

Obituary.

ALFRED HUME GRIFFITH, M.D. EDIN., D.P.H. CAMB.,
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LINGFIELD COLONY FOR EPILEPTICS.

Dr. Alfred Hume Griffith, whose death occurred at the early age of 43 years, was second son of the late Rev. Edward Moule Griffith, and received his preliminary education at Persse School, Cambridge, and at Totnes and Bedford Grammar Schools. The missionary spirit took hold of him in the earlier years of his manhood; and it was in order to fit himself to be of service to others that he decided to enter the medical profession. With this intent he matriculated at Edinburgh in 1893, graduating M.B., Ch.B. six years later. In 1900 he married Mary, daughter of George Welchman, of Cullompton, and went out to take temporary charge of the Persian medical mission work at Ispahan. His pioneer work in Kerman, relinquished with reluctance on account of his wife's ill-health, was successful in breaking down hostile fanaticism of a kind which has often cost the lives of those who faced it. After a year in charge of the Medical Mission at Yezd Dr. Griffith finally left Persia in 1903, and after a short furlough, largely spent in study at Edinburgh (during which he took his M.D. degree), he offered himself for work in Palestine, and was appointed to the C.M.S. Hospital at Nablus, obtaining, while passing through Constantinople, the Turkish certificate enabling him to practise medicine throughout the Turkish Empire. In 1904 he moved on to Mosul in Mesopotamia and founded a hospital, where, assisted only by native men whom he himself had trained, he performed a large amount of surgical work. A collection of urinary calculi was presented by him to the Museum at Cambridge. But his strength proving unequal to the great strain thus made upon it, he was invalided home in 1908.

After a period of further study, during which he obtained the Cambridge D.P.H., Dr. Griffith was appointed, in October, 1910, superintendent and medical officer of Lingfield Colony for Epileptics, one of the several homes established by the National Union for Christian Social Service. Although impaired health necessarily restricted his energies, he brought to this task a union of qualities exactly suited for the successful handling and treatment in colony life of a malady and temperament admittedly presenting peculiar difficulties. Himself of athletic instincts—he was an Edinburgh “blue” in football, and when abroad never so happy as in the saddle—he saw to it that his patients as far as possible lived an open-air life, abundantly supplied with occupation, recreation, and hobbies.

He was an omnivorous reader and kept himself abreast of medical research, his own powers of observation being displayed in the contributions he made to medical literature, including articles on Hereditary Factors in Epilepsy (1911), Mental Tests in Defective Children (1916), and a chapter on the Epileptic in Kelynak's “Human Derelicts.” He also wrote the chapters on Medical Missions in his wife's book, “Behind the Veil in Persia and Turkish Arabia.” Recently Dr. Griffith had been much occupied with the institutional treatment and training of discharged sailors and soldiers suffering from epilepsy by arrangement with the Ministry of Pensions. Experience has shown that this is a specially difficult problem, many of the men failing to realise their disability, and being, not unnaturally, impatient of prolonged treatment. But Dr. Griffith knew his men; he possessed the technical skill requisite to obtain insight into their individual peculiarities, and often into the origin of the latter; and his sympathy with them and determination to restore them to a normal civilian life engendered, besides affection, a loyalty to régime that explains much of his success. Apart from his special work, Dr. Griffith had many projects in view for the development of the Lingfield Colony's sphere of usefulness, and the carrying of these into effect will be the best tribute to his memory. He leaves a widow and a young daughter.

At their meeting on Oct. 8th the Portsmouth town council resolved unanimously to raise the salary of their medical officer of health, Dr. A. Mearns Fraser, from £800 to £1000 per annum “in view of the satisfactory manner in which he has performed his duties during a period of 23 years.”

Correspondence.

“Audi alteram partem.”

WAR EMERGENCY FUND OF THE R.M.B.F.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am very glad that Sir W. Watson Cheyne has drawn attention (THE LANCET, Oct. 12th) to the urgent need of providing without delay help for the members of our profession who, on returning from the war, will have to start in practice anew. Some provision for the financial need has already been made. Two years ago the War Emergency Fund of the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund was started, and about £20,000 have already been collected and temporarily invested. This Fund has been raised to help those who are in financial difficulties as the result of their war service, and to assist them in re-starting in practice. It is obviously most desirable not to duplicate funds of this kind, and I venture to urge all those who are moved by Sir W. Watson Cheyne's appeal to rally to the support of the War Emergency Fund and send subscriptions to the treasurer, addressed to 11, Chandos-street, Cavendish-square, W. 1.

It is impossible to tell what amount of money will be needed; it is certain that we shall want much more than we have at present, and we are appealing now for a further £10,000. When our colleagues returning from the front need help to resume their civil work they will want it promptly and it must be ample in amount. We must be prepared with large funds, and there is no time to lose if we are to be ready for the emergency.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ALFRED PEARCE GOULD,

Chairman of the War Emergency Fund Committee.
Queen Anne-street, W., Oct. 13th, 1918.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The American Commission for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in France (the Rockefeller Foundation) has organised a very successful campaign against tuberculosis among the civil population in France by means of dispensaries, caravans, lectures, cartoons, and similar propaganda. Professor Selskar M. Gunn, one of the Associate Directors of the above Commission, will give a lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, at the annual meeting of the National Association for the Prevention of Consumption and Other Forms of Tuberculosis, on Tuesday, Oct. 29th, at 4 P.M., in the Large Hall, 20, Hanover-square, W. He will show the methods the Commission is using in France, which should be very interesting to us in this country.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should apply to the secretary of the National Association for the Prevention of Consumption and Other Forms of Tuberculosis, 20, Hanover-square, W. 1, for a ticket.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

J. J. PERKINS,

Oct. 15th, 1918.

Hon. Secretary.

MEDICAL MEN IN PARLIAMENT: SIR WILMOT HERRINGHAM'S CANDIDATURE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I see that a meeting has been held, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Morris, to promote the candidature of medical men in the coming General Election. It will be important to have doctors in Parliament in view of the many questions which will press for attention concerning the prevention of disease and of infant mortality, sanitary housing, the treatment of the sick, and the establishment of disabled soldiers in suitable positions. The creation of a Ministry of Health and the proper position of medical advisers in local administration are equally important topics. It has been pointed out that the Universities are specially suitable for our candidates, since they are, or should be, more free than other constituencies from a narrow party spirit.

On these grounds I have accepted an invitation to stand for the University of London at the coming election.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

W. P. HERRINGHAM,

Major-General (Temp.); Consulting Physician to G.H.Q., France, Oct. 11th, 1918. the Forces in France.