

also showed a decline from that recorded in recent weeks. The 171 deaths in Dublin last week included 40 of infants under one year of age, and 39 of persons aged upwards of sixty years; the deaths both of infants and of elderly persons exceeded the numbers returned in the preceding week. Six inquest cases and 6 deaths from violence were registered; and 57, or one-third, of the deaths occurred in public institutions. The causes of 10, or nearly 6 per cent., of the deaths in the city last week were not certified.

THE SERVICES.

ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

BRIGADE-SURGEON-LIEUTENANT-COLONEL P. R. D. GABBETT has embarked for Barbados. Surgeon-Major H. A. H. Charlton has arrived in Dublin District for duty.

Surgeon-Major John G. S. Lewis has been placed on temporary half-pay on account of ill-health.

INDIA AND THE INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICES.

THE Queen has approved of the following promotions among the officers of the Indian Medical Service:—Surgeon-Majors to be Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonels: *Bengal Establishment*: Arthur Thomes, M.D., William Arthur Mawson, Sorabshaw Hormasji Dantra, M.D., Henry Hamilton, M.D., Bernard Doyle, Robert Cobb, Augustus Edward Richard Stephens, and William Hotson Cadge. *Madras Establishment*: John Maitland, M.D., George Lemon Walker, M.D., Charles Lethbridge Swaine, M.D., and Maurice Henry Smith. *Bombay Establishment*: John Macgregor, M.D., Alexander Kenneth Stewart, William George Hume Henderson, Kharshedji Ardeshir Dalal, and Henry Walker Butler Boyd. Surgeon-Captains to be Surgeon-Majors: *Bengal Establishment*: John Henry Tull Walsh, Harold Hendley, George Herbert Fink, Hormasji Edalji Banatvala, and William George Patrick Alpin, M.D. The Queen has approved of the retirement from the service of Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Cobham Nicholson, and has approved of the resignation of Surgeon-Lieutenant Alfred Edward Joseph Ward. The services of Surgeon-Captain F. P. Maynard are replaced at the disposal of the Government of Bengal, and the services of Surgeon-Captain J. C. S. Vaughan are placed permanently at the disposal of the same Government.

NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

Surgeon George Dacre Trevor-Roper has been placed on the Retired List of his rank.

The following appointments are announced:—Staff-Surgeon H. X. Browne to the *Camperdown*; Surgeon C. L. Nolan to the *Melampus*.

THE SOUDAN CAMPAIGN.

According to all reports and to the statements of refugees the native population of the Soudan are thoroughly tired of the tyrannical rule of the Khalifa and of the devastation which has been brought about by it. There is at present a pause in the operations of the Anglo-Egyptian expedition, but the interval has been employed in accumulating stores of all kinds for the future advance on Dongola, in pushing on the railway, and in completing the transport arrangements. The Nile is slowly rising and the state of the river will soon be such as to materially add to the means of transport. There is an increasing scarcity of food, the price of provisions throughout the Soudan is very high, and trade is closed. These circumstances are believed to be a source of grave difficulty and embarrassment to the Dervish forces at Dongola and elsewhere. Notwithstanding that the general health and spirits of the troops composing the Anglo-Egyptian expedition are excellent, the appearance of cholera at Assouan in the 1st and 5th battalions, which are detained in quarantine between Assouan and Wady Halfa, is an unfortunate cause of some anxiety, apart from the delays and difficulties entailed by the adoption of necessary precautionary measures against the spread of the disease. The affected battalions were on their way from Suakin to the front when attacked.

THE RISING IN MASHONALAND.

The news that reaches this country from South Africa has been of a somewhat gloomy character and far from satisfactory of late. It is reassuring under these circumstances

to learn that no further troops are, in the opinion of General Goodenough and Sir F. Carrington, required for the present to deal with the native rising, notwithstanding that the insurrection has greatly extended its dimensions and has already given rise to much bloodshed and a serious loss of life. The Government of this country have evidently been contemplating the probability of their being called upon to send reinforcements to South Africa and have intimated to the authorities there that they are quite ready to despatch an additional force when required. For political reasons it has been deemed expedient to select British and not Indian troops for the purpose. The Secretary of State for War has already sent instructions to Malta to dispatch the 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifles to the Cape as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made for the embarkation of the regiment, which is over 1000 strong.

ROYAL MILITARY TOURNAMENT.

"The takings at the Royal Military Tournament this year," says the *Army and Navy Gazette* "amounted to over £20,000, and it is hoped to hand as the net result some £3500 to the Commander-in-Chief for distribution as he may decide among the military charities. Lord Methuen and his committee are to be congratulated. The task they assumed was one fraught with difficulty, and it is highly creditable to all concerned that the result is so eminently satisfactory. It has to be remembered that this was the committee's first attempt to run the display on purely military lines, and it is no exaggeration to say that they earned the confidence of all associated with them in the management of affairs. In its changed, and, in many respects, improved aspect, the Royal Military Tournament has been able to attract crowded houses to Islington at each performance. May Lord Methuen and his colleagues go on and prosper, for they have unquestionably rendered a great service to the Army and its charities."

THE WEIGHT THAT CAN BE CARRIED BY SOLDIERS.

According to the *Army and Navy Gazette* the German military authorities have been experimenting in this direction and have come to the conclusion that 60 lb. is about the maximum weight that a soldier can carry on a march, of twenty-five miles per diem in a temperate climate where the temperature does not exceed 60° F., if the march is to be continued for a number of days. A load of 68 lb. could not be carried twenty-five miles without danger of serious injury, and one of 60 lb. had a temporarily bad effect when carried in a temperature of 70° F. and upwards.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE DEFAACEMENT OF PRESCRIPTIONS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It is time for a protest to be made against the custom of the defacement of prescriptions by the druggists who dispense them. It is not uncommon to see a prescription on which the whole space written upon is occupied by the impressions of rubber stamps. A prescription is not the property of the druggist to put on it his name and address. If there is any justification for such stamping the back of the prescription is free to receive these many coloured marks. Every legitimate purpose such as the record of a number can be served by the back as well as by the front. But dispensers go still farther. I have seen several prescriptions in which alterations in the dose of certain constituents had been made. Against every one of the constituents there had been written in ink by the druggist the initials of the firm and the date in figures. In one of these there was repeated five times "A. & H., 16/4/96" (the date is at random). This can be only for the druggist's private convenience, and is quite without even the semblance of warrant. I maintain that no impression of a stamp or writing should be placed on the face of a prescription by the dispensers. I believe my contention will be widely supported by the profession and ought to be the subject of a definite rule by the Pharmaceutical Society, which should soon terminate the objectionable practice.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

June 27th, 1896.

W. R. GOWERS.