be glad if the General Medical Council can do anything to help his appeal for justice. There seems to be a doubt about the Council's power, but I shall support any movement that is possible. I go to London to-night.

"Faithfully yours," "W. THOMSON."

"To Timothy Holmes, Esq."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I read with great satisfaction the letter of Dr. Rentoul in THE LANCET of last Saturday and consider the insertion of it a magnanimous act, and I venture to say that nothing could have shown the profession more clearly the openness of its columns to the contributions of those of all shades of opinion, and that persistence in such a course will supply a want which is, and will be, more appreciated day by day. Although I know Dr. Rentoul well, intimately to a certain degree, yet I "did not know half which the letter contains," but I cannot agree with the view expressed in the editorial comment appended to it, which is apt to give the impression that the midwives' question is a monomania or fad of his. Surely his letter has disproved conclusively any such view, and yet there is a phase of it which is as great a satisfaction to his friends—namely, that "he cannot get away from it"—as it is disagreeable to his opponents, that the midwives' question "cannot get away from him." I will not trespass further on your space.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

G. H. BROADBENT.

Ardwick-green, Manchester, Nov. 24th, 1896.

BEATTY v. CULLINGWORTH.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I am sure that the whole of the profession will rejoice to know that the verdict of the jury in the above case was in favour of the defendant. I sincerely trust that a fund will be inaugurated for the payment of Dr. Cullingworth's costs out of pocket. To this end I shall be very pleased to contribute the sum of twenty guineas.

Believe me, very truly yours,

D. LLOYD ROBERTS.

St. John-street, Manchester, Nov. 23th, 1896.

AN ACOUSTIC BLADDER SOUND AND VAGINAL STETHOSCOPE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The same idea occurred to me as has been carried out by Surgeon-Captain Richard Heard, but for the purpose I have adapted the phonendoscope. I found that instrument so useful in abdominal examinations that I first attached to it a modification of Hyde-Salter's globular stethoscope, an instrument I have long used for detecting early pregnancy. I found this combination so useful for detecting faint pelvic sounds that I further adapted a small sound screwed into the peg-hole of the moveable disc of the phonendoscope, which sound may be of steel or vulcanite, the latter, perhaps, giving the better results of the two.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Birmingham, Nov. 24th, 1896.

LAWSON TAIT.

"THE ETIOLOGY OF ACUTE RHEUMATISM."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Your summary of Dr. McClymont's paper on the Etiology of Acute Rheumatism, read before the Hunterian Society on Nov. 11th,¹ contains one or two errors which, in the interest of historical accuracy, I trust you will allow me to correct. It is there stated: "Dr. Newsholme had shown that acute rheumatism was an urban disease and occurred more often in places situated in valleys; it occurred, also, when the mean soil temperature was raised. He had also shown that where the soil water was in excess acute rheumatism was very prevalent." The two last statements are mutually destructive, a high soil temperature being obviously inconsistent with an excess of soil water. THE LANCET of March 16th, 1895 (pp. 660-665), gives the real gist of the conclusions at which I had arrived, which are so opposed to all previous conceptions of the conditions of soil favourable to rheumatism. It is there shown that the great epidemics of rheumatic fever, wherever the necessary data could be ascertained, occurred in dry years—especially when there had been a succession of such dry years—

and that they never occurred except when the subsoil water was abnormally low and the mean earth temperature for the year was exceptionally high. As to the two first statements quoted above there is, I think, sufficient evidence to show that rheumatic fever is an urban rather than a rural disease; but I know of none of a satisfactory character to show that it is specially prevalent in valleys. The immediate fatality (case-mortality) from rheumatic fever is so small and the place of ultimate death from the disease may be so remote from that of the locality in which the disease has been acquired that death returns have only a slight value in the solution of this problem. Some more certain indications may be gathered from Scandinavian countries, in which every case of rheumatic fever is notified to the public authorities. Until the same far-sighted policy is adopted in this country our knowledge of the natural history of rheumatic fever must remain incomplete, though I have been able to adduce sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it occurs in great epidemics and pandemics at irregular intervals of years, and that these epidemics occur only under the conditions of soil-temperature and deficiency of moisture already indicated.—I am, Sirs, yours obediently,

Brighton, Nov. 24th, 1896. ARTHUR NEWSHOLME, M.D. Lond.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN FRANCE: THE SAGE-FEMME.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—If an object-lesson on the effect on the medical profession of the licensing of midwives and the extension of privileges to chemists is wanted in England it can be obtained by contemplating the profession abroad. The French medical profession has let go to sage-femme and chemist so many of its sources of income that it now of necessity appeals for the most part to a rougher and poorer class of men than in England. I have met several men who have qualified in France as both medical practitioner and chemist, but they always chose the better part and practised as chemists. If the English medical profession in a generous or careless spirit follows a foolish example and gives away its privileges, the smarter English youths will become dentists and chemists.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

D. W. SAMWAYS, M.D. Lond., D.Sc. Camb., &c.

Menton, Riviera, Nov. 14th, 1896.

"THE USE OF CALF LYMPH BY PUBLIC VACCINATORS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I regret that in your editorial note to my letter in THE LANCET of Nov. 21st you evade the chief point of it. Written warning as to the use of calf lymph was given by the Local Government Board to the vaccinators of Islington only eighteen months after the first departure from the printed instruction, but this departure was due to the sanction given by the Board's own inspector. This sanction became the Board's by virtue of the act of their inspector, just as a railway company is responsible for any accident caused by the ignorance, carelessness, or inadvertence of one of their officials. The public vaccinators who were not responsible for the departure have had their awards withheld as a punishment, whereas punishment implies, or ought to imply, responsibility. You call this a hardship, I call it an injustice. It seems from what you say that we are all acting illegally, or, as you so euphemistically put it, are engaged in making "departures from the instructions"—the vaccinators in using tube calf lymph, the guardians in paying for it out of public funds, and the Local Government Board themselves in making the 20 per cent. regulation. The droll and unfair thing is that only the vaccinators are put in the stocks. Like you, I hope for happier times and the advent of better legislation. Will you allow me, as a public vaccinator of over sixteen years' experience, to express my views very briefly on two subjects connected with public vaccination—namely, inspection and the supply of tube calf lymph?

First, with regard to inspection. Inspection of the stations should be made two or three times a year and without notice given. At present an inspection resolves itself into a more or less pleasant chat about the weather, numbers, insusceptibility to vaccination and the like, and then the infrequent visitor is off. The inspector should inspect everything

¹ THE LANCET, Nov. 21st, 1896.