

## ALL INDIA SANITARY CONFERENCE.

SPECIALLY REPORTED FOR  
*The Nursing Journal of India.*

THE third All India Sanitary Conference has been held at Lucknow, and lasted from 19th to 27th January. The experience gained at the Bombay and Madras conferences was useful to its organizers in enabling them to map out the programme. Thus the daily sessions were made distinctly shorter, thus obviating the risk of that mental indigestion which is apt to result from too many hours' discussion of papers on varied subjects.

As at Madras, a practical side was given to the work of the Conference by the organization of visits to places of sanitary interest. Not only was the sanitation of Lucknow demonstrated to the delegates, but visits were made by train to three important places of pilgrimage, Hardwar, Benares and Allahabad, the latter while the *Magh mela* was going on.

On Monday 19th January the President, Sir Harcourt Butler K.C.S.I., I. C. S., Secretary to the Government of India in the Educational Department, gave his opening address. After this the work of the Conference began. Each contributor of a paper introduced it in a few remarks, the paper being held as read, as a printed copy of it was already in the hands of the delegates. A discussion then followed, and as the delegates came from all parts of India the experience voiced in the speeches made was of the most varied character.

On this opening day the subjects for discussion were the Italian system of reclamation of land by silt deposit with reference to mitigation of Malaria, Rural Sanitation, the Medical Inspection of Schools, and the Teaching of Hygiene, and Conservancy. In the latter connection great interest was shown in a paper by Major A. W. C. Young I. M. S., on the prevalence of flies and their reduction in Delhi. This fly survey had brought out certain important facts, that fly maggots were chiefly found in stables and cowsheds, that shops and the areas under the wooden plank used to form the steps in front of them were also most fertile fly breeding grounds, and that other places were private house latrines, ruined buildings and the walls of *kachcha* houses. Besides paying attention to the cleanliness of all those places and to the proper management of the trenching grounds Capt. Young had effected a considerable diminution in the number of flies by the institution of incinerators. By now over one-third of the entire filth and refuse from the city is disposed of by the incinerators, and the erection of more is steadily going on. Another paper in this section was a note on the pitting of night-soil and manure in private compounds by Major J. L. Marjoribanks I. M. S. He showed that in many

compounds instead of relying on the visits of a Municipal sweeper once in twenty-four hours, a far better method of disposing of night-soil, together with horse manure and the dung of cattle and kitchen refuse, such as egg shells and potato peelings, is to bury them at once in a shallow pit, covering them as they are put in with soiled grass from the stable, the rest of the grass, together with the contents of the waste paper basket, being burned in the pit. The contents of the pit are dug up in the month of May after the night-soil has dried and ripened, and all pathogenic organisms in it have perished, and are dug into the vegetable beds in the garden. Nurses, who have frequent opportunities of seeing the careless way in which night-soil is disposed of in the compounds of even highly-placed European Officers, may be interested in a method for which it is claimed that it is by far the quickest way of getting rid of faeces, urine and vomit, as well as dung from the stable, and of putting them beyond the reach of the flies which breed in them.

On Tuesday 20th January the subjects of discussion were Infantile Mortality, Notification of diseases, Tuberculosis, Water Supply, Milk Standards, the Milk Trade, and Municipal Drainage. In connection with the first subject one very important paper was that of Dr. A. M. Benson, written on behalf of the Council of the Association of Medical Women in India at its fourth Annual meeting, containing proposals for the formation of a Women's domestic sanitary service for India. This would include, besides Sanitary Officers who would be medical women with a D. P. H., a subordinate staff of Indian and Anglo-Indian women having had not less than three years training in sick nursing and midwifery in good hospitals. In connection with the District Officers' work one small but important practical point was mentioned, that if a cinematograph apparatus is used in illustrating lectures one side of the sheet may be enjoyed by the general public while the other is reserved for purdah ladies.

A most important fact mentioned by Dr. Turner, the Medical Officer of Health for Bombay City, in connection with the work of nurse district visitors, was that in Bombay, instead of regarding *dais* as a nuisance to be exterminated gradually by the spread of civilization, the policy now is to accept them as a social factor and to give them some training, by lectures and otherwise, in the elements of cleanliness and of domestic Hygiene. The system had been so successful that the Mohamedan *dais* had actually petitioned that the lectures might be translated into Urdu for their benefit.

In connection with the subject of Tuberculosis, speakers of experience from all parts of India deplored the promiscuous use of tuberculin by native practitioners ignorant of the fact that its use should be confined to early cases, carefully selected.

