Dr. Richardson's experiments led him to regard with such distrust.

2. It is of so unstable a nature that unless a freshly made specimen is opened for the first time for each operation, it will probably be a mixture in unknown proportions of methylene and chloroform.

3. Though it has been very little used yet, ten deaths have occurred through its agency in the past ten years. It appears to resemble chloroform closely in its physiological properties. Would it be too much to expect that one of the Medical Societies should appoint a committee to collect statistics on the subject, with reference to the number of administrations of anæsthetics, and deaths occurring in, at all events, our principal hospitals? Ether is in general use in most of our great centres of disease, and must be given yearly to patients amounting to tens of thousands. Surely it is time we came to some conclusion on the subject.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Leeds, March 7th, 1882.

ERNEST H. JACOB, M.D.

VENTILATION IN TUNNELS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of last week a reference is made to the "Chemical Lung" and its probable utility during the construction of the Channel Tunnel. It may interest some of your readers to know what the "lung" has done, and also what I believe it capable of doing.

A "chemical lung," or punkah, 4 ft. by 2½ ft., was suspended in a room, carefully freed from any possible means of ventilation, on the basement of my house. The room measures 18 ft. by 15 ft., being 8 ft. 6 in. high. A gas-stove with fifty jets and a gas-burner were lighted one hour before the meeting of fourteen medical and scientific men, raising the temperature to 82°, and loading the air with a corresponding amount of impurities. When we were all shut in the room a quarter of an ounce of sulphur was burnt on live coals and half a pound of chalk was treated with muriatic acid, thus adding to the impurities until my visitors sued for mercy. The "chemical lung," or punkah, was then set in action, and in ten minutes the temperature was reduced to 65°, and the room freed from all impurities, the atmosphere feeling light, fresh, and enjoyable. It was then suggested that fat should be burnt, in order to test whether the "lung" removed organic as well as chemical impurities. Accordingly, a shovel of hot coals was introduced, on which beef-dripping was freely sprinkled, with a result easily imagined. In a few minutes the room was insufferable, and during the moment it took to open the door, in order to rush across the passage and cast the offending coals into the garden, the whole house was pervaded by the stench. Very quickly, after the "lung" began its work, the atmosphere of the test-chamber became endurable, and in thirty minutes it was *pure*, while the house itself remained for several hours strongly impregnated with the odour. Some of the gentlemen then smoked, but while the odour clung to the clothes the atmosphere itself was rapidly freed.

One such lung has for several weeks kept the sick chamber of a lady, on her return from wintering at Hastings, perfectly free day and night of all carbonic acid and organic impurities, as evidenced by the chemical reaction of the residual fluid of the "lung." On entering the chamber a deep inspiration is involuntarily taken on account of the freshness of the atmosphere. What I maintain the "lung" *can do*, in one or other of the many forms it may assume, is, that the air of any tunnel, hospital, or hospital ward, of any church, theatre, or mansion, of any room, be it large or small, may be deprived of all its chemical, organic, and inorganic impurities, without causing any draught, while the temperature can be regulated at pleasure, both the expense and labour being trivial. In tunnels an exception must be made to carbonic oxide. This gas is affected by no chemical agent that could be brought to bear upon it; but it may by heat be readily converted into carbonic acid, and thus removed; but it ought not to be generated at all, since a little care on the part of the driver may almost entirely prevent it. It is to test the correctness of these assertions that I challenge *practical* criticism.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

RICHARD NEALE, M.D. Lond.

Boundary-road, South Hampstead, N.W., March, 1882.

"POST-PRANDIAL MEDICAL ETHICS."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I was sorry to see the remarks which appeared in THE LANCET of Feb. 25th, with regard to my medical dinner, and which have been copied into the local papers here. If my desire to get medical men to act *honourably* to each other was wrong, then you were perfectly right in denouncing it; but I always thought, and *will* think, that THE LANCET seeks to maintain the honour of the profession. Whatever it may think or say, I had the approval of the President of the College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Dr. Roberts of London, Dr. Phillipson of Newcastle, Dr. Myrtle of Harrogate, and Mr. Teale of Leeds, with a host of other eminent men, for having discussed ethics at dessert. We did not "wash dirty linen," but we considered the best way of bringing moral pressure to bear upon those medical men who act dishonourably. I can assure you that good will result from my dinner-party through the South Durham and Cleveland Medical Society.

I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

Stockton-on-Tees, March 2nd, 1882.

JOHN FARQUHARSON.

* * We are grateful to Dr. Farquharson for thinking and determining that he "will" think that THE LANCET has some concern for the honour of the profession. We are quite ready to reciprocate the compliment. But we are not converted to the notion that a private dinner, with men of other professions present, the report being published in local newspapers, along with the abortive discussion of the doings of a few members of the profession, was the proper way of dealing with breaches of medical ethics. Dr. Farquharson, like any other man, is at liberty to entertain his friends, or even his enemies, but not to announce a private dinner in the newspapers, and take occasion of it to give unnecessary importance to persons who ostentatiously parade their success. The soundness of our view was shown by the impotence of the discussion, and the adjournment of it to a different meeting.—ED. L.

THE EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN THE IRISH COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I regret to observe that your columns have been utilised by one or other of the two opponents of the new educational scheme of the Irish College of Surgeons to misrepresent the purpose and the importance of the two deputations which waited the week before last on the Home Secretary. The real truth is that the president, vice-president, two ex-presidents, and myself, a councillor of the College, were deputed by the College council to explain to the minister that we wanted his approval of the annulling of certain by-laws which are inconsistent with the scheme.

It is not true that the Home Secretary's sanction is necessary to the annulling of any by-law of the College, but the council, nevertheless, thought it inadvisable to put their new regulations in force until the responsible minister had been informed of their intention to do so.

After this deputation had been received, as officially representing the College, two gentlemen were received as claiming to represent a body of Fellows opposed to the reform. It may, however, be doubted that they represented anyone but themselves, considering, after the most vigorous whipping of the Fellows, the most earnest importunity that they would accompany the counter-deputation, and after much boasting as to the importance of the coming demonstration against the new scheme, that one Fellow, and one only, Mr. Ormsby, could be induced to follow the leader of the opposition. Driven to extremities to make a decent show before the Home Secretary, these two gentlemen drove about London entreating Fellows of the College there resident to join them in their interview, with the result that a naval surgeon, who was entirely ignorant of the contemplated reforms, was induced to go as far as the House of Commons, but declined to go further or to see the Home Secretary at all.