characteristic of our public life that any ambitious amateur, if endowed with sufficient pertinacity, can always obtain a hearing and if backed with sufficient noise can sometimes overcome expert professional opinion. I hope Mr. Humphreys will give me an opportunity of joining issue with him in the pages of the "great monthly magazine."

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

F. S. TOOGOOD, M.D. Lond.

Lewisham Infirmary, High-street, Lewisham, Oct. 14th, 1901.

CLUB PRACTICE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am instructed by the Stockton, Thornaby, and District Medical Association to lay before you the following facts. Some months ago this association unanimously passed a resolution that no member would accept or hold any appointment to a friendly, trade, or yearly society at less than an annual fee of 4s. for adults and 3s. for juveniles. The societies in question agreed to this, but now an amalgamation has taken place between certain of them and they are attempting to obtain the services of an outside medical man at a lower rate of remuneration. The members of the Association have pledged themselves to hold no professional relations with any medical man who may accept the post. By making these facts known in THE LANCET you will oblige, and at the same time may prevent any medical man applying for a post the remuneration for which is inadequate and its disadvantages necessarily very great. Thanking you in anticipation,

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

FRED. G. SMITH,
Joint Secretary.

Oct. 13th, 1901.

"TUBERCULOSIS AND HEREDITY."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I should like emphatically to endorse Sir W. Gowers's remarks in THE LANCET of Oct. 12th (p. 1007) as to the importance of heredity and predisposition in the etiology of tuberculous disease. At the present time the tendency is to exalt unduly the importance of extrinsic factors in the causation of disease and to ignore the intrinsic factors. Yet for preventive and therapeutic purposes the latter are often the more important, and that this is the case with tuberculosis I propose to show. The discovery of the tubercle bacillus was a great triumph for the bacteriologist, but it has not done much for the more effectual prevention and treatment of the disease. Long before its discovery remarkable diminution had been effected in the mortality from tuberculous disease in this country by the introduction of methods that tended to strengthen the predisposition of the organism against the disease, and to the continued operation of such factors the present diminishing mortality from the disease is undoubtedly due. Instead of being encouraged to persevere along these and kindred lines the profession has been misled by bacteriologists to entertain the delusion, that the disease may be prevented by exterminating the special microbes or by preventing their access to the body—both of which expectations are futile. Because a few living tubercle microbes were found in a roll of beef that had been cooked in the ordinary way a learned commission somewhat hastily concluded that the disease was therefore spread by eating such meat, &c. If this were so the tubercle mortality would have doubled during the last half-century, for the meat consumption per head has increased in that proportion; but the fact is that the tubercle mortality has diminished by more than one-half. Plenty of good meat—which generally contains some tubercle bacilli—is one of the chief safeguards of crowded urban populations against tuberculosis. Bacteriologists seem to forget that under modern conditions of life it is impossible for anyone to escape from the infection of tubercle; and all schemes for the prevention of the disease based on the contrary supposition are mere fads.

The more thoroughly post-mortem examinations are made the higher is the percentage of tuberculous lesions discovered; until when such examinations are made with the utmost scientific precision almost every body examined is found to present undoubted signs of tubercle. Thus, Naegeli reports that of 500 post-mortem examinations at the Zürich Pathological Institute undoubted signs of tubercle were found in no less than 97 per cent. of all the bodies examined. Now if this be so—and personally I believe it to be true—how can we account for 12 members out of a family of 13

dying from tubercle—as in a case of which I know—otherwise than by predisposition and heredity?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Clifton, Bristol, Oct. 14th, 1901.

W. ROGER WILLIAMS.

WORKERS' RESTAURANTS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In the course of my daily duties which bring me into close contact with the working girl of the West-end the pressing need of special restaurants for women and girls is constantly presenting itself. It is obvious that for the rapidly growing girl, whose strength is further taxed by sedentary occupations in close rooms for long consecutive hours, abundance of nourishing food is essential. In the workrooms of the dressmakers and milliners of the West-end there are thousands of young girls employed, from the child apprentice earning a weekly half-crown for "pocket-money" to the finished assistant who receives on an average from 15s. to 18s. per week. These are absent from their distant homes for periods of 12 hours and longer, during which time a nourishing meal is unobtainable.

The prices of the West-end restaurants are, needless to remark, beyond the reach of these workers. At the mid-day break the only alternative is a lunch at the tea-shop, where the few pence are spent in worse than useless fare, or the consumption in the workroom of the unappetising dry sandwich. Is it to be wondered at that so many girls break down at the onset—that many more struggle wearily on, battling with that arch enemy to young womanhood, anæmia, which is the forerunner of even worse ills? The point I wish to emphasise is that at present these girls are unable to procure the food of which they are so much in need. I am convinced that it would not be difficult to remedy this state of things by starting special restaurants where good hot meals at cheap rates could be obtained; indeed, I am of opinion that it would be possible to raise capital for such a purpose, and if a sufficient number of these restaurants were started and well managed financial success might be counted upon and a small dividend paid to investors.

Employers would doubtless liberally encourage such an undertaking, and in so doing would be acting in their own interests, while I am sure that many of the ladies who wear the beautiful gowns and millinery which these clever workers produce would gladly become shareholders and so help to confer a boon on those who are labouring for them. I should be glad if employers of labour or others who may be interested in this question would communicate with me, with a view to putting the idea into practical form.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

L. MARGUERITE O'KELL,
Sanitary Inspector.

Town Hall, St. Marylebone, W., Oct. 9th, 1901.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

The Recrudescence of Plague in India.—Leprosy in Burdwan.—Original Observations on the Habits of Certain Mosquitoes.

THE deaths from plague throughout India have been mounting up week by week, and the last return, for the week ending Sept. 14th, shows that 6386 deaths occurred as compared with 4822 in the previous week. The Bombay Presidency is severely affected, 5668 deaths being reported last week, against 4132 in the preceding week, and against only 593 for the corresponding week last year. Of this number 293 deaths occurred in Bombay city, 1235 in Belgaum, 1455 in Kolhapore, 1509 in Dharwar, 107 in Thana, 86 in Surat, 78 in Cutch, and 586 in Satara. In other parts of India the disease is not active, but Calcutta returned 18 deaths, Patna 20 deaths (this is a sudden increase), and Shahabad 32 deaths (a fresh outbreak). In Karachi there were 15 deaths, in Mysore 295, and in the Punjab 16. The chief changes during the week are the recrudescence in Bengal, the continued increase in Bombay city, and the decline in Mysore. The development in Bengal is especially serious because a few weeks ago it was almost clear and because during the last cold weather there was a high mortality in certain districts. Madras city has up to the present been free from plague,