latter number is of course the reciprocal of "the mean term of residence in years." How Dr. Farr, in the face of this his own explanation, can say that the term of residence is kept out of account in the common method I cannot understand, any more than I can understand at what point in his method he brings it in. Why should not Dr. Farr have taken notice of the instance by which I showed the omission of this consideration in the items of his list which referred to the Royal Infirmary and Northern Hospital at Liverpool? But, perhaps, if Dr. Farr would reason calmly with me, I might understand his meaning.

It is hardly candid of Dr. Farr to say that "though we cannot deduce the rate of mortality from the deaths in a single house of any class, we can deduce the mean rate of mortality from several of such houses," when I had expressly barred this argument by pointing out that one of Dr. Farr's classes consists of only four, and another of only five, individuals, so that each amounts to little more than an individual instance; and further, that all the five were London hospitals, all the four situated in large towns, while those with which they were compared were chiefly if not entirely country hospitals.

Again, the way in which Dr. Farr tries to set aside my hypothetical illustration from the cancer wards and the general wards of Middlesex Hospital is not very happy. That illustration was a perfectly legitimate application of his own method; nor does Dr. Farr impugn the process by which the result was arrived at, further than to say that "special hospitals" were excluded from his table. But why were they excluded? If the method gives accurate comparisons between hospitals and private houses, why not between general and special hospitals? However, my illustration was not drawn from a special hospital, but might be extended to every hospital which has distinct wards for chronic and acute cases, and by parity of reasoning to every pair of chronic and acute hospitals, and to all sums of such pairs. In all such cases Dr. Farr's method would lead to the belief—and a most erroneous one it would generally be—that the hospital which was doing the greatest amount of good was the least salubrious.

Dr. Farr refers to the note appended to his letter to the Registrar-General, in which "the reader is informed that the mortality of groups is sufficiently correct, while he is cautioned as to the use of the returns of any one hospital alone." This was precisely one of the features of his method to which I objected. He seems to allow that the separate items, of which his (very short) lists are composed, are inaccurate, and yet to claim accuracy for the sums of them. Can this be a true method? Ought not Dr. Farr to have followed the opposite plan, which is the one usual in arithmetic, and have inferred the trustworthiness of the sum from the proved accuracy of the items?

I feel, Sir, that this letter has already extended to an inordinate length: my excuse must be the strange liberty which you allowed to Dr. Farr of producing numerous miscellaneous and irrelevant topics. I have many other misunderstandings to complain of; but there is one which I cannot pass over in silence—I mean the insinuation that I have spoken disrespectfully of Miss Nightingale, and that I wish to undo the good which she has done. I should indeed have reason to be ashamed of myself if I had ever written, spoken, or thought of Miss Nightingale otherwise than with respect. But I submit that her name has been most improperly introduced by Dr. Farr into this discussion with a view of leading your readers' minds away from what is really in question—viz., will his statistical method bear examination, and will it support the assertions in his letter to the Registrar-General? So much I may perhaps be allowed to say about Miss Nightingale—that the good by which she has earned the love and gratitude of her countrymen and of the whole world was done by personal service and personal work in hospitals, not by summing up figures.

One word in reply to Dr. Farr's P.S. He begs I will not consider him discourteous if he declines further controversy with me. I certainly shall not. His courtesy or discourtesy is not the point in question, nor is it a matter of the least importance in this discussion. If Dr. Farr, having made use of his public position to bring forward statements of the highest interest on a great public question, feels that he is in possession of any facts or arguments to support those statements, he will of course know that it is his public duty to defend them to the uttermost. But if he can find nothing better to produce than irrelevant and unfounded personalities, he had better withdraw from a controversy for which he is unfitted. The conclusion will be, not that he is discourteous, but that his statements are without foundation.

I am, Sir, yours &c.,
Queen-street, May-fair, April, 1864.

T. HOLMES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I should think that Dr. Farr must already regret the intemperate letter which escaped from him into your journal of last week—a letter which affords a specimen (though I believe an exaggerated specimen) of those very defects of reasoning which such as call in question Dr. Farr's conclusions are wont to attribute to him.

1st. He assumes, on the authority of his friend Mrs. Harris, that Mr. Holmes and myself are incompetent to perform a certain task which we undertook to perform.

2nd. He assumes, on the authority of the same amiable lady, that "the book," as he chooses to term the report on which we have been engaged, "will contain gross blunders;" and he ventures to criticize some of our assumed blunders of method and of fact.

