

or modified. To obtain this result excessive doses are not required, but are contraindicated.

Can we improve upon the *vis medicatrix naturae*? I would enter a plea for the application of radium not as a destructive agent but in more moderate doses, employed in such a way as to assist the natural forces which the human body is capable of exerting, giving time and patience, and depending less upon large doses as a destructive agent, with the object of obtaining speedy and spectacular results.

At the present time there seems to be a general impression in the public mind that radium treatment is painful. This is not the case. When applied in the manner suggested radium treatment is painless, and in the article referred to occurs the statement, "pain is not a feature even of a severe conjunctival reaction, or even of corneal necrosis." Pain in radium treatment occurs when it is used in excessive doses and as a destructive agent, also in conditions which may be brought about by its use in that manner. I would quote the case of a lady who had an innocent tumour in front of the shoulder. Into this half a dozen radium needles were inserted and left for six days. The result was interference with the circulation in the axilla.

In conclusion, being myself a firm believer in the efficacy of radium as a remedial agent, my letter is written with the object of attracting attention to the good work which is being done in many directions, and to the good results which are being obtained, so that the apprehension of the public, which is undoubtedly largely existent at the present time with regard to radium treatment, may be allayed.—I am, etc.,

RALPH H. BROWNE-CARTHEW, M.D.

London, S.W., April 5.

Acquired Haemophilia

SIR,—Mr. C. V. Braimbridge's case of acquired haemophilia described in the *Journal* of February 6 (p. 301) is indeed very interesting. Though acquired haemophilia is not known to occur, it is very difficult to explain the case in any other way, particularly in view of the fact that the patient was operated on in 1927 without any untoward effect.

With regard to the treatment I would suggest the use of stypven, which is a preparation of Russell's viper venom put on the market by Messrs. Burroughs Wellcome and Co. It can be used either by local application in a dilution of 1 in 10,000 or by intradermal injection in a dilution of 1 in 100,000, the dose for injection being 1/2 to 1 c.cm. Dr. Hance of Bangalore has even used the preparation for intravenous injection without any ill effect. For further information I would refer readers to a paper on the subject by Dr. J. B. Hance in the *Indian Medical Gazette* of February, 1937, in which he describes three cases of severe post-operative bleeding in haemophiliacs treated by stypven used in three different ways—namely, local application, intradermal injection, and intravenous injection. In one of the cases bleeding occurred after tonsillectomy.—I am, etc.,

Nairobi, March 5.

K. V. ADALJA.

The Birching of Children

SIR,—The letter in the *Journal* of March 27 by Dr. Maple is somewhat amazing. He would have us believe that the ceremony of birching young offenders approaches that of the grim ritual portrayed in the film "Mutiny on the Bounty."

I have myself witnessed about a dozen birchings of young children, and although it is not a pleasing spectacle I have no hesitation in saying that in not a single instance was there any sign of that physical and mental anguish that Dr. Maple would have us believe afflicts the unfortunate victim. In every case the victim left the prison as if nothing had happened. In every case the birching was administered with the consent of the boy's father as an alternative to imprisonment.

Every boy who is worth his mettle, no matter to what class he may belong, knows that when he does a mischievous thing he may, if he is unlucky enough to be found out, be called upon to pay the penalty. A mischievous spirit is part of every healthy boy's character, and if punishment is given, painful though it may be, he accepts it as part of the game—that is the essence of sportsmanship. If, as Dr. Maple says, a beating damages a boy's mental make-up for six weeks, then I fear that all the English public schools must be full of potential nervous wrecks. Nothing is further from the truth.

The growth of psycho-analysis in the last few years has been amazing, but it is a double-edged weapon and should only be applied to certain chosen cases; applied haphazard it can do the most incalculable harm, and turn healthy young people into hypochondriacs and incurable neurotics. The increase of juvenile crime during the last ten years has been a difficult problem to tackle, but I am of the firm opinion that corporal punishment, carried out humanely and with every consideration for the particular case in point, is a far better method of controlling crime than a lot of indiscriminate dabbling with a science about which so few of us know so very little.—I am, etc.,

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Medical Officer, H.M. Prison, Jersey.

Jersey, March 31.

Milk and the Health of the Cow

SIR,—After reading Dr. Brockington's article on compulsory pasteurization of milk (*Journal*, March 27, p. 667) I feel that if all the intellectual energy of the M.O.H.s expended on behalf of milk pasteurization had been directed into channels for the prevention of disease in cows the whole problem ere now would be well on the way to a satisfactory settlement. He, like all his colleagues, has been vigorously advertising the value of milk-drinking, and thereby encouraging an increased production of milk at the expense of the poor old cow.

All the milk-registering societies are of the devil, because their great aim is to record a pathological disturbance of the cow's udder, resulting in an increased flow of milk which is only fit to drink when still further damaged by pasteurization. These pathological udders indicate a lowered vitality of the cow and a predisposition to further disease, whereby the tubercle bacillus, *Brucella abortus*, and streptococcal organisms are able to flourish all the more abundantly.

It is bad enough for a strong healthy cow to struggle against adverse conditions when fed on food grown on an impoverished soil, but when cows with pathological udders have to struggle "against the market" on limeless soil Dr. Brockington is silent. We can hope to have a healthy nation only when we realize that men, animals, and soil are inseparably interdependent: their health rates rise and fall together. If we do not feed the soil—which these days is ravenous—we cannot expect the cows to get good food, and if the cows are badly fed they become predisposed to so many diseases that the milk and the meat suffer. No amount of pasteurization is going to help the cow to recover, but it certainly will