

## MEDICAL MATTERS.

### THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACE SUICIDE.

An excellent article on Moral Prophylaxis, by Dr. George P. Dale, concluded in this month's *American Journal of Nursing*, asks: Could a nobler work be performed by us than to help in a crusade—not, as in the past, a silent one—against these diseases which are responsible for race suicide, in its true sense, through the inculcation of knowledge in the minds of parents and the laity, as a body, in reference to the necessity of instruction of the young man as to the risks he runs personally, should he acquire them, and as to the risks to which he subjects the woman he marries? Should we, through our moral influence along these lines, and the only possible lines, be enabled to exterminate the gonococcus, preventive medicine would make the greatest of all strides.

The real difficulty in disseminating information along these lines has been the inability to reach the great mass of the public to any effective extent. The public press and the periodicals which serve for the enlightenment of the masses, and which have rendered such signal service in the campaign against tuberculosis and other infectious diseases through the popularisation of hygienic knowledge, are absolutely barred to the mention even of the diseases we wish to prevent.

Dr. Howard A. Kelly, of Baltimore, says: "The great practical questions to be answered are: What is the work that is to be done? Who is to do the work? And what is the best way to do it? The work to be done begins right in the home by parents meeting the responsibilities touching their own children. If you have no children, then you may devote yourself to the public welfare, the status of the thing in our schools and in our colleges, and perhaps most of all our courts, co-operating with the teachers in the public schools and with the splendid modern playground associations. Look into the housing conditions and sanitary arrangements for the poor, and the wages paid to girls. The least promising work is the eradication of existing prostitution. All attacks made upon the prostitute herself have been dishonest and hypocritical in that they may reach but the one, and that the weaker sex. Let every one who enters upon this crusade at once dismiss all notion that there is any difference between male and female prostitution. Your moral hands will be absolutely tied if you discriminate between the two. Except in flagrant cases let us have no part in raiding, fining, and harrying these poor women; if it is to be

done at all, take the men and let the women go free. You must look into the conditions of the poor children and see that they, too, are receiving adequate instruction. You must see that these instructions are given in schools and colleges. Watch the courts, especially the juvenile ones. You must see that women brought to trial are duly shielded, and that in houses of detention and in the prison they are not exposed to indignity or insult, whatever their status in life. You must treat the prostitute with infinite pity and compassion, but with respect."

Women who are willing to put their minds and hearts in work for world betterment should inaugurate educational work in their city or town, in the workshops, factories, churches, schools, social settlements, women's clubs and colleges, and influence women of their section to do likewise until this work becomes international in character. A few can do nothing; public opinion must be aroused until resentment against these preventable diseases is as keen as it is now against all other preventable diseases.

To sum up all this—it is the duty of citizens in relation to social vice to practise personal, and insist on public, morality; to urge the registration by departments of health of all cases of venereal diseases; to supply to rich and poor alike competent medical treatment for their affection, however acquired; to advocate instruction in the physiology of sex and dangers of venereal diseases to all adolescents and adults; to discourage social recognition of all immoral men; to prevent the marriage of syphilitic and gonorrhoeal subjects until the danger of infection has been averted by treatment; and, finally, to aid the legal authorities of the community to convict and punish criminal abortionists.

I hope that in these articles I may have brought out some facts and statements which will be the means of showing to nurses the necessity of their encouraging education regarding these topics, and I hope that they will stand with the medical profession in its effort to eradicate these diseases and to first give the parents the instructions which they are to impart to their children.

### A VACCINE PROPHYLACTIC FOR TYPHOID FEVER.

Dr. Nelson and Dr. Kent, of the United States Army Medical Corps, claim to have discovered a vaccine prophylactic which will eventually put an end to typhoid fever. The experiments which these two doctors have been recently conducting at San Antonio Camp have been attended by successful results.

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