SANATOGEN—ITS FOOD VALUE

To the Editor:—Will you kindly tell me whether or not Sanatogen has any food value?

ARCH DIXON, JR., M.D., El Paso, Texas.

ANSWER.—Sanatogen is said to contain 95 per cent. of casein so that 30 gm. (1 ounce) of this preparation would contain approximately 28.5 gm. of protein, which would yield 117 calories. This is the equivalent in round numbers of one-third of a pint of milk or one and one-half eggs. The same amount of energy would be given by an equal weight of starch or by one and one-fifth as much of flour or other cereals. To present the matter even more graphically, it may be said that \$1 worth (4 ounces) of Sanatogen yields approximately no more energy than 6 cents' worth of good milk or 1 cent's worth of ordinary wheat flour. Sanatogen, therefore, like most preparations of this class, while a food, is a ruinously expensive one. The absurdly exaggerated claims regarding it were discussed in THE JOURNAL, Feb. 19, 1910, as follows:

"According to the manufacturers, this patent medicine—or food—is composed of 95 per cent. casein and 5 per cent. sodium glycerophosphate. The preparation is advertised very extensively both to physicians and to the laity, on both sides of the Atlantic. In Great Britain it is a 'tonic food,' in this country a 'food tonic;' whether this is a distinction with or without a difference, it is hard to say. The public is told that Sanatogen is a 'muscle builder and a nerve and brain food;' the medical profession, that 'it should not be regarded as a food preparation in the ordinary sense of the term and it is not offered as such to the medical profession. . . . Many of the claims made for this combination of milk-curd and glycerophosphates are exaggerated and absurd. The following are taken from advertisements, appearing both in this country and abroad:

"The Re-Creator of Lost Health."

"Sanatogen is . . . a rebuilding food."

" . . . revitalizes the overworked nervous system."

"Specific nerve tonic action."

"Most reliable and scientific of all nutriment."

" . . . in certain diseases it exerts a specific action which renders it a valuable adjunct to other curative measures."

"In one of the form letters sent to physicians, the makers of Sanatogen opine that 'you have likely noticed' an article that appeared 'in the May issue' of a certain medical journal. The ingenuousness of this intimation becomes apparent when it is known that a few days previous to receiving the letters, the physicians had been the recipients of pamphlet reprints of said article—'With Author's Compliments.'"

"That milk curd has a food value no one will deny; that the glycerophosphates of soda have a place in medicine may be admitted; but that a combination of these two products should become at once the summum bonum of medicinal foods is a proposition that will not appeal to the thinking physician."

Correspondence**Fatal Accident from Toy Pistol Means of Securing Sane Fourth Ordinance**

To the Editor:—On April 11, a child, aged 7, was playing with another boy, aged 13, and in some manner a toy blank cartridge pistol, which had been loaded with a 22-caliber cartridge, with the bullet whittled down to allow it to enter the bore of the pistol, was discharged, the bullet entering the younger child's back, between the lower ribs and the crest of the ilium. In spite of everything that could be done, even to opening the abdomen in the hope of tracing the bullet, which had been followed from the rear as far as the spine, the child died about thirty-six hours after the accident.

It was found that the toy pistol causing the child's death had been purchased for the celebration of last Fourth of July.

Attorneys, physicians, and business men, together with the press, at once took up the matter of a prohibitive ordinance insuring a "sane Fourth" and April 17 the desired ordinance was passed by the Enid city commission, and the prohibition made to include all forms of explosive fireworks. Some slight objection was made by one or two members of the commission

who wanted an exception made in favor of small firecrackers and other so-called harmless fireworks, but several physicians armed with the statistics summarized in THE JOURNAL, Sept. 3, 1910, turned the tide; the opposition was withdrawn and the ordinance was passed as drawn.

The firms in the city handling fireworks had agreed to cancel their orders in case an ordinance was passed immediately, and to their fair-mindedness in the matter the result was due in no small measure.

The physicians of Enid have been trying to get such an ordinance passed for two or three years, but were always met by more or less indifference, and by the statement that it would be unjust to the dealers to prohibit the sale of stock already purchased. It took this needless sacrifice of an innocent young life to bring the community and the city government to their senses in the matter, but once aroused they have moved in the matter with a promptness truly commendable, and we hope in the future to have a Fourth truly "sane."

P. A. SMITH, M.D., Enid, Okla.

The Round-Ligament Operation

To the Editor:—I believe Dr. J. Clarence Webster and Dr. J. M. Baldy (see THE JOURNAL, April 29, 1911, p. 1280) are both behind the times in respect to priority of the operation above named. I saw Dr. Frank Andrews do this operation at Mercy Hospital in 1898 many times, drawing the round ligaments through the broad ligaments and uniting them back of the fundus. Dr. Andrews said that occasionally it might be advantageous to put a small suture from ligaments to fundus when the round ligaments were greatly relaxed.

WILLIAM J. THOMSON, Portage, Wis.

Method of Staining Bacteria

To the Editor:—My attention has been called to the fact that I have not mentioned the staining of preparations for the standardizing of vaccine by the method described in my article on "The Simplified Method of Staining Bacteria," which appeared in THE JOURNAL, April 22, 1911, p. 1189.

I have used this method of staining for that purpose all along with the greatest satisfaction in place of Leishman's or Wright's blood-stain recommended by most observers.

LEON S. MEDALIA, Boston.

Association News**No Genito-Urinary Section Program at Los Angeles**

To the Editor:—At a meeting of the executive committee of the Section on Genito-Urinary Diseases of the American Medical Association, held April 20, it was unanimously resolved to hold the first meeting of the Section in 1912.

The committee finds that proper representation cannot be secured at so late a date in June this year.

H. H. YOUNG, Secretary, Baltimore.

WILLIAM T. BELFIELD, Chairman, Chicago.

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.

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS NOT FREE

To the Editor:—You recently mentioned the Public Health Bulletins. Every letter that I have received in reference thereto has indicated that the writer had received the impression from your publication that the bulletins were sent free.

If you can see your way clear to publish a few lines removing that erroneous impression, which causes some disappointment to those who address me, and involves considerable correspondence on the part of my clerks, I shall be obliged.

AUGUST DONATH, Superintendent of Documents,
Washington, D. C.