curiosity cannot be frequent among men who know too much of pain, and are too eager to alleviate it willingly to inflict it. I am convinced that Sir Thomas Watson, profoundly humane as he was, would not have dissent from this opinion I have been so bold as to express. But when I use his own word 'humane,' I mean that he was benignant. He had a graciousness, a sympathy, a quickness to understand, a liberal openness of mind, and a gentle, assuring courtesy, which gave courage to those who came to confide in him, and at least did somewhat to alleviate the alarms which add fresh burdens to those of disease. He could not be ill-mannered; he could not forget what was due to others; above all, he was a deeply religious man. 'It is a common speech,' says an old writer, 'ubi tres medici duo athri.' Three doctors, two doubters. But it is not hard to explain why doctors are regarded by people who do not think as indifferent or opposed to religion. Very often they have had to set themselves in opposition to teachings and practices which were connected with religion, and thus they were held to be attacking religion itself. The very moment medicine began to distinguish itself from magic, that moment it must have excited the enmity of the professors and practisers of magic, who were generally priests. 'Doctors,' says Mr. Matthew Arnold, 'are the natural friends of lucidity,' and he defines lucidity as 'the perception of the want of truth and validity in notions long current, the perception that they are no longer possible, that their time is finished, and they can serve us no more.' Rational medicine became possible when at length charms and incantations were seen to be worthless, and rational medicine must at first have been looked upon as a rebellion against religion. Then, again, the study of physical science, which includes that of the human organism, was looked upon for generations with suspicion, and Christian ecclesiastics, and even a Pope, fell under suspicion of heresy, because of his scientific investigations. The same dark shadow could rest upon the doctors and would do much to deter earnest Churchmen from adopting the medical profession. It fell, therefore, into the hands of Jews and Arabs, among whom lived on the traditions of Greek schools and freer days; and it has been said that 'in the eleventh century nearly all the physicians in Europe were Jews' (Draper). But Arabs and Jews, to the Church, were infidels—in other words, doctors were infidels; and men have gone on saying this, or something like it, until the present day. But, speaking from a fairly large experience, I should say the contrary. Instead of less, I have seen more reverence and piety of soul among doctors than among other classes of men. And I should naturally expect it. 'These men see the wonders of the Lord.' Foppishness and frivolity may have no feeling, and fools may say there is no God; but intellectual eminence gives a man a vision denied to the vacant and the idle. Sir Thomas Watson was a truly and unaffectedly religious man. For many years, how many I know not, each Sunday saw him in this church, and to the last his venerable devotion was expressed at the Lord's table. Various were the sites of truth which were presented to him in the ministry of this church, but I am sure that to all he gave the consideration of a temperate and unprejudiced judgment. That which he could take he took, and at least his prayers always overshadowed him with benediction. 'I have no genius for disputes in religion,' he might have said, with Sir Thomas Browne. 'He was a man of peace, and the blessing of the peace-maker is his.' 'The profession of medicine,' he said, 'having for its end the good of mankind, knows nothing of national enmities, of political strife, of sectarian divisions.' I cannot more fitly close this sermon than in words of his own which were spoken on the death of his friend Dr. Peter Mere Latham, and which I will say of himself, 'Ripe in years and ready in spirit for the solemn change, his death must long be the subject of tender and sacred regret among the nearest and dearest of his surviving friends; nor will his memory soon cease to be reverently cherished throughout a much wider circle.' Not as 'water spilt upon the ground,' is the life we seem to have lost. His are the two immortalities which are granted to the good. And specially let me say to you members of the medical profession, to so many of whom it is my great privilege and responsibility to minister, that life of nobleness is still with you, and will be with those who shall come after you, even when no conscious memory of it remains; and that you, too, may reach that high life over which death hath no dominion, is the earnest desire and prayer of your friend and pastor."

DR. MOXON'S LECTURE ON "FEVER."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you grant me space while I venture to make what appears to me a needful remark on a point in Dr. Moxon's attractive lecture on "Fever," which we have all read in your issue of Dec. 2nd.

I allude to his criticism, severe in form, though in manner gentle, delivered on a definition of "fever" occurring in a book which the lecturer and most of us regard as "the best recent work on medicine." And here I would ask Dr. Moxon's pardon if I wrongly take his remarks so much *au sérieux*, as his many readers have doubtless done, from the prominence both of the lecturer and the lecture. I would plead, as my reason for writing, the simple desire of attempting to counteract the very false impression likely to be produced by this somewhat plausible attack on a very solid work.

In a passage reminding one a little of a "logic paper" in an examination, Dr. Moxon treats with some definition a definition of fever which he appears to quote from the work alluded to, as follows: "By the term fever is meant that abstract condition which is common to all so-called febrile disorders, and the presence of which gives them claim to that designation"; and he proceeds to accuse the writer of the confessedly unpardonable sin of including in the terms of his definition the very thing to be defined. But an accurate quotation of the original deprives that seemingly formidable criticism of all its terror. Dr. Moxon's edition of it is garbled and imperfect; garbled unintentionally, no doubt, in that certain inverted commas (in this instance of logical importance) are ignored; imperfect, in that an essential part of the definition is altogether omitted. Here is the original author's own statement: "By the term fever is meant that abstract condition which is common to all so-called 'febrile disorders,' and the presence of which gives them their claim to that designation. Essentially it means undue elevation of temperature, the immediate or proximate cause of that elevation, and the consequences which these conditions entail." A moderately careful reading of this will show that Dr. Moxon has resorted to the time-honoured and classical device of setting up an imaginary adversary in order to have the pleasure of knocking something down. The term "so-called febrile disorders" is obviously used in this well-known book on medicine as a condensed formula to express conveniently the series of diseases—typhus, typhoid, variola, scarlatina, &c.; this being clearly shown by the words "so-called" and the inverted commas, which mark the term "febrile disorders," both of which are ignored by Dr. Moxon. Had the author of the book in question given his list of diseases explicitly, instead of having recourse to a grouping mark or formula, the airy shaft of his critic could never have been shot at all, for it would have lacked even the formal plausibility that it now possesses. The definition in the book as it stands is certainly clear, and, as far as I can see, guiltless of any logical flaw.

For his well-timed and brilliant attack on the frequent and unsavoury medical bulletin, which gives a bad taste to the reader, as a necessary consequence of that evinced by its signatories, Dr. Moxon has the cordial thanks of the profession at large. Such a serious warning, however, would have sounded further and more solemnly had it not been set in the midst of the digressive logomachy of this extraordinary and very interesting lecture.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

H. DONKIN.

Upper Berkeley-street, Portman-square, Dec. 13th, 1882.

PROVIDENT SURGICAL APPLIANCE SOCIETY.—On the 14th inst. the decennial festival of this society was held in the Cannon-street Hotel. The chairman, in proposing the toast of the evening, stated that, whilst formerly it was the practice to extend aid to those only who succeeded in obtaining the requisite number of subscribers' tickets, now applicants were relieved from this irksome and difficult requirement. During the ten years of the Society's existence 25,000 surgical appliances had been distributed. In the course of the evening the receipt of £450 in subscriptions was announced.