

INTOLERABLE INGRATITUDE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Has not Mr. Malcolm M. McHardy in expressing indignation at "intolerable ingratitude" forgotten that he is primarily a citizen of the State and, quite secondarily, a medical man with, it is to be hoped, a sufficient practice? Is it not usual with solicitors to call medical witnesses at the last moment by telephone or telegram and further save their time by getting their evidence taken at once? Why this was not done in his case Mr. McHardy perhaps may be able to say.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Water-lane, S.W., Nov. 10th, 1904.

F. J. FIELDER.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Mr. McHardy appears to have been badly hurt. His philanthropy has been grossly prostituted. He has been indecently assaulted and there is something further about a cur which has bitten his hand!

To what do these various injuries really amount? He was deemed, rightly or wrongly, a necessary witness in an action at law and his attendance was procured by the only available method of the common subpoena. Of what can he justly complain? The fact that he is a surgeon does not place him above the law, though it certainly does give him privileges denied to ordinary individuals.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Nov. 11th, 1904.

AN AMUSED SOLICITOR.

THE DELIVERY OF BREAD.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—May I call attention to the insanitary treatment of bread between the bakehouse and our breakfast tables. Each morning when I walk from my rooms to my club for breakfast at 8.30 I pass a baker who is probably one of the leading bakers in London. Trays of loaves are on the pavement, often surrounded by dogs attracted by the crumbs; overladen hand carts, with dirty baskets covered with mud and bumping on the road, full of loaves, on the handles, are just starting for the morning delivery. Generally, so overladen are these carts, several loaves fall off at starting and roll about the road, only to be replaced. So disgusting is the whole thing I have insisted on every loaf being sent in brown paper by separate delivery. I think if attention was called to this by your journal, considerably more care and cleanliness might ensue.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Nov. 14th, 1904.

REGINALD BARRATT.

A CASE OF EXOPHTHALMOS IN THE NEWLY BORN.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Cases of exophthalmos in the newly born must be commoner than is usually supposed; at least, I had a case some time ago. It was a natural labour case attended by a midwife. The right eye bulged out in an extraordinary way. After a few weeks the eye slowly resumed its proper position with, apparently, no evil results to vision.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

I. CRAWFORD, L.R.C.P. & S. Edin.

Tredegar, Mon., Nov. 16th, 1904.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SURGERY AND THE TREATMENT OF ACUTE ABDOMINAL AFFECTIONS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I read with the greatest interest Mr. Charles A. Ballance's remarks on appendicitis in THE LANCET of Oct. 29th, p. 1196. It is quite refreshing to find the great principles of surgery made to apply equally to an inflammation of the palm of the hand and to an inflammation of the appendix. I am convinced that Mr. Ballance is right when he argues that operation is the proper treatment for all cases of appendicitis and that the sooner it is resorted to the better is the outlook for the patient. I cannot agree with him, however, when he says that 50 per cent. of the practitioners of the country will disapprove of his conclusions. On the contrary, I believe that a very much

larger proportion than he thinks will be in accord with his ideas. Any man who has been in general practice for even a few years must be able to look back on some cases of this most anxious and dangerous affection. If his experience is at all similar to mine he will be unable to recall a single instance in which he advised operation too soon, but more than one perhaps in which it was done too late.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Nov. 15th, 1904.

A GENERAL PRACTITIONER.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

The New Sanitary Department for India.—The Trials of the Tibet Expedition.—Medical Appointments to Kabul.—The Plague Epidemic.—The Rangoon Drainage Scheme.

As has been foreshadowed there is to be a new sanitary department for India, and Major J. T. W. Leslie, I.M.S., has been appointed as the first Imperial Sanitary Commissioner. This office will be distinct from that of the Director-General of the Indian Medical Service. The head of the new department will, of course, give his whole time to the work but his position with regard to provincial governments will be consultative rather than authoritative. An important part of his duties will consist in the organisation and direction of research throughout India, as it is contemplated to establish several fully equipped institutes in different parts of the country for the study of health problems. The central laboratory will be devoted mainly to original research of a general character and the manufacture of curative sera. The provincial laboratories will be chiefly utilised for diagnostic purposes and for special research connected with local conditions. The existing laboratory at Parel, Bombay, will continue to carry on the manufacture of the plague prophylactic. There is an enormous field of work before these institutions and upon the head of this new sanitary administration will fall the organisation of the work. For research all seems well, but for the carrying out of more practical sanitary work we are not yet vouchsafed any scheme. Probably this part is to be left to the provincial governments—at any rate the powers of the Sanitary Commissioner are not to be authoritative, as improvements will largely depend upon local resources.

When the Tibet expedition was on its way to Lhasa I gave your readers an account of some of the physical discomforts attendant upon the high altitudes. On its return further trials have had to be borne. The march over Pharo plain was in snow knee-deep and the fearful glare of the sun caused dozens of men to be stricken with snow blindness. The blind had to be led by their comrades and the sight of strong, stern soldiers following on a bit of string like blind beggars is described as having been most affecting. Progress was, of course, very slow and as the depth of snow obliterated the road the difficulties were enhanced, many men stumbling against fallen trees. The camp had to be pitched in snow and slush. The work of the rearguard was so well performed that not a man was missing. The exposure played havoc, however, and many of the followers succumbed to pneumonia.

It is reported that Major Cleveland, I.M.S., from Poona, is proceeding to Kabul as surgeon to the Amir of Afghanistan. Mrs. Cleveland and Miss Brown go as lady doctors and Dr. Gholam Nabbi is also appointed. The mission is unofficial, Major Cleveland being merely lent by the Government and the others are proceeding on their own account.

The plague epidemic has during the past few weeks been gradually recrudescing, over 16,000 deaths being reported each seven days. The Bombay Presidency reports 9801 deaths for the week ending Oct. 20th, a few hundred less than during the previous week. The United Provinces return an increase from 984 to 1248 and Central India from 1548 to 1616. Bombay city shows indications of a revival with 69 deaths, Karachi returns 13, the Madras Presidency 540, Bengal 180, the Punjab 400, the Central Provinces 661, Mysore 770, Hyderabad 494, Rajputana 473, and Kashmir 27. These figures are not hopeful, as they show how widespread are the developing centres of infection. Calcutta is quiet, only single figures being reported weekly.

The Rangoon drainage scheme proposed by Mr. Ault, of Messrs. Shone and Ault, is likely to be accepted. It will be remembered that the Shone system was partially adopted for