

of the wounded in general and so to enable them to undergo expeditious transference to a hospital ship than it is to lose precious time over a surgical operation, even though from the point of view of the patient it may be highly desirable to perform one.

Every vessel engaged under Admiral Togo had a sufficient supply of suitable dressing materials. This most important detail was very efficiently carried out; at no time during the operations, even after the great battle of May 27th and 28th, 1905, when the Japanese had to provide for a large number of wounded Russians, was there any serious deficiency or inconvenience in this respect. Packets for first aid in the navy differ essentially from those used in the army because wounds received in sea fights are generally more extensive than those received on land. At first the packets issued to Admiral Togo's fleet were too small, being only about three and a half inches long by two and a quarter inches wide. After the battle of Feb. 9th, 1904, it was noted that two or three packets were frequently required for a single dressing. This led to great loss of time, more especially as the wounds in addition to being large were often multiple, so orders were given for the immediate manufacture of an improved supply. The new packet was prepared in a wonderfully short time and gave complete satisfaction. It is about four and a half inches square and contains sublimated gauze compresses wrapped in tough Japanese paper and further enveloped in a specially prepared material known as "shibukami."

In spite of the hardship and fatigue inseparable from active service the sanitary condition of Admiral Togo's command was satisfactory to a remarkable extent, the sick-rate for the entire period having been lower than the average of the three preceding years.

In the Japanese navy the ordinary ration is as follows:—

Daily.	
Biscuit 6 ounces.	Dry vegetables ... 3 ounces.
Or bread 8 "	Or fresh ,, ... 15 "
Rice 12 "	Fish, dry or preserved 5 "
Barley flour 5 "	Tea... .. ½ drachm.
Preserved meat ... 5 "	Parched barley ... 1 "
Or fresh ,, ... 7 "	Sugar 6 "
Weekly.	
Peas or haricots ... 2½ ounces.	Vinegar ½ ounce.
Wheat flour 2 "	Oil of sesame ... 1 drachm.
Sugar 3½ "	Salt 1½ ounces.
Soy 3 "	Suet 1 "
Additional for Supper.	
Biscuit 4 ounces.	Tea ½ drachm.
Or bread 5 "	Sugar 4 "

During the war the above items were increased by one-fifth, all, that is, except the rice, of which the allowance continued to be 12 ounces. The fleet was provisioned by two ships specially allocated for this service. Each ship was fitted with refrigerating appliances and cold storage. They visited the mainland alternately and also drew supplies from transports. Never at any time, even during the season of fogs, had the sailors to put up with short commons, though occasionally in detached cruisers the fresh ingredients were lacking. The water-supply was excellent and ample, in fact abundant, sufficing not merely for drinking and culinary purposes but also for ablution. After a salt-water bath the men were always able to obtain a supplementary douche with fresh water. The surgeon-in-chief attributes the complete immunity of the fleet from the boils and blains usual so prevalent during warlike operations by sea or land to the copious water-supply.

Clothing suitable for extreme cold in winter and great heat in summer was provided for all ranks, officers as well as men. The results of this wise precaution are very evident. Never has the sequence of cause and effect been demonstrated with greater clearness. In spite of the rigour of the winter climate frost-bite was almost unknown and not a single man had to go to hospital on account of it. In the same way sunstroke was conspicuous by its absence during two hot seasons. No one suffered from it either on deck or in the stoke-hold. The stokers all drank fresh distilled water as a rule, but by way of a treat they were allowed now and then to mix with it a little arrowroot and sugar.

Two hospital ships, named respectively *Kobe-Maru* and *Saikio-Maru*, were attached to Admiral Togo's fleet, each making up about 168 beds. It was thought best to have two

ships of moderate size (about 3000 tons) rather than one of large dimensions. Sick and wounded men were transferred in steam launches, the ordinary hospital cot being utilised for the journey. In the opinion of Dr. Alvernhe there was room here for improvement, a hammock being by no means a good appliance in the circumstances. Judging by the results, however, the system of removal adopted by the Japanese undoubtedly succeeded very well.

But perhaps the most remarkable thing in this wonderful war was the rareness of infectious disease. Typhoid fever and dysentery alone occurred and in neither case to an alarming extent. Before the war broke out there were some sporadic cases of typhoid fever in the fleet and afterwards a similar condition of things prevailed. At no time were there more than three or four men under treatment for the disease in any of the war vessels. In all there were 241 cases, which gives an annual sick-rate of 7·2 per 1000 of strength. The dysentery cases numbered 151 in all. They took place for the most part during the months of August and September, 1904, in the vessels blockading Port Arthur. The propagation of this affection is said to have been due to the swarms of flies with which the vessels were infested.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

AN ordinary meeting of the Council was held on Feb. 8th, Mr. JOHN TWEEDY, the President, being in the chair.

A report was read from the court of examiners respecting 99 candidates found qualified for the diploma of Member and it was resolved that diplomas of Membership should be issued to these candidates.

It was resolved that diplomas of the Licence in Dental Surgery should be issued to three candidates found qualified.

It was resolved that diplomas in Public Health should be issued, jointly with the Royal College of Physicians of London, to 18 candidates found qualified.

It was resolved that the Vicar of Hempstead should be informed that the College will contribute ten guineas towards the rebuilding of the tower of Hempstead Church, where William Harvey is buried, provided that a sufficient sum for the purpose is raised.

Dr. J. Ward Cousins was reappointed as the representative of the College on the Central Midwives Board.

It was resolved to hold an afternoon reception in the Museum for the members of the British Dental Association on the occasion of the meeting in London in May next.

Professor HOWARD MARSH gave notice of the following motion for the next meeting of the Council:—

That the time has come for reconsidering the question of the admission of women to the examinations of the Conjoint Board.

MEDICINE AND THE LAW.

Certification of the Cause of Death.

AT a recent inquest at Bermondsey it was alleged that the deceased had been placed in his coffin before life was actually extinct and an attempt was made to fix the responsibility for this upon the medical attendant of the deceased because he had given a certificate of the cause of death without inspecting the body. The evidence as to the continuance of life fell far short of proving this to have been the fact and was given by a witness related to the deceased who was stated to have made similar allegations upon another like occasion. As a matter of fact, however, Mr. George Burton of Wanstead, the medical practitioner who attended the deceased, had seen him last when he was at the point of death and before quitting the house had asked a friend of the wife to prepare her for what he knew must inevitably ensue. He was afterwards informed, as is perfectly usual, that the deceased was dead, and granted in the prescribed manner a certificate of the cause of death. The story of the female witness already mentioned as to what she believed that she observed subsequently to this was the cause of an inquest being held and was also responsible for a rider added by the jury to their verdict, apparently with the acquiescence of the coroner, to the effect that Mr. Burton ought to have inspected the dead body before certifying.