tins were sent out at stated intervals advertising the "cure" far and wide. This went on for some months, and then a news item appeared in the Chicago papers announcing, unofficially, that the "investigation" of the Duket cure had demonstrated its worthlessness. These items appeared Nov. 4, 1913. So far as THE JOURNAL has been able to learn, however, the 140,000 persons who received the bulletins advertising the "cure" have never been sent the final report, showing its worthlessness.

After waiting some weeks, THE JOURNAL wrote asking when the public would be notified of the results of the investigation. No definite reply was given on this point, but some time later a copy of the "report" on the "cure" was received for publication. This "report" was returned with the suggestion that it be given to the country through the same avenues of publicity that had been used in cruelly raising the hopes of the consumptives. It was again asked whether the facts were going to be given the public. No reply was forthcoming.

In view of this, it becomes the unpleasant duty of THE JOURNAL to give what publicity it can to the essential parts of the report by Duket's backers on the Duket "cure." The findings are really summed up in the following paragraph, taken from the report as submitted to THE JOURNAL. The capitalization is ours:

"It may at once be stated that the investigators and authors of this report have finally come to the conclusion that there are ABSOLUTELY NO MERITS IN THE DUKET TREATMENT OF tuberculosis; that the method is VASTLY INFERIOR TO ANY OF THE APPROVED SYSTEMS of treating pulmonary tuberculosis; and that their observations would indicate that the DUKET TREATMENT MAY SOMETIMES LEAD TO ALBUMINURIA."

Summed up, then, every contention made by THE JOURNAL regarding the worthlessness of Duket's "cure" has been proved! At an expenditure of thousands of dollars a self-evident fact has been verified—a fact that THE JOURNAL gave to the medical profession and the public a year earlier!

In discussing the possible composition of Duket's secret "cure," THE JOURNAL admitted its ignorance on this point, but stated that there was evidence which indicated that Duket was using a widely advertised consumption "cure" known as the Hyer-Baldwin preparation, consisting of carbonate of guaiacol, salicylic acid and glycerin. Here is what the report has to say regarding the composition of the nostrum:

"The chemicals used in the so-called Duket cure for tuberculosis are *carbonate of guaiacol, salicylic acid, bicarbonate of soda, carbonate of potash and a small amount of nitric acid*, all of which are dissolved in *glycerin*. This solution is diluted with distilled water and sometimes a trace of tincture of chlorid of iron is added." [Italics ours.—Ed.]

What does it all mean? That a self-evident fraud has been seriously studied and gravely reported to be a fraud; that, after exhaustive research costing thousands of dollars, scientific men solemnly affirm that the moon is not, and probably never was, made of green cheese!

But the expenditure of money and brains on a quest of this sort, while a woful economic waste, could be overlooked if that were the only thing involved. In reality, this is the smallest part of it. The most expensive element in this widely advertised piece of miscalled research was paid for, not in money, but in the blasted hopes and shattered desires of a myriad of unhappy consumptives.

UNITED DOCTORS LEAVE SOUTH BEND; DR. S. M. BARTLETT, SUCCESSOR—ANOTHER NEWS ITEM

The latest town to be abandoned by the United Doctors is South Bend, Ind., where Lee B. Kinsey, brother of Ben W. Kinsey, the original promoter, lived and had his headquarters. From there he directed the offices at South Bend, Elkhart, Kokomo, Muncie and Evansville, Ind., and several in northern and western Ohio and a number of offices in Michigan. Most of these offices, like the one at Muskegon, Mich., where the owners were sued for rent, died a natural death. The office at South Bend, which had been making a desperate struggle for some time, in a last spurt advertised in the South Bend and nearby Indiana and Michigan papers about the middle of February that the "President of the Medical Staff of the

United Doctors" would be in South Bend for a week. Everybody was advised to come in and take advantage of the opportunity to see this "past master in the art of healing." His name was not mentioned. Evidently the invitation to come in was not accepted to any great extent, for shortly the announcement was made that Dr. S. M. Bartlett, who had supplied the office for a year or more, had succeeded the United Doctors and was occupying the same offices. Bartlett now advertises under the name "Dr. S. M. Bartlett, Specialist," and in his advertisements calls himself "Master Specialist in chronic diseases." He is an example of the way in which the United Doctors make "specialists" in a short time out of indifferent or poor material, and foist them on the public as men with special skill and training. Bartlett graduated in 1904 at the Physio-Medical College in Indiana, which went out of existence in 1909. Until a little over two years ago he practiced at Oakford, Howard County, Ind., a town of 150 inhabitants, which has not supported a physician since he left. After leaving Oakford he became one of the hired men of the United Doctors at Kokomo, Ind., where he was immediately made one of the United Doctors' "great specialists," and was then transferred to the South Bend office.

