

start to make a complaint to the visiting surgeon, who, of course, has a sergeant with him in his rounds, but before he could say sufficient to attract the doctor's attention the sergeant would lean down and in an undertone threaten the man in insulting and obscene language that he would make it worse for him if he said a word. I have seen men down with dysentery make a complaint, and in return the orderly has kicked the man—a man, mind you, who had no strength to stand up. . . . My advice on the subject of improvement in the R.A.M.C. is to pay better wages, draw the men not from the slums, but from the better classes; have more of them, and offer them some encouragement to improve themselves. Have reserve surgeons, as the Navy has reserve officers, and double the pay and number of sisters."

Mr. Arthur Balfour informed the House on Tuesday, that, as Parliament had passed a measure for the protection of witnesses examined before Royal Commissions, the Hospitals Committee would be made a Royal Commission.

Lord George Hamilton informed the Commons, on Monday night, that Her Majesty's Government had no special information as to the arrangements made at the front for the wounded in the recent engagements in China. He added, however, that there is good hospital accommodation at Wei-hai-wei, that the Government of India had already provided a hospital ship and are prepared to supplement this accommodation by converting three transports into hospital ships. The American hospital ship *Maine* has also been placed at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government, and the Maharajah Sind hia of Gwalior has offered a fully-equipped hospital ship for China, upon which he is willing to spend 20 lakhs of rupees.

### Marriage Bells.

THE marriage is announced at Bloemfontein, Orange River Colony, of James S. Warrack, M.A., M.D., civil surgeon, Army Medical Staff, to Miss Fanny Mary Gates Purdy (Sister Gates), of the Army Nursing Reserve. Dr. Warrack, who is the eldest son of Rev. Alexander Warrack, Leswalt, Wigtonshire, is a graduate of Aberdeen University, and was for some time assistant surgeon at the Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen. Dr. Warrack graduated M.D., with honours, in 1898. Sister Gates was also on the Royal Infirmary staff, and left Aberdeen last spring for South Africa, along with several other local nurses who had volunteered for the front. The wedding just announced is another of those happy incidents which stand out in pleasant contrast to the grim realities of the South African campaign.

### Sir Walter Foster's Foresight.

THE following correspondence between Sir Walter Foster, M.P., and Mr. Wyndham, M.P., was issued on Saturday last as a Parliamentary paper:—

30, Grosvenor Road, Westminster, S.W., October 31, 1899.—Dear Wyndham,—I am sure you will excuse me for troubling you at a busy time, as I have a suggestion to make which seems to me of importance as regards the medical aspects of the South African campaign. I think you have done admirably in sending out Sir William McCormac, Mr. Treves and Mr. Makins. They will be splendid help from a surgical point of view. There remains, however, the medical and sanitary side. In all human probability there will be great loss of life from fever and other maladies more or less preventable by careful sanitary work. To meet this prospect, it would be wise to send out a small sanitary commission or a commissioner with assistants. Such aid would be invaluable to the Army medical officers in assisting them to prevent the loss of life to which I have referred. I thought of going out myself for the purpose of lending any aid I could, as I have had, as you may know, a life-long experience as a physician, and during the last cholera invasion, as secretary to the Local Government Board, I had the main responsibility of the health defence of the kingdom. I fear, however, that as a private individual I could do little or nothing. I therefore write to you to say that if you decide to do anything in the direction I have indicated, I will gladly place my services at the disposal of the War Office. I am not willing to resign my seat in the House of Commons, and so I should wish to go out in an unpaid capacity.—Yours very truly, WALTER FOSTER.

Mr. Wyndham at once acknowledged the letter, promising to show it to Lord Lansdowne, and a week later wrote again:—

War Office, November 9th, 1899.—My dear Foster, —I put your scheme of a Sanitary commission for South Africa before the Secretary of State, and it was carefully considered by the medical authorities here. They think that the need of special assistance is not the same in sanitary matters, as in surgical operations. The general practice of an Army doctor must necessarily make him inferior as an operator to skilled specialists; but sanitary investigations are among the most important of his daily duties, and he is constantly accumulating experience with regard to them. The Director-General, therefore, does not regard as necessary the establishment of such a commission as you recommend.

Lord Lansdowne concurs in this view, and desires me to express to you, when communicating the decision, his sense of the patriotic feeling which inspired your suggestion, and your offer of personal service.—Yours very truly, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

In a final letter, Sir Walter Foster said:—"I am very sorry the Secretary of State has not been able to accept my offer or my suggestion." And the country, looking to the terrible results of Lord Lansdowne's action, will surely share this regret.

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