

THE NURSES' MISSIONARY LEAGUE.

"The World Our Field," was the subject taken at the morning session of the Nurses' Missionary League Annual Meetings on May 10th. After an address by Miss M. V. Hunter, in which she vividly described scenes she had witnessed in India, a "Demonstration Study Circle," composed of nurses from various hospitals, discussed different forms of nursing work in the mission field. One member of the Circle who had worked in China, described her day's work in her hospital, and then other members spoke or read papers descriptive of pioneer work, dispensary work, women's work and the training of "native" nurses. The discussion proved the tremendous value of each of these branches of work, and showed how nurses with the very highest and widest professional qualifications and filled with the spirit of love are needed. The session closed with an address by Dr. Mary Hemmingway-Rees on "Who is Able for such a Task."

The afternoon gathering was, as usual, of a social nature, and the instrumental and vocal music was much enjoyed. Lieut.-Colonel A. E. J. Lister, M.B., B.S., late Hon. Surgeon to H.E. the Viceroy, spoke in the highest terms of the work that he had seen done in mission hospitals in India, especially at Amritsar and in Kashmir, and told of the suffering and the cramped existence of Indian purdah women, and the rife-ness of tuberculosis among them. He dwelt, too, upon the great work that medical missions are doing in bringing hope and peace to the people, and emphasised the tremendous value of the work of nurses, speaking with special feeling as he had had experience of a big operative practice with no nurses at all.

In the evening the chair was taken by W. McAdam Eccles, Esq., M.S., F.R.C.S., and Miss Richardson read extracts from the Annual Report of the League. These showed that the keynote for the year had been "consolidation," especially in the hospital branches, where excellent study circles had been carried on, and also showed that 262 new members had been enrolled during the year, and 31 members had sailed for the mission field. Miss Richardson drew special attention to the following missionary exhibition, "Africa and the East," to be held in the Agricultural Hall, Islington, from May 17th to June 15th. In addition to having its own Court, the N.M.L. is responsible for the stewarding in the model hospital, and it was shown that the Exhibition will be full of interest for all nurses who can visit it.

In a most interesting address Dr. White described his work in Persia, where his practice with one medical and two nurse colleagues had an area half the size of England, and patients came six days' journey in each direction to the hospital. He showed how medical work is breaking down opposition and prejudice, and how a doctor gains access to the wild nomadic tribes and to the rich business man, and closed with an urgent appeal for more recruits, his Society alone needing some thirty nurses at the present time. The evening closed with an address on "What Discipleship Involves," by the Rev. E. N. Coulthard.

A PUBLIC DANGER.

A Conference convened by the National Council for Combating Venereal Disease was held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall, on May 3rd, to consider "How Persons Infected with Venereal Disease can Best be Retained Under Treatment until a Non-Infective Condition has been Attained."

The Conference was opened by the Lord Mayor, who said that after years of work by various organisations connected with this subject, the results left much to be desired. In London, out of 1,391 persons, 831 left off attending the clinic before their treatment was finished.

In spite of large sums expended on free treatment, these persons resumed normal life while still infective. If fresh legislation were required, this Conference was the time to ventilate the whole subject and he hoped some practical solution might emerge from it.

The paper of Lady Barrett, C.B.E., M.D., dealt with "Education *versus* Compulsion." She said that in educating the public it had caught hold of a side not wholly beneficial, it had learned a good deal of the method of treatment and had come to regard the quick disappearance of symptoms after one or more injections, as a cure. All clinics had practically the same tale to tell of the failure of continuity of treatment. She was disposed to consider free treatment as a detriment rather than an encouragement, especially as now in all hospitals a charge was made for treatment of other diseases.

Patients under treatment at clinics needed to be thoroughly drilled in the need of long drastic treatment. She argued that little good would be gained by notification unless some punishment followed the neglect of its observance, and urged that more thorough education of the public was the best solution.

Dr. Margaret Rorke, speaking of hostels for the treatment of young girls, said that the non-pregnant girls were very difficult to retain. They were given a jolly time, but many of them ran away. They could not stand restriction, and many of them went as "amateurs" on the streets, and she had known them take service in the houses of eminent practitioners; but her lips were sealed by professional honour.

Dr. Nebarro, in charge of Great Ormond Street V.D. Clinic, said he had dealt with 340 cases of congenital syphilis. Of these only half were under observation, although bribes of varying degrees were offered for attendances. Fares were paid in many cases. He could not speak positively about cures, even in cases of regular attendances. Eye symptoms develop. Wasserman reactions that had become negative became positive again. He was of opinion that when a syphilitic family was got hold of the plan was to deal with the mother. Of 17 pregnant mothers under treatment, 14 bore fine healthy children, six to 12 injections being given during the pregnancy. In his opinion, congenital syphilis should be notified in order to make the mother go under treatment in pregnancies.

Dr. Franks, V.D. Officer for Durham, quoted

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)