

## THE WAR.

### THE ATTACK ON THE ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

An officer who has been with the British Expeditionary Force in France continuously, save for two or three periods of leave, since October, 1914, has written as follows in a private letter after reading the full report of Mr. McNeill's speech in the House of Commons on March 15th, and Colonel Lee's reply on March 16th:

On March 15th everything that it was thought could be said against the Army Medical Service and its chief administrators in Great Britain and France was voiced by one of the most experienced exponents of grievances that the House of Commons possesses. On March 16th the charges were met by Mr. Arthur Lee in a speech so crushing, that even so doughty a fighter as Mr. McNeill seems to have felt that he must throw up his brief. Incidentally he admitted that he had no first hand knowledge of matters, and threw the blame for his errors on those who instructed him.

Statements of this kind are usually written down as mere excuses, but in the present instance this would be unjust, because what was apparently said to Mr. McNeill and repeated by him is very much what has been said to a good many of us on many occasions. It is, in fact, a good many months ago that these attacks on the Army Medical Service began, and it has long been clear that there is a cave whose inhabitants are out to disturb as far as they possibly can the confidence of the public in the wisdom and ability of the administrators of the medical affairs of the army.

The cave has exhibited considerable cunning. Knowing that the public had too intimate and personal a knowledge of the way in which the wounded were being treated to be easily convinced that there could be anything much wrong the cave has avoided a frontal attack, and endeavoured to excite disquiet by dwelling on alleged slackness in matters of organization and other technical details. On such subjects neither the public nor the medical profession at large can be well informed. So for a time the cave had a little success, being assisted thereto by certain newspapers which one after the other open their columns to the grievances, which the writers failed to recognize were due not to the army system but to the inevitable circumstances of war.

But the success of the cave was not prolonged; its battle line began to look ragged a month or two ago, and when at length in March it ventured on its great push it was utterly defeated. Consequently the campaign is not one of which the cave has any reason to be proud, for it has certainly done no good, and probably has achieved some harm. Attacks of the kind almost invariably necessitate the preparation of returns and reports which would not otherwise be needed, and thus lessen the time available for attending to ordinary and really useful business. These attacks ought, therefore, to be resented both by the medical profession and the general public as *contra rem publicam*.

Never before have two men had to undertake a larger task or greater responsibilities than those that have been shouldered by Sir Arthur Sloggett and Sir Alfred Keogh respectively during the last eighteen months. They have had to deal with members of a profession accustomed both to think for itself and to express its opinions freely, and it was natural that various steps taken both at home and abroad should have been deemed open to criticism; it was almost equally natural but far less defensible that one man here and another there should have considered that had he been in charge of matters he could have managed things much better. But, nevertheless, the fact remains that a huge task has up to the present been most successfully accomplished. The health of the army has been maintained at a singularly high level, and the wounded have been tended both individually and collectively with tenderness and most enlightened care.

The medical public, in fact, owes the deepest gratitude to the officers in question. During the last eighteen months it has been upon its trial, and had it been less ably led it would have suffered greatly in public opinion, whatever sacrifices individuals might have made. As things are, it stands distinctly higher in public opinion than it did at the beginning of the war.

What have been the motives of the men who entered this cave? It is difficult to say. Doubtless they considered themselves to be acting altruistically, but it is not likely that anyone else will take that view. There are certain

individuals in this world who, having obtained a certain position, resent the idea of any large public affair being conducted without their assistance. There are others who are ever ready to pull down any existing pile in the hope that in the general ruin something valuable may roll in their direction. There are also nobodies who, confusing notoriety with fame, deem that they will become somebodies if they agitate long enough and loud enough.

Whether there will be any attempt to restart the campaign remains to be seen. But being aware of the methods the cave has hitherto employed, I suggest that anyone invited to assist them should closely question those by whom they are approached. If, for instance, statements are made to them on the alleged authority of B. or C. they should ascertain precisely what real knowledge of matters B. or C. possess. Both in France and in England the work is on so large a scale that it is scarcely possible for anyone not seated at the centre where all nerves meet to apprehend accurately any particular item of work. Moreover, in France the different units are so scattered, there is so much difference in their environment and the character of the work, and aims and general needs everywhere differ so greatly that only exceptionally fortunate individuals gain any real knowledge of it as a whole. An officer may work quite a long time in France and yet acquire nothing beyond hearsay knowledge of a very small part of the general work.

