Parker very emphatically declines to be convinced that any evils can result from the use of farinaceous food. We must agree to differ, therefore. I look upon the use of farinaceous food to divide the curd as at least an unnecessary expedient, and one which is entirely done away with if a cow's milk diet is suitably adjusted and properly given. I am glad that Mr. Parker agrees with what my letter contains bearing upon the mode of administration of food; but, from the tenour of his remarks, I do not gather that he, with myself, recognises the fact that teachers and practitioners do not attach much importance to those details. How many men in practice will tell us the quantity of food which a child will take at a given age, or what strength of milk preparation is most likely to be well digested at the same age? This is not taught in the schools, and I know of no book, except the last edition of my friend Dr. Goodhart's, which attempts to make complete suggestions on the subject. It may be a common practice in some counties to stock cows so early as represented by Mr. Parker; I am led, however, to believe that it is not the general custom. I have heard too often the frank expressions of the typical matron, but her evidence, even when backed by the "healthy family," is not always reliable. 

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Rottingdean, November, 1886.

LEWIS W. MARSHALL, M.D.

CHIAN TURPENTINE IN THE TREATMENT OF CANCER.

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—In your issue of Oct. 16th, Dr. J. Clay has published a case of the successful treatment by Chian turpentine of a case of epithelioma of the tongue which was under our joint care, and, with your permission, I should like to supplement this case by the more recent history of another case, with a like result from the same treatment.

Mrs. G., aged forty-nine, sent for me in Oct. 1883. She had been suffering from occasional and severe haemorrhage from the vagina for some five or six months, accompanied with little pain and slight colourless discharge in the intervals of the haemorrhage. On examination, a polypus in the os and cervix uteri were replaced by an extensive ulcerating surface of a decidedly malignant character. The haemorrhage was soon arrested by cotton-wool plugs saturated with glycerine of tannin, but it frequently recurred, and between its arrest and reappearance a purulent discharge, with the characteristic cancerous odour, occurred, and between its arrest and reappearance a purulent discharge, with the characteristic cancerous odour, was observed. In the hope that some alleviation of the symptoms might result, I gave her the Chian turpentine pills according to Dr. Clay's formula, and she took them for some weeks. However, there was no improvement in any way, and it was decided that Dr. Playfair should see her. But, as the symptoms continued, and confirmed my diagnosis of cancer, considering it to be of the medullary form. His prognosis was that "she could not last many weeks." He advised the carrying out of Dr. Clay's treatment as suggested by Mr. Godward, which does not give immediate results.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

LEWIS W. MARSHALL, M.D.

VITAL STATISTICS OF READING.

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—I observe that you have published a paper read by my friend Mr. Barford, of Wokingham, at the Reading Pathological Society, in which he contrasts certain statistics as regards Reading with those of other districts.

Mr. Barford has taken the figures of the Registrar-General on "registration districts," and has thus contrasted the Reading district (which is, as regards population, almost identical with the borough) with scattered rural districts, containing only villages and towns of much less size than Reading, but having a far greater area in acres. Thus he has contrasted the following "registration districts" with Reading:

- Bedford registration district, 97,406 acres, with a population in 1881 of 42,932 (including the small town of Bedford); Bracknell, 64,700 acres and 18,000 people; Newbury, 44,935 acres, 23,500 people, and several districts of a similar nature.

In other words, districts ranging from about 40 to 160 square miles, many of them sparsely populated, were contrasted with the Reading Union, populated by 43,494 people, of whom (in 1881) 43,950 lived in the borough on about three square miles, or 2094 acres. If the correct statistics were taken for the borough or urban sanitary district of Reading, it will be found that the reduction in the general death-rate has been from 24 per 1000 in 1841, to 18 per 1000 (imported deaths in hospital being excluded) taken on the average of the last ten years (1876 to 1885), and for this period the birth-rate has been 36-6 per 1000, and the infant mortality 132-5 per 1000 births. Mr. Barford, however, says, "The lives of at least 40 infants born in Reading, no less than 158 di die during the first year of their existence." This language would seem to imply that is the case at the present time, whereas in the last five years the infant mortality for the borough has been 121-7 per 1000 births, and for the ten years (1876 to 1885) 132-2. Dividing this period into two periods of five years, the saving of infant life on the last five years, as contrasted with the first five years, has been 22 per 1000 births. This reduction, taken in connection with the total number of children born in each year, would give an annual saving of the lives of 34 children. Mr. Barford does not state what he has taken as a standard of excellence for infant mortality, but he says, "The lives of at least 40 infants might be saved every year." Therefore, during the last five years (1881 to 1885) this has very nearly been accomplished. I cannot follow Mr. Barford when he states that Bedford resembles Reading, and that as the population...
the Bedford registration district was 42,000 and Reading 38,000, "the comparison should be a little in favour of Reading." Apparently, he would seem to think that the registration district of Bedford is coincident with the town of that name, whereas Bedford "registration district" covers 150 square miles, and in 1881 had a population of 42,032, whilst the Reading "registration district" covers seven and a half square miles, and in 1881 had a population of 42,050 residing in the borough on three square miles. The small town of Bedford, which is included in the above district, had in 1881 only 19,532 people, and in ten years had only increased 2081 in population, but Reading had increased 3790. A comparison between the respective town or urban districts would have been to more purpose, rather than one based on the respective registration areas or unions which differ so widely, and it is to be regretted that the returns of the Registrar-General do not refer to urban and rural sanitary areas, as at the present time it is only the medical officers of health who can give the rates for their respective sanitary districts. Although I should be very pleased to see the infant mortality of this borough still further reduced, I think, for the credit of the town, the improvement that has already taken place should be recorded.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

