

that period the amount of immunization practised in London was negligible.

The memorandum of the Wandsworth Division states that "it is known that deaths from diphtheria can be prevented by immunization." There are records of at least thirty deaths from diphtheria of immunized children in this country. These are the admitted deaths. Keen advocates of immunization actually suggest that if, in a case of diphtheria in an immunized child, there is a negative reaction to the Schick test, the case should be rediagnosed as tonsillitis, regardless of the fact that fatal cases of diphtheria have occurred in Schick-negatives and that undoubted cases of diphtheria at Leeds and elsewhere have given a Schick-negative reaction during the course of the illness.

The memorandum also states that "the injections are almost painless." On the other hand, the medical officer for Hammersmith, in a report to his public health committee, said: "It appears that children receive the first injection without much objection, but difficulty is experienced in persuading the child to attend for the second and third injections. They become nervous, cry, and owing to this difficulty immunization has not been completed."—I am, etc.,

London, E.2, Feb. 11.

M. BEDDOW BAYLY.

Sanitation and Holiday Camping

SIR,—A letter by Dr. R. Coates under the above heading in your issue of January 7 (p. 39) has been brought to my notice. Your correspondent is evidently ignorant of the fact that the 1936 Public Health Act gave local authorities absolute control over the sanitation, etc., of all camping grounds. The remedy is therefore in the hands of the local authorities, and most of them have been very active in controlling all regular camping grounds.

Further, your correspondent is ignorant of the fact that camping grounds all over the country are paying heavy rates to local authorities. I can instance a case of £700 a year being paid by the owners of one large camping ground without receiving any return at all from the local authorities except permission to use the water supply. Lastly, your correspondent is evidently ignorant of the very great benefit to health from camping and of the fact that no case of infectious disease spreading among holiday campers has ever yet occurred.—I am, etc.,

S. J. C. RUSSELL,
Organizing Secretary.

The Camping Club of Great
Britain and Ireland, London, S.W.1.

The second statutory meeting of the International Assembly of Cosmobiology was held last December, and the third will take place in Mentone from April 9 to 11. In addition to the ordinary official business there will be a discussion of the scope and potentialities of this organization, and arrangements will be started for the holding in 1940 of the second international congress of the International Association of Cosmobiology. Further details may be obtained on application to Dr. M. Faure, the general secretary of the association, Rue Verdi 24, Nice. The fourteenth Easter holiday tour of the Medical Society of the Mediterranean Coast will begin on April 8 at Mentone; the places to be visited include l'Annonciade, the Italian frontier, Cap Martin, Monaco, Roquebrune, Villefranche, Cap d'Antibes, Juan-les-Pins, and Cannes. An extension of the tour to Corsica will be possible. Lectures and demonstrations of interest to medical practitioners will be given, and the full programme may be obtained from the climatological office of that medical society, Rue Verdi 24, Nice.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND THE CANCER BILL

DEPUTATION FROM B.M.A.

The Minister of Health on February 21 received a deputation from the British Medical Association, who wished to discuss with him a number of questions which will arise if the Cancer Bill becomes law in connexion with the guidance which the Minister will give to the responsible local authorities.

Sir Kaye Le Fleming, Chairman of the Council of the British Medical Association, introduced the deputation, which included Professor R. M. F. Picken (chairman of the Public Health Committee), Sir Henry Brackenbury, Mr. Bishop Harman, Dr. J. W. Bone, and Dr. C. Hill (Deputy Secretary of the Association).

The deputation especially expressed the hope that the cancer schemes would make use of the facilities of the larger voluntary and municipal general hospitals, which normally provide the specialist services in each region, and would not establish separate special clinics not closely linked with the general hospitals. They also suggested that the arrangements for facilitating the diagnosis and early treatment of cancer should include the provision of consultant facilities in the homes of patients. They trusted that the Minister would direct the attention of local authorities to the desirability of the development of schemes on a regional basis, and that the Minister would make full use of the power given him by the Bill to require local authorities to combine for the purpose of making adequate arrangements for diagnosis and treatment.

Finally, they stressed the desirability of a system of uniform records of clinical findings so that proper statistical material might be available for purposes of investigation and research.

The Minister's Reply

In reply to the deputation the Minister mentioned that in addition to the Medical Advisory Committee, now of some years' standing, whose function it was to advise him on matters of common interest to the medical profession and the Ministry, he intended to appoint a subcommittee of this Medical Advisory Committee to advise him on general principles with regard to the treatment of cancer and to consider any questions on that subject which he might refer to them. He proposed to consult this subcommittee on the general exercise of his functions under the Cancer Bill, including the principles to be applied to the arrangements, which would have to be submitted to him for approval before they could be given effect. In this connexion he would gladly keep in mind the views expressed by the deputation. He could at once say that, broadly speaking, he was in agreement with the deputation's opinion that maximum use should be made of the facilities provided by the existing voluntary and municipal general hospitals, and that clinics should normally be closely associated with these hospitals. As for consultants, they would normally not be available except at hospitals and clinics, but he agreed that it might be found desirable to make arrangements for consultants to visit the homes of patients in exceptional cases. In many regions it would clearly be desirable that a large and well-equipped hospital should serve the areas of more than one local authority, and this might be achieved either by a series of agreements with each local authority or by one agreement with the combination of authorities. He fully agreed with the deputation as to the importance of the collection of records on a uniform basis and their utilization for the purposes of investigation and research. It thus seemed that there was no real point of difference between himself and the deputation on almost all their points.

Sir Kaye Le Fleming thanked the Minister for the way in which he had received the deputation's representations, and assured him that they were all concerned to do all in their power to make the cancer scheme a practical success.