

the institution and repressing a certain amount of hospital mendicity amongst the well-to-do. When I subscribed thirty guineas to the hospital it was given to support an institution for the sick poor alone; however, should the committee permit the existence of pay wards, I shall certainly call upon them to refund my subscription of thirty guineas, to be paid over to such charitable institution as I may hereafter decide.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY FOSTER BURNES, M.R.C.P., &c.,
Medical Officer for Dent.

To the Chairman and Committee of the Great Northern Central Hospital, London.

[COPY.]

Great Northern Central Hospital, Holloway-road, N.,
Oct. 23rd, 1894.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst., which I will lay before the Committee of Management at their next meeting, on Friday, Nov. 2nd.

Yours truly,

LEWIS H. STRUTOWKER, Secretary.

To H. F. Burnes, Esq., M.R.C.P., Haycote, Dent, Yorks.

"THE ADMINISTRATION OF ARSENIC."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—On referring to the abstract of the proceedings of the Liverpool Medical Institution forwarded to you by its honorary secretary, and referred to by Dr. John Livy in THE LANCET of Nov. 3rd, I do not find it reported that several of the speakers affirmed, as he says they did, "that it is impossible to detect arsenic when only medicinal doses are given." So far was this from being the case that at least two of them—viz., Mr. F. W. Lowndes and myself—mentioned cases where it was detected both by Reinsch's and Marsh's tests. What they did state was that it was impossible in their opinion to detect the presence of arsenic when given in medicinal doses by what in the abstract is alluded to as "the rough test." This "rough test" was fully described in my paper, and consisted of acidifying nearly a fluid ounce of unconcentrated urine, in which had been immersed a piece of copper wire, and then simply raising it to the boiling point—the whole process from beginning to end not occupying more than two minutes. This was a rougher test than the one by which Dr. Livy states that he himself failed to detect it, and yet it was one which was considered conclusive against the possibility of Mr. James Maybrick having "taken a serious or fatal dose" of the poison within a fortnight before the test was applied, because its results were negative in the hands of Dr. Humphreys, as they probably would have been in the hands of the most expert chemist living.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Liverpool, Nov. 3rd, 1894.

WILLIAM CARTER.

"THE REMUNERATION OF MEDICAL WITNESSES."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am pleased that another effort is being made to increase the fees to medical men for evidence in criminal cases. I hope the Police Surgeons' Association will be successful. For years I have felt that the fees were totally inadequate for the services rendered and were a great loss to a man in busy practice. I have for a long time avoided police cases in consequence, and when I have by any chance had a case in the police-court it has been because I could not avoid it. Although the courtesy of the bench, solicitors, and magistrate's clerk not to detain a medical witness longer than necessary is common, yet 10s. 6d. as a fee and a prospect of a journey to assizes for a guinea per day are not sufficient in the present day. I once attended the assizes in Liverpool for five days; I was not able to visit a patient during the time, leaving home early and being back late; I had to pay a locum tenens. At the end of the time I asked for a special fee, as I was retained for special evidence, with the result that the Crown could not allow it. I probably had been a little extravagant with my friends, but I had only a few shillings left after I had paid my expenses. As far back as 1887 Mr. Brady of Wigan, who had to attend the assizes in Liverpool, presented a petition from the medical men of Wigan to the grand jury, and, I believe, also to the judge. I also brought the subject before the Branch of the British Medical Association, and we got a promise that the parent association would move in the matter, yet seven years are gone and we are still in the same position. Unless a universal cry is raised I am afraid we shall be in the same position seven years hence. There cannot be a doubt that for a man in private practice one guinea per day is totally inadequate, no matter how small

his practice may be; for house surgeons and those holding public appointments the matter is a little different, and no harm would be done by having a scale of fees. I must say that since our petition a better arrangement has been made at the Liverpool assizes, so as to allow the practitioner to attend only on the day his case is called when this is possible.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Wigan, Nov. 5th, 1894.

WM. BERRY, F.R.C.S. Irei.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS—Will you permit me to give my experience *re* the remuneration of medical witnesses, as I have had some little experience both of the Scotch and English systems? For three or four years I was criminal reporting surgeon for the western district of Perthshire, when I had occasion to be sent on long journeys to investigate criminal cases and cases of sudden death. Though I have resided in England over thirty years my criminal work has happily been limited. Last year, however, I had the rather unique experience of having been called upon to attend every assize at Warwick (three in number). Twice I was detained three days and once two days. Now let me detail the procedure in each set of cases. Warwick is fairly convenient to get at from here, but as you have to put in a morning appearance under a threat of a heavy penalty it comes of necessity that you must leave home early and so are able to do but little work before starting. When you arrive at the court-house a mild chaos exists; the solicitors or their clerks run a race as to who shall get his bill first before the grand jury. As the various cases are taken in no order, it is not safe to leave the precincts of the court, and you may be kept hours waiting before you are called before the grand jury. When this ordeal is passed there is no certainty which day your case will be called, and that in spite of every effort on the part of the officials to give you information—and here I will take this opportunity of cordially thanking the members of the Bar and solicitors for their courtesy and kind help in forwarding as far as they can your case and seeing that you are put to the least possible inconvenience. Now, as to payment; I received a daily fee of £1 1s. and second-class fare one way. Now I do not profess to have a large practice, but it unfortunately happened that twice I had a considerable number of patients down with influenza—one man suffering from acute mania. I need not go into figures about my loss, but my assize experience spells a considerable pecuniary balance to the bad. Now let me contrast the mode of payment in Scotland. When a medical witness is called upon by the procurator fiscal to give evidence that official calls and takes what is called a "recognition." This may be long or short, but for this a fee of £1 1s. is granted, and if a post-mortem examination is thought necessary an additional fee is given for it. If the case has to be seen at a distance of over one mile from the reporter's residence, £2 2s. are allowed for the report. If evidence has to be supplemented an additional fee is given. When the case goes to the circuit court the witness is allowed £2 2s. per diem and one day extra: thus, he gets £4 4s. at least for one day, £6 6s. for two days, and so on. Now, Sirs, I ask if Scotland can pay these fees, why not England? To me it seems that the matter only wants fairly putting before the authorities, as both the miserable payment and the hardship of taking away a medical man from his work are universally admitted. I for one shall be most happy to give my aid in helping to alter matters. Let us make a strong protest or none at all, and I would suggest that we call in the aid of our able representative, Dr. Glover, who I am sure would gladly give us his influential aid. Apologising for trespassing on your valuable space,

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

JAMES HAIR, M.D., F.F.P.S.G.,

Formerly Criminal Reporting Surgeon for the
Brinklow, Nov. 5th, 1894. Western District of Perthshire, &c.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In connexion with the above subject Dr. Thomas Mackenzie, of Douglas, Isle of Man, has brought to my notice the curious fact that in Manxland the fee for attendance and giving evidence at an inquest is only 15s. 6d., instead of the guinea to which we are universally accustomed in other parts of the United Kingdom. My correspondent is of opinion that it is only necessary for attention to be drawn to this anomaly in the columns of THE LANCET in order to have it rectified, and as I hope with