The duty devolved of taking action in the matter. The fact of a regimental officer of the rank of captain having been deferred pay for past service. Even assuming that from a military and disciplinary standpoint he failed to take the right course, it is highly probable that his motive was a very proper one and that he took what seemed to him the best course under the circumstances in the interest of the service.

The ITALIANS in Abyssinia.

The gravity of the disaster that has befallen the Italian army in Abyssinia is not only recognised by Italy but by the other Powers of Europe. Abyssinia is, from topographical and climatic points of view, a very difficult country for campaigning; it ismountaneous and barren, without roads and water supplies, and the full range of climate.

The force at the disposal of King Menelik was a large and overwhelming one, and his troops had the advantage of knowing the country and of course occupied the best available positions. That the fighting was very severe, that a worthy reward of bravery was given to those who fired both on the medical officers and wounded. The losses on both sides were severe, and there is no doubt that the Shahs had a very large number of their men slain and wounded and that they were too much crippled to follow up their success. A telegram from Massowah to the Central Committee of the Red Cross Society at Rome announces that mountain ambulances have been dispatched to the Shoan camp to the aid of the wounded Italians. The news of the evacuation of Kassala has not been confirmed, and it seems unlikely that the garrison would incur the grave danger to which they would be exposed by evacuating it. Adigrat, which is still held by the Italians, bears an excellent character; the punishment meted out to him seems to be very severe under the circumstances.

Surgeon-Captain Fowler has nine years' service, and with little available water and great diurnal variations of temperature. The subject is one which certainly calls for further inquiry.

The drainage of Aldershot district in lieu of rates, and so a scheme of surface water disposal has now with approval at the War Office. The urban council had included the surface drainage of the Wellington Lines in their scheme, but the War Office think, in the circumstances named above, it is "inadvisable to include in the draft a provision for contribution from the central government."

The Times of India says: "While we bear but little of the pride of the Government of India in the detection of criminals in Bombay, the further development of the process is being prosecuted with untiring energy on the Bengal side, where, although still in its infancy, it has been gratifyingly fruitful in results. An officer in Bengal was permitted during the year to instruct the Bombay Police in the Bengal system, and another officer was sent to the North-West Provinces with the same object. In due course the Bertillon net will be spread all over the country, and we are doubly hopeful of a vast increase in the serious crime for which the habitual offender is so largely responsible."

The Treasury has still under consideration a contribution of £250,000 by the Government to the cost of the drainage of Aldershot urban district in lieu of rates, and so a scheme of surface water disposal has now with approval at the War Office. The urban council had included the surface drainage of the Wellington Lines in their scheme, but the War Office think, in the circumstances named above, it is "inadvisable to include in the draft a provision for contribution from the central government."

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By the selection of Surgeon-Major-General J. Jameson as successor to Sir W. A. MacKinnon, K.C.B., in the office of Director-General, Army Medical Staff, an additional vacancy has thus been created in the rank of Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel. Dr. Jameson would not have been due for retirement till August, 1897, whereas Surgeon-Major-General Paterson will be retired for age in July next.

Correspondence.

"Audit alteram partem."