In the evening popular lectures were delivered on Goitre by Major

R. McCarrison I.M. S., and on Malaria by Major S. R. Christophers with the aid of a lantern.

On Wednesday 21st January, after an opening address by the Director General, Indian Medical Service, the subjects discussed were Malaria, Cholera, Relapsing fever, and Guinea-worm disease.

Thursday having been spent on a visit of inspection to Hardwar, Friday 23rd January was taken up with the subject of Town Planning and Improvement, Mosquitoes, Kala Azar and the Bacteriology and Filtration of Water.

Saturday 24th January was taken up with a discussion on Vital Statistics and on Plague. In connection with the latter it was pointed out, in a paper by Capt. J. C. G. Kunhardt, I. M. S., that in certain plague infected districts the disease is carried over from one plague season to the next in certain villages only, and that it is worth while to ascertain for a particular district what these villages are, and to carry out energetic measures of trapping, rat poisoning, etc., in them.

An apparatus for the generation of Hydrocyanic Acid gas as a disinfectant for plague-infected houses and ships was given by Major W. Glen Liston I. M. S. The advantage of this gas over Sulphurous Acid gas is that it does not exert any injurious effect upon grain stored in godowns or holds of ships, while it is efficacious in destroying rats between the bags, and also the rat fleas which penetrate into the bags, and carry Plague in them.

Sunday, 25th January was taken up with the visit to Benares and Monday with the visit to Allahabad. On Tuesday, 27th January, a full conference was held, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces being in the chair. Resolutions were passed recommending the deputation of a committee to Italy to study the Italian system for the mitigation of Malaria; pointing out the measures of rural sanitation in which it is most worth while to attempt to secure the co-operation of the public; recommending the Medical inspection of schools and scholars; pointing out the importance of Sanitary measures directed to the mitigation of the fly nuisance; recommending the education of mothers and *dais*; drawing attention to the importance of obtaining correct vital statistics and, where possible, voluntary notification of deaths; recommending the special study of Tuberculosis in India; giving a warning against the indiscriminate use of tuberculin by inexperienced practitioners; suggesting special standards of purity for milk and milk products in India; recommending mutual help and co-operation between sanitarians, milk dealers and the Agricultural Department, instead of mere restriction of the sale of milk without organization; recommending that the authorities should be empowered to compel Municipalities which have not done so to introduce and enforce satisfactory building and drainage by-laws; suggesting to Local Governments the preparation and execution of town planning

and housing schemes, with the acquisition of land where necessary; pointing out that the progress of Sanitation is greatly impeded by the want of Sanitary Engineers; showing that Malaria surveys have brought important facts to light already; recommending efficient screening of bungalows in Malarious areas; emphasizing the importance of dealing with the villages which carry over plague from one season to the next, and recommending the further investigation of the etiology of Beri-beri.

The importance of the Conference was well recognized socially. On the first Tuesday the inhabitants of Lucknow invited the delegates to a garden party to meet Sir Harcourt Butler. On Wednesday Sir James and Lady Meston were at home at Government House, and in the evening Sir Harcourt Butler held a reception. On Friday the Taluqdars of Oudh held a dinner to which Sir Harcourt Butler and the delegates were invited, together with the ladies who had accompanied their husbands to the Conference. The termination of the Conference was celebrated on Tuesday 24th January by the officers of the Indian Medical Service attending the Conference, who held a dinner, to which their professional brethren were invited as guests.

Looking to the quality of the papers read and the criticisms made by those with experience of the different subjects discussed, it may be said that the Conference has again justified its annual existence as an indispensable factor in the Sanitary progress of the continent of India.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE.

By MRS. H. R. L. WORRAL, M. D., MUSCAT, ARABIA.

PICTURE a woman doctor in an isolated mission station trying to carry on a large dispensary work, trying to do whatever operations timid women may consent to, with only the help of ignorant and careless native women helpers. What portion of a nurse's work falls to the lot of such a physician? First and most important of all the minutiae and toil of preparations for operations. The afternoon of the day before while she is still tired from the dispensary work of the morning, she must see to the preparation of all the things necessary to be sterilized. The native nurse may indeed prepare the gauze for the sterilizer, but the rolls of towels, gowns, sheets, cotton, etc., and placing the same in proper position for conveniently taking from the sterilizer in a hurry, if she wishes to avoid confusion at the time of operation, the doctor sees to herself. Also selecting the basins, trays, etc., to be boiled. Then the sterilization of all the dressings carefully done. If this were trusted to the native nurse there might be an accident as she does not understand the principles of the machine. Selecting of instruments for the next morning's operation,