3rd. He assumes, apparently on his own authority and by that method of "intuition" which he condemns, that affidavits which were made by Mr. Holmes and myself in reference to the suitability of Stangate as a site for the future St. Thomas's Hospital contained certain arguments, which he takes the trouble to indicate and refute.

In reply, I may be permitted to say—

1st. That Dr. Farr's hasty judgment on the intellectual capabilities of two individuals of whom he evidently knows nothing, beyond the fact that they differ from him in opinion, can be a matter of little importance to those individuals and of none to the public, and would be as useless to discuss as it was indecent to publish.

2nd. That Dr. Farr's conjectural criticism on an imaginary report of ours cannot surely, even by himself, be regarded as a true criticism on our real report, which neither he nor his friend has yet seen, and of the contents of which they are both up to the present moment wholly ignorant.

3rd. That the arguments and opinions which Dr. Farr attributes to our affidavits and believes to have unduly influenced the Vice-Chancellor's recent judgment in the matter of St. Thomas's Hospital, are a pure fiction of Dr. Farr's own. Our affidavits contained no such argument as that which he tries to fasten upon us by combating with so much gusto and self-complacency. My affidavit is, I presume, either in the possession of the Court of Chancery or in the hands of the hospital solicitor, Mr. Wainwright, of 6, Lincoln's-inn; and, so far as I am concerned, Dr. Farr is at full liberty to consult it, to publish it, and to criticize it. It contains nothing but what I am fully prepared to defend, and nothing in reference to the Hôtel Dieu beyond what is based on published documents and actual statistics.

The only other points of moment contained in Dr. Farr's letter are, a personal attack on the medical officer of the Privy Council, and a similar attack on my colleague, Mr. Holmes. It would be easy for me to rebut them; but it is obviously no duty of mine to take up the cudgels in behalf of gentlemen so competent as they are to defend themselves.

In conclusion, Sir, let me point out that Dr. Farr evades in this letter, as he has done in former letters, the real question at issue between himself and me. He has spoken of hospitals as "ways of death to their inmates." I have called upon him for the evidence on which he bases this accusation, and he replies by random statements and uncivil language.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. S. BRISTOWE, M.D.

Queen-square, Westminster, April, 1864.

ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Holmes addresses you in the last number of THE LANCET in his character as "Hon. Sec. of the Pathological Society," and desires to remind your readers that what has been said in THE LANCET on the subject of the rent paid by the Pathological Society to the Medico-Chirurgical Society is merely the private opinion of different individuals, and "he is permitted by the President" to inform you that no expression of opinion has been authorized by the Council of the Society. Allow me as a member of the Society to remind Mr. Holmes that a very recent report presented by the Council to the Society alluded in very pointed terms to the amount of rent charged by the Medico-Chirurgical Society; and let me also remind him of more than one communication which has passed between the Councils on the subject. I take it that the opinion expressed by Mr. Holmes for himself and for our excellent

President is also that of private individuals, for I feel assured that neither of these gentlemen would venture in his official capacity to express publicly an opinion, without reference to the Council, certainly not one which must be opposed to the interests of the Society to which they render such valuable services. I will not here refer to the merits of the question, which have been ably discussed by your correspondents. My impression is that the Medico-Chirurgical Society is ill-advised in the proceeding, and I know that this opinion is shared by a majority of the members of the Societies.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
April, 1864. ANOTHER MEMBER OF BOTH SOCIETIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to enclose you a statement of the number of Fellows of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society given me by the resident librarian, by which you will perceive that there is no incorrectness in the letter you inserted from

Yours obediently,

CHARLES HAWKINS, F.R.C.S.

Savile-row, Burlington-gardens, April, 1864.

Honorary	31
Ordinary Resident	332
Do. Non-Resident	271
	634
Elections since December	9
	643
Resignations since December	4
	639

CROSS-BIRTH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On Feb. 23rd I was called to attend Mrs. — in her fifth confinement. On examination, I found the pelvis half filled with the bag of waters, the os uteri fully dilated, and the pains strong, but no presentation could be felt. I at once suspected a cross-birth, and my suspicion was confirmed by placing the hand over the uterus externally. The child could very easily be felt in the transverse position, with the head in the right side and the pelvis in the left. At the end of three hours there was not the slightest alteration in the case. As the pelvis was very well formed, and her previous confinements had been very easy and very speedy, the last stage sometimes occupying not more than ten or fifteen minutes; and as she had been pretty regularly ill, in this instance for more than twelve hours before I saw her, I thought it right to ask the assistance of Dr. M'Intyre. On consultation, we agreed to wait a little longer, to see what nature would do towards rectifying the position. In the meantime, however, I recollected Dr. Hicks's remarks in your columns on *external* manipulation, and I thought I would try to put them in practice. In the interval of the pains I found the child quite movable across the brim of the pelvis, as no part of it had entered the brim; and by moving it upwards on the one side and downwards on the other, I brought it into a line with the inlet of the pelvis with the greatest possible ease. I held it steadily in that position till a pain came on, when it instantly entered the pelvis and reached the perineum, and was born in a few minutes. The lady did not know what I was about; but the moment the pain came on, after I turned the child, she said she felt it entirely changed in its position, and she thought the waters must have burst; but this was not the case, as I discharged the waters myself after I ascertained the presentation to be correct.

