

only in those handling sheep, such as farmers, veterinary surgeons, and butchers, but also on occasions in city housewives who are fond of gardening.—I am, etc.,

Edinburgh.

G. A. GRANT PETERKIN.

The South African Meeting

SIR,—Does not the difference of opinion between the B.M.A. and Sir Reginald Watson-Jones (March 3, p. 477) on the South African meeting reflect not so much a difference of outlook as a difference of approach? The approach of the British Medical Association is political, that of Watson-Jones medical. Should not these two approaches be integrated and not opposed? Quite rightly the B.M.A. is not going to pass over lightly the probable humiliation of any of its members, especially when this is viewed in the sombre background of racial oppression.

At the same time the Malan Government is a sufferer from psychoneurosis—a deep seated and terrible one it is true—but nevertheless a disorder which is more likely to respond to firm but sympathetic therapy than to the cold shoulder. Moreover, I do not think that the South African Medical Association can be blamed for its Government unless the B.M.A. is prepared to hold itself responsible for our own.

Let the B.M.A. reconsider its decision. Let the meeting be held as originally arranged, but those who take Watson-Jones's advice and go should not forget that racial oppression is the most cruel of all because it is inescapable. Even toeing the line cannot save you from it. And let them whenever and wherever possible apply by word and action that sympathetic criticism which is the basis of psychotherapy.—I am, etc.,

Fatfield, near Washington, Co. Durham.

M. J. CLAY.

SIR,—The letter of Sir Reginald Watson-Jones (March 3, p. 477) does not appear to suggest a reasonable solution to the difficulties that have arisen with regard to the meeting. Surely some organization would be necessary to make full-scale arrangements. What body or association is capable of carrying out such an arduous task, apart from the B.M.A.? Sir Reginald gives his blessing to British ideals of freedom, and then proceeds to make all the excuses he can think of on behalf of the Malan Government. Condemnations and excuses run throughout the letter. To suggest that the action of the B.M.A. though it is *correct* is unfortunate is a denial of the elementary principles of right and wrong.—I am, etc.,

Hull.

R. BERTRAM BLAIR.

POINTS FROM LETTERS

Copper Sulphate Douche in Vaginitis

Dr. K. A. EXLEY (Leeds) writes: . . . I have found the mild astringent and trichomonocidal properties of copper sulphate valuable in relieving the symptoms (in acute trichomoniasis and in vaginitis) and in paving the way for the use of stronger and more orthodox medicaments later. Daily douching for three days with a warm 0.5% solution of copper sulphate usually controls the symptoms and may be followed by further douching at four- or five-day intervals. On each occasion the vulva should be thoroughly swabbed with the solution.

How to get to Sleep

Dr. LINDESAY NEUSTATTER (London, W.1) writes: Dr. W. N. Leak (March 3, p. 473) advocates the hot-water bottle for inducing sleep. It doubtless has its place, but for those with a tolerably good circulation, plenty of bed-clothes, the window wide open, and warming up cold sheets from the body's own heat produce relaxation and refreshing sleep which the artificial warmth of the hot-water bottle can never equal. For myself I find that if one comes in late, tense, tired, and moistly warm, there is nothing to equal a cold sponge before turning in. However, I still have to make a convert to this procedure, as my suggestion invariably meets with a chilly response.

Obituary

Sir PERCY TOMLINSON, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.
F.R.C.P.

Major-General, Army Medical Services

Major-General Sir Percy Tomlinson, who during the last war was the officer responsible for building up the vast medical organization of Middle East Command, died at Hove on March 6, aged 66 years.

Percy Stanley Tomlinson was the son of Lieutenant-Colonel W. W. Tomlinson, R.A.M.C. He went to school at Clifton College and studied medicine at Bristol University, qualifying in 1908. After holding a resident appointment at the Bristol General Infirmary, Tomlinson joined the R.A.M.C. in 1909. He served with distinction in the first world war, being mentioned three times in dispatches and receiving the award of the D.S.O. During the inter-war years he steadily progressed in his chosen branch of the profession, being promoted colonel in 1937. While he was posted to a Territorial adjutancy in London he became a Member of the Royal College of Physicians in 1931. At the end of 1938 he was appointed D.D.M.S. British Troops in Egypt—his task was to prepare the Army Medical Services in Egypt and the Sudan for a possible war. Early in 1940 he was appointed Director of Medical Services in the Middle East with the rank of Acting Major-General (he received the substantive rank a few months later), and he remained in that post until the end of 1943, when he was transferred to England to become General Montgomery's D.M.S. in 21 Army Group. The proudest honour in his career was that he was D.M.S. to five G.O.C.s in Chief who later became Field Marshals—Lord Wavell, Sir Claude Auchinleck, Viscount Alexander, Lord Wilson, and Viscount Montgomery. He retired from the Army in November, 1944.

Many honours were awarded to Tomlinson for his distinguished service to his country. He was made a C.B. in 1941 and became an honorary physician to the King. In 1943 he was created K.B.E. and elected F.R.C.P. He was also an honorary F.R.C.P. of Edinburgh. The French Government made him an Officer of the Legion of Honour and awarded him the Croix de Guerre (with palm). He also held the American Order of Merit. In 1945 he became Colonel Commandant of the R.A.M.C.

During the last few years Tomlinson was able to give some of his time to the B.M.A. He was a member of Council from 1948 to 1950, and also a member of the Armed Forces Committee. Before he went to live in Hove he was a member of the Croydon Group Hospital Management Committee.

He married Miss G. M. Barr in 1920: they had a daughter and a son, who was killed in action in 1941.

Major-General J. M. Macfie, A.M.S., writes: My first meeting with Tomlinson was in August, 1915.



(Walter Stoneman, London)