

VOLUNTEER CORPS.

Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers): 2nd Hampshire: Percy James Sandys Bird (late Surgeon-Captain, 1st West Riding of Yorkshire Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers)), to be Second Lieutenant (dated Feb. 1st, 1908). 1st Northumberland: Surgeon-Captain (Honorary Captain in the Army) John Wreford to be Surgeon-Major (dated Jan. 21st, 1908).

Rifle: 3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Northumberland Fusiliers: Surgeon-Lieutenant Herbert M. Jamieson resigns his commission (dated Feb. 29th, 1908). 5th (Irish) Volunteer Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment): Surgeon-Captain John J. O'Hagan to be Surgeon-Major (dated Feb. 25th, 1908). 1st Volunteer Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment: Surgeon-Lieutenant Herbert J. Godwin to be Surgeon-Captain, remaining supernumerary (dated Feb. 22nd, 1908). 2nd Volunteer Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment: Surgeon-Lieutenant Robert E. Lauder to be Surgeon-Captain (dated Feb. 7th, 1908). 3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Essex Regiment: Surgeon-Captain Francis J. Warwick to be Surgeon-Major (dated Feb. 26th, 1908). 3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment): Surgeon-Captain Lewis T. F. Bryett to be Surgeon-Major (dated Jan. 21st, 1908).

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS (VOLUNTEERS).

Liverpool Bearer Company: Captain Samuel H. House resigns his commission (dated March 31st, 1908).

DEATHS IN THE SERVICES.

At Wellington, Somerset, on March 24th, Colonel Joseph Henry Moore, R.A.M.C. (retired), in his sixty-fourth year. The deceased had been for 30 years in the service. He was in the Ashanti War, 1873-74, being at the defence of the hospital at Foomana (medal and clasp). In the Afghan War, 1878-79, Colonel Moore was present at the occupation of Candahar, the battle of Khalet, the Ghilzan actions, and also at Ahmed Khel and Urzoo (mentioned in despatches, medal, and clasp). Subsequently Colonel Moore served in India and was principal medical officer both at Quetta and Bombay.

Surgeon-Major-General Thomas William Fox, A.M.S., on March 28th at his residence at Rochester. He joined the service as assistant surgeon in 1852, became surgeon in 1860, surgeon-major in 1872, deputy surgeon-general in 1880, and surgeon-major-general in 1887. He retired in the following year. He served with the 14th Light Dragoons in the Persian campaign of 1857 and was present at the bombardment of Mohumvah (medal with clasp).

OUTBREAK OF DIPHTHERIA ON H.M.S. “IMPREGNABLE.”

It has just been officially notified that owing to the number of cases of diphtheria on board the *Impregnable* (the boys' training establishment at Devonport) the ship has been placed under sanitary regulations. For some time there have been an unusual number of cases of illness and over 100 boys have been removed to the Royal Naval Hospital, Stonehouse, including 24 suffering from diphtheria. There are now about 700 boys and instructors on board.

RECRUITS AND BAD TEETH.

At a meeting of the Royal Dental Hospital held on March 26th the Hon. W. F. D. Smith, M.P., who presided, called attention to the large number of recruits for the army who were rejected owing to their teeth being too bad to eat army food.

Colonel Valentine Matthews, late commanding London Companies Royal Army Medical Corps (Volunteers), has been appointed an honorary officer (1er Jefe Honorario) of Ambulancia No. 3 (Madrid), Spanish Red Cross.

Correspondence.

“Audi alteram partem.”

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To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Many members of our profession have noticed with regret a statement that Mr. Edge, a judge in the Clerkenwell county court, has seen fit to criticise in very forcible language the conduct of a much respected medical practitioner. In the case of *Cropper v. Stokes* it was asserted by the plaintiff that Dr. Henry Fraser Stokes of Highbury had agreed to attend a patient at Horsham, that he stated his fee to be 5 guineas per visit, that he agreed to reduce this fee to 3 guineas (the charge per visit made for a previous attendance at Oxted, a much nearer point), that he subsequently demanded a cheque in payment on the 5-guinea basis, promising to refund £17, which would practically restore the 3-guinea scale, and that he did not make restitution as promised. Medical men will at once recognise that such an arrangement as this would be unique in the annals of practice and that improbability—nay, impossibility—is stamped on the face of it. Its existence was absolutely denied by the defendant. On the side of the plaintiff there were three witnesses. Dr. Stokes himself gave evidence for the defence. The judge appears to have had no difficulty in believing the stronger seeming side, and incidentally he is reported to have accused Dr. Stokes of perjury and that in terms which were not distinguished by moderation. To those who know Dr. Stokes its mere association with him is incredible. Mr. Edge is said to have based his decision and his strictures on the facts that the plaintiff was supported by several sworn witnesses and that these were corroborated by correspondence.

Under all the circumstances, Sir, I feel sure that your readers will be interested in hearing the other side of this singular case. In the first place, the “correspondence” referred to, which seems to have brought such weighty consequences in its train, was on one side only, like the bulk of the evidence—namely, on that of the plaintiff. No letter came from Dr. Stokes. Further, the assertion that fees once fixed at 5 guineas had been reduced to 3 guineas is without foundation. There is, indeed, no reason for such a reduction but every reason to the contrary.

Horsham is 39 miles from London, Oxted but 20, and the assumption that both places could be set on an equality of remuneration will commend itself to no sane man acquainted with medical procedure. Finally, the alleged engagement to receive a cheque and to refund a portion of it is, as every practitioner would suppose, entirely imaginary. It may have arisen, as has been suggested, by what process of logic I cannot conjecture, from a statement by Dr. Stokes that in the event of poverty on the plaintiff's part being shown he might consider some reduction of the amount due to him; in fact, from the sort of optional and provisional concession which medical men are making every day and which in future they are likely to make with greater caution than hitherto, if at all.

Such is the case and such the conditions of judgment which have given rise to the most emphatic reprobation of a universally respected and estimable practitioner engaged in simply maintaining his right to adequate remuneration. With Mr. Edge's position as a judge in dealing with a numerical balance of evidence or in sifting its purity I do not concern myself but certain points about this case must, I think, stand out in relief. These are the mainly one-sided character of the evidence, the imputation of perjury without any demonstrated proof, the violence of denunciation which attended this, and, lastly, the harshness which denied an appeal against a judgment with these aggressive accompaniments. It is possible that on reflection Mr. Edge himself regrets the freedom of his remarks and, if so, he cannot as a gentleman do less than state the fact. As for Dr. Stokes, he may rest assured that whatever the temporary discomfort of his present position he cannot forfeit the esteem of his medical brethren.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Green-lanes, N., March 31st, 1908.

B. G. MORISON.

MEDICAL GRADUATES' COLLEGE AND POLYCLINIC.

—The annual general meeting of the Medical Graduates' College and Polyclinic was held at 22, Chenies-street, London, on March 27th, Dr. C. Theodore Williams being in the chair. The annual report, which was duly adopted, gave an interesting account of the success and the progress of the institution, the total number of attendances of medical men at the lectures and clinics making a grand total of 13,862. The courses of instruction in opsonins and vaccine therapy had attracted a great many practitioners, and the clinical investigations conducted by Captain A. E. H. Pinch, I.M.S. (retired), the medical superintendent, had proved as profitable as they were successful.