congested. And I may at once say that this was the only case in which the grains were influenced in any way. It will be seen, therefore, that in my hands at least this treatment has given what amounts practically to a negative result.—I am, Sirs, yours truly,

SYDNEY STEPHENSON, M.B., F.R.C.S. Edin.

Central London School, Hanwell, Feb. 23rd, 1891.

ENGLISH MEDICAL PRACTICE IN FRANCE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The facts shown in my friend's (Dr. Barnard) letter, in your issue of Feb. 21st, deserve consideration, as the interests of practitioners abroad are not so much at stake as those of the great mass of travelling English and Americans on the Continent. It would be well for all persons visiting Europe to obtain first the address of competent professional men before leaving home, as it can be stated as a fact that local advice is not always disinterested. Indeed, it is positive that most of the professional people recommended by servants, couriers, *concierges*, hotel-keepers, and chemists have to pay a commission to these people for the clients obtained, and, like the well-known 5 per cent., or *sou per franc*, given by commercial people in France to our servants, we can be sure it comes on our bills and not out of their pockets. These abuses are so well known now that people who settle in France put up with them like the *pourboire*, as a necessary evil, but they limit it as much as they can. It would be well if all persons who need a doctor abroad could first of all inquire as to the standing of anyone recommended of their consul or clergyman, and others, but many (indeed most hotel patients) are those who are taken suddenly ill, and who perforce must accept the hotel doctor, for the moment. If we were to put into print the really outrageous things that have happened and the charges made it would take too much of your space, but to hasten on the remedy proposed by Dr. Barnard it ought to be accepted for the special reasons given. It might be possible also to induce hotel-keepers and chemists to keep a framed list of the members of the Anglo-American Continental Medical Society, which includes most of the English and American doctors who are legally entitled to practise abroad. Hoping that some practical solution may be found to stop the present abuse,

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

Nice, Feb. 23rd, 1891.

THOMAS LINN.

THE USE OF NITROUS OXIDE BOTTLES IN THE HORIZONTAL POSITION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Dr. Sheppard has called attention in THE LANCET of Feb. 21st to some very practical points of embarrassment that are liable to occur at times with the supply of gas from horizontally placed bottles. My experience with the improved pedal attachment leads me to assert that it is unaccompanied by such objections. As the valve ends of the bottles are on a slightly higher level than the opposite ends, it is possible the aperture of exit of the gas is just above the level of the liquid nitrous oxide. The supply of gas is never fitful and irregular with it, but, on the contrary, can be regulated with the utmost facility. The screw is certainly liable to "set" in any bottle, but this can never be a source of inconvenience during the administration when the improved pedal attachment is used, for the reason that it is turned on at the commencement of the operation, the escape of gas being then controlled by the pedal screw valve.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

PERCY EDGELOW,

Anæsthetist to the National Dental Hospital.
Old Burlington-street, W., Feb. 21st, 1891.

MANCHESTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The Infirmary and Owens College.

THE negotiations which have for some time been going on between these two bodies respecting the provision of increased hospital accommodation appear to make but little progress, and at present matters are almost at a deadlock.

A conference held on the 17th ult. between the Infirmary and College authorities ended without anything definite being done, and the matter is further adjourned to consider certain suggestions made by Dr. Renaud. To all who have any intimate knowledge of either institution it is an open secret that there is a feeling of rivalry between certain sections of the two bodies which, unless some more cordial relations be established, augurs rather badly for an amicable settlement of the questions now in dispute. Shortly put, the position of affairs at present is this: The College wishes to have a more direct share in the control of the clinical instruction which must be given to the medical students, and they are desirous of having a new hospital erected on the site they now have for the purpose, whilst the infirmary authorities are unwilling to enter into any arrangements to forward such a scheme, but prefer to extend the present building in Piccadilly. It is admitted that some additional hospital accommodation is wanted, and will be still more wanted in a few years. The question in dispute is how and where it shall be provided. So far the public at large has scarcely been approached in the matter, but it is not unlikely that public opinion, as expressed through the general body of subscribers to the infirmary, will be averse to any further extension of the present building or the covering of any more of what is left of the open space around the infirmary.

Licensing Reform.

Important public meetings have recently been held "to unite in immediate practical efforts all those who are interested in the moral and social well-being of the people," with a view to obtain some speedy reform in our licensing system. The conferences were presided over by the Bishop of Manchester, and, as usual when the "drink question" is discussed, a wide divergence of opinion was found to exist as to the best practical steps to be taken to forward the ends which all had at heart. So keen was this divergence that at one time it seemed as though the present efforts would end in nothing, but at the last meeting (held on the 26th ult.) a series of resolutions were arrived at which may be briefly put as providing (1) for the extinction of all licences within seven years from the passing of a Bill; (2) licences to be granted only according to a fixed ratio of the population; (3) three-fourths of the inhabitants of a licensing district to have the power to veto all licences, and the licences to be granted only by representative bodies. A Bill upon these lines is to be promoted in Parliament.

Provident Dispensaries.

At the annual meeting of the Provident Dispensaries it was stated that there are at present 24,000 members. The receipts from members amounted to £4107, and the sum total paid to the medical staff, exclusive of confinement fees, was £2372. Eight of the nine branches are now self-supporting. The only disquieting reflection upon this report is whether any, and, if so, how many, of the above 24,000 members are in such position as to pay the ordinary fees of the general practitioner?—for complaints are still at times heard that persons are allowed to become members without sufficient inquiry as to their means and income.

The Workhouse Infirmarys.

It was recently noted in these columns that Dr. Reynolds had been appointed visiting physician to the Crumpsall Infirmary. This week another old infirmary "resident," Mr. Milner, has been appointed to a similar appointment at the Hope Hospital, belonging to the Salford guardians. Another vacancy has been caused at Crumpsall by the resignation of Mr. Hardie, who for many years has been visiting medical officer there. A singular item is down on the agenda for the next meeting of the City Council—i.e., the infirmary is to be told that in the opinion of the Council patients are not to be taken into the fever hospital from districts outside the city. As well might the districts outside the city who use the hospital in common with the corporation tell the infirmary that they consider the city authorities should no longer use the hospital, but provide one for itself and leave the present one for their exclusive benefit. A very fitting reply from the infirmary would be that if the corporation is not satisfied with the manner in which the hospital has hitherto been conducted and managed, they had better enter into negotiations for having it transferred to them, as at present the infirmary burdens itself with the care of a large infectious hospital—