If the statements of men of really long experience are to be received with caution, those of individuals who after a few months abroad have preferred to return home to look after their personal interests should not be swallowed even with a pinch of salt.

### THE CARE OF CRIPPLES IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

A CONGRESS was held in Berlin early in February to discuss the care and education of crippled soldiers. An exhibition of artificial limbs and other devices for helping cripples to become self-supporting was also held. It was stated that in Austria this problem had been dealt with so drastically that it was impossible for a cripple to refuse treatment, and that in Hungary a special commission had been appointed, with powers to refuse pensions and every other compensation to cripples who would not be treated. Another speaker gave an account of the numerous institutions which had sprung up in connexion with the education of cripples. He described how "compensation psychoses" were discouraged, and how the paramount importance of regaining their capacity for work was impressed on soldiers early, the healing of their wounds being treated as a secondary consideration. At the outbreak of the war there was hardly a single institution in Austria for the treatment and education of cripples. The initiative, ingenuity, and capacity for organization shown by Spitzky had done much to promote the welfare of the crippled soldier. His hospital contained 3,500 beds, 1,300 of which were devoted to soldiers with amputated limbs. The hospital included twelve different departments; one ward was set apart for wounds of the knee, another for wounds of the finger, and so on. About three-fifths of all the crippled Austrian soldiers had previously worked on the land, and new occupations on the land were chosen for them. Professor Dollinger said that in Hungary about 5,000 beds had been set apart for crippled soldiers, and institutions had been organized for the education of cripples, usually with a view to farm work. Dealing with the problems of artificial limbs, one speaker insisted that success depended much more on the cripple's desire to work than on the nature of the artificial limb. The standardization of every artificial limb was also insisted on in order that the whole or part of such a limb could easily be replaced. It was also generally agreed that crutches should be dispensed with as early as possible and the cripple be given some temporary artificial limb, be its construction ever so primitive. In this connexion the plaster-of-Paris limb was warmly recommended.

### TREATMENT OF WOUNDS OF THE BRAIN.

THE Nobel prize winner, R. Bárány, who during the siege of Przemyśl by the Russians was reported to have dispatched his observations on war surgery by aeroplane to the Austrian headquarters, has now published a paper

on the treatment of wounds of the brain.<sup>1</sup> He observed from start to finish sixty cases of bullet and shell wounds of the brain. He learnt to abandon rubber and glass drainage tubes in favour of the "cigarette" drain. In a series of thirty-nine cases in which drainage was by small strips of gutta-percha, recovery occurred in 20.5 per cent. Being impressed by the part played by secondary infection of the brain, he kept the wound closed and undrained in many cases. Out of thirteen in which the wound was closed from the outset, healing by first intention occurred in nine; in three plastic operations on the dura had to be undertaken. He considered that, as a rule, when the wound was not obviously infected and came under treatment within the first twenty-four hours, the best course was to operate at once, to excise the tissues about the wounds of entry and exit, to remove fragments of bone and foreign bodies from the brain, to arrest haemorrhage, and to close the wound carefully with sutures without employing any drain. When an abscess had already formed it should be opened and drained with strips of gutta-percha.

## CASUALTIES IN THE MEDICAL SERVICES.

### ARMY.

#### *Killed in Action.*

Fourth-class Assistant Surgeon George Cyril West, of the Indian Subordinate Medical Department, is reported as killed in action. He is the third officer of the I.S.M.D. thus reported as killed within the past three weeks. He was born on August 7th, 1893, attained warrant rank on April 20th, 1914, and prior to the war was stationed at Dalhousie.

#### *Wounded.*

Lieutenant N. McCalk-Smith, R.A.M.C., temporary.  
Assistant Surgeon J. W. Newbold, I.S.M.D.

