

May I end by offering my whole-hearted support and congratulations to the Chairman of Council on his very prompt and courageous action in suspending circulation?—I am, etc.,

Rugby.

R. PRESTON HENDRY.

SIR,—It is a matter of grave importance when the leading professional organization in the country comes out with an attack on Christian morality. Surely the B.M.A. is, to say the least of it, unwise to make statements which cause scandal and pain to its Christian members and to others. Can a Christian continue to subscribe to an organization which puts out propaganda which he regards as sinful?

The best course would be to repudiate these views, and withdraw the booklet.—I am, etc.,

London, N.W.4.

R. W. COCKSHUT.

SIR,—Please add my protest to what, I have no doubt, has become a growing flood: I refer, of course, to the opening pages of "Getting Married," published by the British Medical Association—ungrammatical, inaccurate, and tendentious. To cite some examples:

Page 38: "If left alone, we would [?] should] perish," as would baby rats. Page 40: "[A relationship] which presupposes the acceptance of each as they really are." . . . "Since each, unbeknown to the other, would be using his partner merely for their own personal satisfaction." Page 41: "Freed of [?] from] preconceived ideas and prejudices."

Page 38: "One woman in every three at the present time in this country admits to [sic] premarital intercourse." This is patently untrue: perhaps the author means, Of those questioned by me one wife in three admits (or confesses to) premarital intercourse. "One in eight births would have been illegitimate but for the subsequent marriage of the parents." Page 54: "One bride in eight is already having a baby at the time of her wedding." These statements cannot possibly both be true.

Page 40: "[The double standard of morality] has up till now been based on the functional differences between the sexes. . . . But with the advent of female emancipation, with all that is implied, the functional differences have lost much of their meaning." So has this sentence—unless it means that men now conceive and bear children. Page 41: "And a shocking price has [sic], and is, being paid for by [society's] unforgivable hypocrisy." Delete "by" and some trace of meaning can be extracted from words which as they stand have none.

Pages 40 and 41: "By the kind permission of society, we are allowed to lose our chastity when married. All too often events prove this to be too little and too late." For as far back as human records go, a wife's chastity throughout her married life has been reckoned her brightest jewel. And I firmly believe that the great majority of all the millions of married people in this country live in entire chastity during the whole of their married lives, and would be revolted to think anything else possible. As for the second sentence, anyone who can extract an intelligible meaning from it deserves a D.Litt.

No wonder the popular press is smacking its lips. It will take long to assess the harm this publication has done the Association in the eyes of the general public; and recovery will take longer still.—I am, etc.,

Cambridge.

E. WATSON-WILLIAMS.

SIR,—I wish to register a very definite protest at the publication under the aegis of the British Medical Association of such a booklet as "Getting Married." Words cannot express my sense of shock and disgust at some of the expressions of opinion contained therein, which are the antithesis of all that is truly Christian.

I have cancelled my order to my bookseller for *Family Doctor*, as this appears in my waiting-room and I would hate my patients to think that I associate myself with teaching of this sort.—I am, etc.,

Shaftesbury, Dorset.

R. W. PINNIGER.

SIR,—I am appalled that a book published by the British Medical Association in good faith, and setting out the views of the contributors on matters of immediate social importance, should be withdrawn in response to the pressure of special groups, and without any reference to the members of the Association. I refer, of course, to "Getting Married."

The profession is not an arbiter of private morality. Dr. Solomon Wand should be waved again. If the attitude of the Association's Council supports this prejudiced and timorous action, I am sure I shall not be alone in withdrawing from the Association.—I am, etc.,

London, W.1.

B. S. COOPER.

Obstetric Problems in G.P.

SIR,—Mr. S. Bender (*Journal*, February 21, p. 497) advises intravenous ergometrine at the end of the second stage of a domiciliary forceps delivery under local analgesia, but he considers that the presence of a second doctor is necessary. An alternative, based on the principle of doing nothing that can be done by the midwife, is to deliver the head, remove the forceps, hand over delivery of the shoulders to her, and give the intravenous injection oneself. There is plenty of time, particularly if the patient is keeping herself in relative oblivion with trichlorethylene.

When only two persons, doctor and midwife, are present, it is especially important to avoid simultaneous post-partum haemorrhage and foetal apnoea. A combination of local analgesia and second stage intravenous ergometrine virtually abolishes the former and reduces the chances of the latter. To give the ergometrine is well worth while, and the only price to be paid is the need for a second pair of gloves for repair of the perineum.—I am, etc.,

Hucclecote, Gloucester.

IVOR COOKSON.

Serum Gonadotrophin in Acne

SIR,—I disagree with the conclusions drawn by Dr John H. S. Pettit (*Journal*, February 28, p. 557). I am still having good results with tablets of serum gonadotrophin in patients with acne vulgaris. A mild exacerbation between the third and sixth weeks is not uncommon, and improvement cannot be judged until after ten weeks. Many of my patients receive no other treatment. These tablets are soluble in saliva and are inactivated by the stomach. Absorption from the mouth is therefore essential, but dissolving the tablets in the mouth and absorption through its mucous membrane are two different things. Most of my failures have been due either to dissolving the tablets under the tongue instead of putting them between the gum and the cheek or to sucking them vigorously. In both cases the gonadotrophin is, in fact, dissolved in the saliva and swallowed. The tablets should take between three-quarters of an hour and two hours to disappear. When they go more quickly improvement cannot be expected. Perhaps these points explain Dr. Pettit's results.—I am, etc.,

London, W.1.

E. LIPMAN COHEN.