Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

A FOREIGN BODY IN THE STOMACH FOR SIX MONTHS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—An infant of eight months old was brought to me this evening with the following story. When eight weeks old the child had swallowed an indiarubber teat; the mother gave her a dose of castor oil and watched the motions to see if the teat would pass through, but found no signs of its doing so. The child has been in good health and has not been seen by a doctor until a fortnight ago, when I saw her for a slight bronchial attack. This morning the child had breakfast of warm milk with a little bread crumbs in it and soon after vomited and in the vomit was the teat inclosed herewith. The child is a healthy-looking, well-nourished baby and seems perfectly well, so if the story is true the presence in the stomach of a large piece of vulcanised rubber has given rise to no symptoms and has not affected the child's growth or strength in any way.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

LAUNCELOT ARCHER.

Vincent-square, Westminster, Sept. 18th, 1908.

* * We have received the teat which is in two pieces and is stained slightly yellow.—ED. L.

THE MEDICAL DIRECTORY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—May we ask for the courtesy of your columns to announce our intention of reverting in the 1909 issue to the old plan upon which the "Local List" for London was arranged, namely the division of Inner London into streets in preference to districts. We thank your correspondent "Non Edipus" and other gentlemen who have written to us for the expression of their views on this subject.

We are, Sir, yours faithfully,

J. & A. CHURCHILL.

Great Marlborough-street, London, W., Sept. 18th, 1908.

THE MEDICAL ASPECT OF GASTRO-ENTEROSTOMY, BASED ON 128 OPERATIONS AT THE MANCHESTER ROYAL INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is difficult to thank Dr. Leech adequately for the temperate and judicial analysis of the cases in which gastro-enterostomy has been performed in the Manchester Royal Infirmary, published in your issue of Sept. 19th. I do not think any surgeon will feel disposed to cavil at the conclusions at which he has arrived, especially that conclusion which has reference to the disastrous consequences of delay. But there is one point telling strongly in favour of early operation which Dr. Leech has not mentioned, and which certainly deserves to be taken into consideration in weighing the merits or the demerits of this operation. There were 46 cases of malignant disease. In one of these the growth was a secondary one; in two others the situation is not mentioned. These may be left upon one side. In 40 out of 43 the growth was at the pylorus—the part of the stomach in which chronic ulcer is most common. In what proportion of these 40 cases did the growth originate at the site of an old ulcer, which had failed to heal under medical treatment and which would at least have had a chance of healing if timely gastro-enterostomy had been done?

It is notorious that in every part of the body, stomach included, carcinoma is especially prone to develop at the site of an old ulcer which is prevented from healing; and the identity of situation in such a large proportion of cases is most significant. It is not the least argument in favour of early gastro-enterostomy that, in addition to the relief it gives, it will, by enabling a chronic ulcer of the stomach to

heal more readily, diminish the frequency of gastric carcinoma.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Wimpole-street, W., Sept. 20th, 1908. C. MANSELL MOULLIN.

THE PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS (IRELAND) BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of Sept. 19th, p. 901, Dr. J. C. McWalter, writing in reference to the Prevention of Tuberculosis (Ireland) Bill, says: "Knowing what I do of the Irish people, I believe that the Compulsory Notification Clauses will excite so much suspicion and dread as effectually to undo any good result heretofore obtained from the tuberculosis campaign. People simply will not go to a medical man if they think that by so doing they may be listed as tuberculous."

Now, Sir, while Dr. McWalter gives no evidence of any kind beyond his own individual opinion in support of such a prophetic view he totally ignores the following facts: 1. In places where there is compulsory notification (and here we are dealing with practical experience and not with mere theoretical opinion) no difficulty of this kind has arisen. If practical experience in Sheffield, Edinburgh, Bolton, and New York (where there are so many people from Ireland) has clearly demonstrated that there are no serious objections to compulsory notification, why should there be any in Ireland? 2. At the meetings held in connexion with the Tuberculosis Exhibition all over Ireland resolutions were passed by the people of Ireland calling upon the Government to legislate upon certain points regarded as essential and one of these was the compulsory notification of tuberculosis. Then a deputation of almost everybody who could speak with authority in Ireland on such a question waited on the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary, and the Vice-Chairman of the Department of Agriculture on Nov. 29th, 1907, asking that special legislation should be introduced without delay with the object of making it compulsory that all cases of pulmonary tuberculosis should be notified; and, finally, on August 27th, 1908, at a large conference of delegates summoned from all parts of Ireland, a resolution was carried with only two dissentients heartily approving of the principles of the Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill and earnestly desiring to see it passed into law. Does Dr. McWalter really believe that the people who were at these meetings and on this deputation would have taken such a line of action had they for one moment imagined that the compulsory notification clauses would cause any annoyance, or that the people would object to them, or that they would impale for life persons notified? Ireland enjoys the unenviable notoriety of losing close upon 12,000 of her people every year from tuberculosis—that is, 15 per cent. of all the deaths in Ireland are from tuberculosis. Is this to continue or is she not to be allowed, if her people wish it, to take her position with those in the van in trying to get rid of a largely preventable disease?

Let us discuss this problem in a thoroughly scientific and practical way.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Belfast, Sept. 21st, 1908.

JOHN BYERS.

A QUESTION OF SOBRIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The regret expressed by "M.D." at finding himself at variance with me seems to me uncalled for, for I cannot find anything in his account of himself or of his cousin that conflicts with the opinions I hold on the nature of drunkenness. Perhaps the account of my address, to which you courteously gave the hospitality of your columns, was so much compressed as to be obscure. A full report will appear in the October number of the *Journal of Mental Science*, and if "M.D." will do me the honour to read it there, or in a copy which I shall be happy to send him on request, I am confident that he will find his criticism unnecessary. Few people have preached, more insistently than I have, the doctrine of the inescapable responsibility of every man for his own acts; and many a trouncing have I had from my colleagues for such preachments. That I should now be accused of supporting the opposite opinion is startling, and impels me to declare that the abstract of my address was