

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS.

SIR,

The article on 'The Medical Aspect of Lourdes' in your June number contains a statement which seems to be misleading. The author writes (p. 134) that he once heard a distinguished scientist say that it must always remain impossible for any light to traverse the human body because of refraction effects. Then follows the doubtful passage, 'Surely in X-rays, then, we discovered a new force which upset a law which in the year of that statement was perfectly valid.'

Now X-rays are not light in the accepted meaning of the word. It is true that they resemble light in being wave motions, but their wave length is very much smaller than that of light. The passage of X-rays through an opaque body does not necessarily, therefore, upset the laws of refraction of luminous rays. Considering the known very small wave length of X-rays, the observed extremely small extent to which they undergo refraction is in agreement with optical theory.

Yours, etc.,
H. O'N.

MANCHESTER,

June 14th, 1924.