themselves to abstain from the use of alcohol, except under medical advice.

2. That the committee to be appointed at this meeting be requested to consider the question whether a University rifle club can be formed with advantage, and whether any other action can be taken in substitution for such a club, or in addition to it; and, further, that the members of the teaching staff of the University and the affiliated colleges pledge themselves to encourage volunteering among the members of the University by such means as may be approved by the committee to be formed.

3. Though many special services have already been performed by officers of the University at the invitation of Ministers, it is desirable to make it more definitely understood that such services are available, and therefore that the council be asked to approach the Federal and State Governments with the suggestion that the members of the staff of the University would be willing to offer their services, as far as compatible with the continuance of University work, to aid or supplement wherever possible the work of the scientific, technical, or professional branches of the Government departments during the war on any matters connected with Imperial defence in which their assistance may be useful.

4. That this meeting is of opinion that public lectures under the auspices of the University should be given on the subject of the war, its causes, its importance to Australia, and the political and other problems which will arise from it; and that the council be requested to give its support to this course.

5. That the administration of the above resolutions be placed in the hands of a representative committee, with power to appoint special committees.

Concerning the first resolution I am further instructed to state that, whilst every member of the staffs was informed of the meeting, which was in consequence largely attended, no attempt has been made to force the resolution upon those who were unable to attend.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

RICHARD J. A. BERRY,

Honorary Secretary, Executive University War Committee.
Melbourne, May 8th, 1915.

THE WAR AND THE MEDICAL PERSONNEL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Tennant's statement in Parliament that at present no more surgeons are needed either at home or abroad gives us time to ascertain the best means of supplying the large number which will be required shortly. In the *Times* "History of the War," No. 41, p. 74, the statement is made that after nine months of war there is still a shortage of 2000 surgeons. This is about the number whose services, according to Mr. Tennant, had been declined. If there was a shortage, why were the offers of 1900 applicants rejected? If there was no shortage, why does the writer of history say there was? The question is, has the writer of history knowledge of facts and reliable figures of which Mr. Tennant is ignorant? The answer is in the negative. For the credit of the profession and of history let it be put on record that there was not a shortage of surgeons after nine months of war; but, even if there were, it was from no lack of offers.

With your permission, I propose briefly to review the present and future situation. A good deal of solicitude has been expressed, by those not conversant with general practice, lest there should be a future shortage of doctors. The truth is that through the passing of the Insurance Act, the same population will not support anything like the same number of medical men; and it would probably be a good thing for the profession and for the public, if no students, of either sex, entered at the schools of medicine for the next five years.

In addition most patients will be financially crippled by the war and doctors will be the first to suffer and the last to be paid. In the present situation, it is certain every medical man would offer his services if our wounded wanted him, provided that he had some guarantee that his practice would be safeguarded in his absence. The only thing clear from the various schemes advanced in the interest of the absentee is that there will be a good deal of friction or even litigation on his return.

Now, Sir, the one authority capable of reducing this friction to a minimum is the General Medical Council. The service of the Council would be *pro patria*, and if undertaken would induce quite enough medical men to offer themselves for the succour of our sick and wounded. The expense might well be met by a Government grant.

If the General Medical Council issued a short scheme equitable to the absentee and to the man who carried on the practice, and at the same time agreed to mediate in case of dispute, there would be an ample supply of military surgeons. No other body has the requisite moral force behind it. At present certain reserve battalions of Territorials seem to be short of surgeons, but this is work that can be done by civilian doctors in the districts where the troops are stationed.

The pay of the Territorial surgeon is a strange anomaly. In the past, in many cases, he has given money and much time, with his only reward a good-natured derision. He now gets less than two-thirds the pay of any recently qualified young man who likes to join Kitchener's army. Mr. Harold Baker stated in the House that there is no hardship, since the bargain was made with open eyes. The inference is that the penalty for patriotism is 9s. a day. History will do more justice to the Territorial, for it will say he saved Calais, perhaps England.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Formby, June 21st, 1915.

ARTHUR C. WILSON.

"MILITARY HONOURS."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With regard to the letter appearing under this title in your issue of June 12th may I suggest to Mr. W. H. Clayton-Greene that perhaps time might have been saved if instead of giving his certificate to the registrar he had first of all written to the coroner stating the circumstances of the man's death, and at the same time intimating his willingness to give a certificate of death should the coroner approve. By the same post the War Office could be notified of the death and requested to take the funeral in hand. There is a point here, of course, which should not be overlooked, that some coroners prefer all communications to be made through the police or through their own officer. Then, again, it was natural that the coroner should want to know of any relative for the purpose of identification. The War Office then having been apprised that a military funeral had to be provided could have forthwith ordered a coffin from the undertaker, and the latter would begin his work at once, probably the day after death. It would surely also be the duty of the undertaker to arrange all the details of the funeral, including the services of the clergyman and the time and place, and in this connexion he would probably like to consult with the sister mentioned in Mr. Clayton-Greene's letter. Meanwhile the coroner is considering whether he can allow Mr. Clayton-Greene to give a certificate of death in the

usual way. He decides yes, and straight away says so. Mr. Clayton-Greene gives his certificate, all for nothing, on the statutory form: the sister, or the nurse who witnessed the death, or the undertaker conveys the same to the registrar of the district or subdistrict. Finally, the registrar makes a copy in his register and also makes a duplicate copy for the undertaker, which is handed to the clergyman at the graveside.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Weston-super-Mare, June 17th, 1915.

