

have never been defined, but their very vagueness could, and, in my opinion, should, be used by the College to extend its basis, and elect out of its numerous licentiates a considerable number of Fellows.

But this desirable course is prevented by the action of the five dissentients, who, by siding with some others who openly admit their wish to limit the Fellowship, have prevented what otherwise would have been the majority from taking the steps necessary to effect this reform.

In the Irish College of Physicians, there is no Council. The Fellowships having been hitherto restricted in number, the Fellows at large exercised the functions of an Executive Council, such as exists in the sister colleges.

The five dissentients who oppose the Ballot also oppose the formation of an Elective Council.

I ask you, sir, would it be possible for a corporate body, consisting of some two or three hundred Fellows, to discharge its functions without the intervention of a Council? The Charter Memorial Committee, of which I was a member, recommended that powers to form an Elective Council should be sought for by the College. This was opposed by the dissentients, they being the leaders of the opposition; yet these gentlemen now declare that we, who urged the adoption of the only course which rendered a considerable extension of the College possible, are narrow-minded, influenced by religious animosity and by a desire for personal aggrandisement.

As it is, the College is too large for the efficient transaction of business; already its meetings are turned to account for the purpose of delivering carefully prepared speeches. A few weeks ago, a Fellow read a speech, which occupied in the reading over half an hour, and which next morning appeared in one of the daily papers. At a more recent meeting, another gentleman, also one of the dissentients, made a speech which occupied forty-five minutes in delivery; the motion in favour of which he spoke was, *inter alia*, for the admission of reporters to the meetings of the College; and, though introduced by so long a speech, it fell to the ground for lack of a seconder. Imagine nearly an hour wasted on the introduction of a motion which no one would second; but, nevertheless, an allusion to this motion was given a prominent place in one of the morning newspapers. I am aware that, in making these statements, I leave myself open to the charge of holding up the College, or at least some of its Fellows, to ridicule; and I regret being obliged to mention these facts; but it is necessary to do so, in order to show that the proposed new Charter, or, what I would much prefer, a modification of it, assimilating the Irish College of Physicians to those of London and Edinburgh, in both of which a Council exists, is essential to the well-being, nay, the very existence, of the College.

I am, etc., LOMBE ATTHILL.

11, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin, Feb. 14th, 1875.

DIPSOMANIA.

SIR,—In my letter on Dipsomania, in the JOURNAL for February 6th, I find that the name of Dr. Harrington Tuke is omitted from the list of those distinguished friends who kindly signed the document referred to in my letter. The omission occurred through an error of my copyist in the first instance, and my own carelessness in not having noticed it before it was sent to press.

I am, etc., CARSTEN HOLTHOUSE.

3, George Street, Hanover Square, February 12th, 1875.

THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS.

SIR,—You will perhaps permit me to send one more letter on the influence of the Contagious Diseases Acts, as the statistics given in it seem to me very strong. I am enabled to give them by the kindness of Surgeon-General Mouat, C.B., V.C., and of Surgeons Ambrose and Macnamara, of the 58th and 106th Regiments respectively.

The two regiments named above arrived from India in the early part of 1874, and each brought with it, as usual, a considerable sum of money, which, as usual, passed in large measure into the hands of publicans and harlots before the end of the year. The 58th Regiment went to a station (Portsmouth) under the Acts; the 106th Regiment went to Parkhurst in the Isle of Wight, a much better station than Portsmouth in all sanitary particulars, except that it is not under the Acts.

The 58th Regiment arrived at Portsmouth from India on March 30th, 1874; and, from that date until December 31st, the mean strength was 720 men, and there were admitted 31 cases of primary syphilis, and 37 cases of gonorrhœa. The 106th Regiment went to Parkhurst from India on January 13th; and, from that time to the end of the year, the

mean strength was 561 men; the admissions from primary syphilis were 65; and from gonorrhœa were 61. In each regiment, exactly the same number of recruits (*viz.*, 6) were taken in the year, so that that source of fallacy is avoided. In the 58th, there are 54 men married with leave, and about 12 without leave; in the 106th, there are 70 men married with and without leave.

