

You further say that "the account given of the conditions under which the product has been manufactured is far from reassuring." I have not seen the account to which you refer, but Government inspectors from Ottawa and Washington made very few suggestions for changes in the laboratory or process. The last inspection made by an official of the Department of Health at Ottawa found that all Government standards and requirements were in force, and it was so reported. Last February I had made a formal application to the Department of Health at Washington for an inspection of the laboratory, but no action was taken upon it until after the publicity from the accident mentioned. Everything possible is done to ensure the safety of these biological products made under a personnel approved by Canadian Government officials.

You continue your comment by adding that while the disaster had no bearing whatever on the possible usefulness of the treatment "properly applied and safeguarded, it will doubtless, and rightly, serve as a setback to the indiscriminate application of treatments which have been insufficiently tested and are not under adequate control." The implication is unfair and unwarranted so far as my work is concerned. Treatment of patients in this research has been properly carried out under supervision of expert and experienced consultants. There has been no indiscriminate application of treatments; they have been sufficiently tested and are under adequate control. It appears that anyone who undertakes cancer research and combines laboratory and clinical experimentation is immediately under suspicion by the organized medical profession and the mandarins of the medical press, and certain to be condemned and derided. However, if there is merit or truth or value underlying such research it will survive all attacks.—I am, etc.,

Kingston, Ontario, Canada,
August 10.

H. C. CONNELL.

Wanted: Surgical Instruments for China

SIR,—I am very interested in the relief work that is being done in connexion with the Lord Mayor of London's fund for the relief of distress in China and for the hospitals working in China. I am anxious to collect surgical instruments and apparatus from various hospitals and surgeons for which they have no further use. All that are worth reconditioning will be put in order in Sheffield and sent out to China. If any of your readers have any surplus or unwanted instruments will they please dispatch them to me at Clyde Steel Works, Sheffield, marked "China Relief."

The need is very great, and through the good will of various people transport will be arranged without any charge being made.—I am, etc.,

FRED. M. OSBORN,
Sheffield, September 2. Vice-Chairman of the Sheffield Committee.

Rheumatoid Arthritis and Jaundice

SIR,—Some of your correspondents seem to think that the jaundice had some curative effect on the arthritic condition. It ought to be made clear that such is definitely not the case. Virtually every case of arthritis deformans has a complicating gastro-enteritis as part of the vicious circle. Reaction to an antigen of the causative microbes produces temporary blocking of the bile duct in some few cases, with consequent jaundice. In Dr. G. Laurence's case (*Journal*, September 10, p. 592) the gastro-intestinal infection was a *Staphylococcus aureus*, streptococcus, and

B. coli combination. The direct microbial causes of the arthritic condition are excreted into the urine from the blood by the kidneys from which they can be isolated. Invariably, when there is effusion such microbes can be precisely isolated from the clear, generally reported sterile, fluid of the joint. In this case there was a *Staphylococcus albus* and diphtheroid bacillus combination. Complete restoration to health in any case of any kind can only be secured by specifically treating all the infections present in the body. The disappearance of osteophytes and the replacement of the destroyed articular cartilage by some substitute tissue, the nature of which has not yet been ascertained, has to be experienced to be believed.—I am, etc.,

London, N.W.1, Sept. 9.

W. M. CROFTON.

"A Mere University"

SIR,—I can assure Sir Ernest Graham-Little and Dr. Major Greenwood that I had neither intention nor desire to be sneering or contemptuous about the University of London, for I agree that its foundation brought "higher education to large sections of the community then debarred from admission to the older Universities by sex, creed, or race." My own father graduated at London in 1851, when as a Nonconformist he would have been unable to obtain a degree elsewhere in England. Nor had I any intention of making unfavourable comparisons with Cambridge. No Cambridge man can view with pride the state of medical education there when London University was founded, and it is obvious that the standard then set had a most beneficial effect in raising standards elsewhere.

The head and front of my offending appears to have been the use of the words "mere" and "incredible." The Oxford English Dictionary gives as the first definition of "mere"—pure, unmixed, undiluted, and its subsequent definitions are as free from a note of contempt as I intended my use of the word to be. But it is quite clear that though the "attitude [of London University] towards examinations has in no way changed," the reconstituted University realized that examinations in themselves are not enough. In the retrospect an attitude may appear "incredible" which at the time was the only possible one. To say that the advance made by London University in its first century of existence is almost incredible would be to state a fact that has no sinister connotation.

May I remind Sir Ernest that the "would-be destructive criticism of examinations" was not mine, but came from the pens of a past and a present official of London University. I "merely" attempted some constructive suggestions to diminish the serious chance of fallacies in the system to which they called attention.—I am, etc.,

W. LANGDON-BROWN.

London, W.1, Sept. 13.

Universities and Colleges

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

J. T. Irving, M.D., of Gonville and Caius College, has been appointed university lecturer in physiology for three years from October 1, 1938.

A. R. H. Trim, B.A., of Trinity College, has been appointed to the Benn W. Levy research studentship in biochemistry, 1938-9.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Dr. Benjamin Portnoy has been awarded the Dickinson Travelling Scholarship in Medicine.