

LETTERS, NOTES, AND ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK'S JOURNAL SHOULD REACH THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN MIDDAY POST ON WEDNESDAY. TELEGRAMS CAN BE RECEIVED ON THURSDAY MORNING.

COMMUNICATIONS respecting Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, 429, Strand, W.C., London; those concerning business matters, non-delivery of the JOURNAL, etc., should be addressed to the Manager, at the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., London.

In order to avoid delay, it is particularly requested that all letters on the editorial business of the JOURNAL be addressed to the Editor at the Office of the JOURNAL, and not to his private house.

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate beforehand with the Manager, 429, Strand, W.C.

CORRESPONDENTS who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names—of course not necessarily for publication.

CORRESPONDENTS not answered are requested to look to the Notices to Correspondents of the following week.

MANUSCRIPTS FORWARDED TO THE OFFICE OF THIS JOURNAL CANNOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE RETURNED.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.—We shall be much obliged to Medical Officers of Health if they will, on forwarding their Annual and other Reports, favour us with *duplicate copies*.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are devoted will be found under their respective headings.

QUERIES.

MICROSCOPE asks to be recommended a useful microscope, moderate in price (five or six guineas), and a small manual on practical microscopic working?

M.B. CANTAB asks: Has an English medical man much chance of gaining a livelihood in California? Can any book be recommended on the climate and expense of living, etc., in California?

MEDICO-LEGAL wishes to be referred to a book where he can find the average weights recorded of children from birth upwards for determining cases of alleged neglect, etc.?

AMBULANCE WAGGONS.

SURGEON-MAJOR UNDERHILL, V.M.S. (Bromsgrove) wishes to know what an ambulance wagon suitable for Volunteer service would cost; and, also, what is the best kind of wagon to have?

SULPHONAL.

A DOCTOR OF MEDICINE asks: Has it been observed that sulphonal, taken for a lengthened period, produces a complete cessation of the catamenia? I have under my care a lady for whom, fifteen months ago, I prescribed, during influenza, 20 grains of sulphonal. Unknown to me, this patient has taken this dose of this drug every single night since. She now consults me for amenorrhoea, and for no other symptom. She is, and looks, perfectly well, and the sulphonal has been stopped. Does experience show any similar relationship of cause and effect in similar cases? There is no anæmia in the case I am alluding to. The lady is unmarried.

THE DIPLOMA IN MENTAL DISEASE, ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

A. B. C. asks: Please inform me when the examination for diploma in mental diseases of the Royal University of Ireland is held, and what books are recommended to be read for it.

* * 1, October 11th, 1893. 2. Bevan Lewis's *Mental Diseases*; Clouston's *Clinical Lectures* (last edition); Savage's *Insanity*; Gowers on *Nervous Diseases*. The candidate must also be able to prepare histological or pathological specimens of nerve tissue.

FRACTIONAL STERILISATION OF MILK.

MCD. W. asks: Would you kindly inform me what is meant by the "fractional or interrupted method" of sterilising milk, and where I can find a full and practical account of it?

* * By the fractional or interrupted method of sterilising milk is meant the alternate heating and cooling of milk for the purpose of more effectually destroying micro-organisms and their spores, and of effecting such destruction at lower temperatures than that of boiling. We are not acquainted with any publication containing a "full and practical account" of the process as regards milk. The principle of the method is well known, and will be found explained in any good work on practical bacteriology.

ANSWERS.

THE PARENT OF A REJECTED CANDIDATE has omitted to enclose his card.

AGREEMENTS BETWEEN PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANTS.

A MEMBER B. M. A.—A draft form of agreement between a principal and assistant was published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL on July 12th, 1890, pp. 115. The stamps required are also stated at the same place.

EXCESSIVE HEAT.

A. L. B.—A return of the kind suggested is not obtainable, but it is certain that the danger from heat in the Red Sea is greatly exaggerated. The Red Sea is the western gate of the tropics, and sick persons in a state of great exhaustion have their first experience of tropical heat when they have left Suez one or two days behind them. Invalids in an almost hopeless condition are often shipped homewards from the East, and die on the passage, and of course not in the Red Sea less frequently than in other parts of the homeward journey.

THE PREVENTION OF BORBOROGYMI.

MR. F. F. JONES, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. (Weston, Bath) writes in reply to "Reader": I recommend m15 of tincture of nux vomica in 3j of water every morning before breakfast (m20 would be about the dose for an adult male). I have found this successful in a good many cases, without making any alteration in diet.

