

## Parliamentary Intelligence.

### HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22ND.

#### *Clinical Thermometers Bill.*

Lord STANMORE, Lord-in-Waiting, moved the second reading of a Bill to regulate the sale of clinical thermometers by providing that they must be tested, approved, and marked in accordance with the regulations made by the Board of Trade before they could be supplied or delivered. The provision, he said, had already been in operation under the Defence of the Realm Regulations and its value had been universally recognised by the medical profession. The Bill was read a second time.

#### *Coroners Bill.*

The Coroners (Emergency Provisions Continuance) Bill was read a third time and passed on the motion of the Earl of ONSLOW, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health.

THURSDAY, FEB. 23RD.

#### *The Russian Famine.*

The ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY called attention to the reported facts respecting the gravity of the famine in Russia and asked whether H.M. Government was now able to make any statement. He said they had set before them—and he referred specially to Sir Benjamin Robertson's report—a fairly clear objective as to what could be done with a definite plan for doing it more or less worked out with the prospect of a real possibility of practical business-like relief giving and a definite estimate based on knowledge and experience as to the sum of money that was required for doing it. All that seemed to him to put the situation in a different light from that in which it had been before and there was upon them a somewhat increased responsibility. He wished to know whether H.M. Government could see their way to adopt any practical steps in leadership, or whether they had any suggestion to make of a substantial grant to supplement voluntary aid and so help them to do what they felt could be done. Everyone of their lordships felt as strongly as he did what their obligations were in these matters—obligations for the sake of this unhappy people and their obligation for the sake of the health of Europe, for famine bred pestilence which went far beyond the famine area.

Lord EMMOTT said that as chairman of the Russian Famine Relief Fund responsible for the proper disposal of the stores given by the Government to the British Red Cross, and then handed by them to his organisation, he did not want to take too much the attitude of looking a gift horse in the mouth, but there were some facts that he thought he ought to make known to their lordships. A good many of these stores were useless from the point of view of famine relief. They received £30,000 worth of foodstuffs. They had to collect them at terrible expense from army dumps and pay all the freight charges to send them out to Russia. Among those stores were 200 tons of lime-juice valued at £2100; and lime-juice after all could not bring great physical relief or moral comfort to people who were dying from starvation. Pork and beans and tinned beef were less useful than grain, but still they had their value from the point of view of feeding adults. With regard to the balance of what was said by the Disposals Board to be worth £100,000, they collected £21,000 worth of stores in Egypt, and brought them to Constantinople, and they consisted of moth-eaten clothing and second-hand things with some medical comforts. They found that it was really so little use sending them to Russia that they arranged to divert them for the purpose of the refugees in the Constantinople district, with the consent of H.M. Government. These stores, which were said to be worth £21,000, were valued by Lloyds at £8500. The remainder, £41,000 worth according to the Disposals Board valuation, were handed over to them and consisted of medical drugs, hospital equipment, and so on. He was credibly informed that many of the drugs were what was known as "time expired." They had been handed over only on the previous day after two and a half months delay. There were some 300 tons, and he supposed it would cost at least £1000 to send them to Russia, and they had had two or three of the staff waiting to receive them for two or three months. One felt that from the point of view of famine relief something more digestible was required than operating tables, of which there were a good many in this medical equipment. He must say quite frankly that £40,000 or £50,000 in cash would have been infinitely more useful than this nominal gift of £100,000 worth of goods.

Marquess CURZON, replying for the Government, said Lord Emmott had spoken as chairman of the Russian Relief Fund, and if he was dissatisfied with the nature of the material

with which he had to deal, he could assure him that no one was dissatisfied with the way in which the Fund, and particularly Lord Emmott himself, had devoted themselves to their task. As to the question of the stores it always seemed that in our country the administration of charity was accompanied and disfigured by stupidity of the grossest description. So it had been in this case. He imagined that it was the Disposals Board which had been responsible for the errors which were complained of and he promised to put himself into communication with those persons with a view of seeing whether any more serviceable stores were available. As to the question of Government assistance, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out to him that if he went to the House of Commons for a sum of money he could not get it. He (Lord Curzon) could only say that, glad to help as he was, he had not persuaded his colleagues to help. He suggested that those who were bringing this matter forward should organise public opinion and if necessary get two or three hundred Members of the House of Commons to sign a round-robin to the Government to consider the matter.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22ND.

