

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

TO THE EDITORS,

The Journal of Laryngology.

SIRS,—The highly interesting Critical Review, "Various Theories of Hearing," which Dr Albert Gray contributed to the Journal in August 1921, leaves the matter in the hands of the physiologists to settle in the dim future. But it occurs to me that it may be possible to help matters a little by furnishing some cross proofs. I have had three cases of loss of sense of pitch which has been restored by treatment with the Electrophonoide, and these seem worthy of record. Presumably the sound-waves which it produces have more effect on the nearer organ, the cochlea, than they can have on the more distant organ, the brain, and this would therefore seem to support Dr Gray's theory that the analysis takes place in the cochlea.

A piano-tuner, an organ-tuner, and a violinist had lost their sense of pitch, which rendered them useless in their profession. The first, aged 29, served in the A.S.C.; a heavy battery suddenly opened fire close to him. He became quite deaf and suffered from what is generally known as concussion of the labyrinth. He gradually recovered his hearing, and in a few weeks thought nothing more about it. On being demobilised he returned to his work, but after a little he was told by his Firm that he could not be kept on as they were receiving complaints that he left the pianos more out of tune than he found them. As that meant losing his work, he applied to the Ministry of Pensions. After examination he was told that he could not receive a pension as he could hear quite well and there was no provision in the regulations for loss of sense of pitch, and he had better therefore change his profession. In this quandary he came to me and had a course of treatment with the Zund-Burguet Electrophonoide. Happily it was not necessary for him to change his profession as his sense of pitch came back completely.

The second case was that of the organ-tuner, aged 37, who suffered from chronic otitis media. He had been deaf for several years, but had got much worse during the last two years; he had also begun to have great difficulty in hearing whether his organs were in tune. His hearing was reduced considerably, as with his hand to his ear, he could only hear the loud voice at 1 foot on the right side and at 6 inches on the left. After a course of treatment he could hear a conversational voice at 16 feet on the right side and 12 feet on the left side and his sense of pitch was also restored.

The last case is that of the lady violinist, aged 42, suffering

General Notes

from nerve deafness. When the war broke out she was engaged playing the violin in Moscow. She could not get out of the country and had been all through the horrors of the Bolshevist Revolution, being only repatriated by the British Government last year. About a year ago she began to notice that she couldn't hear in general conversation, nor on the telephone. About the same time she was told she was playing out of tune, a thing she had never done before. When she got to this country, she found the inability to hear when she was out of tune was a fatal bar to her getting any engagement. She was sent to me for treatment with the Zund-Burguet Electrophoneide.

When she came she could hear, on the right side, the voice at 10 feet and a whisper at 1 foot. On the left side she could hear the voice at 8 feet and a whisper at 1 inch. After a few treatments she could hear the conversational voice 23 feet with the back turned and a whisper at 2 feet and the sense of pitch came back so that she no longer played out of tune.

These three cases are especially interesting as they show that the sense of pitch is something apart from the sense of hearing, as the first case was not deaf, the second had chronic otitis media and the third nerve deafness.

GEORGE C. CATHCART.

GENERAL NOTES

THE SEMON LECTURE.

ON 12th July, in the Hall of the Royal Society of Medicine, The Semon Lecture for 1922 upon "The Development of Trans-Atlantic Rhinology" was delivered by Professor H. S. Birkett, C.B., Dean of the Medical Faculty, McGill University, Montreal. Mr H. J. Waring, F.R.C.S., the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, occupied the Chair, and introduced the lecturer to an audience which numbered about seventy persons. In his most interesting and instructive address, Dr Birkett sketched not only the rise and progress of laryngology in the Western Hemisphere, duly emphasising the part played by the pioneers and leaders in the specialty in the United States, while modestly ignoring his own share in placing the subject upon an assured and recognised basis, but he related also what had been done in Canada and the United States in developing the education of the student of medicine and the specialist in this important branch. The vote of thanks to the lecturer was moved and seconded in felicitous terms by Sir James Dundas-Grant, K.B.E., and Sir St Clair Thomson.

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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

At the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, which was held in Glasgow from the 25th to 29th July, the Sections of Otology and Laryngology attracted large attendances. We hope to give a short account of the Proceedings in our next number.