

largely increased. All surgical instruments are metal handled. Sterilisers (field pattern) have been added. In the panniers and fracture box, splints have been entirely abolished and perforated zinc substituted, together with tools for making it into splints. All field medical units are now supplied with operating tables.

SURGEON-GENERAL W. TAYLOR.

Surgeon-General Taylor had the honour of forming one of a party of officers dining with the Queen and Royal family previously to embarkation for Egypt to take part in the forthcoming expedition to Khartoum. Surgeon-General Taylor, as we have already intimated, will act as principal medical officer of that expedition and subsequently, on completion of that service, will proceed to India as Surgeon-General and principal medical officer of Her Majesty's forces in relief of Surgeon-General Gore, who will go on the retired list in December next.

ENTERIC FEVER AT OOTACAMUND.

There has been a good deal of enteric fever prevailing of late at this favourite hill station and the Madras Government have appointed a committee to inquire into and report upon the causes of it.

We are glad to hear that Surgeon-Major-General Cleghorn, C.S.I., of the Indian Medical Service, has recovered from the results of his late accident while bicycling.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

A PROPOSED SCHOOL FOR TROPICAL DISEASES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Sir H. Burdett in the *Times* of July 11th writing of a proposed school for tropical medicine, states that "the teaching staff will consist of the senior medical staff of the *Dreadnought* Hospital at Greenwich, as well as of the branch hospital, together with a number of teachers specially selected and attached to the new school." This was the first intimation of any kind that we had that such a scheme was on foot, and the statement was made without our authority or consent.

We are, Sirs, yours faithfully,

JOHN CURNOW, M.D., F.R.C.P. Lond.,
JOHN ANDERSON, M.D. St. And.,
F.R.C.P. Lond.,

Visiting
Physicians.

G. R. TURNER, F.R.C.S. Eng., Visiting Surgeon.

Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich, July 18th.

"REGINA v. COLLINS": A PLEA FOR AMENDED LEGISLATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It would serve no good purpose to dwell in the page of a professional journal on the unspeakably low moral tone of so-called "society," on which the revelations of the recent trial have thrown such a lurid light. The sentiments of the community have already found adequate expression in the columns of the lay press—notably the *Times*—whose fearlessly outspoken article has rendered a distinct service to the cause of public morality. Rather, with your kind permission, would I remind my professional brethren that this trial has once more called attention to the exceedingly shadowy nature of our privileges as duly registered members of the medical profession. When the general public learn, as in this case, that an unregistered man may engage with perfect impunity in medical practice until his career is checked by conviction for felony they not unnaturally ask what the privileges of registration really mean. Briefly they are somewhat as follows. We may sign valid certificates, we may offer ourselves as candidates for public appointments, and we may claim (though we may not always obtain) our fees in a court of law. Apart from this our position is aptly described in the following extract from the leading article in the *Times*: "He [Collins] must have known in what degree his calling was esteemed, or he himself as a member of it, when he found that his patients were as ready to honour him with their

confidence after he had been convicted of felony as before, and that a trifle of this kind scarcely at all affected his position." Significant words, and only too true.

A duly enrolled solicitor is adequately protected by law against unscrupulous competition on the part of those whose names have never appeared in the Law List or whose misconduct has entailed their removal from it. The same protection is afforded to duly ordained clergymen of the Church of England. Why, then, should duly registered members of a profession not a whit less honourable be obliged to share the right of practice with anyone possessed of sufficient self-assurance to make a show of professional skill and sufficient cunning to keep within the generously defined bounds imposed by the existing law? Your columns have again and again exposed this absurd and indefensible anomaly. May we not hope that the General Medical Council, as custodian of our Register and of the honour of our profession, may find an early opportunity for urging on our legislators the necessity for some amendment of the present statutes? I feel confident, Sirs, that your powerful aid will not be wanting and that you will allow the subject to be thoroughly ventilated in your columns.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

T. R. HENDERSON, M.B. Edin.

Bedford-hill, S.W., July 5th, 1898.

"A PHYSICAL BASIS IN THE DRUNKENNESS OF WOMEN."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am much obliged for your paragraph on this matter, for its criticism is at least much more kindly and fair than most of that which I have come across.

In most instances I am wholly misrepresented because of a ridiculously garbled and inaccurate report prepared for one of the reporting companies which appeared in most of the morning papers. Even your paragraph falls into one error in which you make me say that I recommend the use of alcohol in treating the inebriety of women. This is not the fact. What I did say was that in the climacteric drunkenness of women I did not regard total deprivation as necessarily a part or always a safe plan. That men and women in the better ranks of life differ materially in their ways of abusing alcohol is a fact which no one can dispute. That there is a specific drunkenness amongst women confined to the climacteric period is a point on which I want the eyes of my profession to be opened. I have often declared it, but my work has so far received no recognition. But I know it not only as a practitioner but as an intimate friend and relation of some of its victims.

That the agonising suffering induced by chronic pyosalpinx and kindred ailments will induce the victims to the periodic abuse of alcohol and morphia, and that these habits may be cured as the sufferings are by surgical treatment, are facts which are proved up to the hilt by my surgical records. My brethren may dispute my conclusions as much as they like, but if they bear my statements in mind and look about for evidence they will not be long before they find that the facts and my statements run together.

Having arrived at such conclusions it seems to me a terrible thing that women may, under the Government Inebriates Bill, be put in prison because they are the victims of curable surgical ailments.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

LAWSON TAIT.

Newhall-street, Birmingham, July 18th, 1898.

"ARSENIC IN WOOL."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—My attention has been drawn to a letter in THE LANCET of July 9th under the above heading. My only reason for referring to this correspondence is to correct a misapprehension on the part of the writer of the letter, who says: "I believe it is nearly if not quite impossible to buy any sheep's wool (home or foreign grown) which does not contain arsenic." This is a mistake, for while it is quite true that the great majority of sheep are arsenic-dipped a very large number are dipped with other substances, principally carbolic dip, next tobacco, and a considerable number with lime and sulphur. I manufacture, for home and export trade, both arsenical and carbolic sheep dips, and I find that exactly 20 per cent. of my total output last year was carbolic sheep dip; fully 80 per cent. of this carbolic dip was