

between ladies, was keen (why should the Commission go out of its way to jibe at ladies?), we do not think that the patients suffered materially in this hospital." That disputes were not confined to ladies is evident from the report of the Victoria Hotel Hospital at Johannesburg above mentioned, and also that of No. 8 General Hospital at Bloemfontein, of which the Commission report that friction "arose between the civil surgeons in the hospital on the one hand, and the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps on the other. Complaints have reached us affecting some of the medical officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps that they were inattentive and inexperienced, while it was stated that some of the civil engineers neglected their duty, and were "rowdy and not teetotal." There were in fact some faults on both sides." That "hostile feelings" were entertained by the different members of the staff towards each other appears to have been a matter of common knowledge, and the Commission expresses its surprise that more vigorous steps were not taken by successive Principal Medical Officers at Bloemfontein "to put an end to a condition of affairs which could only result in disorganization." No. 8 General Hospital seems to have been exceptionally unfortunate, for "a few of the nurses in this hospital were themselves not wholly satisfactory."

THE NEED OF SANITARY OFFICERS.

Sir Walter Foster's contention as to the necessity for the appointment of Sanitary Officers receives indirect endorsement from the Commission. They relate that Dr. Turner, the Medical Officer of Health to the Cape Government, was consulted by Lord Roberts as to sanitary matters at Pretoria, and authorised by him to deal with the question. "This need of a good sanitary officer, who should have authority, amongst other things, to select suitable and healthy sites for camps, is shown by a statement made by Dr. Turner in his evidence that a very insanitary site was selected for the Welsh Regiment on its arrival, which might have led, if it had not been changed, to considerable sickness being developed in that regiment."

IN CONCLUSION.

There are many more points mentioned in the Report to which we should like to draw attention, but pressure on our space forbids. We think, however, it is plain from the statements which it contains that there was ample ground for Mr. Burdett-Coutts's action in making the unsatisfactory conditions which obtained in South African Military Hospitals public, and for the appointment of the Commission of Enquiry. The conditions as indicated by the Commission point to the need of an increased and properly organized Nursing Service in connection with the Army, and we hope that no considerations of politics or prejudice will be allowed to stand in the way of such organization.

The Plague at Cape Town.

Cases of plague are still occurring at Cape Town. It is disquieting to hear of twelve cases in one day, including three Europeans, one of whom died. The Government is evidently on the alert, recognizing the gravity of the situation, and we hope every effort will be made to stamp out the disease. The success which followed the prompt measures taken at Glasgow proves what can be done.

Professional Review.

DIET AND FOOD IN RELATION TO STRENGTH AND POWER OF ENDURANCE.

BY ALEXANDER HAIG, M.A., M.D. Oxon., F.R.C.P.
Physician to the Metropolitan Hospital and the Royal Hospital for Children and Women.

We have received from Messrs. J. and H. Churchill 7, Great Marlborough Street, W., a book by Dr. Alexander Haig, on Diet and Food, considered in relation to strength and power of endurance. There is, perhaps, no one who has studied this question so closely, and whose opinions are therefore better worth considering than Dr. Haig's, and as it behoves all nurses to study the question of dieting, and to have an intelligent knowledge of the effect and the nutritive value of food stuffs, we commend this book to their attention.

In this introduction the author writes:—"I believe that I speak no more than the truth when I say that once a clear knowledge of the facts is obtained and a workmanlike and useful grasp of the subject is attained, it will be found that in diet lies the key to nine-tenths of the social and political problems that vex our nation and time. Diet, as at present used, is often the product of a vast amount of ignorance; it is the cause of a hideous waste of time and money, it produces mental and moral obliquities, destroys health and shortens life, and generally quite fails to fulfil its proper purpose."

Dr. Haig defines health as a "satisfactory condition of nutrition, strength, and power of endurance," and shows that in considering how this condition can be produced and maintained, the albumens of the food, their sources, characters, digestibility, and the amount of the force and urea derived from the metabolism in the body must be taken into consideration, the "relation between urea, albumen, and force, being the keynote of the volume."

Passing on from the consideration of the sufficient supply of albumens, and the necessity for a free circulation through the tissues, the author discusses the physiology and pathology of fatigue which he ascribes to (1) a general dearth of albumens in the blood, and (2) a condition in the blood which leads to its defective circulation through the tissues, so that though the blood contains sufficient albumens the tissues cannot readily obtain them, and also the tissues become, as the result of their activity, laden with waste products, which are not sufficiently quickly removed.

The foods most suitable for use, according to the lines laid down in this book, are then discussed, with their relative values. Dr. Haig is a firm believer in the value of a non-flesh diet, and therefore goes somewhat minutely into detail as to the substances which he considers suitable in place of the ordinary diet. He strongly recommends the use of Protene, and the many forms of biscuits made by Protene, Ltd., which are "very palatable," as well as their various cakes.

The use of stimulants is not recommended by the author, who defines the difference between food and stimulants as follows: A food introduces force from without, a stimulant merely calls out force already in the body, and only increases available force so long as there is albumen available for it to act upon.

We have given but a glimpse of this interesting book which we should advise our readers to study.

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