

that there were grounds for the belief that the disease had been introduced by the Russians during their occupation of the country. Not the least interesting of the reports is that by Dr. J. A. Mitchell, Director of the Health Service of the Union of South Africa, who states that the disease is almost exclusively confined to the European population, and that the natives are almost entirely refractory to it. On the whole the character of scarlet fever appears to be milder in South Africa than in Great Britain. The season and climate have a considerable influence on the predominance of the disease. Epidemics invariably occur in the cold months of the year, and the activity of the disease invariably declines when the hot weather commences. Scarlet fever is most prevalent in Capetown; at Port Elizabeth, where the climate is a little warmer, it is considerably less prevalent; at East London, where it is hotter still, there is even less scarlet fever; and lastly at Durban, where the climate is semi-tropical, the disease is relatively rare, except among children who have come from Johannesburg or other localities in the High Veldt in the incubation stage.

THE sixth annual congress known as the Journées médicales de Bruxelles, which will be held at Brussels from June 26th to 30th, will be presided over by Professor Jean Demoor, director of the Institute of Physiology at Brussels. It is expected that the attendance will exceed that of last year, which was over 1,500. In addition to numerous lectures and demonstrations by specialists from many countries, an international exhibition of applied art and science is being arranged, special classes being reserved for medical journalism and works of art by medical practitioners. The King and Queen of the Belgians will receive the members at the royal castle of Laeken; a dinner will be held in honour of Marshal Lyautey in appreciation of his services to medical progress in the French colonies; and a performance will be given of Rimsky-Korsakof's *Le Tsar Saltan*. Further information may be obtained from Dr. R. Beckers, 62, rue Froissart, Brussels.

A SOCIETY for the study of the history of medicine has recently been founded at Lemberg in Poland.

DR. GREGORIO MARAÑÓN has been elected president of the Spanish Medico-Chirurgical Academy.

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **THE EDITOR, British Medical Journal, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

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LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

LIGHTNING PAINS IN TABES.

DR. S. E. DENYER (Hull) sends the following note: Dr. Washington Isaac (JOURNAL, May 1st, p. 814) writes of a patient who suffers severely from the lightning pains of tabes dorsalis. May I suggest that he tries 10 or 15 grain doses of acetylsalicylic acid. For several years I was in medical charge of a home for chronic cases, most of which were nerve cases, and one of them, a patient with tabes, suffered at times most severely from lightning pains; this went on for some years. He was always much more benefited by 10 grains of acetylsalicylic acid than by any other drug. It relieved his pain much more quickly than even an injection of morphine, which, indeed, he would refuse if he could get the other drug.

ECHINOCOCCAL CYSTS IN CAMELS.

DR. J. BURTON CLELAND (Professor of Pathology, University of Adelaide) writes: In reference to Dr. J. C. Milne's note (**BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL**, December 19th, 1925, p. 1206) in connexion with this subject, and the reply of Dr. G. W. Sudlow (January 9th, 1926, p. 76), the following further references may be of interest.

In an article entitled "Trypanosomiasis and other diseases in camels" (*Transactions of the eighth session of the Australasian Medical Congress*, 1908, vol. ii, p. 305, and also *Bulletin No. 34, Department of Agriculture, Western Australia*, 1909) I have recorded the occurrence of hydatid cysts in four camels which had recently been imported into the north-western part of Australia from Karachi in India. The following is an extract from this paper:—

Other Animal Parasites found in the Imported Camels.

"Hydatids (*Taenia echinococcus*).—In post-mortem examinations on four of the camels hydatid cysts were found in each. In one there were about a dozen cysts, some as large as a goose's egg, in the lungs. In the other three there were up to half a dozen, ranging to the size of a hen's egg. Single cysts were found in the livers of two. Two of the cysts were degenerating and becoming calcified. In one a large number of daughter cysts, about the size of a grain of sago, were present. In some brood capsules were conspicuous. Scolices were numerous, and also the rounded concentric bodies like starch grains. Considering the number of cysts present, and the fact that two were degenerating, it hardly seems possible that the camels can have gained the infection in Western Australia during a stay of five months, especially as, in the only two bullocks I have seen slaughtered here, the liver and lungs were unaffected, and stockmen here are not apparently aware of the presence of hydatids in this part."

UTERINE AND MAMMARY CANCER IN HOLLAND.

PROFESSOR H. W. METHORST, director of the Dutch Central Statistical Bureau, and Dr. H. T. Deelman, who recently have investigated the mortality due to uterine and mammary cancer in Holland, have published a statistical summary of their results in the *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* (1926, p. 1178). The general death rate in Holland is stated to have shown a regular and well marked fall since the middle of last century (from 25.56 per 1,000 in 1840-49 to 9.60 in 1924). The birth rate also showed a regular, though less pronounced, decline (from 33.54 to 24.89). The mortality from various causes was generally diminished, but not from cancer; this might perhaps be attributed in part to more correct diagnosis; longer duration of life might also be a factor, since cancer shows a predilection for the elderly. As in other countries, the mortality from mammary cancer is constantly higher in the unmarried than in the married; while uterine cancer is much less frequent among the unmarried, cancer of the body of the uterus shows a preference for unmarried and childless old women, while cancer of the cervix occurs chiefly in young women who have borne children. Since 1905 the mortality from uterine cancer in Holland has risen from 13 to 14.9 per 100,000 of the female population, and the mortality from mammary cancer from 9.9 to 13.3 in 1923. In 1924 the figures were 16.8 and 14.6 respectively. With the exception of North Brabant, where the mortality from uterine cancer has fallen from 10.4 to 10.1, all the provinces in Holland have shared in the increase. The likelihood of death from uterine and mammary cancer generally increases with age. Uterine cancer showed a moderate increase among the unmarried up to the 59th year, and then a fall until the 64th, succeeded by a moderate rise up to the 74th year, followed by a fall until the 79th, and, lastly, a rise after the 80th year. In married women uterine cancer showed a continuous slight rise up to the 69th year, followed by a considerable rise up to the 79th year, when a fall occurred. Mammary cancer in unmarried women showed a pronounced rise in each age group up to the 54th year; this was succeeded by a fall until the 59th year, followed by a rise, except from the 64th to the 69th year. In married women mammary cancer showed a slight rise up to the 59th year, followed by a fall from the 60th to the 64th, and then a slight increase until the 69th year, when the rise became more pronounced.

MEDICAL GOLF.

IN the final of the Medical Golfing Society's spring tournament Mr. Joseph Canning defeated Dr. E. Ravensworth Hart at the nineteenth hole, and thus won Mr. T. P. Kolesar's cup.

A BROADS CAMP FOR BOYS.

DR. F. CHAMBERLAIN, secretary to the Cadet Department of the Broads Cruising Association, announces that a camp will be held for public school boys between the ages of 14 and 18 on the Norfolk Broads for a fortnight from Saturday, August 7th. In addition to the provision of a pleasant holiday, full opportunities are given for learning watermanship and small boat sailing. The charge for the fortnight is 7 guineas, and for one week 4 guineas. Further information may be obtained from Dr. Chamberlain, 127, Aylsham Road, Norwich.

VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 52, 53, 56, 57, and 58 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 54 and 55.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 188.