Messrs. Wm. Mitchell (Pens), Limited, 8, Warwick-lane, London, E.C., who, with much trouble, have succeeded in producing them at rather less than 2½d. each, with a reduction on large quantities.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

LAUDER BRUNTON.

New Cavendish-street, W., July 17th, 1915.

SANITATION IN THE DARDANELLES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As an Advisory Medical Committee is proceeding to the Dardanelles, it may be of interest if I give some details about certain of the diseases there which I gathered a few years ago when surgeon to H.M.S. *Lancaster*. The sanitary condition of the towns (villages) on both sides of the Straits is very poor—"streets of steps" bordered by whitewashed houses, very dirty, very squalid, hovels mostly. The water-supply is from shallow springs and streams frequently polluted by sewage; drains there are none. The scavenging was done by prowling dogs. Everything was unkempt and unclean. The country is very rough and barren. The hills are composed of "many stones," interspersed by bushes of thorns which tear and hurt. There are muscatel grapes in the cultivated patches and some olives. Mosquitoes play a part in the life there. *Stegomyia fasciata*, *Culex pipiens* and *fatigans* account for dengue fever and some of the so-called Weil's disease perhaps. Anophelines are represented by *Cellia pharoensis* and *Anopheles maculipennis*—found in some of the pools of the ravines; and in one village at least they convey malaria, which was rife. In the early autumn these, with phlebotomus flies, caused much fever. The house-fly, with blue-bottles and sarcophagus galore, were a pest. And when the sea-water at high Mediterranean left salt puddles and pools a marine mosquito, *Acartomyia zammitii*, annoyed us all day long. The game consists of a few red-leg partridges and occasional quail in October, and in cold winters, when the snow reaches Mount Athos and streaks the slopes of the Eumoea, there are woodcock which give good shooting. Incidentally, there are some wonderful chameleons and butterflies to be found near the site of Troy on the Asiatic shore which would please a collector. Typhoid fever was in the villages, dengue occurred in outbreaks, three-day fever was present every summer, and Malta fever appeared from time to time when the few Syrian goats were interbred with imported Maltese animals. Small-pox was common, measles killed the children, scarlet fever was rare, typhus fever frequent. The peasant Turk there is a lazy, cheerful, amiable man, religious but tolerant. He speaks a multi-tongue of Turkish, Greek, Yiddish, mixed with patois French and Italian words. All are Mohammedans. The officials, soldiers, and lighthouse keepers received such pay as they could find or impose. Their occupation was fishing; and their hobbies were gambling, swindling, and thieving. The women were veiled in the presence of strangers. The Governor at Gallipoli possessed a harem which was supported out of the local customs dues. Its occupants were fair, fat, comely, and immodest; the children were naked. The port health officer wore a coat "borrowed" from a European naval lieutenant, and his trousers were remarkable by their absence. The climate is superb, and the bathing excellent.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Sackville-street, W., July 19th, 1915.

E. HALFORD ROSS.

THE NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS EXTENSION BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—This Bill proposes to make the Notification of Births Act, 1907, apply to all areas in the United Kingdom. Some of its points require careful attention. Unfortunately it neglects to provide for the payment of any fee to the person notifying. When we consider that all vital statistics, insurance of life calculations, and many other national questions are placed upon doctors, and that no fee is paid to them for notifying and certifying, we can see that the limit of medical charity has been passed. A fee of 3s. 6d. should be paid out of the public funds.

A most important point is that the Bill is defective in regard to a practical definition of "stillbirth." Section 1 (5) of the 1907 Act states that only stillbirths of and over the age of 7 months intra-uterine life shall be notified. The defect is further emphasised when we see that the definition given by the Central Midwives Board is: "A child is deemed to be stillborn after being completely born it has not breathed or shown any sign of life." Here no intra-uterine age is mentioned, and so the midwife may notify only fully developed infants. I would suggest the following clause be added to the Bill: Every stillborn child in which the external sex organs—that is from the fourth and a half month and upwards of intra-uterine life—shall be notified by the medical practitioner or midwife or person present at the birth. The age and sex of the child shall be notified and whether the child has been born out of wedlock. The fact shall also be notified as to whether the child was alive during its birth, or showed symptoms of death in the womb before its birth for some hours or days before birth. Only one form of official notification form shall be used, such being supplied free by the Registrar-General offices. Each year a return showing the total number of stillbirths notified, with the age, sex, legitimacy, and appearance of life or death shall be laid before Parliament by the three Registrar-Generals of the United Kingdom. The present war compels us to afford more protection to the intra-uterine child. It is quite easy to criminally prevent an infant during its birth from breathing, and both criminal abortion, foeticide, and infanticide are on the increase. I would almost prefer to have it made compulsory that every conception must be notified, for this would give us an insight into the real loss to England through children being stillborn.

In 1890 I found that at 71 burial board cemeteries in England 6321 stillbirths had been interred in one year alone. The late Dr. Cameron, M.P., called attention in the Commons to these statistics, and then moved for a full return. It showed that during 1890 the number of stillbirths interred in England and Wales was 17,335, and that 4562 had been interred without a doctor's certificate. It will be noted that the return did not include any burial grounds other than those belonging to public burial boards, probably about 10,000. In 1893 a further return—"Stillbirths in England and other Countries"—was issued. It is most unfortunate that the *larger* the child and the later the marriage of parents, the more likely is the child to be still-born, and, further, that more male children than female are stillborn. This imposes a great loss to the country of future husbands and men.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Liverpool, July 15th, 1915.

ROBERT R. RENTOUL.