of supply and demand but on account of governmental measures of extrusion adopted in Eastern Europe.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
Chelsea Embankment, S.W. W. EVANS GORDON.

THE URBAN HOSPITAL TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The report on the urban hospital treatment of tuberculosis by the committee appointed by the Society for the Study of Disease in Children to inquire into the matter and report to them is still under consideration by that body, and its publication in THE LANCET of Dec. 5th, p. 1590, was owing to an unfortunate oversight. As this report is still *sub judice* its discussion at the present moment would be premature.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

GEORGE CARPENTER,
Senior Honorary Secretary.
Welbeck-street, Cavendish-square, W., Dec. 7th, 1903.

THE MORTALITY AFTER OPERATIONS FOR STRANGULATED UMBILICAL HERNIA.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I shall be glad if any of your readers can give me a reference to any statistics with regard to this subject. I have been unable to find any definite information but that it is unexpectedly high I believe.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
Hove, Dec. 3rd, 1903. ARTHUR H. BUCK.

THE PHOSPHATES AND UREA OF URINE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I shall be obliged if you will give me space for a somewhat belated acknowledgment of the communications from Dr. H. Harper, Dr. A. W. Gilchrist, and others, in THE LANCET of the latter end of 1902, and January of this year, referring to a paper of mine on the above subject.¹ These letters appeared at a period when serious illness prevented me from attending to anything, and I have only recently found an opportunity of looking through the back numbers of your journal.

To remove misconception (for I think there was some, partly owing perhaps to the results of the analyses having been tabulated, for the sake of brevity, so that the figures yielded by very different pathological samples were in juxtaposition), I should like to state, chiefly in reply to Dr. Gilchrist:—
1. That I never thought to "establish an analogy" between the diseases. In one not a medical man I should think this presumptuous. 2. As a scientific chemist I have long known the desirability that analyses of urine should represent the collective fluid excreted during 24 hours. But for the analyst and, if I mistake not, for the medical man also, this is very often impracticable. The former, at all events, has to work with just what is submitted to him, frequently by the medical adviser, who cannot help himself. 3. Professing to no knowledge of medicine, I certainly did not intend it to appear as if I had had the temerity to make any precise comparison of the composition of tuberculous urine with that of the fluid from glycosuria or with other samples of urine from similar cases. No data were at my command for this sort of comparison, which was left, of course, to medical men. I sent these analyses, such as they were, to THE LANCET on the chance that they might be of some service or interest to my medical brethren; but I was far from wishing to seem to attach to them undue importance and was particular in giving what information I possessed, as to times, &c., so as to show clearly that the samples were not representative of the entire 24 hours' excretion. Any remarks—they could hardly be called conclusions—were extremely guarded, and confined to comparisons of the most general kind, not with analyses of other pathological urines, but with such statements regarding the limits of composition of *normal* urine as are to be found in ordinary works of reference—by Halliburton, Hammarsten, Allen, Pearmain and Moor, and others; and referred only to

¹ THE LANCET, Sept. 6th, 1902, p. 656.

the actual samples, as they were received. I do not at all claim infallibility for the remarks in question. At the worst, if the paper had no other use, the figures recorded such analytical results as may be yielded in particular circumstances and by limited samples, representing only part of the 24 hours—such as medical practitioners must often be forced to be content with. 4. As far as my own imperfect opportunities permitted me to judge, I was under the impression that there were not very many readily accessible analyses, at all events as full as that of the tuberculous sample, and personally I had never seen any published analysis of urine from a case of *tubercle of the bladder*. For my own information, I should be grateful for references to such analyses, and interested to know whether the figures are similar to, or different from, those yielded in other cases of tuberculosis, as of the lungs; also whether the "graph" in Dr. Gilchrist's communication represented the results from one sample of tuberculous urine or the mean of several.

