

THE POINT OF VIEW

A WOMAN AND A BOOK

IN these days when attention is attracted to the deliberately lascivious in literature by extraordinary advertising and publicity with the sole purpose of financial gain in view, there comes to mind the fair parallel between a woman and a book — or perhaps the publisher of the book, or rather, and more likely, the writer of the book. Any woman anywhere may do as she chooses with her body. She may secretly give it in lust for sensual gratification or she may sell it indiscriminately for purposes of gain. In the first instance the woman takes the risk only of ostracism from that limited circle which inevitably comes to knowledge of her calculated immorality. That is in its essence a private affair. When the woman carries her prostitution to the point of bold solicitation upon the public highway, that becomes a State affair, for it is an offense against her

fellows and a crime in the eyes of the law. When an author or a publisher privately prints and distributes an unclean book in gratification of a certain form of sensual desire, that is more or less a personal affair. When the publisher or an author deliberately exploits and advertises and urges for public sale an indecent book, he affronts his fellow craftsmen and comes within the penalties of those reasonable laws which are designed to protect the sanctity of the American home. Nor is this a narrow minded view.

There remain the grand passions of lives and the equally grand passions of literature. Only understanding hearts and understanding minds can encompass these. Life has been enriched, as literature has been enriched, by these exquisites of passion, but they are unmistakable — sublime almost to the point of the divine, and no one may experience the one or read the other without genuine spiritual gain.

And this is the case for censorship of that author or that publisher who persists in prostitution as a means of livelihood or for wealth, as the circumstance may be.

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