

partial reactions, and it was calculated that this corresponded to a number of syphilitic cases equivalent to 0.5 per cent. of the population of the area; this figure was very much lower than had been anticipated.

An investigation was also carried on at the eye and ear clinics of Dr. Barrett. All patients presenting themselves during a certain period, irrespective of the disease from which they were suffering were tested by the Wassermann reaction. The results showed that out of 550 cases 75 or 13.6 per cent. gave positive or partial reactions. With regard to gonorrhœa a statement was furnished to the Advisory Committee by the Women's Hospital from which it appeared that in the view of the staff at least 50 per cent. of the major operations performed at the Hospital were due to gonorrhœa.

The Advisory Committee, after submitting their report to the Government endeavoured to induce the Press to take up the question, and in this they met with a certain amount of success. The National Council of Women were also approached and they agreed to assist in an educational campaign and to co-operate with any reasonable measures the Government might bring in, provided that there was no legislation on the lines of the Contagious Diseases Acts, and that no difference was made as between men and women. The Advisory Committee did not recommend legislation, but they advised the Government to subsidise the provision of wards for the reception of venereal cases in the general hospitals. This recommendation was adopted by the Government and free beds were provided; 24 for males at the Alfred Hospital and 20 for females at the Women's Hospital. The wards were equipped by the Government with the most modern appliances, and, in addition, a subsidy was made to the Melbourne University to provide for the carrying out of Wassermann tests.

At first there was some difficulty in filling the beds provided, but as it became known that the treatment was in a general ward and that the patients would not be dealt with differently from those in the other wards a good demand for beds arose. The establishment of a night clinic at the Alfred Hospital also helped to popularize the arrangements.

Dr. Ham thought that the experiments conducted at Melbourne had roused greater interest in the subject and that in securing early treatment and early diagnosis they had achieved an important result.

A Health Bill was at the present time before the Victorian Legislature which contained provisions for adequate and gratuitous treatment of patients, for the prohibition of treatment by unqualified persons, and for making the transmission knowingly of venereal diseases a penal offence.

We strongly approve of these three provisions, especially the last one.

## PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

### WAR AND WOMEN.\*

"What the Woman wanteth God wanteth; and what God wanteth cometh to pass."—*Old Friulean Saying.*

We have not for some time read a book which has given us such unqualified pleasure as "War and Women," by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, Founder of the Women's Convoy Corps, which relates her experience in the Balkans and elsewhere, and her deductions therefrom, for it not only deals in a most interesting way with a unique experience, and is written with a restraint and modesty which compel admiration, but unfolds the story of the resource, the courage, the gallant cheerfulness, and stoical endurance, of a little body of women, whose disciplined services having been refused by the British Red Cross Society were offered to the Bulgarian Government, with the result that this embassy of mercy was a most unqualified success, though the British Red Cross Society still obstinately adheres to its indefensible policy. When it was determined to close the hospital of the Women's Convoy Corps at Kirk-Kilisse, one of the patients was inconsolable. Mrs. Stobart assured him he would be sent to a bigger and better hospital, where he would be as well cared for as there.

"No, no," he sobbed. "where we shall go we shall be looked after by *fathers*—but *you* are *mothers*, and that is *much* better."

"How I wished," writes Mrs. Stobart, "that the British Red Cross authorities could have heard those simple words. They have now heard the story, but their only comment has been, 'If we had the decision to make all over again, we should make the same decision. We considered the Balkans was not a fit place for white women.'"

The book is dedicated to the Queen of Bulgaria, and has a Prefatory Note by Viscount Esher, G.C.B., who writes, "As President of the County of London Territorial Association, I became acquainted with Mrs. St. Clair Stobart and her work. We have differed much in opinion, but we have worked well together for the interests of the Territorial Force. Like her, I have resigned my connection with the British Red Cross Society, not being satisfied that the organisation, plan and sphere of operations of the Society, although philanthropic, are framed with a sole view to the welfare of our own country."

Lord Esher takes a novel view of the offer of nursing assistance to foreign armies engaged in war, holding that "any help whatever (however humane the motive) is a breach of neutrality and is tantamount to taking part in the war," and he supports this theory by stating that "this record of the Convoy Corps' achievement in the Balkans proves how effectively a body of well-meaning, philanthropic and earnest folk can assist combatants, patching up wounded to go and kill and

\* George Bell & Son, Portugal St., London; W.C.

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