

Correspondence.

The Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any views expressed in this Department.

'TIS PLEASANT, SURE, TO SEE ONE'S NAME IN PRINT.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

DEAR DR.—“A book's a book altho' there's nothing in't.” The question you ask, in one of your editorial references, as to the possible discovery of some agent or plan by which phthisis can be successfully treated, may be answered very quickly, and, to my mind, very satisfactorily, as it embraces the only plan as yet in sight of as nearly as possible arresting the ravages of “consumption.” “Stop the intermarrying of all who have the slightest suspicion of possessing any hereditary constitutional tendency to develop phthisis.” The same rule will apply in all cases of inherited diseases. I might finish my remarks at once and take up no more space, but the plan and its practical working are two very different things, however. It must be agitated, written up, and brought before the laity as a subject of great consequence for their consideration. Its possibility rests with them. I do not see why the family physician should not be consulted on a matter involving such important interests. Of course, “Love is blind,” and “life is a disease of which we die.”

As to the possibility of anyone discovering an antidote or a tuberculo-toxin, and in another way conferring upon humanity a great benefit, as did the renowned Jenner in the application of vaccine, it must not be forgotten that the conditions of the two cases are as different as they can well be.

Phthisis depends upon an hereditary constitutional or systemic defect, and tubercle is developed as a degeneracy and the outcome of a lowered standard. From summit to base, or head to foot, the tendency is downward. Tuberculo-toxin at best can contend only against the effect; the cause remains.

Small-pox is not systemic, it depends upon a pabulum *sui generis* in which the germ incubates and develops into full variola of a milder or severer type. Vaccine pus is not a toxic agent, but it incubates and develops in the same pabulum, and by anticipation exhausts it, thus leaving no nidus in which the germ of variola can develop and serving as an exhauster or prophylactic, only in variola.

Each of all the exanthemata must depend for its development