

April 4, 1919.

VENEREAL INFECTION.**MEDICAL MEN AND
NOTIFICATION.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—We observed with great satisfaction that Lord Willoughby de Broke, speaking in the House of Lords on Wednesday, April 2, on the subject of venereal infection, expressed his opinion that the time was approaching when notification would have to be considered as a means of securing a better control of these communicable diseases. We cordially agree with his statement. The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, we are aware, in its report, expressed the opinion that notification could not at that time be regarded as a practicable measure. But that was four years ago, and since that time both medical knowledge and public opinion have made great strides, with the result that we are in a position to-day to reconsider notification as within the sphere of practical politics.

Many objections to notification have been raised, none of which, however, though raised also in the United States, have materialized in that country to any detrimental extent, when a policy of compulsory notification was adopted. We firmly believe that experience in this country will be similar, if a system be inaugurated—and we are happy to know, from your Medical Correspondent's article on the "Ravages of Venereal Disease," which appeared in *The Times* of April 4, that such a system has already been proposed—whereby notification can be secured without any publicity. The patient and doctor can remain in perfectly confidential relation, provided the patient continues treatment until pronounced cured.

We have the honour to be faithfully yours,

WM. OSLER, F.R.S., M.D.

G. ERIC PRITCHARD, M.A., M.D.

WM. HALE-WHITE, M.D., F.R.C.P.

G. LENTHAL CHEATLE, F.R.C.S.

W. H. CLAYTON GREENE, F.R.C.S.

JAMES PURVES STEWART, M.D.,

London, April 4, 1919.

F.R.C.P.