amongst English auscultators. In view of the successive editions of his (now subdivided) works on the heart and the lungs respectively, there will be few, I think, who will now question this precedence. In spite of a tendency to over-refinement, which makes it more difficult, perhaps, apart from the personal traditions of his teaching, to recommend these works to students, I have always placed them in the very front rank, giving explanations in detail where the difficulties come in, or where I fancy they come in, so as to be perplexing to students not bred in University College traditions or by Dr. Walshe's own pupils. This explained, Dr. Walshe's books are even now better worth studying in many respects than any of their more modern rivals, and certainly beyond all comparison superior in impartiality and breadth of view to Skoda's running commentaries on Laennec. The curious anecdote by Dr. Wilks in THE LANCET of to-day goes to show that, with all his admiration for Louis as his early teacher and his high estimate of the numerical method Dr. Walshe was fully alive to the limitations of the method and regarded it, as many of us now are disposed to regard the "pre-Raphaelite" school in art, as only a "stepping-stone to higher things." My personal opportunities of meeting Dr. Walshe occurred at such rare and distant intervals that the sum of them does not come to much, but I can well understand and appreciate all that is said of him from the higher point of view of his character and genius. Dr. Walshe's was not, however, the genius that scornfully rejects details or aims at posing in an attitude of mental superiority. He was *natura minister et interpres*, but chiefly and, above all, the latter.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Glasgow, Jan. 7th, 1893. W. T. GAIRDNER, LL.D., M.D. Edin.

BICARBONATE OF POTASH IN INFLUENZA.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In your "Annus Medicus 1892," under the heading "Therapeutic Progress," the following sentence occurs: "Influenza in the earlier part of the year, and cholera in the autumn, produced a crop of specifics of which little need be said beyond noting that the efficacy claimed for them was, as usual, greatest during the decline of the epidemics." The writer seems to convey the impression that no progress worth noting has been made during 1892 in the treatment of influenza and cholera. I demur to the accuracy of this statement in the case of influenza. Three years ago, by a process of reasoning from facts placed at my disposal (as at the disposal of all) by the most reliable living bacteriologists, I hoped that I had found an effectual and speedy remedy for influenza. On July 16th, 1891, I communicated my discovery to the members of the Border Counties Branch of the British Medical Association in an address which, as president, my position imposed upon me.

An abstract of my address appeared in THE LANCET on Dec. 19th, 1891. I naturally watched the subsequent issues with expectancy, but the article seemed to me at the time to have fallen flat and to have attracted very little attention; however, it was not quite so, as I afterwards found out. You very liberally published a leader in THE LANCET of Jan. 23rd, 1892, calling the attention of the profession to my conclusions, but declining insertion of the evidence I adduced as to the value of my remedy. The bold, fearless and fair statements in that leader more than atoned for the airs of superiority assumed by the writer. One of the best known and most respected teachers in the University of Edinburgh had previously stated, from personal knowledge, his full conviction of the thoroughly satisfactory character of the new treatment. I give his *ipsissima verba* from his letter now lying before me: "My strength never suffered, and indeed my rapid recovery and immunity from all of the unpleasant after-consequences of influenza made it somewhat difficult for me to believe that I had actually successfully combated an affection which has led to such consequences in some of its victims. However, there can be no doubt about the correctness of the diagnosis, the value of your remedy, or the satisfactory results of its energetic use." In the most manly and straightforward manner he has given me leave to make use of his name and experience in support of my contention. I refer to Dr. David Hepburn, F.R.S. Edin. &c. Out of the many communications which you must have received in response to your invitation, some from gentlemen well qualified from practical experience to form a reliable opinion, there were some which you did not insert. But I assume, acting on your editorial judgment, that the two letters you printed

—the only letters that referred to me by name—were fairly representative of your correspondents, placing before the profession the general sense of their experience. Those letters were confirmatory of my position. Mr. Pugin Thornton of Canterbury (THE LANCET, Jan. 30th, 1892, page 279), a well-known medical author, a valued contributor to Sir Richard Quain's Dictionary of Medicine, and a man of ripe experience and acute observation, says: "During this epidemic I have used nothing else but bicarbonate of potash, giving it, as recommended by Mr. Crerar, in half-drachm doses in milk every three hours as long as the fever lasted. Last epidemic I gave salicylate of soda with bromide of ammonium, after an injection of apomorphia or an aperient, and the bicarbonate treatment I find by far the best." This was not "during the decline of the epidemic," as asserted in your summary of Dec. 31st, 1892, but during the whole of the second epidemic from its commencement up to that date; and Mr. Thornton draws a careful comparison between my treatment and the accredited treatment previously used, entirely to my advantage. I needed not Mr. Thornton's testimony, valuable as it is, to establish my contention:

"It only serves to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate (by no means) thinly."

