

Editorial Notes

THE SOCIAL EVIL

(*Int. Med. Congress.*)

Members of the combined sections of Dermatology and Forensic Medicine met in Albert Hall, in order to discuss the dangers of the scourge in connection with which many leading doctors have recently been urging the Government to appoint a Royal Commission. Sir Malcolm Morris, one of the signatories to the manifesto to the Government, occupied the chair.

Professor Dr. A. Blaschko, Berlin, who opened the discussion, urged that State laws in reference to the infection were indispensable. The so-called regulation had not proved an active means of diminishing venereal diseases in any country, chiefly because it did not include the most dangerous individuals. In place of regulation, a system of purely sanitary measures should be set up, which, recognizing that all sources of infection could by no system of supervision be excluded, should seek especially to make these most dangerous elements innocuous.

Such a system, for instance, as that already existing in Norway, should apply equally to both sexes, and should not officially label individuals or impose exceptional regulations, such as registration, inspection, and police control. While for most cases it would suffice to facilitate for all citizens opportunity of treatment, it would only be necessary in the case of specially dangerous classes, the youthful, the weak-minded, and the depraved to institute measures of compulsory education.

Professor Dr. Ernest Finger, Vienna, was in favor of measures being taken for the education of youth showing the dangers of syphilis, and also of the education of diseased persons themselves. Treatment, he said, should be made as easy as possible.

"PREVENTABLE MISERY."

Dr. W. A. Brend read a paper prepared by Major H. C. French, R.A.M.C., which dealt mainly with the subject of State control. The question of venereal diseases, he said, must soon become crucial in Great Britain under the insurance scheme, and in time they must become notifiable by reason of the heavy cost to the State, apart from all other considerations. Those diseases cost the country millions of pounds; they filled many homes with preventable misery,