

Manufacturing Company and others]." The editor is right. These things do impress one as most "puny and ephemeral!"

Unfortunately, such instances as the above are not rare, although it is unusual for the manufacturer himself to assume the rôle of clinical reporter on his own products. Mark Sullivan's "Patent-Medicine Conspiracy Against the Freedom of the Press" finds its counterpart in medical journalism. The publisher, to get the contract, throws in so much space in the reading pages with or without the editor's consent; some one who can write M.D. after his name is found to write a pseudo-scientific article which extols the particular product; the editor winks, and the subscriber reads and believes—because he thinks the editor is honest and will give him a square deal.

It is not, as the editor of the *Medical Council* seems to think, a question of "independent" or "organization" journal, but it is one that involves the primal, simple question of common honesty, no matter who is the owner or editor.

#### Digalen.

The claims of Cloetta regarding digalen, sold in the form of a solution under the same name by Hoffmann-La Roche & Co., are controverted by Professor Kiliani in the *Muench. med. Wochschr.*, April 30, 1907. The claim of Cloetta that the action of digitalis is to be attributed to the action of digitoxin is also, he states, without foundation, since Windhaus has shown in a conclusive manner that digitalis leaves contain an active heart poison which is soluble in water, namely, digitalein. There is no experimental evidence that the composition of digitoxin and digalen is identical or that they furnish the same decomposition products. The claim of Cloetta that the molecules of digitoxin can be reduced to half their size by converting them into the amorphous condition is preposterous. If such a change occurred, Kiliani declares, we would expect to find distinct chemical substances with distinct physiologic actions. In Kiliani's opinion, digalen (referring to the dry substance before solution), is nothing more than a mixture containing a high percentage of digitalein and which may be prepared by the process published by Windhaus and Kiliani. Certainly Cloetta has offered no evidence to show the relation of digalen to the well characterized digitoxin nor has he even demonstrated that digalen is a definite chemical substance.

### Correspondence

#### Misuse of Term Vaccination in Opsonotherapy.

PHILADELPHIA, July 12, 1907.

To the Editor:—In the publication of articles on opsonotherapy the terms "vaccine" and "vaccination" are frequently appearing. They have doubtless been employed as convenient designations to indicate a degree of parallelism between the action of vaccination and bacterial inoculations. It is obvious, however, that the analogy is only partial. In vaccination a living parasite is introduced which produces a benign, modified smallpox. The bacterial inoculations on the other hand introduce toxins which, if present theories be true, sensitize the bacteria in the body and render them ready victims for phagocytosis.

There are stronger reasons than the above for the discontinuance of the use of the words "vaccine" and "vaccination" in this connection. Through a century of usage these terms have been firmly established in the medical and lay mind as related to a prophylactic measure against smallpox. The popular comprehension of "vaccination" is clear cut and concrete, and to confuse it by applying the term to various immunizing inoculations is unfortunate. Antivaccinationists will unwittingly or wittingly take advantage of the confusion of terms and turn it to their advantage. I recently read an article in which the words "vaccination" and "revaccination" were employed for bacterial injections, and the perusal of an entire paragraph did not enlighten one as to whether Jennerian vaccination was referred to or not; indeed, it becomes necessary now to qualify vaccination by saying "Jennerian vaccination."

From an etymologic viewpoint, vaccination can only refer to a subject related to the bovine species, the word being

derived from *vacca*, a cow. The first lymph used by Jenner was primarily of cow origin, therefore, the name. The terms ovination and equination have been employed when lymph from sheep and horses has been used.

It is not alone undesirable to thus employ the term "vaccination," but it is unnecessary. Certainly some appropriate terminology can be created if it does not already exist. In Dr. S. Solis-Cohen's "System of Physiological Therapeutics," in an article by Dr. Joseph McFarland, the terms bacterin, bacterinate, and bacterination appear. These would seem to answer the purpose.

JAY FRANK SCHAMBERG.

#### The Physiologic Effects of Light.

GUTHRIE, OKLA., July 7, 1907.

To the Editor:—Your editorial on the above subject in which you refer to the effects of light on blonds and brunettes, is the cause of my writing the following:

Many reasons have been advanced to account for the large number of deaths from consumption among blacks and other dark-skinned races; all of which reasons contain their quota of truth, but are as applicable to white races also; I believe, though, that the true reason has never been stated, that is, that the excessive mortality rate per cent. is due to the deep pigmentation of their skin. The investigations as to the therapeutic and physiologic action of light, made in recent years, if logically studied, can lead to no other conclusion.

Finsen claimed that the actinic (blue) rays in sunlight are inimical to the life and growth of the tubercle bacilli. It has been acknowledged the blue rays are the rays that are most beneficial in the light treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis. Dr. Woodruff states that in health the deeply pigmented races best withstand the injurious effects of sunlight; ergo, in disease the deeply pigmented races would least receive the beneficial effects of sunlight. Finsen's experiments, and the experiments of others since, have proved that black is the color that most prevents the ingress of blue and other therapeutic rays.

These premises being true (and I think that they are generally accepted), it follows that the more deeply pigmented the skin the graver the prognosis in a case of pulmonary tuberculosis. It has been demonstrated by postmortem dissections that hundreds of individuals who finally died from other than pulmonary troubles had had at some period of their lives attacks of pulmonary tuberculosis from which they have recovered. Postmortem statistics gathered along this line will show that a very small per cent. of those so recovering were deeply pigmented individuals.

The true black who once acquires pulmonary tuberculosis rarely recovers, but steadily and rapidly fades away. This does not mean that negroes are more susceptible to tubercular troubles (their immunity when living an active out-of-door life in ante-bellum days proves that) but that, once having acquired the disease, the deep pigmentation of their skin prevents them from receiving the beneficial action of the actinic rays, existing in all sunlight, that lighter skinned races receive.

H. W. CONRAD, M.D.

#### Leslie's Weekly's Partnership with Fraud.

MEMPHIS, TENN., July 11, 1907.

To the Editor:—Your editorial entitled "Accomplice or Dupe," on page 48 of THE JOURNAL, July 6, in which you call attention to the elaborate notice given in *Leslie's Weekly* of the opening of a so-called hospital for the treatment of cancer by the Alexander method, should be supplemented with a notice of the fact that this periodical is prone to such offenses. About eighteen months ago an article was published under the heading "Is Blindness on the Increase," or something to that effect. The medical eye was at once attracted, and my disgust may be imagined when the thing proved to be an advertisement of the "cele-brated specialist," Dr. Oren Oneal. This article occupied a full page ordinarily devoted to reading matter, and was evidently intended to be taken for reading matter. Though a reader of *Leslie's* for several years, I at once dropped it, and while I do not see that the loss of my patronage has keenly hurt the periodical, I can never again be a reader of it, especially when I learn of this new offense.

E. C. ELLETT.