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to support him, feeling that the conduct of the Committee
did not justify the form of attack adopted by him, and
foreseeing that the hospital must necessarily suffer, fell away
from him.

As to the utility of sea-water baths, I may be allowed to
state that, judging from the results of their use at the old
infirmary, I do not attach great value to them in the treat-
ment of disease, but would rather see the new wing of the
hospital filled with patients than know that a large sum of
money was being spent in procuring impure sea-water from
Swansea Bay.

Yours obediently,

"TREATMENT OF THE INSANE IN
PRIVATE HOUSES."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It was not my wish to have addressed you so soon
again on this subject, but I cannot allow Dr. Thomson's letter
in your last issue to go unanswered. It is, however, to only
one part of it that it is my intention to allude. Quoting,
then, from his letter I find he writes:—Throughout the
article and in the letters to theeditors [one of which was my
own], in the same number of THE LANCET, one great
factor seems misunderstood, and it is this—viz., that the
insane are not all suffering from acute mania; if so they
might, as a rule, be treated at home just as for any other
serious illness, and probably they are, for in this
asylum of 500 patients we have not a dozen cases of acute
mania admitted in a year.

Surely Dr. Thomson cannot mean to assert that acute
maniacal patients are the only ones suitable for treatment in
private dwellings. If so he very distinctly differs from some
of the leading writers on insanity, for I find that Dr. Blund-
ford, among others, states his conviction that cases of acute
mania are perfectly unmanageable out of an asylum, and he
does not believe that many of them could possibly be treated
with a view to recovery in private houses. When such men as
Dr. Crichton Browne, Dr. Lockhart Robertson, Dr.
Maudsley, and Dr. Bucknill have so emphatically spoken in
favour of the treatment of at least one-third of the
certified lunatics of this country outside asylum walls, and
have distinctly given it as their opinion that properly
treated in private dwellings they would be happier and have
greater chances of recovery than in asylum association,
surely it requires a man to be very bold to come forward and
assert that acute mania is the only form of insanity at all
suitable for private dwellings.

There are many other points in Dr. Thomson's letter on
which I should like to join issue with him, but I am hopeful
that men of greater experience than myself will come forward
and discuss this question on those common-sense principles
which alone will admit of real benefit accruing to a large
class of the unfortunate insane.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
LIONEL A. WEATHERLY, M.D.
Portishead, Somerset, Sept. 1881.

GUNSHOT WOUND OF THE SKULL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The case of the late Capt. Elliot, Paymaster of
H.M.'s 94th Regiment, is one that may interest some
members of the profession, from the fact that injury to the
skull of the peculiar character described hereafter is not
alluded to by Erichsen, Holmes, Druitt, Taylor, or Ogston,
as the result of a bullet wound not penetrating. To illustra-
te the case I have had the roof of the cranium pho-
graphed, and send you a copy. At first sight I hesitated to
attribute the fracture to a bullet wound, but subsequent
examination left no doubt upon the subject. It will be within
the recollection of your readers that Captains Elliot and
Lambart were taken prisoners of war by the Boers, released
on parole, and sent under an armed escort to cross the Vaal
River, when the former ill-fated officer was shot in the river,
and his companion, Captain Lambart, escaped by little
short of a miracle, swimming across the river in the
darkness of the night. After the war two Boers were tried
for the crime of murder, and acquitted. The evidence
produced showed that the two unfortunate officers had
been fired upon with rifles soon after they had driven
into the river. The remains of their cart, exhibited in
court, gave testimony to bullets having been fired at it.
Dr. Vowles, of the Orange Free State, gave evidence that he
had examined the body of Capt. Elliot on the 5th January,
1881, the date of the murder being December 29th. He de-
scribed a furrowed wound from right to left, crossing the
forehead, causing a depressed fracture of the skull corre-
sponding to that produced in court and represented in the ac-
companying engraving; also bullet wounds at right thigh and
left wrist. On the 29th of June the skull was received in
Pretoria and examined by Brigadier Surgeon Skeen and my-
self. It was bare of integument; the cavity contained a small
quantity of decomposed brain substance and three pieces of
bone. The largest portion consisted of the missing piece of
the outer table and a much larger surface of the inner table;
the other two pieces were from the inner table of which
together the three pieces measured about a square inch,

The hole in the outer table, in shape well exhibited in the
accompanying engraving, situated about the middle of the
frontal bone, measured about three-quarters of an inch is
length, and was so narrow that it would only admit the
passage of the smallest pistol bullet. From this fracture
extended in different directions: two in the direction of the
left orbit, two backwards to the left parietal bone, through
which bone one extended two inches in length. Beside
these there were three or four cracks around the hole and
diverging from it, but no other injury at any point of the
skull. Brigadier Surgeon Skeen and Surgeon-Major Corner-
ford, after the examination of the skull, were sent to Orange
Free State and brought back the remains of the late
Capt. Elliot, from an examination of which they were able
to give evidence corroborating that of Dr. Vowles as to the
nature of the wounds of the right thigh and left wrist.
I consider this case deserving of record in its medico-legal
aspect, and if you regard it as such, trust that you will find
a place for it in your columns.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
JOHN E. DYER, M.D., M.R.C.S., &c.,
District Surgeon, Pretoria.

MEDICAL MEN AND THE INCREASE OF
HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue, week by week, appear appeals for
assistance to medical men who have fallen by the wayside
in the struggle for existence, or for their widows and
children when the stroke has been mortal; and side by side
with these are notices of the enlargement of this or that