

Employment of Aurists in Connexion with Recruiting by Lieutenant-Colonel R. C. Cottell, the author refers to the large number of cases invalidated from the army in consequence of deafness. He points out that short service after an expensive training owing to this cause is obviously a bad investment for the State, and believes that more care must be taken in testing the hearing of recruits, and that if necessary more aural specialists should be employed. "If the remedy," he says, "would even half this terrible loss, time and money would be well spent." Captain J. Dorgan gives an interesting personal experience of spinal analgesia by stovaine and describes his feelings in the course of an operation for radical cure of a right inguinal hernia.

#### THE RED CROSS SOCIETY.

At the annual general meeting of the council of the Scottish branch of the British Red Cross Society held on May 5th at the North British Railway station, Glasgow, it was stated that the returns received from the honorary secretaries of counties showed that there would appear to be in all but 277 members and associates of the society belonging to the Scottish branch, of whom 193 were members and 84 associates.

The President of the Suffolk branch of the Red Cross Society, the Hon. Mrs. Stirling, gave an address at a meeting of the executive committee which was held in the County Hall, Ipswich, on May 3rd. She laid particular stress upon the importance of field cooking classes, or what she might term housekeeping classes, remarking that even those ladies who were good cooks were neither accustomed to catering for dozens of invalids and their nurses, nor to cooking without the conveniences of a well-appointed house.

On May 3rd the Countess of Warwick presided at the Great Eastern Hotel, Liverpool-street, London, E.C., over a meeting convened for the purpose of forming an Essex branch of the British Red Cross Society. Mr. G. H. Makins, C.B., gave an address on the aims and objects of the movement.

A meeting of the Swansea branch of the Red Cross Society was held at the Guildhall, Swansea, on May 9th under the presidency of the Mayor, when a central committee was elected.

#### THE PARKES MEMORIAL PRIZE.

The subject for the next Parkes Memorial Prize will be as follows:—The Causation and Prevention of Enteric Fever in Military Service with special reference to one of the following branches of the subject: (1) the rôle played by flies in the dissemination of the disease; (2) the importance of carriers; and (3) the predisposing influence of age and length of service. This prize, consisting of 75 guineas and a bronze medal, is open for competition among the medical officers of the Royal Navy, Army, and Indian Services of executive rank on full pay, with the exception of the professors and assistant professors of the Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar, and the Royal Army Medical College, London, during their term of office.

Major O. J. Currie, late Natal Field Artillery, has been appointed to the command of B Company, Cape Medical Corps.

ROYAL EYE HOSPITAL, ST. GEORGE'S CIRCUS, SOUTHWARK, S.E.—Lectures, demonstrations on clinical cases, instruction in refraction work, and demonstrations on pathological specimens in the museum are given throughout the winter and summer sessions by the members of the staff of this hospital. Post-graduates and medical students wishing to become students at the hospital should communicate with the honorary secretary.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.—The examinations for medical and surgical degrees during the Easter Term, 1910, will be held during June. The First and Second Examinations will commence on Monday, June 13th. The Third Examination (Part 1) will commence on June 15th and Part 2 on June 16th. The examination for the degree of M.C. will commence on June 18th. The names of candidates for the two latter examinations must be sent to the Registrary on or before Saturday, May 21st. Candidates who are members of the Senate may send their names to the Registrary direct. All other names must be sent through the prælectors of the respective colleges.

## Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

### EPSOM COLLEGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your sympathetic article on Epsom College in last Saturday's issue, which I read with much pleasure, prompts me to write a few lines of kindly criticism and suggestion to the authorities of that great institution. I venture to think that the council might easily enlist the active sympathy of the medical profession in much greater degree than at present by giving those members of it who are, or might become, subscribers to the College opportunities of taking a personal interest in the institution.

My experience is probably not unusual, and I mention it, not in a spirit of cavil, but merely to indicate the lines on which a change might be made with advantage to the College. I have taken an interest in Epsom College for a long time; I have been a subscriber for many years; I have induced others to become subscribers; I have been the means of sending boys to the school, partly by advice, partly by helping to pay fees. With the exception of an annual visit from the collector and the reception of voting papers once a year, no indication of the existence of the College reaches me. No annual report, no notice of public functions at the College, has found its way to my address. It is true I have received invitations to banquets in aid of the institution and have been asked to subscribe to the funds then raised.

