

Original Complaint from Mr O'Brien to Home Secretary

HOME OFFICE  
22 MAY 1909  
RECEIVED

4 Quoit Green,  
Bromfield,  
Nr. Sheffield

183473 ~~183473~~ 16<sup>th</sup> May 09

To the Rt. Hon. Herbert Gladstone M.P.  
Home Secretary to His Majesty's Govt.

My Dear Sir,

In the enclosed pamphlet you will find evidence that a man called Edward Carpenter, who lives only a few miles from here, is one of the leading spirits in a secret society of a political character composed of persons bound together by homosexual practices carried on amongst themselves.

I enclose a list of the man's openly circulated writings, &c

(2)

that you may be able to verify the quotations made from them in my pamphlet; & if you wish to see a copy of his privately-circulated advocacy of sexual inversion I shall be glad to send you one.

What I want to ask you before going any further is this plain question - Supposing that you have reasons ~~for~~ given for believing that this man is one of the leaders of a criminal & secret society bent upon destroying civilization, will it then be your duty to take action against him?

3

I am already spending between fifteen & twenty pounds of my own savings in printing & circulating pamphlets against the man. Nearly all the copies of these pamphlets are given away in order to get them into the hands of the public; for booksellers & newsagents dare not sell them. So that I am not doing this for material gain. I am doing it because I know that it is my duty before God & man to do it. Sexual inversion spells ruin for any country, & any man who advocates it & spreads the practice of it among the people of these islands is

(4)  
doing infinitely more mischief  
to human society than the  
greatest criminal hung or  
whung

In a letter which appeared  
in the Sheffield Daily Telegraph  
on or about April the 12<sup>th</sup> I  
asked Edward Carpenter  
whether he was willing to be  
present when I read his  
pamphlet called Homogeneity  
Love before a public audience,  
but he refused to face such  
a test, as you may see if  
you read the concluding  
words of a letter of his  
which appeared in the

(5)

same newspaper on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
of April. Why did he refuse?  
If he does not, ~~as I allege,~~  
advocate sexual inversion  
why should he be afraid of  
a public test? And even if  
he does advocate it he ought  
surely to have the pluck  
& the manliness to do what  
other advocates even of bad  
doctrines have often not  
been afraid to do. For history  
shows that there have been  
times when the vilest doctrines  
have been openly proclaimed.  
If this infamy called "comrade  
love" is such a glorious &  
splendid thing; if it is such

(14)  
(6)  
"a valuable social force"; if,  
in cases, it is <sup>such</sup> an indispensable  
factor in the production of the  
noblest human character, if  
it is a bond of political &  
social union "of the most  
lasting & passionate  
compulsion"; if it is a  
useful aid to "social & heroic  
work", & if it has other  
advantages both for individuals  
& for the community at large  
— as its advocate says that  
it has — why should it not  
be openly & boldly proclaimed  
to the whole world? Why  
should it be sent through  
the country in private?

(17)

circulated pamphlets? Why should the "comrades" thus be able to selfishly keep all its inestimable blessings to themselves? If its advocate possesses, "to a very large degree", the spirit of Christ, as he was said the other day by an admirer who wrote in the before-mentioned newspaper to possess, why should he be afraid of openly preaching it, as Christ is said to have openly preached his doctrines? Christ, so we are told, lived a life of suffering & died a death of agony for the sake of his principles. Surely

(8)

this great Socialist Prophet of  
Candwell Valley may at least  
be expected to face the ordeal  
of a public audience for the  
sake of his. One correspondent,  
whose letter appeared in the  
Sheffield Daily Telegraph on  
April the 22<sup>nd</sup>, suggested  
that he should Homogenise  
Love "to a gathering of educated  
Sheffield gentlemen - say  
doctors & head schoolmasters  
- so that they might hear it  
read & discuss its character,"  
but he has not yet accepted  
that proposal. In fact, his  
whole action in the matter  
has up to the present been  
that of a shirking, ~~shirking~~

(9)

skulking coward, & not of  
a man at all. He began his  
defence against my attack with  
a falsehood which he had  
to retract at a later period. In  
a letter which appeared in the  
Sheffield Daily Telegraph on the  
6<sup>th</sup> of April he said — "I  
make no secret of my writings.  
In fact it would be senseless  
for an author to do that; &  
Mr. O'Brien's suggestion that he  
has unearthed things that I have  
endeavoured to conceal is absurd  
on the face of it" But in his  
letter which appeared in the same  
newspaper on April the 17<sup>th</sup>, he  
said in reference to Homogenic Love —  
"Only a few copies were printed &  
those privately, for the simple

(10)

reason that the pamphlet was not intended for general circulation, but only in order to be sent to a few scientific friends, for the purpose of comparing notes & obtaining more information on a subject than new to me."

