, with no distinction between the self-respecting and the gutless, with no distinction between devotion and mere sensuality. Those wrapped up in the homosexual cause tend to lose sight of such distinctions, I believe. It is at least ridiculous to find oneself a «crusader» for kinds of love which are irresponsible and sordid as well as for love which is characterful and good. *The Last of the Wine* confronts us with such qualitative, ethical distinctions in such a way that few of us, perhaps, will be able to put the book down without a rather shamed realization of how far we have strayed from the standards of our youth while, at the same time, it restores our confidence in those standards and inspires us to rededicate ourselves to them.

I suppose I ought to mention the novel's few slight faults. They are relative faults which would not be apparent at all if the book were not so extraordinarily good. Well, Alexias seems to have too orderly a grasp, too clear a perspective of Athenian political and military affairs for a boy of fifteen. The relationship between Alexias and Lysis sometimes seems a little too noble to be true. When Lysis marries, Alexias conquers his quite understandable jealousy much too easily . . . It is said that love needs something to forgive. *The Last of the Wine* is a novel which it would be impossible not to love. It is easy to forgive faults which are only those of a fond parent who slightly over-idealizes her children.

*The Last of the Wine* has been scheduled for publication in the United States by Pantheon Books, on October 15th. Price 4.50 dollars.

Luther Allen.

## What is sinful is not always criminal

In the most outspoken declaration on sex ever made in Britain by religious leaders, the Church of England today urges that—

1. Homosexuals should be accepted into the homes of normal people.
2. Consenting homosexuality between adults in private should not be punished.
3. Street prostitutes should not be convicted without corroborative evidence

—which means that the man who has been solicited would have to be called as a witness.

4. The words «prostitute» and «common prostitute» should be erased from the law books.

The Church's Moral Welfare Council has already made these startling recommendations in evidence to the Government Departmental Committee set up to investigate homosexuality and prostitution.

The Council's evidence to the committee is published today under the title «Sexual Offenders and Social Punishment.»

On prostitution, it says: «Nothing less than a revolution in our ideas of «sex» is required before the problem can be handled with any success.»

It charges men with being responsible for prostitution; and says present court proceedings against prostitutes are a farce.

And in a plea for better treatment of the homosexual, it says: *The fornicator and the adulterer who do more social damage go unpunished. Why penalise the homosexual for his private sex habits?*

In a foreword to the report, the Bishop of St. Albans, Dr. Michael Gresford Jones, says: «With prostitution, we see the law administered so mechanically, and the fines and publicity accepted so lightly, that justice is brought into contempt.

*«On the other hand, with homosexual offences, the law seems sometimes to reach to the other extreme, and men pay the price of blackmail or even suicide to avoid conviction and a heavy prison sentence.»*

#### *«Misguided» parents*

Main cause of homosexuality, states the report, is an unsatisfactory emotional adjustment in childhood.

This can be due either to divorce or the death or absence of a father or mother.

Blame is also laid on «misguided» parents who stop boys and girls from playing together and a revision of conventional notions of what is «manly» and «womanly» is called for.

*But homosexuality in boarding schools has been exaggerated, the report says.*

The danger there lies in the «unbalanced» environment in which children are required to spend their formative years.

«Segregation in the armed forces or in prison has been known in some cases to cause a permanent homosexual «attitude» to life.

«The consequences of the peace-time conscription of large numbers of young men for national service ought not to be overlooked; nor ought those of overcrowding in prisons and reformatories.»

There is no evidence that the average homosexual was likely to corrupt boys or youths nor was there any to suggest that homosexual practices were either more or less harmful than normal practices.

There is no cure for the real homosexual, says the report.

«The best help that the real invert can be given is the promotion of mutual sympathetic adjustment between himself or herself and the rest of society.»

And people are urged to take them into normal, happy homes.

*«Many inverts feel that their condition gives them the opportunity to make a definite and unique contribution to the good of the community, if only society would accept them with understanding and sympathy.»*

The report adds: «The problem will remain until better marriages, happier family relationships and more settled and secure conditions of life eliminate some of the chief causes.»

The council wants the present homosexual laws scrapped. It suggests, instead, an act which would penalise those who practiced or attempted to practice homosexuality:

1. with any young person under the age of legal assent (which should be raised from 16 to 17);
2. in circumstances constituting a public nuisance or an infringement of public decency; or
3. involving assault, violence, fraud or duress.

And in each case the penalty should take into account the physical and psychological condition of the offender.

*From: Daily Herald, London.*

### *Letters to the Editor*

Dear Sir,

I should like to seize the opportunity of thanking you for the last three issues of *der Kreis* which I have received, lately, to express my admiration for the excellent production of your magazine, both as regards its editorship, as well as its highly artistic illustrations.

Apart from the noble human cause you are endeavouring to achieve, *der Kreis* is actually rendering a no less important service to its readers. I am inclined to believe that every one of them is indebted to you for the solace, consolation and encouragement he is finding in its priceless pages.

A. Sh.

Gentlemen,

I should like to go on record as being truly appreciative of your interest towards the writer for treating my enquiries so diligently, your providing me with a membership card as well as all the pertinent information in regard to your activities and details relative to the exchange of correspondence with other members and your staff.

Although my knowledge of the German language is very limited, I manage to understand somehow to a certain extent the majority of articles published in «*der Kreis*». I will admit however that I feel much more at home reading French which is my mother-tongue and English with which I am fully conversant. Many a praise to your fine magazine which has so far provided me with some delightful entertainment in reading, and may you know that I am always eagerly looking forward to receiving the next issue.

«*Der Kreis*» has so far known very little publicity in this part of the country and you may rest assured that I shall spare no effort in bringing «*Der Kreis*» to the attention of many of my good friends whom, I trust, will join the ranks shortly.

Subscriber No. 3148.