Errington, unaided, unassisted, and unrelieved, was left on the 17th in this critical state—in fact, to die. Dr. Bennett, knowing that the man refused to go to the Middlesboro' Infirmary, left him in this condition, and sent him a mixture of tincture of muriate of iron, and never visited him again until the afternoon of the 19th, when he was sent for by the wish of my dying patient for the purpose of telling him how he had treated him. When Dr. Bennett arrived at the house on this occasion I accused him of neglect and disgraceful treatment—unworthy of a medical man, and told him that if the man died I would have a coroner's inquest, as I considered his conduct most culpable. Had Dr. Bennett shown any degree of anxiety for the welfare of his patient, either in calling in the aid and opinion of a brother medical friend, or made more endeavours to relieve him from his critical state, I should never have said one word; but his not doing so, in my mind, proves the "conduct and treatment in the case culpable."

Dr. Bennett, not knowing any other medical man had been called in to see Errington, left him in this state from the evening of the 17th to the afternoon of the 19th, as before alluded to.

With these facts before me, I acted as I did, and, when even Dr. Bennett himself admitted to me that "he had not paid that attention to the case that it required," I felt it to be a duty to my deceased patient and the public to refuse my certificate of death, so that an investigation should take place.

If, however, in acting up to the dictates of my conscience, "and a public duty," I have strayed from the path of "professional etiquette," I regret much its narrowness; but, at the same time, I felt, under all the circumstances of the case, justified in the act; and I must say, in conclusion, that I still consider a great injustice to have been done towards me in your remarks, as I never for one moment wished to take to myself the credit of having succeeded in doing three times that which another medical man failed in doing at all; although having done so was a fact that, with patience and perseverance, success would be the result.

In conclusion, I now lay before my medical brethren the facts of this case, and, should they condemn me for my "conduct," I hope they will remember that "nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit."

Yours very truly,

THOS. LOCKE, M.R.C.S. Lond.

Bedcar, Yorkshire, October, 1867.

* * Our comments were founded on sworn evidence given before the Coroner.

THE DRY-EARTH SYSTEM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A letter in THE LANCET of the 5th inst. contains some severe remarks on the Report of the Leamington Sewage Conference, and on the Dry-Earth System. Will you kindly allow me, through your columns, to inform the writer of that letter that the sole responsibility of the Report of which he complains rested with the late Mr. Hitchman, and that his decease renders it impossible for any one to say what was his motive for dismissing that "Inventor's" scheme with only *one line and a-half*, and for giving Royston as the "Inventor's" residence instead of Romsey.

I have scarcely looked into the Report; but if my memory serves me I saw in it, that to an invention of Mr. Cheshire for saving the solid fæces with the loss of the urine, and to an invention of Mr. Bannehr, for saving the urine with little care for the solid fæces, Mr. Hitchman has given full space; and I think I observed that he gave the address of both those gentlemen. The motive, therefore, assigned for neglect and mistake in the case of Mr. Taylor can scarcely with justice be imputed to Mr. Hitchman.

In that letter the Dry-Earth System is termed "impractical," and to its "important and damaging rival" a single testimonial is given. The *Times* newspaper of the 5th inst. contains a testimonial from the Government of India, grounded on reports from all the Presidencies, of the general and successful adoption of that system. This great work, the importance of which, in the opinion of the Inspector-General of Gaols in Bengal can scarcely be estimated, is the result simply of a paper read by me before the Society of Arts, and published in the Journal of that Society for May, 1863.

If Mr. Taylor would inquire at the House of Correction at Wakefield, he would find that there are in that prison 100 cells

already fitted with the earth-closet: that governor, warders, and prisoners are all perfectly satisfied with the invention; and that the work of fitting at least 700 cells is in progress.

As to the value of the manure saved by means of dry earth I will, out of many statements which might be made on the subject, content myself with the following:—A farmer, who is also a dealer in manure, supplies and removes the earth for a school of eighty boys. There are for that school four self-acting closets and a urinal. One vault serves for the whole. The removal is effected *once in three months*. It takes place in open day in the high street of a town. No one is offended by it. The manure-dealer has tested its value on wheat and on turnips, and he estimates the value of the contents of that vault, at the end of three months, to be, when dry, at least from £2 to £3 per ton. He fully agrees with me, also, that by repeated uses of the same earth you may increase the strength of the manure to any amount.