I know of three persons in Holmesfield who have read this vile production. Not one of them is a scientific man. I know of four who have read it in Sheffield. Not one is a man of science. In a note at the beginning of it we are told that the pamphlet is one of a series on six questions, but that it is thought best at present

(11)

to print it for private circulation only. Instead of defunding his pamphlet & the vile teaching in it, the Socialist Prophet has written a pack of lies about it. He has taken refuge in falsehood, but it will not avail him. The Power fighting against him will never fail & never rest until it has mated out unto such an infernal monster the punishment which he has long so justly deserved. Some of the readers of my pamphlet have said that it is too severe upon him. Is it possible to be too severe upon

infamy such as his? a friend of his told me that he should have left the matter alone. I asked that friend if he would have acted in that way if a son of his own had been poisoned & morally ruined by the teaching of this Prophet. When the thing is brought home to them in this way the apologists for Sodom & Gomorrah are silenced. It is the young & inexperienced who are made victims of this iniquity. From "embrace & endearment" between persons of the same sex they are led ~~on~~ on through the different stages of it until they reach the last. In our widening circles

(14)  
(13) 5  
it spreads in secrecy &  
darkness through a community  
until at last a time comes  
when society is full of it.  
"This vice," says Voltaire, "was  
so common at Rome, that it  
was impossible to punish  
a crime which almost  
everyone committed. Octavius  
Augustus, that murderer,  
debauchee, & coward, who  
exiled Ovid, thought it right  
in Virgil to sing the charms  
of Aeneas. Horace, his other  
political favourite, constructed  
small odes on Ligurinus;  
& this same Horace, who  
praised Augustus for reforming  
manners, speaks in his satires

(14)  
in much the same way of  
both boys & girls. Yet the  
ancient law "Santinia", which  
forbade pederasty, always  
existed, & was put in force  
by the emperor Philip, who  
drove away from Rome the  
boys who made a profession  
of it. If, however, Rome had  
witty & licentious students,  
like Petronius, it had also  
such preceptors as Quintilian;  
& attend to the precautions he  
lays down in his chapter of  
"The Preceptor", in order to preserve  
the purity of early youth.

"Cavendum non solum crimine  
turpitudinis, sed etiam  
suspicione." We must not only

was not believe

15

beware of a shameful crime, but  
even of the suspicion of it." —  
Philosophical Dictionary, Article  
on "Socratic Love":

I am afraid that there are  
few persons in this country to-  
day who are as anxious to  
preserve the purity of early  
youth as Quintilian was.  
Everywhere have I found  
~~reluctance~~ to fear & reluctance  
to handle this question.  
People appear to think that evil  
carried on beneath the surface  
of society in a sly, crafty,  
subtle, clever & quiet way is  
not a thing that ought to  
be exposed & fought  
against? I do not believe

(16)  
that your honoured & respected  
father would have taken this  
view. Whenever wrong was done  
in any part of the world, &  
he knew of it, his custom always  
was to speak out against it,  
& do all that lay in his  
power to put it down. So  
far as he knew his duty, he  
did it to the best of his  
ability like a man; & I  
am firmly convinced that  
if he had been at the head  
of the British Government  
to-day, & had known of the  
existence of a vile political  
society, whether large or  
small, that aimed, by the  
express acknowledgment of

(14)  
one of its Prophets & leaders, at  
the destruction of civilization,  
he would have left no stone  
unturned to rid this country  
& the world of such a deadly  
& destructive pest. He would  
have thought of the young men  
& the young women of to-day &  
of the days to come, & in their  
interest, & on their behalf, he  
would have struck as hard  
at their enemies as ever  
old Ulysses ~~struck~~ struck when he  
pitilessly slew the witches  
who occupied his palace,  
consumed his substance, &  
sought to destroy his honour.

