

It is remarkable how ignorant the public is about syphilis. Herein nurses and midwives can play, and ought to play, an educative rôle; they come into very intimate and private relationship with their patients, often far more so than doctors do, and consequently they have opportunities often denied to doctors.

We are, I am thankful to say, quickly changing our mental attitude towards venereal diseases. They were long considered absolutely unmentionable subjects, and were looked upon as shameful diseases: the patients who suffered from them were looked on as moral outcasts. This is quite a wrong attitude; we should consider syphilis no more shameful a disease than smallpox or scarlet fever.

It is this wrong attitude that has no doubt been responsible for the shameful neglect of the Government of this and various other countries to deal with the prevention of syphilis. The disease can be propagated with impunity, can be treated by chemists and quacks, men and women can marry and continue to propagate macerated fœtuses and diseased children. The loss to the national health and the national efficiency, and the misery caused by syphilis are greater than by any other disease. No doubt times are changing, and we live in hopes that the recent Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases will come to a useful conclusion,\* and will have the courage to advise an efficient plan of campaign against venereal disease.

We must, at the present time, make the best of the very limited means at our disposal, and to my mind the best of these is to educate the public so that they may avoid contracting infection, may avoid infecting other people, may avoid transmitting it to their offspring, may be persuaded to present themselves early for treatment, and to continue that treatment until they are cured. And as an educative factor I know no class more suitable than nurses and midwives.

### A CAUSE CÉLÈBRE.

The action between Macmillan & Co., Ltd., and Swanhilde Bulau, the proprietors and editor of the *Nursing Times*; and the Nursing Press, Ltd., and Ethel Gordon Fenwick, editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, will probably be heard in the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, before a Special Jury, on Tuesday next, 14th March.

As this is a case of great professional interest, we advise nurses who are able to do so, to attend the Court and hear it for themselves.

\* See page 221.—Ed.

## SOCIETY FOR STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society will be held on Saturday, March 18th, at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., at 4.30 p.m., to discuss the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the proposed Voluntary College of Nursing. Members who are not on the Executive Committee are invited to attend and express their opinion.

### JOIN NOW.

Trained nurses holding a three years' certificate, who are in favour of State, and not Voluntary Registration, should join the Society, the single object of which is to obtain an Act of Parliament providing for the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses—so that the profession of nursing may be organized on a legal basis. Apply for forms of membership to the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., and return with particulars required. Annual subscription, 1s., or life membership, 5s., should be enclosed with form.

### IN SUPPORT OF STATE REGISTRATION.

The President of the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses acknowledges with thanks the following donations:—Miss Janet Stewart, "in memory of my dear sister, Isla Stewart," £2 2s.; Miss J. C. Child, 10s. 6d.; Miss Violetta Thurstan, 10s.; Anon., 5s.; Miss G. A. Rogers, 5s.; Miss M. Harvey, 2s. 6d.; Miss A. Phipps, 2s.; Miss Jeffries, 1s.

### THE ANTI-REGISTRATION PRESS.

Sir Henry Burdett, named by Mr. Stanley as one of his advisers on the Voluntary Nursing College Scheme, attended the Meeting on February 23rd, the proceedings at which were accurately reported in our last issue, and at which some forty persons were present. The absolutely false statement which Sir Henry Burdett subsequently inserted in his organ the *Nursing Mirror* concerning the attitude of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick upon that occasion can therefore be refuted by overwhelming evidence, and is too contemptible for further notice. But we claim that if Mr. Stanley expects honourable women to believe in his sincerity with regard to State Registration of Nurses, he must prevent this "adviser" from making grossly untrue statements concerning them in his Anti-Registration organ.

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