

the development of immunity, the endocrine situation, the vasomotor and muscular tone. All these had been described as important factors in rheumatic disorders. After discussing investigations reported by various workers, he described briefly a few cases in which "fibrositis," although it probably had a local origin in vasomotor and spastic conditions of muscle, was almost certainly part of a psychoneurotic reaction to some gross environmental disturbance. This finding was borne out by the statement which had been made—that the total incapacity produced by "rheumatism" only exceeded that arising from tuberculosis in countries with State health insurance.

## Local News

### ENGLAND AND WALES

#### The Midwifery Service

The annual report of the Central Midwives Board for the year ended March 31, 1938 (H.M. Stationery Office, 4d.), shows that at the end of the period under review there were 67,089 women on the Midwives Roll for England and Wales, a net increase of 2,043 on the total for the previous year. As in the past few years, only a little more than a quarter of the total number of midwives on the Roll are actually engaged in the practice of their profession, the number practising in 1938 being 17,494. The number of candidates who entered for the midwifery examination was 4,420, which is the highest on record. Three out of every four candidates who sat for the examination were successful, the proportion varying to some extent in the different examination centres. The report sets out the arrangements made by the Board for the approval of institutions, lecturers, and teachers under the new training and examination rules, and it includes a detailed explanation of the rules made under the Midwives Act, 1936, requiring midwives to attend from time to time approved courses of instruction. Reference is made to the removal from the Midwives Roll of the names of 1,164 midwives who surrendered their certificates to local supervising authorities under the provisions of the Midwives Act, 1936. There has been a pronounced decline in the number of midwives dealt with annually by the Board under its penal powers; during the year under review only eleven charges were heard in respect of malpractice, negligence, or misconduct. Eighteen institutions were approved for the purpose of providing for midwives and pupil midwives the instruction in obstetric analgesia and in the use of an apparatus prescribed in the Board's ruling on the administration of nitrous oxide and air by midwives; the total number of institutions so approved on March 31, 1938, was thirty-two. The report also includes notes on decisions given during the year on midwifery etiquette and practice.

It was announced on April 1 that the Central Midwives Board has unanimously re-elected Sir Comyns Berkeley, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G., as its chairman for the year ending March 31, 1940.

#### Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

The thirty-ninth annual report of the incorporated Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (1937-8) records the deaths of Mr. T. Edward Lescher, who served on the council of the School as a representative of the Chamber of Commerce, and of the lecturer in entomology, Miss A. M. Evans, D.Sc. Following the resignation of Professor W. S. Patton owing to ill-health, Professor R. M. Gordon was appointed to the Dutton Memorial Chair

of Entomology. During the year under review an insectarium was provided for this department, which should facilitate the rearing and maintenance of stocks of tropical parasites. Investigations along a new line opened up by the discovery of the guanidine compound synthalin, a powerful trypanocidal agent, have led to the discovery of several new substances which, while equal to synthalin in trypanocidal activity, are considerably less poisonous to the vertebrate host. One of these substances has been found to be also active in malarial infections of man. The re-establishment of the Imperial Garrison in Freetown, Sierra Leone, will probably further diminish in the near future the already restricted accommodation available for the Sir Alfred Lewis Jones Laboratory. At this institution research was continued regarding the forms of typhus encountered in West Africa. Other activities included an investigation into mosquito gauze suitable for screening houses, a mosquito survey of the Protectorate, and a study of a fungal disease affecting mosquitos, which proves fatal to a high proportion of larvae infected in nature. Should it be possible to culture this fungus under laboratory conditions, it is believed that it might be used as a biological means of mosquito control. The report states that the corrugated-iron roof of the animal house at Freetown was covered with light thatch at a cost of less than £2, with the result that the maximum temperature inside the building was reduced by 8° to 12° F., as compared with similar unthatched buildings.