#### *Leprosy.*

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Minister of Health how many cases of leprosy there were in this country and what steps were being taken to segregate persons suffering from this disease and to provide for their treatment and maintenance; whether the disease was notifiable or not; and what success had attended remedial treatment.—Sir A. MOND replied: In regard to the first part of my hon. friend's question I have no definite information as to the number of cases of leprosy in this country as the disease is not notifiable. The number is, however, very small and the cases which have been reported to the Ministry have without exception been contracted abroad. I am advised that as the infectivity of the disease in this country is very restricted measures for the compulsory segregation of persons suffering therefrom would not be justified. Up to the present no specific cure for leprosy has been discovered, but the matter is being studied by workers in various countries.

#### *Cost of Lunatics in County Asylums.*

Mr. HURD asked the Minister of Health what reply he was making to representations from ratepayers' associations and meetings, as, for instance, from the Frome division, protesting against the inadequacy of the Government payment of 4s. per head weekly for the maintenance of inmates in county asylums, seeing the great increase in the cost of maintenance and the unfair burden thus thrown upon the rates.—Sir A. MOND replied: The amount of this grant was based on the estimated difference between the cost of maintenance in workhouses and in asylums respectively, and while it is true that the cost of maintenance in an asylum has increased since the grant was fixed it is equally true that the cost of maintenance in a workhouse has also increased. It has been repeatedly stated in replies to questions put in this House that no revision of the grant can be undertaken at the present time.

#### *Local Authorities and Milk Substitutes.*

Mr. HURD asked the Minister of Health whether it was the experience of his department that fresh milk formed the principal part of the diet in the successful treatment of tuberculosis; and whether he would advise all local health authorities that they should use no substitutes for fresh milk in this or any other part of their administration.—Sir A. MOND replied: The answer is in the negative. I am advised that although milk may be an essential element of special diets for tuberculous persons in certain stages of the disease, or for young children, a mixed general diet is preferable in the case of adults to one consisting mainly of milk. As regards the second part of the question, I am advised that certain substitutes, such as full cream dried milk, suitably prepared for use, are as nutritious as fresh milk so long as vitamins are provided in the necessary amounts in other parts of the diet.

#### *Sanatorium Treatment.*

Mr. JOHN DAVISON asked the Minister of Health the number of applications made during the past 12 months for sanatorium treatment; the number of people admitted to receive such treatment; the average waiting time between application for treatment and the treatment itself; and whether tuberculosis was on the increase.—Sir A. MOND replied: The returns made to my department by the local authorities who are responsible for making arrangements for the treatment of tuberculosis do not provide the precise information asked for in the first three parts of the question, but I am sending the hon. Member particulars of the numbers of persons receiving and awaiting treatment, respectively, in residential institutions from local authorities in England

on the first day of each month from June 1st last. As regards the last part of the question, I am sending the hon. Member particulars of the annual notification of, and deaths from, tuberculosis, which indicate that the answer is in the negative.

*Leprosy in India.*

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Secretary for India if he could give any information as to the results of the amended Leper Act passed by the Imperial Legislative Council in India; how far the Act had been put into force by the various provincial governments; how many lepers had now been segregated; and how far the remedial treatment of the disease gave promise of success.—Mr. MONTAGU replied: I have not received any information, but will inquire.

