

Mr. William Straker, corresponding Secretary to the Northumberland Miners' Federation, pointed out last week at the Conference of the British Hospitals Association at the Royal Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne, that a proposed amendment to the Truck Acts prohibiting deductions from wages would injuriously affect voluntary hospitals, and should in the interests of the working classes be opposed. Last year working men contributed £20,000 to the Royal Infirmary, but experience had shown that if the deduction was not made from the wages at the pay office it would be impossible to get more than 50 per cent. at most in any other way.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON VENEREAL DISEASES.

At the fortieth meeting of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases evidence was given by Dr. Dubois Havenith of Brussels, who was Secretary to the International Congresses of 1899 and 1902 dealing with venereal diseases.

Dr. Dubois Havenith reviewed the principal preventiv measure for dealing with ordinary infectious diseases, viz., notification, isolation, disinfection and general sanitary measures aiming at combating all unhealthy conditions. Of these he said in the case of syphilis disinfection, by which he meant the getting rid of contagious lesions and the sterilising of contaminated objects, was essential. In effect disinfection in the case of syphilis consisted in treatment.

Dr. Havenith laid stress on the need for early diagnosis, free and readily accessible treatment, and surveillance of the treatment for such time as might be necessary.

For the purpose of early diagnosis it was necessary to make adequate provision of laboratories in which bacteriological and other tests could be carried out.

The discovery of the existence of the disease should be followed immediately by treatment, and it was necessary to arrange for clinics which would be open after the ordinary hours of labour.

In order that patients, who were often negligent or ill-instructed, should not abandon their treatment, it was desirable to introduce some measure of control or surveillance. Such a system was already in operation at the dispensary founded by Professor Malvoy at Liège, where arrangements had been made, with the consent of the patients, for keeping in touch with them, for the purpose of giving advice, for submitting them to the investigations necessary to determine the permanence of the cure, for warning them against contracting marriage too early and so on.

Dr. Dubois Havenith thought that it was very important that the public should be enlightened upon the gravity of syphilis, both from the individual and public point of view, but it was equally important that it should be realised that syphilis was a curable disease, that as a rule it was avoidable, and that if properly treated it ceased to be contagious.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

The Congress of the Olympic Games, which met last week in Paris, has decided to admit women to participate in future Olympiads. The sports in which they may take part will be decided later.

The most important event of the week, so far as women are concerned, has been the reception by the Premier of a deputation of working women from the East End of London, who, in the most outspoken way, urged upon him their claims to the Parliamentary Suffrage, and received from Mr. Asquith a reply more sympathetic in character than usual.

The Premier, moreover, told the deputation—which was introduced by Mrs. Scurr—that upon one point he was in complete agreement with them. "I have always said," declared Mr. Asquith, "that if you are going to give the franchise to women, give it to them on the same terms as men. Make it a democratic measure. It is no good paltering with a thing of this kind. If the discrimination of sex is not sufficient to justify the giving of the vote to one sex, and the withholding of it from another, it follows, *a fortiori*, that the discrimination of sex does not justify and cannot warrant giving women a restricted form of franchise, when you give it to men in an unrestricted form. If the change has got to come, we must face it boldly, and give it on a thoroughly democratic basis."

Dr. Chapple asked the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on Monday whether, in view of the fact that women, having no electoral voice in the selection of members of the House, persistently alleged that they suffered as a class from wrongs which a man-made Parliament would not redress, he would set up a Select Committee to inquire into alleged grievances.

Mr. Asquith replied that His Majesty's Government were quite willing to consider any grievances which might be shown to exist, but hardly thought the establishment of a Select Committee for the purpose suggested necessary.

Let us hope the long-standing grievances of nurses, which they consider will be remedied by a Registration Act, will receive consideration at an early date.

A meeting in aid of the Nursery Training School, Hackney, N.E., was held by the kindness of Mrs. Malcolm at 1, Princes Square, S.W., on Tuesday, Lady Emmott presiding. The object of this institution is to train girls of the industrial class as little children's nurses. Dr. Eric Pritchard, Hon. Consulting Physician, spoke in high praise of the methods observed at the school and of its Superintendent, Miss Edwards. He added that it was remarkable that a civilised nation had not until recent years thought it necessary to demand any training whatever for those engaged in the care of young children. The Nursery Training Schools would remedy this defect.

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