

THE SURGICAL REPORT ON THE BELFAST RIOTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Kindly allow me space for a personal explanation. Commenting on the summary of my Report, you state it is your "impression that Mr. Foy under-estimates the number of those injured in the riots." Nothing was more difficult to avoid than exaggeration in preparing my report, which I may incidentally remark was for your contemporary, the *Medical Press*. I was told of hundreds killed, of many bodies buried in back yards, of dozens of insurance agents requested not to ask for medical certificates, of congregations that counted their losses by scores, &c. Of the wounded, if I had believed what I was told, the Shankhill-road fight was more terrible than Plevna. But I was not going to print loose statements, and as I was actually in one of the riots in the Shankhill-road, and read the following day's Belfast papers, I saw that the reports did not minimise the incidents of the night. The cemetery returns, the doctors' lists, the statement of the rector and curate of one of the largest congregations (one which was said to have suffered dreadfully), and the personal introduction into the disturbed districts of the most trusted men of both sides, were all utilised to aid me in forming an approximation to the truth. As for the statement that many bodies were buried in back yards to avoid medical certificates—a statement which is freely made by artisans in Belfast, and appears to be credited by many,—I think it is unwarranted. With most diligent searching I could not find a single such grave. As for the wounded, I only counted such cases as required surgical care. Of the 322 police "more or less injured," I do not hesitate to say that the "less" form the enormous majority.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Dublin, Sept. 4th, 1886.

GEORGE FOY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR—Permit me to point out an error into which you, in common with several newspapers, have fallen in ascribing this Report to the initiation of the Loyal and Patriotic Association. In your issue of Sept. 4th you quote largely from this Report, prefacing the same with the remark that it is "just presented by Mr. Foy, F.R.C.S., the surgical commissioner sent down by the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union to inquire into the nature of the injuries," &c. Mr. Foy went solely as our special commissioner, to report exclusively on behalf of the *Medical Press and Circular*, and was in no sense the commissioner for any political association; and his report appears in full in the above journal for Sept. 1st. The mistake probably arose from the fact of the Loyal and Patriotic Union having, with our permission, reprinted the Report in pamphlet form and circulated it throughout the country. This correction has now been made in the House of Lords, during debate, and in *The Times* and several leading newspapers, and in justice to the *Medical Press and Circular*, I trust you will kindly allow this to appear in your columns.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Sept. 1886.

A. A. TINDALL, General Manager.

INFANT FEEDING.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Thurstan publishes a paper in your issue of Sept. 4th on the above-named subject, in which he advocates the early use of farinaceous food in the hand-rearing of young babies. Physiology and experience both, in my opinion, negative such a plan. It is not to express this opinion that I write, but to refer to certain points in the paper which lead me to think that Dr. Thurstan's failure with cow's milk is to be explained by his method of using it. In the case quoted he states that a child recently born was fed upon "milk-and-water, half and half of each." Those accustomed to hand-rearing of infants would easily predicate what he tells us in detail afterwards. No baby certainly can be expected to tolerate milk food of such a strength at that age. Nothing is said as to the interval between the meals, or the quantity given at each meal. These two factors are of equal importance to the selection of food, and should not be ignored. The manner of giving

the meals is also not stated. In this paper we also find that lime-water "sometimes produces sickness." How soon after the meal? Upon the answer to this question may possibly hang the solution to what, I cannot help thinking, is an error in reasoning upon the part of the observer. In the numbered diets "cream-and-water" is mentioned, and subsequently negatived for use because of the absence of caseine. Dr. Thurstan probably does not know of the admirable mixture of whey-cream-and-water (Eustace Smith), and, for after-use, of Frankland's milk. This latter preparation should at first be used, I think, more diluted with whey than Frankland suggests. The "problem we have to solve" is scarcely "how to make curd digestible," but in what way we can reduce the caseine to digestible limits in each individual case. That this can be done by one of the two methods mentioned by me is certain. Increasing experience makes me more convinced that the larger proportion of failures in the use of cow's milk is due to want of appreciation of the general principles of hand-rearing and the erratic manner in which it is given. At least an equal interest in the subject to that claimed by the writer of the paper makes me hope that Dr. Thurstan's suggestions may not be adopted.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

LEWIS W. MARSHALL, M.D.,

Nottingham, Sept. 5th, 1886. House-Surgeon, Children's Hospital.

THE INTRA-UTERINE GALVANO-CAUTERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In an annotation in your issue of Sept. 4th you refer to the use of the galvano-cautery in the treatment of dysmenorrhœa. I have no doubt that galvano-cautery, if applied to the cervical canal, will relieve the affection, and I should think that it would not be necessary to cauterise the entire intra-uterine wall; but a much easier and more effectual method of using electricity for the relief of the complaint named is electrolysis. This, I should say, has proved more effectual than any other method hitherto adopted. I will not enter into the question as to whether or not stenosis is the cause of the painful menstruation, but a common mode of treating the affection, even by opponents of the obstructive theory, is to dilate the os uteri. In the treatment by galvano-cautery to which you alluded, the os was first dilated, and it might be said that the relief experienced was due to the dilatation, and not to the electricity. With electrolysis no previous dilatation is necessary, and therefore the operation can be performed much more easily and without the slightest pain. No doubt after the operation the cervical canal is larger from the chemical action which takes place around the electrode. Very possibly, for the cases in which M. Apostoli is mentioned as using the galvano-cautery, it may be the best method of employing electricity. Of this I have not as yet had sufficient experience, but I am sure that for dysmenorrhœa and several other affections of the uterus for which electricity can be employed electrolysis will be found the most effectual and best form of using it.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Welbeck-street, W., Sept. 1886.

W. E. STEAVENSON, M.D.

ON CLERGYMAN'S SORE-THROAT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The theory propounded by Dr. Whipham with regard to one of the causes of the so-called clergyman's sore-throat, and published in THE LANCET of September 4th, will, I am sure, be acquiesced in by many who have had some of these troublesome cases to deal with; but there is another matter not mentioned by Dr. Whipham, which has certainly in more than one case under my care declared itself by contributing to the obstinacy of the attack—that is, the wearing of the stiff band-like collar now so much in use by clergymen. This I have found, when the head is bent, presses unduly across the thyroid cartilage, and at times a sharp red line on the skin may be observed after the performance of a service, showing how severe the pressure has been.

In a case lately under my care, by discarding the use of this kind of collar and wearing one open in front, more after the fashion of those which prevail amongst barristers, remedies succeeded which had hitherto failed.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Windsor, Sept. 1886.

W. B. HOLDERNESS.