#### *Died on Service.*

Major Francis Courtenay Lambert, R.A.M.C., died of paratyphoid fever on service abroad, on March 29th, aged 37. He was born at Dover on January 22nd, 1879, the eldest son of Lieutenant-Colonel Lambert, late of the Royal Marine Artillery, now of Lyston, Branksome Park, Bournemouth, was educated at Wimborne Grammar School, at Cheltenham College, and at St. Mary's Hospital, and took the qualifications of M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. Lond. in 1902, after which he served as house-surgeon at St. Mary's. He entered the army as lieutenant on January 31st, 1903, becoming captain on July 31st, 1906, and major on October 31st, 1914. He was recently serving in Mesopotamia, where he was twice mentioned in despatches.

Major Robertson Stewart Smyth, R.A.M.C., died in a nursing home in London on April 6th, aged 36. He was born on August 18th, 1879, the fourth son of the late William Smyth, of Brookfield House, Banbridge, and was educated at Dungannon Royal School and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took the M.B., M.D., B.Ch., and B.A.O. in 1904. There he was captain of the Dublin University Rugby fifteen, and played in several international matches in 1903-4. Entering the army as lieutenant on July 31st, 1905, he became captain on January 31st, 1909, and had recently been promoted to major. He had been serving in France from September, 1914, up to last December, when he was invalided. He was mentioned in despatches by Lord French for gallant conduct in the field. One of his brothers is a captain in the Royal Irish Rifles.

Major Walter Linney Hawksley, R.A.M.C.(T.F.), is reported as having been accidentally killed on service on April 4th, aged 33. He was the eldest son of the late Dr. Hawksley, of Southport, and was educated at Liverpool University, where he took the M.B. and Ch.B. in 1904 and the D.P.H. in 1907. After qualifying, he acted as house-surgeon and house-physician of the Northern Hospital, Liverpool, as resident medical officer of the new City Hospital, Fazakerley, and as school medical officer to the Liverpool Education Committee, finally becoming assistant medical officer of health and chief tuberculosis officer, Liverpool, and assistant lecturer in hygiene, Liverpool University. He got a commission as captain in the 2nd West Lancashire Field Ambulance on October 1st, 1911, and had recently been promoted to major. He leaves a widow and two young children.

<sup>1</sup> *Beiträge zur klinischen Chirurgie, kriegschirurgisches.* Heft 8. Abstract in *Muench. med. Wochn.*, January 4th, 1916.

Major Charles James Holmes, R.A.M.C.(retired), died at his residence in Lancaster on April 5th, aged 58. He was born on October 15th, 1857, the youngest son of Mr. John Holmes, of Athlunkard, co. Clare, was educated at Queen's College, Cork, and took the M.D., M.Ch., and the obstetrical diploma of the Royal University, Ireland, in 1882, also the F.R.C.S.I. in 1890. Entering the army as surgeon on August 2nd, 1884, he became surgeon-major on August 2nd, 1896, and retired on November 16th, 1904. He rejoined on mobilization in August, 1914, and was employed in charge of the military hospital at Bowerham Barracks, Lancaster. He had seen much war service: Sudan, 1885, medal with clasp, and Khedive's bronze star; Sudan, 1896, advance on Dongola, and operations of September 19th, medal with clasp and Khedive's medal; and South Africa, 1900-2, in Cape Colony and Orange River Colony, Queen's medal with one clasp and King's medal with two clasps.

### DEATHS AMONG SONS OF MEDICAL MEN.

Underhill, Charles Bertram, Second Lieutenant West Yorkshire Regiment, fourth son of Dr. F. T. Underhill, formerly of Tipton, Staffordshire, now medical officer of health, Vancouver, British Columbia, killed on March 28th, aged 22. He was born at Tipton, educated at Vancouver and at McGill University, and was assistant city analyst at Vancouver. At the beginning of the war he joined the 11th British Columbia Regiment, and came to Europe with the first Canadian contingent. He got a commission in the West Yorks on December 22nd, 1914, and went to the front last September. He was serving as machine gun officer of his battalion when killed.

### NOTES.

Mr. HUGH M. RIGBY, M.S.Lond., F.R.C.S., has been appointed a consulting surgeon to His Majesty's forces in France, with the rank of Colonel A.M.S.

### HONOURS.

The Médaille d'Honneur des Epidémies has been bestowed by the French Government on two members of the staff of British Red Cross Clearing Hospital No. 16, Miss Bradley, matron, receiving the silver medal, and Miss Dorothy Gully, a sister employed in the nursing of contagious diseases, the bronze medal.

