

or another being expected to pay interest on the money sunk. Two suggestions have been made:

(1) The first, adopted by the Commissioners, is to the effect that, as all properly equipped hospitals should have "clinical laboratories, in which elaborate microscopic, chemical, and other investigations may be carried on in close proximity to the wards," the school buildings should be used for these purposes and for the purposes of the final school, while the University should provide accommodation for the teaching of the preliminary and intermediate subjects. It was thought that this would mean the building by Government at South Kensington of one institute into which all intermediate students should be gathered. Such action on the part of the University would deprive the hospitals of most of their interest upon the money sunk in the school, and it would tend to force them to institute and maintain clinical laboratories of large size for which they are not prepared financially. It is, moreover, doubtful whether the staffs, taken as a whole, and trained, as most of them have been, chiefly or entirely in English schools, are prepared at once to take over and work large clinical laboratories. That such laboratories are necessary no one can doubt; but they need hardly begin on such an extensive scale. Many Hospital Committees would probably be forced by circumstances to resist such a change, and their opposition would probably be fatal. Nevertheless, it is said that in one or two schools a majority of the *School Committee* is in favour of this suggestion.

(2) The alternative proposal is that the University should become the tenant, at a rental to be calculated on an equitable basis, of the school buildings of such schools as might be willing to give up the teaching of the preliminary and intermediate subjects; and that the University should at first use some or all of these buildings as institutes, in each of which the intermediate group of subjects should be taught. This would prevent waste of the students' time. The interests of teachers in the schools would be safeguarded and the school plant would be taken at a valuation. These institutes would together constitute the University School in Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology; each should be completely equipped for research and teaching in all branches of each subject, and all would be under the absolute control of the Senate of the University. All fees for study in these institutes would be paid to the University, by which every teacher, from the highest to the lowest, would be appointed and paid. No share in the control or the administration of an institute should be left to any hospital or to the committee of any final school.

The number and situation of the institutes would be determined by the Senate, and would depend upon many circumstances: for example, the number of schools joining in the scheme and the number of students likely to enter the University school, the situations of the school buildings acquired by the University, the possibility of extending them, and so forth. In order that each institute should be self-supporting its annual entry of ordinary students should be not less than 100, if the fee for two years' instruction in the intermediate subjects were £50. On the other hand, the entry should be not greater than 150 ordinary students in any year, or the professor would be unable to maintain touch with each one. Moreover, it is desirable to have more than one institute, in order that, whilst the posts are sufficiently valuable to attract and retain the services of the best men, there may still be sufficient competition to induce the professors to continue working after their election; also by their situation in different parts to suit the convenience of students resident in the various districts of London.

It will be noted that concentration according to this scheme would be quite voluntary. The object of the movement is to "do the thing" as well as it can be done, and some believe that "the thing" can be done better by a combination of schools than by schools singly. If any school believes that alone, or combined with others, a "complete" school can be carried on, in the management of which the University will have no part, there is nothing to prevent the experiment being tried; continued success will show that "the thing" is being done at least as well as in the University school, which is all that can be asked.

These remarks deal entirely with the teaching of intermediate subjects. It would hardly seem right to teach

medical students the small amount of science they have to learn in institutes devoted to so limited an object; nevertheless, the objections to over-concentration stated above hold also in science.

OVER-CONCENTRATION UNDESIRABLE.

3. To what extent should concentration be carried? Under the scheme favoured by the Commissioners, it was thought that "complete" concentration at South Kensington was intended—that is, all preliminary and all intermediate students were to be gathered together there. For the reasons given—namely, the avoidance of monopoly in teaching, the establishment of as many centres of teaching and research as can be well supported, the convenience of students in so large a place as London—concentration in more than one centre appears to be a better plan. If, ultimately, the preliminary science and intermediate studies could be carried on outside London in the neighbourhood of playing fields, rifle ranges, river, etc., the best results would probably be achieved.

It is right to mention a third scheme which aims only indirectly at concentration. It has been suggested that the University should found a School of Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology, equip it thoroughly for teaching and research, and open its doors to any who choose to study there; the idea being that all schools unable to stand competition with the University school would be obliged to cease teaching these subjects, to the advantage of the University school. Considering the vitality the medical schools have shown, and the deep roots which even the youngest of them has thrown out, it is highly probable that this scheme would fail, and would only add a thirteenth obstacle to the establishment of a coherent medical school in London.

The suggestions I have shortly mentioned have sprung from comparatively few minds. General interest in the matter would doubtless reveal fresh difficulties, and, I believe, solutions also. With the first elections to the Senate at hand—elections which will carry the University through the first two to four years of its career—it is all-important to send up the right men to advocate the right policy. Are our medical senators—whether representing Convocation, the Faculties, or the Royal Colleges—to be selected because they will resist change or because they are determined to let no difficulty turn them from the endeavour to found a school such as I have faintly outlined?

THE PLAGUE.

PREVALENCE OF THE DISEASE.

INDIA.

DURING the week ending April 24th a decrease of 735 deaths from plague for India is reported, as compared with the previous week. Since then a telegram, dated May 9th, states that there is a general and material decrease in the number of plague cases throughout India.

In Bombay city during the week ending April 24th there were 473 deaths from plague, being 60 fewer than occurred during the previous week; the deaths from respiratory diseases, however, are still very high (309), and in all probability not a few are of the nature of plague pneumonia. The inoculations against plague in Bombay continue; during the week ending April 11th they numbered over 2,000. Dr. A. Meyer, in an address to the Bombay Medical and Physical Society, stated that the serum treatment of plague was the means of saving 12 per cent. of persons attacked by the disease, a sufficient percentage to warrant its regular use.

In Karachi plague cases during the week ending April 24th numbered over 400, with 398 deaths from the disease. In Calcutta the mortality from plague has been fairly stationary; 393 persons died of the disease during the week ending April 26th.

AUSTRALIA.

At Sydney, up to May 15th, 227 cases of plague had occurred with 74 deaths. Every port in Australia is adopting stringent precautions, and it will be no fault of local authorities if the disease spreads. War is being systematically waged against rats, especially those on board ship. It would seem that, with the exception of Western Australia, every one of the Australian colonies is at present infected by plague.

EGYPT.

On May 13th 2 suspected cases of plague were under treatment in the city of Cairo. At Alexandria 2 deaths occurred from plague on May 2nd; so far no fresh cases have been recorded in the city. Down to May 2nd 16 cases of plague had occurred at Port Said and 9 deaths from the disease.

TURKEY.

A suspected case of plague was reported from Smyrna on May 9th. The Inspector-General of the Sanitary Service was immediately despatched from Constantinople to Smyrna to report on the case. All travellers coming to Constantinople are being submitted to strict medical examination. The quarantine for arrivals from Egypt at Constantinople has been extended to ten days.