

## Correspondence

### "PATRIOTISM RAMPANT"

*To the Editor:*—Continuing the subject of "Patriotism Rampant": Patriotism sometimes goes to excess; but, like the old adage of "better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all," it is better that patriotism ramp, and wildly ramp, than that it crouch or cower. That the language and literature of a people reflect the spirit of the people is a truism: why then should we wish to perpetuate or encourage by any authoritative act of our own the spirit that decorates authors of "Hymns of Hate"; that finds solemn treaties but "scraps of paper"; that stamps its very money with "God damns" of its enemies; that mints commemorative medals of the sinking of a *Lusitania*; that, while professing good will with its lips, sinks the ships of its friends "without a trace being left"?

I take off my hat to "Patriotism Rampant."

But *science*—so much *science*—will be lost to us if patriotism continues to ramp. To this, like Job to his comforters, I am willing to reply, slightly paraphrasing, "No doubt but the German is the language and all wisdom shall die without it."

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*To the Editor:*—Dr. Robert Peter's letter in THE JOURNAL, Sept. 8, 1917, reminds me of Mark Twain's comment, in Appendix D to his "Tramp Abroad":

"... for I once heard a gentle and lovely old German lady say to a sweet young American girl: 'The two languages are so alike—how pleasant it is; we say "Ach! Gott!" you say "Goddam!"'"

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### FIRST YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS AND THE DRAFT

*To the Editor:*—It is a genuine relief to all interested in the medical aspects of national preparedness to know that a way has at last been announced whereby second, third and fourth year medical students may continue their training for future service. First year medical students are not included, doubtless because of the fear that, if they were, medical schools would become a refuge for slackers.

It would indeed seem that there can be no other reason for this failure to provide for the first year student; for the only valid and conclusive argument for keeping any medical student at his work is that there should be at no time, either during the war or after it is over, a diminution in the output of medical schools. The demand for hospital interns and for the recruiting of every branch of the profession with an adequate supply of men trained in modern medicine will continue year by year after the war. Before war was declared, the output was not quite equal to the demand. The demand will be greater—not less—after the war is over.

Far-seeing leaders in medicine recognize today that the medical resources of America will be heavily called on to assist in the rehabilitation of war-devastated Europe. For this reason, if for no other, it is most desirable that there shall be no diminution in the number of students entering on the study of medicine this year. If possible this number should be increased. There can be no question of the demand for the service of these men when they are graduated four years hence.

In my opinion, the delay of the War Department in providing for the continuance of medical students at their work will tell chiefly in deterring men from entering on the study of medicine this year. Many causes will contribute to this result, one of the most important being the natural hesitation to incur the expense of a period of five years of study with no assurance that it will be uninterrupted. Ordinary foresight dictates that it is sound policy to keep this loss of first year students to a minimum.

Granting that it is better to keep the medical schools free from slackers so that only those men will go in for medicine who have the aptitude and taste therefor as a profession,

there is a class of first year students many of whom are drafted but against whom no just charge of being slackers can be preferred; namely, those men who, prior to the declaration of war—or even prior to the introduction of the draft bill into Congress—had declared their intention of entering on the study of medicine in the fall of 1917. In many colleges there are premedical courses in which students are formally registered; other college students can show that they had given their names to the deans of medical schools as candidates for entrance; still others can show that their entrance credits had been approved for admission. These men are as truly in the medical ranks as the man who has finished the first year of his medical course. Why should they not be included in the order by which drafted medical students have the privilege of enlisting in the Enlisted Reserve Corps of the Medical Department and so of being discharged from the National Army to continue the study of medicine? They will be needed four years hence; it may be that they will be needed as England needs medical graduates today.

When, last May, college authorities at the urgent request of the Medical Board of the Advisory Council of National Defense discouraged not only medical but premedical students as well from leaving their studies to volunteer for officers' training camps, ambulance corps, hospital units, etc., because continuance at their work was their best form of national service—and this on the one ground given above, that "their country needs their trained and not their untrained service"—these drafted premedical men followed this sound advice and made their contribution to the service of their country. Will the government now do less to make as strong as possible our future medical preparedness?

To accomplish the desired result it is only necessary to extend the privilege of enlisting in the Enlisted Reserve Corps of the Medical Department to all men who can present evidence satisfactory to the Surgeon-General that prior to the declaration of war—or to the introduction of the draft bill into Congress—they were recognized as candidates for admission to any well recognized medical school.

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### OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN LABORATORY WORK

*To the Editor:*—I note the editorial mention of this subject in THE JOURNAL, Aug. 18, 1917, p. 569. During the 1917 summer school at the University of Wisconsin, there was offered in the Department of Agricultural Bacteriology a special course in laboratory methods. The object in presenting this course was to give to young women who had had preliminary work in bacteriology an intensive training in those laboratory procedures that are of greatest importance from the standpoint of the diagnostic and control laboratory. To this end special attention was devoted to the methods used in the examination of water and of milk and the diagnosis of tuberculosis, diphtheria and typhoid fever. The course was taken by nineteen young women, all of whom had had at least a year and a half of chemistry and a semester's work in bacteriology. A number of these women had had a more extensive preliminary training. Some of these young women have already accepted positions in laboratories, and a number of others are available for such work.

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### PRIORITY IN APPLICATION OF HEAT IN CORNEAL ULCERS

*To the Editor:*—In the abstract of the discussion on the papers of Drs. Verhoeff and Shahan (THE JOURNAL, June 30, 1917, pp. 1973 ff.) Dr. L. Webster Fox credits Dr. Barkan with being the originator of the application of heat in the treatment of corneal ulcer. Without in the least wishing to impugn Dr. Barkan's claim as "one of California's pioneers in ophthalmology," I will say that it is a grave error to assign to him the authorship of corneal cauterization. As