

nurse her hostess. After 10 days this lady (the mother) felt so ill that she returned home and went straight to bed, carefully avoiding her children; and next day it was clear that she was beginning measles. The children, meanwhile, had been threatening the troublesome cough that might precede measles, but not until the fifteenth and seventeenth day after their exposure did they show manifest signs of measles. Now, it would seem that the extra dose received by the mother distinctly led to a shorter length of the incubation stage. Again in August and in the early days of September I was using lymph of the Jenner Institute (*not* the Jenner Institute of Preventive Medicine) which failed to take at all. Later, in the month of October, I found that the vaccine would take effect in a mild sort of way on the twelfth day, showing that there probably was but a very mild dose of the vaccine virus in the glycerine. I had always been able to prophesy that in revaccination one could look with certainty for the local reaction on the third or fifth day (at least this always happened when I used lymph from Dr. Renner's establishment). So I took to using Dr. Renner's lymph again and always find that I can guarantee a good pock-mark or an abortive one equally surely about from the third to the fifth day, showing, I suppose, that the dose is fairly equal.

These facts would seem to prove that if lymph is over-glycerinated it is either inert or very slow in incubation, all which would show that there might be some standard of strength established by the authority of those who make lymph for the Government. For we non-public vaccinators are entirely dependent on the private companies who advertise their goods. They, on the other hand, deny all responsibility for the uncertainty of their lymph. I have lately revaccinated and caused to be revaccinated many who were done with Jenner lymph and find that 30 per cent. when done again with Dr. Renner's lymph give excellent vaccine vesicles. This shows how our unfortunate patients are entirely at the mercy of the trade supply in lymph.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Courtfield-road, S.W., Jan. 21st, 1902. J. KINGSTON BARTON.

EXCISION OF GASTRIC ULCER.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I notice that in THE LANCET of Jan. 25th, p. 275, you refer a correspondent signing himself "E. N. B." to a case of mine recorded in your issue of March 2nd, 1895, p. 544. As that case occurred early in the history of operation for perforated gastric ulcer and was my first experience of operating for it, will you allow me to say that in four or five subsequent cases (one of which was published in 1896) I have not thought it advisable to excise the ulcer before suturing? I think that perhaps your correspondent may find the information he seeks in the excellent lectures by Mr. A. W. Mayo Robson published in THE LANCET of March 10th (p. 671), 17th (p. 747), and 24th (p. 830), 1900, and in an address by Mr. Robson in THE LANCET of Feb. 9th, 1901, p. 375.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

Brighton, Jan. 25th, 1902.

R. F. JOWERS.

FIRST AID FOR PRIMARY HÆMORRHAGE: THE WRONG INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO AMBULANCE CLASSES. A CORRECTION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In my letter which appears in THE LANCET of Jan. 25th, p. 256, the words "severely burnt" have been omitted from the account of the infant who was carried over two miles to a hospital.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Plymouth, Jan. 25th, 1902.

C. HAMILTON WHITEFORD.

FEEDING ON GOAT'S MILK.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—If any of your readers have had experience of the suckling of children by goats I should be greatly obliged if they would let me benefit thereby. The child who has come under my care quite recently is four months old, and has been suckled since birth by a goat, taking at present four

meals daily from the goat and two from the mother. The child is large, firm-fleshed, mottled, but has a scurfy patch covering the lower part of the forehead, the nose, and the left cheek. There is no irritability, flatulence, vomiting, or loss of weight. There has been a little diarrhoea which passed off without treatment; curds are frequently passed in the stools. There is no loss of weight. The udders of the goat are well cleaned before each meal and the animal is healthy.

Would it be wiser to advise a change in the method of feeding than to leave well alone?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Albareda 49, Seville, Jan. 21st, 1902.

JOHN DALEBROOK.

HIGH FREQUENCY CURRENTS IN THE TREATMENT OF PHTHISIS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I trust that you will afford brief space for an indignant repudiation of certain sensational statements concerning the treatment of phthisis by currents of high frequency which have appeared in the columns of the daily press, and in which my name has been used to my great annoyance and entirely without my knowledge or consent.

On Jan. 23rd, as a matter of courtesy, I saw a representative of the *Daily Mail*, who called on me with an introduction from a well-known member of our profession, a personal friend, for the alleged purpose of reporting on the subject which had been dealt with in the Gresham lectures. I explained to him impersonally the *modus operandi* of the electrical treatment in question, allowing him to test for himself the physical properties of the current from an ordinary Oudin resonator which stands in my room without any adjuncts of elaborate finish, mystery, or impressiveness, and is indeed in all its surroundings eloquent of makeshift arrangements and purely experimental use. I pointed out that I personally was interested in the matter from a purely scientific point of view, and had had an extremely short and small acquaintance with its alleged therapeutic effects.

