

THE Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems
from the Hindu Standpoint.

Medical Supplement

‘चिकित्सितात्पुण्यतमं न किञ्चिदपि शुश्रुमः’ । ‘विभेयस्वभृताद्देहो मामयं प्रहरिष्यति’

VOL. I. No 18.]
Registered No. M. 1304.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1922

[PRICE: 1 ANNA
Annual Subscription Rs. 3.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Dr. Robert C. Paterson in an article read before the Medical Society of the County of Albany, April 1920, on the subject of *Intestinal Tuberculosis* summarised his experience as follows:—1. Intestinal tuberculosis may and does occur as a complication in all stages of pulmonary tuberculosis, incipient as well as advanced. 2. The commonly described symptoms are those of advanced disease and the symptoms of early intestinal ulceration are usually slight and indefinite. 3. Early diagnosis is possible in many cases and has been particularly aided by the use of X-ray examinations. 4. Spontaneous recovery has been known to occur in a few cases. 5. Surgery offers the greatest hope in treatment, but the cases for operation must be carefully selected. 6. The condition of the lungs is as important as the condition of the intestines in deciding for or against operation and in prognosis. 7. We have as yet no means of accurately estimating the extent of intestinal disease and for this reason operation must always be more or less exploratory.

Dr. Kedarnath Das, M. D., the eminent Gynecologist and obstetrician, has been invited to address the Gynecological and Obstetrical Conference to be held at Washington in April. As desired by the Calcutta University, Dr. Das will, after addressing the Washington Conference, also visit the principal hospitals of Europe including, Italy, France, Germany, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland with a view to submit to the Vice-Chancellor and Syndicate a comprehensive report as to the standard of Midwifery teaching and hospital practice prevalent in the European Universities and his recommendations as to the standard to be adopted here.

A method of administering ether in vegetable or animal oils has been devised by a doctor, and it is stated to have been used in more than 30,000 operations says the "Popular Science Siftings". The ether and oil mixture is swallowed or injected into the lower intestines, and the same anaesthetic effect is produced as when the ether is applied through the lungs. The nausea, vomiting, and other unpleasant after-effects, however, are greatly lessened or entirely avoided.

There must be an honest recognition by all who attend child birth that puerperal infection is almost always avoidable and the appearance of it in any case that has been examined, or in which interference has been practised, is a serious reflection on the accoucheur or accoucheuse.

Mr. Zachary Cope finds testicular pain or discomfort in about 5 per cent of cases of appendicitis in the male. The pain often is not so severe as the general abdominal pain and may not be mentioned until the patient is questioned. It is either a dull aching or of a sharp shooting nature. It seems to be a referred pain due to the fact that the testicle and appendix are supplied from the same segment of the cord.

Dr. D. S. Hills in *Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics*, writes that cases of septic abortion should receive no local treatment until they are at least five days fever free; the one exception being hemorrhage that threatens life. This nominal period converts a septic case into a so-called nonseptic, which has fewer days of fever, a shorter stay in the hospital, fewer complications, and a lower mortality. So-called nonseptic cases should be curetted as a routine, for forty per cent, of expectantly treated cases have to be curetted. Curettage insures an empty uterus and prevents subsequent bleeding.

Venereal Disease, Prostitution and Vice Prevention.

By DR. S. L. KATZOFF, M.D., LL.B., PH. D.
Eminent Physician; President of the Connecticut Medical Liberty League; Author of "Timely Truths On Human Health," etc.

[We are enabled to give below a chapter from the writer's *Timely Truths on Human Health*, by his kind permission:—Editor, H. M.]

(Concluded)

MASTURBATION.

Before discussing the prevention of venereal disease and vice, a brief comment regarding self-abuse or masturbation will be timely. When we stop to realize that the very foundation of our modern social structure—that is, the maintenance of our family and the continuation of human life—depends upon the preservation of the sexual instinct, and that its perversion and misuse are most virulent factors in the disintegration of the individual and the race, then we can better appreciate the significance of this vital problem.

Men cannot err against the dictates of nature without paying the penalty for his lapse sooner or later. The penalty exacted for masturbation (if continued) is one of the most serious and awful in its nature. To begin the carrier of manhood by the abuse of nature's functions, and that, too, when the system has not completed the powers of its organism, is contrary to all the rules by which health and happiness may be attained. It is a vampire feeding on the life blood of its victims. It not only occasions impotency, but it destroys the excitement itself, by which the process is induced, and the feeling which led to it are maintained.

PREVENTION AND MITIGATION.

For the *prevention and mitigation* of vice and venereal diseases there are a number of suggestions to be considered.

Economic. The most significant cause or factor in producing prostitution and the resulting venereal disease is the economic circumstances of both male and female. Every female worker, whether married or single, should be endowed with the legal right to work for a minimum (and why not maximum?) living wage. Most women in normal times receive small wages, and so the temptation for vice becomes great according to needs for necessities of life. The average young man of marriageable age (20 to 25) receives small wages; sometimes he is only an "apprentice" or "learner" at this age and cannot marry, as he should, and probably would if he could; hence an unbridled sexual desire paves the way for the companionship of prostitutes. Eventually he falls a victim of gonorrhoea, syphilis, and other venereal diseases.

