

duction of serum, or even more so. I have no wish, however, to raise controversial points, but I hope, in view of the disastrous results to the community, both military and civil, of the last outbreak of influenza, that attempts will be made in the next epidemic to reduce the mortality by judicious tapping in suitable cases; this will, I believe, include the majority of bad ones; if properly done it is without risk.

Increased pressure on the vital centres in the medulla, if severe or prolonged, cannot be anything but disastrous, and if positive and reliable evidence is required in support of such an obvious proposal, no stronger fact can be adduced than the immediately beneficial effect of a satisfactory flow from a spinal puncture in spinal meningitis.

As a profession we are conservative, and rightly so, for by following those lines we exclude quackery; but it is well to remember that it took 300 years to apply a ligature to a bleeding vessel, and with all respect to authority we are prone to repeat in our textbooks fallacies which have been handed down year after year, to the detriment of the public and also to the reputation of the profession.—I am, etc.,

Broadstairs, Feb. 1st.

H. V. DREW, F.R.C.S.

WAR HONOURS.

SIR,—I am quite in sympathy with your correspondent upon the above subject. I acted for nearly two years as A.M.O. to one of our largest county council mental hospitals, as did others of my friends, like myself upwards of 70 years of age, and was responsible at night for 1,000 patients, several of them shell-shock cases. The Army Council decline to bestow any medal upon the doctors, as they were not appointed by it but by the county council. I consider this rather straining a point. Soldiers were received daily and at all times, and examined on the spot. I press this, being one who contracted illness, which has nearly cost me my life, as was the case with others at my age (some died). It is a great satisfaction to have done something by way of help in this unprecedented war; nevertheless I think the authorities should bestow some sort of decoration upon those who volunteered for some duty at the onset.—I am, etc.,

February 18th.

ANOTHER M.R.C.S.

SIR,—May I ask a question—namely, how is it that one never sees or hears mention of the excellent services rendered by the Admiralty surgeons and agents during the war—men whose care in the selection of recruits for the navy accounts to a great extent for its physical and mental constitution? Surely those men who have rendered such conspicuous service to the nation deserve some recognition from the Government. Not being connected with the navy, I have no other interest beyond wishing for fair play.—I am, etc.,

February 22nd.

EXPOSTULATOR.

Universities and Colleges.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

At a congregation held on February 20th the degree of M.D. was conferred upon T. E. Sandall, E. E. Paget-Tomlinson, and J. T. Fox.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Among those upon whom the Senatus of the University of Aberdeen has decided to confer the honorary degree of LL.D. are Dr. William Bulloch, F.R.S., professor of bacteriology in the University of London; Major-General Sir Robert Jones, K.B.E., C.B., inspector of Military Orthopaedics, A.M.S.; Dr. David Nicolson, C.B., Lord Chancellor's visitor in lunacy; Sir Daniel Hall, K.C.B., F.R.S., secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture; Mr. J. H. Jeans, secretary of the Royal Society; and Sir J. C. Bose, D.Sc., founder director of the Bose Research Institute, Calcutta.

THE Finnish medical journal *Duodecim*, which has hitherto been published monthly in Finnish, will in the future appear as *Acta Societatis Medicorum Fennicae Duodecim*. Contributions to this journal will be published in English, French, or German. This change in the Finnish journal is in response to the growing determination on the part of Finnish scientists to publish their investigations under their own auspices and yet to make them accessible to the world at large.

The Services.

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

STRENGTH AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FUTURE.

A MEMORANDUM¹ giving details of the work of the various departments of the War Office in connexion with the reconstruction of the Army since the armistice has been issued, amplifying the speech of the Secretary of State in introducing the Army Estimates for 1920-21 on February 23rd. In a note attached to the memorandum Mr. Churchill says that the work of demobilizing the large forces on foot at the armistice and of bringing into being the army of the future was so gigantic that he had been compelled to confine himself in his speech to the larger issues.

Territorial R.A.M.C.

In dealing with the Royal Army Medical Corps, the memorandum notes that a Territorial Section has been added to the War Office, which it is hoped will be a permanent section to deal with medical questions and personnel of the new Territorial army. The medical section of that army will be reorganized on its pre-war basis, with such additions and alterations as the war had shown to be necessary. The war showed the importance of casualty clearing stations, and it is proposed to form and maintain these medical units. Regimental medical officers will be appointed to battalions and will be carried on a Divisional List, which will include also officers of field ambulances and casualty clearing stations, and will show their seniority. Field ambulances will be organized with a head quarters and two sections. Sanitary Sections will be allowed to each Division; it is proposed to form them into companies and place them under the Director of Hygiene for technical training. Specially qualified medical officers, such as pathologists, x-ray specialists and hygienists, will be allowed for in the organization. General hospitals will be formed in connexion with universities and medical schools. A large number of physicians and surgeons of universities and hospitals will be required, and will be given the opportunity of training in the military duties of hospital administration. They will be carried on a special list.

Dental Corps.

It is proposed to form a dental corps, consisting of 110 officers and 132 other ranks (mechanics and orderlies).

Directorates of Pathology and Hygiene.

Reference is made to the establishment of Directorates of Hygiene and Pathology, according to the plan we announced some time ago. For each there will be a Director and Deputy at head quarters, and Assistants and Deputy Assistants in the important commands and districts at home and abroad. Officers will henceforth be able to continue to work in these special subjects throughout their service, instead of being compelled, as has hitherto been the case, to abandon them in order to take up administrative duties on attaining a certain seniority. Promotion to the higher ranks is now open to such specialists, and it is hoped that this will attract to these branches men from whose labours the army may expect to reap constantly increasing benefit. Each Director will have the aid of a strong Advisory Committee of experts, both civil and military, which will not only strengthen his hands in technical matters, but help to secure effective collaboration with other workers in these subjects, whether in a civil profession or in the medical branches of other departments of the State.

Strength: Officers.

The pre-war establishment of officers R.A.M.C. was 1,068; on the date of the armistice the strength was 14,461, and in addition 1,524 civil medical practitioners were employed. At present 3,338 officers and 322 civil medical practitioners are employed, and the number is continually being reduced in conformity with the reduction in hospital population. At the armistice the number of patients in the military hospitals in the United Kingdom was 316,000; on May 1st, 1919, it had been reduced to 112,000, and on February 1st, 1920, to 28,000. The policy had been to close the smaller hospitals and transfer the patients to hospitals which could be retained, and in this way the number of vacant beds had been kept as low as possible. In order to

¹ [Cmd. 565.] Price 3d.