

"While Modesty was out sunning herself," says an American writer, "Prudery stole her clothes. But Modesty's friends were never for a moment deceived or fooled by the disguise." Hitherto syphilis has been considered a shameful and unmentionable malady. The reason is not far to seek. The subject of venereal disease has been so long tabooed in general conversation, in public speaking, or newspaper writings, that the cloak of prudery and false modesty effectually concealed from the public gaze a national evil long known to have resisted moral and religious influences, as well as the uniform testimony of medical history, in every country of the world. To-day the cloak of Prudery and Silence is becoming loosened and thrown off. The new mantle is Education—the giving of the right information in the right way. A process of change goes on—a mental and physical change—in every normal human being, and when the factors in ante-natal life become more fully understood, and the importance of their right regulation better appreciated, some of the attention and energy now directed to the stage of adolescence will be consciously, intelligently, and intentionally guided to the innate qualities and tendencies which Heredity may give each of us at birth.

"Heredity is placed first among the constituent parts of the science of Eugenics because, more than any agency, it moulds the racial characters of future generations." Of the many diseases in the causation of which heredity has been regarded as an important factor, there is, perhaps, none more common or more deadly than syphilis. In defining what Eugenics may mean in its relation to venereal disease, we may say that it is an evolution backwards, so to speak. It is the care for the individual extended backwards first to his childhood, then to the time before his birth. It is the right of the child to be well born. If one accepts this principle, one is a Eugenist. The life of the individual, says Edgar Schuster, does not begin with birth. "A child," he says, "may be born with his life irretrievably ruined, and no matter upon what favourable conditions he is brought up his chance will be gone. Thus to go to the root of the matter, care for his surroundings must be extended backwards. The step most urgently needed in this direction is the suppression of venereal diseases, which cause more waste of life and happiness than any other comparatively simple cause. Also the conditions under which the mother lives during her pregnancy must be made as good as possible for herself and her child. These two methods come on the border-line between Eugenics and other means of progress, and in the future we shall see medical men, Eugenists, social workers of all kinds, and creeds and classes joining hands in a determined effort to banish the great scourge of venereal disease, and to which less than to any other evil can the epithet "inevitable" be rightly applied."

"It would appear, then, that all our efforts to eradicate the terrible scourge of venereal disease concentrate largely on one word, viz., Education."

"The members of the nursing and midwifery profession will soon discover numerous opportunities for doing valuable service of this kind, which, when wisely and sympathetically directed, may prove of the highest value. The influence of the nurse is all potent for good in her sphere of life and duty."

#### CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The following are the questions set in the examination held in London on April 22nd:—

1. Name the various organs in the pelvis, and state their relative positions. What special care do any of them require during Labour?
2. Describe the management of a Breech Presentation with the sacrum pointing to the right side and behind.
3. What varieties of Fits may be met with in connection with Labour, and what can be done to prevent them?
4. Describe a case of Inflammation of the Breast. What are its causes and how may it be prevented?
5. After vaginal examination the finger is found covered with meconium; what importance would you attach to this fact?
6. State all you know about Micro-organisms (Germs) in relation to Midwifery.

Sir George Fordham, who represents the County Councils Association on the Central Midwives Board, to which position he was appointed in succession to the late Mr. Heywood Johnstone, has resigned this position.

Dr. L. H. West, J.P., of the Grange, Wendover, Bucks, has been appointed to represent the Association on the Central Midwives Board.

#### RURAL MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION.

The eleventh annual meeting of the Rural Midwives Association will be held by kind permission of the Viscountess Hambleden, at 3, Grosvenor Place, S.W., on Tuesday, May 5th, at 3.15 p.m. The Marchioness of Tullibardine will preside, and the speakers will include Miss Margaret Awdry, who will speak on "Infant Mortality," Mr. Francis E. Fremantle, F.R.C.S., County Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire, on "Co-operation of Voluntary Associations with Public Bodies in Rural Areas" and others.

#### THE REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

The Midwives (Scotland) Bill, introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Balfour of Burleigh on April 1st, was read a second time on April 23rd. Lord Balfour in formally moving its second reading, said that all the communications he had received had been entirely favourable. Drafting amendments would be considered in the Committee stage.

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