*Wound Pension Statistics.*

Sir FREDERICK HALL asked the Minister of Pensions what was the number of men in receipt of wound pensions at Dec. 31st, 1921, on account of having lost one or more limbs or one or both eyes; what was the total annual amount of their pensions; and if he would state what were the corresponding figures at Dec. 31st, 1920.—Major H. BARNSTON replied: The number of men thus disabled by wounds sustained during the Great War and in receipt of pensions from the Ministry on Dec. 31st, 1921, was some 37,250; and the number on Dec. 31st, 1920, was approximately the same. My right hon. friend regrets that he is not in a position to give the annual amount of these pensions without a laborious review of the individual papers.

*Taxation of Motor-cars.*

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE-BRABAZON asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport whether it was intended to introduce legislation to reduce taxation on the horse-power basis of cars built in 1915 instead of 1914, and continue such rebate on all cars that became seven years old.—Mr. A. NEAL replied: The answer is in the negative. The ground for the rebate in the case of pre-1913 engines is not the age of the engine but the type of construction.

THURSDAY, FEB. 23RD.

*Dr. Lomax and Asylum Administration.*

Mr. ROBERT RICHARDSON asked the Minister of Health whether, in view of the letter, dated Jan. 20th, sent to his department by the National Asylum Workers' Union to the effect that the union had advised its members not to submit evidence before the Committee on Asylum Administration because representatives of the Medico-Psychological Association predominated on the committee, and that the charges made in Dr. Lomax's book were, in the main, charges against the administrative methods and capacity of members of that Association, he could give the grounds for his statement that the union had refused to submit evidence because it was refused representation on the committee.—Sir A. MOND replied: The first communication from the union was a verbal request through a member of the executive council for representation on the committee. It was only when I was unable to accede to this request that the union refused to give evidence and sought to justify refusal on the grounds indicated in the question.

*Economies in Health Ministry.*

Mr. GEORGE TERRELL asked the Minister of Health what steps he had decided to take up to the present to give effect in his department to the recommendations of the Geddes Report.—Sir ALFRED MOND replied: I am anticipating that I shall be able to obtain the entire saving suggested on my estimates for 1922-23 as recommended by the Geddes Committee mainly on the proposals submitted by me.

*The Shepherd's Bush Orthopaedic Hospital.*

Lieut.-Colonel SPENDER CLAY asked the Minister of Pensions whether his attention had been called to the hardship which the contemplated removal of the Shepherd's Bush Hospital to other quarters would entail on out-patients attending the hospital; what action he proposed to take to assist such cases; and whether the saving which it was anticipated would be the result of the change would be almost entirely wiped out by the cost of removal and allowances to out-patients.—Mr. MACPHERSON replied: In selecting alternative accommodation for out-patient treatment full regard is being paid to the convenience of the pensioners, and I do not anticipate any difficulty in making satisfactory arrangements. The estimated cost of the removal from Shepherd's Bush, which I gave my hon. and gallant friend last Thursday, includes the cost of providing suitable out-patient accommodation.—Major COHEN asked if the right hon. gentleman was aware of the remarkable efficiency of the electrical appliances at this hospital, and if it was intended to scrap those appliances or remove them.—Mr. MACPHERSON: All the appliances will be removed.—Viscount CURZON asked if it was a fact, as stated in the press, that the treatment of out-patients could not proceed so satisfactorily as at present if the hospital was removed.—Mr. MACPHERSON: My medical officers tell me that it can.—Sir H. FOREMAN: In view of the

strong feeling which exists with reference to this hospital would the right hon. gentleman be prepared to reconsider the matter if he received a more moderate demand from the guardians?—Mr. MACPHERSON: Yes, Sir. The desire of the Ministry has always been to retain this hospital, and even now I am prepared to consider a modified proposal from the guardians. But it must be at once. I cannot keep the fate of all these men hanging in the balance.—Viscount CURZON: Is it the action taken by the guardians which necessitates the removal of this hospital?—Mr. MACPHERSON: Yes, without doubt. It is a question of rent. I pressed them very hard and I have been negotiating for a long time. I know the value of this hospital and I am very anxious to keep it, but I refuse to be blackmailed. They are asking a rent which I think is wholly unjustified.

