one may reckon that the risk of recurrence has passed no absolute limit can be laid down, but in the case of the breast Volkmann's three-year limit is fairly accurate and very convenient. I pointed out, however, that it was not absolute, and referred to cases in which recurrence had become manifest at a later period. The proportion of such recurrences is, however, quite small and, as I mentioned, the highest estimate is given by König, who places it at 15 per cent. Thus, of breast cases apparently quite free from disease after three years, something like 85 per cent. may be looked on as permanently cured. No time limit can be assigned for the other 15 per cent.; they are usually cases of atrophic scirrhus which has been imperfectly removed and are slow in recurring, and in some of them probably the examination at the end of three years has been imperfect. In the case of the rectum the limit must be considerably extended, for, as is evident from several statistics, about 40 per cent. of those apparently well at the end of three years subsequently recur.

I must apologise for taking up your space so soon with the repetition of these points. They were all carefully laid down in my lectures and will be quite clear to any one who reads them intelligently and without prejudice.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

March 23rd, 1896.

W. WATSON CHEYNE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In reference to Mr. Watson Cheyne's recent lecture on mammary cancer, reported in THE LANCET of Feb. 15th last, does it not seem that the following case, recently under my care and showing the lymphatic connexion of the mammary gland, points to the importance of removing the supra-clavicular glands in early cancer of that organ if as good a chance as possible of radical cure is aimed at in every case? A patient six weeks after delivery complained of a swelling recently formed above her left clavicle and of pain in, and tenderness of, the breast on that side; ill-developed nipples had altogether prevented suckling. On examination the lobules of the breast were found to be distended with milk, and the swelling above the clavicle was an enlarged lymphatic gland resulting therefrom. The axillary glands were unaffected. After treatment directed to the breast the adenitis diminished. She informed me that after her previous confinement she had a similar state of affairs, and a scar adjacent to the above swelling showed where a similarly affected gland had suppurated and burst.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

LIONEL N. HARDING, M.B. Camb.

Brighton, March 18th, 1896.

THE QUESTION OF MEDICAL DEFENCE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In answer to Dr. Heron and Mr. Bruce Clarke, I have only to draw the attention of your readers to your report of the annual meeting of the Medical Defence Union in your issue of Feb. 29th, 1896, and to my former letter in your issue of the 14th inst. In the latter I wrote that "up to March 6th, 1896, the only point of difference remaining was, as I had stated previously at the meeting, that of the name of the amalgamated bodies. On March 6th, however, Mr. Oakley, solicitor to the London and Counties Medical Protection Society, raised a number of fresh obstacles which I sincerely hope and expect the combined councils will have no difficulty in removing." All this being correct I am still of that opinion, and remain

March 25th, 1896.

Yours faithfully,
VICTOR HORSLEY.

"FUNCTIONAL APHONIA IN MAN; TREATMENT, ETC.; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SO-CALLED VARICOSE VEINS AT THE BASE OF THE TONGUE."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It will be obvious to all who have followed this controversy that unless a categorical denial be given to Mr. Lennox Browne's "confident" expectation—viz., that the signatories of the conjoint letter published in THE LANCET of Feb. 29th would now feel that they had been somewhat in a hurry to endorse Dr. Herbert Tilley's and Dr. Watson

Williams's views as stated in THE LANCET of Feb. 15th and 22nd—their silence would in all probability be misconstrued as Dr. McBride's and Dr. Williams's plain statements had been misconstrued. Allow me, therefore, to say, first, that the real question at issue is not (as casual readers might have been led to believe from the prominence given to this point in Mr. Lennox Browne's last letter) whether Dr. Watson Williams has changed his former opinions, but whether the so-called varicose veins at the base of the tongue, alone or as part of a "complex" condition, represent an actual disease, very often necessitating, to judge from my personal experience, in the opinion of its partisans galvano-caustic interference. Secondly, permit me to state that, so far from regretting that I have expressed a definite opinion to the contrary, I should do so to-morrow again were it necessary, and in stating this I have not the least doubt that I express the feelings of all the signatories to the conjoint letter, one of whom is at present abroad.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Wimpole-street, March 24th, 1896.

FELIX SEMON.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In his letter of March 2nd, published in THE LANCET of March 7th, Mr. Lennox Browne, on the strength of a manipulation which I exposed in THE LANCET of March 14th, claimed me as his ally. After I had repudiated that position Mr. Browne now, in his letter of March 16th published in THE LANCET of March 21st, deems fit to doubt the sincerity of my convictions. Considering that this remarkable change of front with him required only one fortnight, it is surely rather hard that he, of all persons, should twit me with inconsistency. At the same time I am grateful to him for having given me the opportunity of now publicly expressing my regret that I should ever have had so much confidence in his teaching as to pen the sentences he quotes. In the preface to my book I state expressly "only to a very limited degree can I lay claim to originality, as my purpose has been simply to reflect the present state of knowledge in this department of medicine;" and I further say, "the greater portion of this work was written a year ago, but from unavoidable causes its publication has been delayed." When in 1893 I wrote the sentences now brought forward against me I, *bona-fide*, accepted as facts the statements put forth by Mr. Browne, never dreaming what use was made of them in practice. Subsequent personal experience convinced me that the pathological importance of the so-called varicose veins had been grossly exaggerated, and just because I had unwittingly assisted in promulgating views which, as now shown in your columns, are put into practice with most deplorable effects I considered it my duty to record my personal experience in the letter which you were good enough to publish in THE LANCET of Feb. 22nd. I do not think it in the least derogatory for anyone to modify his views if he sees that he has been mistaken, and if I now regret one thing it is that I did not expressly say in my first letter that I wished to correct my former utterances on the subject. But had I done so I should have laid myself open to the accusation that I wished covertly to advertise my book.

However hard Mr. Browne may try to confuse, even in his last letter, the real issue, I venture to hope that the eyes of the profession are now opened to the reality of the abuses denounced by Drs. Tilley and Coates, and if the frank confession of my own conversion to better views exposes me in the eyes of Mr. Browne and his friends to the reproach of inconsistency I trust that a different interpretation will be accorded to it at the hands of the bulk of the profession.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Clifton, Bristol, March 23rd, 1896.

P. WATSON WILLIAMS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Doubtless many of your readers in other branches of the profession besides that more immediately concerned have been interested in the discussion on "lingual varix." As a general practitioner I have noted with pleasure the outspoken protest of several laryngologists against what they regard as the exaggerated importance attached to a trivial condition. Without venturing to express an opinion upon the question at issue, may I be permitted to relate the experience of a relative of mine. I give it as nearly as possible in the patient's own words. He consulted a specialist, complaining of "hoarseness in singing," and was