

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

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.

We would request correspondents who desire to ask questions in this column not to make use of such signatures as "A Member," "A Member B.M.A.," "Enquirer," and so on. By attention to this request much confusion would be avoided. Correspondents are asked to write upon one side of the paper only.

DR. W. S. DANKS (Worcester Road, Sutton) desires to hear of a home of rest where an old lady, aged 73 years, whose income is only a few shillings a week, could find a permanent home.

LOCAL ANAESTHESIA FOR PHIMOSIS OPERATION.

"FORGETFUL" asks for details of any satisfactory method of operating on phimosis in an adult with a local anaesthetic, for example, freezing with ethyl chloride.

* * The use of local anaesthesia for circumcision in children was described in the JOURNAL of April 13th, 1907, page 912.

ANSWERS.

DR. THOMAS HAYES (Rathkeale, co. Limerick) writes: If "Naval Surgeon" will try ung. hydrarg. ammoniati for marginal blepharitis, he may succeed in curing it.

HYGIEN.—"Tuberal" appears to be a recent addition to the number of therapeutic agents recommended in tuberculosis. Professor Hilbert of Königsberg, writing in the *Deutsche med. Wochenschrift* of December 13th, 1907 (see EPILOGUE, March 14th, 1908), states that no full report of results obtained had been published up to that time. He had tried it in a few cases, but failed to be able to convince himself of any therapeutic activity. We have not been able to trace any more recent publication on the subject giving further details. It is taken by the mouth, and no mention is made by Hilbert of necessity of controlling the dosage by opsonic curves.

EXAMINATION OF RECRUITS, TERRITORIAL ARMY.

E. R.—The fee for examining recruits for the territorial army is 1s. for each recruit. It is paid by the county association. Civil medical men should apply through the officer commanding corps for which they examined. (See also p. 183.)

CYANOSIS AND INSOLATION.

N. F. R. writes: With reference to R. H.'s curious case of insolation followed by cyanosis, it would be worth while inquiring if his patient took antifebrin or antipyrin ("Daisy Powders," "Kaputine," "Antikamnia") for his headache. I have seen precisely the same symptoms following 10-grain doses of antifebrin, and disappearing in a few hours without treatment.

LETTERS, NOTES, Etc.

PYRETHRUM AS AN INSECTICIDE.

PYRETHRUM has long been known as a powerful insecticide, and as such has been used with varying success in the special destruction of mosquitos. Armbrrecht, Nelson and Co. (Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, S.W.), acting on this well-known fact, have now produced some preparations of the drug and have advertised them in a small pamphlet on mosquitos and other flying and creeping pests producing sickness in man and beast. What is termed the pyrethrum carrier is a little sponge fitting into a vulcanite container. The sponge soaked in a little undiluted pyrethrum is said to cure stings and bites; testimonials to its efficacy are appended, but its use and the use of other preparations can only have a limited application in the tropics. If the names of scientific men are to be quoted they ought at least to be correctly spelt.

L'ENTENTE CORDIALE.

WE may perhaps, as the circumstances are rather special, take the unusual course of calling attention here to an advertisement of a French physician which appears elsewhere. The advertiser, who resides in a pleasant part of provincial France near the sea, desires to receive into his family English pupils desirous of learning French. From a small volume of verses which we have received from him it appears that he is a man of cultured and refined tastes.

PREScribing CHEMISTS.

PHARMAKOS writes: Your correspondent "Aggrieved" (July 4th, p. 60) has certainly a just cause for complaint, but I think it hardly fair that the chemist should bear all the blame. While I do not in any way uphold or exonerate the prescribing chemist, I think your correspondent ought to consider the circumstances in which the average chemist is placed. He may be asked twenty times a day, or oftener in some districts, for "a stomach powder for a baby," "a draught to make the bowels move," etc., possibly accompanied by a rough account of the symptoms; and as such requests are simple, and the chemist has to live, he cannot in the nature of things be expected to refuse such business. Were he to say, "You must

go to a doctor and get a prescription," his customer would simply go to another chemist and get the medicine there. The chemist who sees patients in his pharmacy and treats them as would a medical man certainly deserves censure, but if simple aperient medicines are to be refused on the chance that the patient may be suffering from intestinal obstruction, the chemist, as an individual, will soon cease to exist, especially in districts where doctors dispense. The public will have to be educated to the desirability of seeking medical aid more readily than they do, for it is really self-medication which is at the bottom of the evil your correspondent complains of, and is the physician's greatest grievance.

