The improvement which this treatment produces—e.g., in tabes—shows itself, as Dr. Gordon Spencer points out,¹ by a disappearance of the lightning pains and by a diminution in the incoördination; but, inasmuch as sceptics might be inclined to attribute such improvement to suggestion, it is desirable that careful records should be made of the effect of the treatment as regards such clinical features as the light reflex, the knee-jerks, and the weight of the patient. Observations on the light reflex demand particular care, and should always be checked by a second observer. The most accurate method of gauging the improvement brought about by the intrathecal treatment, however, is by observing the changes in the cerebro-spinal fluid. At every intrathecal injection a specimen of this fluid should be secured for testing purposes, and a record made of the Wassermann reaction, the lymphocyte count, the globulin reaction, and the percentage of albumin.

By comparing the results obtained by different methods in a large number of patients we shall be able to discover the most efficient one.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Wimpole-street, W., June 2nd, 1914. HARRY CAMPBELL.

HELMINTHEMESIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There is an interesting note on "helminthmeses" in THE LANCET of April 25th. It begins with the statement that "vomiting or expulsion by the mouth of intestinal parasites is a rare occurrence," and I would ask you to allow me to qualify this by adding the words "except in Persia." Here intestinal worms are exceedingly common, and I think I am safe in saying that every Persian is infected at one time or another in the course of his life, and that a large proportion of Europeans fails to escape. The common worms in the North of Persia are *ascaris lumbricoides*, *oxyuris vermicularis*, and *taenia saginata*, and they occur in this order of frequency.

So far is the vomiting of a round worm removed from being a rare occurrence that I now hear of the event with composure, though not a little astonished at its frequency when I first came to Tehran. I regret that I have not kept a record of the cases which I have met, but I can only say that they have been numerous. The expulsion of the worm is very often accompanied by serious general disturbance. I well remember the first case of grave illness to which I was called after arriving in Tehran eight years ago. It was that of a child aged 4 who was unconscious, with high fever, a rapid irregular pulse, and Cheyne-Stokes breathing. Meningitis was my diagnosis, but within 24 hours the child vomited a round worm and promptly got well. I have seen other cases of obscure and apparently grave illness, both in adults and children, terminated by the vomiting of a worm; I should say round worm, for I have never seen a tapeworm expelled from the mouth. To omit to give santonin in most cases of gastro-intestinal disturbance, and to many patients whose symptoms cannot be correlated with any definite diagnosis, might here in Tehran, to my mind, almost be dubbed mal-praxis!

Before closing I would like to describe a case of helminthiasis the like of which I have not read nor seen again. A child aged 7, wasted to skin and bone, face drawn with pain, fever, irregular bowels, and

occasional vomiting. Abdomen full of lumps, some as big as hen's eggs, and tender. Diagnosis: tuberculous peritonitis. Prognosis: hopeless. Treatment: calomel and santonin in small doses, as a beginning. In three days the child was brought back looking a different creature and the lumps in the abdomen gone. Unfortunately I had been too sure of my diagnosis to order the results of my prescription, if any, to be brought for inspection. But the expressive gestures of the mother were sufficient to show that scores of round worms must have been expelled.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

H.B.M's Legation, Tehran, May 11th, 1914. A. R. NELIGAN.

RE-EDUCATION OF THE DEAF.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of May 23rd, p. 1449, Mr. Richard Lake has published an article on my method of treatment of deafness. In order to explain the lack of success which he has experienced, in contradiction to the results obtained in France during 15 years, results which are officially recognised by the Academy of Medicine, one of the three following hypotheses must be admitted: (1) Either he has modified the apparatus, however little, which has transformed the vibrations; or (2) he has turned his attention to patients who are not amenable to the siren (and this is evident at the end of a week's treatment); or (3) he has not followed the rules of clinical treatment.

I enclose my communication to the Academy of Medicine and the report of that body. In the interest of patients and medical men it would appear to me desirable that you should publish my letter and the report of the Academy in your journal.

There is no question here at all of a commercial matter, as in the case of other methods which Mr. Lake seems to confound with mine, since anybody who likes may construct my apparatus.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

M. MARAGE,

Docteur en Médecine et Docteur ès Sciences Chargé de Cours à la Sorbonne.

19, Rue Cambon, Paris, June 2nd, 1914.

* * We have translated Dr. Marage's letter. The communication to the Academy of Medicine (which we have not space to reprint) is entitled "Règles Acoustiques et Cliniques de la Ré-éducation Auditive," and is published by the author at his address.—ED. L.

A PRINCIPLE OF DIETETICS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It appears that the time has arrived when a subject interesting alike to physicians and the public generally should be discussed in the medical journals. It seems to me undesirable that medical men in authoritative positions should speak dogmatically to lay audiences upon subjects which they may not have studied closely and upon which there appear to be widely divergent views. I am prompted to suggest this discussion in THE LANCET by having had my attention drawn to some remarks by Dr. Robert Hutchison, reported in the *Times*, at a conference of teachers on domestic subjects. Answering questions, Dr. Hutchison said: "A good deal of nonsense was being talked about the effects of bad teeth. The most absurd instructions were issued, and in one leaflet he had seen it was stated that every meal was to end with raw fruit to clean

¹ THE LANCET, May 30th, 1914.