

Medical Notes in Parliament

[FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT]

Both Houses of the New Parliament met at Westminster on November 26th. The Peers took the oath, and the House of Commons again selected Captain E. A. Fitzroy as Speaker.

The King's speech will be delivered and debated next week. The Minister of Health is unlikely to ask the House of Commons to proceed before Christmas with any legislation for his department.

Universities and Colleges

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND

ANNUAL MEETING OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS

The annual meeting of Fellows and Members of the Royal College of Surgeons was held on November 21st. The quorum (thirty) was not obtained, so that no resolutions could be moved, but the PRESIDENT (Sir Cuthbert Wallace) said that he proposed to make a few observations on the annual report, and would be glad to hear the remarks of those who had given notice of the usual motion about the representation of Members on the Council.

The President then mentioned several items appearing in the report. A telegram had been received from Melbourne saying with what pleasure Sir Holburt Waring's visit had been received on the occasion of the opening of the Royal Australasian College. At the suggestion of the Société Nationale de Chirurgie of Paris steps had been taken to establish close scientific relations between that body and the Royal College of Surgeons. Meetings had been held between representatives of the two bodies and of the Association of Surgeons, and a committee of arrangement had been appointed to put into effect the activities contemplated. These were annual scientific meetings to be held between British and French surgeons, alternately in Great Britain and France; the translation and exchange of scientific articles for publication in the journals of each country; and the arrangement of visits by individuals or small parties to France or England, as might be required. The first meeting was to be held in London in July, 1936. After much deliberation the Council had decided to make no change in the scope and method of conducting the Primary Examination for the Fellowship. For the Fellowship Final it was now necessary for candidates to have held a house appointment for six months. The President also referred to the great value in the research work of the College of the gift of the Buckston Browne farm.

Dr. REDMOND ROCHE drew attention to a statement in the report that for the Final Examination for the Fellowship it was no longer necessary to hold a medical qualification registrable in Great Britain. Did this mean that the Membership diploma would be conferred after the candidate had obtained his Fellowship?

Dr. HOWARD STRATFORD pointed out that the Primary Examination expenses for 1935, £1,800, were twelve times as heavy as for 1934. The PRESIDENT said that this was on account of the over-seas examinations; the expenses were covered by the candidates' fees.

A Member drew attention to a reference in the report to the Macloglin Scholarship and to the statement that candidates "must not previously have passed an examination which normally exempts from a part or the whole of the Pre-medical Examination." Unless this was in accordance with the terms under which the money was left it seemed to be putting an embargo on persons with the more active brains. The PRESIDENT replied that experience had proved that the College did not get "duds." He had sat on the committee which considered the matter, and was satisfied that the rules were good and expedient.

Dr. ERNEST E. WARE suggested that the multiplication of diplomas was a mistake. Things were being too much divided up into little specialties. "Child health," for example, was important, but the subject was very much magnified, and people who had nothing else to do were taking up the matter at clinics. The PRESIDENT said that he would convey that expression of opinion to the Royal College of Physicians,

which, however, was satisfied that there was a place for that diploma.

Dr. C. L. BATESON had given notice of a resolution that Members, who constituted 90 per cent. of the College, should have some representation on the Council. In the absence of a quorum he could not move the resolution, but he put forward briefly the arguments in favour of the proposal.

Dr. RICHARD GILLBARD, who had intended to second the motion, suggested that it was fear of the British Medical Association which had led the Council to refuse to move in the matter. If, for example, there were eight or nine candidates for six seats, and the British Medical Association nominated six, the Association nominees would be elected and the others stand no chance. But even so, if the B.M.A. represented a majority it was entitled to the representation, and, after all, six Members on the Council would only represent one-fourth of the total number. He felt that the absence of any explanation by the Council to the representations made at successive annual meetings was discourteous.

Dr. H. E. WATKINS spoke of the great help which general practitioners might afford on the Council, and Dr. STRATFORD considered it amazing that the Council should never put forward any of the grounds on which it objected to the proposal.

Dr. ROCHE had given notice of a motion protesting against the suggestion set out in the annual report of awarding to persons not holding a medical qualification a diploma in dietetics. It could not be for the public good that a diploma should be given to unqualified persons, who, under the guise—or disguise—of a diploma from the two Royal Colleges would appear to be qualified to advise as to the diet of people in health or ill-health. How could these people detect early diabetes, kidney disease, and so on? Would these diplomates be content to play the part of skilled advisers of menus under medical direction? It might be said that they would only be engaged in mass production, supervision, and instruction with regard to dietaries in institutions. It was not the affair of the medical profession how far these super-cooks would work harmoniously with the super-chefs, but it was their affair that they should claim to intrude on the rightful domain of the physician in dictating diets.

