

Notes, Short Comments, and Answers to Correspondents.

A NATIVE MEDICAL SCHOOL IN UGANDA.

BY E. N. COOK, M.B., B.SC. LOND.

A NOVEL and interesting experiment in training natives in medical and surgical work is being made in Uganda. The romance of the undertaking lies in this. Native boys who are the raw material from the best schools of the country are being taken, and are receiving a three years' course of training at the large C.M.S. Hospital at Mengo, the native capital of Uganda, where the medical school began its work three years ago. Twelve lads, of the highest standard of education as yet attained in Uganda, were selected by the Native Government and sent to the hospital to be trained. They are extraordinarily keen and readily absorb any knowledge imparted to them. They live in a hostel attached to the hospital and attend lectures on anatomy, physiology, medicine, surgery, elementary chemistry, pharmacy, and English. In the operating theatre they give anaesthetics and assist in the sponging, &c., at operations; in the wards they act as clerks and dressers to the doctors; in the pathological laboratory they examine blood-films and various kinds of specimens. In the dispensary, with its crowd of native and Indian patients, they themselves examine the cases under the direction of the doctors.

It is curious to watch the black man writing a prescription or making up accurately the mixture that has been ordered. The teachers responsible for the training are the doctors and sisters in the hospital, who, over-worked as they are, make time for this voluntary work for the good of the country. Thus the need has arisen for a young and enthusiastic doctor to devote his time to the work. I have taken a part in the working of this school, and can speak from experience of the fascination of breaking new ground—taking intelligent natives and building a medical education upon their school training.

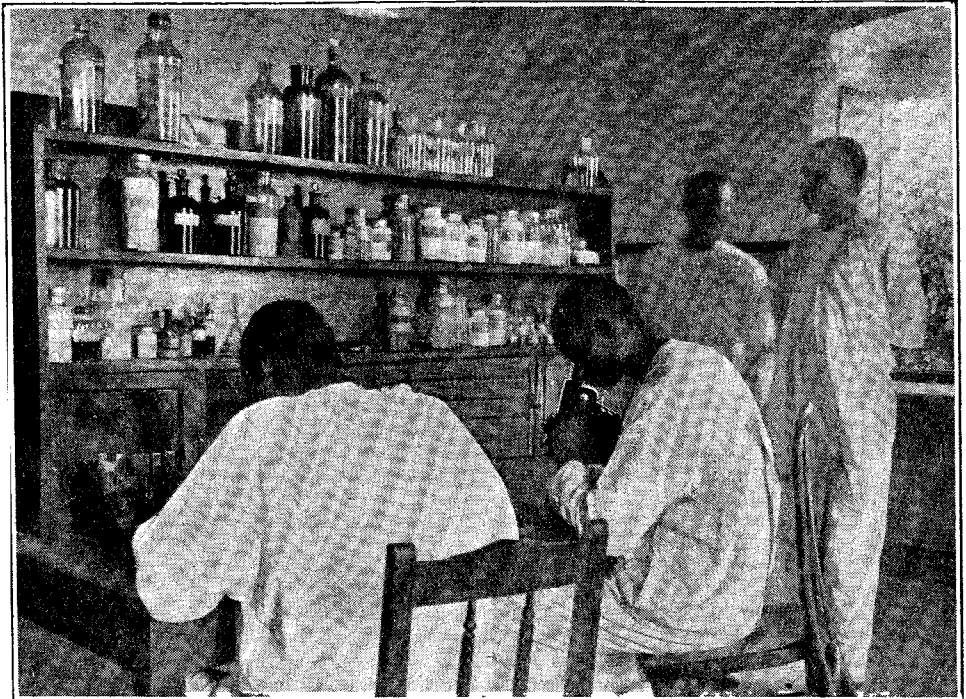
The study of tropical diseases in Central Africa, with all its opportunities of investigating methods of treatment in connexion with a well-organised hospital, is of never-failing interest. Blackwater fever, malaria, tick fever, sleeping sickness, and the like can be studied there better perhaps than in any other country. Research work is needed in many un-pigeonholed diseases, and a well-established medical training centre at the capital will, it is believed, be of value to the whole country in sending out natives trained up to the standard of clinical assistants who will be able to run native dispensaries throughout the country.

