attacked with typhoid fever, and there had been two previous cases, all were traced to a defective watercloset. A complete
examination revealed that the water was contaminated with sewage. The House adjourned for the Easter recess.

SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS IN CRIMINAL CASES.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The proposal of the Home Secretary to delegate to the President of the two Colleges the task of selecting scientific experts in criminal cases has excited no little surprise in Edinburgh. With the Crown lies the responsibility of trying a person on a criminal charge, and on the Crown alone should rest the onus of all the evidence adduced. In such circumstances there should be no divided responsibility. The Crown, too, has the best opportunities of instituting inquiries as to the fittest men to act as scientific witnesses, far better than the proposed tribunal; for it cannot be denied that the distinguished dermatologist and the Court physician were at present so well known that all the presidential chairs of the two Colleges would be compelled, to guide them in their selection, to solicit advice from those qualified to give it as to the respective merits of medical jurisprudence and analysts.

My present object, however, is to draw the attention of your readers to the practice in Scotland. Fifteen days before the day of trial the prisoner has an opportunity of access to all the medical and chemical reports to be adduced in evidence against him, and no trial is ever commenced without all the scientific and other evidence proposed to be adduced by the Crown being completed at least fifteen days before. I observe that in Lamson’s case there were postponements from time to time to allow of the completion of the scientific evidence. This involves hurry, and certainly places the prisoner at a great disadvantage. Lamson, who has fifteen days’ cognizance of the evidence to be brought against him by the Crown, and he has thus ample opportunity of determining his line of defence. In addition, in Scotland the prisoner is again a person in a criminal court on the testimony of a single expert. Thus in Madeline’s case there were the independent analyses of Dr. Penny and of Sir Robert Christison; in Pritchard’s of Dr. Penny and Professor Macalpine; and in Chauncelle’s of Professor Macalpine, myself, and also of Professors Charl Brown and Fraser. In Miss Smith’s and Pritchard’s cases the scientific evidence was unsubased, but in the late case of Chauncelle’s our city analyst appeared for the defence, and expressed doubts as to the validity of some of the tests relied on by the Crown witnesses. In Scotland, in all such cases it is expressly enjoined on the experts of the Crown that only a portion of the matters reserved for analysis be used; and this proviso is intended to meet the objection that the prisoner has no opportunity of verifying the results obtained by the witnesses for the prosecution.

In neither of the trials I have quoted was any application made by the Crown in behalf of the引起者 for an extension of time for the purpose of having two independent analyses, the expense of which should, as in Scotland, be borne by the Crown; and that sufficient time should be allowed the prisoner and his counsel to examine the reports of the Crown witnesses. Were this process followed, such proposals as that of the Home Secretary would be rendered unnecessary, and we would be spared the risk of an unseemly canvass for such deservedly honourable appointments. I am, Sir, yours truly,

HENRY D. LITTLEJOHN, M.D.
Surgeons’ Hall, Edinburgh, April 10th, 1882.

SCIENCE AND SCEPTICISM.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Some two or three years ago an article appeared in THE LANCET dealing exhaustively with the subject of evolutionary materialism and modern scepticism and infidelity; and while being a very decided protest against narrow-minded conclusions and inferences, drawn from scientific facts, to the disadvantage of faith and religion, the article referred to clearly and distinctly defined the then position of true science in relation to this great question now agitating the minds of all thoughtful and well-wishing men.

This article, valuable as it is, apparently created but little interest and controversy at the time, although I have reason to believe that it has been freely discussed and commented upon within the pale of the profession; and I have heard many express the opinion that a more extensive circulation had not been secured to it.

Several years have elapsed since this article appeared, the field of our literature is literally covered with writings of a sceptical and infidel tendency, the adverse tendency of infidelity to the claims of religion is rapidly becoming greater, its effects upon the minds of the community more and more visible, and men are beginning to wonder where we are to look for help from a future of faithlessness and atheism. The extensive diffusion of the principles of evolution, for the most part imperfectly understood, and the attitude of prominent men of science towards matters religious, have not failed to spread their influence over the minds of men and women of almost all classes of society; and it has gradually come to be supposed that faith in God, the responsibility of man, and the immortality of the human soul are conceptions of an age that is past, an age that is dead, and a dead age when viewed in the light of our modern science. A scouring scepticism appears to be the leading principle of modern thought. The Bible is ridiculed, the arguments of Paley and Butler, conclusive though they are, are rejected as silly and old-fashioned, and the higher moral attributes of man are pronounced visceral in their nature and physical in their origin. Metaphysical, historical, and theological arguments have wholly ceased to exert an influence; the many endeavours of able and learned men of the Church to check the evil appear to be useless. Science alone is quoted; physical science reigns over the minds of men! It is evident, therefore, that in the many debates at a tremendous difficulty is needed, and that on the part of true Science herself, to check the course of the malady, and to recall the intellect of our age to reason and common sense.

Your valuable paper has often shown that the healing profession is keenly alive to all human pains and weaknesses, and the very article quoted plainly proves that this great sore has not been overlooked. Whenever the subject of religion has been mentioned in the columns of THE LANCET it has been treated in a liberal, tolerant, and sincerely reverential spirit. Men eminent for their attainments in the medical world have again and again proved themselves fully alive to this great social and intellectual disease, and have, by the courtesy of Sir James Paget, delivered addresses at Clergy School, Leeds, to show how deeply the very leaders of the profession are interested in the matter.

At first sight the subject may not appear to come within the legitimate sphere of the physician, but when all other means and remedies have failed, and we are compelled to look to physical science alone for an absolute and incontrovertible proof of the veracity of the religious instinct in man, who is better qualified to express reliable views than the phyical organisation and the mental attributes and character of man?

The question referred to appears to me to touch the very root of the question, and to establish a true scientific and, if I may so term it, physical basis of religion, and the value of such principles, acquiesced in by members of the profession, cannot be too highly estimated at a time when this very profession is openly and constantly charged

"And ill at arm partem."