Mr. Humphreys asserts that Dr. Duncan "never said anything of the kind." Here again Mr. Humphreys shows his ignorance. If he will refer to Dr. Duncan's work¹ he will find a table showing that 1 in 15 dies in her first confinement, 1 in 8 in the fourteenth confinement, and 1 in 6 in the fifteenth confinement. I am really surprised that even Mr. Humphreys gives himself the congenial part of trying to throw mud at Dr. Duncan. Dr. Duncan was appointed by the Government to report upon this subject, and it is not likely he either wilfully or otherwise told untruths. Had Mr. Humphreys taken the trouble—as the merest tyro would—of having read the statement made by Mr. Stephens, M.P., before the Select Committee upon Midwives Registration (question 586) he would have seen Mr. Stephens stated that the death-rate among women in their first confinement at the City of London Lying-in Hospital was 1 in 20; this among 1923 births. Dr. Duncan's figures also are, if anything, too low, because he deliberately excluded all deaths among *unmarried* women—a class who give a very high puerperal death-rate.

If the above are fair samples of my "mis-statements," I think I can leave your readers to judge of their accuracy. If my case is based upon untruths, let it deservedly perish. Will you allow me here to state that the "Editorial Reference Committee" of the *British Medical Journal* has, on Jan. 21st, ordered that my address, which you published on Jan. 16th, is to be suppressed from the journal? This "Reference Committee" consists of Dr. H. Barnes (Carlisle), Dr. Roddick (Montreal), Dr. C. Parsons (Dover), Dr. T. Bridgewater (Harrow), Dr. J. W. Cousins (Southsea), and Dr. C. Holman (London). Why have they thought it worthy of being suppressed? May I ask as a favour, through THE LANCET, that each practitioner interested in this vital question order at once 100 reprints of my address, so that he may send it to M.P.'s, county councillors, boards of guardians, and members of medical societies?

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

ROBERT R. RENTOUL,
Liverpool. Direct Representative, General Medical Council.

"POISONING BY ANTIPYRIN; RECOVERY."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The case of poisoning by antipyrin recorded by Mr. Webster in THE LANCET of Jan. 30th reminds me of a case I saw a few years ago in Calcutta. The patient was a middle-aged woman, convalescent from typho-malarial fever. She was suffering from severe headache, for which I gave her ten grains of antipyrin, with twenty minims of spiritus ammoniæ aromaticus and an ounce of water. In about half an hour's time the patient's condition much resembled that described by Mr. Webster, but with these differences: she was very pale, not cyanotic; there was no swelling of the eyelids, but almost complete loss of sight, and the rash disappeared in about eighteen hours. It much resembled that of urticaria, but there were no small papules, as in Mr. Webster's case. It is interesting to note that the rash in cases of chronic antipyrin poisoning is small scattered papules only, which are seen chiefly on the flexor surfaces. My patient rallied well on the administration of hot coffee and whisky. I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

FRANK G. WALLACE, M.A., M.B., B.C. Cantab.
Earl's-court, Feb. 1st, 1897.

CHRONIC ULCERATION TREATED BY OXYGEN.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you permit me to make a correction in your kind report in THE LANCET of Jan. 30th of my oxygen cases shown at the Clinical Society? All the final bacteriological examinations showed only *staphylococci*, all the other micro-organisms having disappeared. I have obtained identical results in hundreds of examinations. I mentioned these facts to show the selective power that oxygen undoubtedly has.

I remain, yours faithfully,

Hertford-street, Mayfair, W., Feb. 1st, 1897. GEORGE STOKER.

MALE NURSES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It is possible that some of your readers may be inconvenienced by an erroneous statement of Lady Priestley in the *Nineteenth Century*. Having mentioned the necessity and propriety of employing male nurses in certain cases Lady Priestley regrets that there should be no institution for supplying them. This is an amazing misstatement considering that the Hamilton Association for providing male nurses was founded in May, 1885, and has been steadily at work up to the present time. Many medical men have employed the nurses under the association, and have testified to their ability and attention. During all this time the association has been regularly advertised in the THE LANCET, and on more than one occasion you have expressed your editorial approval of its work; even as early as 1886 you pronounced it "deserving of support." Let us again remind your readers that the Hamilton Association is not a commercial, but a philanthropic institution. Its object is not to make a pecuniary profit, but to be a benefit to both patients and nurses, and therefore to medical men. Thus it differs altogether from proprietary concerns which since its establishment have added this branch to their business. It is managed by a committee on which the profession is fully represented and which is therefore able to exercise needful discipline. Admission to the roll of the association is only obtainable after full inquiry into the character and antecedents of candidates and is the best guarantee the public have of the qualifications of a nurse. You will, no doubt, remember that the association was founded by the late Miss Jane Hamilton, a lady whose relatives were hospital physicians and surgeons. Miss Hamilton had seen the necessity of men being trained as nurses to attend to various cases, had witnessed distress at the difficulty of obtaining them, and founded the association at very great expense, leaving a legacy at her death to carry it on. Surely Lady Priestley should have known this before writing on the subject. We hope, however, the publication of these facts in your columns may go far to neutralise the injurious effects of her misstatement.

We are, Sirs, yours faithfully,

THE TREASURERS OF THE HAMILTON ASSOCIATION.
Park-street, Grosvenor-square, W.

* * "The Hamilton Association for providing trained male nurses is one deserving of support. It is most desirable, we think, that male nurses should be employed for attendance on the sick of their own sex whenever practicable." These were our words concerning the Hamilton Association in THE LANCET of Aug. 7th, 1886, and they convey our opinion at the present time.—ED.L.

"ARMY EXAMINATIONS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—May I say, in answer to "Uncrammed," that I did not uphold the current scheme of "Army Examinations," neither did I decry our public school life, and I certainly do not call in question the capacities of the school teachers? My point is that the inevitable competition, whatever the subjects of examination may be, is the great cause of the parental complainings, with which everyone must sympathise. This competition means that only a proportion of candidates can be successful, notwithstanding that all may come up to a satisfactory standard of physique, mental equipment, &c., and have enjoyed the advantages of a public school training. But the misfortune is that this is not enough. These candidates have to compete with one another, and the competition necessitates a special preparation which is carried out under disadvantages at school, but, for reasons I gave, with more success outside by special army instructors. The need of this special preparation may be deplorable, but how is "Uncrammed" going to obviate it? To eliminate competition is impossible, and the only other way to suppress these outside army instructors is for the schoolmasters to be more successful. Even then, does "Uncrammed" suppose there would be no distressed parents left to write to the papers and bemoan their hard lot? Are the lads who cannot compete successfully from school to give up the struggle? But what harm do these army instructors do? THE LANCET, having

¹ Mortality of Childbed and Maternity Hospitals, p. 41, table vi.