

THE PLACE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IN THE TREATMENT OF VENEREAL DISEASES.

A meeting for women members of Local Authorities in Greater London was held on Tuesday, June 14th, at the Middlesex Guildhall, Westminster. The meeting was presided over by Miss Bertha Mason, and Mr. E. B. Turner, F.R.C.S., Chairman of the National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases, spoke on "The Place of the Local Authority in Treatment of Venereal Diseases." He said it was most important to tear aside veils which had hitherto been drawn over these subjects and instruct the public. After a campaign, at which he was speaking, the attendance at the local clinic increased four or five hundred per cent. Many more clinics should be started, and it was important that there should be co-ordination with other authorities, especially with the education authorities. Education was the rock bottom of reform in this respect, and the teachers should be taught how to instruct the young in sex matters, and the parents invited to conference. He spoke in high terms of the work of women police, and said that women of education were needed, not of the class who would give the "glad eye" to the police constable. He considered that many films were "filthy and disgusting"; common lodging houses needed more supervision as they were not infrequently haunts for the procurers. The use of prophylactics he denounced as immoral and leading to the increase of disease.

Of a large number of young men who were under his care, three-quarters of them had assured him that they would never have exposed themselves to the risk if they had not been dead sure of the efficacy of self-disinfection. The worst case of venereal disease he had ever seen was in a boy of sixteen. Was it suggested that young boys and girls were to be supplied with these means, the very possession of which would be one continual suggestion and incitement. The idea was horrible. The present Minister of Health was absolutely dead against the practice. The gospel of morality was the only remedy for the evil. Morality and health cannot be divorced. Children should be taught the facts of life as soon as they begin to ask questions, and "tosh" such as telling them that babies were found under gooseberry bushes should be abandoned.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. Wood gave some further illuminating facts. In Cologne, where the prophylactic packets are displayed in every chemist's window, and where they may be obtained by a penny in the slot system, it was estimated that fifty per cent. of the population was infected.

In answer to a question as to compulsory notification, he said that it could not be forced, but

that it would certainly come with the will of the people.

As an instance of its desirability, he said that a surgeon of a large venereal department had told him that he saw numbers of the women attending his clinic in the Strand at night, in pursuance of their calling.

It was highly desirable that Boards of Guardians should have power to compulsorily retain infected patients. In sea-port towns it was a common practice for such women to take their discharge on the arrival of a ship in port and to return for further treatment after it had sailed.

ST. THOMAS' HOSPITAL.

ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY OF THE NIGHTINGALE TRAINING SCHOOL.

The annual garden party of the Nightingale Training School to Old Nightingales at St. Thomas' Hospital, on June 21st, was a charming function. Firstly, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught came on to the lawn, where the Nightingale School and their guests were assembled under the shadow of Big Ben, from the presentation of prizes to medical students, and received from the Matron, Miss Lloyd Still, the offering of £2,000 given and collected by the nurses of the Nightingale Training School now in the Hospital towards its Appeal Fund, "In love of our Hospital and with sympathy for our President, Treasurer and Almoners, in their time of anxiety for its welfare."

Again, the group of international students, who have just finished their course at King's College for Women were there, with Miss Fitzgerald and Miss Waters, for Dr. Depage, of the Belgian Red Cross had come over to present them with the beautiful commemorative bronze medal of those two rare women and rare friends, Mme. Marie Depage and Edith Cavell. The medal bears on the obverse the heads of these heroic women side by side, and on the reverse, "1915—Remember." The presentation took place in the Matron's dining room in the Nightingale Home. Dr. Depage, in making the presentation, spoke in French, the Treasurer, the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, in both French and English, and Miss Fitzgerald returned thanks in French. One of the medals was presented by Dr. Depage to Miss Lloyd Still. A large portion of the long corridor was glowing with beauty—roses, delphiniums, fox-gloves, cornflowers, and sweet peas of every hue, perfectly blended, provided a feast of colour, to which tea tables played a subsidiary, if important part. On the terrace by the river, the Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards played delightful music, and on the lawn Miss Lloyd Still and the Nursing Staff were indefatigable in their care of their guests, among whom one recognised many distinguished "Nightingales," and other well-known members of the nursing profession. It was an afternoon long to be remembered.

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