

"added fat and sugar." The number of babies who are suffering from sheer starvation because of low-calorie milk mixtures must be very great. These cases usually show abnormal stools which clear up on increasing the diet; too often these stools are made an excuse for further dilution of the mixture. The fact that an adequate calorie intake is necessary for full nutrition is such an elementary point that it is amazing to find how little it is appreciated.—I am, etc.,

London, March 29th.

D. C. H.

Treatment of Superfluous Facial Hair

SIR,—In your issue of January 21st, 1933, I described a method of treating superfluous hair on the face by a combination of x -ray epilation with subsequent friction. The x -ray epilation is produced by a dosage insufficient to make it permanent, but the effect, once established, is kept up by daily rubbing pumice-stone "against the grain." After some months a comparatively small amount of attention is often sufficient to maintain smoothness of the face.

Three years' further experience has convinced me of the value of the method in selected cases. A follow-up has shown that the procedure is useless where hair growth of definitely masculine type exists. For such cases I have tried irradiation of the suprarenal area, but the effects are only temporary, and the Broster operation would seem to be the sole hope for such people. Also, in the case of the highly neurotic type of girl, who studies her profile against the light to detect the finest fluff, any method is bound to fail. In the average patient, however, where the hair growth is mild and the mentality normal, results satisfactory to all concerned are obtained. Temporary epilation followed by daily rubbing with pumice-stone, though not an ideal treatment, may be confidently recommended until a better method is discovered—always provided that its limitations are pointed out to the patient.

If this is done carefully and honestly cases of unsuitable mentality are weeded out, and subsequent disappointment and reproach avoided.—I am, etc.,

London, W.1, March 27th.

F. HERNAMAN-JOHNSON.

Lead in Grease Paint

SIR,—As a consulting chemist to the perfumery and cosmetic trades I am deeply interested in the report of a case of chronic lead poisoning due to theatrical grease paint, by Drs. Bartleman and Cuthbert Dukes, which appeared in your issue for March 14th. In Eugene Rimmel's *The Book of Perfumes* (1865) the following passage occurs (page 120): "Paints for the face I cannot conscientiously recommend. Rouge is innocuous in itself, being made of cochineal and safflower; but whites are often made of deadly poisons, such as cost poor Zelgar his life a few months since." In a footnote the author adds: "M. Zelgar was a Belgian singer at the Royal Italian Opera. During the performance of *Guillaume Tell* some of the paint which he had on his face accidentally entered his mouth, and he died in consequence, after a very painful and lingering illness." Rimmel does not state what the paint was, but probably it was white lead.

Chemical science has made big advances since Rimmel's day, and now numerous harmless pigments are available for cosmetic use, so that painting the face need no longer be attended with any danger. Titanium dioxide, for example, provides a perfect substitute for white lead. Indeed, it is more than a substitute, since it represents an improvement.

The account of the chemistry of grease paints in *Pharmaceutical Formulas* (1934, ii), from the beginning on page 121 down to the middle of page 125, to which

Drs. Bartleman and Cuthbert Dukes refer, is quoted from an article of mine on grease paints, which appeared in *The Chemist and Druggist* for September 28th, 1929 (pp. 386-7). A much fuller account will be found in *Paint, Powder and Patches* (Heinemann, 1930), by the late Gilbert A. Foan and myself.—I am, etc.,

H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., F.I.C.

London, S.E.25, March 21st.

Medicines and Appliances (Advertisement) Bill

SIR,—According to the Press report the House of Commons could not get a quorum to discuss the second reading of the Medicines and Appliances (Advertisement) Bill, so the Bill was incontinently dropped into the waste-paper basket. All the hard work and negotiating skill of the Medical Secretary and the chairman of the Medico-Political Committee of the B.M.A., and the backing of the Advertising Association anxious to preserve its repute, has gone for nothing.

It is unfortunate that the Bill was taken on the day of the Grand National, for many of the faithful Commons probably had gone North; also the count was taken when probably many had gone to lunch and would not be disturbed on account of a "trivial little Bill" like this. Yet they are being paid £400 a year each to attend to their duties, and forty—about 6 per cent. of the total membership—could not be gathered together to listen to the debate or take part in it.

The Association has striven for thirty years to educate public opinion and promote legislation to mitigate the major social evil of swindling advertisements to cure disease, not in its own interests, but in the interests of the public weal. It must be disheartening to men who give up so much of their time and make such efforts to prevent rogues from defrauding the public to find their work treated with contempt. There are many nowadays who hold that democratic institutions are effete, and the present case seems to me to give support to that opinion.—I am, etc.,

Warrington, March 30th.

J. S. MANSON.

Recruitment of Medical Men in a National Emergency

SIR,—The apathy of the medical profession to matters of great importance to itself is always remarkable. Colonel Walsh's letter in the *Journal* of March 14th (p. 557) raised questions important enough for editorial comment—so far it has stimulated one letter. In 1914 hundreds of doctors left everything on the outbreak of war and joined one of the Services at once. Their colleagues who, from choice or necessity, stayed behind declared that the interests of those absent on service would be protected, and doubtless they meant what they said. However, the war went on so long that ideals faded, more joined up, and practices changed hands; so on demobilization very many doctors instead of returning to a practice returned to—nothing.

I am well aware of the many men at home who kept faith, in my experience more notably among the older practitioners. But there was much bitterness amongst ex-Service men in every branch of the profession. They saw that their practices had disintegrated. They saw the Ministry of Pensions expanding in every centre, but its permanent medical officials were largely drawn from men who were on the spot and had not been over-seas. Young consultants returned to find their juniors now senior to them on the staff of their hospitals, with cars costing more than the whole of a war gratuity, demonstrating the material advantages of remaining at home. One even had to listen to their tales of hardship, chiefly lack of holidays and food tickets.