question being at Andover in Hampshire in the middle of a garden, which has been manured with the excremental refuse of some twenty cottages for more than ten years. I trouble you with this correction because I hope to be at Andover during August and September and it will be, as it always has been, a pleasure to me to exhibit this well and garden to any of your readers who are interested in questions of rural hygiene. You are quite right in saying that the choice of methods is largely an economical question, and I fully agree with you in thinking that no one method is universally applicable. We are apt to be too procrustean in the matter and to forget that circumstances alter cases. With regard to the economical aspects of the case, may I remind you that there are economic limits to crowding and that locomotion in central London is painfully slow from this cause. I would further remind you that the rates of this house have risen 87 per cent. in the last twenty-five years, while the interest on money has steadily decreased; and that in your valuable report on plumbing you estimate that it costs from £400 to £600 in order to make the average London house fairly secure against the dangers of putrefaction which are going on beneath and around it. Are we not approaching our economic limit?

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Wimpole-street, W., July 14th, 1896.

G. V. POORE.

DINNERS FOR CONVALESCENTS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I trust you will allow me to appeal in your columns to all who have the welfare of the deserving working men and women of this metropolis at heart for assistance in a charity which for the last fifteen years has been helping them at a time when sickness has so reduced their strength as to render them, although convalescent, unfit to return to the work by which they earn "daily bread" for themselves and their families. The number of convalescent homes is only sufficient to provide for a very small proportion of those thus situated, and the Convalescent Dinners Society undertakes the duty of supplementing this deficiency by granting to well-authenticated cases an order for fourteen daily dinners on a coffee tavern near to the convalescent's home. The application form has to be filled in and signed by a clergyman or by a recognised district visitor, and, when passed by the committee, the order for the dinners is sent to one or other for delivery, thus guarding against fraud and misrepresentation. The value of this charity is acknowledged by all those who work amongst the poor; and the working men and women who reap the benefit of it are very grateful for the good food which enables them to return to their work so much sooner than would otherwise be the case. During the last nine months the Convalescent Dinners Society has granted fourteen daily dinners to nearly 1000 poor convalescents. Its funds are, however, now exhausted; and I, therefore, confidently appeal for assistance to all who can afford to give, so that the society may be enabled to continue its good and useful work.

Donations may be sent either to myself as hon. treasurer or to Miss Carbonell, hon. secretary, 114, Queen's-gate, S.W., or can be paid into the account of the Convalescent Dinners Society at the London and County Bank, South Kensington Branch. I have the honour to be, yours faithfully,

CHELMSFORD.

Chairman, Convalescent Dinners Society.

5, Knaresboro'-place, S.W., July, 1896.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: THE ANNUAL TEMPERANCE BREAKFAST.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you kindly allow me to announce that the usual temperance breakfast will take place on Thursday morning, July 30th, in the Great Central Hotel, Carlisle, at eight o'clock, when the Lord Bishop of Carlisle, a vice-president of the League, will preside, supported by Mr. Miles MacInnes, J.P., Dr. Henry Barnes, president, and other members of the British Medical Association. It is particularly requested that members who desire to attend will make early application for invitations to Mr. J. L. Fenn, 33, Paternoster-row, London, E.C.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

London, July 13th, 1896.

ROBERT RAE, Secretary.

"THE REMUNERATION OF MEDICAL MEN."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have read with much gratification the letters of "M.D." and "M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P." in THE LANCET on the above subject. It seems a strange thing to me, considering the extremely congested state of our profession, that the parents and guardians of young men do not warn them against entering upon a calling where competition is so very keen and remuneration for the most part so dreadfully small, especially when the cost of a medical education is so heavy and the examinations are so difficult. There are men whose educations have cost as much as £2000 who now, since they have passed their final examination, are glad to accept a sixpenny fee and give a bottle of medicine (?) as well. Again, why do young people choose our profession as a means of gaining a living when they have not the slightest love for the work and when there are other occupations where the expenses are less, the work easier, and pay greater. I heard a young surgeon remark the other day: "I am sorry I ever went in for this starving-out job." I have met many of this type. Young medical men are often blamed for taking miserably low fees, but what is a man to do on finding himself fully fledged, with the accompanying honour of course, and not a farthing in his pocket, all having been spent in getting him into our noble profession? He soon forgets the honour part of the business and turns to undersell his struggling brethren as the only means of obtaining patients and a living. He thus contrives to make a miserable livelihood until he in his turn is underbid by a new arrival who also must have bread, and so down go the fees and down, down goes the profession, and the struggle of the poor practitioner becomes harder and harder. In the meantime more are joining and the flow of fresh men into our ranks is for ever increasing. On, on they come, without a thought, it seems, of what they are coming to. And what are our consultants, lecturers, and examiners doing all this time? They pocket their big fees, lecture at the hospitals, and hold out every inducement for men to enter the profession through their individual classes. They never say a word, as far as I know, about the struggle and hardship to get bread in after years. I cannot persuade myself that our great men are ignorant of the deplorable state of things amongst the rank and file of the profession. If not, what about duty to their brethren who are practising and to the youth who would become a practitioner? and, more, what about the honour of the great and noble profession? They talk most about its dignity, but do they attempt any reform? and still the power is all in their hands. I agree with "M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P." when he says "the numbers can be reduced by raising the standard of the entrance examination and making it competitive that only a fixed number of new men are admitted yearly." This, I think, would be a point in the right direction, but I would say some broader and further reaching scheme is required, for, with the number of men qualifying each year in vastly increasing numbers, if something is not soon done the outlook for the bulk of us as well as for those who are to come is gloomy and sad indeed. For my own part I have been scouring England for the past twenty-one months in search of an opening where setting up would not mean the sharpest of competition, but I have failed to find such a spot. I am, therefore, forced to be idle as I do not like the idea of taking a part of another man's living away from him—a living which he has had a great struggle to get. Had I not possessed some small private means I fear ere now I would myself, notwithstanding my dislike of the idea, have been forced to join the already large army of sixpenny doctors. The pinch of poverty makes us do strange things at times. As it is I must wait, like hundreds of my brethren, "till something turns up," and do my best in the meantime to uphold the dignity of our noble calling. Concluding, I beg forgiveness for occupying so much of your space, and as a humble member of the profession I thank you for taking up the subject, which so much requires discussion, for by so doing you are conferring a benefit upon all of us and deserve our hearty support and thanks.

I remain, Sirs, yours faithfully,

June 27th, 1896.

ONE OF THE CROWD.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,— "Another M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P." is hard upon "M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P." He is so angry with him that he