Of what use is it to spend millions in building dreadnoughts to defend ~~your~~ yourselves against foreign enemies when you allow a domestic cancer, whose heart is in the very centre of your island, to eat away the very foundations of national & imperial strength? Your greatest enemies are inside your own borders. And they are not your enemies only. They are the enemies of all mankind. In crushing them you will be doing a service not to your own country alone, but to every

only late assisting a country  
country in the world. Sexual  
invasion spells depopulation  
whenever it spreads. Referring  
to depopulation in his own  
country, M. de Foville has  
recently asked — "Is it the  
beginning of the end?" "In  
another twenty-five years," he  
continues, "there will be two  
Germans for every Frenchman,  
without counting the sons of  
the Fatherland scattered all  
over the globe by emigration.  
Thus France is marching  
with quickened step to her  
doom." If the present  
downward movement  
continues "France will soon  
be ripe for invasion. It is the

(20)

only fate awaiting a country which is capable of supporting 80,000,000 inhabitants & is content with half that number." God is not mocked. The Omnipotent (whose truths about the disaster to which infamous conduct leads, for individuals & <sup>for</sup> nations alike, are laws forbidding such conduct) cannot be set at defiance with impunity. It is virtue alone which makes a nation or an empire strong. Sodom & Gomorrah may cover their seas with fleets & their shores with armies, but all these will avail them nothing in the day of trial.

(22)  
(21)  
if the character of their people  
is what it must become  
if the teaching of this  
infamous Socialist Prophet  
makes headway among the  
young men & young women  
whose minds it is intended  
to corrupt & whose lives  
it is meant to blast  
beyond all possibility of  
reform. Dealing with the  
cause of the fall of the  
Roman Empire on page 287  
of the issue of Macmillan's  
Magazine for August 1869,  
Professor Seelye says that "the  
Empire perished for lack  
of men"; & every well-  
informed student of history

+ 1 1. 10  
(225)

knows that although the destructive infamy which these advocates of sexual inversion have done to the skies did not actually annihilate the descendants of early Rome, yet that, along with other social evils, it did a great deal in this direction. It is to this state that the Socialist Prophet & his vile disciples are working & scheming & plotting & contriving in darkness & secrecy to reduce England & every other civilized country in the world; & for the evil which they are seeking to do the whole lot of them deserve

(23)  
to be exterminated like  
vermin off the face of  
God's earth. Why cannot they  
be content to keep their  
abominable practices to  
themselves? Why should they  
endeavour to lead others into  
the lost condition to which  
they have themselves sunk?  
Is there not enough natural  
vice in the country? if, indeed,  
any form of vice can ever be  
natural. But to use the vice  
of homosexuality as a sort  
of social & political cement  
holding persons together in  
a band of so-called "comradship",  
is surely, I should think, to  
carry it to such a length  
as to bring them within the  
earnest

(20)  
reach of the laws of any  
civilized country. Is there any  
right-minded father of a  
family who would like this  
kind of thing, or even the  
sentiment of it — for the  
sentiment is the root out of  
which all its forms grow  
— to be introduced either  
openly or secretly among his  
growing sons & daughters? Of  
what avail is it for parents  
to endeavour to instil into the  
minds of their children lofty  
& pure ideals of friendship,  
such as those of Epictetus,  
Marcus Aurelius, & similar  
teachers — ideals which  
have nothing of a physical  
or carnal taint in them —

(9)  
(25)

when all their efforts in this direction, when all their labours to do their duty as parents, are being sapped & undermined by these vile advocates of sexual inversion, not one of whom dare get upon a public platform & lay before a public audience the revolting & loathsome ideas which they set forth in their privately & openly circulated books & pamphlets? These men — for the Socialist Prophet is only one among the rest, only one of the diseased school to which he belongs — claim

(20)

that they have a gospel to preach & a practice to justify. Why do they not come out into the open to preach that gospel & justify that practice? Why do they not do what all the great teachers of the world have done? Are they afraid of unpopularity? Are they afraid of suffering? Do they dread the anger of an outraged public? — of a public which they have not yet sufficiently poisoned with their vile writings to make it safe for them to take a bolder course? The Socialist

Prophet says that he believes  
that the Braman men, or, in  
other words, the homosexual  
men — for Braman is but  
a timid substitute for the  
plain English of Homosexual  
— are superior to the normal  
men in respect of their love  
feeling, "which is gentler,  
more sympathetic, more  
considerate, more a matter of  
heart & less one of mere  
physical satisfaction than  
that of ordinary men." (The  
Intermediate Sex, page 128.)  
Very well, then, if they are  
such superior persons to  
the rest of us, why cannot  
they come out openly &

preach their superior gospel  
 like other teachers have  
 done? The extensive Appendix  
 at the end of The Intermediate  
Sex contains the special  
 pleadings of a number  
 of homosexual writers on  
 behalf of their erotic &  
 shocking insanity. Why  
 not give public audiences  
 the benefit of these ~~any~~  
 arguments, just as such  
 audiences are given the  
 benefit of arguments for  
 other practices that make  
 for the good of individuals  
 & for that of society at large?

