Since the large preponderance of patients with fucosidosis are of Italian extraction, I wonder whether this could be regarded as a legacy of the Roman legions, and would suggest that further searches for fucosidosis could be made most profitably in areas that formed part of the Roman Empire.

Craig Phadrig Hospital, Inverness. P.H. Gosling.

CAR VACUUM CLEANER FOR BUG CAPTURE

Sir,—Chagas' disease is the commonest cause of heart-failure and sudden cardiac arrest in Brazil. For its successful control the contact between man and the blood-sucking bugs that transmit Trypanosoma cruzi must be broken. Further studies on domestic bug ecology are needed, and during the course of our work on house demolition of homes containing Triatoma infestans, an important bug vector of Chagas' disease, we have had difficulty in catching all the young instars. Underneath a chicken nest, for example, one may encounter many first and second instars which move rapidly to disappear among the rubble. One of us (C. H. C.) suggested suction to overcome this problem. We have found the small vacuum cleaners used in cars to be useful. The degree of suction is sufficient to secure undamaged the first and second instars which are captured by a net gauze (size 2 mm) placed anterior to the fan of the instrument. Third instars and older stages, however, can secure themselves against the suction force and have to be individually collected with forceps. Despite many attempts no-one has succeeded in designing a trapping method for these bugs. We still have to resort to individual manual capture.


CALF DIARRHEA CORONAVIRUS

Sir,—We would like to propose an alternative explanation for Sharpel and Mebus's findings. We have adapted the neonatal calf diarrhea coronavirus (N.C.D.C.) to the sucking mouse brain. Electron micrographs of negatively stained and thin section tissues of infected brain have demonstrated morphological characteristics shared with other members of the coronaviridae. The adaptation of N.C.D.C. to the sucking mouse brain has facilitated comparative serological testing with human coronavirus strain OC43 by the use of common host reagents and systems. The evidence documenting defects in some lymphokine activities in relation to a recrudescent herpetic infection is appealing, but I think it is important to remember that we still have little idea of the importance of these factors in vivo. This is of particular note when that old-fashioned indicator of cell-mediated immunity, the skin test, has consistently been shown to be positive using herpes-virus antigen in patients with recurrent lesions. On a more specific level, we do not know, for example, the importance of interferon production in recovery or protection from any form of herpes infection. I am much more impressed by the regular reproducibility of lesions in some people, so that they occur on every skiing trip or with every bout of fever. It seems unlikely that the defect in the production of a particular lymphotoxin would occur at the right time to just precede every such episode.

1. Stevens, J. G. Personal communication.