

Smith, Miss F. Jenkins, Miss M. D. Hunter, Miss G. Robinson, Miss O'Brien.

Miss Nancy Smith points out that massage of the abdomen often gives instant relief from pain. The usual movements are given combined with deep breathing. This increases the secretion of digestive fluids, promotes absorption, and shortens the time the food is retained.

By abdominal massage the activity of the kidneys is promoted and the secretion of urine is increased.

It is well to ascertain the condition of the bowels as constipation sets up indigestion. A good soap and water enema should be given if there is any constipation every other day, and an aperient the alternate day.

Miss Florence Jenkins writes that indigestion is one of the most common complaints to which the human frame is liable, and is very largely due to the fact that people will not attend to their diet, and to the daily evacuations of their bowels. . . . It may also arise from catarrh in the stomach, and in this condition it is in many instances hereditary.

Miss M. D. Hunter says Should there be flatulence, enough Sodii Bicarb to cover a three-penny bit, taken in 5 ounces of warm water is often effectual, or half an ounce of Aqua Menthæ Pip in an ounce of very hot water is nicer to take.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe your happiest holiday.

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### VENEREAL DISEASE.\*

#### THE BLACK PLAGUE.

By the HON. ALBINIA BRODRICK.

(Concluded from page 45.)

Time is too short to multiply instances. I want to direct your attention more particularly to the very important question of Syphilis in relation to children and to women—more especially women. Stiner examined the blood of forty-five women, mothers of syphilitic children, getting a Wasserman reaction even in the case of apparently healthy mothers. He therefore concludes that the mother of a syphilitic child should always be regarded as syphilitic. Out of 102 still births 75 mothers were apparently healthy, but all reacted. It

has been demonstrated that a woman who has had stillborn children by a syphilitic husband may bear syphilitic children to a second or third healthy husband, she herself remaining clinically healthy the whole time. Is it surprising that Dr. Prosser White should state broadly that venereal disease is more disastrous to the health of a country than either tubercle or alcohol?

As to children, Dr. Ferguson Watson tells us that in his experience children suffering from true congenital heart disease all gave a positive Wasserman reaction. Dr. Kerr Love found congenital Syphilis causing deafness. Dr. Robert Hutchison tells of the splenic enlargement, the syphilitic epiphysitis at the point where ossification is going on in the long bones, of the syphilitic pseudo-paralysis consequent upon it—all in infants under 6 months. Dr. Hugh Thursfield notes syphilitic laryngitis in children, Dr. Denman Fitzwilliam states that gummatous changes in bones are by far the commonest cause of spontaneous fracture in children, Mr. Bishop Harman reports many children as being more or less blind from congenital Syphilis. I would commend to all nurses the picture of the syphilitic infant presented by Dr. Robert Hutchison in his delightful book "The Diseases of Children"—

These syphilitic mothers, syphilitic unsuspected by themselves and often by their medical attendants—these syphilitic children, many of them with the disease latent and therefore unrecognized for years, but attacked as Stifter reminds us in later life, after an interval of several decades during which they have been apparently quite well by the symptoms possibly of severe nervous affections—these innocent and unsuspecting women and children form a phalanx of horrible danger to the community—for at some time or another they will undoubtedly transmit, and perhaps to many persons, an insidious, a painful and often a most loathsome disease.

As I write, there passes before my mind a procession—not of ghosts, alas, would to God they were not human—but of men and women and children whom I have known personally, some of whom I have loved. The young wife, whose ill-health dated from her marriage, who goes restlessly from health resort to health resort, seeking vainly the cure for—well *she* knows not what—the cure which we know she is unlikely to find on this side of the grave—and God send her early release. The elderly woman, she also a wife—sterile, the subject of a total hysterectomy, victim of nerve-troubles

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\* Read at the Nursing Conference, Dublin, June 4th, 1913.

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