

THE USE OF PHENYLHYDRAZIN IN THE EXAMINATION OF URINE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Dr. P. J. Cammidge in his recent paper¹ discourages the use of the water bath in using the phenylhydrazin test. This is an attitude not to be lightly assumed by one in the position occupied by Dr. Cammidge, for the water bath method has been so strongly insisted on by von Jaksch, Hirschl, and other authorities as a means of preventing the osazone compound of glycuronic acid from being precipitated in a crystalline form—a compound so likely to be mistaken for dextrosazone. According to Dr Cammidge this adventitious precipitation occurred in 4 per cent. of his cases when the water bath was used and only six times with the free flame. This experience is quite contrary to mine, for although I have not kept statistics on this point I find that I practically never meet with it since using the water bath, whereas when I used the free flame I used to meet with it occasionally. That the water bath method has advantages over the rapid method he admits when dealing with the microscopic examination of the crystals, for in referring to lactosazone he says: "In preparations made by the rapid method the individual crystals are not usually as distinct as those formed after prolonged heating in the water bath," and with regard to maltosazone he also says "preparations made by heating in the free flame are less characteristic." Both of these statements I can vouch for; indeed, the same is true of all the sugars. Surely the method whereby the best crystals are obtained is the one to adopt, for the identification of a sugar by means of the microscopic appearance of its osazone is practically relied on by clinicians. This, I need not add, does not apply to lævulosazone, for lævulose is the isomer of dextrose and their osazones are indistinguishable.

Dr. Cammidge also says that "in the water bath even an hour is not sufficient to obtain a satisfactory yield with maltose, lactose, and pentose, an hour and a half or two hours being required to demonstrate their presence satisfactorily, especially when the solution is weak." Here I quite disagree with him, for I find that half an hour in the water bath gives a good crop of crystals on cooling with aqueous solutions of these bodies of only 0.3 per cent. strength. Dr. Cammidge contradicts himself when dealing with the rate of osazone formation, for he says that "the osazones of maltose, lactose, and the pentoses only form after much more prolonged heating," whilst in the next sentence he says: "In my experience the rapid method of performing the phenylhydrazin test gives a reaction with all sugar." In dealing with the melting points Dr. Cammidge omits to give that of the glycuronic acid compound and the comparatively low melting point of 115° C. is one of its most distinctive features.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

L. C. S. BROUGHTON.

Langley Green, Birmingham, July 11th, 1905.

MOTOR SIGNALLING.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you give your valuable help towards getting an extended mode of signalling between drivers of motors and riders and drivers of horses? At present, in the day-time, there is only one signal—the uplifted hand. At night, the most important and dangerous time to the medical profession, there is none. When riding or driving a nervous horse in the day-time one does not want to bring every motor-car to a dead stop. It is often easier to drive such a horse past a slowly moving car than past one which is stationary and which has its engine going. I suppose the horse, like some sanitarians, thinks a moving smell less objectionable than a fixed one. In the day-time when meeting a driver I know I extend my arm at right angles to the trunk if I want him to slow down. At night the best way I have found for attracting a driver's notice is by covering the right lamp with the hand, using it like a "flash light" at sea. When meeting a motor in the dark this could be made to signify: right lamp covered once, go slow; twice, stop. In the case of a car coming up behind, the red light at the back could be used in the same way. It should now be made compulsory for all gig lamps to show a good red light behind. By a very simple method the

driving lamp could be made to show a very coloured light "fore and aft" and could be easily worked by the driver. There is no reason why good feeling should not exist between all users of the King's highway. Motors mean to stay, so we must make the best of them. If we can create a healthy public opinion the road hog (the present curse) will die of inanition.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Thrapston, July 17th, 1905.

T. W. BUCKLEY, M.D. Durh.

THE PREVENTIVE TREATMENT OF CONSUMPTION IN AUSTRALIA.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I ask for a small part of your space to correct an error in the letter of "your own correspondent" in Australia published in THE LANCET of April 22nd. In a paragraph headed "Prevention and Treatment of Consumption" he writes, "Dr. Philip Sydney Jones recently gave an address in which he advocated the isolation of every consumptive." I did not recommend so sweeping a measure as the isolation of *all* consumptives. What I did say was that the Government of the State should make provision for the isolation of advanced cases occurring among the poorer classes of the people and thus remove from our midst dangerous foci of infection. Your correspondent probably derived his information from one of our local newspapers which fell into the same error.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Sydney, May 30th, 1905.

P. SYDNEY JONES, M.D. Lond.

FREEMAN v. APPERLY.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am anxious through the medium of THE LANCET to thank most heartily those members of the London and Counties Medical Protection Society who have so kindly contributed to the fund raised to help me with the very heavy expenses entailed by the recent action for damages brought against me in the Gloucester county court. Though not a member of the above society until after the operation which resulted in this action I received most valuable help from its officers, both in advice and in the matter of witnesses, and now the society, though not liable in any way, has raised a fund among its members as a help towards my expenses. I do not wish what I intend as a letter of simple but warmest thanks to the generous members and officers of the society who have done so much to help me should resolve itself into a eulogy of the society itself, but I feel that it is only right that I should publicly acknowledge the kindness and generosity of its committee and officers, especially mentioning the names of Mr. A. G. R. Foulerton and Mr. C. W. Glassington, who have given so much time and have taken so much trouble on my behalf.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Mandeville-place, W., July 12th, 1905.

E. APPERLY.

THE INFLUENCE OF FRUIT ON THE PRECIPITATION OF THE URIC ACID OF THE URINE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I shall be much obliged if you will do me the favour of allowing me to state in your next issue that, through an oversight on my part, the word *is* appears instead of *may be* in the passage "the quantity thrown down *is* independent of this" (page 142) in my article with this title.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Oxford, July 17th, 1905.

WILLIAM J. SMITH JEROME.

MOUNT VERNON SANATORIUM AT NORTHWOOD.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In THE LANCET of July 8th you say with reference to the report of Dr. A. W. J. MacFadden, medical officer of health of Edmonton, that "it seems almost a pity that some of the beds at the Mount Vernon Sanatorium at Northwood cannot be utilised by the sanitary authorities in Middlesex." As there it is, it does seem a great pity for some reasons that the whole of the Northwood institution is not set apart for