Wantage and the council of the Red Cross Society have given their sanction to this application of the funds. The society's steamer *Mayflower* returned to Assouan on Oct. 3rd to bring down the last of the sick from the front. This voyage terminates the society's work of evacuating the sick and wounded and the society's general operations will probably be wound up by the end of this month. It is very gratifying to the council—and will no doubt be to the public also—to learn that the supplemental aid rendered in the Soudan campaign by the British Red Cross Society has met with a very favourable impression in Egypt and the Soudan and has been most highly appreciated alike by the sick and wounded and the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

THE MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON.

With reference to a paragraph under the above heading in our issue of Oct. 8th stating that some dissatisfaction had been caused among naval medical officers serving with the Mediterranean fleet at the promulgation of an order that every ship is to have a surgeon on board at all hours of the day, we find that the words "a rigid enforcement of the order that every ship is to have a medical officer always on board would practically make a prisoner of the medical officer where there happened to be only one on board a small ship" are liable to misinterpretation, as under the regulations in force every ship bearing two or more medical officers has always to retain one on board, who ministers to the medical requirements of the smaller ships which bear only one or no medical officer; in the former case (that is, when there is only one medical officer) he can take his leave daily except on the occasions when he assumes the medical guard equally with the officers of other ships.

THE BLANE GOLD MEDAL.

The adjudication of the Blane Gold Medal founded for Medical Officers of the Royal Navy has recently been made by the Presidents of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of London and Surgeons of England and the Director-General of the Medical Department of the Navy, and medals have been awarded to Surgeon Francis H. A. Clayton, R.N., H.M.S. *Thrush*, and Staff-Surgeon Percy W. Bassett-Smith, R.N., H.M.S. *Magdala*.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT COLLEGE: AN APPEAL FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND TREASURER.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The growth of Epsom College within the last decade has surpassed the most sanguine hopes of those interested in its prosperity, and it has now taken its place among the most successful public schools of the country. The distinctions won by pupils of the College at the Universities and medical schools and the success achieved by them in various walks of life, afford convincing evidence of the excellence of the education given within its walls. The large share of academic honours which has fallen to the foundation scholars is a gratifying proof of the efficiency with which the College fulfils one of the chief purposes of its founder. The steadily increasing progress of the College is, however, in danger of receiving a check from insufficiency of funds. Besides providing a first-class education practically free of cost for fifty sons of medical men and exhibitions for several others the institution gives pensions to fifty aged medical men or the widows of medical men. Moreover, in connexion with the College there are other annuities, some of which are for the aged daughters of medical men, and there are also nine presentations to St. Anne's Schools for their orphan daughters. We who, with our colleagues of the governing body, take a deep interest in the welfare of this most necessary and useful institution, therefore earnestly appeal to every member of the medical profession to contribute to its support. When we state that a sum of more than £6000 is expended each year, barely one half of which is at present contributed by the medical profession, it will be granted that the profession does not do all that might reasonably be

expected of it for the maintenance of what may justly be called its most important charity. We are confident that these facts only need to be mentioned to ensure a satisfactory response to our appeal. Proverbially charitable to all mankind, members of the profession are not likely to be indifferent to the necessities of their own brethren.

It may be well here to correct an impression which appears to exist in many quarters that the College is solely a charitable establishment intended for the sons of medical men and giving only a narrow scientific training. The school consists for the most part of paying pupils, and these and the foundationers are on a footing of absolute equality both in the class-rooms and in the playing fields. The education is of the most liberal character and is directed not so much to the preparation of the boys for any particular profession as to the development of their intellectual powers in a way which will enable them when the time comes to apply them readily and successfully to the acquisition of special knowledge of any kind. The soundness of the literary training is shown by the fact that in recent years several classical scholarships have been won at the Universities by Epsom boys.

We wish it, however, to be clearly understood that the funds for which we are appealing will not be applied in aid of those of the scholars who are paying pupils. That large section of the school is self-supporting, and here we would only point out to the profession that the numbers of our scholars have been steadily increasing, that more accommodation has been recently provided, and that by sending their sons to the College they will not only secure them a sound first-class education at a moderate cost, but will indirectly assist in the education and maintenance of those who are less fortunate—namely, the foundation scholars and the pensioners.

Like other great schools of England Epsom has its "foundation," but, unfortunately, instead of being like these older schools secure in the possession of a sufficient endowment Epsom has mainly to depend for the purposes of its foundation on a precarious annual income.

It is for the charitable side of the institution (the foundation scholars and the pensioners) that we appeal to the *esprit de corps* of the medical profession and to the generosity of the public which is under a debt of obligation to that profession. Unless a larger measure of public support can be secured than can be counted upon at present the Council will be compelled to make a considerable reduction in their expenditure for charitable purposes. This course, entailing as it necessarily would much privation on many deserving persons, they are most anxious to avoid. It is not much they ask for. An annual subscription of 1 guinea entitles to the privileges of a governor, but smaller subscriptions or donations will be gratefully received. If each member of the profession would give 10s., or even 5s., a year for a very few years the position of the pensioners and foundation scholars would be placed on a secure financial basis and the Council would be able to improve the school and extend its usefulness still more. We are fully aware that during the last year or two the calls upon every class of the community for contributions to charitable objects of all kinds have been unusually numerous, but we venture to think that it would be difficult to find an institution which, having regard either to the value of the work which it is doing or to the merits of the persons for whom it is done, has stronger claims on the profession and on the public than the Royal Medical Benevolent College, Epsom.

Subscriptions may be sent to our honorary local secretaries; to the bankers, Messrs. Barclay and Co., 19, Fleet-street, E.C.; to Dr. Holman, the treasurer, 26, Gloucester-place, Portman-square, W.; or to the secretary, at the office, 37, Soho-square, W.

We are, Sirs, your faithful servants,

J. FAYRER, Chairman of the Council;

C. HOLMAN, Treasurer;

J. BERNARD LAMB, Secretary.

Oct. 18th, 1898.

"THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BACTERIOLOGY TO COMMERCE."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—My attention has just been called to an important leading article on this subject in THE LANCET of Oct. 1st. In it appreciation is only rightly expressed for the pioneer and admirably organised work carried out by Professor Delépine