#### Charterhouse Rheumatism Clinic

The new building of the Charterhouse Rheumatism Clinic in Weymouth Street was opened by the Duchess of Gloucester on March 29. Dr. H. Warren Crowe said that the clinic had been started with the idea that serious forms of rheumatism and arthritis should be treated at special centres. In the treatment of this condition a number of investigations were required: x rays, chemical and bacteriological analyses, and the services of specialists in various branches of medicine and dentistry. These things were expensive and out of reach except for the well-to-do; they had therefore conceived the idea of helping patients of small means to get such treatment by charging them small fees which just covered expenses. Up till now the clinic had been self-supporting, but they now needed £23,500 to complete the building, towards which they had collected close on £10,000 by private subscription. Mr. E. Hackforth, Controller of the Insurance Department of the Ministry of Health, said that they at the Ministry would watch with the greatest interest the progress of the work carried on at the clinic. He read a message from the Minister of Health in which Dr. Elliot said that he approved the new premises as an institution at which insured persons under the National Health Insurance Act would in future be able to obtain treatment for rheumatism as an additional benefit granted by their approved societies.

#### Notification of Puerperal Pyrexia: Correction

In the notes which appeared under this heading on page 690 of the last issue it was stated: "Unless the notifying medical practitioner holds a commission in His Majesty's Forces the local authority shall pay to him for the certificate a fee of one shilling, whether the case occurs in his private practice or not." The fee of one shilling mentioned here relates to notifications of puerperal pyrexia occurring in buildings in the occupation of any of His Majesty's Forces, or of any person employed by the Admiralty, the Army Council, or the Air Council. For other notifications of puerperal pyrexia the fees at present payable are to be continued—namely, a fee of 2s. 6d. to the notifying practitioner if the case occurs in his private practice, and a fee of 1s. if in his practice as medical officer of any public body or institution.

## SCOTLAND

### Finances of the Dundee Royal Infirmary

At the meeting of Dundee Royal Infirmary on March 13 it was intimated that the accounts for 1938 showed a deficit of over £15,000, and even after applying towards this the legacies and donations received in the course of the year there still remained a deficit of over £8,500. The chairman said that something drastic must be done to improve the financial position by increasing the revenue of the hospital. Efforts towards enrolling employee contributors had been so far successful that over 4,000 new weekly contributors had been obtained. A good deal of attention had been focused lately upon the nursing profession owing to the report recently issued by the Scottish Departmental Committee on Nursing Services. It appeared, however, to the directors that until the Government was prepared to assist the voluntary hospitals to carry out the suggestions of the committee the directors could only partially follow the recommendations. More nurses had been engaged and existing accommodation had been improved at a cost of £3,650. The directors had also decided to reorganize the medical electrical department at an estimated cost of £1,000, for which an anonymous gift of this amount had been received.

### Edinburgh Dental School

At the annual meeting of the Edinburgh Dental Hospital and School Professor Sydney Smith, who presided, intimated that for the scheme of rebuilding this school they expected to secure £55,000, of which £18,000 had already been promised. The reconstruction was one of great importance for the whole health of the city, since increasing numbers of patients were applying for dental treatment, and opportunities for teaching and research in dental disorders were growing. The annual report showed that the total number of operations performed in the hospital during the past year had been 51,884, compared with 46,927 in 1937. The number of patients attending had been 35,603, as against 31,099 in the previous year. The total number of students on the roll of the school was 232, including nine women, and of these fifty-one students were taking a medical course as well as one in dentistry. It is expected that the work of demolition of the old building will take place during the summer vacation, and that thereafter the rebuilding will be completed in about two years.

