

was found by both parties that the pleasure was infinitely greater when coverings were not used. Finally, one found that those who did use the appliances supplied by the packet system consistently gradually acquired a taste for unnatural vice.—I am, etc.,

J. C. McWALTER, M.D., F.R.F.P. and S.

Dublin, Jan. 24th.

SIR,—I have refrained from joining in the controversy on this subject now appearing, but it seems to me rather ludicrous to read the arguments for and against its use.

Two eminent ladies have been reviled for disagreeing with the statistical branch of the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease, although in my opinion clinical experience bears out amply the contention of Drs. Sturge and Molloy. Statistics, we know, can be manipulated so as to make a fallacy appear as the truth (some of your readers will remember how 4d. was made to appear equivalent to 9d.), but what we require are clinical facts, and in my experience (which has been nurtured from nearly all parts of the civilized world) prophylaxis as recommended by the society is utterly valueless and dangerous.

To issue "packets" to a hundred men and compare the results with another hundred who have had no "packets" is clinically fallacious and useless, for so many factors must enter into consideration before a conclusion can be arrived at. No two urethrae are alike with regard to gonorrhoeal infections; one may be virgin soil, another may have its epithelial cells altered through previous attacks. No two persons are alike as regards resistance or immunity. Every venereologist is aware that ten men may have intercourse with the same woman, yet nine may escape infection and the tenth succumb, and I presume if those that escaped had "packets" in their pockets they would be used as evidence of the value of prophylaxis.

There has not been produced one tittle of evidence by the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease that prophylaxis, as recommended by them, is other than dangerous and valueless—dangerous in that it gives the unwary a position of false security.

Early skilled irrigations given by a skilled person before the gonococcus has had time to penetrate the mucosa would be beneficial, but that is not prophylaxis as advised. Simply urinating, after connexion, and ballooning the urethra by holding the meatus, is more satisfactory and safer than the application of chemicals by a layman. Washing with soap and water is simpler and just as efficacious as the smearing of calomel ointment for the prevention of syphilis.

The glaring posters, publishing the dire results and exaggerated calamities in store for those who have had venereal disease are, in my opinion, doing more harm than good. I can readily predict a race of venereal neurasthenics. The clarion cry of any society for the prevention of venereal disease should be early and immediate skilled treatment, and the society should see that the means of obtaining such treatment is easy.—I am, etc.,

M. W. BROWDY, M.B.

Manchester, Jan. 11th.

#### FORGETTING: PSYCHOLOGICAL REPRESSION.

SIR,—The late Dr. C. Mercier stated that the ability to forget is the attribute of sanity; and another well known mental authority remarked to his students, "We are all insane, some more so than others."

In my opinion the human mind remembers everything except trivialities which escape through the sieves of thought. But the important events of life, such as the experiences of this great war, do they not become permanently pictured on the memory?

The prospective suicide who has failed, or recovered from the attempt—does he not balance his stupidity with more enlightened common-sense views? The morbid mental condition passes off as time and improved ideas cross his path. Let us remember, too, that "minds" may be compared to the pebbles on the beach—of different patterns when we regard them alongside each other. Much has to be considered in respect to their heredity, environment, and education.

May I be privileged to add a few lines in support of the very useful discussion on Forgetting and Psychological Repression. The simple and practical way of treating the many nervous cases of soldiers and sailors who come before our boards by means of the skill and ingenuity of psycho-

therapeutics is as old as Adam. Yet, nevertheless, we are indebted to a number of professional men who, during this great war, have brought it so thoroughly up to date.—I am, etc.,

Boscombe, Bournemouth, Feb. 8th.

J. F. BRISCOE.

SIR,—Drs. Rixon and Matthew have struck quite a new note in the discussion which arose from Dr. Carver's article and Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones's letter. Their letter is written by men who have not only read and pondered but have evidently theorized upon the actual experiences of practice of psycho-analysis for a considerable time. With all due deference to Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones, and with full acknowledgement of his eminence in the world of psychiatry, I maintain that Drs. Rixon and Matthew are correct when they write that he has not yet grasped the full meaning and scope of psycho-analysis.

