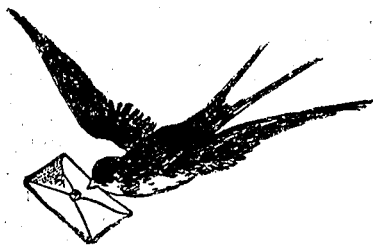


Our Foreign Letter.

FROM HAUSALAND.



From an official in Hausaland comes the following account of the way in which Guinea-worm is dealt with:

—Of the various cures for Guinea-worm, the Hausa method is the crudest and most effective. I once observed my Sergeant, locally known as the truculent Sergeant for obvious reasons, operating on himself. At the time it struck me that he was not enjoying life, in fact, from certain expressions I gathered he was distinctly peevish; the worm was just showing a head below the ankle, and its course could be traced by various swellings up the leg; the truculent one had heated a small sheath knife red hot and was jabbing it in at various intervals along the course of the worm: in this case the worm seemed to think further effort unnecessary, and died at once, coming away afterwards quite easily at the various punctures. The sergeant told me, however, that sometimes the worm recurs, and the operation has to be repeated once or twice even, before it is eradicated. In the case of my placid cook, he attempted the usual Fanti cure; the Fanti poultice with herbs until the head of the worm comes right out. The head is then secured and the whole drawn very gradually out. Frequently the head is tied to a small bit of wood, which is twisted round once a day until the head is removed, which takes a very long time and there is danger of the worm breaking. The cook had secured the head, drawn it too hastily and it had broken. A large abscess formed just below the knee, another on the front of the leg about six inches above the ankle and a third on the inside below the ankle. The head of the worm refused to appear, the cook was wasting badly, so I opened the middle abscess. I took out an enormous amount of matter which drained away from far inside. I then opened right out cutting away a portion of the outer flesh and cleaned out the cavity. A portion of the Guinea-worm was then visible, so I washed it again with fairly strong carbolic acid: this caused it to loosen its grip of the flesh, and I was able to draw out a portion. This I secured with the forceps and injected a solution of Dover's powders. I had no sulphate of zinc or morphine, so I thought this would do the trick. As a matter of fact, I expect I gave that wretched worm enough to kill a dog. Anyway, he died and was drawn out entire—when dead the worm can always be withdrawn. The other two abscesses were opened and plugged, and all three healed well and rapidly.

Waste Not, Want Not.—I have heard a Jew cannot live in Aberdeen on account of the economical habits of the Aberdonians. I am told if you meet a red-haired Scotch Jew born at Aberdeen you should not seek an introduction, but for sheer solid economy

I think the poor ignorant native of Africa takes the prize. This section of Africa is on a par with Aberdeen; there are no Jews. As an instance of economy, I once had a small boy who acted as steward, his wages were 10s. per month, 3d. per day for his food. In twelve months he had saved £9, and the balance was spent in clothes. If he could not cadge his food to-day, he would wait until to-morrow. Buy food! Never.

Another instance was a case of pneumonia, it was a slight case, and I gave the boy (a Kroo boy), called Jim Do, a good fat poultice filled with mustard and red pepper, and steaming hot. The boy kept it on for twenty minutes, and then ate it. He saw no use for wasting a good wholesome bit of food. Evidently a disciple of the simple life. B.

International Conference of Red Cross Societies.

The eighth International Conference of Red Cross Societies will be held in London from the 10th to the 14th of June next. These conferences take place every five years, the last having been held at St. Petersburg in 1902. All Red Cross Societies established in countries whose Governments are signatory to the Geneva Convention are invited to send delegates, and many have already signified their intention of being represented. Invitations to send official delegates have been forwarded through the Foreign Office to the Governments of the countries in question. The Conjoint Board of the Royal College of Physicians in London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England have kindly placed the Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, at the disposal of the Conference. Earl Roberts will act as president of the Conference, and the following Reception Committee has been formed for the purpose of arranging a suitable programme for the entertainment of the delegates during the period of the Conference: The Duchess of Montrose, the Marchioness of Lansdowne, the Marchioness of Londonderry, Georgiana Countess of Dudley, Lady Wantage, Lord Rothschild, Viscount Esher, Viscount Iveagh, Lord Burton, Sir Ernest Cassel, Sir Frederick Treves, and Mr. A. K. Loyd. Provided a sufficient number of exhibits are entered an exhibition of appliances in connection with Red Cross work will be held at the same time as the Conference. The "Empress Marie Féodorovna Prizes" will be awarded by an International Jury for the best inventions tending to lessen the sufferings of sick and wounded soldiers. There are three prizes which will be given out of a sum arising from the interest on an investment of 100,000 roubles, the total amount available for the three 1907 prizes being about £2,000. Full particulars of these competitions will be forwarded on application. The business arrangements of the Conference are being made by a committee composed of Mr. J. Danvers Power (chairman), Sir Frederick Treves, and Sir Benjamin Franklin. Communications should be addressed to the Secretary, British Red Cross Society, 9, Victoria Street, Westminster.

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