

the measure will press hardly on individuals, but the hardness will decrease as time goes on, as its result will inevitably be to produce a healthy stock, and consequently the number of persons who are qualified to pass the medical test will increase. At the present time there are, doubtless, in Colorado as in this country, a certain number of persons who, conscious of hereditary taint, refrain from marriage on account of the condition of their health. But this number will, we fear, always be in the minority. The majority seem to feel no responsibility or shame in bringing into the world children who not only suffer themselves, but, in their turn, if they live to adult age, become a source of danger to the community. On the principle that the greatest good of the greatest number must be considered, legislation which will protect the race is both expedient and desirable. Not only will it affect persons whose tendency if they inherit any of the above mentioned diseases is, as a rule, fairly well known, but it will prevent the marriage of persons suffering from specific taint. At present there is no disease of which the existence is kept so secret. There is none which brings such widespread misery to those to whom it is communicated. As a rule it is the most ignorant and innocent women who are victims to the inexcusable and heartless cruelty of men who, possessed of knowledge which should keep them celibate, do not hesitate to contract marriage; and to convey to the women who trust them, as well as to their unborn children, the most terrible disease with which it is possible for them to be afflicted. The general public have unfortunately a very dim understanding of how many diseases emanate not only directly, but indirectly, from this one source alone, otherwise, in this country, the demand would long since have been made that specific disease should be notified and isolated. Sooner or later, the day must come when such a measure will be enforced, otherwise the health of the community will be undermined, and we shall deteriorate nationally.

It will be a matter of extreme interest to watch the working of the measure now passed by the State of Colorado, and its influence upon the public health. If it is found to act for the general well-being, no doubt other States will adopt the same law, until it becomes the rule throughout the United States. For the rest, the example set by the West to-day will be followed in the East to-morrow.

Annotations.

PATRIOTISM.

At a meeting of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, held last Saturday, an application from the Matron of one of the Board's largest Fever Hospitals for leave of absence, in order to proceed to South Africa to nurse the sick and wounded, was considered. The Chairman of the Hospital Committee brought forward the recommendation of that Committee, which was that the managers should not grant the Matron's request. Her absence would seriously disorganise the institution. He therefore proposed a resolution in accordance with the Committee's recommendation, which was duly seconded. The Clerk then read a letter from the Matron resigning her position. An amendment was moved that she be granted leave of absence without pay, on the ground that nurses of experience were greatly needed by the War Office, and it would be unpatriotic on the part of the Board to refuse leave of absence on such an errand of mercy.

After some discussion the Board decided to accept the resignation and to fill the post as soon as possible. We think that in adopting this course the Metropolitan Asylums Board has acted wisely, as there is no doubt that the prolonged absence of the Superintendent of Nursing is prejudicial to the welfare of any institution and it is therefore well that if she desires to proceed to South Africa the Matron should vacate her present post. Patriotism at the present time is of course most praiseworthy and incumbent upon all British subjects, but the immediate duty of the Metropolitan Asylums Board is to consider the welfare of the sick under their care. Our opinion is that as there is no dearth of well trained sisters and nurses, all eager to proceed to South Africa, Matrons holding the responsible positions of head of the nursing staff of hospitals of 500 or 600 beds, will do well to remain at their posts and let others go to the war. Their services at home are more especially required, as, at the present time, owing to the fact that Sisters and Nurses have been allowed leave of absence from General Hospitals, and the nursing staffs have in consequence been depleted, it is doubly necessary that the heads of the hospitals should be at their posts in order to ensure the smooth working of these institutions under circumstances of additional difficulty, otherwise the sick poor will suffer. There

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