The PRESIDENT agreed that the subject was a difficult one. It had been carefully canvassed by the Council and the committee concerned, and he did not think he was giving away any secret when he said that the opinion of the College was rather against the College giving the diploma direct. But it must be remembered that it was no good saying they were not going to have dietitians, for they already had them, and was it not better to ensure a certain standard and qualification?

The meeting ended without any resolutions being put.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Schorstein Research Fellowship

The Board of the Faculty of Medicine will make an election to the Schorstein Research Fellowship in Medical Science in June, 1936, if a candidate of sufficient merit presents himself. The Board has power, in special circumstances, to divide the Fellowship into two studentships.

The Fellowship, of the annual value of £200, will be tenable for two years, from October 1st, 1936, in any of the medical departments at Oxford, under such regulations as the Board may approve. Candidates must be graduate members (of either sex) of the University holding a registrable medical qualification, and must be under 35 years of age on October 1st, 1936. Candidates must submit their applications to the dean of the Medical School, University Museum, not later than May 4th, 1936. Each candidate must submit evidence of age, testimonials (five copies) or names of referees, statement of his career (five copies), and a statement of the department of medical science in which he proposes to research.

The electors to the Wilde Readership in Mental Philosophy have re-elected William Brown, M.D. (Christ Church), as Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy for five years from June 9th, 1936.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

At a meeting of the Senate, held on November 20th, with the Vice-Chancellor, Mr. H. L. Eason, in the chair, Dr. V. B. Wigglesworth was appointed to the University Readership in Entomology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine from October 1st.

The Services

DEATHS IN THE SERVICES

Colonel Edward Ormiston Butt, R.A.M.C. (retired), died at Bournemouth on November 12th, aged 78. He was born on March 4th, 1857, the eldest son of the late John Gillis Butt, was educated at Queen's College, Belfast, and in the School of the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland, and took the L.K.Q.C.P. and L.R.C.S.I. in 1878, also subsequently the F.R.C.S.I. in 1884 and the D.P.H. of the Irish Colleges in 1888. Entering the Army as surgeon on February 5th, 1881, he attained the rank of colonel on September 15th, 1909, was placed on half pay on September 15th, 1913, and retired on March 4th, 1914.

Lieut.-Colonel Edward Mair, Bengal Medical Service (ret.), died in London on November 22nd, aged 88. He was born on July 3rd, 1847, the son of Mr. John Mair of Ellon, Aberdeen, and was educated at Aberdeen University, where he graduated M.B., C.M., with honours, in 1872. Entering the I.M.S. as surgeon on March 31st, 1874, he became lieutenant-colonel after twenty years' service, and retired, with an extra compensation pension, on July 3rd, 1902. Most of his service was spent in the Jail Department, chiefly in the North-West, now the United Provinces, where he served as superintendent of the central jails at Meerut, Benares, and Bareilly successively, and was appointed Inspector-General of Jails in Bengal in August, 1898.

Medico-Legal

A CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER

At the Kent assizes on November 18th Dr. Robert Erskine-Gray, police surgeon at Chatham, was charged with the manslaughter of Edith Alice Forgham of Streatham, the wife of a seaman, on whom he was alleged to have performed an illegal operation. He was also charged on two other counts of unlawfully using an instrument on Mrs. Forgham and on another woman. He pleaded "Not guilty." It was stated on behalf of the prosecution that a man named Wells approached Dr. Erskine-Gray about the case of Mrs. Forgham and suggested a fee of £10 for the expected service, and that the doctor eventually agreed to a fee of £25, part of it to be paid in instalments. Dr. Erskine-Gray in the box denied the truth of the statements made against him, and that any money was passed or promised. He first saw Mrs. Forgham on the day before he admitted her to the hospital where she died. She told him that she had had a fall. He also denied the allegations relating to the case of the other woman.

After a two-day hearing Dr. Erskine-Gray was found "Not guilty" on all the counts alleged against him, and was discharged.

ALLEGED UNLAWFUL DETENTION

At Manchester assizes, before Mr. Justice Greaves-Lord, on November 18th to 20th, a case was heard in which Mr. J. C. D. Bustard of Rusholme sued Dr. Mul Raj Soni of Withington for alleged false imprisonment and assault. Mr. Bustard was at first represented by counsel, but later withdrew his instructions. Dr. Soni was represented by Mr. Lynskey, K.C., and Mr. Lustgarten, instructed by Messrs. Hempsons.