Allow me to point to a feature in this "impractical system" in which every medical man must feel a deep interest. The earth commode *can exclude entirely foul smells from the excreta in sick rooms*; and also, as I believe, the many deleterious gases arising from them. What other system will do this? The idea of being instrumental in effecting this relief of even one human misery has often cheered me in a work which, during ten years, has been neither pleasant, nor easy, nor inexpensive.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Fordington Vicarage, Oct. 8th, 1867.

HENRY MOULE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Fully recognizing the value and importance of Mr. Moule's earth-closet plan for deodorizing and utilizing the chief excreta from the human body, I think that its main advantages may be extended to all but the very poorest classes by the simple throwing of a few handfuls of dry clay over each motion in the vessel used. To all who can afford it I strongly recommend the use of the inexpensive and most complete closets supplied by the company established for their manufacture; my suggestion is for those to whom a sum of two or three pounds would be an insurmountable difficulty. The requisite details will be obvious at a glance; a tub or receptacle of any kind to hold some dry clay, and a little scoop or shovel are really all that is required. After emptying, once a day, the vessel or night-stool used, a scoopful of earth should be put in prior to its being used again; no slops of any kind should be thrown into it.

This would bring all the essential features of the admirable system within the reach of nearly everyone who can rent a room in the country and outskirts of towns: that it would present difficulties to those poor living in centres of population is no reason why the millions who can should not take advantage of it.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS PALMER, M.D. Lond.

Upper Southwick-street, Hyde Park,
October 4th, 1867.

COUNTRY WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES.

IN relation to the investigation of country workhouses now proceeding in our columns, the following letter is from one of the Farnham guardians:—

FARNHAM WORKHOUSE.

To the Editor of the *Times*.

SIR,—The description of Farnham Workhouse, published in THE LANCET of Saturday, and to which you draw the attention of the public to-day, is unquestionably true.

Scandalous as the facts referred to appear, others of a more shocking nature might have been introduced into the picture to render it still more revolting.

The visitors' book may record no indignant protest, but not only protests, but efforts have been made by some of the guardians to remedy the scandal; their influence, however, has never been equal to that of the Poor Law inspector, much less of the Poor Law Board. "The wards are clean, and everything very satisfactory, and the management of the guardians admirable." Yes, sir, the guardians have been well instructed in and well carry out the present Poor Law system, which amounts to this—that they guard the doors of their workhouses with the most determined vigilance against the poor, the sick, and the infirm. If such unfortunates will enter they must be branded with disgrace, made very miserable, must be made to eat the bread of affliction and drink the water of affliction until they disappear.

It is no part of a guardian's duty to see that the poor who are willing to work but cannot get work, shall be fed, that the indigent sick shall be well cared for, and that the aged, when past work, shall be honourably provided for.

This system, when exposed, as at Farnham, looks very scandalous, but, depend upon it, sir, most other workhouses are like it.

Yours obediently,

THOMAS WIGHTMAN, Guardian.

16 and 17, High-street, Aldershot, Oct. 22.

* * The above letter speaks for itself. A second letter, of substantially similar tenor, and coming from another member of the same board of guardians, appeared in *The Times* of Thursday. More emphatic testimony to the accuracy of our report could not be desired.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES AT THE QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY.

ON Friday, the 11th, the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland distributed the prizes to the successful candidates for honours in the Queen's University; the chair being occupied by the Right Hon. M. Brady, the Vice-Chancellor, who stated that the number of the college students who have presented themselves for the examinations of 1867 has not fallen off. In fact, the total present number rather exceeds it, though by a small amount. Of these candidates 43 out of 56 who were examined for the degree of Doctor of Medicine have been considered entitled to receive it. Nineteen of the whole number have also obtained the degree of Master in Surgery. Eighty-two medical students, out of a total number of 109 candidates, have passed the first examination in that faculty. The colleges thus continue to maintain in every branch of learning cultivated within their walls that conspicuous standard of excellence which from the first has distinguished their students and reflected honour on their able and diligent professors.

The Lord-Lieutenant, after distributing the prizes, expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present, dwelt upon the importance of every year of student life, as bearing largely on the future character and career of the student, in forming his mind, maturing his intellect, and even shadowing forth his destiny. Referring to a change of residence for the University, his lordship said: "I think I am not venturing too far when I say that I believe the wished-for completion of the new arrangement is near at hand, and that whoever occupies the place from which I now address you in the ensuing year, will, in all probability, be able to congratulate you, if not upon the completion, at least on the actual uprearing of walls, destined hereafter to afford a congenial and suitable abode for your learned conclave. Whenever that time shall come it will be the payment of a debt long due, and too long delayed, in acknowledgment of the great and national usefulness and importance of the manifold functions which have been exercised with such ability and discretion by the Queen's University in this country. It would be superfluous in me where I to dwell on the educational statistics which have been so ably referred to by the Vice-Chancellor, or do more than to allude to the number and quality of the degrees and honours which have been distributed to-day, and which we are glad to hear are not only equal, but more than the average of former years. I may allude with great satisfaction, however, to the large number of young men sent forth by this institution with high qualifications and marked distinctions, not only to the learned professions, but to the civil and other services of the country."