To any person reasonably open to conviction the evidence already placed before the profession is quite conclusive. I further affirm most emphatically that it was in severe cases and in the acute stages of the epidemic that the value of my treatment was most conspicuous. Also let me not be misapprehended. The patient ought to be under the care of his physician, who will adopt the usual precautionary measures in such cases; but the bicarbonate will be his sheet-anchor. Furthermore, as I intend when leisure serves to write a monograph on this subject, in which my views on the etiology, pathology and treatment of influenza will be fully expressed, unfettered by the limitations necessarily imposed on an article in a weekly journal, I will not trespass further on your valuable space. Meantime, as I have been singled out in your Annus Medicus for a thinly-veiled attack, I have confidence that you will in common fairness give me the opportunity of defending myself by inserting this *apologia pro medicina mea*.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

JOHN CRERAR, M.R.C.P. Edin.

* * * We have been compelled to abbreviate Mr. Crerar's letter, but we think he is mistaken in supposing that we have received many communications on this subject. To the best of our recollection the letters referred to by him as being inserted in our columns were all that were received by us. We might also point out that the summary to which he takes exception refers to the year 1892 and not 1891, when he first drew attention to the efficacy of bicarbonate of potash in influenza. He must know that many other drugs have been alleged to be of specific action in this disease by other writers in this country and abroad. We shall await his projected monograph with interest.—ED. L.

THE TEACHING OF THERAPEUTICS AT GLASGOW.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—At the last meeting of the Glasgow University Students' Representative Council Mr. de Hyde-Wytt submitted the following motion: "That in view of the change in the Medical Ordinance—which now reads *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics instead of the old reading, *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy—that a deputation wait upon the Senate requesting them to ask the managers and directors of the Western Infirmary to place wards at the disposal of the Professor of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics in the University of Glasgow in order that he may be able to give full and proper instruction in that most highly important of the medical sciences—therapeutics, the art and science of healing." This was carried unanimously and referred to the Grand Committee in Medicine to take proper steps. As the result the latter body elected a deputation which will wait upon the Senate as soon as possible and ask their coöperation in rectifying the anomalous state of affairs which obtains: that Dr. M. Charteris, the Professor of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics, having no wards at his disposition, can only teach therapeutics in the lecture room. This is preposterous for this subject is pre-eminently a practical one. When the

new buildings connected with the Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen, are completed Professor Cash, the Teacher of Materia Medica and Therapeutics in the University of Aberdeen, is to have wards handed over to him. This demonstrates that the Aberdeen medical faculty is alive to its interests, and Glasgow University will soon, perhaps, be the only great medical school in the kingdom so ingloriously unique in its abnormality as regards therapeutics.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

JAMES W. CLELAND, Hon. Sec.

Glasgow University Students' Representative Council, Jan. 10th, 1893.

HOSPITALS AS CENTRES OF STUDY.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—We have throughout England many towns containing hospitals to which are attached post-mortem rooms. Grouped round each hospital as a centre are town and suburban practices, the principals of which are appointed officers of the hospital. Outside these come groups of country practices. It would be a great boon to practitioners and the public also if more use could be made of these hospitals as centres of study, especially as regards surgery. It would cost but little trouble to arrange courses of operative surgery on the dead body if clinical societies of the various towns would take up the matter. The chief obstacle would be public opinion, and I believe that great and influential organs like THE LANCET could, if they thought fit, educate public started by itself the public of that district would probably opinion. If many centres agreed simultaneously to take up the matter much good might be done. But if only one centre make up what it calls its mind and stamp out an honest endeavour to improve the skill and worth of its own medical advisers. Hoping that some of your readers may express an opinion on this idea, I remain, Sirs, yours truly,

Jan. 8th, 1893.

L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Hospital Sunday.

LAST Sunday was the twenty-third anniversary of Hospital Sunday in Liverpool, the first being observed on Jan. 8th, 1871. The second Sunday in the year was after due consideration agreed upon by the local clergy and ministers as the day on which the collections should be made. For the first few years the weather on Hospital Sunday was remarkably good and the collections realised sums rising from £4685 in 1871 to £8848 in 1874. This was the maximum sum raised in church and chapel collections, the following years showing fluctuations, whether owing to the inclement weather or to the depression of trade, or to both, it would be difficult to say. But the fact remains that the lowest sum raised by this means since 1874 was £6029 in 1887, which gradually improved to £6973 in 1891. Last year there was again a falling off and great efforts have been made to prevent its repetition this year. The weather was most inclement, but while some of the collections show a decrease, an almost equal number show an increase over the sum collected last year. The mayor, Mr. R. D. Holt, attended in state the Renshaw-street Unitarian Chapel, of which congregation he has been a member for many years past. After an eloquent sermon by the Rev. J. P. Jacks a collection was made which amounted to the munificent sum of £709 9s. 8d. Many other handsome collections are announced, but it would be premature to attempt any estimate of the total at present.