In the opening statement on behalf of the plaintiff he was described as a man aged 68 years, admittedly of highly nervous temperament, who on being taken ill with broncho-pneumonia in April, 1935, was persuaded by Dr. Soni to go into a nursing home, where it was suggested he should have a gland operation to abate his nervous trouble. Plaintiff alleged that while in the home he was regularly dosed with drugs, and was unable effectively to communicate with the outside world. Eventually, in October, after several unsuccessful attempts, he made his escape.

The defence was that there was no assault or false imprisonment, and that anything complained of was done with the acquiescence of Mr. Bustard. After the gland operation, performed at his request, a great mental change came over him, and he became violent. Counsel for the

defendant said that he would call in mental specialists who would say that Mr. Bustard was suffering from manic-depressive insanity, and that while the attacks continued he ought to be subject to control. Dr. Soni's cross-examination by Mr. Bustard led the judge to interpose several times owing to the irrelevance of the questions. The jury intimated that in their view the case should not further proceed, and agreed that what was done by the doctor was in the interests of the patient and for his protection. In a final address to the jury Mr. Bustard broke down and had to be assisted from court.

Judgement was entered for Dr. Soni on the claim against him, and also on a counterclaim for £68 15s. for nursing home fees and services, with costs. Mr. Justice Greaves-Lord said that the case, so far as he could see, was absolutely clear that Dr. Soni had done the best that any man could do in very difficult circumstances.

Medical News

The annual dinner of the Irish Medical Schools' and Graduates' Association will be held at Savoy Hotel, Strand, W.C., on Thursday, December 5th, at 7.45 p.m.

The annual dinner of the Medico-Legal Society will be held at the Holborn Restaurant on Friday, December 13th, at 7.15 p.m., with the president, Dr. C. A. Mitchell, in the chair.

At a luncheon to be given by the Governors of the Papworth Village Settlement at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London, W.1, on Wednesday, December 11th, over which H.R.H. the Duke of Kent will preside, a film, "The Story of Papworth," will be shown. It is hoped that this film will afterwards be exhibited to the public throughout the country.

The annual dinner of the Association of Certifying Factory Surgeons will be held at Langham Hotel, Portland Place, W., on Thursday, December 5th, at 8 p.m.

The annual dinner of the British Institute of Radiology and Röntgen Society will be held on Friday, December 6th, at 8 p.m., at Claridge's Hotel, Brook Street, W.

Mr. R. C. Maxwell, LL.D., will deliver a Chadwick Public Lecture on "Town and Country Planning and the Housing Act" at Inner Temple Hall, E.C., on Tuesday, December 3rd, at 8.15 p.m. Admission free, without ticket.

The Thomas Young Oration will be given by Professor Charles Fabry of the Institut d'Optique, Paris, on Friday, December 6th, at 5 p.m., at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, South Kensington, S.W.7. The title of the lecture is "Vision in Optical Instruments."

The London County Council announces that the new isolation block recently erected at Grove Hospital, Tooting, will be opened on Friday, December 6th, at 3.30 p.m. The block is a two-story building, and provides accommodation for sixty patients in single-bedded wards. The wards are separated by partly glazed screens, with duty rooms so placed that the nurses will be able to keep the patients under observation.

The annual meeting of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and Her Child will be held at Carnegie House, 117, Piccadilly, W., on Monday, December 2nd, at 2.30 p.m., when Lord Gorell will preside. Mr. H. E. Norman will give an address on "Social Work in the Courts."

The Fellowship of Medicine announces that a course in thoracic surgery will be given at Brompton Hospital from December 2nd to 7th. Two special classes have been arranged for M.R.C.P. candidates: at Brompton Hospital, chest diseases, two days a week, at 5 p.m., from December 9th to January 10th (excluding Christmas week); City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Heart and Lungs, Victoria Park, E., diseases of the heart and lungs, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 6 p.m., from December 10th to January 10th (excluding Christmas week). Full information may be obtained from the Fellowship of Medicine, 1, Wimpole Street, W.

The international post-graduate course in Röntgen-ray diagnosis and radiotherapy, arranged by the Berliner Akademie für ärztliche Fortbildung, will be held from March 9th to 14th, and not in April as previously stated.

The fourth biennial Conference on Mental Health will be held at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W., from January 23rd to 25th, 1936. It is hoped that the conference will be opened on Thursday, January 23rd, by H.R.H. the Duke of Kent, president of the National Council for Mental Hygiene. Applications for tickets and all correspondence relating to the conference should be addressed to the Secretary, The National Council for Mental Hygiene, 78, Chandos House, Palmer Street, London, S.W.