Correspondence

A Christian Scientist as Adjuster of Accident Insurance Disability*

To the Editor:—I wish through your columns to inform the profession, especially those in Illinois, that the Preferred Accident Insurance Company of New York employs as an agency superintendent and adjuster in Chicago a man who is understood to be a devotee of Christian Science. What this means to the patrons of this company in this district can be readily appreciated. As I have written to the officers of the company, it would seem as reasonable for a fire-insurance company to employ a blind man to adjust a fire loss as for an accident company to adjust accident insurance disability of its patrons by the aid of one who religiously believes there is no actual pain, disease or disability.

I have asked of the home office for the name of the medical director of this company in order that I might call his attention to this fact, but have not been able to secure the name of that official. If you can give me his name please do so.

GEORGE N. KREIDER, M.D., Springfield, Ill.

Correction of Error

To the Editor:—In the article on the "Progress of Orthopedic Surgery," by Dr. J. D. Griffith (THE JOURNAL, March 7, 1914, p. 748), the following error should be corrected:

Dr. Griffith, under the head of scoliosis, states that "after having pursued this treatment [with the Abbott plaster-of-Paris jacket] in a great many cases of lateral curvature, Abbott's conclusions are as follows:

"1. Rotary lateral curvature of the fixed type, developed in childhood and persisting in adolescence, cannot be cured perfectly.

"2. The condition of the patient can be much improved.

"3. The anteroposterior postural deformities can be corrected.

"4. The lumbar lordosis can be corrected.

"5. The lateral deviation of the body can be corrected.

"6. The lateral deviation of the spine is corrected in early cases.

"7. The rotation of the vertebrae may be improved but not corrected.

"8. The use of the plaster jacket, applied by the Abbott method in flexion with corrective felt pads, is very satisfactory, in that we are enabled to obtain the result in a shorter time than by any other method of treatment heretofore practiced."

These are my own conclusions and have been copied from my article printed in the *New York Medical Journal* of

* See Current Comment, this issue.

Nov. 22, 1913, from a paper entitled "Recent Progress in Orthopedic Surgery," which I send you herewith and which reads as follows:

"In the *New York Medical Journal* of April 27, 1912, the same journal in which Abbott's last article appeared, there was also another by the writer, entitled "Rotary Lateral Curvature Based on the Report of Results Obtained." My conclusions at that time have since been substantiated. They are in brief: 1," etc., as above.

Dr. Griffith has also copied from this article elsewhere in his paper, to which one would have no objection provided that quotation marks were used and the references given in each instance.

CHARLES OGILVY, M.D., New York.

[The preceding letter was referred to Dr. Griffith, who replied:]

To the Editor:—I am very sorry indeed that I understood from the paper in the *New York Medical Journal* that the conclusions were Dr. Abbott's and hence did not give Dr. Ogilvy credit. I did not and do not claim a particle of originality in the review on "The Progress of Orthopedic Surgery," and used the article of Dr. Ogilvy as I did those of Goldthwaite and others. I am sorry I did not mention Dr. Ogilvy as I should have.

J. D. GRIFFITH, M.D.

Holmes, Not Semmelweis

To the Editor:—In preparing, a few years ago, material for a publication on "Epoch-Making Contributions to Medicine and Surgery," I had occasion to look up the subject discussed in the Current Comment on "Holmes, not Semmelweis" (THE JOURNAL, April 11, 1914, p. 1177). A comparison of the dates of the writings of Holmes and Semmelweis arranged in parallel columns brings out graphically the truth of your statement. These lists of publications will be found on pages 434 and 435 of the volume on "Epoch-Making Contributions" referred to.

I should like also to mention an article by Dr. Richard Cole Newton on "A Brief Study of the Contribution of Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis to Modern Medicine" (*Med. Rec.*, New York, Sept. 10, 1910). Dr. Newton shows the gradual development in the mind of Semmelweis regarding the theory of the origin of puerperal fever. On page 10 Newton states that Semmelweis' intensive study of puerperal fever began with his appointment as assistant to the chair of obstetrics and as chief of the First Obstetrical Clinic in the Vienna General Hospital in 1846. This was three years after the publication of Holmes' paper on "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever" in the *New England Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery*, Boston. Semmelweis did not publish his observations until several years later.

C. N. B. CAMAC, M.D., New York.

Queries and Minor Notes

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

VITAMINS

To the Editor:—Please answer the following questions:

1. What are vitamins?
2. When and by whom were they discovered?
3. What is their scientific status and their relation to beriberi?
4. What literature is there on the subject?