Finally, the Lord-Lieutenant offered his congratulations to the successful candidates, and gave encouragement to those who had competed unsuccessfully.

BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

OUR winter session has opened with even more than the usual activity; for, in addition to the introductory lectures at the schools, we have had several other meetings of interest during the past ten days. The opening lectures at the schools were delivered to crowded audiences, and each address was marked by special ability. Mr. Pemberton, at the Queen's College, confined himself chiefly to professional topics; but Mr. Bates, at the Sydenham, delivered a very able and elo-

quent defence of classical education as a preliminary training for medical study. Mr. Bates was listened to with the greatest attention, as, in addition to his position as Lecturer on Classics in the College, he is also a second-year's student of medicine. Contrary to the experience of the London teachers (as stated in *THE LANCET* of Oct. 12th, p. 469), Birmingham has not as yet found any falling off in the number of new students. Up to the middle of last week twenty new students had registered at the Sydenham College, and thirteen entries were made at the Queen's. These numbers, which will no doubt be increased during the next few days, show what grand results might be obtained if the energies of the profession here were only concentrated in a single medical school.

The new scheme for the Queen's College has not as yet come into operation; the new Council will, however, be appointed next month, and the present professors in the medical department will go out of office (being eligible for re-election) at the end of the winter session. It is much to be regretted that up to the present the public have not come forward in any numbers to support the College. The qualification for the governors (25 guineas up to Christmas, and 50 guineas after) is no doubt too high, as the welfare of the College demanded, not a few rich supporters, but a large, energetic, and wide-spread constituency. This mistake will not, it is to be hoped, prevent the election of a good working council, as, in the absence of a sufficient number of governors, the council may be formed by the nomination of the best friends of education in the district. The Act of Parliament which places Queen's College, after its many disasters and repeated mismanagement, in a position for fresh usefulness, and free from the influences which have hitherto prevented its success, also improves in no small degree the status of the Queen's Hospital. The hospital is separated from the college, and incorporated by the Act as a clinical hospital. At the meeting of the governors, held to receive the act of incorporation, a most important step for the future of the charity was taken in the purchase of the adjoining rectory house and grounds, which occupy the only land available for the future extension of the hospital, an event which its growing popularity must ere long necessitate.

At the first meeting of the local branch of the British Medical Association, the report of the Council on the Club question was read. As stated in your columns some months back, it consisted of a resolution expressing the inability of the Council to take any steps, in the absence of any complaints on the part of the club doctors. A very lengthy and animated discussion followed the reading of the report, but eventually a committee, consisting of a number of the leading members of the branch, and several club doctors, was appointed to consider the question, and report to a special general meeting of the branch. The committee have plenty of work before them; but if they can obtain the co-operation of the medical officers of clubs, or even a large majority of them, they will be able to perform a lasting service to the profession, and reform one of the most crying evils from which medical men suffer. The club doctors have now only to act boldly in support of the committee, to forget for a moment personal ends for the sake of the general good, and to be true to themselves as a body, in order to win a position which they will never again have so good an opportunity of attaining.

At the first ordinary meeting of the Birmingham and Midland Counties Branch of the British Medical Association, held on the 10th inst., it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Newnham, seconded by Dr. B. Foster,—“That this Branch beg to record their thanks to the Council for their report, and to request them to refer the subject to a special general meeting of the Branch, to be held at an early date, to take into consideration the present rate of remuneration of medical offices to sick assurance societies, and to receive a report from the following committees: Mr. Newnham, of Wolverhampton (chairman), Dr. Foster, Dr. Heslop, Dr. Wade, Dr. Leslie, Mr. Kite (West Bromwich), Mr. Manley (ditto), Mr. Gamgee, Mr. Gaunt (Alvechurch), Mr. Oakes, Dr. Vinrace, Mr. Swain, Dr. Roden (Droitwich), Dr. Hinds (secretary).

Birmingham, Oct. 12th, 1867.

EDINBURGH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

WE have lately had two fires in Edinburgh, out of the evil of which it is to be not only hoped, but expected, that good will come. In reference to the first, on the ground-floor of a lofty tenement a firework-maker of the name of Hammond