LETTERS, NOTES, AND ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK'S JOURNAL SHOULD REACH THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN MONDAY AT 12 M. TELEGRAMS CAN BE RECEIVED ON THURSDAY MORNING.

Communications respecting editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, 429, Strand, W.C., London; 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.

Arrangements of the editors and of the 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 be returned unless special instructions are given.

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.

Aqua regia wants to know of good works describing the varieties and mode of applying the baths provided at first class hydro pathetic establishments, including a list of diseases in which they are useful; also those on massage and electricity in relation to above.

Milk and Butter Testing.

H. R. asks: (1) What is the lowest proportion of cream in milk compared with pure oil, and (2) to be recommended a book giving simple tests for the purity of milk and butter.

" " (1) We presume that our correspondent means the lowest proportion of fat. Cream contains other constituents of milk besides fat, and the richness of a milk cannot be determined by the amount of cream which rises when the milk stands: 3 per cent. by weight is the lowest amount of fat that should be yielded on the analysis, by modern methods, of cow's milk which can justifiably be regarded as genuine. Any cow's milk yielding less fat than this is not of the "nature, substance, and quality" of the article which a purchaser is entitled to get when he asks for cow's milk. Genuine cow's milk of good quality yields higher percentages of fat than that mentioned above, namely 3 per cent., which is adopted as the lowest limit by the Society of Public Analysts, and is now universally accepted both in Great Britain and abroad. (2) With reference to the second part of our correspondent's question, we are acquainted with no book, either expensive or inexpensive, which gives "simple tests" for the purity of milk and butter. Conclusions as to the purity or otherwise of these substances can only be drawn by experts of considerable experience, after careful and full analysis; and nothing is more misleading in these matters than the application of so-called "simple" or popular tests. Great injustice may be done, and much needless alarm caused by this proceeding. Food analysis is a complicated matter, and should only be undertaken by specialists.

ANSWERS.

A.M.—The address of the Income Tax Repayment Agency is 25, Colville Terrace, N.W.

Army Surgeon.—The names of our correspondents in the public services never appear in the list of acknowledgment of letters received unless specially requested.

M.D., F.R.C.S.—It is a matter of opinion. There is no rule on the subject, except in respect to members of the medical profession. Reciprocal courtesies of the kind between kindred professions are, however, very usual.

Examination for F.R.C.S.Ed.

L. R.C.S.Ed.—A well-informed and determined candidate, supplied by us as useful to a candidate taking up midwifery as the optional subject, either Playfair's Science and Practice of Midwifery, or Spiers's Textbook of Midwifery, as published by the New Sydenham Society. Wochen's very bad with very much accident with a severe diarrhoea. Witness wanted to send for a doctor, but deceased was found soon after. The inquest was held, and had been in attendance since. He had been in the habit of taking pills for some time. Dr. Donald Macleod, of 4, King Street, testified to attending deceased, who was suffering from a stricte purging, with other complications. He lingered on in a semi-delirious condition until January 1st, when charges setting in deceased died from exhaustion. The verdict returned was in accordance with the medical evidence.

Swearing with Uplifted Hand.

Dr. E. D. Evans (Wrexham) writes: Acting upon a suggestion made in the British Medical Journal some weeks ago, I obtained the right— in a coronor's court about a fortnight since—to be sworn with uplifted hand. I am pleased to say that at an inquest in which I gave evidence last week, the coroner and jurymen availed themselves of the same privilege, and were so sworn.

The Letters of Trinidad.

Dr. Deaven Baker (Trinidad) writes to say that he will be glad to receive packets of Christmas cards and such things as cards, sweets, and any such odds and ends, to be sent out by parcel post. It would he, he contends, a great help to the less fortunate in Trinidad, in which there are at present 216 inmates, who especially like to think that people in England remember them.

Unqualified Practice by Women in Prussia.

The Prussian Medical and Dental Law, 1890, makes the inquiry as to the practice of medicine by "so-called women" (unqualified women) in that kingdom. The inquiry is to be directed to the following points: In what localities within the various administrative districts is such practice prevalent? Under what designation is it carried on? And what are the means to such practice from the medical and from the social point of view?

Halfpenny Dinners.

The following recipe, used in making soup for the halfpenny dinners at Maude's House, was kindly given by the managing secretary of the London Veterinary Society, Farrington Hall:

To make one gallon: Take 1 lb. of grains (wheat, barley, oats, maize, rice), 1 lb. of pulse (peas and beans), and 1 lb. of barley. Soak for two hours. Then add 1 lb. of potatoes (mashed) and 1 lb. of mixed vegetables (turnips, carrots, onions, and other vegetables). Grated or cut into small. Boil for another hour and stir well. Flavour to taste with butter, sweet herbs, spices, etc. That this soup, with a slice of whole meal bread and another of curd cheese supplied in reasonable quantity to the scholars at a cost of 3d. per head for materials is shown by the following bill of prices:

Soup (3½ gallons): 18 lbs. of lentils, 8 lbs. of rice, 8 lbs. of peas, costing 4s. 3d.; 8 lbs. of turnips, 8 lbs. of carrots, 8 lbs. of potatoes, 2 lbs. of salt, and salt, costing 1½d.; or for another hour and stir well. Flavour to taste with butter, sweet herbs, spices, etc. That this soup, with a slice of whole meal bread at 4d. per quarter, cut into 25 slices, 4s. 6d.; 12 half-quarters of currant whole meal bread at 4d. per quarter), cut into 25 slices, 2s. 6d.; total, 12s. 6d.

Manual of the Volunteer Medical Service.

Surgeon-Captain Reginald Sleman (artists R.Y.) writes: With reference to the review of my book, The Manual for the Volunteer Medical Service, which appears on page 77 of the British Medical Journal, on January 14th, I wish to state that almost all the information contained in the book is drawn from regulations. With regard to the question of the medical service of the officers in a brigade bearer company it is clearly laid down in Medical Regulations, part 1, page 35, that they should be moulded. It is true that it is not necessary for an officer to resign in order to be transferred to another corps, but the instances in which officers have resigned and have then been re-admitted to other corps are very numerous. The term "medicine and duty," as applied to a company's sick report, is complained of, but it will be found in Medical Regulations, part 1, section 1, paragraph 171. The term "lifting and laying," as applied to the transport of wounded, is mentioned in Medical Regulations, part 1, paragraph 239, and the alteration in the colour of the field hospital lights will be found in the Regulations and Instructions for Encampments (1889) paragraph 11, page 181, where it will be noticed that the field hospital lights in the centre of the camp are green. Obviously, the colour of light is therefore correctly given in my book.

Concerning the mobilization of the Volunteer Medical Staff Corps, the information contained in the Volunteer Service Gazette only appeared after my book was printed, so that I was unable to mention the change of the Medical Regulations, taking place at the time.

" " Our Reviewer writes: Surgeon-Captain Sleman is quite correct in saying that according to the details given in the Medical Regulations, the officers of a bearer company are moulded; nevertheless, the statement is not that it is not under the control of the army for these officers to be moulded on home service is also correct.

Both the terms "medicine and duty" and "lifting and laying," as applied to the transport of wounded, are, as Surgeon-Captain Sleman states, to be found in the Medical Regulations. The former term may be misunderstood on sick reports, but no one would give an order to "lay wounded." The colour (white) of the field hospital lights is correct, but the number should be two, not three. There is no "change of station" of the Vol Crops at Central Station Office in my book.

The statement in the Volunteer Service Gazette gives the original position assigned in the sealed to certain companies of that corps.

Too Many Pills.

An inquest was held at Bristol (Bristol Times, January 20th) relative to the death of Miss Margaret Hill. Fanny Goodfellow, housekeeper to the deceased, said he was unwell on January 7th, when he took four Beechan's pills. The next night he was very ill, and had suffered from severe diarrhoea. Witness wanted to send for a doctor, but deceased would not consent until two days later. Dr. Goodfellow then was sent for, and had been in attendance since. He had been in the habit of taking pills for some time. Dr. Donald Macleod, of 4, King Street, testified to attending deceased, who was suffering from a stricte purging, with other complications. He lingered on in a semi-delirious condition until January 1st, when charges setting in deceased died from exhaustion. The verdict returned was in accordance with the medical evidence.