

## Letters to the Editor

consulting practice and, particularly in his earlier days, made many contributions to the scientific side of his profession. Chief amongst the latter was his well-known work on "Chronic Hyperplasia of the Superior Maxilla" (*Trans. Internat. Cong. Med. London, 1913*), and his contribution in 1912 on diseases of the nasal accessory sinuses, was published in Latham and English's *System of Medicine*.

He was a member of the B.M.A., and acted as Secretary of the Section of Otology at the Association's meeting in Manchester in 1902, and Vice-President at the London meeting in 1910. When in 1929, the Association met in Manchester, Westmacott was President of his special section and Chairman of the Arrangements Committee.

Such was his charming personality that he acquired, and retained around him many friends. Evidence of the public esteem was the well-attended funeral service held at the Manchester Cathedral, when representatives of the various civic, military, medical, and charitable organizations in which he had played so prominent a part came to pay a last tribute to their departed friend.

F. HOLT DIGGLE.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR,

*The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.*

DEAR SIR,—As the review of the book on *Speech in Childhood* in the December, 1935, number of the *Journal* was unsigned, we are unable to communicate directly with the anonymous reviewer and we therefore ask you to give us the courtesy of your columns in order that the following small point may be made clear.

Your reviewer states: "Fig. 10 is unfortunate as it indicates stretching of the vocal cords, as illustrated by a weight pulling the arytenoids backwards, acting as an 'inner tensor, thyro-arytenoid muscle'."

If your reviewer will kindly look at the diagram again, he will observe that the weight is actually pulling the anterior end of the vocal cord forwards. The word "stretching" is not used at all, and on page 22 it is stated that "the thyro-arytenoid muscles by their contraction impart to the vibrating edge of the vocal cords the varying degree of hardness or elasticity which is necessary for the production of voice". The use of an elastic membrane, in our model, to represent the cords has misled your reviewer into imagining that we regard the vocal cord as physically comparable to an elastic band but we do not think that the average reader is likely to misconstrue the description, as he will not find anywhere in the book the slightest indication that the vocal cords undergo

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stretching. Even in the model, admittedly imperfect, the cords are merely rendered tense. Tension, to our mind, need not be synonymous with stretching; it may actually imply contraction.

We are sorry to trouble you with this long explanation, but it seems only fair that the reviewer should be given an opportunity of re-investigating this matter as he has dealt so kindly with the writers in all other respects.

We are, Sir,

Yours very truly,

GEORGE SETH,

DOUGLAS GUTHRIE.

4 Rothesay Place,  
Edinburgh.

January 20th, 1936.

TO THE EDITOR,

*The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.*

SIR,—I thank you for allowing me to read the letter from Mr. Seth and Dr. Guthrie before its publication. As the anonymous reviewer concerned I hasten to offer my apologies to these gentlemen for my inaccuracy. I regret that my name was not appended to the review; I had looked forward to the possibility of receiving a nice letter of appreciation from Mr. Seth and Dr. Guthrie for my complimentary references to their book.

I have now re-examined Fig. 10 and I acknowledge my mistake in saying that a weight pulled the arytenoids backwards, thus indicating stretching of the vocal cords. I see that the weight is actually pulling the anterior ends of the vocal cords forwards. This is worse than ever.

I had already read page 22 and had taken pains to comprehend the authors' exposition of the action of the laryngeal muscles during phonation, as the subject is one of considerable interest to me, and one I have always found to be fraught with difficulty.

Mr. Seth and Dr. Guthrie are more sorry than hurt at my lack of perception, and state that others will not place the same misconstruction on the diagram. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that many readers will not take so much trouble to arrive at a clear understanding of the writers' meaning, and will, like myself, be misled.

I still dislike Fig. 10, but it appears to satisfy the authors and therefore I presume it will reappear in further editions of the book. If so, I shall have to ask your permission, Sir, to be entrusted with the task of writing a fresh review when the time comes.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

V. E. NEGUS.