The British Government have this year guaranteed the stipend of a doctor to go out under the C.M.S. as superintendent of the medical training in Uganda. It is a unique opportunity for a man keen on teaching, and offers unlimited opportunities of investigating new or partly-known tropical diseases. There is at the present time an urgent need felt for supplying native dispensaries with natives trained in the country, and along with this an anti-venereal campaign is being planned by the Government. Treatment of venereal diseases is taken as a special part of the curriculum, and the students have great facilities in the practical treatment of venereal diseases in the special wards devoted to them. The present lot of students completed their three-years' course last January, and entered for a final examination for a Government certificate. Four students obtained the certificate, and this marks but the first stage in the progress of medical training in Uganda. There is a vast difference between the native medicine-man with his beads and incantations and these lithe and athletic young Baganda Christians, trained under up-to-date medical methods.

The difficulty of this work in Uganda, as compared with India or China, where the medical training of natives has

been going on for years, is that there they have an already educated manhood upon which to graft the medical knowledge, whereas in Uganda general education is as yet in its earliest stages. It is, moreover, a country with no literature as yet, and eventually it is hoped the training will be given in English, but meantime medical handbooks in the vernacular are urgently required. At the present moment the school is closed owing to depletion of staff and the fact that I am on leave in England.

Geographically, the strategic importance of Uganda is fully recognised, and now that German East Africa has been re-labelled Tanganika Territory there is an "all-red" strip of British territory from Cairo to the Cape. Uganda lies half-way along this journey and is also the terminus of the railway through East Africa from Mombasa. Uganda is rapidly becoming the hub of the African universe, and from



A laboratory class of native students in Uganda.

it will radiate knowledge, progress, and relief of suffering to the surrounding millions who are placed under British protection.

A HANDY INCOME-TAX GUIDE.

A STIFF paper folder of 10 pages entitled "Income-tax and Super-tax: a Tabular View, 1842-1921," explains the 1920 Budget changes, and shows in a concise and handy form the present position of income-tax and super-tax, along with the several rates, exemptions, deductions, allowances, and so forth, now in force. The publication can be obtained from Messrs. Oliver and Boyd, 33, Paternoster-row, London, E.C., at 1s. (post-free, 1s. 2d.), and is well worth the money to any income-tax payer.

THE LONDON ASSURANCE, 1720-1920.

AN assurance company is naturally proud of a history of 200 years, and the souvenir of the bicentenary of the London Assurance which lies before us, written in Mr. G. S. Street's graceful manner and printed for private circulation, gives an interesting picture of bygone days and also a remarkable record of how a well-managed business concern can fight disaster successfully, and from small beginnings grow into a vast and eminently prosperous undertaking. The London Assurance grew out of a scheme of Marine Insurance started in 1719 by Lord Chetwynd, unkindly known as "Chetwynd's Bubble," and another insurance scheme known as "Overall's." A Royal Charter for Marine Insurance was granted in 1720, and one for Fire and Life in 1721. Chetwynd was the first governor, and Overall was an official of the company. In 1731 he was secretary, and in 1755, about which date he died, it appears that there was a deficiency in the funds of £213 3s. 11d. The company had a hard time in its early youth, for some eight months after the granting of the Charter the South Sea Bubble burst. In the first year of its existence the value of the shares (£25) fluctuated between £160 and practically nothing, but nevertheless they weathered the storm.

Mr. Street has collected from the minute books of the company and from sundry newspaper cuttings preserved by

the secretary a collection of interesting facts and occurrences in the history of the institution. In March, 1806, we find the firemen and porters being supplied with clothing. The jacket of the former cost £4 10s., that of the latter £4 8s., "including waistcoats with sleeves and plush breeches." Such clothing inspired the W.S. of Rejected Addresses.

"Starting from short and broken snooze
Each sought his ponderous hob-nailed shoes,
But first his worsted hosen plied,
Plush breeches next in crimson died
His nether bulk embraced.
Then jacket thick of red or blue
Whose massy shoulder gave to view
The badge of each respective crew
In tin or copper traced."

A picture of such badges is given opposite p. 36 of Mr. Street's book.

