

blood films, examine for amoebae, hookworms, filariae, trypanosomes, etc.

A printed slip accompanying the letter shows that the number of hours devoted to laboratory instruction in this institution is in excess of the requirements of the American Medical College Association and of the Council on Medical Education of the A. M. A. The University of Tennessee, at Memphis, is composed of one medical college founded in that city and the medical department of the University of Tennessee, formerly in Nashville, but now moved to Memphis for the consolidation. This makes a strong school of medicine. The stand it has taken for thorough and advanced work assures its ultimate success, and its lectureship or department of tropical medicine will be a most useful feature.

Dr. W. H. Oates and His Work

The Journal desires to call attention to a pamphlet published by the State of Alabama, in which are discussed "The Laws Governing State and County Officers with Reference to State Institutions, Especially Jails and Almshouses, in Alabama."

It is compiled by Dr. W. H. Oates, State Prison Inspector for Alabama, and its object is to help sheriffs and other officers "to enforce the laws pertaining to jails, etc." Dr. Oates says, in his "preface," that heretofore jails and city prisons have neither been swept nor scrubbed, and then calls the attention of officers to the fact that the law requires all such institutions to be kept clean, prisoners to be bathed once a week, furnished with clean clothing and bedding, and good, wholesome food, and the kitchens screened against flies. It is doubtful whether he found a jail in Alabama thus managed and provided. After reciting the legal requirements he calls attention to the fact that jails are not, as a rule, places of punishment, but merely where persons, whether guilty or innocent, may be safely detained to await the action of the law. He also reminds sheriffs, and chief of police

in cities of 10,000 or more inhabitants, that the law requires them to mail to him monthly reports upon blanks furnished for the purpose, and says he will insist upon prompt compliance. And he uses the forceful words:

"Henceforth jails in this State must conform to the requirements of the law in regard to the separation of whites and negroes, and males and females; the laws of hygiene and ventilation; and must be fireproof."

That these are not idle words is proven by the thorough work Dr. Oates has done since his appointment by Governor O'Neal. He found most of our jails in a deplorably unsanitary condition, and some of them so filthy and unfurnished that he condemned them—as unfit to shelter domestic animals.

He has faced storms of protest and opposition with unshaken resolution, if not always with equanimity, but in the end his course has been approved and his recommendations and directions carried out. Such a shaking up of the dry bones of apparently dead laws has seldom occurred in this State, but they have been roused from a very noxious desuetude to beneficent usefulness. In past years detention of a witness, or of a moneyless man for a few weeks while waiting for trial, was quite apt to mean capital punishment, for though finally released by the law, he would have become fatally infected with tuberculosis from the filthy walls, floors, and excuses for furniture and bedding. Even if through natural immunity he escaped death, he suffered hourly punishment from disgusting odors, degraded associates, ribald language, and a plague of loathsome, creeping things, all inflicted upon the helpless, perhaps innocent, prisoner.

All this Dr. Oates saw, and his heart swelled with disgust and resentment at such disregard of law and of humanity. Therefore, the language he used in condemning these conditions sometimes wounded the refined sensibilities of those who were responsible, and they remonstrated. But the reform was accom-

plished, and when the work was finally done and the improved conditions were evident, the interested officials generally acknowledged the necessity for the changes. And to Dr. Oates belongs the credit, and mainly if not actually to him alone; though the powerful backing given him by the Governor must not be forgotten. Dr. Oates has done for the poor and unfortunate of Alabama a Christlike service; he has redeemed the State from a shameful condition, and has, probably, without realizing, made for himself a reputation of wide extent. His work will be an inspiration to men in other lands, and whose names he may never learn. He is a young man, with a bright future before him, to which his friends hope he will symmetrically expand, without being injured by either the flattery or abuse that inevitably attend such success.

The Reading Notice

Occasionally some of our most highly esteemed advertisers send us matter descriptive and laudatory of their preparations, with the request that we publish it as reading notice, and though it pains us to deny any request made by them, yet we are obliged to do so. Naturally the Journal must treat all its patrons alike, and one such reading notice printed in our pages would oblige us to publish similar matter for every one of our advertisers who requested it. Consequently, many pages now devoted to the publication of valuable matter absolutely free from commercial influence would have to be surrendered to half-disguised advertisements.

It is a fact, upon which the Journal is to be congratulated, that instead of a dearth of "Original Matter," so common with most monthly medical publications, that they have to republish articles from other journals to fill up, the editorial desk of the S. M. J. is crowded with sufficient manuscripts from eminent physicians to fill all its available space for months in advance. But there is another

reason. It is a common custom for manufacturers of proprietary preparations to quote these "reading notices" in their circular literature as endorsements from the journals that publish them, and as expressions of the personal views of the editors. Though we do not think a single one of our present patrons would do such an unethical thing, yet we believe our present policy is best for all concerned, even where such care in excluding fake advertisements is observed as is the case with us. Where a journal is not governed by ethical considerations, but advertises for all who pay the price, including reading notices, the custom above alluded to results in the most barefaced swindling preparations being able to claim that they are endorsed by the medical profession. "See what the Buncombe State Medical Association Journal says about it," they say in the newspapers, and then they proceed to quote their own lying "reading notice." None of that for us, thank you.

X-Ray Illustrations

One who has never examined the metallic blocks from which reproductions of X-ray pictures are printed upon paper can have not the slightest idea of the apparent smoothness of their surfaces, a smoothness that would seem to render impossible any ink-impression therefrom except a uniform field of blackness.

Yet so refined is the art of printing that these cuts, themselves looking like mere shadows on a surface of copper, will transmit to polished paper every grade of light and shade, line or form impressed thereon. It is only when the X-ray plates themselves are indistinct that the final picture is blurred, though generally the publisher gets the blame. The Journal always takes the utmost pains to get the best possible effects from the plates or cuts submitted, but sometimes they are so dim that good results are impossible. So when any of our shadowgraph pictures are dim, please remember that perhaps it is not the fault of the publisher. There are others.