Now, Sirs, I have attempted to lay down certain conditions which I think in fairness all will agree must be fulfilled if a university in Ireland is to be a truly national one. May I ask will the authorities of Trinity College allow such modifications of that old and venerated educational institution? And if they refused (as it is certain they would) would any of our political parties in the State for one moment attempt to force them to accept such radical changes in the arrangement and government of their College? As a consequence I am compelled to agree with your conclusion that "the proposal to nationalise Trinity College is therefore as useless as it is impracticable."

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

July 2nd, 1900.

IRISH GRADUATE.

"LYMPHATIC LEUKÆMIA."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am much indebted to Mr. J. Charlton Briscoe for his courteous criticism of my case. The diagnosis was arrived at not solely from an examination of the blood, but from a careful consideration of all the symptoms. The differential diagnosis between acute Bright's disease, tuberculous peritonitis, ulcerative endocarditis, and other possible causes was carefully discussed. There was no enlargement of the lymphatic glands but the dulness in the left hypochondriac and adjacent regions was probably splenic in origin. Hyperplasia of the lymphatic glands is by no means a constant symptom in lymphocythæmia. Muir states that it may be slight or even absent and Osler expressly mentions that in only four out of his series of 26 cases were the glands enlarged. Enlargement of the glands is much more common in lymphadenoma, a disease of an essentially different character. Leucocytosis is usually met with in the lymphatic form of leucocythæmia, but the number of leucocytes fluctuates greatly from time to time and cases are recorded in which it fell to normal. Although in my case the leucocytes were not absolutely in excess they were relatively so compared with the erythrocytes. The ratio before treatment was 1 in 493, whilst after treatment it fell to 1 in 669. I quite admit that in lymphatic leukæmia a prominent feature is the increase of uninucleated leucocytes, lymphocytes, and slightly larger corpuscles such as are normally present in the blood. In my case the report stated that of the leucocytes 43 per cent. were small cells having a single pale nucleus, but so much doubt evidently existed as to their real nature that the information was of no practical value as an aid to diagnosis. With a patient in a critical condition one cannot afford to suspend treatment whilst experts are discussing the value of methylene blue as a staining agent or considering whether certain appearances are or are not "artefacts." In this case there was some pathological condition of the hæmatopoietic tissues, and whether we choose to label it leukæmia or call it by some similar and perhaps equally indefinite name is a matter of little importance. The essential points are that there was a considerable effusion of fluid into the abdomen, that the patient was sinking rapidly, and that she was restored to safety by the performance by Mr. Walter Spencer of an operation for establishing a collateral circulation.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Welbeck-street, W., July 2nd, 1900.

WILLIAM MURRELL.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—As Mr. Briscoe's letter in THE LANCET of June 30th with regard to Dr. Murrell's case of "lymphocythæmia" directly concerns myself, I hope you will spare me a short space to reply to that portion which refers to the examination of the blood; any questions as to the clinical diagnosis pass beyond my domain. I think that if Mr. Briscoe will refer to the wording of my reports (and these Dr. Murrell has given *in extenso* and has placed in inverted commas), he will recognise that I was in considerable doubt as to the true nature of the cells which he thinks were possibly lymphocytes. Since reading his letter I have again examined the specimen upon which my first report was founded and find no reason to alter my opinion. I am sure that he will agree that the lymphocyte is the least variable of the leucocytes, and that anyone at all acquainted with blood examinations should make the fewest mistakes when they are the cells under consideration. If I may be excused a little pride, may I express my satisfaction that the arrangements I have

made in our clinical laboratory are so soon to bear fruit that will extend beyond our walls? For by our arrangements it is possible to exclude the personal element from a pathological diagnosis entirely. If Mr. Briscoe will favour me with a call at the laboratory he will not only be able to form his own opinion upon the cells in the original blood-film, but also will aid in bringing about that agreement as to the nomenclature of the different varieties of colourless cells found in the blood which is so much needed.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

W. S. LAZARUS-BARLOW.

Clinical Laboratory, Westminster Hospital, July 2nd, 1900.

"THE POSITION OF THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL WITH RESPECT TO THE MIDWIVES BILL."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—With reference to the letter of the President of the General Medical Council which appears in THE LANCET of June 30th permit me to inform your readers that the promoters of the Midwives Bill declined to place upon the order paper the amendment to which he calls your attention, or any other amendment which might lay them open to a charge of breach of faith with the General Medical Council.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

F. R. HUMPHREYS,

Honorary Secretary of the Midwives Bill Committee.

Buckingham-street, Strand, W.C., July 2nd, 1900.

THE OPERATIVE TREATMENT OF PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In THE LANCET of June 23rd Mr. Foster Palmer, urging "early operation in cases of undoubted tubercle of the lung," proclaims that medical treatment of this disease is "vague, empirical, and uncertain," and that surgery alone "offers a really good prospect of success." He argues that when any other organ of the human body is attacked by the tubercle bacillus extirpation is the usual and successful remedy; and straightway he apparently concludes that when the lung becomes tuberculous a similar result must follow a similar operation. It is to be hoped that the future surgery of the lungs will be placed on a far more satisfactory pathological basis. For is it not certain that in almost all cases of adult pulmonary tuberculosis the affection of the lung is secondary to tuberculosis of some other tissue, most frequently to that of the bronchial lymphatic glands? And consequently will not surgical operations on the lung, such as Mr. Palmer describes, prove as useless as if he were to remove the tuberculous index-finger of a patient already suffering from tuberculosis of the wrist-joint?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Switzerland, June 25th, 1900.

CHARLES S. MYERS.

"THE CAUSE OF CARIES OF THE TEETH."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In THE LANCET of June 30th there appeared an annotation on The Cause of Caries of the Teeth in which my theory is characterised as "highly improbable." Yet as far as I am aware there has been no case recorded either of rapid and extensive caries of the teeth or of complete freedom from the disease which does not lend support to the theory. The writer says: "That the structure of the tooth plays a most important part in the resistance to caries is within the knowledge of a dental practitioner with even a small experience." This current assumption is repudiated by some of our most acute observers and experienced practitioners (Dr. Black, Mr. Leon Williams, and others). At one time I, too, shared this prevalent belief. When a tooth is soft and non-resistant to an instrument at a part which does not appear to be attacked by caries this condition is usually brought about in the following way. In the mannitic fermentation of sugar the mannite or gum formed clings to the enamel and together with the acids generated in the fermentation gives rise to a general decalcification of the enamel which is not pigmented nor sharply localised and so escapes observation. In the crevices of such teeth