We have only space for two more incidents. On Feb. 29th, 1768, the office in Birchin-lane was held up, quite in to-day's fashion, by a madman, who hit the one clerk over the head with a pistol and decamped with nearly 250 guineas. In 1786 a lady, by name Elizabeth Wade, was tried for setting fire to her lodgings near Coldbath Fields. Much combustible material was found lying about, and the whole of her property was valued at £20. She had shortly before insured with the company for £1500. The chairman of the quarter sessions, however, proceeded, after dwelling on the enormity of her offence, to sentence her to a fine of 1s. and 12 months' imprisonment. Considering the draconic nature of the criminal code at that date—stealing from a shop to the value of 5s. was a capital offence—Elizabeth was extraordinarily lucky.

EGYPTIAN WATER-SUPPLIES.

SINCE the early part of 1915 the Department of Public Health in Egypt has made special efforts to undertake the regular inspection of all public water-supplies, whether in the hands of the Government, of municipalities, companies, or private individuals. Although no special staff was then available for this purpose, the Director of the Public Health Laboratories was placed in charge, in collaboration with the Chief Engineer of the Municipalities and Local Commissions Section of the Ministry of the Interior. These officers visited and reported on the more important supplies, and regular bacteriological examinations were made of drinking water, aerated waters, and ice in Cairo. It is stated by Mr. C. Todd, Director of the Public Health Laboratories,¹ that although a great deal has been done for the provision of water-supplies for the larger towns, much remains to be done even in Cairo and Alexandria; and that most of the smaller towns are still taking their water generally from very questionable sources. Since the beginning of 1915 regular and systematic examination has been made of the Nile water at Cairo by collecting weekly samples "from near the surface of the river in mid-stream at a point opposite the north end of Roda Island, a bottle being let down to arm's length in the river." During the period of low Nile, from January to June inclusive, the suspended solids are low (below 100 parts per million). During June or July the river begins to rise, and from July to September continues to do so, the water being charged with suspended matter amounting to 1235 parts per million (August, 1915) and even 1547 per million in August, 1917. Questions arose as to the plumbo-solvency of Nile water and the use of bleaching powder for purification purposes; its addition up to an amount corresponding to 5 parts of active chlorine per million does not increase the plumbo-solvency in the case of the Nile water, which is not unduly high and lower than that of some European city supplies. From experiments on bleaching powder dried "by passing a current of dry CO₂-free air over the powder contained in a U-tube, and immersed in an oil bath, the temperature of which was slowly raised to a maximum of just under 100° C." it was found that this mode of drying removes practically every trace of water, leaving a powder which, when kept dry, undergoes practically no decomposition when maintained at as high a temperature as 45° C. for a very long period. The Jewell system of mechanical filtration is in use at Beni Suef, and is giving satisfactory results. There are two "decantation basins" (which would be better called "settling tanks" because "decant" means "to pass off gently by inclining," or tilting up the vessel containing the fluid) where alum is added, and from which the water is run on to gravel and sand filters. Samples are examined by a transparency test, which consists in noting the visibility of a platinum wire through a column of the filtered water, 1.20 metres long. This system of filtration is also in use satisfactorily at Giza, Mansura, and elsewhere. At Port Said, Suez, and Ismailia the Puech-Chabal system of sedimentation and filtration also works well. The bacterial content is reduced from 610 per c.cm. in

the raw water at Port Said to 13 per c.cm. after decantation and filtration. During the war the laboratories were constantly referred to by the military authorities in regard to water-supplies for the troops in Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula. Several hundreds of these analyses and descriptions of the sources of water are collected in the present report, and form an invaluable record for future reference.

Medical Diary.

LECTURES, ADDRESSES, DEMONSTRATIONS, &c.

LONDON HOSPITAL MEDICAL COLLEGE.

MEDICAL UNIT, in the Clinical Theatre of the London Hospital, E.

MONDAY, August 23rd.—2 P.M., Mr. Goulden: Eye Conditions in Focal Brain Disease.

WEST LONDON POST-GRADUATE COLLEGE, West London Hospital, Hammersmith, W.

MONDAY, August 23rd.—12.15 P.M., Dr. Burnford: Pathological Demonstration. 5 P.M., Mr. MacDonald: Stricture.

TUESDAY.—10.30 A.M., Surgical Registrar: Demonstration of Cases. (Surgical Wards.) 4.30 P.M., Mr. Addison: Practical Surgery.

WEDNESDAY.—10.30 A.M., Mr. MacDonald: Demonstration of Cystoscopy. 4.30 P.M., Dr. Owen: Demonstration of Medical Cases. (Lecture Room.)