## AUSTRALIA

### Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

The inaugural session of the twelfth annual general meeting of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (writes our correspondent in Victoria) was a brilliant function. It was held on the evening of March 15 in the noble Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne. It was rendered notable by the presence of Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson, surgeon to H.M. Queen Mary, surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, and a member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Distinguished surgeons from all parts of Australia and New Zealand attended, and the proceedings were officially opened by Sir Frederick Mann, the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Justice of the State of Victoria. The Judiciary and the Bar, the University, the Services, the Churches, and the Federal and State Governments were represented, and with a large medical gathering, accompanied by many ladies, the audience formed a fitting one to appreciate the erudite address on "Surgery in England in the Making," which was the subject chosen by Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson for the Syme Oration, the central feature

of the occasion. [An abstract of this oration appeared in the *British Medical Journal* of March 25 (p. 618).] After Sir Hugh Devine, the newly elected President of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, had invited him to do so the Chief Justice of Victoria declared the meeting open, and then Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson delivered the following personal message from Queen Mary:

"I have heard with much interest that Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson is travelling to Australia for the purpose of delivering the Syme Oration to the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. I feel sure that visits of this nature must greatly facilitate the exchange of views and experiences and assist in promoting the cordial relations which already exist between the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of England and Australasia.

"I am asking him to convey my greetings to your President and Fellows, and everyone assembled at the meeting, and my best wishes for the continued success of your important work in the advancement of both science and surgery in Australia and New Zealand."

Sir Hugh Devine announced that a suitable cable would be sent to Queen Mary expressing the appreciation and loyalty of the Fellows of the College. He then delivered the Presidential Address, in which he welcomed Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson, to whom they were grateful for making the long journey to Australia to do honour to the first President of the Australasian College, the late Sir George Adlington Syme. Australia and New Zealand were countries which were distant from the big medical centres, and the Australasian constitution of the College would bring it into the world of international surgery, retain its Fellows within its fold, and keep them abreast of all advances in the art and science of surgery. The College was already after twelve years a body comprising 642 Fellows; its functions were purely scientific, and it was intended primarily to fashion highly skilled surgical healers for the benefit of the community. The Gordon Craig Memorial Library had been established as a lending library, which included a translation service of current surgical literature upon which they were prepared to spend £1,000 annually. Arrangements had been completed to share the management of the new Prince Henry Hospital in Melbourne, a section of which would be entrusted to the College for postgraduate teaching purposes. Sir Hugh Devine stated that the direct association of a College of Surgeons with a postgraduate teaching hospital would be unique, and must ultimately raise the local standard of surgery to a high level. He concluded his address by hailing with joy the advent of the sister college—the Royal Australasian College of Physicians—whose path in medicine would necessarily run parallel with that of their College in surgery.

### ADMISSION OF FELLOWS

Sir Alan Newton, Vice-President and Censor-in-Chief, presented to the President a number of candidates, approved after examination by a Board of Censors of the College, for admission as Fellows in Surgery. The President then formally admitted as Fellows in Surgery the following surgeons:

Stanley Hains Lovell, M.S.Sydney; Roderick Hector Macdonald, M.S.Sydney; Edward Gerard MacMahon, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Alan Frank Hobbs, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Thomas Harry Ackland, M.D., M.S.Melb., F.R.C.S. Eng.; Leslie Westfield Gleadall, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Norman Marshall Harry, M.S.Melb., F.R.C.S. Eng.; Francis Joseph Hayden, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Bryan Tobyn Keon-Cohen, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Geoffrey Newman Morris, M.S.Melb., F.R.C.S. Eng.; Mervyn Henry Bowzer Robinson, F.R.C.S. Eng.; Eustace Alwynne Rowlands, F.R.C.S. Eng.; John Bowie Somerset, M.D.Melb., F.R.C.S. Eng.; and James Cuming Stewart, F.R.C.S. Eng.

George Alexander Brew, D.O.M.S.London, was similarly presented and admitted as a Fellow in Ophthalmology, and Hedley Francis Summons, D.L.O.Melb., and Heyworth Alexander Wigglesworth Watson, F.R.C.S. Eng., as Fellows in Laryngo-Otology.