Sanitary lavatories, closets, and recreation rooms should be installed in all factories. The best ventilation and lighting system should always be had.

The dinner or lunch time should be two hours instead of one, and never less than one hour and a half.

A work day should never be longer than six hours. There should be no less than four shifts. The piece-work or "hurry-up" systems should be abolished. The same may be said of "overtime" work, which devitalizes the nervous system irreparably more in one hour than normal labour does in four hours.

Lectures on health and on other vital subjects should be held weekly by different experts. Questions by the workers should be permitted and encouraged.

Social. In view of the fact that the normal social unit is the family, anything that tends to make family life difficult or mitigate against the morals or well-being of the members of a family should be prohibited. Laws should be enacted to prevent the building of rooms in flats that do not furnish sufficient cubic feet of air, and landlords should be obliged to obey the laws regarding sanitation.

Medical. A venereal disease clinic should be established, providing all the doctors of the community have an *equal opportunity* to render service. Furthermore, there should be no political, religious, school, or other prejudices dominating the clinic, as is usually the case today. The aim should be to give all persons of ability an equal opportunity, at specified times, to render community service. The poor should not have to pay for examination, treatment or medicine. Further, the patients should not be humiliated (by being made to wait for hours in the waiting room or stand in line), experimented on, serumated, vaccinated, or "chopped" in any way, without their knowledge or consent. If a clinic cannot be maintained along such scientific, humane and democratic lines it ought not to exist. We have too many of the "ordinary" kind now. (More about this subject under the heading of "Hospital Abuses," "Abuses of Surgery," "The Doctor and the Public" and "Ethics and the Doctor.")

Recreational. Relaxation should follow the strain and stress of labour.

Recreation facilities, comfort stations and bath-houses should be improved in all cities.

A recreation commission should be elected by the people (not by an "old foggy" committee) to see to it that the people have good, clean dance halls, theatres, art galleries, park amusements and the like.

Dens, "private booths" or side rooms in restaurants, cafes, and saloons should be forbidden.

Sex Knowledge. Prudery should be set aside and education substituted for it. Prudery may be classed among the world's great degenerating forces.

Most children are permitted to grow into manhood and womanhood without a genuine knowledge of sex. They grow up in ignorance of the laws of life, finally their conception of sex knowledge becomes tainted with vulgarity. Seeds planted by vulgar minds are sometimes hard to eradicate. Parents should first know the subject of sex themselves; then answer children's questions relating to sex truthfully. There is no harm in keeping children innocent and free from sex curiosity as long as possible; but the parent should be the first to inform the child on this vital subject. Sexology ought to be taught in the schools to those whose parents do not object. Of course there should be different courses for different children, according to the environment, health and age. Special literature on the subject should be sent by proper city or state educational authorities to all parents who have children, with an aim in view of first educating the parents, and second to secure their co-operation in this fight for a cleaner, stronger and healthier manhood and womanhood.

The last few years have seen *prudery* discredited, and the public, without wincing, has faced the truth. Public sentiment has been jolted into action by learning the startling facts formerly so carefully concealed. Publicity must continue, and with it an earnest effort to redeem the subject of sex from unclean associations and raise it to its proper high place. (Suggested readings: See "Higher Race Development," by R. Swinburne Clymer, M. D., Quakertown, Pa.)

Education includes the establishment of proper social relations. When respectable women cease to condone the indiscretions of youth, so called, and shall demand the same high standards from men as

those which they themselves observe, fewer "wild oats" will be sown and a cleaner manhood, moral and physical, will be the result, for it is unquestionably true that young, ambitious men live up (to a certain degree at least) to the standards set for them by society.

"MODESTY"

When every pool in Eden was a mirror
That unto Eve her dainty charms proclaimed,
She went undraped without a single fear or
Thought that she had need to be ashamed.
'Twas only when she'd eaten of the apple
That she became inclined to be a prude,
And found that ever more she'd have to grapple
With much debated problems of the nude.
Thereafter she devoted her attention,
Her time and all her money to her clothes,
And that was the beginning of convention,
And modesty, at least, so I suppose.
Reactions come about in fashions recent;
Now girls conceal so little from the men,
That it would seem, to get back to the decent,
Some serpent ought to pass the fruit again.

—Yale Record.

The Segregated District. The segregated vice district of earlier days, with material improvements, would be preferable to the "Scattered system" of today. We certainly are against vice and intemperance in all things; but we will not approve a proposition merely because a number of self-appointed moral censors believe so. Prostitution, white slavery, and venereal disease should be abolished. Mankind is sufficiently burdened already without having more plagues to contend with. The "ostrich method" has not and will not work. We have more venereal disease to-day than in the days of segregation, editorials, rigid laws, and certain statistics notwithstanding. I do not say that "segregation" will absolutely "segregate" or "cure" the situation—far from it. We shall have prostitution, vice and venereal disease just as long as the causes of prostitution and vice exist; and from present indications it will exist for quite a long while. Therefore, I say that the improved segregated district under present circumstances would be much more scientific, humane and wholesome a method to adopt than the scattered plan of today.