THURSDAY.—12 noon, Mr. Sinclair: Abdominal Diagnosis. 4.30 P.M., Mr. B. Harman: Disorders of the Lacrymal Sac.

FRIDAY.—12.15 P.M., Dr. Burnford: Applied Pathology. 4.30 P.M., Mr. D. Buxton: Local Analgesia in Dental Cases.

SATURDAY.—12 noon, Mr. Sinclair: Surgical Diseases of the Abdomen.

Daily.—10 A.M., Ward Visits. 2 P.M., In-patient, Out-patient Clinics and Operations.

MALE LOCK HOSPITAL, Dean-street, W.

MONDAY, August 23rd, WEDNESDAY, AND FRIDAY.—5 P.M., Dr. C. Russ: Demonstration of the Treatment of Gonorrhoea by Electrolysis.

Communications, Letters, &c., to the Editor have been received from—

- A.—Dr. S. G. Askey, Lond.; Dr. A. Abrahams, Lond.
B.—Lt.-Col. Sir J. Barrett, Melbourne; Dr. F. A. Bainbridge, Middleton-in-Teesdale; Mr. P. W. Boughton-Leigh, Arundel; British and Russian Transport Co., Lond.; Messrs. Burroughs Wellcome and Co., Lond.; Dr. J. Blomfield, Lond.; Board of Education, Lond.; Dr. H. Barber, Derby.
C.—Crystal Palace, Lond., Gen. Manager of; Dr. H. Curtis, Lond.; Sir F. Colyer, Deal; Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics, Lond.
D.—Dr. J. N. D'Esterre, Lond., Dollard Printinghouse Dublin, Ltd., Dublin.
E.—Messrs. Evans, Sons, Lescher, and Webb, Lond.
F.—Farnborough, Medical Officer of Health of.
G.—Great Northern Central Hospital, Lond.; Dr. R. P. Garrow, Lond.; Dr. E. F. Greene, Liverpool; Dr. G. Graham, Lond.; Lt.-Col. E. Goodall, Whitechurch; Dr. T. C. Graves, Birmingham; Mr. J. E. Gurdon, Lond.
H.—Dr. A. L. Hoops, Shanklin; Prof. A. J. Hall, Sheffield.
I.—Mr. S. T. Irwin, Belfast.
L.—Dr. C. E. Lakin, Lond.; Dr. A. W. Lemarchand, Barnstable.
M.—Dr. J. B. McDougall, Wakefield; Dr. E. H. M. Milligan, Bangor; Ministry of Health, Lond.; Dr. W. F. Menzies, Cheddleton; Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Lond.; Ministry of Labour, Lond., Sec. of; Dr. W. J. McKeand, Lond.; Mr. C. C. Morley, Milford Haven; Mr. J. E. R. McDonagh, Lond.; Medical Research Council, Lond.; Mr. R. B. Marston, Lond.; Dr. T. W. Mitchell, Hadlow; Dr. W. C. Morton, Leeds.
N.—Nottingham, Medical Officer of Health of.
P.—Mr. W. H. Plows, Lond.; Dr. D. S. Pracy, Atherstone.
R.—Dr. J. A. Ryle, Lond.; Royal Sanitary Institute, Lond.; Dr. P. B. Roth, Chamonix; Royal Medical Benevolent Fund, Lond.; Dr. H. D. Rolleston, Lond.; Mr. G. Riddoch, Lond.; Royal Earlswood Institution, Redhill, Medical Superintendent of.
S.—Dr. J. H. Sequeira, Lond.; Dr. G. E. Shuttleworth, Bournemouth; Dr. R. E. Smith, Barry; St. Thomas's Hospital Medical School, Lond., Sec. of; Mr. E. J. Simmons, Southend-on-Sea; Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne and Co., Lond.; Messrs. G. Street and Co., Lond.; Prof. W. Stirling, Manchester; Mr. A. E. Shipley, Cambridge; Sanborn Co., Lond., Manager of.
T.—Dr. F. Thomson, Lond.
W.—Dr. G. Ward, Sevenoaks; West London Hospital Post-Graduate College; Mr. K. W. Walker, Lond.

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¹ Report on Egyptian Water-Supplies, Cairo, Government Press, 1920.