

Universities and Colleges

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND

Gift from the B.M.A.

As announced in the Annual Report of Council printed in the *Supplement* of May 12, the Council of the British Medical Association has contributed 1,000 guineas from Association funds to the Restoration and Development Fund of the Royal College of Surgeons. Since then the Secretary of the Association has received the following letter from Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson, President of the College:

MY DEAR DR. HILL,

I beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter informing me that the British Medical Association is making a donation of one thousand guineas to the Restoration and Development Fund of the Royal College of Surgeons. This spontaneous gesture is very deeply appreciated by my Council, and it will be welcomed by all the Fellows and Members of the College.

It is a great encouragement to us in our work to receive the support of your great Association, which is representative of the whole medical profession. The gift is welcome not only for the substantial help which it will give towards the objects we have in view, but also as further evidence of the cordial relations between the Association and our College. It has been one of the happiest experiences of my period of office as President of the College to have had such friendly relations and such fruitful co-operation with the British Medical Association.

I would like you to assure your Council that my colleagues and I are deeply grateful for this gesture of friendship and for the Association's support of the high ideals for which our College stands.

Yours very sincerely,

ALFRED WEBB-JOHNSON.

Council Meeting

At a meeting of the Council of the College, held on May 10, with the President in the chair, Dr. R. A. Willis, who had arrived from Melbourne, was admitted as the first Sir William H. Collins Professor of Human and Comparative Pathology. The Hallett Prize was awarded to William Burnett, of the University of Aberdeen. The British Association of Urological Surgeons was added to the list of those specialist associations who enjoy the facilities of the joint secretariat at 45, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Diplomas of Membership were granted to the 139 successful candidates whose names were published in the report of the meeting of the Royal College of Physicians of London in the *Journal* of May 5 (p. 647).

Diplomas in Medical Radiodiagnosis and in Medical Radiotherapy were granted jointly with the Royal College of Physicians of London to J. A. Ireland and L. M. Shorvon respectively.

Lister Medal

The Lister Medal for 1945, which is awarded in recognition of distinguished contributions to surgical science, has been granted to Sir Howard W. Florey, F.R.S., of the University of Oxford, for the outstanding importance to surgical science of his work on penicillin and its application. He will deliver the Lister Memorial Lecture later in 1945. This is the eighth occasion of the award, which is made by a committee representative of the Royal Society, the Royal College of Surgeons of England, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the University of Edinburgh, and the University of Glasgow.

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

The King, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State for Scotland, has appointed Prof. William James Hamilton, M.D., D.Sc., to the Regius Chair of Anatomy at Glasgow University. After a distinguished career at Queen's University, Belfast, Prof. Hamilton went to Glasgow in 1930 as demonstrator of anatomy, and two years later was appointed lecturer. In 1935 he became lecturer at St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, and since 1936 has held the Chair of Anatomy in the University of London tenable at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College.

The Services

CASUALTIES IN THE MEDICAL SERVICES

Died.—Capt. James Alexander Harper, R.A.M.C.; War Subs. Capt. Clarence Wilfred O'Donoghue, R.A.M.C.

Missing, presumed killed.—Temp. Surg. Lieut. John Nairn Lennox, R.N.V.R.

Died of wounds.—War Subs. Capt. Thomas Joseph Seavers, R.A.M.C.

Medical Notes in Parliament

Alien Doctors

Answering Sir Walter Smiles on May 11, Mr. HERBERT MORRISON reported that some of the foreign doctors admitted temporarily to this country had already returned. Others were preparing to leave. He said the remainder still render valuable service in this country, where, for the time being, there was an extreme shortage of medical man-power.

Sir WALTER SMILES suggested that, as numbers of British medical students had been sent to work in Europe, the Minister should consider returning some foreign doctors to their native countries.

Control of Flies on Sewage Filter

On May 11 Sir JOHN MELLOR asked what reports the Minister of Health had received concerning the nuisance from flies in the sewage filter beds of the Birmingham Tame and Rea District Drainage Board. Mr. WILLINK replied that the most recent report from the Drainage Board, received a little over a week ago, was that the flies were not more numerous than in recent years, though their emergence appeared to have been accelerated by an early spell of warm weather. A group of experts formed under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in 1943 had directed extensive observations both at the Drainage Board's works at Minworth and at a number of other sewage disposal works. Much detailed information had been collected on the distribution and life history of flies in percolating filters and on their reaction to variations in such factors as the composition and temperature of the settled sewage and the alternation of periods of operation and rest of the filters. Further investigation was in progress on the control of the emergence of flies by chemical substances, and on alterations in the construction and method of operation of filters. The effect of treating the sewage at a greatly increased rate in percolating filters was also being investigated. Measures were applied by the Drainage Board from time to time to alleviate the conditions, including treatment of the sewage by gas liquor, by salt, and by a number of chemicals, a large-scale application of bleaching powder and creosote, and an attempt to trap the flies by mechanical means. The problem was difficult, largely because the larvae of the flies constituted an important element in the efficient operation of the filters. Control must therefore be restricted to the emergence of the adult flies without destroying the biological life within the filters.

Polio myelitis in the Army

On May 15 Sir JAMES GRIGG, replying to Mr. Rhys Davies, said that the incidence of infantile paralysis in the Army since the beginning of the war had not yet been worked out. The incidence of this disease was low, and from the general manpower viewpoint insignificant. Current statistics were not therefore maintained, and it would not be justifiable at present to divert the limited statistical staff from more important work to have this incidence worked out. It was, however, hoped that details would eventually be published in the *Medical History of the War*. As the disease occurred in small sporadic outbreaks, and as the source and transmission of the virus were not yet known, it was not possible to say to what extent special preventive measures employed were responsible for the cessation of an outbreak compared with, for example, natural or climatic conditions. No remedy for the disease as such was known. The damage to the nerve cells attacked by the virus occurred at once and was irremediable. Once the infective process had been arrested, however, a very great deal could be done by physiotherapy and by orthopaedic surgery to re-educate partially affected muscles or muscles which had deteriorated through inactivity. During the acute period iron lungs were used to replace damaged respiratory muscles.

Tuberculosis Waiting List in Scotland

On May 15 Mr. MCINTYRE asked the Secretary of State for Scotland how many patients suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis were at present awaiting beds in hospitals in Scotland as a whole, and in Glasgow, respectively; and what steps he proposed to take to bring an immediate end to this situation. Mr. JOHNSTON in reply said that at March 31, 1945, 1,776 persons in Scotland suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis were awaiting admission to hospital. Of this number 1,142 were in Glasgow. The Department had provided 758 beds from the Government's Emergency Hospital Scheme, and the number of patients undergoing hospital treatment for pulmonary tuberculosis in Scotland had already been increased by over 60% since the war began. Further beds could be made available, but there was a serious shortage of nursing staff and there were obvious difficulties in compulsorily directing girls to the service.