SIRS,—I beg to forward you copies (translations) of two documents which I have received from Professor Erisman, the general secretary of the Twelfth International Medical Congress. The first relates to the languages which will be admitted in the discussions of the Congress, to which the Medical Faculty of the University of Moscow, as the language of diplomacy, and the tongue which has long served the Indian Medical Service is concerned. It appears to carry out the principle of one language to the exclusion of all others. It was found that Russian must be admitted, even if only in part. At the request of the Press Committee of the Congress and the Executive Committee felt that from a sense of delicacy (delicatissimamente) towards their foreign guests, Russian members of the Congress should refrain, as much as possible, from the use of their own tongue,
as it is so little known to foreigners. But under these conditions
who have studied at German universities or from German text-books
ground above mentioned, from using their own language. Con-
use of French alone would have been extremely irksome (st6is?'Litelnui?)t)
from ourselves the fact that we have departed, albeit from necessity,
the principal sections of the next Congress will correspond, with some
minor exceptions due in part to local conditions, to those in use on
previous occasions. A more important departure from the practice
it was thought desirable to unite certain specialties under one head.
section of "surgery," in order to show that they belong essentially to
specialties, have thought it better to join them to the general
allied to their own work as otology, laryngology, and odontology, and
general surgeons to take part in the discussions of subjects so closely
as one that will inconvenience specialists, but as a justifiable attempt to
It need scarcely be said that this innovation will not in any way what-
do away with the inevitable evil results of extreme subdivision in the
Berlin it was called "Military Sanitaria"; in Rome, "Military Med-
matters, though the most important, of course, were those of field
both the medical faculty and the executive committee, in making these
probably be raised to the addition of Hydrology and Climatology to the
practical point of view. After what has been said no objection will
of the Congress interest ed in hygiene. whether from a theoretical or a
vice versd. Consequently, this mpasme should in no way be regarded
specialists, and had in view solely the wish to emphasise the real union
branches of Practical or Applied Hygiene, which have sometimes formed
"varicose veins" (which have only comparatively recently been discovered) in all probability
comparatively recently been discovered) in all probability
I am unable to discover that throats are more unhealthv now
is one question I should like to ask before closing this letter.
 Believe me, Sira, yours very faithfully,
Salisbury.
HARCOURT COATES.
To the Editors of THE LANCET.
Sirs,—Much to my regret, Mr. Lennox Browne, by his letter in your current issue forces me to return to a subject
which, in the minds of some of our correspondents, including myself, concerns the honour of laryngology. I feel
especially incumbent on me to claim your indulgence in further encroaching on your space to render my position in
regard to this subject clear, inasmuch as Mr. H. T. Battillue, Mr. Lennox Browne, Mr. Charters Symonds, by their conjoint letter
of the amalgamation in question. On March 6th, however, Mr. 
Oakley, solicitor to the London and Counties Medical Pro-
tection Society, according to the number of London and Counties Med-
I sincerely hope and expect the combined Councils will have
no difficulty in removing.
I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
VICTOR HORSLEY,
March 11th, 1895.
President, Medical Defence Union.

"FUNCTIONAL APHONIA IN MAN; TREAT-
MENT, ETC.; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
SOLE-CALLED VARICOSE VEINS
AT THE BASE OF THE TONGUE."
To the Editors of THE LANCET.
Sirs,—I notice that most of the letters published by you
upon the above subject are written by throat specialists; I
think it not out of place therefore that your readers should
know some of the experiences of a general practitioner.
In one case a patient of mine contracted a sore
throst whilst taking a short holiday in London. He was
persecuted by his friends to consult a throat specialist; he
was told that he had varicose veins at the base of the tongue,
and that it would make it impossible for him to swallow or
“piles” in that region. The electric cautery was used, and
the result was a great deal of pain and, of course, no relief
of the throat symptoms. A few days after the patient returned
home and had a very sore throat. He was told that it was
all but two cases, one of simple aphonia
and another of simple enlarged tonsils, the electric cautery
was again applied for so-called "varicose veins." In the first
case a good result was obtained until the patient
a prolonged rest at the seaside, and in the second not until
I had removed the tonsils a month after. At the present time
I have a patient who was taken ill with a violent fit of
coughing whilst paying a visit in London. He was hurried
by his friends to consult a throat specialist; it was there
suggested that he had varicose veins at the base of the
I am unable to discover that throats are more unhealthv now
than they were twenty years ago, and presumably these
"varicose veins" have appeared and disappeared in many
throats without operative interference of any kind. There
is one question I should like to ask. Is the good old custom of
the specialist writing his
opinion, &,c., of a case falling accidentally into his hands to the
usual medical attendant gone out?
To the Editors of THE LANCET.
SIRS,—In my present position as reporter and editor of the British Medical Journal, I have the honour to say that
my letter of March 22nd was written for the purpose of giving your readers an idea of the nature of the
Amalgamation Bill. I have no desire to comment on the arguments brought forward by the London and Counties Medical Protection Society, and
I do not wish to enter into a discussion on the conduct of the officers of that Body. I only wish to make it clear that I am
entirely in favour of the Bill and that I have no desire to see it altered in any way.
VICTOR HORSLEY,
President, Medical Defence Union.