Before he delivered the Syme Oration, Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson was presented by the Censor-in-Chief and admitted by the President as an Honorary Fellow of the

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and acknowledged the honour most graciously. It is unnecessary to inform his colleagues in England of the details of the Syme Oration, which, as would be expected, displayed a wonderful fund of scholarly knowledge and was delivered with elegant grace and many touches of dignified humour, which held the interest of the audience and aroused its admiration. In response to the expression of thanks by the President Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson made a number of handsome gifts to the Australasian College. Sidney Young's *Annals of the Barber Surgeons*, and South's *Craft of Surgery*, edited by Sir D'Arcy Power, were brought by Sir Alfred as a gift from the chairman of the publishing company, Lord Ebbisham, one time Lord Mayor of London. A volume prepared by Sir William MacCormac to celebrate the centenary of the Royal College of Surgeons of England was presented by Sir William MacCormac to Sir Cuthbert Wallace, who had sent it in the care of Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson for presentation to the College. Sir Alfred himself gave the College three volumes of the writings of Sir Charles Bell, the founder of the Medical School of the Middlesex Hospital, and capped this generosity by presenting a portrait of the late Lord Lister, copied by Francis E. Hodge from the portrait by W. W. Oules hanging at the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

### Leprosy in Queensland

The annual report for 1937-8 on the health and medical services of the State of Queensland includes, among less common features, accounts of leprosy and leptospirosis (with a separate section on *L. pomona*) and further investigations on "Q" fever. Points from a survey of leprosy in Queensland during 1900-30 are that: (1) age extremes were 7 and 92 years; (2) child leprosy has increased, indicating its endemicity; (3) the number of coloured lepers detected has much increased (since 1930), and (4) latterly (1935-6) a greater number of white people were admitted to Peel Island; (5) of 126 first admissions to the latter (1925-37) thirty-four died. The probable place of infection in 129 cases (fifty-eight whites, seventy-one aboriginals) occurring during 1925-38 has been mapped out, and study of the natural history of the disease is proceeding in a closed aboriginal community in North Queensland; each member of families yielding suspects or proved cases is examined every three months. Apparently early cases may be bacteriologically negative, and the methylene-blue diagnostic test was disappointing, perhaps due to the predominance of neural types of leprosy. Further work on "Q" fever has shown that the known endemic centres are located in an area with an annual rainfall greater than 50 inches; infected bandicoots have been caught (in some antibodies have been demonstrated), and four other bush animals and the cow and dog have been found susceptible, but a parasitic vector has not yet been traced. Agglutinin examination of abattoir workers showed that infection may occur without clinical signs. Investigation of leptospirosis throughout Queensland demonstrated at least four serological strains of leptospira, but classical Weil's disease is rare. Another type, *L. pomona*, induces immunity in guinea-pigs for about one year, probably for a longer period in human beings.

## Correspondence

### Storage of Radium in War-time

SIR,—Radium is not only a valuable but also a very dangerous substance. If, during an air raid, any quantity of radium was dispersed by violence, the buildings in which it was dispersed, as well as a considerable area surrounding the buildings, would be for many years to come a menace to any people who inhabited them. One-hundredth of a milligramme would probably be fatal if inhaled.

It is therefore necessary that steps should be taken to provide for the safe custody of radium in war-time, and a conference has been held between representatives of the British X-Ray and Radium Protection Committee, King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, the Ministry of Health, and the National Radium Commission to consider this matter.

The National Radium Commission is compiling a register of owners and holders of radium, with a view to satisfactory arrangements being made. The Commission earnestly requests all persons who have radium in their custody or possession (including the responsible official of institutions holding radium) to notify the Commission, stating the amount of radium held.—I am, etc.,

GEORGE F. STEBBING, M.B., F.R.C.S.,  
Secretary, National Radium Commission.

18, Park Crescent, Portland Place,  
London, W.1, March 31.

### Nomenclature of the Malarial Parasites

SIR,—In the past, following the teaching of F. Mesnil, we have used the name *Plasmodium praecox* Grassi and Feletti, 1890, to designate the parasite of malignant tertian malaria, and we have given our reasons for this choice (*Arch. Inst. Past. Alger.*, 1929, 7, 223). These were based upon a study of the original documents, and especially on papers very kindly lent to us by Mlle. Isabella Grassi.

