

attendance. The arrangements were under the care of the hon. secretary to the dinner committee, Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel Hector, to whom every credit is due, both for his excellent management and the untiring way in which he looked after the guests.

## THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL:

THE RESIGNATION OF MR. WHEELHOUSE AND  
SIR WALTER FOSTER.

WE have received for publication the following letter addressed by Mr. Wheelhouse and Sir Walter Foster to the profession announcing their intention of not offering themselves for re-election at the expiration of their term of office on the Council in November next:—

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSION IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

GENTLEMEN,—Ten years ago, after a struggle of many years' duration, Parliament conceded the boon of Direct Representation of the Profession on the General Medical Council, and you did us the honour to elect us as your first representatives. During those ten years we have endeavoured to serve you to the best of our ability, and have never lost sight of your true interests. We are not without the hope that we have been of service both to you and to the Council—to you, by acting as your exponents in the various questions of professional importance that have from time to time been brought under the notice of the Council, and to the Council by seeking temperately to place your views before it and, as far as possible, to assist in carrying out its general work. In what we have succeeded and in what we have failed we are content to leave the history of the Council to determine; but, so far as your wishes have been compatible with the Acts of Parliament which it is the duty of the Council to administer we have never lost sight of them or failed to advocate them to the utmost of our power.

The time has now come when, for the third time, you are called upon to choose your representatives, and, after careful and anxious consideration, we have determined to ask you to release us from the responsibility of the office. We desire most cordially to thank you for the great honour you have conferred upon us by twice entrusting us with your interests, and also to place on record our grateful sense of all the kindness we have personally received at the hands of every member of the Council, and especially of the various presidents under whom it has been our privilege to serve.

In conclusion, we would urge you to make very deliberate and careful choice of your future representatives, remembering the high order of the duties the Council is called upon to exercise, and when you have elected them to give them that moral support without which it is impossible for them efficiently to represent you.

We are, gentlemen, your obedient servants,

C. G. WHEELHOUSE.  
B. WALTER FOSTER.

June 12th, 1896.

## THE CROYDON BOROUGH HOSPITAL, WADDON.

THE new buildings of the Croydon Borough Hospital were opened on Saturday, June 6th, and the municipality is to be congratulated on possessing a permanent isolation hospital of the most approved type. The triangular site on which the pavilions have been erected comprises eight acres of land moderately elevated and situated some two miles from the more populous portions of the district. Accommodation is provided for 116 patients. We have not space to describe in detail the various wards and administrative blocks which constitute the hospital, but there are one or two points specially worthy of notice to which we may refer. In the first place everything has been done to make the wards as comfortable and attractive as possible in order that patients requiring isolation may be induced to take advantage of the accommodation provided by the borough. With the

same object in view a private block has been built for people of means consisting of four wards containing six beds. Each ward is aerially disconnected, so that more than one class of infectious disease can be treated at the same time. The interior furnishing has been carried out in the best possible style consistent with a sick chamber. Dr. Leonard Wilde, the visiting physician, who has superintended the internal arrangements of the buildings, has introduced a novel feature with regard to the clothing of the patients. On admission to hospital each patient is provided with a garment the colour of which indicates the nature of the disease from which he or she may be suffering. For instance, scarlet fever patients are clothed in pink or red, diphtheria patients in blue, and enteric fever patients in yellow. By this means the variously infected garments are readily distinguished for cleansing purposes, and as a day is set apart for each colour to be washed there is no danger of one set of garments becoming infected with the germs that may be contained in another set. The additional precaution of disinfecting the clothes before entering the washhouse is, of course, taken. Another desirable feature of the new hospital, which has been carried out by Dr. Wilde, is the bacteriological research laboratory. Besides the use which can be made of this department should a doubtful case present itself at the hospital, it is at the disposal of any medical practitioner who may wish to assure himself of the exact nature of a case coming under his notice. On application a culture outfit is forwarded to the medical man, who makes the culture and returns the tube in its case, and within twenty-four hours he receives a report from the hospital.

## THE LATE DR. CHARLES RUMNEY ILLINGWORTH.

SOME of the friends of the late Dr. C. R. Illingworth have started a fund on behalf of his widow and children, the first list of subscriptions to which we have much pleasure in subjoining. Dr. Illingworth's early death under distressing circumstances deprived the profession of an ardent votary of the science of medicine, and we confidently recommend the case of his wife and children to the generous consideration of others who did not know him personally, and who will perhaps take our assurance that the money is sadly all wanted, and the case a thoroughly deserving one for benevolence.

