

committees. On several occasions when I have been present it was painfully evident that regular physicians who were being depended on by members of the committee had not read any of the books or other literature of the osteopaths, and that they were not prepared to take a dignified position in discussions. It seems to me that the osteopaths could always be defeated without the necessity for any very elaborate argument if some physician would take the trouble to have properly-prepared specimens of spinal columns to show to members of the committee. I have chosen a longitudinal section of a child three or four years of age, preserved in formalin solution, and the fresh rack of a lamb. The osteopaths are then asked to state that they cure diseases by "setting or moving" vertebrae and ribs and other bones, and the fraudulent nature of their pretension is so apparent to legislators who have the specimens before them, that even as laymen they are at once convinced of the deception that is practiced on patients, and one need not turn any fine points in rhetoric, or polish his diction in preparation for the discussion. There is one point in osteopathic bills that is misleading to legislators. I quote from this year's New Jersey Senate Bill No. 218, Page 4, Section 9: "The certificate or license granted by said board shall not in any way be construed to authorize the holder thereof to prescribe or use drugs in his or her practice, nor to perform operative surgery." This sounds very innocent, but it means that osteopaths will take charge of all sorts of cases that really should have the benefit of drugs or of operative surgery.

58 West 56th Street.

ROBERT T. MORRIS.

#### Priority in Technic of Tubercle Bacilli Recognition.

CHICAGO, March 30, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—In your issue of March 28, I notice an abstract of a paper which appeared in the "Deutsche Zeitschrift für Chirurgie" by Forssell on an "Improved Method of Determining the Presence of Tubercle Bacilli in the Urine."

I would direct your attention to the fact that the process described is identical in every essential feature with the method introduced by Dr. J. E. Skinner and myself a number of years ago and described by us in an article published in THE JOURNAL of the American Medical Association, Jan. 29, 1898. Our process, as described in this paper, consists in separating the sediment from a considerable volume of urine by gravity (preferably in a tapering glass vessel like a percolator), drawing off the deposit, and reducing it to a very small bulk by centrifuging. Forssell's method, as will be seen by consulting the abstract referred to, is practically identical with this.

It is true that our method was especially devised and introduced for the purpose of detecting casts in the urine, and this fact is indicated in the title of our article. But in two or three places we refer to its use in examining for any sediment, and in next to the last paragraph we speak of its great advantage in testing urine for micro-organisms, especially when they are sparingly present.

I may add that I have used the method now for six or seven years and find it fully as advantageous as claimed in our article for the detection of casts and all other sediments when present in small proportion, and I am glad to have the added testimony of Forssell in regard to its value in examining for tubercle bacilli.

WALTER S. HAINES.

#### A Vigorous Protest.

CHICAGO, March 30, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—I wish to protest as vigorously and publicly as may be against the sentiment, the lack of good taste, the apparent deplorable motive, and the contents of the editorial with the Latinized caption, on page 855 of the last issue of THE JOURNAL. This poorly conceived, libelous and anonymous assault on the scientific labors of Dr. Jacques Loeb, and on his personal character, does not add dignity to THE JOURNAL, nor is it calculated to cultivate respect for the Association among the many students of this pioneer in physiology. I have read it with shame and disgust, and I call for a public

apology from the censorial editor of his flagrant neglect of duty.

BAYARD HOLMES, M.D.

*ANSWER*—A careful reading of our editorial will, we think, convince one that our critic is over-sensitive in his interest in the eminent physiologist referred to. It was not intended to reflect in any way on his personal character or scientific work, but to criticise the unfortunate—to say the least—sensationalism which has attended most of the announcements of his discoveries in the public press, and to notice the latest statements credited to him which seem to be extreme and scientifically presumptuous. We do not think an apology is called for.

#### The Sub-Section on Tropical Medicine.

NEW YORK, March 28, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—Allow me the observation that tropical medicine is of such vast importance that a sub-section as proposed by you and which you editorially endorse would not cover the ground. Why should the Section on Hygiene and Sanitary Science have anything to do with it? That section has as much interest in every other section as it would have in tropical medicine.

ALBERT S. ASHMEAD.

### Queries and Minor Notes.

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS will not be noticed. Queries for this column must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, but the request of the writer not to publish his name will be faithfully observed.

#### WHY IS THE A. C. E. MIXTURE NOT USED MORE?

MAHONY CITY, PA., March 23, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—Dr. Willy Meyer (in THE JOURNAL of February 28 and March 7) quotes our English colleagues as having used the A. C. E. mixture in 15,000 cases without one death. If this is true kindly advise me why the A. C. E. mixture is not used more in this country.

GEORGE W. REESE.

*ANS.*—The A. C. E. mixture has never achieved the popularity in this country that it has in England. We believe it is used there more than is either ether or chloroform. Deaths are, however, reported from its use.

#### MADRID CONGRESS RAILROAD CERTIFICATES.

NEW YORK, March 25, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—The following information has just been received by cable from the Secretary-General of the Fourteenth International Medical Congress: The French railroads have made their rate reductions for the members of the International Medical Congress depend on a special certificate, and on the use of the same route for going and returning. Any member of the congress to whom this is of interest should therefore write immediately to the secretary-general at Madrid, stating at what port he expects to land and what route he will take. The secretary-general will send to him at the port named under the address "poste restante" the necessary certificate.

JOHN H. HUDDLESTON,  
Secretary American Committee.

#### MATERNAL IMPRESSIONS.

ATCHISON, KAN., March 26, 1903.

*To the Editor:*—In THE JOURNAL of March 21, Dr. A. G. Belsheim reports a case of so-called maternal impression. The Doctor evidently wishes to convey the inference that the burn was responsible for the birthmark.

The maternal-impression belief is as old as the race and apparently as ineradicable as the unlucky Friday superstition. Occasionally some one meets misfortune on Friday; therefore Friday is responsible. Very rarely a powerful shock or accident occurring during pregnancy is followed by the appearance of a mark on the child at birth; such a coincidence is promptly regarded as a case of cause and effect. When an expected marking doesn't appear—which is the case at very many births—the maternal-impression theory receives no discredit thereby, but possibly some pious reflection on the efficacy of prayer may be elicited instead.

Surely at this late day the maternal-impression superstition should be relegated to the medical lumber-room. When it is remembered that there is practically no more anatomic or physiologic connection between the nervous systems of the mother and her unborn child than there is between the nervous systems of the setting hen and her unhatched chicks, how can the belief in the transmis-