Lastly, the cautiously chosen title of the paper, "Observed Variations," &c., was changed in the later communications to "The Low Phosphates and Urea," &c. I must disclaim responsibility for this. My own use (in the paper) of the expression, "low phosphates" related solely to the particular set of analyses and to the actual specimens of urine received, imperfectly representative as they may have been. This was without any universal application or generalisation, such as the latter title might imply: I intended none.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

EDWY G. CLAYTON, F.I.C., F.C.S.
Holborn Viaduct, E.C., Nov. 30th, 1903.

RADIUM AND THE BACILLUS TYPHOSUS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The following experiences with bromide of radium upon cultures of the bacillus typhosus may be of interest to some of your readers. The cultures were of the usual kind, in agar, and were exposed to the rays of 50 milligrammes of the salt for periods varying from 15 minutes to 48 hours. The longer exposures were in the dark in order to eliminate any inhibitory effect of daylight upon the cultures. The tubes containing the cultures were at first placed horizontally above the radium at a distance of five centimetres but were afterwards allowed to rest in an upright position actually upon the mica cover of the box containing the radium, so that the culture received the full rays diverging from below upwards throughout its length. From each tube subcultures were afterwards taken without difficulty and so far as could be observed there seemed to be no inhibitory action upon the growth of the culture. Rather the contrary, for, in the opinion of more than one observer, examining the cultures under a high power, there seemed to be more activity in those cultures which had been subjected to the longer exposures, and in cultures which had been exposed, than in others of the same date which had not been exposed to the radium but had been simply excluded from daylight.

These experiences would seem to lead one in the direction of supposing the beneficial action of radium in certain cases to be that of stimulation of normal tissue rather than directly bactericidal. It is not easy to determine accurately the activity of a radium salt, but at a rough estimate the radium used in this instance is sufficiently strong to make its rays apparent upon the screen through a thickness of 15 coins, half-crowns and pennies. They pass easily therefore through the thickest part of a Cabaud gauge and in therapeutic use an application to the skin of five minutes produces redness and one of ten minutes a slight burn, appearing after two days. The cultures were kindly prepared for me in the laboratory of the Westminster Hospital.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
Beaumont-street, W., Dec. 5th, 1903. R. BROWNE-CARTHEW.

ST. JOHN'S HOUSE OF REST, MENTONE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—We are anxious through the medium of your journal to draw the attention of the members of the medical profession to the existence in Mentone of St. John's House of Rest which we believe to be little known to them. The institution, which was founded 25 years ago, is intended for

professional men who in consequence of illness or overwork require rest and a mild climate and who could not otherwise afford the expense of a sojourn on the Riviera. Medical men have occasionally been among the inmates. The house is capable of admitting ten gentlemen, allowing a separate bedroom for each. There are also public drawing, dining, and smoking rooms, a bath-room, and a shelter in the garden for open-air treatment. Applications for admission have hitherto been few so that the house has seldom been filled except for short periods. It is open from Nov. 1st to May 1st. The charge made is £1 a week including medical attendance. We think that medical practitioners must frequently meet with cases for which such a home would prove a great boon. The gentlemen who have resided in the House of Rest have expressed themselves grateful for the care and comfort which they have met with. Of course, such an institution cannot be self-supporting and the sum of £250 is required yearly to meet all the extra cost entailed.

We remain, Sirs, yours faithfully,

J. L. SIORDET, M.B., F.R.C.P. Lond.

STANLEY RENDALL, M.D. Paris.

Mentone, Dec. 3rd, 1903.

Obituary.

PROFESSOR PROUST.

THE Paris Faculty of Medicine has recently received a severe blow by the very sudden and unforeseen death of Professor Proust. While he was presiding over the delivery of a thesis by one of his pupils on Nov. 24th he was suddenly struck down by a paralytic seizure and although he was at once removed to his home he grew rapidly worse and died on the 26th. He was born at Illiers in the department of Eure-et-Loire on March 18th, 1834. He determined to study medicine and had a brilliant career as a student,

PROFESSOR PROUST.