If we now calculate out what number of admissions there would have been, in the same period of time for each regiment—*viz.*, in a year, and take the mean strength as above, we have the following table:

Regt.	Strength.	Total Admissions per Annum.		Admissions per 1,000 of Strength per Annum.	
		Prim. Syphilis.	Gonorrhœa.	Prim. Syph.	Gonorrhœa.
58th...	720	40.84	48.75	56.72	67.71
106th...	561	67.21	63.06	119.8	112.4

The astonishing difference in the number of admissions in the protected and the unprotected stations is most striking, and must, I should think, impress anybody who is capable of being influenced by figures. But, lest it should be said that the small number of men introduces an error, let us see what the error arising from the small numbers is. In the case of primary syphilitic admissions, the error is in the 58th Regiment  $\pm .024382$  to unity, and in the 106th Regiment  $\pm .039173$  to unity. In other words, the ratio of admissions per 1,000 might have been in the 58th, the protected regiment, anything between 32.34 to 81.1; and in the 106th, the unprotected regiment, anything between 80.63 to 158.73. So that the highest possible limit in the protected station is nearly identical with the lowest possible limit in the unprotected station. We can only conceive the admissions from syphilis to have been identical in the two stations on the almost impossible supposition that the error arising from the small number was entirely in one direction in one station, and entirely in the other direction in the other station. In gonorrhœa, the range of error lies in the 58th Regiment between 43.29 and 94.19 admissions per 1,000, and in the 106th between 74.69 and 150.13 per 1,000. The case here is almost as strong.

Can, then, any one doubt that the unlucky 106th, by being sent to the unprotected station, has had, in proportion to its strength, more than two cases of syphilis to one case in the fortunate regiment in the protected station? Considering, now, the facts stated in this and in previous letters, and in the army and navy returns, I think I have a right to call on those members of our profession who oppose the Acts to review their position. If they do so, and still oppose the Acts, it can only be, I conceive, on grounds altogether unconnected with statistics. If figures can prove anything, they prove that the Acts have greatly lessened disease; and whoever aids in repealing the Acts, ought to recognise the responsibility thereby resting upon him of increasing, by his action, the amount of venereal disease.

I am, etc., E. A. PARKES, M.D.

Netley, February 11th, 1875.

SIR,—The following facts, derived from a study of the medical history of my late regiment (the 34th), may throw some light upon the vexed question now under discussion, and the utility or otherwise of the above Acts.

We left Shorncliffe, a protected district, in September 1871, embarking at Dover for Ireland, our average strength during the year being 824.41. The head-quarters proceeded to Newry, a half battalion to Enniskillen, and detachments to Kavan, Drogheda, Newtonstewards, Armagh, and Monaghan—all unprotected districts. We lay in these quarters from January 1st, 1872, until July 1st, 1872, when we marched into the Curragh camp, a protected district.

Disease.	Rate per 1,000 of Admissions.		Second Six Months, Curragh Camp; Average.	
	No. of Cases.	Average Duration.	No. of Cases.	Average Duration.
Gonorrhœa.....	48	22.9 days	21	17.86 days
Primary syphilis.....	17	33.32 ,,	13	28.62 ,,
Secondary syphilis.....	4	32.25 ,,	4	29.25 ,,

Total, protected districts...69 Protected...38

The average annual strength throughout the year was 871 non-commissioned officers and men.

On referring to my notes, I find that in 12 cases of primary syphilis admitted into hospital at the Curragh, January 1st to May 1st, and shown in the returns as having been admitted in a protected district, 10 were contracted elsewhere, only two at the Curragh (6 at Newbridge, 1 at Kells, 1 at Rath, 1 in London, 1 in Brownstown, none of which places were under the Act). Statistics would show all these as having occurred in a protected district.