In their recent study of the nomenclature of the parasite of malignant tertian malaria Sir Rickard Christophers and Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Sinton (*Journal*, December 3, 1938, p. 1130) have pointed out the difference between the specific nomenclature *de jure* and *de facto* of this plasmodium. They have, however, emphasized with justification the fact that a strict application of the rules of nomenclature would lead to almost intolerable confusion in malarial literature. We are in agreement with them, and consider that for convenience in practice and to ensure uniformity it is necessary to adopt for all three species of human plasmodia the names now in most common use, even if they do not conform strictly with the nomenclature *de jure*. The names which should be used for the parasites responsible for the three common fevers are:

*Plasmodium vivax* Grassi and Feletti, 1890. (The parasite of benign tertian malaria.)

*Plasmodium malariae* Grassi and Feletti, 1890. (The parasite of quartan malaria.)

*Plasmodium falciparum* Welch, 1897. (The parasite of malignant tertian malaria.)

In consequence, and also to ensure the same clarity of nomenclature in future, it is desirable that the specific name *praecox* should be abandoned as the designation of the first avian plasmodium described by Grassi and Feletti. This parasite ought, therefore, to be called *Plasmodium relictum* Grassi and Feletti, 1891, as was

The fifth International Exhibition of Cripples' Work will be held in London in October, 1939, under the auspices of the Central Council for the Care of Cripples, 34, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Work done by crippled persons in workshops, hospital schools, training colleges, and home industries will be displayed and will be eligible for competition for diplomas and trophies. Applications for stand space should be made before May 1. The Queen and Queen Mary have promised to visit the exhibition if their engagements permit.

## Universities and Colleges

### UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Sir Edward Mellanby, K.C.B., M.D., F.R.S., Secretary of the Medical Research Council, will deliver the Rede Lecture on Friday, April 28, at 5 p.m. in the Regent House. His subject is "Some Social and Economic Implications of the Recent Advances in Medical Science."

The Faculty Board of Medicine has appointed E. B. Verney, M.A., to be a member of the M.D. Committee for the year 1939, in place of Dr. T. H. Hele, resigned.

O. M. Solandt, M.D. Toronto, has been appointed University Lecturer in Mammalian Physiology for three years from April 1.

At the Congregation held on March 17 the degree of M.Chir. was conferred on D. B. McGavin, whose initials were incorrectly stated in our issue of March 25 (p. 654).

### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

#### LONDON HOSPITAL MEDICAL COLLEGE

The two open scholarships, each of the value of £100, have been awarded to the following candidates for the forthcoming academic year: (1) Mr. R. G. White, Queen's College, Oxford. (2) Mr. R. G. Ladkin, Exeter College, Oxford, and Mr. J. Waterlow, Trinity College, Cambridge (equal, scholarship divided).

The following candidates have been approved at the examination indicated:

ACADEMIC POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MEDICAL RADIOLOGY.—*Part I:* S. H. Ali, G. W. Boden, M. L. Mundy, M. Nasiruddin, Peggy C. Permain, N. Sacks.

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

At a graduation ceremony held on March 29 the following degrees were conferred:

LL.D.—James McIntosh, M.D., Director of the Bland-Sutton Institute of Pathology, Middlesex Hospital.

D.P.H.—J. Leiper, N. A. Ross, Marie S. Sutherland.

### UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

At a graduation ceremonial to be held on Wednesday, June 21, the honorary degree of LL.D. will be conferred on O. H. Mavor, M.D. (the well-known playwright "James Bridie"), and G. Grey Turner, M.S., F.R.C.S., professor of surgery in the University of London.

### UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

The University of Dublin (Trinity College) has appointed as Lecturer in Psychological Medicine Edward Armstrong Bennet, M.C., M.D., D.P.M., who will visit Dublin during each summer term to give his courses of lectures.

### SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES OF LONDON

The following candidates have passed in the subjects indicated:

SURGERY.—D. E. Harken, A. N. Kalra, S. Smith, A. B. Taylor.

MEDICINE.—T. Bliss, G. R. Green, D. E. Harken, H. Woolwich.

