

family doctor is in a far better position to know the constitution, to make required examination, and to deal with delicacy or disease than any public functionary; and surely the home, in presence of the mother, is far more suitable for such examination than the school.

At present it is no part of the general practitioners' duty to advise the school in matters of health (unless in cases of infectious disease), and interference on his part, when required in the interest of the child, is as a rule not well taken; he cannot therefore be held responsible for the serious state of matters found to exist in some schools. If, however, medical inspection and supervision of school children is to be enforced by law, I hold that the family medical attendant is the proper person to undertake that duty. A form similar to those used by insurance companies might be given to the parent with the registration certificate, to be duly filled up and sent with the child when entered at school. Other forms for periodic report, etc., might be issued by the school. Remuneration might be as in the notification of infectious diseases, but at an adequate rate for the work done.

It appears to me that such a plan might be worked more economically, more efficiently, and with far less friction—socially and professionally—than one by specially appointed inspectors.

There is still to be considered the very important question of the medical inspection of schools.—I am, etc.,

Dollar, March 18th.

J. STRACHAN.

HOSPITALS AND CLUBS.

SIR,—I submit that the man who undertakes to treat persons who fall sick from among 110 members of a society for the sum of £22 per annum must be either a philanthropist or poverty is nigh unto his door.

I am sorry to think the latter cause is the one actuating a large percentage of practitioners of medicine. The reason so many practitioners are obliged to accept such servile pay is due to the encouragement that people receive from large, well-organized hospitals to regard advice and medicine as obtainable for the mere asking or for a few pence. The hospital system of inquiry, to be of any use, should be conducted by almoners appointed by bodies independent of hospital authorities. Secondly, large employers of labour and companies should not be permitted to obtain gratuitous advice for their employés by a subscription to the hospital. Thirdly, house-surgeons and house-physicians should be adequately paid for their services. Though the public should be encouraged to contribute to the deserving poor, there is no reason why medical services should be expected to be given gratuitously, an allocation from public subscriptions being made for medical work.

The delinquency of certain members of the profession in sending cases to hospitals is due to the long-continued unsympathetic attitude assumed by hospitals to the reasonable demands of the profession for more efficient supervision and administrative reform in the hospital out-patient departments. Hospital policy undervalues medical work so that the poorer classes are unreasonable in their demands and are unwilling to pay reasonable remuneration.

I would suggest that medical men should refuse all clubs unless their funds pay their medical advisers according to the services rendered—in other words, payment should be by piece work.—I am, etc.,

Acton Hill, W., March 24th. FREDERICK W. COLLINGWOOD.

TENNIS ELBOW.

SIR,—The cause of the affection which is termed "tennis elbow" was discussed in your columns more than twenty years ago. I held the opinion at that time, in spite of criticism from friends, that the affection was produced by a nipping of the posterior interosseous nerve by the supinator brevis muscle, through the fibres of which it passes. In any case some injury is done to the musculospiral nerve either at that point or where the main trunk passes between the heads of the triceps muscle. The neuritis thus produced being merely traumatic, soon gets well with rest. I have not heard of a case for some considerable time, although one sees tennis played very frequently.—I am, etc.,

Shelford, Beds., March 12th.

C. E. WINCKWORTH.

MEDICAL STUDENTS AND ORGANISED GYMNASTIC TRAINING.

SIR,—Surgeon-General Evatt does not seem quite to understand why young army medical officers are now being passed through the gymnasium 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 subjects (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 1st. 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 medical 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.

SIR,—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 wherever it was, therefore diet as a cause was eliminated. Wherever the child was fresh air and ventilation was attended to. I was obliged, therefore, to admit locality was the cause of the sleeplessness, owing to the persistency 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 being awake from two to four hours in the middle part of the night, and averaging only five to six hours' sleep in the twenty-four hours. 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 seventh month he was weaned, but this 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 small hours.

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.,

Warringham, Surrey, March 19th.

W. R. ETCHES, M.D.

ERRATUM.—In a letter entitled "Vaccination and the L.C.C. Election," by Dr. Arthur Drury, of Halifax, which appeared in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of March 30th, p. 780, the clause in the first sentence of the second paragraph, "Of these 19 were elected and 15 defeated," should read, "9 were elected and 15 defeated."