In addition it must be demanded that the male patron be examined prior to being permitted to enter the district, otherwise segregation will not accomplish much. Even then this step should be only a temporary one, as distasteful as it is. Conditions under which people live should be so much better as to prevent possibilities of prostitution and vice in general.

The victims of venereal disease and the prostitutes, who are themselves victims of society, present a sad picture. They are as a rule scorned by friends, ostracized from society and condemned by nearly every one. They get little sympathy at best. Easily influenced by the elaborate statements made by physicians in their fake advertisements, they finally fall into various traps. Downtrodden and distracted, they often end up in the underworld, victims of "dopes," followers of crime, and finally seek relief in suicide.

A clean bill of health, based upon a thorough examination of the whole body, would do much to prevent transmission of disease to innocent wives. It would prevent the marrying of thousands of young men and women who have had venereal disease and still have it in their systems. It would prevent thousands of innocent wives becoming diseased within a few months or a year of married life, many times leading to the operating table or untimely graves. It would prevent thousands of abortions, miscarriages, and deaths of infants during first and second years of life. It would prevent sterility, blindness, and

insanity in a large measure. Yes, a physical examination (including uroanalysis, etc.) should be a *condition precedent* to marriage, for it would be a blessing to all humanity.

Not until we approach this subject in a more scientific and serious light, not until we are willing to admit the real causes and make an effort to eliminate them, shall we ever be much better off on this vital health problem, no matter how many books are written, lectures given, prayers uttered and laws made. The subject has been clothed in too much mystery, due to false modesty, ignorance and the worship of God. Even to-day it is easy to be misunderstood and misquoted on a delicate matter as this one. We need an awakening; a greater enlightenment of the parent, and as a prerequisite, a closer relationship between the child and the parent. The father, in other words, must begin to give more attention to his children and less attention to his game of pinchwholes or baseball score. Too long have the people been kept in ignorance on this issue as well as on all health subjects of importance. It must be made plain to the people, who have a right to know and who must know if we really expect to eradicate this menace.

SUMMARY.

Good economic conditions, systematic education, wholesome recreation, segregated system, including an examination of the male as well as the female, and a clean bill of health prior to marriage would improve the present sexual chaos and do much to prevent and lessen white slavery, prostitution, venereal disease and vice in general.

Should Doctors Tell.

Lord Justice Atkin took the chair at a meeting of the Medico-Legal Society, in London, when the discussion opened by Lord Dawson on "Professional Secrecy" was resumed.

Sir Lenthal Cheate, who began the debate, said the question was of large and growing importance, and he agreed with Lord Dawson that any future legislation on individual and public health must be made with due regard to professional secrecy. The problems of individual and public health, and those of professional secrecy, were so intimately connected that it was impossible to separate them. Take the case of a mail in a house where there was a large family. She had consulted a doctor, and he had discovered that she was a "carrier" of typhoid or diphtheria. She ought to be isolated, and in such a case the doctor must tell. She would have to be isolated, and ought to be compensated for that isolation by the State. By the notification of infectious disease the State not only incidentally absolved the doctor from professional secrecy, but realised that no private doctor had sufficient power and authority to ensure the public health. He recognised all the special needs of professional secrecy in venereal diseases; but nobody could be blind to the fact that these diseases were not properly controlled by the present want of system. The State would guard both professional secrecy and its duty to public health by a system of anonymous notification.

Dr. MacKeith strongly opposed any departure from secrecy.

The Chairman said that those who had heard Lord Dawson and other speakers must feel that the question was a real living one. It was not the case of a dispute between the medical profession and the lawyers, and it was unfortunate that it had been considered so. The lawyer was as much concerned for justice as the medical man was for the public health. He did not think it wise to claim that there was an absolute privilege for medical men.

Lord Dawson repeated his previous plea for a measure of privilege.

Teetotalism and Literature.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw, writing in response to a request from the editor of the "Westminster Gazette" on Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's recent statement that a total abstainer, and more particularly a life-long abstainer, is, in the nature of things, imperfectly equipped for high literature, and his challenge to the Wesleyan President to enumerate a list of half a dozen great poets and another list of half a dozen critics who have been total abstainers, says: "'Q' forgets Shelley and me. But his proposition that alcohol effects an extension of manhood is flatly contrary to obvious facts. Six drops of any alcoholic liquid will depreciate a man's critical acumen by ten per cent. That is what people take alcohol for. It dells their self-criticism and also their criticism of their surroundings, making them happy and silly. If it had the opposite effect the world would go dry at once. The world does not appeal from Phillip sober to Phillip drunk when it wants a sound judgment (which it seldom does). Shakespeare, who knew what he was talking about said that the effect of drink on a man was to steal away his brains. If 'Q' said that it added another inch of grey matter, then I want to know how much 'Q' had had when he said it.'

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