

date twenty-four patients, now have to be stretched to contain forty beds. A convoy of twenty men from the front had been admitted the previous evening, and they already appeared quite at home.

H. H.

### VENEREAL DISEASE: ITS RACIAL EFFECT.

The third lecture of the series on venereal diseases, organized by the Institute of Hygiene, was delivered on Tuesday, November 14th, at the Institute, 33, Devonshire Street, W. The lecturer was Lady Barrett, M.D., M.S., and her subject, "Venereal Disease and its Racial Effects."

Lady Barrett said that there were many racial questions, such as whether virility or numbers were of the most importance, and whether it would not be better to rear fewer children of a better type. This argument went out so far as venereal disease was concerned, for it affected both the number and quality, diminishing both. In its effect upon the birth-rate, it was largely responsible for the deaths of infants in the first twelve months of their lives, but the case of those who succumbed was not so pitiful as that of those who survived.

Its effects on the latter were more terrible, and resulted in the maiming of the race.

The difference between gonorrhœa and syphilis was that syphilis was inherited, but gonorrhœa was not, although it had even a more drastic effect on the birth-rate.

Lady Barrett instanced the far-reaching and terrible effects of syphilis and the loss to the nation, in production of labour, and cost of education. A blind child, after costing seven times as much to educate as a normal child, was still for ever handicapped. She spoke of the hardships and misery in families caused by this terrible disease, and gave some instructive statistics collected by Dr. Mott.

Dealing with gonorrhœa, the lecturer said that one of its saddest aspects was sterility in women, owing to the sealing of the fimbriated ends of the Fallopian tubes by inflammation which it caused.

It was often pitiful to see married people, both yearning for children, and the man inclined to be indignant, and both being totally ignorant of the cause of their disappointment. A woman so affected would often bear one child and no more.

The effect on the birth-rate from gonorrhœa could not be estimated as the family did not exist.

The maiming by blindness through this cause was terrible. The gonococcus could pass through the delicate membrane of the eye without any abrasion being present.

At an institution in Vienna for this disease, fifteen nurses had each lost an eye from being infected through ignorance.

It should be made a criminal offence for an infected person knowingly to infect another.

Every boy and girl should be taught how to avoid initial infection.

The lecturer emphasised the great importance of early and continuous treatment, and the responsibility that lay with nurses and midwives to ensure its being obtained.

At the close of the lecture some interesting questions were raised.

Dr. Murray Leslie asked whether in maternity hospitals it was the practice to treat women suffering from gonorrhœa.

Another question asked was if it were known whether male infants were more susceptible to syphilis than females, as there was a far greater proportion of deaths among the former.

Lady Barrett replied that the question had never been scientifically investigated.

### BOOK OF THE WEEK.

#### "THE WORLD FOR SALE."\*

A tale of the North-West! A romance worthy of the name. For this book forsakes the well-worn paths of convention, and tells how the Romany conducts his wooing, and how the daughter of the Romany King breaks free from their primitive life and does battle with her wild instincts till she has subdued them and can rest content with her Georgio lover.

Why was Fleda Duse tempting death in the Rapids of Carillon? The girl had reached the angry thrashing waters where the rocks rent and tore into white ribbons the onrushing current, and her first trial had come on the instant the spitting, raging panthers of foam struck the bow of her canoe.

"Women are sich dam fools when they git going," gasped Osterhaut as he ran. "They don't care a split pea what happens when they've got the pip. Look at her—my hair's bleaching."

Fleda Duse had run the Rapids of Carillon. She had obeyed a desire that had become an obsession with her. She had heard a whisper as she wandered among the pine trees there at Lebanon, and it simply said "Now." She knew that she must do it; she had driven her canoe out into the resistless current to ride the Rapids of Carillon. Having accomplished this tremendous feat she fainted in her canoe and was rescued by Ingolby.

"It's like a thing in a book," he murmured, as he neared the waiting people on the banks, and the vesper bells came out to him on the evening air. Years before, the life of the daughter of the Romany King had been saved from death by a great lady, who in return had made her promise that she would not remain a Gypsy, that she would not marry a Gypsy. The chief, Gabriel Duse, had kept his vow to the woman who had given her life for the Romany lass. It had meant to him the sacrifice of his life and exile from his people.

But the man who had married her according to the custom of their race, when she was a child

\*By Gilbert Parker. Heinemann, London.

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