### MESOPOTAMIA DISPATCHES.

A despatch from General Sir John Nixon, K.C.B., covering the operations in Mesopotamia from the middle of April to the end of September, 1915, dated January 1st, 1916, was published in the *London Gazette* of April 5th. Among a large number of officers mentioned for good service are the following medical officers:

*Operations at Khafajiyah, April 21th to June 19th, 1915.*—Major H. B. Brown, I.M.S.

*Operations at Amara, May 31st to June 1th, 1915.*—Colonel P. Hehir, C.B., I.M.S. Lieutenant-Colonels: H. O. B. Browne-Mason, R.A.M.C.; J. F. Donegan, R.A.M.C. Captains: G. Wilson, R.A.M.C. Lieutenant: R. V. Martin, I.M.S. Assistant Surgeons: E. A. Cotton and E. S. Sheele, I.S.M.D.

*Euphrates Operations, June 26th to July 25th, 1915.*—Colonel H. M. Adamson, R.A.M.C. Lieutenant-Colonel E. Jennings, I.M.S. Major A. Spitteler, I.M.S. Captains: P. B. Bharucha, I.M.S.; R. C. Clifford, I.M.S.; R. E. Flowerdew, I.M.S.; F. A. Robinson, R.A.M.C. Sub-Assistant-Surgeons: Mohan Lal, Barkatullah, Fazl Ahmad, I.S.M.D.

*Operations at Kut-el-Amara, September 28th, 1915.*—Surgeon-General H. G. Hathaway, C.B., A.M.S., Staff. Lieutenant-Colonel J. F. Donegan, R.A.M.C. Majors: S. Anderson, I.M.S.; \*F. C. Lambert, R.A.M.C. Captains: K. K. Mukerji, I.M.S.; J. Startin, R.A.M.C. Lieutenant: F. T. Simpson, R.A.M.C. Assistant Surgeons: A. S. Morarji, H. J. Luxa, S. A. de Souza, I.S.M.D. Sub-Assistant Surgeons: Mithu Lal, S. Manikkam, I.S.M.D.

*Operations from November 6th, 1914, to April 14th, 1915* (previously published in *Gazette of India*).—Colonel P. Hehir, C.B., I.M.S. Staff. Lieutenant-Colonels: J. Hennessy, F. J. Palmer, H. M. Adamson, F. J. Donegan, H. O. B. Browne-Mason, D. J. Collins, all R.A.M.C.; and G. B. Irvine, I.M.S. Majors: E. Bennett, H. A. Bransbury, J. C. Foster, and \*F. C. Lambert, all R.A.M.C.; and J. H. Horton, D. S. A. O'Keefe, H. R. Brown, and L. Cook, all I.M.S. Captains: A. T. J. McCreery, R.A.M.C.; and R. E. Wright, T. H. Hislop, D. Arthur, C. H. Barber, H. E. Shortt, C. C. C. Shaw, G. F. Graham, R. Knowles, J. J. H. Nelson, F. C. Fraser, and H. E. Stanger-Leathes, all I.M.S. Lieutenants: E. B. Allant and †M. Burnett, both R.A.M.C.; N. K. Bal and L. A. P. Anderson, both I.M.S. Assistant Surgeons, I.S.M.D.: W. H. Brown, T. H. S. Hutton, E. A. Cotton, L. C. Raphael, H. Vincent, J. V. Fernandez, J. H. T. Pacheco, H. N. Murphy, and A. F. Phaura. Sub-Assistant Surgeons, I.S.M.D.: V. L. U. Ram Pandit, Mohan Lal, G. R. Hariba, V. S. Nayakar, M. Ramasami, Sundar Singh, K. W. Khuperkar, and S. M. Dadasahib. Dr. Arthur Bennett (American Mission Hospital).

\* Since dead. † Killed in action.

### MEDICAL OFFICERS WANTED.

14th Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance.  
There are vacancies for medical officers in this unit. Apply to Major J. Hamilton, Cricket Ground, Canterbury.

### 2/1st Home Counties Casualty Clearing Hospital.

Three medical officers are required for this unit. Application to the Officer Commanding 2/1st Home Counties Casualty Clearing Hospital, Halton Camp West, Tring.