ROYAL COMMISSION ON VENEREAL DISEASES.

At the twenty-eighth meeting evidence was given by Sir Donald MacAlister, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Glasgow University and President of the General Medical Council.

Sir Donald described the powers of the General Council in relation to medical education and the way in which these powers are exercised, for securing the maintenance of such a standard of proficiency as shall guarantee the possession by registered practitioners of the knowledge and skill requisite for efficient practice.

With regard to instruction respecting venereal diseases Sir Donald MacAlister said that the first reports made to the General Medical Council and the examination papers used at qualifying examinations, as well as the results of a special enquiry he had made for the purposes of the Commission, enabled him to say that questions on these subjects were set with such regularity by every Licensing Body that candidates could not fail to be aware of the importance attached to the subject and of the necessity laid upon them to study it seriously as a condition of success.

On the subject of quack treatment Sir Donald said that the General Council had taken every opportunity to press on the Government of the day the importance of restricting the free practice of medicine, surgery and midwifery by unqualified persons and the Council was strongly of opinion that steps ought to be taken to prevent the cruel wrong done by permitting free practice in branches of these subjects on the public without any previous qualification.

He pointed out that without difficulty veterinary surgeons had obtained an Act which protected them and protected the lower animals, so that no person could use any title suggesting that he had a veterinary qualification or practise as a veterinary surgeon on the lower animals without being qualified. In fact, Parliament had protected the lower animals much more effectively than it had protected human beings against the ravages of the quack.

He thought that a special case could be made out for preventing unprofessional treatment of venereal diseases by reason of the severity of these diseases and their effect upon the population.

THE LONELIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD.

By Nurse B. V. Hedderman.

The Island of Inishmain, the central figure of the Aran group, is situated about thirty miles from the town of Galway, and about eleven from the coast of Connemara. It is triangular-shaped, and has a surface covered with sand-rock and blue-grey limestone with a population of not much more than 500.

In winter it is bleak and desolate, bare and weird-looking. Without exception it is the loneliest place in the world, and so little protected from the fierce gales of the Atlantic that for many months one can hear nothing but the deafening roar of that never resting ocean.

This middle island is inhabited by people entirely different to those met on either of the others. They speak nothing but their native Gaelic, and from earliest childhood are inured to every conceivable degree of hardship, with the result that their sense of endurance is greater, sharpened perhaps by the compelling influence of having to earn a livelihood under the worst possible conditions of soil and climate.

Within the last few years many innovations have been introduced, and the visitor will now discover for the first time that absence of primevalism so often ascribed to this island, because of its isolation, by writers who have barely touched its surface.

Still, with all its dreariness, all its wildness, it has many remarkable objects of interest. Chief amongst these are the pagan remains, two huge stone Firboly Forts standing on a lofty eminence overlooking Galway Bay. There is evidence that these were once used as places of defence and of refuge from possible attack, and here in this very island now live the descendants of the very people that raised these massive and pre-historic ruins—it might be three thousand years ago, who can tell—all concerning their birth is a matter of conjecture. Surrounding these structures for miles around nothing can attract the eye but whole masses of stone—large boulders, scattered here and there, tier upon tier, wreathed in the greenest ivy, and the delicate queen of ferns, the "maiden hair" peeping up from beneath the creviced ledges of these rocks.

Geologists tell us that at some remote period Aran formed part of the neighbouring county of Clare, to which part of it at this moment bears some resemblance, and that it was afterwards separated by subsidence some time during the ice period.

Scattered about the island little patches of tillage reveal themselves here and there, though little in themselves colossal proof of industry and thrift, bare flags, covered by the people, generation after generation, with sand and clay drawn from whatever cavity it could be found not on beasts of burden but on the back and shoulders of human beings. This is the only soil found to-day in

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