Before consenting to afford him any information I had obtained his assurance that my name should not be used at all in connexion with the matter, so that its use in the published paragraph is entirely unjustifiable and a grave breach of confidence.

I have written a letter to the *Daily Mail* pointing out my extreme annoyance, and I feel confident that those who know me and my work will at once see how I have been made an unsuspecting victim to the peculiar "principles" of modern sensational journalism.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Devonshire-street, W., Jan. 28th, 1902.

T. J. BOKENHAM.

THE ROYAL UNITED HOSPITAL, BATH.—Mr. Arthur Roberts, the comedian, who was performing at the Theatre Royal, Bath, gave an entertainment at the Royal United Hospital, Bath, on Jan. 24th. Mr. Roberts was assisted by several members of his company and the performance was much appreciated by the patients.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.—The Friday evening discourse at the Royal Institution on Jan. 24th was delivered by Mr. H. G. Wells, the title of his address being "The Discovery of the Future." He thought that along certain lines and with certain limitations it was quite possible to forecast the future and that the time for commencing investigations in this direction had, in fact, now arrived. In support of his arguments he referred to the calculation of planetary movements many years in advance of the actual occurrences, to the predictions of chemists as to the properties of bodies which were unknown at the time but have since been discovered, to the results of medical prognosis, and to the anticipations of palæontologists at first founded on scanty data but afterwards verified when more abundant fossil remains came to light. The human race as at present existing was not, he said, the last stage in the evolution of the highest form of animal life, and speculation as to what type of creature would succeed man on the earth was exceedingly interesting. He believed that within the next few hundred years the human mind would undergo great development and would accomplish things compared with which all its achievements in the past would be only as the dawn before the day.

THE DESTRUCTOR NUISANCE AT TORQUAY.

(BY OUR SPECIAL SANITARY COMMISSIONER.)

(Continued from p. 264.)

TESTIMONY OF RESIDENTS.—THE ILL-HEALTH AND ACUTE SYMPTOMS ATTRIBUTED TO THE DESTRUCTOR.—NUMEROUS AND BITTER COMPLAINTS.

HAVING given the history of the circumstances which resulted in the construction of a destructor at Torquay and the unfortunate selection of the site which it now occupies, it is necessary to consider the complaints that have been made. It was, as already stated, in September, 1898, that the burning of the town refuse commenced. Individual complaints soon followed, but it took some time before the dissatisfied inhabitants began to organise more systematic protests. By the summer of 1900 the agitation against the destructor had assumed formidable dimensions. If reference is made to the local papers it will be found that the matter was discussed by the Marychurch District Council, which was at that time a separate local authority. Mr. G. M. Winter, M.R.C.S. Eng., then read to the council a memorial signed by from 30 to 40 ratepayers and occupiers of St. Margaret-road, St. Marychurch-road, Westhill, and Daison. This memorial stated that:—

In consequence of the injurious effects of the smoke, fumes, and gases ejected from the destructor, your petitioners respectfully call the attention of the district council to the serious effects upon personal property caused by the said destructor, and request them to take steps effectually to prevent the nuisance.

Mr. Winter, according to the newspaper reports published at the time, is represented to have urged upon the council, of which he was a member, that this was a serious complaint. The matter had been brought before it during the previous month of September and representations were then made to the Torquay Council. A reply was received in the following month of November to the effect that certain alterations would be made which would effectually stop the nuisance. These alterations, however, had not secured the desired result. Mr. Winter then protested that this was in no wise a mere sentimental grievance and he regretted to notice that the officials at Torquay strove to belittle the complaints they had received. At a recent meeting of officials connected with sanitary departments which had been held at Dartmouth they had even stated that the destructor worked well and that no complaints had been received. Such a statement was not justified, for the Marychurch Council had complained, and Mr. Winter went on to say that the fumes from the destructor affected the health and comfort of the inhabitants. The smell was foul and nauseating. There was no doubt that the destructor was placed in a ridiculous position. He added:—

No one knowing anything about wind and gases would place such a thing in the bottom of a pit, where the wind could not possibly take the fumes away. Possibly the destructor was faultily constructed, or perhaps the fumes were not properly cremated. He had said sufficient, added to their own personal knowledge, to show that a nuisance existed, and a very serious one which affected many ratepayers. He would move: "That the St. Marychurch District Council, recognising the real nuisance emanating from the Torquay refuse destructor, regret that effectual means have not been taken to abate it after the communication of Sept. 26th last, and trust that the town council will at once take steps to do away with the nuisance and its attendant risk to health."