(29)

The Intermediate Sex, which is certainly one of the most villainous productions that it has ever been my painful duty to read, contains a considerable portion of the privately-circulated pamphlet called Homogenic Love, but not by any means the whole of it; & the strongest passages, especially those which, by referring to physiology, most ~~clearly~~ unmistakably show the sexual character of the passion advocated, are not to be found anywhere in it. Evidently the Prophet thinks that by veiling his

meaning in this manner he  
has succeeded in keeping  
himself out of the clutches  
of the law. He is a clever  
& cunning instrument of hell  
& destruction, & a worthy  
~~representative~~ of the Father of  
Lies, whom he serves. In  
my humble judgment it  
would be worse than folly  
to allow him without  
opposition to go on spreading  
his vile corruption amongst  
all classes until his  
deluded disciples have  
become numerous enough  
to accomplish his own &  
their insane purpose, or  
at any rate to work an

(31)

immense amount of evil in the desperate attempt to accomplish it. For the band of criminals to which he belongs will, when they think they are able to do so, arise & attempt to sweep away ~~all~~ not only civilization, but also all those who desire it to remain & to go on improving until the end of time. They will do for the civilization of modern times did for that of Greece & Rome, which was ruined from within before it fell before the blows of external enemies. It is the duty, then, I think, of those among us who see this threatening

evil, to do all that lies in  
our power to avert it, by  
opposing with voice & pen,  
as well as in every other  
effective way, the infernal  
fiends who are working  
so energetically to bring it  
upon us or upon our  
children. I feel absolutely  
certain that this infamous  
conspiracy against the  
light & the right is  
contrary to the spirit of  
the laws of this land,  
whether it is contrary to  
the letter or not; & I am  
strongly inclined to think  
that if any man took  
the trouble to make

(33)  
researches into the matter  
he would find that this  
dialectical movement is  
in conflict also with the  
~~letter~~ letter of the laws.

Be this, however, as it may,  
our duty is clear. Against  
a movement of such a  
character we ought to be  
prepared to use every  
possible weapon not  
absolutely condemned by  
conscience & reason. The  
famous conspiracy of  
Cataline, who conspired  
with a gang of wretches as  
dissolute & bankrupt as  
himself to extirpate the  
senate, plunder the treasury,

(30)  
(34)  
I set Rome on fire, was a  
mere storm in a teacup in  
comparison with that of  
persons whose openly-  
proclaimed object is to  
sweep away civilization, &  
make the vilest, lowest,  
& most debasing practices  
be openly tolerated ~~in~~  
~~in~~ human society,  
Cataline & his worthless  
followers sought to set  
a city on fire. Wretches  
of the type of Whitman &  
Carpenter seek to set the  
minds & hearts of all  
mankind on fire, not with  
any fire that dies out  
through lack of fuel,

(36)  
(35)  
but with the fire of hell  
itself, which burns  
eternally in the ~~souls~~  
souls of these fiends, &  
with which they seek to  
drag down to everlasting  
perdition all the sons of  
men. It is not one city  
or one country; it is every  
city & every country - nay,  
it is the human race itself  
which these conspirators  
are seeking to destroy. In  
being at war with  
civilization they are at  
war with humanity; for  
civilization is the path  
of humanity's progress

from darkness to light, & on that path it cannot go back without ~~moving~~ taking a course that must ultimately end in mental, moral, & physical destruction.

If there is no action which you can take in this matter I shall be glad of your advice as to the best method of fighting against the poison to which I have here drawn your attention. I do not see why persons who are undermining the very foundation of human society

should be allowed to have  
 everything their own way  
 simply because they work  
 in secret instead of in the  
 light of open publicity  
 evil done in darkness is  
 evil still. Its effect upon  
 the rising generation is  
 just the same as is that  
 of the same evil done  
 in a more open & straight-  
 forward manner. I am  
 circulating the enclosed  
 pamphlet because I know  
 of no other way in which  
 I can fight against the  
 deadly & destructive thing

with which it deals. If you  
know of any organized  
body in the country that  
would be likely to take  
up this question & do  
anything to counterwork  
the mischief now being  
done by the Socialist Prophet  
& his disciples, I shall be  
very much obliged to you  
for any information about  
such a body. I have  
called the attention of  
the local police to the  
fact that the Prophet  
teaches sodomy, & they  
know quite well that

30

the thing itself has recently  
been carried on in the  
neighbourhood where it is  
taught; but how is it  
possible for them to get  
up a case when those who  
could give evidence will  
not have their names  
brought publicly forward  
in connection ~~with~~ with  
such infamy?

I am,

Rt Hon. Sir,

Yours respectfully,

M. D. O'Brien