R. A. EARLE.

"GROWING PAINS" AND RHEUMATISM?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I think Dr. M. H. Williams, in the interesting paper on Rheumatism in Children appearing in your issue of June 19th, rather overstates the case when she advances the opinion that aching of the legs in children is almost always due to rheumatism—prefacing this remark by stating that by rheumatism she means infection by a specific organism, and following it up by saying that the riddle of treatment is unanswerable. There is no doubt but that her words contain much truth. Dr. Williams, however, makes no mention of what in my opinion is (in this locality at any rate) the commonest cause of "growing pains," and that is the absorption of toxins through adenoid vegetations. It is quite extraordinarily common in my experience to find children with a tendency to fidgets, a constantly raised temperature up to 99°5–100° F., and a muffling of the first cardiac sound in which the whole state can be completely altered by removal of adenoids. I particularly wish to state I do not mean obvious adenoid cases with obstructive signs. Careful examination will almost certainly show a few soft and slightly enlarged cervical glands, but with this exception the signs are general and not local. Treatment by salicylic acid compounds causes no more than a temporary lowering of temperature, and in the cases I have in mind the tuberculin skin tests are negative—both human and bovine.

I have no means of knowing whether the toxin absorbed is that of the specific organism of Poynton and Paine; but if it is, the riddle of treatment can be very readily solved, which is certainly not the experience of most of us with that organism or one closely allied to it.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Chiswick, W., June 21st, 1915.

H. O. BUTLER.

THE POSITION OF SURGEONS TO TRANSPORTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Various companies are advertising for ships' surgeons and offering the sum of £15 to £20 per month as salary to those who act in this capacity. One ship was chartered for transport work and the company it belonged to could not procure a surgeon, although they were prepared to offer £500 per annum. Eventually the company arranged with a military medical officer to act as ship's surgeon at the rate of £1 per day. Personally I have "signed on" at the rate of £15 per month, and so, as I am in distant parts, do not see much chance of a remedy. Further, there is, I believe, a war bonus paid by the Admiralty to every member of the crew for war risks; but so far I have been unable to ascertain from this company, a well-known line, whether any proportion is to be awarded to the surgeon.

Besides the important matter of pay, intending surgeons in the Mercantile Marine and passenger ships ought to investigate accommodation provided for them. I berth next to the cook, the barman, and the head waiter in the "slums" of the ship. There is plenty of other work for medical men to do now, and the present is a good opportunity of securing better conditions all round for the doctor in the Mercantile Marine.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

June 23rd, 1915.

"M."

PROLONGED ANÆSTHESIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Which is the longest period over which an anæsthetic has been known to be given for one operation? I had just recently a case of a man, aged 82, operated upon for malignant growth of the pelvic colon, which took exactly four hours, and therefore the anæsthetic lasted just a few minutes over this time. The patient stood the anæsthetic very well, did not vomit after it, and six hours after the operation was finished he was able to converse with his friends.

The anæsthetic I used throughout the operation was ether, with the exception of a few minutes at the beginning, when chloroform was used. No morphia or atropine was used beforehand, and it is extraordinary that he has not been troubled by any catarrh of the lungs or excess of secretion.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

June 19th, 1915.

M.B., B.S.

Medical News.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.—The following candidates have been approved for the degree of M.D.:—

J. S. B. Stopford (awarded gold medal) and G. C. Mort.

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.—At the last meeting of the committee 28 cases received grants amounting to £294, and two applicants were elected to vacant annuities of £20 each. The following is a summary of the cases relieved:—

Daughter, aged 47, of M.R.C.S. Eng. who practised at Clifton, Bristol. Applicant completely incapacitated owing to complications following operation for hernia. At present in a convalescent home. Lost use of both legs. Prior to illness earned a living by acting as children's nurse. Voted £10 in two instalments.—Daughter, aged 63, of L.R.C.S. Glasg. who practised at Liverpool. For a number of years acted as matron to a private mental home, but has not been able to save. A younger matron is now required, and applicant must try to obtain other work and finds it difficult at her age. Voted £12 in 12 instalments and referred to the Guild.—Widow, aged 34, of L.S.A. Lond. who died in January of this year, and had acted as locum-tenent in various places. Left the applicant totally unprovided for with three children ages 12 to 17 years. Hopes to obtain some employment. Voted £10 in two instalments.—Widow, aged 73, of L.S.A. Lond. who practised at Bermondsey, and died in 1887. Until the outbreak of war was able to make a living by taking in boarders at her house on the South Coast. All the August and autumn bookings last year were cancelled, and has had to close up the house temporarily. Lives in own house, which is heavily mortgaged. Voted £15.—M.R.C.S. Eng., aged 58, who had practised in the Midlands, and now suffering from total paralysis of the right side and unable to speak or write. Only income a pension of £30 per annum, and a little from the sale of his practice. His wife has to devote all her attention to him, and the three children are unable to help financially. Voted £2, and referred to the Guild for report.—Widow, aged 70, of M.D. St. And. who practised in Pall Mall, S.W., but was incapacitated for some years before death in May of this year, and was a pensioner of the Fund, and received assistance from another charity. Applicant left entirely unprovided for. Voted £2, and referred to the Guild for report.—Daughter, aged 66, of M.R.C.S. Eng. who practised in London. Has earned a living as a teacher of languages, but cannot obtain pupils at present. Lives with two sisters, who try to earn a living by keeping a boarding-house, but not successfully. One of the sisters also receiving a grant from the Fund. Voted £12 in 12 instalments and referred to the Guild for report.—Widow, aged 54, of M.R.C.S. Eng. who died in 1897 and practised at Stockton-on-Tees. Left totally unprovided for with two young children to educate and keep. Has earned a little by needlework and has acted as caretaker. Eyesight now very bad. Daughter