Action against a Café Company.

In October last a case was before the Court of Passage in which the plaintiff, an inspector of agents in a life insurance company, sued the representatives of the Clerks' Café Company for compensation for illness alleged to be caused by the defendants supplying him with bad food at the Economic Café. The jury disagreed, in consequence of which the case was again heard on the 5th and 6th inst. The plaintiff partook of curried steak and stewed rhubarb on June 27th, 1892. He was immediately seized with violent vomiting and diarrhoea and felt strange in his head. From this date till Sept. 5th no solid food would stay on his stomach. During all this time he was under medical treatment and lost about three stones in weight. On his behalf medical evidence was given to the

effect that the symptoms might be due to putrid meat. For the defence it was contended that none but wholesome meat was supplied to the defendants' cafés, of which they had eight. Medical evidence given for the defendants was to the effect that the symptoms occurred too rapidly to be the result of eating putrid meat. The jury returned a verdict for the defendants.

Small-pox and Revaccination.

Although small-pox prevails both in Manchester and Warrington, between both of which towns and Liverpool there is constant communication, the disease has not made any advance here, any cases that may occur being promptly removed to hospital. The prosecution of the two women (noticed in a previous letter) for concealing the disease has had a very wholesome effect in not only deterring others from doing the same, but in showing all the advantage of working with, not against, the sanitary officers. The select committee who regulate the affairs of the parish of Liverpool afford every facility to those who desire to be revaccinated.

Insanitary Property in Liverpool.

On the 7th inst. Mr. Walton, Q.C., M.P., the arbitrator appointed by the Local Government Board to consider the claims for compensation made in regard to property which had been declared to be insanitary, concluded his inquiry. As a proof of the propriety of "presenting" the property in question, it may be mentioned that one man claimed in respect of twelve houses in two courts of two streets. The property was freehold and comprised 575 square yards. It was alleged to be insanitary because of the absence of water-closet accommodation, but the claimant contended that this difficulty could be got over by means of structural alterations. The gross rental was given as £95 and the net rental as £46, but the claimant declined to produce his rent-book. Dr. Taylor, medical officer of health for Liverpool, Dr. Hope, assistant medical officer of health, and Dr. Littlejohn of Edinburgh had all condemned the houses as insanitary and as incapable of being made sanitary. The arbitrator's award will be forwarded to the town clerk.

Taking the Oath with Uplifted Hand.

A copy of the resolutions passed at the last ordinary meeting of the Liverpool Medical Institution is published in each of the three local daily papers. One of them, the *Liverpool Mercury*, warmly encourages the new mode of oath-taking, and suggests that all similar organisations of the faculty should follow the example set by the Liverpool Medical Institution. At the trial in the Court of Passage mentioned above the first medical witness, Dr. Smart, declined the book and claimed to be sworn with uplifted hand, which was at once done. His example was followed by all the other medical witnesses, Drs. Nisbet and Hushy, Professor Paul, Drs. Mann and Taylor, and Mr. Vacher. These gentlemen deserve great credit for giving such prompt effect to the resolutions alluded to, and it is now to be hoped that the practice of kissing the book will rapidly become a thing of the past.

January 11th.

NORTHERN COUNTIES NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Small-pox in the Northern Counties.

THE introduction of small-pox by tramps and casuals is giving our authorities much concern. Cases have occurred and have spread in this way at Sunderland and Newcastle workhouses. In Durham city, too, cases have been reported and, indeed, all over the county of Durham the disease has got a footing.

Lecture on Pedigrees by Professor Milnes Marshall.

Dr. Milnes Marshall, Professor of Zoology in Owens College, Manchester, delivered an admirable lecture in Newcastle this week on Pedigrees. He illustrated some of his theories by familiar animals, such as the horse, which he said is descended from a prehistoric animal with five fingers or toes on each leg, now represented by the hoof, but the splints, he said, were the representatives of the four other toes which had disappeared, but were still shown in fossil equine animals.

The Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle.

I am sorry to say that at a meeting of the trustees and executors of the will of Benoite Josephine Bowes, Countess of Montalto, held lately, they decided to close the splendid museum and park at Barnard Castle to the public, except