

## Letter to the Editor

His death is a severe blow to his colleagues, his many friends and a host of patients in Portsmouth and surrounding district, but his devotion to his profession, his masterly skill, his life of willing and unselfish service, his great and deep kindness of heart will be long remembered.

To his widow and children—one of his sons was at Dunkirk, another at Narvik—we extend our sincerest sympathy.

E.C.T.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR,

*The Journal of Laryngology and Otology.*

DEAR SIR,—Mr. P. W. Leathart's recent paper on the subject of Mastoiditis and Infantile Mortality appears to me to be one of immense practical significance. The saving of young lives by timely mastoid operation on the lines he has suggested is most striking.

Writing from the point of view of a hospital Pathologist, the picture of findings is somewhat as follows in an untreated case :

(1) Relative infrequency of Salmonella or Dysentery pathogens in repeated stool examinations.

(2) Diminishing Hæmoglobin concentrations.

(3) Leucopenic white counts.

(4) At autopsy :

A wasted, pallid body.

Usually very slight respiratory signs.

Extremely fatty liver.

Wasted suprarenal bodies.

Intestines thin and translucent, with watery content and only rarely lymphoid inflammation.

One or both Mastoids and Middle Ears infected, with polypoid mucosa, or frank pus. Sometimes osteomyelitis of the mastoid process.

One frequently hears the adjective "terminal" applied to this infantile mastoid picture. Surely it is part of the primary, respiratory infection, or else secondary to vomiting and eustachian infection, as Mr. Leathart has pointed out. In either case, the condition is almost as sure to terminate the patients' lives as is unrelieved tibial osteomyelitis. To dismiss the condition as a relatively unimportant event in the patients' last hours seems to me to indicate an entire lack of appreciation of the earlier significance of the infection.

I am, Yours faithfully,

R. TAYLOR CHADWICK.

November 16th, 1941.