good. But increased artificial warmth in the buildings, grass fields for exercise, and a larger staff of officers are required, particularly as regards the infants and forward boys. "The commonest means of contagion are the children's fingers, not used purposely, but rubbed, accidentally or in play, over the child's own face and eyes, or over those of its companions." As to preventive measures, an abundant supply of clean water and towels is of course essential, and a great many valuable remarks are offered as to the manner and "stuff" of the clothing adopted in these schools.

The report concludes with some observations on the size of these schools, which are noteworthy. Mr. Nettleship remarks, in effect, that though there is no positive evidence as to the sanitary disadvantages of a large as compared with a small institution, the common sense view of the question is very much in favour of the latter. Small numbers are of course more manageable, but very much of success hinges on the capacity of the superintendent.

We have of course omitted much in the way of detail that is both useful and interesting, and must refer our readers to the report, the able character of which has seldom been excelled.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

MEDICAL EDUCATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your report of the meeting of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, I observed a suggestion by Mr. Marshall of a compulsory examination at the end of the student's first winter session, or immediately after the commencement of the succeeding summer session. I trust that the expression of an adverse opinion will not be considered by the Council an act of presumption on my part, but I cannot think that the multiplication of examinations can prove beneficial. What with frequent *viva voce* and occasional written class examinations, prize examinations, and, at some schools, even *test* examinations, it would appear that our students are already over-examined. It is true that the examination proposed would be more authoritative, but we are not told what would be the result in the case of those who failed to pass it, or how long in such an instance the Primary Examination proper would be postponed.

The blot in our present system, now that so much is required of our students, seems to be that men are allowed, and even required, to attend hospital practice and lectures on the practical subjects while they are working in the dissecting-room and physiological laboratory. Students who seek the degrees of the University of London, or who intend to remain at a medical school four years, are careful to avoid this overlapping of subjects, but still they are obliged to put in an appearance in the wards to comply with the College requirements. On the other hand, the majority of students adopt the plan of crushing through all their hospital practice and lectures in two years and a half, or at most in three years, and present themselves badly prepared for all their examinations. See what this means in one of these student's second winter session. If he be industrious, he endeavours to attend lectures on anatomy and physiology, to work in the dissecting-room and physiological laboratory, to read up for his Primary Examination, and perhaps for a prize or two in his own school. One would think that this was sufficient for an ordinary brain to inwardly digest; but no, he is not content. He further vainly tries to profit by attending lectures on medicine and surgery, and by an *assiduous* attendance in the medical and surgical wards, on clinical lectures, and at post-mortem examinations and demonstrations; and I have even heard of a man taking a dressership. Can it be wondered at that a student should be somewhat bewildered on presenting himself for the Primary Examination?

In my humble opinion, and I have already given expression to it, the remedy is—to separate entirely the curriculum for the Primary Examination from that for the *Pass* Examination, the latter to be commenced after the Primary Examination has been passed. I am aware that reasons are given for maintaining the present system, but I am quite

sure that the objections to it far outweigh these reasons. The knowledge of anatomy and physiology can be kept alive by testing it in its practical bearing upon medicine and surgery at the *Pass* Examination, and the result would be more satisfactory than at present if an uninterrupted study of those subjects had been previously secured. I believe that if our examining bodies enforced such a change as I have suggested, the "number of rejections" would rapidly diminish, and that "many would be diverted from" what is now too often an "idle and profitless course of study."

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE COWELL.

George-street, Hanover-square, Nov. 13th, 1875.

ECCHYMOSIS OF THE SCROTUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—*Apropos* of Mr. Savory's lecture on this subject, I have at present a case of injury to the abdomen and scrotum under treatment, which is resulting so favourably that I think an account of the means employed may interest your readers.

A young man, aged nineteen, a miner, was engaged at his work in the coal-pit, when a large mass of stone from the roof fell upon him, inflicting severe injury upon the lower part of the abdomen and scrotum. I saw him shortly after the accident, when he was suffering from shock, the entire surface pale and cold, the scrotum somewhat swollen and slightly discoloured. He complained of severe pain in the right iliac fossa. He was ordered hot brandy and water, with hop fomentations to the parts injured. The following day general peritonitis had set in, and the scrotum was swollen to the size of a large cocoanut, blue-black in colour, and very tense. He was now ordered a dozen leeches to the abdomen, with calomel and opium internally. The scrotum was supported upon a folded napkin pinned round the hips, and swathed in a bandage saturated with a warm lotion composed of one ounce of tincture of arnica and one ounce of ammonium chloride to a pint of water. In two days the peritonitis had subsided. The lotion to the scrotum was continued, and with such good effect that to-day (the tenth since the accident) its appearance is perfectly normal, soft, and corrugated, without a trace of the residual fibrinous hardness so frequently seen in these cases.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

ALFRED GINDERS, M.D.

Normanton, November 16th, 1875.

SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS USED AS ADVERTISEMENTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A few weeks ago I received through the post a specimen of prepared food from a chemist at some distance, with a letter asking my opinion of it, giving the composition of the food, and stating that it was not advertised. I made a careful trial of the preparation, and found it satisfactory, and wrote a letter in reply to the one I had received stating my good opinion of the food. I was induced to do this contrary to my usual custom, because the food was not advertised. Within a week it accidentally came to my knowledge that my letter was printed and circulated among my professional brethren in the district. I at once took steps to stop this unauthorised use of my letter, and obtained a promise that it should be forthwith discontinued.

I send you this little history in order that others may be warned by my unlucky experience, and may avoid, under any circumstances, giving favourable written opinions of drugs or foods, even to proprietors who do not advertise. May I also ask why it is that the names of distinguished members of the profession are still paraded in our newspapers, by means of testimonials in favour of certain electrical apparatus, and light-brown and pale cod-liver oils, not to mention a score of other articles which the student of the advertising columns of our daily and weekly papers might easily mention?

I am, Sir, yours truly,

A PROVINCIAL PHYSICIAN.

Nov. 6th, 1875.