G. H. J. PEARSON, London, Ont.

ANSWER.—1. "Vitamin" is the name given to a substance which is believed to be necessary to prevent the nervous lesions characteristic of beriberi. It is regarded as an antineuritic agent naturally present in rice, the removal of which by polishing causes the symptoms of the disease to appear. The name appears to be derived from vita, life and amin, indicating its chemical character. The substance was at first thought to be a pyrimidin base with the following formula: $C_{17}H_{20}O_6N_2$. It was at first believed to have the constitution of a ureid, but in his latest work Funk states that the nitrogen is not present in the amino form. Vitamin was first found in rice and was

connected with beriberi. Other substances of similar character were subsequently discovered and the name has become descriptive of a class.

2. Vitamin was discovered in 1912 by Casimir Funk.

3. Up to the present the only vitamin that has been investigated chemically appears to be that of beriberi. Other vitamins are held by Funk to belong chemically to the same group. Vitamin exists in rice along with allantoin and cholin, but it is to vitamin that the physiologic action of the rice-polishings seems to be due. It has been shown that an exclusive diet of rice deprived of vitamin will cause in fowls a neuritis closely resembling beriberi, and that this artificial disease can be cured by the administration of vitamin.

4. Following are the contributions of Funk to the literature on vitamins:

Funk, Casimir: *Pharm. Jour.*, 1912, lxxxix, 351; *Brit. Med. Jour.*, 1912, ii, 787; *ibid.*, 1913, i, 814; *Biochem. Jour.*, vii, 211; *Jour. Physiol.*, 1913, xlv, 173; *Lancet*, London, 1914, i, 98.

Funk, Casimir: Die Vitamine, ihre Bedeutung für Physiologie und Pathologie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Avitaminosen (Beriberi, Skorbut, Pellagra, Rachitis) Anhang: Die Wachstums substanz und das Krebsproblem, Wiesbaden, J. F. Bergmann, 1914.

RADIUM EMANATIONS

To the Editor:—I believe that it is time for the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry to take up the status of radium emanations and to inform the medical profession, and through it the general public, whether or not radium emanations have a curative value, as claimed by some concerns who offer them for sale. I have looked up the subject and I found that according to Prof. Heinrich Willy Schmidt of Giessen, as quoted by Prof. J. Groebel of Naunheim, every spring water contains radium emanations in varying amounts, but that these emanations, being in gaseous form, disappear very soon after the water leaves the ground and are entirely absent after a short time, even if the water is kept in hermetically sealed containers. If this is the case, then the sale of radium emanations is a humbug and a swindle and it is the duty of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry to enlighten the profession to this effect. At any rate it would be worth while to look into this matter and to make public the result of your investigations.

X. Y., Philadelphia.

ANSWER.—The Council has already taken up radium emanations. A discussion of radium and radium preparations appears in New and Nonofficial Remedies, 1914, pp. 221-225. In this discussion it is pointed out that radium emanations lose their strength rapidly and that in 3.85 days any quantity of the emanations will fall to half its initial activity owing to disintegration of the atoms. From this it is evident that waters whose radio-activity is due, not to radium itself but to radium emanations, will quickly lose their activity. As most radio-active waters do owe their activity to radium emanations; they must be used at the springs. Radium-containing waters were discussed in THE JOURNAL, Nov. 1, 1913, p. 1649, Sept. 20, 1913, p. 969, and March 21, 1914, p. 951.

YAWS IN THE UNITED STATES

To the Editor:—Please give me information as to the occurrence of yaws in the United States. Has it occurred in this country? If so, will you kindly give recent literature? I am familiar with the literature of the disease generally, but have been unable to find it in any text-books or systems of medicine published in this country.

EDWARD J. WOOD, Wilmington, N. C.

ANSWER.—Cases of this disease have been reported from the Southern states, but never from the Northern states or from Canada. This is the opinion of Castellani and Chambers, as reported in *Tropical Medicine* for 1910. A similar statement is made in Shoemaker's "Diseases of the Skin," fourth edition, page 647.

ACTION OF WATER ON LEAD PIPES

To the Editor:—In this town there is a municipal water plant. Recently the authorities have made the requirement that all connections to water mains and to the property shall be of lead. Many pipes are from one to three hundred or more feet long. Is there danger of lead poisoning from this? Our water is very hard and heavily charged with mineral and earthy matter. Is this a usual requirement for persons using city water?

F. S. SMITH, M.D., Nevada, Ia.

ANSWER.—The ability of a natural water to take up lead depends largely on the oxygen and carbon dioxide content of the water. In general it may be said that soft waters and especially the acid waters from peaty swamps and marshes possess the most active lead-dissolving properties. Some hard waters, however, particularly those in which the hardness is of the kind known as "permanent," that is, due chiefly to sulphates and chlorides, may be quite plumbosolvent. Thresh (The Examination of Waters and Water-Supplies, Ed. 2, Philadelphia, P. Blakiston's Son & Co., 1913) recommends