Submarine Miners: The Severn Division: Surgeon-Captain A. Rees to be Surgeon-Major.

Rifle: 2nd Volunteer Battalion the King's (Liverpool Regiment): Surgeon-Captain N. F. Roberts to be Surgeon-Major. 4th Volunteer Battalion the Devonshire Regiment: Surgeon-Captain F. B. Manning resigns his commission. 1st Volunteer Battalion the Essex Regiment: Surgeon-Captain St. C. B. Shadwell to be Surgeon-Major. 14th Middlesex (Inns of Court): Surgeon-Captain H. M. Ramsay to be Surgeon-Major; Surgeon-Lieutenant F. C. Wallis to be Surgeon-Captain.

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS (VOLUNTEERS).

The London Companies: Captain H. D. Buss resigns his commission.

VOLUNTEER INFANTRY, BRIGADE BEARER COMPANY.

South Yorkshire: Surgeon-Captain W. K. Clayton, from 1st Volunteer Battalion the King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), to be Surgeon-Captain, and to command under paragraph 55A Volunteer Regulations.

Surgeon-Lieutenant F. J. Sadler, from the 2nd Volunteer Battalion the York and Lancaster Regiment, to be Surgeon-Lieutenant.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS' DECORATION.

The Volunteer Officers' Decoration has been conferred upon Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Lawrance Stephenson of the Woolwich Companies, Royal Army Medical Corps (Volunteers).

OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM.

The *Archives de Médecine Navale*, an official journal published "by order of the Minister of Marine," contains in its June issue a short article in which Dr. Astius Castellan, who is a naval medical officer of the first class, finds fault very unreservedly with the convalescent dépôt for French colonial troops which has been established on the island of Porquerolles. This sanatorium, says the outspoken critic, having been in existence since January, 1898, ought by this time to be organised on a solid basis, but such is far from being the case. In the first place the site that has been pitched on is entirely unsuitable for the purpose. "In this marvellous island," continues Dr. Castellan, "there are several places where the dépôt could have been established under far better conditions, amidst the health-bestowing emanations from the pine groves, but instead of that it stands quite close to the village, on a bare hillock destitute of verdure and entirely unshaded. The rooms, professing to accommodate 16 convalescent men in each, are overcrowded; the kitchen is only a kitchen in name, being filthy, full of cobwebs, and shockingly furnished; the latrine, unprovided with water-supply and very imperfectly cleansed, is placed to windward of the cantonment; there are no drains properly so-called, only a few shallow trenches where putrescible matter lies stagnant and rotting in the sun; the pharmacy and dressing-room is so small and dark that it is impossible to examine or dress a patient in it; finally, in the immediate neighbourhood there is a village of some 250 inhabitants in which there are no fewer than seven liquor shops, some of them being suspected of harbouring improper characters.

THE OVERCROWDED TRANSPORTS.

It is not easy to exaggerate the grave importance of the allegations that have been made regarding the disgraceful state of the transports conveying the colonial troops from South Africa to their various destinations. The affair has very naturally and properly given rise to a good deal of feeling in the colonies. A Royal Commission has been appointed, and if the charges that have been advanced are substantiated we can only trust that the blame will be brought home to those concerned.

THE WELSH HOSPITAL.

A handsome brass tablet to the memory of six members of the staff of the Welsh Hospital who died during the recent war in South Africa was unveiled in St. David's Cathedral on August 14th by Lord Penrhyn. The names on the tablet are those of Professor A. W. Hughes, Professor T. Jones, Dr. H. Davies, T. R. Eames (dresser), Marion Lloyd (matron), and Florence L. Sage (nursing sister).

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE DUTIES OF A MEDICAL MAN AND THE LAW OF LIBEL.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have read with interest the letter of Dr. Shaw-Mackenzie on the above but must confess that I think he has taken too gloomy a view in respect of the dangers run by medical men in the particular instance he quotes. He states in his letter that publication of a wife's disease to the husband would undoubtedly be sufficient to cause an action to lie against the medical attendant and suggests that an alteration in the law of libel is desirable. It is quite clear from the recorded cases that such a statement made *bonâ fide* by a medical man would be held to be "privileged." Only lately in a case held at Leeds Assizes the learned judge extended the "privilege" in this respect not only to the communication made to the husband but also to the employer and also to the housekeeper in whose employment and under whose domestic care the wife was. Further than this "privilege" can hardly be expected to extend.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

A. GEORGE BATEMAN,

August 18th, 1902.

General Secretary, Medical Defence Union.

PATENT FOODS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have read with much interest the valuable and exhaustive address by Dr. R. Hutchison on Patent Foods published in THE LANCET of July 5th (p. 1). There is one point, however, in respect of somatose that is worthy of note. Dr. Hutchison, after stating that somatose is "a good albumose food and a very rich one, containing 80 per cent. of digested proteid," goes on to say that "if it is given in anything like large quantities it is apt to produce diarrhoea and for that reason its use is seriously restricted in practice."

I do not think that this is a universal experience. I have used somatose more or less since 1897 and I have scarcely ever found that it has produced any diarrhoea, and I am anxious to say a good word for it. I think that it is more than probable that the mode of administration has a great deal to do with the results obtained. It is imperative, in the exhibition of somatose, that it should be administered at first in small doses, but frequently, three, four, or more times in 24 hours, gradually increasing every few days until the full dose is obtained. Another thing is also essential—that is, that it should be in *complete* solution before being swallowed. The only cases in which I have seen slight diarrhoea in the use of somatose are those in which this precaution has been neglected and the substance has been lumpy. I have given somatose in adults in quantities of from three to six drachms per day, and to children from 45 to 90 grains, without any unpleasant effects and with the best results.

In July, 1899, I wrote a small brochure on somatose which appeared in the *Scalpel* during that month. On reference to it I find that I have made no mention of diarrhoea, but, as there stated, it has done me yeoman's service, the great increase of body-weight being astonishing, as much as from two to three pounds having been put on in seven days. Dr. J. L. Landau in *Die Heilkunde*, September, 1898, quotes a series of cases in which he exhibited somatose and he states: "The manner of preparing this solution is deserving of very special consideration. Into a wineglass containing a tablespoonful of water or other medium the desired quantity of somatose is poured and the resulting paste stirred for a few minutes until a *complete solution* is obtained." He further states that when given to children in the following manner—one gramme for the first three days and then increased up to three grammes in eight days—no diarrhoea has occurred. He has also used it in gastro-intestinal cases, where there was persistent loss of appetite, diarrhoea, and vomiting, from one to five grammes of somatose being given at first, gradually increased to eight grammes. As a result, by the second day the stools had

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON.—

In the list of gentlemen admitted on July 31st as Members of the College, published in THE LANCET of August 9th, p. 396, the following name was accidentally omitted:—Andrew Elliot, M.A., M.D. Edin.