

Medical Notes in Parliament

Diphtheria Outbreak traced to Milk Supply

Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE on March 11 asked the Minister of Health whether the outbreak of diphtheria in East Yorkshire, traced to new clean milk from a farm, was due to infection the spread of which could have been prevented by pasteurization, and what action had been taken to avoid such danger in future. Mr. ERNEST BROWN replied that the spread of infection in the case referred to would have been prevented by pasteurization. Only one cow was kept on the farm concerned, and the sale of milk from this farm had been ended.

Health in the West Indies

Colonel OLIVER STANLEY opened, on March 16, a debate on colonial administration in the West Indies. He said the section on health in the Stockdale report well set out the health problems which would have to be met. In many ways the most important was the suggestion of the health community system, an attempt to take into rural, scattered communities the health advantages normally found in an urban, highly populated area. The Colonial Office had given authority for a large-scale experiment in this health community system in the Jamaica parish of St. Catherine.

Mr. CREECH JONES referred to malnutrition and doubted whether the proposals of the report were enough to deal with the squalor and dreadful housing in most of the West Indian colonies. Dr. HADEN GUEST cited evidence from the Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire that in Jamaica rickets was frequently found among younger school children. The health problems of the West Indies were insoluble without adequate nutrition. To erect a costly medical structure on the basis of the poverty of the West Indies would give the doctors appointed an impossible task. Dr. MORGAN suggested a mobile team of medical experts ready to go to islands where epidemics had broken out or to others where water supplies needed attention. The Stockdale report did not mention or did not emphasize hookworm disease because Government policy made that disease endemic. There was no decent scheme, except in Trinidad, for proper latrines to prevent the infection. Medical officers engaged in preventive work had no opportunity for doing their work properly. Leprosy could be abolished in the West Indies in a generation. Many sufferers from leprosy filtered back to this country by means of retired officers from the Colonies and now tramped the streets of Great Britain unrecognized.

Dermatitis in Mining Industry

On March 17 Mr. BERNARD TAYLOR asked what steps were being taken to deal with dermatitis in the mining industry. Mr. TOM SMITH answered that any epidemic of this disease, however small, reported among a particular set of workers at a particular mine was investigated in relation to the working conditions, and ameliorative measures taken so far as possible. The large majority of the cases appeared to be sporadic in the sense that they comprised, in ones and twos, workers having many different occupations and employed at many different mines. These cases presented a difficult problem which would be further investigated through the medical officers of mines who were taking up their duties in the coalfields.

Vaccination in the Army.—Answering Mr. Viant on March 16 Sir JAMES GRIGG said vaccinations in the Army were performed in accordance with instructions essentially similar to those issued by the Ministry of Health to public vaccinators. Successful cutaneous vaccination must of necessity lead to the formation of scar tissue, but scars resulting from present methods of vaccinating soldiers were generally very slight.

Medical Regrading and Army Employment.—In a reply on March 16 Sir JAMES GRIGG said a man's physical condition tended to improve as a result of Army training, and in a normal case the medical officer who had watched the man at work could properly determine when he was fit for a higher medical grading. This arrangement would, however, shortly be modified. Army selection centres were being instituted. Eventually all soldiers whose change of medical category entailed a change of employment would pass through these centres and there be classified and allotted to the duties they could best perform. Men suffering from defects which could be cured would be given special remedial training.

Public Health Propaganda.—Asked how many posters in the series entitled "Coughs and Sneezes Spread Diseases" had been issued by his Department for publication, Mr. BROWN said on March 16 that in the current campaign which began last October 152,170 posters and vehicle bills had been issued at a cost of £12,600.

The Services

Capt. O. I. Green, W. N. Hine, and E. D. V. Nicoll, R.A.M.C., have been awarded the M.C. in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in the Middle East.

The name of Lieut. (now Capt.) D. P. G. Paisley, R.A.M.C., was included in a list of officers and men commended for brave conduct in a *Supplement* to the *London Gazette* dated Feb. 17, 1942. We regret that, through an oversight, this item of news was not published in the *Journal* at the time.

Temp. Surg. Lieut. W. D. G. Troup, R.N.V.R., has been mentioned in dispatches.

The annual general meeting of the members of the Auxiliary R.A.M.C. Funds will be held at 11, Chandos Street, W., on Monday, April 5, at 6 p.m., when the annual report and financial statement for the year ended Dec. 31, 1942, will be presented and officers elected for 1943.

CASUALTIES IN THE MEDICAL SERVICES

Major W. L. BROOKES, Indian Medical Department, is included as "died" in an India Office Casualty List published on March 15.

Temp. Surg. Lieut. JACK BLOOR HOUGHTON, R.N.V.R., is included as "missing, presumed killed," in an Admiralty Casualty List published on March 13. He was born on March 20, 1917, and received his professional education at King's College Hospital, qualifying M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. in 1940. Before entering the R.N.V.R. in July, 1941, he held an appointment at the Blind School Hospital, Leatherhead, Surrey. In Aug., 1942, he was mentioned in dispatches for distinguished services in convoys to Murmansk. He was a member of the B.M.A. and his home was at Woodthorpe, Nottingham.

Lieut. EDWARD RAYMOND STONE, R.A.M.C., is included as "killed" in an Army Council Casualty List published on March 17. He was born on March 5, 1913, and graduated M.D. Georgetown in 1939. He entered the U.S.A. Section of the R.A.M.C. in Aug., 1941. His home was at Washington, D.C.

Prisoners of War.—Lieut. W. G. Anderson, I.M.S., Acting Major A. M. Best, I.M.S., Capt. T. R. S. Cormack, R.A.M.C., Acting Major A. C. Glendinning, I.M.S., Capt. D. W. F. Gotla, R.A.M.C., Lieut.-Col. C. W. Maisey, R.A.M.C., Col. J. M. Mitchell, O.B.E., I.M.S., Capt. L. Sefton, R.A.M.C., Surg. Lieut. D. R. Syred, R.N.V.R., Surg. Lieut. J. C. Wyatt, R.N.

Missing.—Capt. J. A. Perkins, R.A.M.C.

Medical News

Sir Hugh Lett will deliver the Thomas Vicary Lecture at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C., on Friday, April 2, at 4 o'clock. His subject is "Anatomy at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall."

The Council of Epsom College will in July award a France Pension of £30 a year to a necessitous medical man, fully 55 years of age, who has been registered for five years, and who is in need of help. The Council will also award St. Anne's Scholarships to girls attending Church of England schools, who must be fully 9 years of age and be orphan daughters of medical men who have been in independent practice in England or Wales for not less than five years. The value of each scholarship is dependent upon the means of the applicant and the locality and fees of the school selected. Educational grants will also be available from the Sherman Bigg Fund for children of either sex. These are not restricted to orphans or to members of any religious denomination, but candidates must be of public school age and in need of such help. Forms of application for the vacant pension and for the scholarships and grants can be had from the Secretary's Office, Epsom College, Surrey, and must be completed and returned by April 30.

A postgraduate lecture and demonstration on living models of clinically approved means of contraception will be held at the C.B.C. Mothers' Clinic, 108, Whitfield Street, W.1, on April 1 at 2.30 p.m. Applications to attend should be sent to the secretary beforehand.

At a recent meeting of the Central Midwives Board for Scotland Prof. R. W. Johnstone and Prof. James Hendry were elected chairman and deputy chairman respectively for the ensuing year.