

Académie de Médecine and of numerous scientific societies in France and abroad. The funeral took place on December 23rd, 1909, and was largely attended. By the expressed wish of the deceased, there were no flowers or orations.

At a recent meeting of the Académie des Sciences M. Arloing made an interesting communication on the result of the series of vaccinations against tubercle in cattle which he has carried out since 1902. The vaccines employed were fixed varieties of human and bovine bacilli; these varieties, not causing any appreciable lesions, were powerless to cause any harm to the animals vaccinated, and were without danger to the operator. The immunity thus artificially created was tested by inoculations of extremely virulent bovine bacilli; the experiments were controlled by similar injections given to non-vaccinated animals, both series being finally slaughtered and subjected to minute *post-mortem* examination. M. Arloing obtained the following results on 60 vaccinated animals and 30 control animals:

Vaccinated Animals.		Control Animals.	
	Per cent.		Per cent.
Complete success	... 50	No infection	... 9.2
Relative success	... 25	Partial infection	... 27.2
Failures	... 25	Complete infection	... 63.6

Measuring the degree of infection in the failures and the partial infections, the lesions appeared six times more serious in the control than in the vaccinated animals. Intravenous vaccination gave the best results—75 per cent. of successes; vaccination by ingestion gave 50 per cent. successful results; while the subcutaneous method gave 10 per cent. of entirely successful and 73 per cent. of partially successful results. M. Arloing concluded by saying that the experiments justified the use of vaccination, associated with the usual prophylactic measures, to diminish the ravages caused by bovine tuberculosis.

The statue which has been erected to the memory of Dr. Péan, the celebrated surgeon, was unveiled by M. Fallières, the President of the French Republic, on December 16th, 1909. The monument is placed on the Boulevard du Port Royal, opposite the entrance to the Rue de la Santé, in which street is the Hôpital International, which Péan founded and where he used to operate. After the unveiling of the statue, the company went on to the amphitheatre of the hospital, where speeches were made, Professor Pozzi handing over the gift to the City of Paris. A demonstration was made by Royalist students, *les Camelots du Roi*, and many of them were arrested.

Correspondence.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND AND GUILD.

SIR,—The tragic fate of Dr. Wells of St. Mary's Hospital, whose death last October at the age of 30 years was caused by contracting glanders in the exercise of his duties, aroused the sympathy of the public, and has drawn attention to the dangers to which all medical men are exposed in the pursuit of their profession. Accident or disease may cut short the career of a medical man, or other adverse circumstances may prevent him from making any provision for old age, so that he himself and those dependent upon him may be left in actual want, and even encumbered with debt. Speaking at a meeting in support of the fund held at the Royal College of Physicians in February last, the Bishop of Oxford said: "I do not think there is any profession in which a man is compelled, without any choice of his own, without any chance of escape, to run so great a risk of inevitable impoverishment for himself and for his family. He really risks his all upon his health. To meet such contingencies the British Medical Benevolent Fund was instituted in the year 1836 (1) to make grants of money to distressed members of the medical profession, their widows or orphans; and (2) to provide annuities for such after they have reached the age of 60 years. During these 73 years the Fund has expended £70,000 in grants, and rather more than this sum in annuities. At the present time the Fund is supporting 126 annuitants who receive from £20 to £26 a year each, and in addition makes grants to others not yet eligible for annuities, spending in this way an aggregate of nearly

£5,000 a year, the working expenses being under 6 per cent. Yet the demands upon the Fund far exceed its resources, and much-needed help has frequently to be denied to applicants approved by the committee.

A Woman's Guild has recently been established in connexion with the Fund to supplement the money grants of the Fund by gifts of clothing and coals and other additional comforts, and, by personal service, to add a warmer touch of human sympathy.

At the meeting above referred to, the Lord Mayor of London, after drawing attention to the economic value of the services of the profession to the State and to the community, whether in general practice or in hospitals or in the departments of public health and preventive medicine, asked: "What has the State and what has the public done in return?" "I think very little," he added; "and it appears to me that the public requires calling to its duties in this respect."

The Fund gives money which has hitherto been mainly supplied by the profession itself; the Guild will give money's worth. For Fund and Guild alike increased support is needed, and in behalf of both we plead, and fain would trust that the public will not fail to recognize its obligation to the medical profession by a liberal response to the appeal which we now make.

Subscriptions and donations for the Fund may be sent to the Treasurer of the Fund, 15, Wimpole Street; and for the Guild to the Secretary of the Guild, 100, Harley Street, by both of whom further information will gladly be supplied.—We are, etc.,

For the guild:

ADELIN M. BEDFORD.
KATHERINE WESTMINSTER.
E. BROADBENT.
MAY THORNE.