*The Rockefeller School of Hygiene.*

Captain ELLIOT asked the Minister of Health whether he could give any information as to a donation by the Rockefeller Foundation towards the establishment of a School of Hygiene in London.—Sir A. MOND replied: Yes, Sir. I am happy to be able to announce that the Rockefeller Foundation have informed me of their readiness to provide a sum not exceeding 2,000,000 dollars towards the cost of providing and equipping such a school of hygiene on the understanding that the British Government accept the responsibility for finding the cost of staffing and maintaining it, estimated certainly not to exceed £25,000 per annum at the outset. I do not anticipate any actual charge on the votes for, say, two years. I may explain that the foundation of such a school was recommended by the Committee on Post-Graduate Medical Education in London appointed by my predecessor early last year. I presided over an expert committee which went further into the question, and finally, in view of the financial difficulty at present of carrying out this recommendation, valuable and timely as it is, I thought it well to put the whole case to the Rockefeller Foundation as one which they might think it well to support in the interests alike of the British Empire and the United States of America, and, indeed, from the widest standpoint of world progress in public health. In the result they have made the generous offer which I have announced, and I have been authorised, as Minister of Health, to accept that offer and am now engaged in the preliminary steps towards the establishment of the school. The House will no doubt agree with me in heartily welcoming this evidence of common interest and co-operation between ourselves and the United States of America in furthering education and research in preventive medicine.

*Function of Pensions Appeal Tribunals.*

Mr. NEIL MACLEAN asked the Minister of Pensions what was the function of a pensions appeal tribunal or a medical appeal board; whether it was their duty to decide whether the disability was attributed to or aggravated by military service; and whether they had any powers to assess the amount of pension or percentage of disability.—Mr. MACPHERSON replied: The function of pensions appeal tribunals established under Section 8 of the War Pensions (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1919, is to hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Ministry refusing entitlement to pension. In the case of final awards made under Section 4 of the War Pensions Act, 1921, pensions appeal tribunals, modified in constitution for that purpose, hear and decide appeals based on dissatisfaction and have power to vary the amount of the award. I have no control over these bodies, which are established on an independent statutory basis under the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor. Medical appeal boards, on the other hand, are Ministry institutions under my control, their duties being to deal with appeals based on dissatisfaction with the assessment of disablement by a previous Ministry Survey Board where entitlement has already been admitted and the award is not final.

*Pay of Temporary Medical Officers.*

Mr. GODFREY LOCKER-LAMPSON asked the Minister of Pensions whether he was considering the reduction in pay of the temporary medical staff, which worked out at £972 per head, in accordance with the recommendation of the Geddes Committee.—Mr. MACPHERSON replied: Yes, Sir.

MONDAY, FEB. 27TH.

*Ministry of Health Vote.*

On a supplementary vote of £10 for the Ministry of Health, Sir ALFRED MOND (Minister of Health) said there was a saving of £1,350,000 on National Health Insurance. That was partly due to the sickness benefit claims being less than was anticipated and partly to savings effected by the reduction of the remuneration of the medical men which resulted from the last negotiations and came into force as from Jan. 1st of this year. The saving for this financial year under that heading was £250,000. There was an additional sum required of £514,000 under the sub-head of tuberculosis. This sum was required because they had under-estimated in respect of the original estimate. For the year 1920-21 they had

under-estimated the amount required for grants to the extent of £200,000; for 1921-22 to the extent of £250,000; and there was an increase required of £65,000 for capital expenditure. The tuberculosis grants were larger than anticipated owing to the increased cost of the maintenance of hospitals and the cost of keeping patients. Next year it was intended to stereotype the grant paid the year before, and in that way he hoped to avoid under-estimating. Under the heading of maternity and child welfare there was an increased sum required of £23,000. This was due to increased expenditure by local authorities in connexion with the supply of milk to necessitous mothers during the coal strike and the present serious period of unemployment.

