

ULCERATION OF THE DUODENUM AFTER BURNS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—During the recent discussion on this subject introduced by Dr. Hunter at the Pathological Society of London (THE LANCET, Jan. 11th, p. 81), attention was directed by several speakers to the rarity of duodenal ulceration and the small number of recorded cases. It may therefore, perhaps, be interesting to briefly mention a case recently under my care, the only instance of this affection which has been met with in the post-mortem room of the Manchester Royal Infirmary of late years. The patient, a man aged thirty-eight, was admitted into the hospital last October, suffering from extensive burns about the face, arms, and thighs, which proved fatal on the twelfth day. For the first eleven days the highest temperature recorded was 103.2°. During the last twenty-four hours the temperature rose steadily and rapidly, until shortly before death the thermometer registered 110.2°. During the last few days he complained of pain and tenderness on pressure in the epigastric region. Otherwise there were no special features in connexion with the case, nor were there any other symptoms indicative of the presence of duodenitis. At the necropsy the duodenum, especially at its commencement, was found deeply congested. Close to the pylorus were two well-defined ulcers, irregular in shape, with slightly raised edges, the largest measuring 1½ in. by ¾ in. Their bases were formed by the muscular coat, the ulceration not extending deeper than the submucous tissue. With the exception that there was marked congestion of both lungs, the other viscera were healthy.

It would be interesting to know whether a similar condition of such extreme hyperpyrexia—which is, I believe, unusual even in cases of burns—has been observed in other instances where duodenal ulceration has been met with after death. If so, it might be an argument in favour of Dr. Hunter's theory that the duodenitis is due to the excretion through the bile of some irritant (septic?) matter formed from the disintegration of the burnt tissues, which is perhaps only generated in certain cases, and the presence of which in the system is attended by marked pyrexia, as in the instance here recorded.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Manchester, Jan. 13th, 1890.

F. A. SOUTHAM.

A COMBINATION OF THE WHOLE PROFESSION NEEDED.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In a former letter to you I called attention to the very serious injury done to the general medical practitioner by medical aid associations and such-like societies, which not only are without any wage-limiting rule of membership, but eagerly canvass the well-to-do tradespeople and others to join. I also gave it as my opinion that for this and other evils (such as hospital abuse &c.), by which a large part of the medical profession is grievously afflicted, the only possible remedy is a combination practically of the whole of the profession. This opinion, I see, has been strongly supported by many speakers at the different branch meetings of the British Medical Association which have recently been held for the purpose of discussing Dr. Rentoul's propositions and scheme. I would suggest that every branch of the British Medical Association, each in its own district, should commence to organise and endeavour to bring about this much-to-be-desired combination. Each branch should elect a committee to investigate as far as possible the special grievances within their district, and, after such investigation, to draw up for the guidance of the profession a few rules which in their opinion would tend to minimise, if not altogether remedy, the existent evils. These rules, having been approved of by the branch at a general meeting, should then be submitted to the Council, who should make a careful selection of a few most likely to be acceptable to a majority of the profession. Finally, it should be the strenuous endeavour of the various branches to gain the assent of the whole of the profession to be bound by these selected rules. Should by this means a very large majority of the profession be brought into unanimity, the various committees of hospitals, dispensaries, medical aid associations, clubs, &c., could be

met in a friendly spirit, and any reasonable demands on the part of the profession would probably receive a favourable consideration and be yielded to. The general public, moreover, instead of, as now, taking advantage of the present cut-throat policy and lack of unanimity, would learn to respect medical men and appreciate their services at their real value, and a larger number of medical practitioners would be able to obtain a reasonable income without lowering themselves or the profession and without hardship to the public.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Stourport, Dec. 30th, 1889.

W. MOORE.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am sorry to learn from your letter of the 9th inst. that my reply to Mr. Alfred Milnes, posted to you on the 17th ult., did not reach you.

Mr. Alfred Milnes, in his letter of Dec. 14th, insinuates that he has more reliable information with regard to the revaccination in the Perth Royal Infirmary than I can possibly have. He quotes from a letter written by one of the infirmary directors, giving the result of a conversation with the house surgeon. I quote from my own notes, and, as I had sole charge of the small-pox cases in the infirmary, most men would consider mine to be the more reliable information. To prove to your readers the worthlessness of Mr. Milnes' statements, and how competent his authorities were, I may mention that when my attention was called to the cases which I diagnosed to be small-pox three had already reached the pustular stage of the disease. There never was any doubt that those cases had not been revaccinated, and I have the written testimony of the medical officer of health to whose care they were removed that they had not been revaccinated. Of the remaining cases, four were nurses, and were never seen by the house surgeon at all. The last case was revaccinated on Oct. 4th by the house surgeon, acting under my orders, and small-pox was developed on Oct. 5th. Both of the fatal cases had only the faintest trace of one primary vaccination, and were practically unmodified cases of small-pox. This, to my mind, is a sufficient reason to account for the result.—I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Perth, Jan. 13th, 1890.

JOHN T. GRAHAM.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AND ITS REPORT ON ROARING IN HORSES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Enclosed please find copy of the report of this Society on the "roarers" operated on by Professor Axe at Wolverhampton on May 24th, and adversely criticised in your issue of Dec. 21st, and again referred to on the 4th inst. On reperusal of this report, I feel confident you will admit that your remarks were somewhat inaccurate and misleading. You accuse the Association of an important omission: "The date of the operation is stated to have been May 24th, but no indication is given of the date on which the committee examined the horses. Time, however, is an important element in judging the effect of the operation." You will find the "serious omission" is on your part. "The committee met at Wolverhampton on Sept. 20th, and proceeded to the Albrighton Hunt Kennels, where the animals were kindly sent for their inspection." Continuing your criticism, you say: "But the most remarkable thing about this report is the reason assigned for its publication;" in proof of which you quote the following sentence: "The public have been led to form such sanguine anticipations of the success of these experiments that it is right they should know they are not always successful or unattended with risk." No such statement as this appears in the report.

Generally speaking, you condemn the Association for publishing these three unsuccessful cases. With all respect, I submit the Association was not only justified in publishing them, but would have been guilty of a "serious omission" had they suppressed the results, as you seem to suggest. In speaking of the cases in question, it must be borne in mind that they were not three extracted from a series of successful and unsuccessful ones, but were specially selected beforehand to demonstrate to the Association the