Inspector-General of the French Sanitary Service.

so that while an *interne* at the hospitals he took his doctor's degree in 1862 at the age of 28 years. In 1866 he was elected agrégé and soon afterwards physician to the hospitals. In 1879 he was elected a member of the Academy of Medicine in succession to Tardieu, and finally, in 1885, he was elected to the chair of hygiene in the faculty of medicine,

having acted as deputy for Bouchardat for two years previously. Long before this date, however, his attention had been turned towards the study of hygiene and as far back as 1869 he had been intrusted with an important mission to Russia and Persia for the purpose of studying the best means of fighting against an invasion of cholera. He was next elected a member of the Consultative Committee of Hygiene of France, to which body he acted as secretary, and Fauvel nominated him as his collaborator. On Fauvel's death Professor Proust succeeded him as inspector-general of the sanitary service. In every question which he had to consider Professor Proust distinguished himself by the essentially practical qualities of his talents, and he had besides an infinite capacity for work, so that wherever his duties as inspector called him, whether abroad or at home, he never spared himself when any risks were to be run. He was Commander of the Legion of Honour.

JOHN HENRY SYLVESTER,

DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL, I.M.S.

WE regret to announce the death of Surgeon-General Sylvester, which occurred at his residence, 16, Melbury-road, Kensington, London, W., on Nov. 29th in his seventy-fourth year. He began his medical studies at King's College, of which he was an associate, and for a time assisted the late Professor Owen. In 1854 he went to India in the employ of the India Office and served with the 14th Light Dragoons in Persia. During the Indian Mutiny he was with his regiment in the Deccan, Malwa, Nerbudda, Central India, and was also engaged with the Central India Field Forces and with the 1st Regiment of Beatson's Horse in Bundelkhand and Rajputana. In the Umbeylla Campaign he served as field surgeon. For his services in Persia, Umbeylla, and Central India he received the medals and clasps granted for those operations. At Ahrinadmuggar he saw some further service and afterwards became professor in the Grant Medical College at Bombay and assistant surgeon in the Jamssetjee Jeejeebhoy Hospital. He also served for four years on the frontier of India at Peshawur and other places. On his return to Bombay he was appointed ophthalmic surgeon, then professor of physiology and second physician at the Jamssetjee Jeejeebhoy Hospital. He remained in India until 1875 when he retired with the rank of deputy surgeon-general. After his retirement he diligently devoted himself to the study of painting in London, Paris, and Italy, and for the rest of his life that art was a great source of pleasure to him. His best known pictures are a portrait of the present Bishop of Peterborough, which now belongs to the Kensington Vestry and hangs in the board room of the town-hall, and a portrait of Field Marshal Lord Roberts which he presented to the East India United Service Club, and of which engravings were published by Mr. Thomas McLean of the Haymarket. Surgeon-General Sylvester possessed great warmth of friendship and his memory will be associated with the kindest recollections. Until eighteen months ago he enjoyed remarkably good health, leading a very regular and active life, his hobbies, in addition to painting, being bicycling, which he practised daily up to the time of his illness, and fishing. He leaves a widow and one daughter, Mrs. Hodder, the wife of Major Hodder, R.E.

EXTENSION OF THE METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD'S AMBULANCE SERVICE.—The Metropolitan Asylums Board at its meeting on Nov. 28th decided to extend the operations of its ambulance service so as to include the transport of medical, surgical, and mental cases for which application might from time to time be made by any authority or person within the metropolis. Such extension shall not be held to include the removal of cases of street accident or of patients to and from the several lunatic asylums under the control of the London County Council, unless by special sanction of the ambulance committee or, on emergency, of the chairman of that council or the clerk to the board. It was also decided that upon the necessary legal authority being obtained for the managers from the Local Government Board the work should be immediately undertaken and a charge of 7s. 6d. made in respect of each removal, and in addition a mileage of 1s. 6d. beyond the boundary of the metropolis.