FORENSIC MEDICINE.—T. Bliss, G. R. Green, D. E. Harken, H. Woolwich.

MIDWIFERY.—R. M. J. Franks, T. L. B. Iredale, G. L. L. Reynolds, R. G. Ticehurst, M. Whitehead.

The diploma of the Society has been granted to G. R. Green, D. E. Harken, A. B. Taylor, R. G. Ticehurst, and M. Whitehead.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS

The following candidates have passed the examination for the diploma of the College:

F. S. Bonugli, A. Buchan, J. W. Brown, Violet Conway, J. G. B. DeVine, N. Dodd, Mary N. Fawcett, R. Edwards, G. H. Ellidge, J. E. Elliott, J. F. Fraser, Audrey I. Freeth, E. G. Collins, Evelyn W. Glennie, A. Grant, D. H. Harrison, R. L. Hartley, D. W. Hendry, Eugenie C. Illingworth, J. Kay, R. F. Lawrence, J. T. Mair, Mary D. Mellersh, G. Mitchell, I. H. C. Morton, R. Pollok, Florence G. Richards, R. Roaf, Ada M. Sewell, Helen Thomson.

## Medical Notes in Parliament

Before rising for the Easter adjournment both Houses of Parliament this week discussed foreign policy. The business of the House of Commons also included the second reading of the Civil Defence Bill.

The Royal Assent was given on March 29 to the Cancer Act.

Sir Francis Fremantle presided on March 29 at a meeting of the Conservative Health and Housing Committee, which was addressed by Dame Ellen Musson and Dame Joanna Cruickshank. Their subject was the report of the Departmental Committee on the Nursing Services, with special reference to the proposed creation of a second grade of nurses.

Sir Francis Fremantle has given notice that on going into committee of supply he will call attention to the nursing services, and will move "that the House, taking note of the report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Nursing Services, recognizes the inadequate supply of nurses to meet the increasing demand for their services and the urgent need of reform in their training, registration, and conditions of service both for institutional and domiciliary nursing."

### Progress of Bills

The Camps Bill and the Disused Burial Grounds Bill were read a second time in the House of Commons on March 29.

On March 30 in the House of Commons the Marriage (Scotland) Bill and the Local Government Amendment (Scotland) Bill were read a second time. The Census of Production Bill was read a third time.

On March 31 the House of Commons gave third readings to the Army and Air Force Annual Bill and the Local Government Superannuation Bill.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL

#### ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Criminal Justice Bill was further considered by a standing committee in the House of Commons on March 14, when a beginning was made with the discussion of Clause 32 (Abolition of power to pass a sentence of corporal punishment). The chairman, Major Lloyd George, intimated that he was prepared to allow a general discussion of the clause on the first amendment, which was by Mr. Spens. Sir SAMUEL HOARE said corporal punishment for the young was becoming obsolete. It was no longer used in London, nor in many of the principal cities of this country. In 1917 there were 5,210 sentences of corporal punishment upon boys under the age of 14, whereas in 1938 only forty-seven such sentences were inflicted on boys under this age. There had been inquiries in two cities into the subsequent records of boys upon whom corporal punishment had been inflicted. Three out of four of these boys were again charged in the police court with serious offences within three years.

The question of corporal punishment of adults was more difficult. As long ago as 1861 the abolition of corporal punishment was carried by Parliament, but as a result of public indignation a number of statutes subsequently reimposed this penalty. It had been imposed for a list of horrible crimes, greater knowledge of which had shown that the perpetrators were pathological and better dealt with by other measures. The records showed that sentences without flogging in the case of robbery with violence were as efficacious as sentences with flogging. He explained the proposal to retain flogging for mutiny and for attacks upon warders in prison. Outside prison there were effective deterrents without corporal punishment; inside those deterrents did not exist, though the punishment of flogging was seldom inflicted, and a year might go by without a single such sentence.

Sir ARCHIBALD SOUTHBY advocated the retention of flogging, and said he believed it was the only thing that would deter the drug peddler.