

LETTERS, NOTES, AND ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK'S JOURNAL SHOULD REACH THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN MIDDAY POST ON WEDNESDAY. TELEGRAMS CAN BE RECEIVED ON THURSDAY MORNING.

COMMUNICATIONS respecting Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, 429, Strand, W.C., London; those concerning business matters, non-delivery of the JOURNAL, etc., should be addressed to the Manager, at the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., London.

IN order to avoid delay, it is particularly requested that all letters on the editorial business of the JOURNAL be addressed to the Editor at the Office of the JOURNAL and not to his private house.

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate beforehand with the Manager, 429, Strand, W.C.

CORRESPONDENTS who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names—of course not necessarily for publication.

CORRESPONDENTS not answered are requested to look to the Notices to Correspondents of the following week.

MANUSCRIPTS FORWARDED TO THE OFFICE OF THIS JOURNAL CANNOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE RETURNED.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.—We shall be much obliged to Medical Officers of Health if they will, on forwarding their Annual and other Reports, favour us with *duplicate copies*.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are devoted will be found under their respective headings.

QUERIES.

J. D. M. asks whether a soft water, free from organic impurities, but containing 41.5 parts of carbonate soda per 100,000, is to be regarded as wholesome; and, if not, how it can be rendered so?

INQUIRER asks for advice as to the choice of a climate favourable to a patient suffering from frequent attack of migraine. The patient has for some years been living in Norfolk, perhaps too dry and bracing a county. She has now the choice of residing in any of the following places: Derby, Bedford, Weymouth, Reading, Dunstable, Worcester, Leamington, Abingdon, Jersey, Guernsey, and London.

J. H. asks for suggestions in the treatment of a patient who complains of "coated tongue and a sweetish taste in the mouth." This has lasted for years, and there are no other symptoms of digestive disorder, the patient being otherwise in apparently good health. Various remedies have been tried, including calomel, rhubarb, and saline purgatives, but with no apparent benefit.

M. O. writes: I should feel greatly obliged if any of your readers could give me a list of books (1) treating of the fevers of India, (2) tropical diseases, and (3) syphilitic diseases of the nervous system. Nos. (1) and (2) are required as works of reference in writing a thesis on the subject.

*. There has been no book on the fevers of India published since Fayrer's *Climate and Fevers of India*, and in it the subject is not treated of from the standpoint of the malaria organism of Laveran. Chevers, Moore, Maclean, Aitken, Morehead, Martin, Annesley—all treat of the fevers of India. (2) Tropical diseases: Davidson's *Hygiene and Diseases of Warm Climates* is the most recent; Corré's *Maladies des Pays Chauds* and Roux on the same subject are the most recent French works. Our correspondent will find ample bibliographies in all of these works—particularly in the French works. He should also consult Hirsch's *Geographical and Historical Pathology* and Davidson's *Geographical Pathology*.

DIAGRAMS.

S. G. writes: Is there any soci- or company or private firm that lends out on hire large illustrations suitable to pin on a wall to illustrate popular medical lectures?

*. Popular diagrams and illustrations to illustrate anatomical subjects may be had at the National Health Society, 53, Berners Street, Oxford Street, W.

ANSWERS.

MR. JAMES PEARCE should recommend his friend to consult a qualified medical practitioner.

M. D.—A full summary of the provisions in the new French medical law which affect foreign practitioners was given in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of April 18th, 1891 (p. 871), and April 25th, 1891 (p. 924).

DR. A. G. OSBOEN.—The exercises for spinal curvature, most of which are acknowledged as suggestions of Bernard Roth, were described by Sayre in a paper read before the New York State Medical Association in 1885, and subsequently published in the *Proceedings*. A copy of this paper may very probably be obtained from Angell of New York, and will be found in the library of the Royal College of Surgeons, *Pamphlets*, Vol. 423.

A SURGICAL QUESTION.

L. N. N.—(1) Greenstick fracture of the radius is usually the result of direct violence, and therefore might be caused by a stone.

(2) In a boy aged 12 a blow from a stone would be more likely to

cause complete than partial fracture, but the possibility of the latter cannot be excluded.

(3) In such an injury as L. N. N. describes, one would certainly expect to find some immediate external marks of injury. (It seems odd that a "boy" was able to hit another boy with a stone weighing several pounds at a distance of twenty yards.)