A. G. W. writes:—In answer to "Reader" I would advise careful regulation of the diet and the following mixture:—R bismuth carb. 3ij, soda bicarb. 3ij, glycerin. acid. carbolic. mxlviii, pulv. tragacanth. co. q.s., sp. chloroformi 3j, aq. menth. pip. 3vj, i ter die sum. M. F. M.

ADMINISTRATION OF ANESTHETICS BY DENTISTS.

PRACTITIONER.—Anæsthetics should be administered only by duly qualified medical men. There is no law upon the subject, but only those who are able to perform tracheotomy in the event of asphyxia ought ever to administer nitrous oxide gas. Ether and chloroform should only be administered by medical men experienced in the use of anæsthetics. If a death were to occur in a dentist's chair the magistrate might consider it culpable negligence on the part of the dentist if he had no medical assistant present at the operation. The only safe rule is always to have a second person present, and, when possible, that person should be a doctor, or, better still, a skilled anæsthetist.

TREATMENT OF CONSTIPATION IN INFANTS.

DR. H. OLIPHANT NICHOLSON (Kirkcaldy) writes:—In reply to "Baffled," I would advise him to let the child be fed partly from the breast and partly from the bottle. Give it at least two of its daily meals from the bottle, which should contain equal quantities of boiled milk and barley water, sweetened with sugar, sugar of milk, or a teaspoonful of extract of malt, and to which a little cream (one or two teaspoonfuls), and Mellin's food (one teaspoonful) has been added. If this treatment be unsuccessful it may be necessary to bring up the infant entirely on the bottle in the manner indicated. An important point is to let the child have small quantities of plain filtered water now and then, and it may be well to see that the whole body, including the thighs and legs, is well protected from chill by means of flannel. If laxatives should be necessary let them be of the mild saline type, and use them continuously for some time, but avoid the administration of purgatives. A little magnesia or phosphate of soda may be added to each bottle meal, and the infant's belly may be well rubbed with olive oil after each bath.

NOTES, LETTERS, Etc.

ERRATUM.—In the discussion on Severe Club Foot in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of February 18th, page 343, col. 1, last line, for "The President (Mr. John Croft)" read "The President (Dr. Lewis Marshall)."

ERRATUM.—The publishers of Dr. N. Senn's work on *Tuberculosis*, of which a review appeared in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of February 18th, p. 358, are the F. A. Davis Co.

MARAT.

DR. P. M. BRAIDWOOD (Willesden Green, N.W.) writes: In your issue of February 11th you give a sketch of Dr. J. Paul Marat's career, and ask your readers to fill up some of the blank spaces in Mr. Bailey's account of this French revolutionist. Allow me, therefore, to send you the enclosed extract from Dr. Robert Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*, vol. II, p. 641: "Marat, J. Paul, M.D., a prominent actor in the French Revolution, was born in Neuchâtel, 1744; assassinated about 1793. *On Man; or, Principles of the Reciprocal Influence of the Soul and Body* (London, 1773, 2 vols., 12mo.). *Essay on Glands* (London, 1775, 8vo., 1s. 6d.), chiefly respecting the use of bougies. *An Inquiry into the Nature, Cause, and Cure of a Singular Disease of the Eyes, arising from Mercury, sometimes Mistaken for Guita Serena* (London, 1776). *Découvertes sur le Feu, etc., Discoveries Relative to Fire, Electricity, and Light* (Paris, 1779, 8vo.; 2nd edition, Paris, 1782, 8vo.). *Mémoire sur l'Électricité Médicale, etc., a Mémoire concerning Medical Electricity* (Paris, 1785, 8vo.). *Publiciste Parisien. The Friend of the People*; a Periodical Paper.

"KISSING THE BOOK."

MEDICAL men are, says the *Western Weekly Mercury*, doing their best to get rid of the old custom of oath-taking by "kissing the book." They are moved to this course of action by sanitary considerations, and there seems to be no reasonable answer to set off against their assertions as to the danger of the custom. It is now accepted as a fact that the germs of infectious diseases are wafted on the breath, or transferred by contact with the lips of persons who are themselves affected, or who have been in recent contact with affected persons. What, then, can be more likely to spread disease than the practice of swearing hundreds of witnesses upon a single copy of the New Testament? Apart from the chance of infection, the mere idea of kissing the worn and soiled cover of a book that has been handled by no one knows how many scores of dirty fingers, and pressed against no one knows how many scores of unclean lips, must be repulsive to any person of average refinement and self respect. The sooner the custom disappears the better. At Totnes, on February 1st, Dr. Hains asked the magistrate to encourage the substitution of the Scotch method of taking the oath with uplifted hand, by giving witnesses a choice of the two forms. The Bench, however, taking the advice of their clerk, came to the conclusion that it was not within their province to make any suggestions to witnesses, but that the