Mr. C. Taylor seconded.

The Chairman, Captain Hill Lowe, said the destructor was a very decided nuisance, and he was exceedingly glad that the matter had been brought forward.

The motion was unanimously agreed to.

In consequence of the adoption of the above resolution a deputation waited on the Torquay Town Council and were informed that the council would construct a Jones's patent coke cremator in the main flue so as to render the fumes and gases innocuous. The *Torquay Directory and South Devon Journal* of Sept. 5th, 1900, reports the discussion held by the council in regard to this deputation. A letter was read from Mrs. Ridley, of Vane Hill, complaining of the smells from the destructor, but the borough surveyor stated that on the night complained of the destructor was not at work. Councillor Pike said that he lived within 150 yards of the destructor and had never smelt it, and that sentiment was at the bottom of all the complaints. Alderman Kerswill named people living near who had never

smelt anything objectionable; but Councillor F. J. Crocker admitted that there had been cause for complaint, and the discussion was brought to a close by the Mayor who declared that the cremator which they were about to build would destroy the last germ of every reasonable complaint. The local paper, after giving these details, comments on this discussion in the following terms:—

An even worse feature was the frequent attempt to pour ridicule upon those who have addressed complaints either to the council or the public press. A lady was several times held up to ridicule, and one member went so far as to speak of ratepayers who have been prominent in the agitation about the destructor as lunatics. This sort of thing only brings the council into disrepute and is to be regretted by all who value the good name of the borough. By their action the council admit that there has been cause for complaint. Then why throw dust in the eyes of the public? And why insult those who have felt compelled to call attention to the matter?

Shortly after this the boundaries of Torquay were extended so as to include the districts of Marychurch and Chelston. Consequently the Marychurch District Council, which it has been seen was a centre of agitation against the destructor, ceased to exist, and Mr. Winter, who had been a leader in this movement, became a member of the Torquay Town Council and was thus jointly responsible with his fellow members of the council for the destructor. There were two good reasons to hope that the nuisance would be abated: firstly, the construction of the cremator, and, secondly, the fact, which has been already explained, that with the addition of a population of 12,000 there would now be refuse enough to keep the destructor working at night as well as in the day, as it was argued that the nuisance arose through the cooling down of the cells when the fires were not kept fully alight. That these hopes were not realised is, I think, fully demonstrated by the evidence I personally was able to collect.

A portion of the Marychurch-road passes over one of the hills that dominate the destructor. Here my first visit was to Dr. H. Humphreys who has taken a leading part in the agitation against the destructor. To him the matter is of personal as well as of general interest. He would long since have left the district, but having purchased the freehold of his house he is compelled to remain. He could not sell his house except at a considerable loss, for he conceives that it would not be honest to do so without warning the intending purchaser of the nuisance to which he would be exposed. Some of his neighbours, however, have been less scrupulous. After taking part in the agitation against the destructor they have succeeded in selling or letting their houses and are now silent. Others are seeking to follow this example or to let out some of their rooms to lodgers and are therefore also anxious not to say too much about this grievance. But there still remain a considerable number of persons who have nothing to lose and much to gain by bringing such public pressure to bear as will result in the abolition of the nuisance. Dr. Humphreys explained that the odour varied considerably. Sometimes it seemed like the smell of a tallow candle, at other times it was more like that of a burnt shoe. It was stifling, caused a choking sensation, and there was an irritation of the throat as if produced by fine dust. The windows were dirtier than they used to be before the destructor was built. When the smell had thoroughly penetrated a room it hung about for hours after the wind had changed and the fumes of the destructor were blown in another direction. The odour was of such a penetrating character that it had been noticed at a great distance, even out at sea off Petty Tor. Mrs. Humphreys complained of a nasty taste in her mouth, of nausea followed by salivation, and of sore or spongy gums. The family were often driven out of their garden by the odour and obliged to take refuge indoors and to shut all the windows, which was very unpleasant on a hot summer day.

My next visit was to neighbours of Dr. Humphreys, the Misses Tappers, whose house overlooks the valley in which the destructor is built. They explained that they were away when the destructor was erected and on their return they were surprised to find their house invaded by strange odours. Later, when the summer came, these odours were so strong that if the wind came from the direction of the destructor they would be obliged to get up in the night so as to shut all the windows. At the risk of suffocating themselves they even shut down the dampers of their stove and closed up their fireplaces. They complained that the odour made them feel sick and provoked headaches. A lady invalid who could get fresh air only in the garden was on these occasions obliged to remain indoors. They had not only felt a sensation of nausea but this had produced