Correspondence

Gerster's Disapproval of the Haslam Traction Bar

To the Editor:—My article, describing a turnbuckle and clamp method for reducing fragments of fractures of long bones in the open operation, was considered by you worthy of an abstract in the Current Medical Literature Department (THE JOURNAL, Nov. 30, 1912, p. 2002). It may therefore interest your readers for me to serve notice for their protection that an instrument put on the market and called by some "Haslam's or Haslam's modification of Gerster's" (traction bar) and called by others "Gerster's traction bar," does not fulfil the requirements outlined in my article.

JOHN C. A. GERSTER, M.D., New York.

A copy of the letter given above was sent to the manufacturer referred to, who replies:

To the Editor:—We designed our instrument but one of our competitors copied it and called it Gerster's traction bar. We will continue to sell our traction bar, but we will not call it by any other name than Haslam's. We thought it a compliment to Dr. Gerster to call it Haslam's modification of Gerster's traction bar, but since he objects we will drop his name and take it all ourselves, being the rightful owners.

FRED HASLAM & CO. INC., Brooklyn, by JOHN J. DOUGLASS.

Phylacogens

To the Editor:—I am pleased with the editorial in the Feb. 1, 1913, issue on "Phylacogens." While I was an intern at the Boston City Hospital, I assisted Parke, Davis and Company's agent to administer the "filtrates" to a number of patients. In the majority of cases, I saw no marked improvement. The type of case that improved with "filtrates" had improved with the same rapidity under ordinary hospital treatment. In some cases relapses occurred under filtrates with such a marked increase in symptoms that the patients refused to receive any more injections. The company's representative appeared unduly enthusiastic over his results. His aim seemed to be that of gathering brilliant clinical results at any cost. There was no check put on his results in the form of control cases.

H. J. CRONIN, M.D., Cambridge, Mass.

P. S.—I assume that "Phylacogens" is the proprietary name for the "filtrates" of gonococcus, streptococcus, etc.

Misstatement Concerning Phylacogen

To the Editor:—I wish to correct, through your columns, a statement which occurs in Parke, Davis and Company's *Therapeutic Notes*, Special Phylacogen Number, January, 1913. On page 56, it is said that Phylacogens were discussed at a meeting of the Fayette County Medical Society, Connellsville, Pa., June 18, 1912. On that date the physicians of Connellsville were invited by a local druggist to assemble in the parlors of the Arlington Hotel to hear a talk on "Serums and Vaccines." About a dozen attended and were plentifully supplied with cigars, beer and Phylacogen claims by one of Parke, Davis and Company's hired men.

The Fayette County Medical Society held no meeting in June, 1912, and has at no time discussed Phylacogen or any other proprietary medicine.

E. B. EDIE, M.D., Connellsville, Pa.

Secretary, the Fayette County Medical Society.

The Role of Prevention.—In the future of medicine, the mere removal of disease must play more and more a subordinate part. Most disease can be prevented. Above all therapeutics stands sanitation. It is possible to remove causes of disease long before any disease begins. It is possible to heal our patients long before they are sick. Our knowledge in many fields is now adequate for this result. No one can be attacked by an infectious disease unless we have somehow or other permitted the infection.—David Starr Jordan, *Science*.

Association News

THE MINNEAPOLIS SESSION

Announcement of the Local Committee for the Next Annual Session of the Association

Dr. Frank C. Todd, chairman of the local Committee on Arrangements for the next annual session of the American Medical Association, in Minneapolis, June 17-20, announces the following physicians as officers of subcommittees. All communications to this committee or to any of the subcommittees should be addressed to 1106 Donaldson Building, Minneapolis, where a clearing-house has been established for all matters pertaining to the arrangements for the session.

COMMITTEE ON	CHAIRMAN	SECRETARY
FINANCE	George D. Head	Earl R. Hare
CLINICS	James E. Moore	A. C. Strachauer
ENTERTAINMENT	T. S. Roberts	J. F. Avery
OUTSIDE EXCURSIONS	H. H. Kimball	John H. Morse
SECTION ENTERTAINMENT	A. E. Wilcox	R. T. LaVake
SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITS	Thomas G. Lee	Fred L. Adair
AUTOMOBILE DRIVES	E. C. Robitschek	C. E. Dutton
REGISTRATION	Arthur T. Mann	A. S. Hamilton
HOTELS	S. Mark White	E. J. Huenekens
HALLS AND MEETING PLACES	H. E. Robertson	J. W. Bell
POST-OFFICE AND PHONES	C. A. Donaldson	C. C. Maland
ALUMNI MEETINGS	Richard J. Hill	E. K. Greene
PRINTING	J. G. Cross	E. S. Strout
ALLIED MEETINGS	Horace Newhart	W. H. Condit
PRESS AND PUBLICITY	Richard A. Beard	
PROGRAM	John W. Bell	E. J. Huenekens
WOMEN PHYSICIANS	Eleanor Hill	Laura Lane
RECEPTION AT RAILROADS	F. A. Knights	M. J. Lynch
COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS	C. H. Bradley	A. E. Hedback
GENERAL HOSPITALITY, INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE	A. E. Benjamin	C. H. Keene
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION	A. H. Parks	E. A. Moren
PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION	A. A. Law	Henry W. Cook
SECTION MEETINGS	J. P. Sedgwick	A. E. Johann
LADIES' ENTERTAINMENT	Mrs. W. A. Jones	
ST. PAUL ENTERTAINMENT	J. W. Chamberlain	
ST. PAUL FINANCE	T. W. Stumm	C. E. Smith

Queries and Minor Notes

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS will not be noticed. Every letter must contain the writer's name and address, but these will be omitted, on request.

LIABILITY FOR OBSTETRIC OPERATION WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE HUSBAND

To the Editor:—In delivering a woman, if the physician sees fit to use instruments, does he have to secure the consent of the husband? Should the husband not consent, would the physician be held legally responsible for the consequences? H.

ANSWER.—The law recognizes no difference between an obstetric operation and a surgical operation. The consent of the patient to an operation is, of course, necessary, if she is conscious or in a condition to give or withhold consent. If she is unconscious or for any other reason unable to decide, then the consent of the husband or next of kin must be obtained if possible. If the woman agrees to the operation, the husband has no right to withhold his consent. The Court of Appeals of Maryland in the well-known case of *Janney vs. Housekeeper* says: "The husband has no right to withhold from his wife the medical assistance which her case might receive."

It is hardly proper to say that a physician is legally responsible for the consequences of an operation. The law holds that anyone undertaking to render medical services as a physician or surgeon must possess a reasonable degree of knowledge, skill and experience; he must exercise ordinary care and diligence and he must use his best judgment in all cases of doubt as to the best method of treatment. He is liable for damages resulting from lack of knowledge, skill or experience, from negligence or from poor judgment. In the case of any obstetric operation his liability is just as great when the husband has given his consent as when that consent is withheld.

It should be remembered that when an injury is done to the wife there is a double cause of action. One lies in favor of the husband for the loss of her services and society during the time she was suffering from the injury and also for the cost of