For the fund:

R. DOUGLAS POWELL.
HENRY T. BUTLIN.
WILLIAM S. CHURCH.
THOMAS BARLOW.
JOHN TWEEDY.
SAMUEL WEST.

December 28th, 1909.

RESEARCH DEFENCE SOCIETY.

SIR,—In view of the General Election, we desire to call the attention of all Parliamentary candidates to the work of the Research Defence Society. It was founded in January, 1908, to make generally known the facts as to experiments on animals in this country, and the regulations under which they are conducted; the immense importance of such experiments to the welfare of mankind, and the great saving of human life and health which is already due to them. We hope that all candidates for Parliament, who may desire to acquaint themselves with these facts, will communicate with the Honorary Secretary, Research Defence Society, 70, Harley Street, W. He will be happy to supply them with literature, and to answer all inquiries.

We would also remind them that the Royal Commission, though it has published all the evidence, has not yet published its final report and recommendations to Government; and we hope that those candidates who may be unable, at present, to declare themselves in sympathy with our society, will at least preserve an open mind, till the report has been published.—We are, etc.,

CROMER,

President.

SYDNEY HOLLAND,

Chairman of Committee.

F. M. SANDWICH,

Honorary Treasurer.

STEPHEN PAGET,

Honorary Secretary.

London, W., Dec. 26th.

PRISON DOCTORS AND THE HOME OFFICE.

SIR,—I do not suppose many members of the Association will be deceived by the terms of Dr. Donkin's letter, which purports to be a correction of your leading article of December 18th, 1909.

Some, however, may not be aware that a disgraceful attempt is being made by the Home Office, from the Home Secretary down to Dr. Donkin, to put the responsibility of this repulsive treatment of political prisoners on to the shoulders of the medical profession. It is useless for Dr. Donkin to repeat the attempts he has been making in

the *Times* to maintain this imposition, for, as you indicate, the whole status of the Home Office was clearly and frankly related by the Under Secretary, Mr. Masterman, in the House of Commons, and is recorded in *Hansard* (q.v.).

Dr. Donkin's suggestion that the responsibility of forcibly feeding suffragettes by the nasal method rests on the medical officers of prisons is as incorrect as the judge's suggestion (in his question to me) that the doctor did it to "save the prisoner's life"!

As may be seen by reading between the lines of Dr. Donkin's letter, this treatment of his political opponents was ordered by the Home Secretary and no one else, though we understand from Mr. Masterman's statement in the House that Mr. Gladstone's action received the concurrence of the Prison Commissioners, one of whom is Dr. Donkin. In his final sentence he alleges that his junior colleagues, the prison officers, who he amiably holds up to the public as the ingenious executioners of this practice, "always act, in the not very infrequent cases of forcible feeding, without any reference to superior authorities, and merely record the event in their journals." This, Sir, coming from one who admits he was present in court during the trial, *Leigh v. the Home Secretary* and others, is a deliberate distortion of the facts as bearing on the issue, namely, the forcible nasal feeding of suffragettes.

So far from these cases being "not infrequent," the Birmingham officer, who had also had an extensive experience of prison service in Wormwood Scrubs, could only recall one case in which he had done it for some time, namely, the case of a "powerful foreigner," a criminal. As Dr. Donkin did not enter the witness-box he was not called upon to justify his assertion, which, though considered by him to be good enough for our *JOURNAL*, has the grave demerit of not being a fact. Precisely the same flat contradiction must be applied to his statement that the prison officers carry out this "treatment," as the court termed it, "without any reference to superior authority."

Dr. Donkin must have heard the Birmingham officer swear the exact opposite in court. That the local prison officials were in constant direct reference to the Home Office was also sworn to by the governor of the prison, as well as admitted by Mr. Masterman last September.

Dr. Donkin, unfortunately, is not the first medical official who has disloyally helped to thrust on his profession, and on its work, the odium which happens to follow an act of a responsible Minister.

We may always rely on our *JOURNAL* to repel such base attacks from within, but the case of *Leigh v. the Home Secretary* contains more questions than those discussed in your leader, and the profession will have to consider, among others, under what circumstances they will, at the bidding of a Minister, perform operations upon prisoners who refuse to undergo the same.—I am, etc.,

London, W., Dec. 25th, 1909.

VICTOR HORSLEY.

FORCIBLE FEEDING.

SIR,—I was continually present at the feeding of the suffragettes in Birmingham Prison, and think it right to reply to Dr. Kirby's letter in your last issue.