Mr. MYERS, in moving the reduction of the vote by £5, said he did not complain of the additional expenditure upon the treatment of tuberculosis. He viewed with considerable regret the suggestion made in another quarter that some reduction should take place in that expenditure. As a matter of fact that expenditure was altogether inadequate at the present time. But he thought that a large amount of the money spent under this head was wasted, and that they did not get the results they ought to get. In addition to making provision for further beds, in sanatoria for civilians and ex-Service patients they needed a national scheme of after-care treatment. Until they got such a scheme they would not get the full benefit from the expenditure on the treatment of tuberculosis.

Dr. ADDISON said he agreed that they did not get the best out of their expenditure on tuberculosis treatment, nor did he think they ever would do so until the present system was supplemented by a more considerate after-care system of treatment and observation. It was bad policy to spend large additional sums on the treatment of tuberculosis on the one hand and on the other to cease to improve the homes in which the people lived.

Lieut.-Colonel FREMANTLE, as one who had served as a county medical officer for some time, agreed that to deal with tuberculosis on a large scale they must aim at improvement of housing.

The motion to reduce the vote was negatived by 169 votes to 58, and the vote was carried by 140 votes to 58.

#### Medical Inspection of Claybury Asylum.

Mr. FREDERICK ROBERTS asked the Minister of Pensions whether he was aware that the first and last occasion on which a medical representative of his department visited ex-Service men in Claybury Asylum was on Dec. 14th, 1920; and whether in view of the number of ex-Service men who had been sent to this institution he could explain the reason for this lack of attention. Major TRYON replied: I would remind my hon. friend that certified patients in asylums are under the care of the Board of Control. Arrangements were, however, made over a year ago under which a medical officer attached to Ministry headquarters visits, by the courtesy of the Commissioners of the Board of Control, those asylums in which ex-Service men are treated at the cost of the Ministry. Claybury Asylum was last visited by a Ministry inspector on the date mentioned and will shortly be again visited in the ordinary course of re-inspection which has now been commenced. A full twelve months is required to go round all the asylums, but should the circumstances of any case brought to notice so require a special visit is paid.

#### Ex-Service Men and Neurasthenia Treatment.

Mr. FREDERICK ROBERTS asked the Minister of Pensions how many hospitals had been set up for the special treatment of ex-Service men suffering from nerve and mental troubles; in what districts were such hospitals situated; and what was the total number of patients for which accommodation could be found.—Major TRYON replied: Eighteen hospitals for the treatment of neurasthenia in its various forms have been established under the direct control of the Ministry in different parts of the country, providing accommodation for about 170 officers and 2500 other ranks. I am sending my hon. friend a list of these institutions, but I may mention that treatment for the milder forms of neurasthenia is also provided in hospitals not specially set apart for that purpose. Treatment for certified mental cases is provided by the Board of Control.

#### Medical Examinations for the Civil Service.

Rear-Admiral SUETER asked the Secretary to the Treasury how many non-Service men rejected for the Army on medical grounds had been passed as medically fit for the Civil Service on passing the recent examination, and the number of ex-Service men rejected as medically unfit on passing the clerical examination.—Mr. HILTON YOUNG replied: Of the candidates who passed the examination for appointment to the clerical class in 1920, 37 non-Service men who were medically rejected for military service have been accepted as physically fit for the Civil Service; 16 ex-Service men have been rejected on physical grounds for appointment to the Civil Service.

TUESDAY, FEB. 28TH.