### FIRST LIST.

| £ s. d.                                     |        | £ s. d.                                    |        |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------|--------|
| Dr. F. Birtwhistle,<br>Barton-on-Humber ... | 1 1 0  | Dr. J. Inglis Parsons,<br>Mayfair ... ..   | 1 0 0  |
| Mr. J. N. Brown, Ealing                     | 0 10 0 | Mr. Frank Pearce,<br>Brighton ... ..       | 1 1 0  |
| Mr. Edgar Duke, St.<br>Leonards-on-Sea ...  | 1 1 0  | Dr. Geo. W. Potter,<br>London ... ..       | 5 5 0  |
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| Dr. A. Kershaw, Far-<br>mouth ... ..        | 1 0 0  | Mr. J. A. Erskine Stuart,<br>Batley ... .. | 0 10 6 |
| Dr. George Kirkwood,<br>Peterborough ... .. | 5 0 0  | Dr. J. W. Walker, Peter-<br>borough ... .. | 5 5 0  |
| Mr. F. Mansy, Tunbridge<br>Wells ... ..     | 1 1 0  | Mr. Griffith Wilkin,<br>London ... ..      | 1 1 0  |
| Dr. E. J. Maclean, London                   | 1 1 0  | Dr. G. Sims Woodhead ...                   | 3 3 0  |
| Dr. Peter McBride, Edin-<br>burgh ... ..    | 1 1 0  | "A. B." ... ..                             | 2 2 0  |
| Dr. Thomas Mitne, Aber-<br>deen ... ..      | 2 2 0  | A. B. ... ..                               | 3 3 0  |
|                                             |        | F. F., London ... ..                       | 0 10 6 |

## HEALTH EFFICIENCY OF THE ENGLISH, FRENCH, ITALIAN, AND RUSSIAN ARMIES.

AT this moment, when the nation is called upon to make great sacrifices so as to increase our means of defence, all that concerns the efficiency of the army and navy is of more than usual importance and interest. It need scarcely be said that it does not suffice to enroll soldiers and sailors, but care must be taken to preserve them in sound bodily strength and health. In respect to general sanitation we may justly claim that the care taken of the health of the army and navy of Great Britain will compare favourably with the best organised

forces of any foreign country. In one important phase of the question, however, we stand at a great disadvantage. The fighting efficiency of our land and sea forces is very considerably impaired by the prevalence of venereal disease among officers and men. Dr. O. Commenge, in a work recently published in Paris entitled "Les Maladies Vénéériennes dans les Armées Anglaise, Française, et Russe," points this out in a very conclusive manner. Dr. Commenge states that the proportion of soldiers who during the four years 1889 to 1892 suffered from venereal disease in what he describes as the English army of the metropolis amounted to 217.1, 212.4, 197.4, and 201.2 per 1000. Thus it may be said in round numbers that one-fifth of the troops of the British army are incapacitated for service during the course of the year and this solely through contracting some form of venereal disease. Judging from our own investigations at Aldershot and elsewhere we may conclude that the case is not overdrawn. The figures vary somewhat, but, roughly speaking, a fifth is certainly no exaggeration, for at Aldershot we found that the proportion of soldiers suffering from venereal disease during the year was equal to a quarter of the entire force. The importance of these calculations will at once be understood when compared with similar figures given for the French and Russian armies. For France we find that during the four years in question the prevalence of venereal disease in the army was equal to 45.8, 43.8, 43.7, and 40.0 per 1000 soldiers. For Russia the figures are 40.7, 43.0, 41.5, and 44.6 per 1000 soldiers. Thus it will be seen that venereal disease is four or five times more prevalent in the English than in the French or Russian armies. For one French or Russian soldier who is incapacitated from service because he is suffering from venereal disease there are four or five English soldiers similarly incapacitated. Putting every other consideration aside, surely, as a mere matter of military defence, this is an evil that should not be neglected.

