

short interval on some nasal operation, as to make its almost certain that something like a fragment of an adenoid growth or some morsel of cotton wool which has been inspired at the time, has been the starting-point of the disease, and I therefore have never adopted the semi-erect position for these operations. The risk of such an occurrence—must surely be less when the head is hanging over the table, and I therefore commend this consideration to those who are specially engaged in this line of practice.

Hygiene and Morality.

The book on the above subject by Miss L. L. Dock, R.N., Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Nurses, is intended as a Manual for Nurses and others, and gives an outline of the Medical, Social, and Legal Aspects of the Venereal Diseases. It is divided into three parts. *Part I.*: The Venereal Diseases. *Part II.*: Prostitution; and *Part III.*: The Prevention of Venereal Disease.

PART I.

The author states that the venereal diseases are, in the commonly accepted order of their gravity, Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, and Chancroid. Historically they are of great, and probably unknown, antiquity. Syphilis is caused by a micro-organism, the *Spirochæte pallida* of Schaudinn. This micro-organism, the specific and invariable cause of syphilis, has not long been known with certainty, though long before its actual demonstration medical specialists had suspected its existence. After the work of Pasteur had given new direction to medical and surgical study, and had caused the doctrine of the action of micro-organisms as the cause of infectious disease to be accepted, active search and research went on in laboratories all over the world to discover the germ of this as well as of other diseases, but for 20 years or more these ended in failure until a commission of experts was formed under the lead of Schulze, Professor of Zoology in the University of Berlin, and the investigation directed towards the discovery of the syphilitic virus was by him entrusted to Schaudinn and Hoffman, who, in 1905, were able to demonstrate the micro-organism. It is not yet definitely settled whether it belongs to the bacteria or the protozoa, but this practically unimportant uncertainty may be ended any day. The *Spirochæte pallida* cannot survive for more than a few hours—six, Andrews says—outside of the human body. After that, its infectious power is lost. It is destroyed by exposing for an hour

to a temperature of 124 degrees Fahr. It needs moisture, and if dried dies quickly, but even with moisture is very perishable when removed from its human host. This readily perishable quality and early loss of pathogenic power is of the highest importance in considering the subject of contagion by direct mechanical contact with infected objects, and has a definite bearing on practical methods of disinfection and on the avoidance of direct infection from inanimate objects and personal contact.

After describing the symptoms of the disease, Miss Dock quotes the pronouncement of Professor Osler that every feature of the acquired disease may be seen in the congenital form. Most nurses and midwives are acquainted with the appearance of an infant suffering from congenital syphilis. It is distinctive and unmistakable. They probably do not realise that "The congenitally syphilitic infant is intensely infectious. Fournier says: Nothing is so dangerous to its surroundings as a syphilitic infant." Little or no emphasis is laid on this point in the lectures given to midwives and monthly nurses, but, in the light of present knowledge such teaching cannot be withheld without grave responsibility for the consequences of its neglect.

The author refers to a suggestive article by Ravogli, who, while not meaning to be understood that syphilis is the determining cause of crime, does believe it to be one of the predisposing factors of crime. Thus he writes:—

A strange relation exists between syphilis, crime, and prostitution—cases of prostitution which cannot be explained by poverty or by special accident have to be attributed to hereditary syphilis. Prostitution and crime go hand in hand, and in the families where the brothers are criminals the sisters are prostitutes. Syphilis is the tie between crime and prostitution when it causes the affections of the nervous system resulting in moral degeneration.

Dealing with the Source and Spread of Syphilis, the author points out that a distinction must be made between (a) cause; (b) source or breeding place; (c) mode of spread of any infectious disease.

In this connection she writes:—Those contagions that are called familiarly filth diseases, do not cease being filth diseases when they are conveyed into clean homes to strike down cleanly living individuals. In the study of every infectious disease knowledge of the breeding place or native haunt of its germ is of the utmost importance for practical hygiene. . . . The breeding place of all venereal diseases without exception is the social institution called prostitution, or sexual promiscuity; in the debasement and degradation of what should

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