

professional sisters, will bring light and joy into the homes of the parturient poor. I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Liverpool, Nov. 9th, 1901.

ALEX. MCCOOK WEIR.

A POINT FOR PUBLIC VACCINATORS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It may be helpful to such of my colleagues as are public vaccinators if you will kindly publish the accompanying copy of a letter received by me to-day from the Local Government Board, which explains itself.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

THOS. FRED. I. BLAKER,

Public Vaccinator, Steyning Union, Sussex.

Preston, Brighton, Nov. 9th, 1901.

[COPY.]

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
Nov. 8th, 1901.

SIR,—I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter of the 1st instant, and in reply to state that the Vaccination Acts do not require the Public Vaccinator to send certificates of successful Revaccination to the vaccination officer.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) NOEL T. KERSHAW,

Assistant Secretary.

THE FALLING OFF IN THE ENTRIES OF LONDON MEDICAL STUDENTS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—No doubt the falling off in the number of entries at the London medical schools is partly due to the facts stated by your correspondent, but, I submit, a more powerful factor in producing this result is due to a determination on the part of future medical students to obtain a pass degree in the provinces with all its professional advantages rather than a diploma of the same standard of efficiency with all its professional, pecuniary, and social drawbacks.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

FREDK. W. COLLINGWOOD.

Wimpole-street, W., Nov. 9th, 1901.

THE PERSONAL FACTOR IN TUBERCULOSIS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am glad to see that Sir Dyce Duckworth has been calling attention to the personal factor in tuberculosis because there has been a tendency of late years to minimise the part played by the patient in the causation of disease. There is one indispensable cause of a microbic disease such as tuberculosis—namely, the action of the microbe on the tissues. This involves two equally essential factors—the presence of the microbe and the susceptibility of the tissues—and neither of these is effective without the other. Variations of a disease are often due more to variations of the personal factor than to variations of the microbe itself. This personal factor is of great importance with reference to treatment, since it is through it that we can best effect a cure or an improvement. For instance, the hygienic treatment of tuberculosis acts by increasing the power of the patient to resist the encroachments of the bacillus. I think that Sir Dyce Duckworth is a little hard on pathologists, but I must admit that the personal factor is often kept too much in the background.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

CHARLES POWELL WHITE.

Medical School, Leeds, Nov. 11th, 1901.

THE DANGERS OF WHIPPING WITH THE CANE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Many years ago now, when I was the staff officer and cantonment magistrate in a station in India, I was visiting officially one of the military schools. The school-mistress, a tall, powerful woman, the wife of the school-master, brought a boy before me, a sturdy, strong-looking little fellow, aged about 10 years, and charged him with repeated acts of theft. The child admitted his guilt and the school-mistress suggested a whipping. I gave the necessary

permission but limited the strokes to six. The school-mistress unfastened the boy's braces and put her left foot on the raised dais, and lifted the child on to her left knee, took down the white duck knickerbockers a little way, and raised the boy's shirt. One of her assistants handed her a thin cane. The first stroke left a terrible mark, and as I am altogether opposed to any undue severity I cautioned the school-mistress. At the third stroke the cane split and before I could stop the punishment the split cane came down upon the child's bare thighs inflicting a very nasty wound that bled freely. The child was immediately removed to the hospital that was quite near and got promptly the necessary treatment. Of course, the school-mistress, who was really a very kind-hearted woman and only wanted to cure the young thief of his dishonest tendencies, was in a terrible state of distress. I consoled her by telling her that we had learnt a lesson—namely, that a thin cane was a dangerous and too severe an instrument of correction on any part of children's bodies or hands. I had all the canes called in and orders were issued that only the hand or a slipper, the smooth back of a hair-brush, or a birch-rod were to be used.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

P. F. ROBERTSON, Lieutenant-Colonel,

(late) 92nd Gordon Highlanders.

Cliftonville, Bray, co. Wicklow, Nov. 4th, 1901.

SYNOVITIS FOLLOWING VACCINATION?

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I recently vaccinated a gentleman with exceedingly good results so far as the vaccination itself was concerned. The arm furnished an excellent instance of a "good take." The right knee, however, soon began to swell and in the course of a few days the patient was *not* enjoying a well-developed synovitis of a curiously passive character. There was practically no pain or inflammation, and as the patient had in no way injured the knee and had never suffered from gout or rheumatism nor gave any history of rheumatic tendency I was obliged to admit that in all probability the synovitis was a result of the vaccination. I should like to know if any of your readers have had a similar case.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

A. J. RICE OXLEY, M.D. Dub.

Courtfield-road, S.W., Nov. 9th, 1901.

X RAYS IN HIRSUTIES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Since my communication to THE LANCET of March 3rd, 1900, p. 654, I have had the opportunity of exposing about 40 cases of hirsuties to the x rays. Those mentioned in that letter are now free from growth. Those exposed within the following six months are as nearly relieved as can be. I notice that your correspondent Dr. David Walsh, in THE LANCET of Nov. 2nd, p. 1191, corroborates this treatment in hirsuties and suggests a dual treatment by electrolysis and x rays. My experience goes so far, now, to show that the Roentgen rays, if carefully carried out in exposures of 10 minutes on consecutive days for about a fortnight at intervals of from two to three months will generally effect a complete removal of hair and, I believe, this is the experience of Professor Schiff of Vienna and other workers. I recently have had under observation two cases, one lupus, one rodent ulcer, in which the adjacent hair has been destroyed by the unprotected action of repeated raying. I may here report a very favourable result in a case of ulcerating epithelioma of the tongue after nine exposures to the x rays; the photographs of the case I shall hope to forward shortly to you.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Harley-street, W., Nov. 5th, 1901.

JAMES STARTIN.

MEDICAL MEN AND MIDWIVES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Like many others of your correspondents, I have had the usual number of casual confinements, staying upon such occasions for hours in dwellings bearing the usual signs of chronic alcoholism in their tenants, and being myself nearly eaten alive, without receiving a penny for my time. So I have also resolved to take no confinements unless previously engaged or unless my fee is tendered in advance.

It is all very fine for the so-called leaders of the profession