

PASTORS PRAISE THE WORK

[excerpt]

Eastern District Clergymen Deeply Interested in the Fight Against Vice in That Section

Among the clergymen of the Eastern District there is a strong feeling that the situation, as presented by the Eagle yesterday, is not in the least overdrawn and that a condition exists in that part of the city that demands immediate attention and a strong corrective.

The Rev. Dr. John Coleman Adams, pastor of All Souls' Universalist Church, said that he was greatly surprised at the extent of the immorality [i.e gambling and prostitution], as shown by the Eagle in its article of yesterday morning.

"The first thing to do," said Dr. Adams, "is to turn on the light. Give the evils that exist all the publicity possible. Public opinion must be aroused. I know that this will take time, but it must be done, nevertheless. But public opinion alone is not enough to accomplish anything. There must be constant effort on the part of the people commonly called reformers, for the reformers are combating, it must be remembered, constant effort on the part of the forces of evil. I think that there are not enough workers with the reformers, and that is the reason why there seems to be at times no result from the campaigns that have been waged against the outbreaks of lust and its attendant evils."

As to the means to be adopted to drive out the places that are now flourishing in various parts of Williamsburgh and the Eastern District, Dr. Adams said that opinions might differ.

"...As for the police force, I believe, as Governor Roosevelt said, five-sixths of the force is well disposed and anxious to do its duty. As for any statement that the officers in any given precinct do not know what is going on, it seems to me that they must know what is happening right around them. A policeman goes out from the station house and walks up and down the street. He must see what is going on right around him.

"I am inclined to think we are somewhat worse off here than are the continental cities. I don't believe that they have over there the forms of blackmail that exist here, and I think that vice and crime are more under cover and not in the open."

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, New York NY, 19 Nov 1900

Transcribed on 20 Aug 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY