CORRESPONDENCE.

[APRIL 6, 1907.]

MEDICAL STUDENTS AND ORGANISED GYMNASTIC TRAINING.

Srn.—Surgeon-General Evatt does not seem quite to understand why young army medical officers are now entering upon the gymnastic training at Aldershot. It is part of the duty of all medical officers in charge of effective troops in barracks to visit all places set apart for the physical training of the troops frequently, and to give his advice on such matters (vide Paragraph 61 Medical Regulations). Unless the visiting medical officer has actually been put through the same course as the recruits whom he is watching, he can hardly be expected to appreciate the results of the gymnastic training as fully as he would wish.

I think we are all at one with Surgeon-General Evatt in his desire to see gymnasia put in charge of the R.A.M.C.—I am, etc.,

Colchester, April lst.

F. J. W. PORTER, Major R.A.M.C.

** We understand that Surgeon-General Evatt was misinformed when he stated that "in the Royal Navy the whole gymnastic training . . . is handed over to the lieutenant class and no master officer has a look-in." It appears that there are two naval medical officers attached to the Portsmouth School of Physical Training solely for assisting in instruction and medical supervision of classes. Arrangements have also been made for medical officers on entering the Royal Navy to go through a modified gymnastic course so as to make them conversant with the present system of training and to qualify them for similar duties when appointed to ships.

THE SLEEP OF CHILDREN IN TOWNS.

Srn.—I venture to think that the following case, showing what appears to be the remarkable effect of locality on the sleeping of an infant, will be of interest.

Possibly others may have had a similar experience, if so one would be glad to hear of it. The child was very carefully tended; there was no variation in its regulated diet whenever it was, nor was it ever eliminated. Whatever the child was fresh air and ventilation was attended to. I was obliged, therefore, to admit localism was the cause of the sleeplessness, owing to the persistence of the effect of change upon it.

A boy, normal and healthy, born in London and breast-fed, at 4 weeks went to St. Margaret's Bay, stayed there two weeks and then returned home, a place 600 ft. above sea level. Then he commenced to suffer from sleeplessness, nearly always waking up from two to four hours in the middle part of the night, and averaging only five to six hours' sleep in the four months. At 4 months he went to London for a week and slept well there. This was considered to be a fortunate coincidence. He immediately reverted to his sleepless habit on his return home. At the end of the summer's holidays he had been made relatively good and made no difference in sleeping. From the eleventh to the twelfth month he lived in Warwickshire and then two weeks at Boulogne; he slept well in Warwickshire and all night at Boulogne.

In the twelfth month he came home again and the sleeplessness returned as bad as ever. In the thirteenth month he was at Brighton for a week. He kept well for the first three nights, and the other four nights were wakeful, but he had slight diarrhoea at the time. At the end of his thirteenth month he came home; he slept well the first night, less the second, worse the third, and then was as bad as ever, wanting to play in the evening.

At the eighteenth month he went to Florence, and slept well two nights in the train. He continued at Florence two months, and slept well all the time. He has now returned home, and although not so bad as before, is wakeful two or three times every night.

It appears to be pretty certain to me that locality is the factor in this case.

All one can say to the parents is, Take him away again somewhere else.—I am, etc.,

Warlingham, Surrey, March 19th.

W. R. ETCHES, M.D.

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FERRATUM.—In a letter entitled "Vaccination and the I.C.C. Election," by Dr. Arthur Drexel Hill, which appeared in the British Medical Journal of March 30th, p. 780, the clause in the first sentence of the second paragraph, "Of these 12 were elected and 12 defeated," should read, "9 were elected and 15 defeated."