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OF

## MEDICAL SCIENCE.

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### PART I.

#### ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

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ART. XIII.—*The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and the War.*<sup>a</sup> By F. CONWAY DWYER, M.D., Univ. Dubl.; President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; Surgeon to the Richmond Hospital, Dublin; Professor of Surgery, R.C.S.I.

GENTLEMEN,—Upon behalf of the College authorities and myself I desire to extend a cordial welcome to those who have joined the Medical School of our College. The number who have presented themselves for the preliminary examination has been exceptionally large—a very satisfactory proof and recognition of the high place the College holds as a centre of medical education. The most convincing evidence of merit that any educational institution can give is its continued ability to attract students without the help of adventitious aid of any kind. We make no jealous complaint of the generous endowments extended by the State to our competitors, but we do trust and hope that in the future our College may be fortunate enough to obtain the State recognition which it has long since deserved.

<sup>a</sup> An Address delivered at the opening of the Session, 1915-1916, to the Students of the Schools of Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, on Friday, October 15, 1915.

The opening of the College Session in former years was considered a suitable occasion for addressing some **general** observations to the students for their guidance in their studies, and, indeed, upon their conduct in general. To my mind the need for this practice no longer exists. The great change for the better in the organisation of medical studies, the holding of term examinations, &c., call for continuous study and application. The whole question of medical education and training has been the subject of great study on the part of those responsible for the teaching of students of Medicine. Greater stress has been laid upon the need for a better scientific education, especially in the matter of Physics and Chemistry, Physiology and Biology. Modern medical work is developing on lines whose scientific exactitude and precision can be appreciated only by the student who has had a proper training in allied subjects. The day for empiricism is passing away, and it is simply impossible for the man whose scientific training is deficient to grasp the essential principle which constitutes the basis of modern views and treatment.

#### THE SHADOW OF THE WAR.

The Winter Session opens to-day under the shadow of the great war whose ultimate end is not yet in sight, and on the result of which issues—the most vital and momentous—depend. For us, defeat means the ruin of our Empire and national humiliation and suffering beyond conception, and for our Allies—France especially—extinction as a European Power. To prevent such a catastrophe the Empire must strain its resources in men and money to the very utmost, and shrink from no sacrifice which may be necessary. Germany has proclaimed that her aim is world-dominance, and to achieve this ambition she has brought **into** existence the most formidable military machine ever known. For many years her national energies and resources have been devoted to preparing for war on a gigantic scale, and she has contrived to maintain, and

with great success, complete secrecy as to her designs upon the world's peace. Whether this was due to German subtlety or our guilelessness makes very little matter now. Germany has amazed and horrified the world by her method of waging war. I do not refer so much to the proven brutalities and savageries deliberately carried out in Belgium and elsewhere as to the views callously admitted and advocated by their military and public men. The wholesale repudiation by Germany of the principles and practices that centuries of civilisation have effected towards humanising warfare demonstrate in the most sinister way the essential depravity and perversion of the German mind. That the world of thought and science is under great obligation to Germany is perfectly true, and one of the deplorable results of the war will be the abiding horror left of German methods and ideals.

#### THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

The great number of troops now in the fighting line, and the consequent percentage of casualties, especially after the recent operations, have thrown a great strain upon the Royal Army Medical Corps. Thanks to the efficient organisation of the corps, effected long before the war broke out, and largely due to the efforts of Sir Alfred Keogh—one of our Honorary Fellows—the needs of the situation were sufficiently met. It is a very great comfort to reflect upon the excellent arrangements made for the treatment of the wounded. The entire machinery for their immediate treatment and transport to a base hospital have notably diminished the suffering and helped the convalescence of our men. The usual scourges of armies in the field, such as typhoid, dysentery, &c., have claimed in this campaign very few victims, thanks to the methods of sanitation and isolation systematically employed.

#### THE COLLEGE RECORD.

Now, gentlemen, it is a source of justifiable pride to us to know that our College has not been behind in aiding in

this beneficent work. I have already drawn attention to the fact that in proportion to our numbers we have sent to the front in one capacity or the other a very large number of our men, many of whom have signally distinguished themselves. As you know, we have inaugurated in the College a Roll of Honour—a permanent record of the services rendered by our students in the war; and that Roll is an ever-increasing one; we are justly proud of the patriotic spirit displayed by our licentiates and students. They, at all events, are free from all reproach in this great crisis. As you know, our students have collected a sum of money for the equipment of a ward in the Castle Hospital, and very shortly this ward will be opened. It is proposed to have the College Arms displayed in the ward. This happy suggestion comes from Mr. Miller, whose resourcefulness and fertility in promoting every object that may redound to the credit of the College are beyond all praise.