#### Ex-Service Men and Tuberculosis.

Sir JOHN BUTCHER asked the Minister of Pensions whether his attention had been called to the serious position of ex-Service men suffering from tuberculosis owing to war service, and to the fact that a very large proportion of these men who had died of tuberculosis between January, 1915, and December, 1921, had died under 40 years of age; and whether, when the men so suffering had, after a definite period of observation by the Ministry, been diagnosed as suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, he would award them permanent pensions of not less than 70 per cent. or 80 per cent. disability.—Major TRYON replied that the suggestion could not be accepted. He added: Generally speaking, in every active case of tuberculosis the man receives the equivalent of pension at the maximum rate; and where a pensioner has satisfactorily completed a prescribed course of treatment and training pension at the 100 per cent. rate is granted for six months, followed by at least 50 per cent. for the next two years.

## Medical Diary.

Information to be included in this column should reach us in proper form on Tuesday, and cannot appear if it reaches us later than the first post on Wednesday morning.

### SOCIETIES.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE, 1, Wimpole-street, W.  
MEETINGS OF SECTIONS.

Monday, March 6th.

TROPICAL DISEASES AND PARASITOLOGY: at 8 P.M.

Paper:

Dr. Castellani, Dr. Douglas, and Dr. Thomson: Tonsillomyiasis.

Papers:

Prof. Leiper, Dr. M. Khalil, and Mrs. Philpot: Hookworm in Cornwall.

Cinema Film: Hookworm Control.

Tuesday, March 7th.

ORTHOPÆDICS: at 5 P.M.

Discussion on the Use of Remedial Exercises as applied to Scoliosis.

Amongst others, the following will take part in the discussion: Mr. McCrae Aitken, Mr. E. B. Clayton, Dr. Barrie Lambert, Mr. Paul Bernard Roth, Dr. Timberg, and Dr. Carl Westman.

Fellows of the Society and members of other Sections who are interested in "physical treatment" are cordially invited to be present and to take part in the discussion.

PATHOLOGY: at 8.30 P.M. at University College Hospital, Gower-street, W.C. 1.

Communications, &c.:

Dr. W. S. Lazarus-Barlow: Further Attempts at the Experimental Production of Carcinoma by Means of Radium.

Dr. D. Embleton and Dr. F. H. Teale: Intestinal Infection.

Dr. C. Dukes: Absorption of Ferments by Bacteria.

Dr. J. W. McNee: Some Specimens of Influenzal Pulmonary Infection.

Dr. A. E. Boycott and Dr. C. Price-Jones: Restoratives of Blood-volume after Hæmorrhage and Anæsthesia.

Wednesday, March 8th.

Social Evening.

Fellows and their friends will be received by the President and Lady Bland-Sutton at 8.30 P.M. Mr. James Sherren will deliver a short address at 9 P.M. on Sailing Ships and the Men who Sailed Them (illustrated).

The Library will be open, and various objects of interest will be exhibited. Music, light refreshments, and smoking.

In order to make arrangements for the evening the main Library will be closed from 5 P.M., but readers can be accommodated in the other reading rooms.

N.B.—All Fellows and their friends are cordially invited. No tickets are required.

Will Fellows who know of Dominion and Foreign Practitioners who are visiting this country send their names and addresses to the Secretary in order that invitations to attend the Social Evening may be sent to them.

Thursday, March 9th.

NEUROLOGY: at 8 P.M.

Discussion on Decerebrate Rigidity and Spasticity, to be opened by Dr. F. M. R. Walshe and Dr. G. Riddoch.

Friday, March 10th.

CLINICAL: at 5.30 P.M. (Cases at 5 P.M.)

Exhibition of Cases:

Dr. Cross (introduced by Mr. Rowlands) will show a case of Winged Scapula.

Other cases will be shown.

Short Paper:

Prof. H. Maclean and Dr. Isaac Jones: Some Observations on Production of Lactic Acid in Stomach Diseases.

OPHTHALMOLOGY at 8.30 P.M. (Cases at 8 P.M.)

Papers:

Mr. P. G. Doyne: Coloured Vision.

Mr. R. Affleck Greeves: A series of Sympathising Eyes examined microscopically.