

amount, whether the comparison made be historical, geographical or social.

Looking at the matter from the historical point of view, the curve of mortality from syphilis in England and Wales shows a very large and rapid rise between 1850 and 1868, followed by a period of fairly sustained elevation till about 1886; this is succeeded by ten years of rapid fall, and the fall has continued, though it has become less rapid, since 1896.

Dr. Stevenson was of opinion that the fall recorded in the last thirty years represented a genuine decrease in the mortality from the disease: he gave several reasons in support of this view, and referred also to the large contemporaneous fall in the curves showing prevalence of syphilis in the Army and Navy.

To illustrate the incidence of syphilis and diseases resulting from it on various occupational and social classes, tables had been prepared in which the male population was graded according to occupation into five main groups and three additional groups (textile workers, miners, and agricultural labourers) representing the three largest single industries. Of the five main groups, the first consisted of the upper and middle classes, and was sufficiently comprehensive to include clerks and insurance agents; the fifth group represented unskilled labour. The most striking feature of the tables was the uniformly low mortality of textile operatives, miners and agricultural labourers, the last group especially yielding very low rates. Of the five main groups the highest mortality was found in group 5; the mortality from syphilis was lowest in group 1, but the mortality recorded against it from the parasyphilitic diseases was high, and for locomotor ataxy the rate was higher than that of any of the other groups.

Taking all the circumstances into consideration Dr. Stevenson conjectured that syphilis is most prevalent amongst the highest and lowest of the five social classes he dealt with, and that the three great industries of textile manufacture, mining and agriculture are almost certainly exceptionally free from the disease.

With regard to the geographical distribution of the diseases the tables furnished by Dr. Stevenson indicated that the prevalence in the large towns was much greater than in the rural and small urban districts.

#### THE ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.

New courses of training, including Demonstrations and Practical Inspections for sanitary inspectors, women health visitors, tuberculosis visitors, and school nurses, as well as on School Hygiene, will be held at the Institute, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W., the first beginning on February 2nd. Full particulars can be obtained from the Institute. As the certificate of the Institute is recognised by the Local Government Board, it is valuable to nurses desiring to obtain appointments under the Board.

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

### WOMEN.

The very long list of New Year's Honours was not very exciting—so many being bestowed on wealthy men one had never heard of. One woman only received Royal recognition. The Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal for Public Service in India of the First Class was bestowed on the Reverend Mother Mechtilda, Mother Superior of the Loreto Convent, Shillong, Assam.

On the last day of the old year, the *Times* published a 54-page "Pacific Coast Supplement." Page 13, headed "Pacific Coast Women," contained information of a vastly instructive and interesting nature. Here was told of their daily life and occupation, their clubs and organisations, the history of the Woman Suffrage movement—its development and success, and what women have already accomplished in California with equal suffrage opportunities.

### MEASURES PASSED.

The following measures are the only ones introduced in the Californian Legislature which were backed by the women voters. Every one passed:

An Act providing for the abatement of houses of prostitution, making houses of prostitution a nuisance and providing for enjoining persons who conduct or maintain such a house, and the owner, lessee, or agent of a building where such nuisance is maintained.

Equal Guardianship Act, providing that the father and mother of a legitimate unmarried minor child are equally entitled to its custody, services, and earnings.

The Bastardy Act, requiring fathers to support their illegitimate children.

Minimum Wage Act, regulating the employment of women and children, and establishing an industrial welfare commission to investigate and deal with such employment, which commission has power to fix a minimum wage.

An Act limiting the hours of labour for women. This Act increases the scope of the eight-hour law, which provides that women shall not be employed more than forty-eight hours in one week nor upon more than six days in one week. A determined opposition to this Bill arose over applying the eight-hour law to student nurses.

An Act regulating the employment of children; providing that no minor child under eighteen years shall be employed more than eight hours in one day, and no minor between the ages of twelve and fifteen shall be employed for wages or profit. Some exceptions are made.

An Act defining the crime of rape. This Act raises the age of consent to eighteen years. It was formerly sixteen.

An Act raising the penalty for rape from a minimum of five to a minimum of ten years' imprisonment, and from a maximum of ten to a maximum of fifty years.

An Act establishing a State training school for delinquent girls and appropriating \$200,000 therefor. (By agreement previous to the Session of the Legislature the organised women of the State asked for no other Act carrying an appropriation.)

An Act providing for the free use of all public schools, houses, and property, and for establishing a civic centre at each and every schoolhouse in the State.

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