obesity, I was led into error in supposing the case to be one of an injury very uncommon in adults—viz., fracture of the anatomical neck of the humerus. There was also a question as to the existence of dislocation complicated with fracture.

Dr. Briggs of Nashville, Tenn., Professor Darling of New York, and one or two other surgeons, however, who happened to be present, obliged me by their assistance and their advice, and set the matter at rest by the use of the method of diagnosis introduced by Dr. Dugas of Augusta, Georgia—viz., by bringing the hand of the injured arm across the chest to the opposite shoulder and showing that the elbow could not be approximated to the chest. This sign depends upon the fact that it is impossible for a straight line (the humerus) to touch the convexity of a curved line (the thorax) at more points than one at the same time. Its value was very apparent in this case on account of the condition and habit of the patient. He was placed under the influence of ether, and Dr. Briggs himself reduced the dislocation by the process of manipulation.

Dr. Robert Smith refers to the distinction between the two injuries of which I have spoken; and Mr. Bryant, in his new edition, notices this method of diagnosis, and acknowledges his obligation to Dr. Briggs for having called his attention to it.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Liverpool, Sept. 1881. J. R. STOCKER, M.B., B.S. Lond.

MEDICAL DIPLOMAS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The enclosed letter was received by me a few days since, and it has occurred to me that the best redress I could obtain for the insulting proposition would be to have the same published in the columns of your valuable journal, for which you have so many subscribers here even on this side of the Mississippi.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
P. GERVAIS ROBINSON, M.D.,
Dean of Mo. Med. Coll.

Missouri Medical College, St. Louis, Sept. 12th, 1881.

“DEAR DOCTOR,—I request you will kindly inform me on what conditions I could obtain *in absentia* a M.D. diploma. You can rely on my discretion; the cash will be forwarded beforehand. Waiting your reply,

“I remain, dear Doctor, yours faithfully,

“ * * * * *, Aug. 27th, 1881.” “ * * * * *

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

IN spite of all the endeavours of the military authorities to keep matters quiet, the truth about the health of the troops in Algiers and Tunis is now known. Thanks to the antagonism between the medical departments of the army and the commissariat, hospital organisation has been completely paralysed, and the state of things is not unlike that which obtained during the Crimean war. In Tunis there is an epidemic of typhoid fever. The Hospital at Bone has two hundred cases, and the commissariat officers daily refuse admission to others for want of beds. Medical aid is also deficient, and an appeal for help to the civil practitioners of the country has just been made. If the *Tribune Médicale* is correct in its information, this appeal is probably the most astounding impertinence ever offered by any administration to the medical profession. The terms, as stated by this journal, are fifty francs (£2) a month, and the prospect of a hospital appointment later. Of several thousands who have received this brilliant offer five only are said to have responded; and it is highly probable that the War Department will have to elaborate more satisfactory conditions. In the first place, the relations between the medical and commissariat officers must be placed on another footing. As regards pay, the civilian surgeons will do well to recollect what the English authorities were obliged to give on an analogous occasion at the outbreak of the Zulu war. Those will be very foolish who allow themselves to be tempted by the promise of future honours. The tenour of such appointments is much too precarious in France; and the engagements of a dying Ministry are by no means sure of being honoured by that which will succeed it.

A report was prevalent a few days since that an English ship had put into Dunkirk with several cases of yellow

fever on board. This turns out to be “Senegal,” or “pernicious,” fever, with typhoid symptoms.

A Commission appointed by the Faculty of Medicine to report upon the study and practice of dentistry in France makes known the result of its deliberations. It is proposed to create a special dental diploma, candidates for which would have to fulfil the following conditions: 1, To be at least twenty years of age; 2, to have passed a preliminary examination; 3, to have attended lectures for two years at a school of medicine on anatomy, physiology, medicine, and surgery; 4, to have attended the practice of a surgical service for one year; 5, to have studied two years either with a dentist or in a school of odontology. The examination for the diploma will consist of a theoretical, a clinical, and a practical test, the candidate being required to perform some dental operation, and to execute a piece of mechanical dentistry. If this project becomes law all dentists, whether French or foreign, who have practised less than ten years, will be required to qualify themselves by submitting to examination within three years.

At the Academy of Sciences M. de Lacerda states that he has found an antidote to the virus of the Bothrops in permanganate of potash. A solution of this salt injected hypodermically, after the venom of the serpent had been introduced beneath the skin, prevented the appearance of any local disturbance where the virus had been injected. When the antidote was not used swellings and abscesses always occurred. The same thing was observed when poison and antidote were injected into the veins.

THE GARRISON HOSPITAL AT METZ.

(From a Correspondent.)

A DESCRIPTION of the above hospital may be of interest to at least some of the readers of THE LANCET. I have to tender my sincere thanks to the military, and especially to the medical, authorities of the famous fortress, the capital of Lorraine, for the kindness shown to me, and also for the trouble taken in explaining everything of interest both in the hospital and in the newly-built cavalry barrack, constructed on the latest principles.

The garrison hospital at Metz, two-storeyed, stands close to the Moselle; it is built round, and completely encloses, a large open space, with trees and shrubs, on a well-kept lawn, divided into two gardens by a cross block, also two-storeyed, connecting the two wings. The accommodation is for 800 beds, though at present the patients number only about 200, out of a garrison of nearly 17,000. Detached are washhouses, a mortuary, and wards for small-pox, &c. The ground-floor is taken up by offices, kitchens, pharmacy, and immense magazines—never touched in peace time—containing complete stores and equipment to the smallest details for 3000 sick for three years, in view of a possible, many say, a probable siege; everything in the most marvellous order. On the first and second floors are the wards, large, lofty, and very roomy, each containing thirty-five to forty beds; floors of polished wood, walls painted to a height of about seven feet, above that distempered; ventilation by opposite windows, provided with curtains, opening quite to the ceiling, and where no windows exist, as at the ends, by ventilating shafts. Latrines are supplied with constantly running water. The sanitary arrangements seemed perfect. Since the Germans came into possession many improvements have been made. Hot and cold water has been laid on everywhere, and gas provided. Upon the iron bedsteads, standing well away from the wall, lies a wire mattress, with headpiece, allowing a free current of air underneath, and making by its springiness a most comfortable bed; upon it, again, a hair mattress in three pieces, sheets and blankets. Over the patient's head hangs a black board, giving his regiment, name, date of admission, diet, medicines, in white chalk. The foot of the bedsteads supports a long narrow ledge, used as a table by the surgeons and attendants for writing upon, &c. Near the head stands a small table, with cupboard for patient's food, necessaries, &c. On admission he is provided with blue-and-white-striped lined coat and trousers, slippers, shirt, and socks. The hospital is divided into three departments—a surgical, a medical, and a venereal “station,” each presided over by a surgeon-major, assisted by one or two assistant-surgeons, the whole being under the surgeon-in-chief, who is responsible for all sanitary arrangements, and for discipline, he having the