Correspondence

lated after the cultures have incubated for twenty-four hours at 37° C. He advises that Endo's agar should not contain too little fuchsin. He employs a freshly prepared solution, 15 grammes of fuchsin in 100 cc. of 96 per cent. alcohol, 10 cc. of this are added to a litre of agar. Reduction is affected by means of 25 cc. of a 10 per cent. freshly prepared sodium sulphite watery solution. If a characteristic growth be observed, agar tubes are inoculated and the culture is further identified by its behaviour in gelatine, its power of fermenting dextrose, of clotting milk, of reducing neutral red, and its appearance on Drigalski-Conradi's medium.

Fromme's conclusions are:

1. The most suitable method of detecting the B. coli communis in water is that of employing 1 per cent. dextrose broth.
2. Eijkman's procedure is unsatisfactory. A temperature of 46° C. restrains the development of the B. coli communis.
3. The B. coli communis is not ubiquitous.
4. The detection of the B. coli communis in drinking water is a valuable indication of contamination.
5. An estimation of the number of B. coli communis should always be made in a bacteriological examination of water.
6. The presence of B. coli communis is often the first sign of pollution.
7. The B. coli communis estimation is an index of the degree of purity attained by the filtration of river and surface waters.

C. B.

Correspondence.

CLEARING HOSPITALS AND THE TERRITORIAL FORCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

Sir,—Those intimately associated with the Territorial Medical Service and who have considered the difficulties encountered in evacuation of the sick and wounded from the zone of active operations must cordially agree with the remarks made by Major Freeman in the paper he contributed to the December number of the Journal on the above subject. All writers emphasise the dominant part the Clearing Hospital plays in this work, and make it evident that at no point in the line of medical assistance is a high state of efficiency and discipline a more vital necessity. I venture to say that the work of a Clearing Hospital cannot be successfully done by any body which is not essentially military in its organisation, administration, and training. To ensure the successful working of Territorial Clearing Hospitals on mobilisation, it is, I believe, essential that for each of them a strong nucleus be maintained and trained in peace. The suggestion that the water-duty detachments should be drawn on for this purpose appears excellent, and the proposal to train the personnel by attaching it to a Field Ambulance alternately with training in a large military hospital, is probably the best that can be put forward.
Correspondence

In the West Lancashire Division we are fortunate in having obtained nearly the full number of men required for water duty, but there is good reason to believe that less difficulty would have been encountered in obtaining recruits had it been possible to offer service in a Clearing Hospital, rather than in water-duty detachments.

I am, &c.,

Wallasey,
December 5th, 1910.

J. H. P. GRAHAM,
Captain, R.A.M.C. (S.R.).

A SIMPLE METHOD OF PRESERVING RUBBER ARTICLES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

SIR,—The following simple means of preserving rubber articles may be of interest to readers of the Journal:—

Ordinary paraffin oil is placed in a flat tin vessel of suitable size, only a small amount of oil is needed (about ½ inch in depth); a tray, perforated with numerous small holes, is fitted into the vessel over the paraffin, and the rubber articles are placed loosely on the top of the tray. The vapour from the oil passes through the holes in the tray, comes in contact with the rubber and keeps it soft and supple. A cover should be fitted on the top to keep out dust, &c.—a clean piece of linen or sheeting will answer the purpose well.

This method has been tried in North China with complete success, where, owing to the climatic conditions, rubber goods have been found to deteriorate rapidly and perish.

I claim no originality for the above, I first saw it used in the native hospital of the 76th Punjabis, in charge of Captain J. W. H. Babington, I.M.S., from whom I got the idea.

I am, &c.,

Tientsin,
November 24th, 1910.

A. C. Fox,
Major R.A.M.C.