

## VENEREAL INFECTION.

The following letter, signed G. Archdall Reid, Southsea, recently appeared in the *Times*, in reply to one signed "M.D.," and as we gather from correspondence that it deals with a question exercising the minds of many nurses, who resent the largely uncontrolled ravages of venereal disease, we reprint it for their information:—

"The discussion on venereal diseases is likely to be futile unless a few elementary facts are recognised.

(1) It is certain that venereal diseases can be abolished, or, at least, greatly reduced, by very simple means. In two instances within my knowledge medical men, each in charge of thousands of men, have stayed a real plague by a few easy lectures on sanitation. They begged their charges not to run into danger, but insisted that, if danger were incurred, disinfection must follow—just such disinfection, but of a more simple type, as a surgeon practises before and after operation.

(2) 'M.D.' considers 'it is the treatment of the females—moral, as well as physical—that is the crying need of the present.' I venture to believe him mistaken. As far as prevention goes, the moral and physical treatment of women is far more difficult than that of men. But if men cease to be carriers, disease will vanish among women. It is actually necessary to deal with only one-half of the population.

(3) 'M.D.' writes also:—'The means and methods of prevention [disinfection] must be taught or not taught, and with such a division of opinion upon this burning question, it is hopeless to expect that it will be settled in the immediate future.' Here, again, I believe he is mistaken. An item of scientific and sanitary knowledge, vitally important to millions, cannot at the present day be placed in an Index Expurgatorius. There are those who are determined it shall reach the public, and I do not know by whom or how they can be silenced.

(4) At present we are in difficulties for men and treasure. Yet at any time during the war the services of a large army have been lost to the country, and millions of money have been spent in the treatment of disease which might easily have been prevented. In the hands of every Army surgeon are the means of prevention. But an Army Order forbids use.

(5) In England, at the present day, if one person willfully kills another with arsenic, the law hangs him by the neck till he is dead. If he merely attempts to poison with arsenic, he suffers a long term of penal servitude. But it is open to any diseased drab to tempt and poison any inexperienced boy, and to any scoundrel to poison, perhaps his own wife and children, even to death, and the law raises not a finger in protest provided the poisoning is done in the most cruel and treacherous way conceivable. There are any number of "moral" people who ardently desire

to maintain the possibility and certainty of this poisoning. Is it any wonder that there are others who, shocked and horrified at this savage wickedness, are resolved to render it innocuous?"

## NO LONGER VOLUNTARY AID.

Lady Ampthill, Director of County Organizations of the Voluntary Aid Detachments in connection with the Joint War Committee, gave an address at the Agricultural Hall, Norwich, on Friday, March 8th, on the needs and development of this branch of the work of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. As is generally known, the Voluntary Aid Detachments include both nursing and general service members; and since the beginning of the war, 9,015 of the former and 2,337 of the latter have been posted. At present the great need is for general service members, some 400 of whom are now needed monthly—the great demand being for cooks and ward maids—but "serving members," who will undertake varied domestic duties, are also needed at home and abroad, as well as motor transport drivers, mechanics and washers. As all these workers are fairly paid, the time indeed seems overdue when the term "voluntary aid" should be dropped. There is no reason why woman's work should not be adequately paid, but the term "voluntary" is a misnomer.

The whole of Devonshire House will shortly be at the disposal of the V.A.D. organization, as the W.A.A.C. are moving into Grosvenor Street. A canteen has now been established, where Red Cross workers can get a hot mid-day meal, and cooks who have joined for service can obtain an insight into the special work before them. It is also hoped to establish a Club for V.A.D. members on leave.

## THE WAR RECOMPENSE.

The original of this verse, says the *Pacific Coast Journal of Nursing*, was found on an Australian soldier who bravely fought and as nobly died. His name is as yet unknown.

Ye that have faith to look with fearless eyes  
Beyond the tragedy of a world at strife,  
And know that out of death and night shall rise  
The dawn of ampler life.  
Rejoice, whatever anguish rend the heart,  
That God has given you a priceless dower,  
To live in these great times and have your part  
In Freedom's crowning hour,  
That you may tell your sons who see the light  
High in the Heavens—their heritage to take—  
"I saw the powers of Darkness put to flight,  
I saw the Morning break."

—Red Cross Magazine.

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