wasted, old-man-like appearance, and was suffering from severe diarrhoea.

Local treatment.—A lotion, consisting mainly of solution of extract of belladonna, to be squeezed lukewarm from a piece of lint into the eye, the lids being held apart, every two hours; and the edges of the eyelids to be smeared with weak red precipitate ointment; a drop of solution of atropine daily applied to the eye, twice a day at first, the iris not duly acting; iodine paint behind right ear. After a few days scarification of internal surface of eyelids, and introduction of a small portion of weak red precipitate ointment.

Constitutional Treatment.—Astringents and tonics to commence with; after a few days beef-tea injections; subsequently, and in addition to injections, cod-liver oil and iron.

I could detect no alteration in appearance of cornea for about a week; after this time the ulcerated surface evidently was filling up from its circumference, the new tissue being rather hazy and vascular at first, but both haziness and vascularity at length disappeared. I saw the child nearly every day while it was under my treatment, from the beginning of June until the 27th, and in the earliest part of that time twice daily.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Yateley, Hants, Dec. 1864.

EBENEZER DIVER, M.D.

THE USE OF THE FORCEPS IN ARREST OF THE FETAL HEAD IN THE PELVIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the remarks of Dr. Graily Hewitt on the use of the forceps published in THE LANCET of the 26th ult. Having been engaged in the practice of midwifery for nearly thirty years, and having been in the habit of employing the forceps more frequently than is customary with many practitioners, I am happy to find the practice so ably advocated in the judicious remarks of Dr. Hewitt.

I have not preserved a statistical record of all my cases, but I find, on referring to the last 200 cases attended by me, the forceps were used eleven times—i. e., at the rate of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; while, in the list quoted by Dr. Churchill, the average number of forceps cases amongst British practitioners (between 1781 and 1840) is 1 in 362. In this list the cases of Mr. Warrington were the most frequent; and he appears to have employed the forceps three times in 110 instances. According to Dr. Graily Hewitt, Dr. G. Hamilton has employed the forceps at the rate of 13 per cent. in 731 cases. In the 11 cases in which I have recently used the forceps, 3 of the children were still-born, 1 of whom had a deformed head, and the other 2, I believe, were dead before the forceps were applied.

Of the females I have attended, and whom I have delivered with forceps, I do not recollect that in the whole course of my practice I have lost more than one; and in her case, in deference to the wishes of another medical man, I used the forceps instead of having recourse to craniotomy. She went on well for nearly ten days after delivery, and then died with symptoms of pyæmia.

After having reflected much upon the subject, I cannot understand why many practitioners should discourage the use of the forceps, and only sanction them in extreme instances—where the patient has undergone much suffering, and when symptoms of exhaustion are becoming manifest. Although it may be perfectly true, as Hippocrates said, that “a meddling midwifery is bad,” I believe that it is equally “bad” and perfectly unjustifiable to allow the patient to pass through several hours of suffering, and to hesitate about affording her instrumental aid, because, forsooth, there is a probability that at last the fetus may be expelled without such assistance.

The gravid uterus, like the bladder full of urine, may, in the majority of cases, be expected to expel its contents without extraneous aid; but what should we think of a surgeon who, having a patient with retention of urine, should hesitate to relieve him with the catheter, and recommend him to wait and see what nature would at last accomplish, and should assign as a reason for such delay that the catheter might possibly do mischief, and that micturition, being a natural process, ought to be assisted by art only in very urgent cases? I firmly believe that the use of the forceps, in those instances in which an intelligent practitioner would employ them, is as much free from danger as is the introduction of a catheter in the hands of a skilful surgeon.

It is objected to the use of forceps, that instruments are always very much dreaded by the patient and her friends. I

can only say that whenever I have thought them necessary, and have explained their *modus operandi*, I have seldom found any objection to their use, and, in every case after their employment, the patient has expressed her gratitude for the relief afforded.

I could say much in defence of the *rational and early* use of the forceps; but I am afraid of trespassing on your space, and must conclude, after thanking Dr. Graily Hewitt for the masterly manner in which he has laid his opinions before the profession.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES ORWIN, M.D.

Queen's-crescent, Haverstock-hill, Dec. 1864.

QUACK ADVERTISEMENTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I regret that you should have had cause to complain of certain advertisements in the “A B C Railway Guide.”

Your reference to myself personally, and to views I entertain upon a great social subject, would, I feel sure, have been spared, had you known that in every publication (including another railway guide) over which I had complete control all such advertisements had been rigidly excluded; and their appearance where you complain of them, together with others which I shall also exclude in due course, was only due to existing contracts, never to be renewed.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

THE PUBLISHER OF THE “A B C RAILWAY GUIDE.”
Dec. 2nd, 1864.

THE PEAT FUND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me to make one more appeal to the profession for subscriptions to the fund being raised for defraying the expenses of the unjust action of Candler v. Peat. The subscriptions only amount to £95, although some of the original subscribers have doubled their subscriptions. The bill of costs is £152 17s. 6d. If 200 of your readers were to send me 5s. each, Mr. Peat would be relieved from this claim upon him.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Colchester, Nov. 1864.

C. R. BREE, M.D., Treasurer.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE sanitary state of Liverpool is being investigated by a Royal Commission. Dr. Buchanan has been sent down by Sir George Grey for that purpose. This step has no doubt been taken in consequence of the mortality from fever having continued much above the average for many months. The deaths from all causes registered in the borough of Liverpool during the fortnight ending November 3rd were 622, being an increase of 86 over the corrected average. Of these 106 were owing to continued fever (the so-called “typhus” of the Registrar-General), being 81 above the average. To go no further back than July: from the end of that month to the present time, Nov. 19th, there have been 618 deaths from “typhus” fever, being 426 above the average; and 149 deaths from small-pox, of which only 25 of the cases are registered as having been vaccinated. The deaths from measles, scarlatina, and whooping-cough are much below what they have been for several years; and even affections of the lungs and air-passages, which at this season of the year figure so largely in the mortality tables, are below the average.

“Typhus” and small-pox are therefore the two diseases that mainly contribute to the present excess of deaths. Whether their persistence is owing to anything peculiarly defective in the sanitary arrangements of Liverpool above all other large towns, or whether it is only part of an epidemic existing more or less in Lancashire and several other counties for some time past, and which has found, not only more victims, but also more conditions favourable to its spread and its fatality amongst half starved, careworn denizens of a town, than it could do in the country, will be a difficult point to determine.

In small-pox the proportion of deaths to recoveries has been very small. If it could be ascertained from each medical man in this town how many cases of this disease have come under his notice during the past year, it would be found to have been