Correspondence

Man" the error about the date of the discovery of T. evansi. This capacity for practical repentance, although it is not accompanied by acknowledgment of sin, leads me to hope that, in some future work, he may correct the gross errors I have referred to, and, possibly, that he may yet see fit to judge more favourably of me and my work.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Norfolk Hotel, Harrington Road, S.W.  

Aldo Castellani.

June, 1908.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

Sir,—As an interested spectator, and to some extent a participator, in the investigation of sleeping sickness in Uganda in 1903, I feel qualified to make a few comments on Dr. Castellani's letter of this morning in justice to Sir David Bruce, against whom this letter is partly directed.

Early in March, 1903, I found a trypanosome in the blood of a patient suffering from fever, but having no symptoms suggestive of sleeping sickness at that time. I showed this to Dr. Castellani, who, having bound me to secrecy, told me he had found a similar parasite in a patient suffering from sleeping sickness in November, 1902, and I have no reason to doubt this statement. He at the same time said that as he had found the parasite in a very few cases only, he still considered his previously discovered streptococcus to be the true cause. My finding trypanosomes in two other cases (published British Medical Journal, May 30th, 1903) apparently made him attach a greater importance to the parasite than hitherto, for in the few days before Colonel Bruce arrived he displayed much energy in a further search for trypanosomes in the cerebro-spinal fluid of his patients. Then I learnt to my surprise that he had himself informed Colonel Bruce of his discovery without letting me know, so that as I thought his conduct peculiar, and as I felt then at liberty to do so, I gave Colonel Bruce as much information as I could.

Dr. Castellani had previously expressed his intention of leaving Entebbe before Colonel Bruce's arrival, so that it is difficult to understand his statement that he persuaded Colonel Bruce to allow him to remain on; in fact, I firmly believe that it was Colonel Bruce who persuaded him to stop, and helped him in the investigation of further cases so that he might obtain sufficient data for a full report. Up to the time he left Entebbe he still maintained that his streptococcus theory was the true one, and if it had not been for the timely occurrence
of my three cases, and the fact that they urged him to collect more evidence of the existence of the trypanosome, he would have gone home saying nothing about it. Though he can claim the credit of being the first to discover the trypanosome in a patient with concomitant symptoms of sleeping sickness (it had been previously found by Ford in West Africa, though without the symptoms of sleeping sickness), it is obvious that the whole task of proving the parasite to be the cause of the disease as well as its connexion with the tsetse-fly was carried out by Bruce and Nabarro, as may be seen in the Royal Society’s Reports.

It seems extraordinary that the writer in his attempt to acquire kudos should make it publicly known that (1) he at one time intended to conceal important data from his Colleagues on the Commission, which might have tied their hands for months. (2) That he made communications to members of foreign Universities which surely should have been the property of the Royal Society, of whose Commission he had the honour to be a member.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

C. J. Baker,
Medical Officer, Uganda.

Care of the Crown Agents for the Colonies,
Whitehall, S.W., July 8th.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE “TIMES.”

Sir,—The Castellani-Bruce incident was closed four and a half years ago—before Dr. Castellani went to Ceylon. The Times of the latter part of November, 1903, contains several letters on the subject. The matter also came before the Committee of the Royal Society on Tropical Diseases, of which I was the Chairman. This fact accounts for my having anything to say on the case.

The statement which I have made in books and articles as to the parts played by Dr. Castellani and Colonel Bruce has not varied, but it is in accordance with the finding of that Committee. Dr. Castellani has always been given the credit due to him for having observed the presence of a trypanosoma in some cases of sleeping sickness. His present assertion that I have stated in my book “The Kingdom of Man” that he communicated this to Colonel Bruce “colloquially,” is contrary to fact, as anyone may see who refers to the book. It was Dr. Castellani’s absolute duty, on relinquishing his work in Uganda, to communicate to Colonel Bruce any observations which he had made and had not followed up, in order that the purpose for which both Castellani and Bruce had