with the vaunted success in rubbing every sore-throat with a piece of caustic to the doctor's heart's content. True diphtheria, I humbly observe, cannot, or ought not, to be ever confounded with malignant sore-throat or croupal attacks.

I have found great benefit, in the commencement of the complaint, by constant fomentation of the external parts, and particularly by inhaling the vapour of heated pyroligneous or strong acetic acid. Diphtheria is decidedly a depressing disease, and of a typhoid type. Any treatment, local or general, that tends to debilitate, cannot, upon scientific reasoning, prove successful.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. M'GRIGOR CROFT, M.D.,

Clevedon, Somerset,
Jan. 24th, 1859.

Late Staff-Surgeon to H. M. Forces.

THE MEDIAN OPERATION OF LITHOTOMY.

[LETTER FROM G. ALLARTON, ESQ., M.R.C.S.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read with much pleasure Dr. F. J. Brown's case of median lithotomy, in THE LANCET of January 15th, and as I am especially desirous just now of drawing attention to the operation, perhaps you will do me the favour to publish the accompanying case.

Four years have elapsed since I brought this operation under the notice of the profession, and as I am now engaged in preparing a second edition of "Lithotomy Simplified," I am anxious to collect, if possible, all the cases operated upon during that time. Many cases have already been reported in the medical journals of this and other countries, but a far greater number are as yet unpublished. I should therefore esteem it a great favour if those medical gentlemen who have done me the honour to practise the operation would also favour me with the results, together with any suggestions they may wish to offer. It is only by statistics collected from all sources that the real merit of the operation can be arrived at, and its superiority over the lateral method established. Success in the hands of any one surgeon argues nothing, for even the lateral operation has been most successful in the hands of some few surgeons. Success, again, is not all; for even granting the recoveries to be equal, the rapidity of the recovery, the power of retaining and passing the urine at will, and the certainty and safety with which the operation can be accomplished, will always be in favour of the median method.

As THE LANCET circulates all over the world, I am induced to hope that my appeal will be responded to by some, if not all, of the surgeons who have performed the operation.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

South Molton, Devon, Jan. 17th, 1859.

GEO. ALLARTON.

Operation.—On July 26th, 1858, I was consulted by J. N——, aged eighteen, who had suffered all the symptoms of stone in the bladder from early childhood. Fourteen years ago he was sounded, and a stone detected, but no operation proposed for his relief, and at length his symptoms grew so urgent that he applied to various medical men, and at last became an in-patient of the North Devon Infirmary, where he tells me he was sounded, and underwent a course of treatment, without deriving any benefit, and returned to his home, to linger out a painful existence. At the recommendation of Mr. Edwin Thorne, a farmer in the neighbourhood, he was brought to me, and the man who accompanied him described his condition as most pitiable, observing that "he was in and out of the cart forty times at least, and that his sufferings were dreadful."

After hearing the history of the case, I sounded him, and at once struck a calculus, so hard in nature that it rang loud enough to be heard at some distance. Satisfied of the presence of a stone, and considering the deplorable state of the patient's health, I refrained from sounding him a second time, and enjoined soothing remedies and rest. A day or two before the operation, I sounded him again, with equally satisfactory results; and on the 10th of August, I proceeded to operate, with the assistance of Mr. Tidbould, of Chulmleigh, and Mr. Spicer, of North Molton. I need not detail the steps of the operation. Suffice it to say, that I removed without difficulty a round mulberry calculus, an inch and a quarter in diameter.

August 11th.—I found the patient cheerful, and free from pain. He had retained his urine several hours, and was enabled to pass it at will every six hours, chiefly by the urethra, very little escaping by the wound. There was no

dribbling from the wound, and he could move about freely in bed, and sit up without inconvenience, kneeling when he wanted to pass urine.

12th.—He was doing well, and expressed himself as easier and better than he had been for months, and able to pass urine better than he had "done all his life." He said that he could sit up or go down stairs, but I advised him to remain quiet. He sits up, however, on the side of the bed, dressed.

13th and 14th.—Improving.

15th.—I found him down stairs, anxiously waiting for his dinner, and looking cheerful and well.

16th.—After a hearty meal yesterday, he was seized with severe headache, accompanied with distressing vomiting, which forced his urine through the wound, and kept him wet and uncomfortable, and these symptoms lasted some days, retarding recovery, and irritating the wound; but despite these untoward circumstances, he made a rapid and complete recovery, and never suffered in the slightest degree from the operation. He is now fat, healthy, and cheerful, and very grateful for the relief obtained.

I will not occupy your valuable space with remarks upon this case, as I shall comment upon it in the edition which I am now preparing.

* * We would direct Mr. Allarton's attention to page 503 of the last volume of this journal. He will find that M. Heurteloup, of Paris, has lately proposed the median operation, which he considers as perfectly new. Mr. Allarton will see that we advised him to communicate with the committee which is to report on M. Heurteloup's paper.—SUB-ED. L.

POOR-LAW MEDICAL RELIEF.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I shall feel obliged if you can make it convenient to insert the following comments on the "Heads of a Scheme" suggested by the President of the Poor-law Board.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

FREDK. SMITH GARLICK, M.R.C.S.

To the Poor-law Board.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—At a meeting of the medical officers of the Halifax Union the "Heads of a Scheme for a suggested New Arrangement of Medical Relief" were deliberately considered *seriatim*, and I am instructed by the meeting to hand you the comments made upon each clause.

I have the honour to be, my Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

5, Cheapside, Halifax,
Jan. 25th, 1859.

FREDK. SMITH GARLICK,
Chairman.

1. We think it much better that all appointments should be permanent.
2. We think it difficult, if not impossible, to secure the residence of every medical officer in the district assigned to him.
3. This clause we dissent from, *in toto*, for several reasons, as it would not only divide that remuneration which is now too low, but would lead to very little practical good.
4. All appointments should be permanent, with power for the medical officer to resign on giving proper notice.
5. Agreed to.
6. We think division of authority in the issuing of orders unnecessary, though in urgent cases it might save time.
7. If the relieving officer did his duty by visiting the case, either before or as soon after issuing the order as possible, the means of the applicant would be promptly ascertained; and this would only apply to those seeking temporary relief.
8. Many boards of guardians meet only *once in a fortnight*, therefore the medical officer would have little chance of a settlement of the point in question in proper time. He may have to attend the case a fortnight before he can obtain the decision of the guardians.
9. This would be attended with much inconvenience if the medical officer's Relief-book is to be sent. We think boards of guardians take very little interest in medical reports. There is plenty of writing as it is.
10. The medical officer ought to have the power to order both the diet and the *quantity*, when necessary; but it will be well not to have two medical officers in a district, lest a spirit of rivalry in ordering nourishment &c. should be engendered.
11. Agreed to.