My experience of other institutions of a somewhat similar character has taught me that if we wish subscribers to take an active personal interest in any institution we must show that we take some interest in them, and it is in this particular that I think we often fail in our medical charities. I have been for some years professionally connected with a large educational institution supported by one of the chief trades of this country, and I have been much impressed by the personal interest shown by the subscribers generally, an interest warmly encouraged by the committee of management, all of whom are trained men of business.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WELL-WISHER.

May 15th, 1910.

## TUBERCULOSIS AND HEALTH RESORTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It has occurred to me that the majority of medical men who send their patients to recoup at a health resort are wholly unaware of the conditions of apartments, boarding houses, or hotels their patients reside in.

Not many days ago, a patient sent down here to me by her medical man complained that she had been to a health resort nearer London, and that it had come to her knowledge that the landlord of her lodgings there had chosen to live in that particular town because he was suffering from phthisis. To make matters worse, she assured me that the whole family, consisting of six persons (adults and children) lived during the time she was there in the kitchen, where everything appertaining to cooking, &c., had to be done. This so disgusted the lady in question that she removed here with despatch.

Now it is a matter of common knowledge that in every seaside and health resort in every part of the world consumptives take up their residence with the object of recovery or dragging on an existence, and making a living by letting lodgings. Under the present circumstances it is impossible for these invalids to be prevented from carrying out the business of lodging-house keeper, and I suggest that there should be some combination between medical men practising in these health resorts and those who are likely to send patients there.

In the meantime, let me further suggest that any medical man wishing to send a patient to convalesce at any health resort should, if he knows personally no medical man living at that particular place, turn up the Medical Directory and pick one doctor's name out and write to him. No doubt the medical man who receives such a request will be only too pleased to reply. As regards Torquay itself, it is, compared

to other seaside resorts, comparatively free from alien consumptives; the distance from London and the great centres prevents the poorer consumptive from undertaking the necessary expense. At any time I shall always be happy to recommend apartments, in Torquay and neighbourhood, which are without the taint of disease, and where the family live in a decent condition and at a moderate expenditure.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,  
Castle-road, Torquay. COURTENAY DUNN, B.A., L.S.A.

## CHLORIDE OF CALCIUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With reference to Dr. Moncany's *résumé* of the therapeutic uses of calcium chloride, published in THE LANCET of May 14th, will you permit me to recall the quantitative estimation I made and published in the year 1900. I estimated the amount of calcium oxide in the normal urine of 24 hours and found that it contained 25 centigrammes of CaO. I also estimated the urine of 24 hours on the third day of taking 600 centigrammes of calcium chloride (daily), and found the amount of calcium oxide had risen from 25 centigrammes to 43 centigrammes in the 24 hours. It would appear that about 7.5 per cent. of the calcium oxide taken in the day was excreted by the kidneys. I am not aware of this investigation having been previously made or followed up, but it has a very great interest in relation to the *scientifio* therapeutic use of this valuable salt. The paper containing the above experiments is published in the volume of the Transactions of the Academy of Medicine, Ireland, for the year 1900.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,  
Terenure, May 16th, 1910. NINIAN M. FALKNER.

## MEDICINE IN FICTION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Many both in the profession and outside it will be grateful for the timely words in your leading article under the above title:—"Sexual perversion is a pathological subject, and finds its only fit place in pathological treatises." The words are timely, for this perversion already finds place in current fictional literature. A protest from THE LANCET or from the official representatives of the profession a few years ago might have been prophylactic and saved "incalculable mischief." What can they do now to arrest that mischief? I venture to assert that a great and harmful fallacy underlies your words, "Suppose we pardon these great ones on the ground that their intellect was such as to demand unfettered scope"; but let that pass, we have now to deal with small men who exploit strange lusts for filthy lucre's sake. The facts are these. The French pornographic novel can be had for the asking at French libraries in London and at some of those leading English circulating libraries which took a part in the agitation for a censorship by libraries of English books. I am told that the same statement applies to German books. "Sapphism" has for many years formed a theme of French pornographic literature, but, so far as my knowledge goes, has only recently found its way into English fiction. Some months ago an English book which dealt with this theme in a veiled but dangerously suggestive fashion was suppressed through the efforts of a private individual after it had reached a sale of some thousands. This book was almost certainly inspired by a French novel written some ten years ago (it is mentioned in the English book) which deals nakedly with Sapphism, and which was circulated and sold by one of the aforesaid English libraries. The Act which regulates police interference with poisonous literature makes no distinction between English and foreign books. The Executive does at present make a distinction in favour of foreign books. Moreover, everything may depend on the definition of the word "obscene," and this difficulty will not be got over by the substitution of another word or words. The Home Office is in possession of the facts here briefly stated. It would greatly strengthen the hands of those who are trying to tackle this nauseous business quietly and wisely if the official representatives of the medical profession would assert that "all works of fiction which deal with sexual perversion in whatever language, and whether in veiled or open fashion, ought to be summarily suppressed without regard to the plea of deterrecy." Perhaps you will allow me