In dealing with the Contagious Diseases Act it has been shown that there is not to-day more venereal disease prevalent in the British Army than there was previously to the abolition of the Act, and there are figures that seem to confirm this theory. But we have, in answer, pointed out that the tone of the army has greatly improved, that a higher class of men now serve in the ranks, that great cleanliness is observed by both the men and the women, and that there is a more general use of antiseptics and a more widespread knowledge of the precautions that can be taken. All this has contributed to prevent matters being worse than they are, but surely they are bad enough. The argument that the Contagious Diseases Acts were of no use because the statistics of to-day show no very marked increase in the prevalence of venereal diseases as compared with what existed many years ago when the Act was in force loses all its significance when we put the British army by the side of the armies of France and Russia. In those countries the Contagious Diseases Act, or its equivalent, is in full operation, and we see by the figures given the enormous advantage that has resulted. But, just as we argue that matters would be even worse than they actually are in England had not the general tone and education of the army improved of late years, so it may be urged that the general tone of the continental armies is much superior to that of the English army. It may be maintained, with some semblance of reason, that if there is so little venereal disease in the French army it is because everybody must be a soldier and serve in the ranks; therefore, the whole social tone of the army is much higher, since men of elevated rank and the best education are to be found serving as common soldiers. Apart from the very doubtful question as to whether men of high rank are much more moral than men of low rank, these arguments as to the high social tone of the French rank-and-file certainly do not apply to the Russian rank-and-file, and we find that if there is any difference there is even less venereal disease in the Russian than in the French army. If we take an average of the four years mentioned above the prevalence of venereal disease among the English troops amounted to 207 per 1000 per annum, among the French soldiers to 44.3 per 1000, and among the Russians to 42.4 per 1000. Thus it cannot be said that it is the high social tone of the French army that reduces the proportion of venereal disease, for we have still less venereal disease among the unlettered peasants who in the main constitute the Russian army.

But to those persons who, by all manner of ingenious and roundabout arguments, try to prove that the Contagious Diseases Acts can do no good we may oppose the still more

significant experience acquired in the Italian army. There the law which enforced the medical examination of women was abrogated. The prevalence of venereal disease in the Italian army was about the same as in the French and Russian armies. It varied from 4 to 5 per cent. per annum. No sooner was the law abolished than the prevalence increased and in a short time 10 per cent. of the troops contracted venereal disease in the course of a year. After three years of trial the Italian Government reversed its former decision and the law regulating prostitution was re-established. This is far more conclusive than any argument that can be derived from the experience acquired in England. As the English law was only enforced in a few towns it was very defective in its operation, and it is not surprising if its abolition failed to produce any very marked change. In Italy, as in all other continental countries, the law did not apply merely to garrison towns but to the entire country. It, therefore, did produce very great and beneficent results, as is shown by the fact that the prevalence of venereal disease was simply doubled when the law was abolished, and that after only three years of experience the Government and the country were glad to return to the old and successful methods of dealing with this dread disease. As for England, we have argued the question so often and from so many points of view that we do not propose to again travel over the well-worn ground on this occasion. We are simply anxious, at a moment when the public mind is preoccupied with the question of military armaments, to point out that one of the most practical means of increasing the fighting strength of both army and navy would be to protect our soldiers and sailors from venereal disease in the same manner as the armies and navies of continental countries are protected.

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## THE ASSOCIATION OF FELLOWS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

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A MEETING of the committee of the Association of Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of England was held on the 10th inst. at 25, Grosvenor-street, W., Mr. George Pollock, President, being in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. H. Percy Dunn, the honorary secretary, reported that he had received a letter from Mr. Victor Horsley in reply to the invitation of the committee that he should come forward in the interests of the Association as a candidate for a seat on the Council of the College at the forthcoming election. Mr. Victor Horsley replied in effect that the very nature of the request made it difficult for him to refuse, but he was so deeply committed to the furtherance and establishment of the principles of medical defence that he could not venture to accept fresh and what would unquestionably be grave responsibilities, and he hoped that the committee would accept his very grateful thanks for their confidence and kindness, understanding that it was only other professional work which rendered him unable to serve, as he should greatly like to do, the objects of the Association. Mr. Percy Dunn further reported that in accordance with the instructions of the committee he had communicated with the provincial Fellow whose name had been brought forward as a possible candidate to represent the Association at the College election and that a reply had been received from him to the effect that he would be willing to come forward if nominated by the Association.

At this stage a member of the committee mentioned that he had just heard that the President of the Association, Mr. George Pollock, had intimated to Mr. Holmes that if it were the desire of the committee that he should stand he would willingly do so.

On the motion of Dr. Robert Barnes and Mr. Gant it was unanimously agreed that the offer of Mr. Pollock should be accepted, and as it was felt to be undesirable to bring forward another candidate Mr. Percy Dunn was asked to communicate with the provincial Fellow above referred to upon this subject.

It was reported to the committee that Mr. Clement Lucas of Guy's Hospital was a candidate for the Council, and that in reply to certain questions addressed to him by Mr. Norton he had expressed views almost entirely in unison with those