I had not the slightest idea, when I read Dr. Hicks's remarks, that they could be so easily turned to account as they were in this case. The amount of pressure required was so slight that it could not possibly injure the uterus or predispose to inflammation. The manipulation was all accomplished in the interval of the pains, when the uterus was flaccid and the child floating in the waters.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
Coleraine, Ireland, April, 1864. JAS. C. L. CARSON, M.D.

OXFORD.—The Regius Professor of Medicine has given notice that an examination under "the old statute" for the degree of Bachelor of Medicine will commence on May 30th, at ten o'clock, at the University Museum.

New Inventions

IN AID OF THE

PRACTICE OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

ATROPIZED AND CALABARIZED GELATINE FOR OPHTHALMIC PURPOSES.

MESSRS. SAVORY and MOORE have forwarded to us specimens of "Atropized and Calabarized Gelatine prepared according to the directions of Mr. Ernest Hart." (*Vide* THE LANCET, Jan. 16th.) The gelatine is rolled to exceeding thinness, and is cut into minute discs, which contain a definite proportion of atropine and of the extract of the Calabar bean. The preparations are extremely clean, portable, and exact. They have, it is stated, many advantages for all the cases in which such local applications can be used. For ophthalmoscopic examinations especially this atropized gelatine is highly useful. The little discs of soft gelatine cause absolutely no irritation, if applied according to the directions, which are the same as for Mr. Streatfeild's original atropine papers. The gelatine has the advantage of slowly softening and dissolving. The atropine, or other medicament, gradually dissolves out, and is thus placed under the most favourable circumstances for absorption. Hence much smaller doses suffice to produce a marked effect, by this form of application, than when drops are introduced, which are rapidly carried off in the flow of tears which their introduction for the moment excites. For the purposes of ophthalmoscopy, in iritis, after wound of the pupil, in photophobia, ulcers of the cornea, &c., these discs are said to be very valuable. They are clean, portable, elegant, and effective, and are got up in a manner which reflects great credit on Messrs. Savory and Moore.

DUBLIN.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

My last letter, giving your readers an account of the laying, by the Lord Lieutenant, of the first stone of the new Carmichael School, contained a statement that the Senior Professor, Dr. Mayne, was absent on the occasion in consequence of illness. Little did I anticipate that in my next letter I should have to record his death; but alas! such is now my melancholy duty. The illness which on the day in question was little thought of eventuated in typhus fever of a bad type, caught in the discharge of his duties in the fever wards of the Adelaide Hospital, and on the tenth day this truly good man ceased to exist. It would be difficult indeed to give even a faint idea of the widely diffused feeling of regret, if not of dismay, that his untimely death has spread amongst all ranks of our profession in this city. Dr. Mayne was emphatically one of those men who neither were born great, nor had greatness thrust upon them, but by untiring industry, strict integrity, a high sense of professional honour, and great natural ability, have achieved for themselves their own greatness. Dr. Mayne served his time to the present Dr. Beatty, and, after obtaining his degrees, attached himself as Demonstrator of Anatomy to the School connected with the Richmond Hospital, with which institution up to the period of his death he was connected, during the last ten or twelve years discharging the duties of Lecturer on the Practice of Physic. He was also for many years Physician to the Hospital of the South Dublin Union Workhouse, a situation which he only resigned a few years ago, shortly after his appointment as Physician to the Adelaide Hospital, in succession to Dr. Hudson, who had been promoted to the Meath Hospital. Dr. Mayne's reputation as an accomplished physician has stood for many years most deservedly high; but as a profound pathologist it was that he stood almost without a compeer, and in him the Pathological Society, of which he was this year the President, has sustained a most grievous loss. Few men ever have attained the same position in their profession by such gradual steps as did Dr. Mayne: round by round, not skipping one of them, he ascended the