

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### THE COST OF MEDICAL PUBLICATIONS.

THE EDITORS,

*The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.*

DEAR SIRS,—May I through your columns register a protest with the publishers of American books regarding the high price at which they produce them. We used, and especially the younger of us, to keep in touch with the new thought coming from the United States, much of which is very valuable. We are, however, largely debarred from this by the prohibitive prices that must be paid for American books. We are unable to buy them, and as many want the few copies that are available for borrowing, we are only able to glance at them rather than to study them. But our American colleagues have also a responsibility to us in regard to German literature. Owing to the unfortunate events of the past thirteen years the rights of translation of German works into English have passed into American hands. Those of us who, in our early days, did not have the wisdom to learn German are almost entirely dependent upon translations from America which we cannot afford to buy.

I shall exemplify these remarks by three works dealing with the subject of Rhinology.

1. We have waited nearly thirty years for a translation into English of Hajek on the Sinuses. As your reviewer of this work I have paid my tribute to the way in which the translation has been done; but as a private individual I should like to suggest to the publishers that they should bring out another edition of the work at less than seventy-five shillings. Wide margins, big type, large spacing, and expensive strong paper are very good things in the production of an *édition de luxe* for the bibliophile; but we (in this country) cannot afford them and do not want them. I believe that this work could be put into one volume by alterations of spacing, typing and margins, and that if a cheaper paper and binding were used, it would then be possible to produce it at one guinea or a little over.

2. A new edition of Dr Greenfield Sluder's book has just appeared under the title of *Nasal Neurology, Headaches and Eye Disorders*. Dr Sluder's work is insufficiently studied in this country, and the occasion of this publication would be an opportunity for a great extension of his views. I fear, however, that at two and a half guineas very few of the younger rhinologists will be able to buy the book, and the neurologists, to whom it might also be of value, will pass it by.

3. There is also that mine of useful anatomical knowledge, *The Nose and Olfactory Organ*, by J. Parsons Schaeffer. Owing to the stilted language into which the modern scientific anatomist has allowed himself to become involved, the ore has to be hewn from it at the

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cost of great labour. This, with the fact that it is rather a special book among the subjects of our specialty, will probably prevent a large demand for this work. It could not therefore be reduced in price to the same extent as the other two should be. Even then the sum of two and a half guineas is more than we should be asked to pay.

I have the same criticisms to raise with regard to the unnecessary luxury of these two books as I have in the case of Hajek's. If they were published in cheap editions we should finger them and read them till they fell to pieces; we would then buy each new edition as it appeared. Now, if we can get someone to give us a copy we put it in a bookcase with a glass front and are afraid to take it out for fear of spoiling it.—I am, etc.,

T. B. LAYTON.

LONDON, *November* 1927.

### TREATMENT OF A CASE OF MÉNIÈRE'S DISEASE.

THE EDITORS,

*The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.*

DEAR SIRS,—In the *British Medical Journal* of 10th September 1927, p. 454, is a memorandum by Dr Arnold Ferguson, F.R.C.S.E., describing a case classed as Ménière's Disease, treated and apparently cured by the Zünd Burguet Electrophonoïde.

I occasionally see cases classed as Ménière's Syndrome in which I am unable to find any actual sign of labyrinthine disturbance. I have seen one case of what was undoubtedly Ménière's Disease, and this patient was and remained completely deaf.

I think a description of Dr Ferguson's case with his ideas regarding its pathology, along with a possible explanation of the rational process of treatment which appears to have been so successful, should be given. I am asking this as there are so many electrical devices for treatment of various complaints and many claims are made. Without some reasonable attempt at a rational explanation of the pathological conditions and the mode of action of the apparatus, the claims cannot be readily accepted.

I am writing to this Journal instead of to the *British Medical Journal*, as the case in point is one for the consideration of the specialist.

Dr Ferguson's views would be of considerable interest.—Yours, etc.,

ERNEST CULPIN.

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA,  
*November* 1927.

[We are glad to publish the above letters, but we are not prepared to guarantee that the matters to which they draw attention will come before the notice of the persons concerned.—EDS.]