JOHN SHEA, M.D., &c.,
Medical Officer of Health. Reading and Wokingham

Urban and Rural Sanitary Districts.

STATISTICS OF OVARiotOMY.

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—I owe to the courtesy of the secretary to the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society the receipt of an abstract of a paper read by Mr. Knowlesly Thornton on the 26th ult. In that abstract will be found the following sentence: "Septicemia has not been quite banished, but much has been done in this direction, as shown by one consecutive series of 100 ovariotomies performed at the Samaritan Hospital without a death." That statement of results has been publicly quoted in its most evident sense—viz., that there were 100 consecutive cases without death from the disease. That has been corrected in the report which you have published, but in such a way as to escape the notice of any but a critical reader, by the simple addition of the words "from septicaemia." I desire therefore to call attention to this correction, and to remove the erroneous impression.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GEO. GRANVILLE BANTOCK.

Granville-place, W., Nov. 2nd, 1886.

BIRMINGHAM.

HOSPITAL SUNDAY.

The universal lament as to trade depression has not failed to produce a marked diminution in the amount contributed in this honoured custom; still there is reason to be satisfied that it is not less, and that the spirit of liberality exists among those who are willing to give to the best of their means. An excuse of any kind is often sufficient to retard the flow of charity, and when one can see so much expended in holidays and amusements of all kinds, it is reasonable to mark the importance of early recourse to surgical aid. A new method of performing colotomy in cases not requiring immediate relief was mentioned, namely, by transfusing the bowel with needles to the upper and lower margins of the wound, and opening some days later. On the motion of Mr. Oliver Cotton, seconded by Mr. Bennett May, a vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Bryant for his valuable and instructive address.

THE QUEEN'S HOSPITAL, BIRMINGHAM.

I regret to have to note the retirement of Mr. Furneaux Jordan from the active duties of his profession in connexion with the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham. At a meeting of the general committee held on the 2nd inst., the following resolution was passed: "That the committee receive with great regret the resignation of Mr. Furneaux Jordan, on account of ill-health, of the office of honorary surgeon which he has held for a period of twenty-three years (having previously held the office of assistant-surgeon for three years), in the course of which he has rendered valuable services to the hospital, with equal distinction to himself, and has retained the entire confidence of the committee; and they trust that his retirement from professional work will not diminish his interest to the best of the hospital, and to the prolongation of his valuable life. The committee also hope that Mr. Furneaux Jordan will allow them to recommend him to the governors for election as consultant surgeon."

A GHOST.

The suburbs of Birmingham have lately been much excited by the presence of some appearance attributed to supernatural agencies in the form of a ghost. The application of ash or brine to a spot where a ghost has been seen is supposed to dispel it, and it is expected that the performer of this illusion will have a sorry time of it if met with by the masculine residents of the localities visited. In the meantime much perturbation is caused in the minds of the children and servants where these visitations have occurred.

NORTHERN COUNTIES NOTES.

SUNDERLAND: INFANT MORTALITY AND THE FERRING-BOTTLE.

In his last report the medical officer of health, Mr. A. E. Harris, makes some pointed reference to infant mortality in the borough of Sunderland. During the last quarter the deaths from diarrhoea were higher than usual. There were, he says, "no special local causes to account for this increase in the disease, which has been more than that usually prevalent in the kingdom. Nevertheless, it has been elicited that the greatest mortality occurred among children under twelve months old, who were fed from the bottle. Out of seven-seven children of this age sixty were fed and seventeen sucked."