It has never been claimed that psycho-analysis will cure every case of psycho-neurosis; but, if it is intelligently and patiently carried out, it will indicate the underlying and often deeply buried origin of the disease. Cure is only to be hoped for when the patient understands what has happened to him and has sufficient backbone to support him while he rearranges his life. The crux of the process of the cure by psycho-analysis does not lie in the recalling of painful memories, nor even in analysis pure and simple; it lies in the interpretation of the symbolism employed by the unconscious. It is not easy to illustrate this by a definite example, but perhaps the following case (who has had only one session with me so far) may help.

A., aged 28, single, sergeant in the R.G.A., served from 1915 to July, 1919. Moderate "anxiety state," which developed after his demobilization. His recent dreams and much of his conversation with me centred round his repeated disappointments in not being demobilized as soon as the war was over. The dreams were but superficially analysed, and then A. was asked to apply the dreams symbolically to his present life. Without hesitation he said that it seemed as if he had demobilized all his faculties, and instead of these being under the control of a commanding officer they were acting independently and thus causing confusion—a priceless word picture and the beginning of the cure, for as this patient attains the understanding of his mental *boulevercement* so will he get better.

The application of symbolism and its interpretation and explanation to the patient is a point that, so far as I am aware, has not yet been plainly and definitely described in psycho-analytic literature, though Jung describes it rather vaguely. Drs. Rixon and Matthew, however, seem to understand the value of this.

Ferenzi says:

Still the unconscious is only able to control the mental and bodily being of man until the analysis reveals the content of the thought processes behind it.

Note that phrase "the content of the thought processes," for in the extent of his appreciation of its meaning lies the measure of success or non-success of the psycho-analyst.—I am, etc.,

A. G. MIDDLETON,

Medical Superintendent, John Leigh Memorial Hospital  
(for Shell Shock), Brooklands, Cheshire.

February 10th.

#### STERILITY.

SIR,—Accustomed as we are to the ravages wrought by the sequelae of gonorrhoea among the patients in women's hospitals, and to the reproach of sterility so often causelessly brought against women, we have read with appreciation the able article by Mr. Kenneth Walker, M.B., F.R.C.S., appearing in your issue of January 3rd, 1920. We were the more surprised at his insertion of the following paragraph (the italics are ours):

... Alcoholism, sexual excesses, debilitating diseases, and x rays produce an azoospermia or oligospermia which is temporary in nature. *Prolonged and absolute continence has been said to have a similar result* (Barney).

On looking up this reference to the observation made by an American writer (*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, June 18th, 1914) we find that this theory rests upon one case only, which has been recorded without reference to any collateral circumstances, and on second-hand evidence; the author candidly admitting that he has been able to find no allusion to the theory elsewhere. Surely a writer of Mr. Kenneth Walker's experience in research ought to be more guarded in the apparent propagation of opinions

based on evidence so unreliable. So able an investigator as Sir William Gowers has stated in reference to this very question that in the whole range of his experience he had never known any one to be the worse for continence. Equally strong testimony is borne by Sir James Paget, and by many other high medical authorities. A clean life, according to Sir Wilmot Herringham, so far from detracting from virility, promotes both vigour and fertility. A recent communication by Dr. Amand Routh to the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 17th, 1920, brings further reinforcement in the same direction.

A theory of the above description could only be brought forward by a writer unacquainted with the acknowledged trend of recent medical opinion, and is worthy of a place among the exploded fallacies of fifty years ago. If men are to be encouraged in incontinence by the dissemination of theories so ill founded, women will inevitably reap the calamitous results which are vividly depicted in Mr. Kenneth Walker's article.

