any occasion in which I have regretted treating a sprained joint by movement instead of by any other method.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Galashiels, N.B., Dec. 8th, 1900. WILLIAM DOIG, M.D. Edin.

"SOME NOTES ON CASES OF MOVEABLE KIDNEY."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—IN an article under the above heading by Dr. H. Davy, in THE LANCET of Dec 1st last, occurs the following statement: "Shortly after complete obstruction supervened and it was thought advisable, after consultation with Mr. A. J. Cumming, to perform lumbar colotomy. Mr. Harris performed colotomy in the ordinary way and he performed a most difficult operation extremely well, for he found the colon *completely empty*, and it is a matter of some difficulty to perform colotomy on an *empty* colon. Within a week the patient died," &c. The italics are mine. It would be of interest to hear what benefit was expected from this remarkable procedure.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

C. HAMILTON WHITEFORD.

Sussex-terrace, Plymouth, Dec. 8th, 1900.

"ARTHRITIS AND APPENDICITIS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—As a contribution to the discussion on the occurrence of arthritis in cases of appendicitis, reported in THE LANCET of Oct. 27th, p. 1203, may I recall the fact that French writers have often described arthritis as a complication of dysentery and in the discussion at the Medical Society of London Mr. F. C. Wallis referred to cases in connexion with ulceration of the bowel? This complication of dysentery appears to be very rare in India, but to judge by the amount of space devoted to it in French books on tropical diseases it must be more common in the dysentery of temperate climates. In his recent book, "Maladies des Pays Chauds," M. Brault devoted no less than ten pages to the discussion of what he calls "le pseudo-rumatisme infectieux dysentérique," whereas the complication is not mentioned in Manson's "Tropical Diseases." It is certainly very rare, but I have recently met with one case in which on the third day the bowel symptoms suddenly ceased and well-marked arthritis of both knee-joints took their place.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

W. J. BUCHANAN, M.B. Dub.,

■ Bhagalpur, Bengal, Nov 20th, 1900.

Major I.M.S.

THE USE OF COPPER FOR ELECTRODES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I notice that in the last edition of Dr. Lewis Jones's work on "Medical" Electricity, as in most of the textbooks on the subject previously published, the electrodes to be employed in giving various kinds of electric baths are recommended to be made of copper. Now electrodes made of this metal rapidly discolour and corrode under the influence of the products of electrolytic decomposition of whatever fluid is used for the bath, and consequently are troublesome in use. I have been using for the last two years electrodes of thin sheet aluminium and find them practically untarnishable in the solutions usually employed and in every way much more suitable. In the case of aluminium the terminals should be clamped on, as soldering the metal is difficult and unsatisfactory. Possibly the hint may be of use to those of your readers who use electric baths in their practice.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

RICHARD J. COWEN, L.R.C.P. Irel., &c.

Clarges-street, Mayfair, W., Dec. 11th, 1900.

"OUR WIDOWS AND ORPHANS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS.—I have read the letters of Mr. Heath and Dr. Cullingworth in THE LANCET of Nov. 17th (p. 1459) and Dec. 1st (p. 1610) respectively, pointing out the advantages of joining the Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men.

May I ask, through the medium of your columns whether the scope of the society cannot be extended so as to include

subscribers practising in any part of England? I do not know of any other society doing similar work, yet the benefits offered by the society are open only to those practitioners who join while they are living within the radius of 20 miles from Charing Cross.

There must be a large number of men who, like myself, never heard of the society when they were in London, and would now very gladly subscribe. Cannot something be done for us? I am Sirs, yours faithfully,

Dec. 3rd, 1900.

A COUNTRY DOCTOR.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Thank you for your note *in re* medical charities, but let me have my growl. I have never been asked for a subscription until now for Epsom College and have often wondered how the institution was financed. As to the British Medical Benevolent Fund, I never heard of it before. How many practitioners are similarly placed? Why not present to every man an appeal when he receives his certificate of registration?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Dec. 8th, 1900.

A.K.C. LOND.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Great Rise in Plague Mortality.—The Famine.—Decoration of Bombay Plague Nurses.

I HAVE to record for the week ending Nov. 18th a great rise in the mortality from plague throughout India, largely due to the recrudescence of the epidemic in Bengal. The deaths were 2963, a rise of 776 on the previous seven days. In Bengal the deaths were 583, a rise of 242. The death-roll is increasing in all the affected districts which are Gaya, Saran, Patna, and Monghyr. For the corresponding week of last year the deaths from plague throughout India were 2968, so that the general condition of things can hardly be said to have improved. The Mysore State is still suffering heavily and records 932 deaths, as against the previous return of 831. There is a decided decrease in the Bombay Presidency as well as in Bombay city. Information has just been published from Lahore of an outbreak of a very virulent type of plague at Darnam in Gurdaspur district. It is said that the death-rate in Hissar is appalling and the people are all seriously debilitated from the prolonged famine. Plague is rapidly going down in Poona. Both the cities of Calcutta and Bombay continue to return very high death-rates. For the past weeks of November the rate in Calcutta has been about 45 per 1000 per annum—the average being only 35. For the same period in Bombay it has been about 47.5 per 1000. In both cases also there is no satisfactory explanation given of the increases. In Calcutta cholera and small-pox are only about the average, but there is an increase under fevers and bowel complaints and especially under "all other diseases." Plague deaths are now merely nominal. In Bombay much of the increase seems to be recorded under phthisis and diseases of the respiratory organs. Large numbers of people from the famine districts have immigrated to Bombay and it has been found necessary to convert the old Grant-road Plague Hospital into a sort of workhouse infirmary where Mrs. Adams Wylie is distinguishing herself in nursing and charitable work.

The numbers under famine relief will soon cease to be published, as the decrease during the past week has been nearly 250 000 and at the present time the total under relief is only 554,787. The Bombay Presidency and the Central Provinces continue to be the chief districts afflicted, but the Baroda State and some of the Bombay native states still record large numbers.

Even after a considerable lapse of time it is pleasing to note the recognition of services of some of the plague nurses during the earlier periods of the epidemic. A presentation lately took place in Bombay by Lady Northcote to three nurses who have especially distinguished themselves in connexion with plague work in the city. Nurse Leavers, Nurse Remy, and Sister Mary Edith have been made Honorary Nursing Sisters of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and the presentation of the badges and diplomas were formally made to them. It must not be forgotten that there are at least a dozen others who have worked equally