

the older methods of treatment a large number of cases (minimum of 8 per cent. of those affected by syphilis) which had been apparently cured, developed conditions known as parasyphilis. This includes general paralysis and locomotor ataxia, which may be roughly described as degeneration of the brain and spinal cord respectively. Under more recent methods of treatment by salvarsan or salvarsan and mercury combined, the symptoms are so much more quickly and effectively removed, that it may be inferred that the number of cases of subsequent parasyphilis will be correspondingly diminished.

As regards the safety of treatment offered by the profession, in a series of 3,800 injections, given under proper supervision and technique and in properly selected cases, the mortality was nil.

In another series of 6,000 cases one death has occurred, but with precautions now taken, that death might not have happened. Consequently, we think the administration of the modern treatment so safe, as to justify its recommendation as a public measure in all ordinary cases.

NOTIFICATION.

The consideration of this is under two heads :—

- (1) Compulsory.
- (2) Encouraged but not compulsory.

This Committee considers that notification of contagious disease of any kind is sound in principle and in the interests of public health. All serious contagious diseases except syphilis are notifiable by law. Syphilis, a very contagious disease, has not hitherto been placed amongst notifiable contagious diseases, because of its peculiar association with the morals of people and the ethics of private life.

In reference to notification, Major French, (R.A.M.C.) stated before the Royal Society of Medicine, London, in 1912, that he had practised the system at Malta, with marked success for the past three years. In Denmark and Norway, notification has been in force for a number of years, and is accompanied by free treatment.

In reference to encouraged but not compulsory notification it goes without saying that every medical practitioner would inform a syphilitic patient of the necessity of undergoing a thorough course of treatment until he was cured ; also of the danger

of spreading the disease until such course has been carried out. If the medical practitioner had reason to believe that the patient was not carrying out the prescribed treatment in a satisfactory manner the practitioner ought to be encouraged to warn the patient that it might be necessary for him to notify the authorities confidentially about his disease. After having assured himself that the warnings have been neglected he should thereupon notify the authorities if he considered that the person would be a menace to the public health. In no case ought a medical man to endeavour to implicate another person through any information given to him by the patient, but he should advise the latter to inform any second party of his (the patient's) condition, and request that the second party should seek medical advice. But no system of confidential notification by medical men will be of any use unless unqualified persons are by law prevented from treating this disease. The Committee therefore recommend that Syphilis be declared a notifiable disease, that the notification be encouraged, but not compulsory, and that the Chief Medical Officer of Health should be the only person to whom the notification be made.

In order to guide the ignorant to efficient advice and so prevent concealment, the Committee recommends that legislation be enacted against the treatment of this disease by any unqualified person. This is recommended by the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board in his evidence tendered to the Sydenham Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases. To recapitulate the arguments given in the earlier parts of our report, it is incontrovertible—That effective methods of treatment can be carried out only by duly qualified medical practitioners—That the treatment carried out by unqualified persons may temporarily conceal the disease during the period of the first two years, when modern treatment is effective—That during the first three years medical supervision and advice are of vital importance, as the syphilitic then is most likely in the unmarried state to disseminate the disease in its active form, and when married to his progeny as well—That the older methods of treatment, consisting of drugs by the mouth, etc., are unable to cure positively any case—That if