It might be added that the advocates of male prophyllaxis against venereal disease who have recently written in your columns ought to bear in mind that, in so far as their recommendations tend to induce vice by unintentionally encouraging a sense of security in the practice of unchastity, just in so far will they wrong women by rendering them more liable to injury, no method having been discovered by which women can be kept safe from risk of infection. When the public arrives at a comprehension of the crudely selfish character of this procedure, it may result in an outcry which will render the advocacy of such methods difficult if not impracticable.—We are, etc.,

E. KNIGHT, M.B.  
S. E. WHITE, M.B., B.Sc.

January 27th.

## The Services.

### HONOURS.

*O.B.E.*—Major (acting Lieut.-Colonel) Alfred Spitteler and Captain Hugh Michael Collins, I.M.S., in recognition of valuable services rendered in connexion with military operations in Southern and Central Kurdistan.

### MENTIONED FOR SERVICES.

The names of the following officers have been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for War for valuable services rendered during the military operations:

*Central Kurdistan.*—Major J. F. Grant and Captain (acting Major) J. M. Weddell, R.A.M.C.; Major (acting Lieut.-Colonel) A. Spitteler and Captain (acting Major) C. J. Stocker, M.C., I.M.S.; Assistant Surgeon J. Luxa and Subassistant Surgeon G. B. Yemkanmurd, I.M.D.  
*Southern Kurdistan.*—Lieutenant (acting Captain) L. G. Blackmore, R.A.M.C.; Lieut.-Colonel (temporary Colonel) J. A. Hamilton, C.M.G.; Captain (acting Major) M. Purvis, Captain H. M. Collins, and temporary Captain W. G. Miller, I.M.S.

Captain H. Colwell Rook, R.A.M.C.(S.R.), has been promoted Brevet Major for distinguished services in connexion with military operations in Archangel, North Russia.

## Universities and Colleges.

### UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

At a congregation held on February 14th the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred upon F. B. Chavasse.

### UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

At a congregation held on February 14th the following medical degrees were conferred:

M.B., B.Ch.—H. G. Taylor. M.B.—C. E. Bond.

### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A MEETING of the Senate was held on January 28th. The title of professor of physiology has been conferred upon the following teachers of the University: Dr. Marcus Seymour Pembrey (Guy's Hospital Medical School), Dr. Winifred Clara Cullis (London School of Medicine for Women); the title of assistant professor of psychology at University College has been conferred upon Dr. Aveling, and that of reader in bio-chemistry on Mr. J. H. Ryffel (Guy's Hospital Medical School).

The Senate adopted a resolution in appreciation of the generosity of Messrs. S. B. and J. B. Joel, of £20,000 for the endowment of the University chair of physics tenable at Middlesex Hospital Medical School.

The External Council reported that the Vice-Chancellor had authorized the admission to the first examination for medical

degrees in March, 1920, of external students who had matriculated as from September, 1919.

Applications are invited for a university studentship in physiology of £50 for one year. It is awarded to a student qualified to undertake research in physiology, and is tenable in a physiological laboratory of the University or of a school of the University. Applications must be received by the Principal Officer not later than May 31st.

*Remuneration of Professors and Readers.*—The second section of the regulations with regard to the conferment of the titles of University Professor and University Reader was amended to read as follows:

The guaranteed minimum salary for a university professor giving his whole time to the work of his post shall be £800 per annum, and the guaranteed minimum salary for a reader giving his whole time to the post shall be £400 per annum, provided that the title of "University Professor" and "University Reader" may be conferred in exceptional cases on the occupants of posts of which the duties do not take up the whole time of the occupant, and of which the guaranteed salaries are not less than £400 and £200 respectively, and provided in each case that the personal qualifications of the occupant are such as to justify the conferment of the title in question. Provided that the Senate shall not withdraw any title of University Professor or University Reader, conferred in respect of a post of which the salary was in accordance with the regulations previously in force on the ground that the salary of such post does not comply with the existing regulations.

