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Norman Douglas on Homosexuality

1.) Here (in homosexuality) we have a constant and well-marked variety or 'sport' of our species — a variety which has existed from time immemorial among all races of man and in every walk of life — a variety which has given to mankind, *caeteris paribus*, as much of beauty and of use as has any other section of the community — a variety which, in typical specimens, is as persistive as the blue-winged teal, though not so rare.

2.) It has been proposed to 'cure' this variety. To attain this end, their cooperation is required. Do they wish to cooperate? I have questioned some fifteen or twenty of them: would they like to be cured? They derided the suggestion. These were society folk, adults of both sexes, non-neurotic and non-convicted. Convicted persons will clamour for treatment in order to conciliate their *entourage*: these are no longer representative examples. Neurotics will run to an expert during one of their recurrent fits of despondency: these are equally suspect. Statistics might clarify the issue, if they took account of age and condition. I should imagine, for instance, that the undergraduate class might yield a fairly high percentage of individuals eager for treatment, always supposing such treatment to be possible and permanent. Impermanent treatment would be worse than none.

3.) Meanwhile how comes it that the often decorative counterpart of the male homosexual is not included in the ban? Is there any difference in the degree of delinquency involved? None whatever. This looks like a legal anomaly. Sauce for the gander should be sauce for the goose.

4.) The heterosexual and the blissfully contented *monosexual* may take care of themselves; in prescribing for the homosexual life a little sanity would not be out of place. And the first step towards sanity is to take over the more reasonable provisions of the Napoleonic Code. If English divorce laws are a disreputable tangle, our enactments on this head are a sinister joke, the source of multiple and unmerited suffering. What calls for treatment is not so much homosexuality as the diseased attitude adopted towards it in non-Latin countries. This attitude is the outcome of Judaeo-Christian teaching, as interpreted by Puritanism.»

(From his book «Late Harvest», 1946, London.)