

front at the beginning of the Tirah campaign, has been since ordered to rejoin the force. The regiment has been in India since 1884 and has suffered greatly from malarious fever. It should by this time be pretty well known that a corps, whether British or native, with a medical history of malarious fever is not likely to render effective service in the field. It is quite clear from the Prime Minister's remarks towards the close of his recent speech in the debate on the Address in the House of Lords that, while deploring the necessity for the frontier campaign, which he regards as having under the circumstances been forced upon the Indian Government, Lord Salisbury is most desirous that it should be brought to a speedy termination and that a moderate and conciliatory policy as regards the tribes should as far as possible be adopted and followed.

THE ARMY SCHEME.

The public generally, as well as the medical staff and other officers of the army, are awaiting with no little curiosity the declaration of the Government proposals for securing the increased strength and efficiency of the army and for amending the present conditions of military service. Meanwhile, newspaper controversy on the subject continues with unabated vigour for the enlightenment as well as the perplexity of the general reader.

THE HEALTH OF THE ARMY IN INDIA.

Lady Henry Somerset has forwarded another communication to Lord George Hamilton withdrawing the proposals put forward in the former one because she considers that restrictive regulations instead of being used as a possibly effective auxiliary to moral efforts seem likely to be always accepted as a convenient substitute.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

"THE USE OF MASSAGE IN THE TREATMENT OF RECENT FRACTURES."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—May I add a word of testimony to the excellence of the advice given by my friend Mr. Bennett in his paper on the Use of Massage in the Treatment of Recent Fractures? Since 1890, mainly as far as I remember from the suggestion made by Mr. Kendal Franks in a paper in the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science* in June of that year and subsequently from conversation with him, I have seldom had a case of fracture in the neighbourhood of a joint accompanied by swelling in which I have not employed massage within a few days of the injury. And I am confident of its value not only, as I believe, in the promotion and hastening of good bony union, but also as I know in the prevention of that stiffness about the joint which is often the cause of trouble and it may be of lasting impairment of movement in many cases of the kind.

Look, for example, at a case of Pott's fracture. Who has not seen the swelling round and about the ankle and does not know how difficult it may be to get rid of it entirely and restore movement in the joint after the limb has been released from splints? The simple reason is that the lymph and blood effused amongst the tissues as a direct result of the injury inflicted upon and near them comes very rapidly to glue the various structures together and when more or less organised cannot be wholly absorbed. Let the parts, however, be subjected to massage within a short time of the accident; the lymph is thereby dispersed and adhesion of neighbouring tissues together is avoided. Day by day the size and natural contour of the limb are restored and abiding after-stiffness is altogether prevented. Furthermore the treatment is eminently grateful to the patient. His limb feels more comfortable, the sense of distension is lessened, and if perchance the massage has been painful on the first occasion pain is rarely induced by it after two or three days. I have never had reason to regret the use of massage under the conditions named and it is singular to note how early it may be begun. I have frequently ordered it as soon as the third day and to do so within a week is almost an ordinary routine of treatment. To recommend it in every case without discrimination is

the purpose neither of Mr. Bennett's paper nor of this letter. Each case must be judged by itself; the state of the tissues must in each instance tell when massage may be begun with safety; it must always be carried out with care; but that we have in massage an invaluable remedy in the treatment of most fractures near joints is in my experience a matter of no doubt whatever. The well-nigh universal practice of fixedly securing broken limbs in splints and giving no heed to the contiguous joints, loses sight of the fact that moveable parts which have been injured very often demand systematic movement to restore them to their former state of usefulness, and massage as an aid to it in the early treatment of fractures near joints is an important remedial measure in the hands of the surgeon.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Feb. 7th, 1898.

HERBERT W. PAGE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—On reading Mr. Bennett's paper in THE LANCET of Feb. 5th I am induced to speak of the application of the method to sprains and dislocations. For a good few years I have used almost the identical methods in both. There is no doubt that stiff joints in both those conditions are as great bugbears as after fractures. Since I have used the procedure so ably described by Mr. Bennett it is a very rare circumstance that I have any worry about sprains or dislocations and, what is more, I have no fear of bone-setters interfering with my work.

It is remarkable how quickly pain and swelling disappear in a joint although the injury may have taken place very shortly before. Even where the capsule is badly torn, as sometimes happens in the ankle, I have no fear in movement from the very first. The space fills up as well as when the joint is kept immoveable and there is no after-weakness. Let the ankle-joint be taken as an example so that the procedure may be explained. Perhaps we see the case an hour after the injury. The joint is very painful, swelled, and without motion. Immediately very slight massage is used and after a few minutes the patient is asked to move his toes. Gradually as massage is being employed he is encouraged to move his joint and within a quarter of an hour he can generally extend and flex his joint pretty freely. He is later encouraged to put his foot to the ground and to try to walk.

The above can be carried out by the patient's friends after the surgeon's visit each day. Very few cases are not almost entirely better within a week; most of them are within a few days. The last case I had happened on a Sunday night. There was a tear in the outer side of the capsule with a well-marked depression and the man was at his work on the Tuesday with only slight lameness.

The same treatment is employed in recent dislocation; from the very first the joint is moved. I have only seen half-a-dozen cases of dislocation of the shoulder within the last six years and all have been treated as above without any bad consequences. None have recurred and no weakness has been left in any of them. No bandaging is employed, but a sling may be used for a few hours if the pain is great. There is no troublesome stiffness and the cases give no bother. A restaurant keeper a month ago had a subglenoid dislocation which I reduced with a little difficulty. He walked home about a quarter of a mile without any sling and was told to move his arm gently if it was painful. Next day he moved it quite freely, although I did not let him put it above his head. The only pain he had was in the pectoral muscle and it was very slight. When I saw him next day he moved it in every direction and was at his work frying fish.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Galashiels, Feb. 5th, 1898.

WM. DOIG, M.D. Edin.

"LEGISLATION AS A REMEDY FOR MEDICAL GRIEVANCES."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Assuming for the moment for "those who wish to deal earnestly with the problems of medical reform" that Mr. Horsley's interpretation of the present Medical Acts is the correct one and that the man in the street is not entitled to practise, and further that the obvious inference to be drawn from Section 6 of the Medical Act, 1886, is that any person not on the Register should be prosecuted, one is at