ART AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.

DR. G. H. BROADBENT (Ardwick Green, Manchester) writes: I am not aware that anything has been done by the local executive to bring those members together who are interested in art when they are at Sheffield for the annual meeting of the Association. I find that there is an example of George Morland in the Mappin Art Gallery of the "Village Inn," and that in hands of two private collectors there are three pictures by him, one described as the "Farmer's Boy, with Cart-horses, Pigs," etc., and two others in the other collection, described as, respectively, "A Scene in Derbyshire" and "The Dead Porker." I simply mention these as I am interested very deeply in anything relating to Morland, and at the very least I shall have gained this much, if you publish it, that members will know that there are at least four examples of his work at Sheffield, which—I have not the least doubt arrangements will be made—they can have access to, for I am sending the addresses of the owners to the local executive. If the idea "catches on," I am wishful that there should be a sort of art centre in the Association, for medical men have always been interested in art, and something may be done to focus it at the meeting, especially as there is one other issue of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL for replies or suggestions before we do actually meet.

THE D.P.H. LOND. EXAMINATION.

A CORRESPONDENT who recently passed this examination writes to call attention to Question 1, Paper 2, of Part I for the D.P.H. Lond. set on July 6th, 1908. It is as follows: "Define 'co-efficient of expansion of a liquid.' Distinguish between the absolute and apparent expansion of a liquid. Describe a method by which the absolute co-efficient of expansion of mercury can be determined. What changes take place in the expansion of water between 0° C. and 100° C.?" He considers that this is a question fit only for a higher physics paper, since co-efficient of expansion of anything (except air) has nothing whatever to do with public health. Thus far, he adds, London has acquired and maintained a reputation for holding good, honest, straightforward and essentially practical examinations, and all along has demanded a standard that is as high, if not higher, than any rival. But a Board of Examiners that sanction a freak or crank conundrum such as this is simply playing into the hands of crammers.

* * We should be the last to defend the domination of examinations by mathematicians, which at the present time is having so unfavourable an effect on the usefulness of the University of London, but we cannot agree with our correspondent that the question quoted by him can properly be characterized as "fit only for a higher physics paper." It is of a rather lower standard than are the questions set in the physics papers of the First Conjoint Board Examination, requiring, as it does, only description without calculation. Co-efficients of expansion are of importance in public health, if the qualified D.P.H. is expected to know the principles on which sanitary engineering (jointing of pipes, the construction of houses, and kindred matters) depend. It is true that he is unlikely ever to consider expansion from the point of view of the coefficients of expanding substances, and there is much to be said in favour of the contention that questions of this type should not be included in the examination. This, however, could only be done by entirely suppressing the examination in elementary physics.

ERRATUM.

In an answer giving information as to ophthalmological classes in Paris, the name of Professor Panas was, by a slip of the pen, inserted in place of that of Professor de la Personne.

SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

	£	s.	d.
Eight lines and under
Each additional line
A whole column
A page

An average line contains six words.

All remittances by Post Office Orders must be made payable to the British Medical Association at the General Post Office, London. No responsibility will be accepted for any such remittance not so safeguarded.

Advertisements should be delivered, addressed to the Manager, 6, Catherine Street, Strand, London, not later than first post on Wednesday morning preceding publication; and if not paid for at the time, should be accompanied by a reference.

N.B.—It is against the rules of the Post Office to receive letters at *Postes Restantes* addressed either in initials or numbers.