The first regular air ambulance in this country was put into service by Mrs. Victor Bruce at the Airport of London, Croydon, on November 23rd, when a demonstration was given. Within a few seconds of the sound of a gong the aeroplane, white-painted and with the Red Cross on its fuselage, was wheeled out of its hangar. A motor ambulance arrived with a member of the staff of Air Dispatch Ltd. impersonating the patient, and in twenty minutes the aeroplane was in the air. The cabin of the air ambulance is automatically heated and ventilated, and the provision of a special bed gives greater comfort to the patient than is possible with an ordinary stretcher. It will be available day and night.

The Duke of York presided at a banquet in 'Grocers' Hall on November 26th, the object being to launch the scheme for rebuilding Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital. His Royal Highness drew attention to the increased demand for accommodation for patients and training, and emphasized the urgent need of moving to a bigger area, where a modern building should be put up with all speed. Other speakers included the Lord Chief Justice and Dr. Watts Eden, past-president of the Royal Society of Medicine, who announced that the new building, the first of its kind in this country, would contain 230 public and private beds for mothers, and would cost £300,000, a striking feature being the privacy and quiet achieved and the unique facilities for teaching, training, and research, all so essential if the grave national problem of maternal mortality was to be solved. Building operations will begin in the new year.

On October 31st the Berlin Medical Society celebrated the 75th anniversary of its foundation. It was formed on October 31st, 1860, by the fusion of the Society for Scientific Medicine with the Berlin Medical Union. Its first scientific meeting was held under the presidency of Langenbeck.

The October issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* contains an article by Dr. Brooke M. Anspach of Philadelphia on the contributions of Great Britain to gynaecology and obstetrics.

The current July-September issue of the Epidemiological Report of the Health Section of the League of Nations is devoted to yellow fever.

The issue of *Le Bulletin Médical* for October 25th is devoted to the subject of sterility.

The issue of the *Chinese Medical Journal* for September is a special number dealing with medical education in China past and present.

The colleagues, friends, and pupils of the late Professor Chaffard have decided to have a medallion of him placed in the Hôpital St. Antoine, to which he was attached. Subscribers of 100 francs and over will receive a bronze copy of the medallion. Subscriptions should be sent to the treasurer, M. Georges Masson, 128, Boulevard St. Germain, Paris 6e.

The Rockefeller Foundation has made the University of Chicago a donation of 243,000 dollars, of which 168,000 is to be spent on the establishment of a psychiatric clinic.

The recent decline of the birth rate in Japan is shown by the following figures: 1932, 1,000,868 births; 1933, 927,000; 1934, 809,224.

To the list of members of the medical profession elected to the House of Commons at the recent General Election, published in our last issue at page 1008, should be added the name of Major B. H. H. Neven-Spence, R.A.M.C. (ret.), who has been returned as Member of Parliament for the Orkney and Shetland Division. Major Neven-Spence stood as a Conservative candidate, and polled 8,406 votes. His opponent received 6,180 votes.

The Prince of Wales has appointed Sir Ernest Pooley to be an honorary secretary of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London.

Letters, Notes, and Answers

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **The EDITOR, British Medical Journal, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS

Glandular Fever

"E. F. G." writes: Does any reader know of a way of shortening an attack of glandular fever in an adult with intermittent pyrexia for thirteen weeks? The use of convalescent serum is impracticable.

Black Tongue

Dr. J. LIVINGSTON (Barrow-in-Furness) writes in reply to "G. T. B." (November 23rd, p. 1029): This condition, which I suppose is due to a fungus, in two recent cases cleared up under the following treatment. (1) Mist rhei and bismuth; (2) pot. chlor. ʒj, glycerin, glycothymol aa ʒj, applied frequently to the tongue; (3) an "aldoform" tablet sucked every four hours.

Pruritus Vulvae et Ani

Dr. JAMES GARDNER (Gourock, Renfrewshire) writes: I would refer "Perplexed" (November 23rd, p. 1029) to a paper published in the *Journal* in 1931 ("Pruritus Ani," by W. P. MacArthur, August 22nd, 1931, p. 334). The author shows that threadworms are often the cause of pruritus ani. The treatment consists of daily injections of warm water containing one tablespoonful of common salt to the pint. In addition, I should recommend him to use Eustace Smith's treatment as outlined in his *Diseases of Children*—namely, order three powders, each containing 3 grains of santalin, 1/2 grain of calomel, and 5 grains of sacch. lactis, one powder every second night and followed by a big dose of castor oil in the morning; also give 5-grain doses of citrate of iron three times a day. A little mercurial or calomel ointment rubbed round the anus would destroy any possible eggs.

"KENSINGTON" writes: I would advise "Perplexed" to try a cod-liver oil preparation, unguentum desitin. I have recently found it most useful in a rather intractable case of pruritus ani secondary to piles.