#### DISTINGUISHED LICENTIATES.

I have delayed you quite long enough. I shall conclude by reading to you two extracts from despatches in which two of our Licentiates find most honourable mention—Captain Ernest Cotton Deane and Surgeon-General O'Donnel :—

“ Captain Ernest Cotton Deane, Royal Army Medical Corps (attached 2nd Battalion the Leicestershire Regiment). For conspicuous gallantry on 22nd August, 1915, near Fauquissart. A standing patrol one hundred and twenty yards in front of our line was bombed by the enemy at about 10 p.m., the only notification being two loud bomb explosions. Captain Deane, without any knowledge of the enemy's strength, at once got over the parapet, and ran by himself to the spot under rifle and machine gun fire. Finding four wounded men, he returned for stretchers, and got them back into safety. This is not the first time that Captain Deane's gallantry under fire has been brought to notice.”

Another of our men mentioned with honour is Surgeon-

General T. J. O'Donnel. In the course of his despatch, Field-Marshal Sir John French says :—

“ These results are due to the skill and energy which have characterised in a marked degree the work of the Royal Army Medical Corps throughout the campaign, under the able supervision of Surgeon-General T. J. O'Donnel, D.S.O., Deputy Director-General, Medical Services.”

He is mentioned again in the following message :—

“ I have already commented upon the number and severity of the casualties in action which have occurred in the period under report. Here once again I have to draw attention to the excellent work done by Surgeon-General O'Donnel and his officers. No organisation could excel the efficiency of the arrangements—whether in regard to time, space, care, and comfort, or transport—which are made for the speedy evacuation of the wounded.”

You cannot do better than follow these noble examples. I know that some of those who have just now been admitted Licentiates of the College propose to enter the R.A.M.C. It is the best course they could adopt. There is an urgent need for medical men in the Army, and could young medical men find anywhere a more ennobling field for their energies and professional skill than in helping those gallant men who are daily facing death and mutilation in defence of all that we hold most dear?

#### LOSSES OF THE SCHOOL.

I regret to say that our School has been deprived, through ill-health, of the services of two of our most capable teachers—we have lost the valuable help of Professor Lapper, who held the Chair of Chemistry for over twenty-five years, and who during that long period fulfilled its duties with the most exemplary devotion and success. I sincerely trust the well-deserved leisure he can now enjoy may restore his health. Most unfortunately, Professor White also has been compelled through failing

health to resign the duties of the important Chair of Pathology. Professor White as a teacher did much to enhance the reputation of the College. He was a strenuous worker, and impressed those whom he taught with something of his own enthusiasm, and that is the best possible qualification a teacher can possess. On behalf of the School and myself we earnestly trust that he may be restored to health. It is with keen regret we see this severance from active work, but these things are inevitable as the years pass by.

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ART. XIV.—*Further Experience in the Use of Salvarsan.* By H. CARSON SMYTH, L.R.C.P. & S.I.; Civil Surgeon at the Military Hospital, Portobello Barracks, Dublin.

IN the September number of this Journal for 1914, Vol. CXXXVIII., page 183, Dr. G. E. Pepper and myself stated our experience in the use of salvarsan in the treatment of eighty patients suffering from syphilis at Dr. Steevens' Hospital.

At that time we gave it as our opinion that the most satisfactory results were obtained by giving three intravenous injections of salvarsan at intervals of six weeks, combined in the interval with a weekly intramuscular injection of grey oil containing one grain of mercury.

During the six months that followed the publication of that paper I have had the opportunity of carrying out this treatment on one hundred and twenty-two other patients, the subjects of syphilitic infection. Of these patients six were in the primary stage of the disease, one hundred and seventeen in the secondary stage, and nine were in the tertiary stage. I now submit the results of my experience in the treatment of these patients.

The method of administration of the salvarsan adopted was similar to that previously described, with the exception that the needle was introduced directly through the skin without first exposing the vein.