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H O M E - B R E D M A L A R I A

To the Editor of The Lancet.

SIR,- Dr. H. B. Newham has done well, in your issue of to-day, to call attention to the importance of distinguishing recurrences in soldiers from infected countries and the true home-bred malaria. I write to urge the most careful study of suspected cases of the latter. A few have occurred and there are sure to be others, as there are hundreds of malaria patients in the country and the anopheles is widespread. There are no grounds for alarm. A colony of patients from Salonika has fluttered the academic doves in Oxford where mosquitoes are prevalent—even anopheles have invaded the bedroom of the Regius Professor of Medicine! Every precaution has been taken by Major Ormerod and Captain Dale, under the direction of Sir Ronald Ross, and, so far as I know, no infection has occurred. In temperate climates districts from which malaria has disappeared have not, to my knowledge, been reinfected. Italian labourers brought the disease to the New England States and there were a few cases but no serious outbreak; nor was the progressive fall in the incidence of malaria in Baltimore interrupted by the importation of many infected Italians. The slight risk, then, from our malarial soldiers in this country may be faced cheerfully. The same may be said of Canada, to which country many infected soldiers have returned. Parts of the Province of Ontario were hot-beds of the disease, which within my memory has disappeared from the districts about the western end of Lake Ontario and the northern shores of Lake Erie. The marshes are there and the anopheles are there, but the disease has gone. As in parts of Italy, the important factor appears to have been the cinchonising of the inhabitants. I retain lively recollections of the buzzing ears of my boyhood from the large doses of quinine administered to us in the spring and autumn. -- I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

WILLIAM OSLER

Oxford, Oct. 13th, 1917.