The Senate may also in exceptional cases confer the title of University Professor or University Reader on the occupant of a post who acts without remuneration for his services or receives a nominal honorarium in respect thereof, provided that his personal qualifications are such as to justify the conferment of the title in question.

### UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL.

THE following candidates have been approved at the examinations indicated:

FINAL M.B., CH.B.—*Part II (Completing Examination):* B. A. Astley-Weston, Hilda M. Brown, D. G. Cossham, Sukhasagar Datta, F. V. Jacques. *Part I only:* Khai Way Chan, Marjorie Wadsworth.  
D.P.H.—W. H. Scott. *Part I only:* S. H. Kingston, A. D. Symons, G. C. Williams.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

An ordinary Council was held on February 12th, when Sir George Makins, President, was in the chair.

*Issue of Diplomas.*—Diplomas of Membership were granted to sixty-five candidates and Diplomas in Public Health were granted, jointly with the Royal College of Physicians, to fifteen candidates found qualified at the recent examinations.

*Court of Examiners.*—Mr. John Murray was re-elected a member of the Court.

*Honorary Fellows.*—The following were elected Honorary Fellows: A. Depage, Surgeon to H.M. the King of the Belgians; Pierre Duval, Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Paris; John Miller Turpin Finney, Professor of Surgery, Johns Hopkins University; A. Gosset, Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Paris; Charles H. Mayo, Professor of Surgery, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, University of Minnesota. The presentation of diplomas to the newly-elected Honorary Fellows will take place on Thursday, July 8th, 1920.

*Appointment of Representatives.*—Dr. W. S. A. Griffith was reappointed Representative on the Central Midwives Board, and Mr. William F. Haslam on the Medical Board of the University of Wales.

*Bradshaw Lecturer.*—The President reported that he had appointed Sir Berkeley Moynihan to be Bradshaw Lecturer for the ensuing year.

*The Diploma in Tropical Medicine.*—The alterations in the regulations for the Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, approved by the Royal College of Physicians on January 29th (see page 204), were adopted.

*Election of Council.*—A meeting of the Fellows will be held at the College on Thursday, July 1st, for the election of three Fellows into the Council in the vacancies occasioned by the retirement in rotation of Sir Anthony A. Bowlby, Mr. W. Harrison Cripps, and Sir D'Arcy Power. The date of the election will be announced to the Fellows by advertisement and by circular on March 5th, and March 15th will be the last day for the nomination of candidates. A voting paper will be sent to every Fellow of the College whose address is registered at the College.

### CONJOINT BOARD IN ENGLAND.

At a meeting of Comitia of the Royal College of Physicians on January 29th and of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons on February 12th diplomas of L.R.C.P. and M.R.C.S. were respectively conferred upon the following candidates who have passed the requisite examinations and have complied with the by-laws of the Colleges:

M. K. Abdel-Khalik, H. E. Archer, H. A. M. Bosman, Doris I. Bosworth, P. J. Briggs, E. F. Brown, J. H. Bulcock, H. G. Burford, G. F. Burnell, F. W. Chamberlain, G. L. Clements, M. Coburn, J. J. Coghlan, B. H. Cole, Alison Margaret Collie, A. C. M. Coxon, G. W. Dando, A. N. M. Davidson, C. O. Davies, D. J. Davies, T. Draper, W. Edge, I. Frost, L. P. Garrod, Mary I. A. Grimmer, E. A. H. Grylls, \*G. C. Hartley, F. S. Horrocks, C. A. Hutchinson, Evelyn H. Johnson, O. E. Kennedy, J. V. Landau, F. F. Langridge, G. P. Lindsay, P. T. McIlroy, S. F. Mahmood, Ida C. Mann, G. Massie, T. Mensannan, O. G. Misquith, A. W. Moore, C. Nicory, F. A. O'Reilly, S. T. Parker, E. F. J. Peregrine, G. Perkins, H. H. Perry, N. A. M. Petersen, G. J. Preston, L. I. Roberts, R. E. E.