

inevitably heal—irrespective of what it is dressed with. To keep the ulcer healed all one needs to do is to control the oedema either by dealing with its cause, if amenable, or by effective compression of the leg.

I have almost never had to put a patient to bed to heal his ulcer (in any case, unless he lies recumbent with the foot of the bed elevated, the venous pressure in the legs is still raised) but have used one-way stretch compression bandaging, together with active ambulation<sup>1</sup>—a physiological approach—to achieve consistently excellent results and without the use of expensive and scarce in-patient treatment and facilities. (The average cost of bandage and dressings is about £A.1=16s. sterling.)—I am, etc.,

Melbourne, Australia.

W. STERN.

REFERENCE

<sup>1</sup> Stern, W., *Med. J. Aust.*, 1960, 2, 292.

SIR,—Dr. Allan Bigham's letter (May 6, p. 1323) about the obese elderly patient suffering from leg ulcers, with oedema, prompts me to write and let you know that I have had considerable success with these cases by using small doses of the newer oral diuretics in conjunction with an antibiotic. Swollen oedematous legs and infection seem to subside if a simple non-irritating dressing with a firm supportive bandage is applied to the affected leg.—I am, etc.,

Bulawayo, S. Rhodesia.

H. J. KINGSLEY.

### Vaccine Storage

SIR,—Dr. M. J. Derbyshire's letter (June 24, p. 1833) under the above heading interested me, as I am one of those "doctors with surgeries away from their domestic refrigerator."

I have been using his technique for some years, with one slight but very convenient modification. Our large, wide-mouthed thermos flask would appear to be the same, but, instead of plastic bags of ice, I use those neat screw-top plastic bottles our drug firms so generously send us to spray our noses with "this and that," almost fill them with water, and keep them in my refrigerator under the ice compartment. They are thus always ready for use. They will not damage the flask.—I am, etc.,

Wallington, Surrey.

C. R. NUNAN.

SIR,—The thermos flask method of cold storage, described by Dr. M. J. Derbyshire (June 24, p. 1833), has its uses, but also its dangers. If the preparations to be stored are viral vaccines (poliomyelitis, smallpox, and yellow fever), the method is relatively safe, provided the ice is replenished as soon as it has disappeared: the danger with such vaccines is a rise of temperature above 10° C., which will cause loss of potency, especially of the rather susceptible yellow fever vaccine.

With other biological preparations, such as antisera and vaccines (including toxoids), the danger is that of freezing. Storage of these products at or below freezing point is harmful: deterioration of a product which is frozen solid may be rapid. In many vaccines a granularity develops and the associated destruction of antigenicity is probably due to local increase in salt and preservative concentration during freezing and thawing.

This is not to decry the thermos flask method, which, properly used, is a good one. When using it, however, it is necessary to be fully aware of the latent dangers of deterioration of biological preparations.—I am, etc.,

The Wellcome Research Laboratories,  
Beckenham, Kent.

D. A. CANNON.

## Obituary

F. G. HOBSON, D.S.O., D.M., F.R.C.P.

Dr. F. G. Hobson, honorary consulting physician to the United Oxford Hospitals, died on June 26 at the age of 69.

Frederick Greig Hobson, who was a member of an old Oxford family, came up to New College in 1910 from Westminster School to read medicine, but as soon as he had taken Schools the first world war broke out. Hobson, being the proud possessor of a motor-bicycle, at once volunteered as a dispatch rider and revealed all those attributes—courage, a selfless devotion to duty, and inexhaustible energy—which were to characterize his life. By 1917 he was a brigade major and had been awarded the D.S.O., the citation reading, "During thirty hours he continually organized parties for water and bomb carrying and also for carrying the wounded."

The precision and planning of things military appealed to him, but the attraction of medicine was stronger, and he had already come under the spell of Sir William Osler, then Regius Professor of Medicine. So a promising Army career was abandoned and Hobson completed his medical training at St. Thomas's Hospital, where, after graduating in 1919, he held house appointments. He then returned to Oxford, at first to carry out research work with Professor Georges Dreyer, as he had been awarded the Theodore Williams scholarship in pathology, but soon he set up in practice in St. Giles and rapidly built up a large private practice. He had married Audrey Gotch, the eldest daughter of Professor Francis Gotch, Waynefleete Professor of Physiology, and the perfect harmony of their married life was tragically broken by Mrs. Hobson's death in December, 1959.

In 1921 Dr. Hobson took the M.R.C.P. and in the following year was appointed assistant physician to the Radcliffe Infirmary, and until his retirement as senior physician in 1956 he devoted much of his energies to the work of the hospital. He was also physician to several of the surrounding hospitals—Wallingford, Savernake, and Marlborough—and to many schools. He was consultant to the Territorials and served on innumerable boards and committees. He took a full part in Oxford medical life, in the B.M.A. (he was a past-chairman of the Oxford Division, a past-president of the Berks, Bucks, and Oxford Branch, and a vice-president of the Section of Medicine at the Annual Meeting in 1937), Oxford Medical Society, Circle of Willis, and Medical Club, and was popular as a lecturer. In the University of Oxford he held the Litchfield clinical lectureship in medicine and was an examiner. He proceeded to the degree of D.M. in 1923 and was elected F.R.C.P. in 1933.

In 1936 the British Medical Association held its 104th Annual Meeting in Oxford, under the Presidency of the Regius Professor, Sir Farquhar Buzzard. Dr. Hobson, as local general secretary, revealed his remarkable gift for organization, for with seemingly effortless ease he created one of the most successful meetings on record. It was at this meeting that Sir Farquhar Buzzard selected as the title of his Presidential address "And the Future," in which he spoke of an ambitious dream of developing a postgraduate medical school at Oxford integrated with the scientific departments, and it was then that Lord Nuffield took the first step in turning the dream into a reality by the benefaction which he gave to the University in October of the same year. It was inevitable that the medical staff of the Radcliffe Infirmary should view with some concern the grafting on to their county and city hospital of a galaxy of high-powered professorial departments, and it was Hobson, as honorary secretary of the medical staff committee, who played a large part in assuaging their anxieties and ensuring that the Radcliffe Infirmary in its transformation to an internationally