

LETTER TO THE EDITORS.

TO THE EDITORS,

The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.

SIRS,—In the November number of the *Journal*, 1923, a debate on the after-treatment of Empyema of the Maxillary Antrum is reported. Several speakers stated that they never packed the antrum, and that they did not carry out post-operative irrigation.

I hold that the omission is harmful in both instances. By omitting the insertion of a temporary pack, the antrum is liable to get filled up with clots, particularly in cases where a polypoid lining membrane has been removed, and a troublesome oozing may take place from the counter-opening into the nasal cavity. By omitting the irrigation, shreds of polypi and portions of clot may remain in the antrum.

When the Caldwell-Luc operation is performed with the surgical engine and burrs, the openings are smooth and do not entangle the temporary gauze packing, so that it is easily removed. After the operation is completed, a long single strip of bismuth gauze has a portion of its distal end passed from the antrum into the floor of the nose: this end can be caught in forceps and drawn forward to the entrance of the nostril. The remainder of the strip is then packed into the antrum. Twenty-four hours later, the gauze is withdrawn through the buccal opening, and no further dressing is inserted. The patient is now given some warm boracic lotion, or normal saline solution, which he injects from the mouth through the antrum and out of the nose. He does this three times a day for about a week, by which time the buccal opening has closed and fluid will not pass. This, as a rule, is the end of any treatment required. The bismuth gauze has the advantage that it is easily withdrawn, and it keeps sweet.

ANDREW J. BRADY.

SYDNEY, 11th January 1924.

GENERAL NOTES

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,

1 Wimpole Street, London, W. 1.

Section of Laryngology—President, Mr H. J. Banks-Davis, M.B., F.R.C.P. Hon. Secretaries, Mr J. F. O'Malley, F.R.C.S., and Mr E. D. D. Davis, F.R.C.S.

The next Meeting of the Section will be held on Friday, 4th April, at 4.45 P.M. Members desirous of showing patients or specimens should give notice of the same to the Senior Hon. Secretary, Mr J. F. O'Malley, 6 Upper Wimpole Street, London, W. 1.