

In two years of practice a Berlin surgeon amputated 56 patients for gonorrhoeal rheumatism.

In the blind institutions of Saxony 75 per cent. of the cases are due to *ophthalmia neonatorum*; in Switzerland, 79 per cent. In Prussia, 30,000 are blind from it.

Pontoppidan assures us that in most European capitals 15 per cent. of the population have had syphilis, in some, as in Paris, the proportion is enormously larger.

Fournier says that in a practice of 30 years he had 4,400 tertiary outbreaks, principally amongst the intelligent classes. Professor Neisser, of Breslau, state that about 40 to 50 per cent. of all barren marriages owe their sterility to gonorrhoeic diseases.

Noeggerath tells us that for every thousand men married in New York 800 have or have had gonorrhoea, and that 90 per cent. are uncured at the time of their marriage.

It is useless to multiply figures. It is necessary to remember that the ultimate origin of all the venereal diseases lies in an act or acts of immorality.

Can venereal diseases be prevented? I believe that they can. If so, how? By regulation? Emphatically no. In the first place, regulation has been and is being tried in every European country with the exception of England and of Norway, and the condition of affairs speaks for itself. Secondly, regulation touches only the older and regular prostitutes, leaving the younger and recently infected women who are the great danger to the community, aside. Thirdly, to quote from the report of the Committee to the Advisory Board of our own Army Medical Service: "The isolation of a particular section of infected persons, namely, of diseased prostitutes, cannot be considered an ideal method of arresting the disease, while large numbers of infected persons of both sexes remain free to spread the contagion."

1. Education is our first plank. Educate children from their infancy to avoid masturbation. Keep the hands of infants rigidly away from the genitals. Teach the little ones to regard the genital organs as sacred. Let them early learn the simple physiology of sexual life, which can easily be taught from animals and plants. Do not lie to them in regard to the birth of the little brother or sister. Teach a scrupulous cleanliness of the sexual organs, especially the ablutions of the penis. Assure yourself whether circumcision is not a necessity. If it is, let it be accomplished early. Train boys and girls in habits of modesty, and of decency, as also of regularity in the accomplishment of the natural acts. Teach your girls the meaning of marriage, your boys the

lessons of puberty, and your young men the dangers of fornication.

2. Discipline the children. Do not leave them to follow their own will. Maintain a firm and gentle authority, and teach them self-control. It is ten times easier to acquire habits of self-control and self-discipline in childhood than in later life. Immoral indulgence in any of the appetites of the body springs from want of self-control. You will make manlier men, more womanly women, and a healthy nation.

3. Notification. Other infectious preventable diseases are notifiable—why not this one, which is by far the more important of them all? Take the seal of secrecy from the physician's lips, and compel him to notify.

4. Open recognition. Acknowledge boldly that the venereal diseases are in our midst, and that they have to be met and treated.

5. Provide free treatment, easily accessible, to which no moral stigma will attach.

6. Punish every case possible in which an infected person, knowingly, has sexual intercourse with another.

7. Diminish alcoholism.

I place these suggestions boldly before you for discussion. These diseases are eradicable from the human race. Innocent and guilty alike desire to see them eradicated. Therein lies the chief strength of our cause.

The limit of time forbids me to enter upon many more interesting points. I have necessarily confined myself to scientific facts. I take it that we are at one upon the main point. As nurses, as patriots, we desire to limit as far as lies in our power the physical, mental, and moral ills of humanity. We desire not merely to cure, but to prevent. These of which we have treated are preventable diseases. And shall we not prevent them, remembering that fornication is no more a necessity of the body than is drunkenness or gluttony? Are we going to sit still as we have sat still so long, and see the race degenerate before our eyes? Are we going to watch the long drawn out sacrifice of life and health that is daily going on around us? Listen to Karl Marx: "Society has hitherto failed to find a remedy; perhaps because only man has sought for one," and "All that is requisite for the attainment of this end is that those engaged in the study and practice of general hygiene, and those concerned in the safeguarding of public morality, should not weary in their efforts; and that scientific research should pursue its aims firmly and clearly, uninfluenced by the tyranny of custom, and independent of prejudice."

The trumpet call to arms has sounded already. America has arisen to rally round the

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