As forcible feeding has been employed for years past, under various circumstances, is it not surprising that any medical man should stigmatize it as "cowardly and disgusting," even if it is to a self-starving suffragette that it is applied? The fact that good and attractive food was continually offered to them seems to be lost sight of. I am chiefly concerned, however, with Dr. Kirby's "few facts."

Most of the weight lost by Miss Laura Ainsworth was lost during her period of total starvation in the first few days of her imprisonment, and the whole of it was due to her persistent refusal of food. Her voice was not more "weak and husky" when she left the prison than it was when I saw her before forcible feeding was commenced.

"The doctors failing in their attempt to force the tube through" implies a charge which is not justifiable. No force whatever was used. As soon as the obstruction was found the attempt was abandoned. She was fed on four, not seven, occasions by the oesophageal tube, the last being seven days before her release, and during those seven days she made no complaint or suggestion of sore throat. As no trouble was ever experienced in the actual passing of the tube, there is no reason why any sore throat should have been produced by it. Although

Miss Ainsworth has stated elsewhere that she did mention to me, the evening before her discharge, that her throat was sore, this is contrary to my recollection. Had she so complained in my hearing I would certainly have investigated the matter. Taking, however, Miss Ainsworth's own statement, the soreness of the throat was only mentioned on this one occasion, six days after the last passing of the tube. Yet Dr. Kirby describes her condition floridly as suffering from pharyngitis due to the "irritation of the tube."

Dr. Kirby states that Miss Hilda Burkitt was very weak when she left the prison. She certainly was very weak after her second hunger strike, but was nursed back to strength (her diet then consisting of fish, chicken, beef-tea, etc.) with such good effect that she told us before leaving the prison that she used to amuse herself by waltzing round the small ward, which has a polished floor, where she was located alone. She also said she felt fit to tackle ten policemen, but this may possibly have been an exaggeration.

Dr. Kirby believes Mrs. Leigh's vomiting was due to the irritation of the pharynx by the nasal tube. Had this been so it would have occurred immediately. As a fact, it never happened until ten minutes after the feeding and frequently was delayed for half an hour. Surely pharyngeal irritation is the least likely explanation of this and is also the least likely explanation of the stomatitis which he found at the back of a carious incisor tooth! Although vomiting did not occur until late in her imprisonment, Dr. Helby recorded, on the fourth day after her reception, that he feared this complication in her particular case. Of the nine suffragettes, Mrs. Leigh was the only one released on medical grounds. So far from being in the desperate condition on her release that one would infer from Dr. Kirby's description, Mrs. Leigh dressed herself rapidly, walked briskly a distance of about 130 yards to the prison gate, where she gave some final trouble, standing and arguing with the officials before entering the cab which was waiting to take her to her friends.

Dr. Kirby says Miss Selina Martin was suffering from dyspepsia aggravated by her imprisonment. She made no complaint of having dyspepsia while she was in prison, nor was any indication of this discovered at any time by Dr. Helby or myself, nor did the consulting surgeon who examined her the day before her discharge do so. She may have had dyspepsia after her release; in fact, this could only be expected if the return to normal diet, in one who had taken no food for six weeks except through a tube, were not judiciously graduated. In this case also Dr. Kirby states he found a "considerable abrasion" of the mucous membrane of the nose. It seems very unlikely that a "considerable abrasion" could be produced without drawing some blood. Not a drop of blood was drawn at any time, nor did the patient ever give any indication of having pain. Indeed on several occasions she passed the tube herself, and always said she felt very well.

I am glad to observe that these ladies "all agreed that the treatment had been as careful and humane as possible." I am pleased to hear at last a public acknowledgment of this from that side, as I was daily impressed with Dr. Helby's patience with prisoners whose obstructive methods were certainly very trying.

Referring to Dr. Kirby's recommendations: Feeding by tube was, of course, only resorted to when, owing to the resistance of the patient, feeding by means of a cup was found impossible. In any case, cup-feeding is the most exhausting form to a determinedly obstructing patient.

It is noteworthy that each of these ladies immediately prior to her release expressed her intention of resuming "militant" political action. None of them, apparently, had any intention of entering a nursing home. I agree with Dr. Kirby that they have shown remarkable courage, but am afraid that his sympathies have somewhat obscured his judgement and led him to discover ailments of which the patients themselves were apparently unconscious.—I am, etc.,

WILLIAM CASSELS, M.B., C.M.

Birmingham, Dec. 28th, 1909.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION ON ANAESTHETICS.

SIR,—As Dr. Joyce points out clearly in the *JOURNAL* of December 18th, 1909, p. 1782, the hands of the general practitioner are to be further tied by another clumsy piece of