part) with the insane adult inmates, to the disadvantage of both. In addition, there may be found in every county in the dwellings of the poor children of this class in no way officially registered, even if known to the school attendance officers. Their parents would be glad to avail themselves of a rate-aided institution competent to give suitable training to these exceptional children, whose education ought to be a matter of concern to the State quite as much as that of ordinary children or of those who are blind or deaf. The experience of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District Board in the matter of providing for imbecile children may be usefully considered in this connexion. Starting originally (in 1874) with 100 children, they soon found it necessary to provide for 250 undergoing training and education, and when plans were made for a permanent institution it was thought that accommodation for 500 would be ample for the needs of London; but when the benefits of the special training given at the Darenth schools became known amongst the poorer classes the demand for accommodation steadily increased, and the provision of 1000 beds at the present time is scarcely adequate. Taking the pauper population of England and Wales at about seven times that of the London district—a ratio also subsisting between the respective gross populations—we find that if accommodation were provided throughout the country in the same proportion as at Darenth an aggregate of 6000 beds would be required independently of the metropolis. In conclusion I am tempted to say, with sincere respect for the many excellent qualifications of workhouse medical officers, that my experience leads me to think that their opinion as to whether or not an imbecile inmate "would be likely to be improved by special training" is not always to be relied on, the question being one for an expert acquainted with the peculiarities of the imbecile class and the results achieved by appropriate modes of education.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

G. E. SHUTTLEWORTH,

Late Medical Superintendent, Royal Albert Asylum,
Lancaster.

Richmond Hill, April 1st, 1895.

"A CASE OF ENCYSTED EMPYEMA."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you permit me, though late, to correct an error in the report of my case of encysted empyema upon the internal surface of the right lung in THE LANCET of March 9th? On p. 620, fourth line from bottom of first column, "there were signs of *pericarditis*" should read "*peritonitis*, with effusion." So many of the deaths after operation for empyema are caused by suppurative pericarditis that it was carefully sought for during life in the case described, but the heart was normal in site and sounds. The peritoneal effusion was obvious.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Leeds, April 2nd, 1895.

T. CHURTON, M.D.

MANCHESTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The Royal Infirmary Question.

THE progress made towards the definite step deciding the future of the infirmary is slow; but there may be some advantage in this. Two schemes have been voted on by the trustees—that of the board of management, which was to throw out wings on each side of the present building; the other, moved by Dr. Brockbank, advocated the gradual rebuilding of the infirmary on the present site. Out of the 1300 trustees about 600 recorded their votes—three to one being in favour of rebuilding. An adjourned meeting was held on the 26th ult. to further consider the various proposals for extending the building. Alderman King proposed an amendment to Dr. Brockbank's scheme, which had become the substantive resolution, to obtain the accommodation required by raising the roof and putting an additional story on the present building. This was defeated by a large majority. Sir John Harwood gave notice of another amendment, which was, however, withdrawn in favour of one moved by Dr. Leech. It is, however, worth placing on record: "That the infirmary building remain as it is at present, with such improvements and sanitary alterations as may be found

necessary and desirable. That the stone-work outside the building be cleaned and put into thorough repair, and that only such additions be made to the building as the board may consider necessary in order to bring the whole structure into harmony with modern sanitary requirements, and the providing of such other conveniences as have been adopted in recent institutions of this character." This was withdrawn, however, and Dr. Leech's amendment, "That before proceeding further, a committee, consisting of the members of the infirmary board and an equal number of trustees who are not members of the board be appointed to report on the best means to be adopted for increasing the accommodation afforded by the institution." It was further resolved that the members of the committee outside the board of management should be nominated by the chairman of the board, the Lord Mayor, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce. So the matter stands for the present. The great majority of the infirmary staff favour the complete, but if necessary gradual, rebuilding on the present site. One or two wish for a supplementary hospital as near as may be to Owens College, and confessedly in its interests. No arguments, however, can do away with the fact that the present infirmary, in a central and hence most convenient position, is salubrious, and that there is a prestige connected with it which would be lacking in a suburban annexe. It is to be hoped that the ultimate decision will be to rebuild on the present site. As time goes on, Owens College may be in a position to provide a hospital with its own funds.

Popular Views on Medical Education.

The controversy on infirmary matters has brought to light views as to medical education, that most of us fondly supposed were out of date and exploded. The *City News*, however, which is usually considered an intelligent paper, at once disabuses our minds. It says: "Whilst there are only between two hundred and three hundred in-patients of the infirmary, it appears that no fewer than four hundred medical students are in attendance"; and then goes on to ask, "For whom is the infirmary maintained, for the patients or to give eleemosynary medical instruction to young fellows qualifying for the profession?" It considers, also, that Dr. Renaud ruined his case by telling the meeting that the extensions were required "more for the accommodation of the increasing number of medical students from Owens College than for any other reason," and it quotes, evidently with approval, a dictum Sir John Harwood uttered in 1892: "If ever it got abroad that the infirmary was a school for young students and not an infirmary, it would decline. People would not go to get their maladies healed and their bones set by learners." Such observations as these make one wonder at the tenacity with which ignorance maintains its ground even in the mind of an able man. With the true facts before him no one would see more clearly than Sir John Harwood the great advantage of a teaching hospital to the patients themselves.

Chief Constable's Report.

We are so apt to hug ourselves complacently on the gradual diminution of crime and improvement of morals, in consequence of the spread of Board schools and other elevating agencies, that the recently issued report of the Chief Constable is not pleasant reading. During the past year there has been an increase of 356 in the number of indictable offences reported to the police, the total being 3279, as against 2923 last year. This increase is spread over all classes of crime, but is more particularly marked in housebreaking, breaking into shops, and in cases of larceny. There has also been an increase in the number proceeded against for non-indictable offences of 1412, chiefly for "drunkenness" and "offences under the Vagrancy Act." The total number of persons arrested for all offences was 17,250—11,344 males and 5906 females—and of this number 5260 males (or 46.3 per cent.) and 2973 females (or 50.3 per cent.) were drunk when taken into custody. Many of those arrested for drunkenness had frequently been in custody for the same offence; 62 persons had been arrested more than 20 times, 19 more than 50 times, and one confirmed inebriate has been before the magistrates 193 times. It is quite clear that the present mode of dealing with drunkenness is a failure. The increase is not due to greater facilities for obtaining drink, as there has been a net decrease of 20 licences, the number of public-houses now being 519, and of beer and wine houses 2506. During the year 851 violent deaths occurred in the city, 98 of them being those of babies. This shows that there is much waste of child-life here, as