

the blood of every patient at every hospital, and to include the blood test as one of the items in the medical examination of school children. If this could be systematically carried out for a few years it would have an enormous effect on the reduction of disease by leading to good treatment. Good work was being done by a number of corporations, including Glasgow, who were prepared, at the public expense, to examine specimens of blood sent to them.

Early detection of the disease should be followed by free treatment. He thought that in treatment lay one of the roads to success in stamping out the disease.

Dr. Browning was convinced of the great efficacy of salvarsan. It was possible with a dose of salvarsan to do what it might take a course of mercury to accomplish, or what a course of mercury might fail to accomplish.

He was opposed to notification of syphilis at the present time because he feared that it might deter people from coming for treatment, but he was inclined to agree with the suggestion of Dr. Kerr Love that some of the manifestations of congenital syphilis might with advantage be made notifiable.

The Hon. Albitia Brodrick will come to London specially to give evidence before the Commission on Friday, 6th inst.

NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

The first of a course of lectures on venereal diseases was given by Miss Hilda Clark, M.B., to a crowded meeting of the London Branch of the National Union of Trained Nurses at the Royal Society of Medicine on February 28th. Dr. Clark first explained to the audience the extreme importance to the nursing profession that they should study the whole field of disease, however disagreeable, since their duty to individual patients, to the race as teachers of the laws of health, and to the cause of scientific progress which needed their accurate observation of the phenomena of disease, could not otherwise be fulfilled. She then proceeded to survey the history of venereal diseases and pointed out that gonorrhœa was evidently recognised and treated in Old Testament days, while syphilis, though apparently known in India and China and possibly in Greece and Rome, does not appear to have been serious until the time of the siege of Naples in 1495. For a time after this the two diseases were confused, but early in the nineteenth century the two were clearly distinguished.

A description of the pathology and clinical features of gonorrhœa was then given, indicating the differences observed in the course of the disease in the male and in the female, and the bearing of certain points on infection.

At the next lecture, to be illustrated by lantern slides, the description of gonorrhœa will be summarised, and syphilis will be dealt with.

Questions are particularly invited.

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

NURSING IN THE PURDAH.

The life of a private nurse in India has a great deal of variety in it. It has been my lot to nurse people of mostly all Eastern nationalities and to get glimpses into customs and ways so different to Western ideas that one wonders how these customs, which are handed down for generations, still continue to hold sway in these days of enlightenment.

It was my good fortune whilst private nursing to be sent to nurse a Princess in a Native State who was strictly in Purdah.

My companion and I left B— by a night train. The journey down was delightful. We had a cool breeze all the way. Our journey to X took twenty-one hours. We had two changes and at these stops had breakfast and tea. The station refreshment rooms were anything but pleasant to take meals in. We were attended by Goanese butlers, who sauntered in with dirty dusters on their shoulders, willing to dust away the flies which may alight on the dining table. I may here mention that at certain times in the year these pests are unbearable and fly papers cut in small squares are placed on the table, so that you have to make yourself content when eating to listen to the buzz of these insects when secured to the paper.

The country we passed through was agricultural and frequently we saw deer and partridge near the railway line. We arrived at our destination at 7 p.m. as evening was closing in. To our surprise the station was alight and decorated with banners, flags, and words of welcome. We were met by a European gentleman and a number of native attendants. A word was spoken—we had nothing more to do. Like clockwork our luggage was taken to our dwelling rooms and we drove in a carriage and pair to the "House" in Purdah.

The whole station was *en fête*, as one of the high Government officials was just then visiting it. Needless to say the glamour of light plus the varied coloured costumes worn by the natives added to the scenery. Owing to the continuous stream of visitors we were housed in a tent just outside "The Purdah" for twenty-four hours.

We made ourselves presentable in apron and cap and were taken for our introduction, one preparing to work day and the other night.

We arrived at the door. There was a guard of Arabs with swords in their belts at the entrance. Some squatting on the ground smoking big hookahs (native pipes), others actually sleeping, but one and all with their fierce-looking faces inspiring one with fear. One of these men, by knocking at the door, announced to one of the women attendants our arrival. She on her part took the message further along, and after an interval we were ushered in and the entrance door carefully closed. We were taken along a long, dimly-lit

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)