(4) The ecchymosis may be best attributed to the contusion of the forearm, caused by the injury, whatever the nature of this injury might have been.

(5) In case of fracture by direct violence the differences in the external marks of injury would be simply differences of degree. If the forearm were covered by clothing there would be less contusion, but not a total absence of redness, swelling, and ecchymosis.

(6) The convexity would be found on the opposite surface to that on which the blow was received; the concavity would be on the side struck.

(7) The convexity of the bent or fractured radius being in front, it is very probable, indeed almost certain, that the blow must have been applied to the posterior surface of the forearm. A blow on the front of the forearm would produce a posterior convexity which would, moreover, be favoured by the natural curvature of the radius.

THE STAINING AND MOUNTING OF URINARY DEPOSITS.

H. M. S.—Dr. Byrom Bramwell informs us that the solution of boric acid employed by him in the first stage of the process of preparing urinary casts is saturated. It is only necessary to use the boric solution in hot weather or when the urine has to be kept for some time. Under ordinary circumstances, particularly if the tube casts are abundant, there is no need to mix the urine with the boric solution.

NOTES, LETTERS, Etc.

CORRECTION.

IN the memorandum on Dysentery and Tropical Liver Abscesses by Dr. C. M. Jessop, published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of July 21st, p. 127, second paragraph, third line, for "or diets" read "districts"; third paragraph, seventh line, for "meal food" read "meat food." ERRATUM.—In our last issue, p. 81, column 2, line 23 from foot, for "small pox," read "typhus."

THE MESSAGE SCANDAL.

Truth publishes the following article on Message: "Much praise is due to the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL for having in its current issue called attention in plain language to a new social evil, or a new phase of an old social evil, which has of late developed in a manner calculated to excite amazement to those who still regard England as a moral country. For months past the advertisements of certain message establishments, the character of which has now been exposed by the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, have been nothing less than a public scandal. The language in which they have been couched has been such as to convey its suggestion with scarcely a possibility of a mistake to all but those, if any there are, who pass through life without knowing what vice is; and a choice for a medium for some of the notices (one of the most suggestive has adorned the pages of a leading financial paper) would help to dispel any doubt as to the true 'inwardness' of the announcement. My own attention has been called to the question again and again and I have been appealed to from several quarters to expose certain parties engaged in the disreputable business. Two considerations have prevented my responding to such appeals. In the first place the subject is an unsavoury one which nobody cares to talk about, and the discussion of which in a newspaper offends many over-sensitive readers. In the second place from the nature of the case it is almost impossible to obtain witnesses in support of specific allegations against particular individuals or particular establishments, and unless it is possible to bring the matter to an issue by exposing and denouncing particular individuals I prefer not to attack an evil of the kind at all.

"All my experience of journalism goes to prove that only by making specific allegations can any practical result be obtained. If a newspaper deals with a matter of this kind and confines itself to mere generalities, it is likely to do more harm than good. A medical paper, however, is in a very different position. The use and abuse of message are professional questions which doctors are bound to face, and on which all members of the profession ought to be fully informed. A medical journal having thus broached the subject, I feel bound to add my testimony to the gravity of the evil. The inquiries which I have made leave no room for doubt (even if the professors of the business made less secret about it than some of them do) that under the name of message treatment there has been carried on in various parts of London, both in the City and West End, an organised system of vice. Nor is there any room for doubt that it is a system peculiarly baneful in its effects, and the source of most pernicious demoralisation to men and women. One of the first who called my attention to the subject, now several months back, was a physician in one of the foremost London hospitals, who had gained his knowledge in the course of his professional experience; and the facts which he laid before me (facts derived directly from patients) were such as no decent person could contemplate without horror.

"I take it, therefore, that there is one question, and one only, in this case, namely, how the evil is to be put down. Primarily, the existence of the establishments where the name of message is but a thin disguise for another business is a matter for the police. Such places are amenable to the law, and now that the truth about them has become notorious there ought to be no delay in putting the law in force against them. But when the law has done its utmost there still remains a probability that the immorality which has lately flaunted itself in the face of the public may continue surreptitiously, and in a form more difficult to deal with. Against that evil it is the duty of the medical profession to guard us. It is a good sign that the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL partially recognises this duty by suggesting the registration of qualified message practitioners, and though the writer discovers a good many difficulties in the way, they will hardly strike the unprofessional reader as insurmountable. The fact has to be recognised that the pro-