

“AN ACCIDENTAL INJURY”

[The following comment on the question published under the heading above, in the last issue of the JOURNAL, was received too late to be included in that issue.]

From Dr. E. Muir, recently of the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta:

All the recent study of leprosy goes to show that the great majority of the serious leprosy infections are contracted in the earliest years, young children being much more susceptible than adults. When infection does occur in healthy adults it is practically always of a very mild type and is easily got rid of by treatment. There are probably large numbers of people who are frequently infected but do not develop the disease; and there is reason to believe that small infections tend to increase immunity, as in tuberculosis. Had I been consulted after the inquirer had pricked his finger I should have advised oral suction and the application of a little iodine, and that nothing more be thought about it. As drastic measures have already been taken, there is absolutely no danger whatever and I should not advise any further treatment. Had the inquirer pricked his finger in operating on a case of tuberculosis he probably would not have taken the precaution of excising a piece of skin. I can say definitely that danger from the leprosy organism is even less than that from that of tuberculosis in this respect.