a therapeutic agent in competent medical hands the less likely are we to approve of this wholesale method of encouraging the use of hypnotism by the general public. I have seen the course sent to inquirers on paying five dollars. The fee is exorbitant for the information given, but the teaching inculcated is, I consider, fraught with danger to public morality.

I fear this unscrupulous exploitation of hypnotism will lead to the occurrence of such crimes against the person and pocket as are described in your annotation in THE LANCET of May 18th, p. 1419, "Suggestion and Hypnotism in their Relation to Jurisprudence," on Dr. von Schrenk-Notzing's article. It is to be hoped that medical men everywhere will lend their influence to counteract the work of this bogus institute.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

CHARLES LLOYD TUCKEY, M.D. Aberd.

Park-street, W., May 26th, 1901.

* * The circular justifies Dr. Lloyd Tuckey's description of it as "unscrupulous exploitation of hypnotism."—ED. L.

"THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND THE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I cannot altogether agree with "Colliery Surgeon's" letter. I am of opinion that if friendly societies paid 4s. per annum for adult male members and 5s. for juveniles and female adults the friction between the friendly societies and their surgeons would at once cease. This is really the cause of dispute. Surely this sum is a reasonable one. The difficulty we have to contend with is that friendly societies insist on our acceptance of a halfpenny a week for juveniles and 3s. 6d. or 4s. for female adults. This is not a living wage and is the bone of contention between the profession and the friendly societies. The Long Eaton (Derbyshire) friendly societies intend to start an institution, and to give an instance of the determination and unanimity of the club officials interested in the promulgation of the scheme they have decided to have a house-to-house canvass and to petition Sir Walter Foster to support the scheme. Mr. Gretton, M.P., has also been written to on the same question—viz., "Is it advisable to establish a friendly society's dispensary?" This means that in a town of 10,000 about 2500 belong to clubs, and if an institution of this kind is established all the married adult lodge members will put their wives and children in, thus increasing the number of dispensary members so considerably that of the eight town practitioners three or four will have to seek fresh fields and pastures new, for one man will have a fixed salary with free residence and have to do the work of two or three men. The general medical practitioner with clubs is better qualified to speak on this question than any member of the General Medical Council, the members of which have very probably never had a club appointment of any kind. It is only in places where the clubs have refused a fair fee that these institutions have been started.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Derby, May 18th, 1901.

W. H. JACKSON, M.B.

TEMPORARY ARMY RANK FOR VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Perhaps Mr. MacNeill or one of the service Members would, at the earliest opportunity, ask Mr. Brodrick if, in view of army order dated May 15th, 1901, wherein temporary army rank is conceded to militia officers employed during the present emergency, a like privilege will be accorded to other auxiliary officers—viz., volunteer officers, combatant and otherwise, "doing duty with troops." Such a concession should at least be granted to those officers holding commissions in the Reserve and Army Medical Reserve; at any rate, they should be allowed seniority from the date of their reserve commissions. If it is just and necessary to grant temporary army rank to volunteers serving abroad it is equally just and necessary to do so for home service; and, further, if in view of the withholding of the gratuity to which they are entitled at the end of 12 months' service, until their services are dispensed with, any grant is likely to be made for "wear and tear" of uniform. Undress uniform, which in the ordinary course of volunteer duties lasted for

years or even perhaps for the whole of a volunteer career, is now worn and dirty and must be replaced.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

May 25th, 1901.

V. M. S.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

The Decline of the Plague in India.—Disturbances in the Punjab.—The Increase of the Famine.—Fresh Hospital Accommodation in Calcutta and Darjeeling.

THE decline of plague is not general throughout India although the total mortality was 3298 as compared with 4093 last week. The number of deaths is nearly double that for the corresponding week last year. The deaths last week fell in Bengal (districts) from 1707 to 1198; in the Punjab from 547 to 524; in the North-West Provinces from 424 to 287; and in Calcutta from 215 to 156. On the other hand Bombay city shows a rise from 393 to 419, Karachi city from 270 to 297, Kashmir (Jumma) from 23 to 46, and Gaya from 320 to 518. The disease still lingers in the districts of the Bombay province—Belgaum, Dharwar, Thana, and Cutch, as well as in the Mysore State. There have been 12 deaths from plague in Agra. This is a new outbreak and it shows how the disease is gradually diffusing itself over the whole country. A recrudescence of plague in Bombay city seems to attain a greater height, to last longer, and to subside more slowly than in any other city. The general mortality in Bombay keeps up at the rate of over 90 per 1000 per annum. Out of 1390 deaths for the week ending April 30th 403 are recorded as due to plague. Deducting this number from that of the general mortality it would still show Bombay with a death-rate of over 64 per 1000 per annum. As there is very little cholera or small-pox in the city the excess mortality is imperfectly accounted for.

In the plague-stricken villages of the Sialkot district of the Punjab there have been serious disturbances and troops have had to be despatched to them. The hospital assistants suffered severely at the hands of the mob and the Naib-Tahsildar was beaten and his thatched huts were ignited. No Europeans were attacked except the assistant commissioner who was pelted with stones and mud. Punitive police will now be placed in the district.

The latest famine returns show that there are still nearly 300,000 persons on relief and the numbers have been increasing lately in the Bombay Presidency. In the native States there are 30,000 and in Hyderabad Deccan about 25,000.

With the increasing popularity of Darjeeling as a hill station and health resort additional provision has to be made for the sick. A new surgical ward has been added to the Eden Sanitarium "for the separate and special treatment of serious surgical, medical, and obstetrical cases demanding operation and special nursing." The new block of the Presidency General Hospital in Calcutta ought also to be ready in a short time. It is intended primarily to afford medical aid and accommodation to well-to-do middle-class European inhabitants of Calcutta, and to planters especially.

May 9th.

BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Hospital Saturday Fund.

THE annual meeting of the Executive Committee was held on May 20th. The report showed that the total receipts in respect of last year's collection were £18,280 7s. 10d., of which sum £17,874 1s. 7d. were received from manufactories and industrial establishments. This showed an increase over the previous year. The expenses of collection amounted to 4.69 per cent.; the number of establishments contributing was 1802. Of the amount collected £10,000 were distributed among the medical charities of the city. Four convalescent homes were associated with the movement, being supported by these funds.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

The annual report on the health of the city for the year