

Failure to Control the Venereal Diseases*

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"Women are mostly troublesome cattle to deal with. . . ." This quotation from Samuel Lover's *Handy Andy* could, I think, never be more aptly applied than to the control of the venereal diseases in women. The difficulties arise not from our inborn cussedness but from psychological, anatomical, and physiological factors, which make the early diagnosis of both syphilis and gonorrhoea far less likely in women than in men. The effect of all these factors is accentuated by ignorance. The consequence is that we women unwittingly provide in the community a pool of infection which is difficult to eradicate.

Ignorance

I have used the first person pronoun deliberately because one of the great stumbling-blocks to early diagnosis is the belief that these diseases are the prerogative of the lowest socio-economic group, and not only of this group but of certain disreputable sections of it. To the lay mind, and, I regret, to many medical and nursing minds, these diseases represent not so much conditions associated with sexual intercourse as

such, but evidence of promiscuity and degradation. The feeling which they engender is often quite illogical.

When I first went to the Liverpool Royal Infirmary 19 years ago, one of the senior honoraries, on the rare occasions when he visited the department, used the tail of his white coat to turn the knob of the door.

Last year a Central Sterile Supply Department (C.S.S.D.) was established in the hospital. The head of this department, a State-registered nurse, had visited North America to study the latest methods of sterilization. When the time came for the sterilization of equipment from my department to be taken over by the C.S.S.D., sister visited her to make the final arrangements. The head of the department said that she was very sorry but she could not allow the syringes and needles from the V.D. department to mix with those of the rest of the hospital until she had taken advice from a bacteriologist.

Recently I was asked to lecture to the postgraduate social

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than others in overcoming disability. Doctors attached to the project have been analysing and interpreting the data and making the ultimate decision on which people are to be considered handicapped when all the circumstances are taken into account. They were helped in their assessment by information from family doctors and from hospitals which had had contact with the handicapped person.

For the purpose of the survey a physical handicap was defined as "a protracted physical disease or defect of such a degree that an unskilled unmarried worker without support from his surroundings and with mental reserves and energy a little below average, normally would have difficulty in coping with daily life on an equal footing with others if he were suffering from the disease or defect in question." The survey was confined to persons between the ages of 15 and 61, since it was desired to place considerable emphasis on the description and analysis of employment conditions. The doctor determined whether the person was to be classified as "occupationally disabled," "not completely disabled," or "physically incapable of work." The occupationally disabled were further classified as to whether part-time work was necessary or desirable and an assessment was made of the conditions under which the handicapped person could undertake full-time or part-time work.

In analysing the data an attempt will be made to obtain a general impression of the overall need for rehabilitation measures. It

is hoped to divide handicapped persons into those who do not require rehabilitation, those who need it because they should be able to work more than they have done previously, and those who need help because their present work is injurious to their health. It is intended to publish the results of the study in a series of reports to be issued in 1964 and 1965.

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Books Received

Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.

Modern Trends in Orthopaedics. No. 4. Science of Fractures. Edited by John P. P. Clark, M.B.E., M.B., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 254; illustrated. 60s.) London: Butterworths. 1964.

The Complete Slimmer. By John Yudkin, M.A., Ph.D., M.R.C.P., F.R.I.C. (Pp. 191; illustrated. 30s.) London: MacGibbon & Kee. 1964.

Pediatric Surgery. Edited by Harry C. Shirkey, B.S., M.D., F.A.A.P. (Pp. 1,144; illustrated. £6 3s. 6d.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1964.

Viruskrankheiten des Menschen Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Experimenterlen Forschungsergebnisse. By Dr. med. Eugen Haagen. Volume I. (Pp. 107+xx. 30 DM.) Darmstadt: Dr. Dietrich Steinkopff Verlag. 1964.

The Architecture of the Body. By C. U. M. Smith. (Pp. 244; illustrated. 42s.) London: Faber and Faber. 1964.

The Biology of the Trace Elements. Their Role in Nutrition. By Karl H. Schutte, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Pp. 228+xx; illustrated. 40s.) London: Crosby Lockwood and Son Ltd. 1964.

The Geography of Life and Death. By L. Dudley Stamp. (Pp. 160; illustrated. 6s.) London: The Fontana Library, Collins. 1964.

Problems of the Biochemistry of the Nervous System. Edited by Professor A. V. Palladin. Translated from the Russian by F. S. Freisinger. (Pp. 330+xii; illustrated. 80s.) Oxford, London, New York, and Paris: Pergamon Press. 1964.

Précis de Radiodiagnostic. By F. de White. Preface by Professor H. Fischgold. (Pp. 402; illustrated. 70 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie. 1963.

The Evolution and Eradication of Infectious Diseases. By Aidan Cockburn, M.D. (Pp. 255+xi; illustrated. 60s.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1963.

Les Parathyroïdes. Rapports de la VII^e Réunion des Endocrinologues de Langue Française. Beyrouth, 9-13 September 1963. Edited by Professor A. Soulairac. (Pp. 578; illustrated. 48 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie. 1963.

Sinoatrial Heart Block. By Richard J. Greenwood, M.D., and David Finkelstein, M.D. (Pp. 94; illustrated. \$4.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

Medical Sociology and Cultural Anthropology of Sport and Physical Education. By Ernest Jokl, M.D. (Pp. 166+viii; illustrated. \$7.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

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