to deal on some future occasion with the failure of our system of dealing with moral filth and moral infection. Poisonous literature has been given an even bigger start than seditious literature has had in India.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,  
May 10th, 1910. M.B. (DUNELM).

## THE GERMAN SURGICAL CONGRESS.

(FROM OUR BERLIN CORRESPONDENT.)

(Concluded from p. 1303.)

Goitre.

Professor KOCHER (Berne) said that goitre might disappear after the administration of iodine, but that nervous symptoms very like those of Graves's disease might develop. These symptoms, however, had nothing to do with the ordinary toxic action of iodine; they were caused by a retention of the iodine in the thyroid gland, where the agent causing the above symptoms was produced. The juice of the thyroid gland had an action similar to that of iodine, and the administration of preparations of that gland, whilst beneficial in myxœdema, might produce the symptoms of Graves's disease in normal persons. The tolerance for preparations of thyroid gland or iodine was different in different individuals, and some persons have a special susceptibility in this respect, as nervous symptoms might develop after the administration of very small quantities of these substances. The treatment must then be stopped at once and phosphates must be given as an antidote. The success of thyroidectomy in Graves's disease was based on the fact that a large stock of iodine was removed from the organism by the operation.

Professor SCHLOFFER (Innsbruck) spoke on paresis of the recurrent laryngeal nerve as a sequel to thyroidectomy. He said that he had seen the paresis develop in 13 out of 600 patients on whom that operation had been performed, and if laryngoscopy was practised immediately after the operation still more cases would be detected. Of his last 30 cases 3 showed this complication, which, however, disappeared in a few days. Even with the most cautious operators the recurrent laryngeal nerve did not always escape injury. Professor Schloffer had ligatured the different branches of the inferior thyroid artery on the capsule and had left the posterior wall of the capsule on the trachea, but nevertheless paresis occurred.

Dr. LEISCHNER (Vienna) confirmed Professor Schloffer's statement, saying that he had seen 63 cases of paresis of the recurrent laryngeal nerve in 300 operations; they were all of a transitory character.

Removal of the Thymus Gland.

Dr. KLOSE (Frankfort) said that he had, together with Dr. Vogt, made experiments on dogs to ascertain the function of the thymus gland. He removed the gland on the tenth day after the birth of puppies and found that during the first two or three months they did not differ much from other dogs. After that time, however, the animals became abnormally fat and somewhat apathetic; this stage lasted for about three months, when a cachectic stage began in which the animals became progressively weaker, and death occurred with symptoms of coma. During the cachectic stage the bones showed an increased brittleness, so that spontaneous fractures were frequent. On examination of the bones delayed ossification and osteoporosis with the formation of cysts were found, the cause being a deficiency of lime in the organism, a deficiency which the speaker considered to be due to the action of nucleinic acid. The administration of thymus juice did not remove the above symptoms. Thymectomy performed at a later stage after the involution of the gland had no effect on the animals. Dr. Klose and Dr. Vogt were of opinion that the spleen replaced the action of the thymus gland in the case of older dogs.

Dr. GEBELE (Munich) said that he had made post-mortem examinations in five cases of Graves's disease, four of which showed persistence of the thymus gland. He had made experiments on dogs by implanting a thymus gland into the abdomen and removing the thyroid gland, and he found that these animals survived, whereas others died from which the thyroid gland was removed without an implantation of a thymus gland. He therefore concluded that the thymus gland might replace the thyroid gland.