the large arteries as always synonymous with accelerated circulation.

The heart, no doubt, is the principal agent in the circulation in the arteries, but arrived at the capillaries its supremacy is usurped by the *vis a fronte*. How, then, can that which retards the interchanges between the blood in the capillaries and the tissues about them be regarded as the most powerful stimulant to the circulation?

In cholera it appears desirable not to retard, but to favour oxidation; and as the caustic alkalies promote that change, I gave, during the last epidemic of cholera, the solution of ammonia in hot water to three cholera patients who came under my care, whilst at intervals they inhaled oxygen from Dr. Beigel's inhaler, with apparent benefit. The three cases recovered without any alcohol. As a disinfectant, a dilute solution of permanganate of potash was thrown up the bowel two or three times during the day, as hot as the patients could bear it.

Probably in fever, and diseases of peroxidation, the antiseptic virtues of carbolic acid are indicated, and in cholera collapse the disinfecting properties of the permanganates.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
MORDEY DOUGLAS, M.R.C.S. Eng.

Sunderland, Oct. 22, 1867.

COUNTRY WORKHOUSE REFORM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am pleased to find that your Workhouse Infirmary Commissioners have so vigorously commenced their inspection of the provincial union infirmaries. I have long known from constant communication with my country brethren, and also from other sources, that you would discover in them abuses and irregularities which would throw into the shade all that your staff has so ably exposed in London.

But I am afraid lest any provincial Poor-law brethren should fancy that your Commission will be calculated, if helped in any way by them, to embroil them with the guardians, and, taking counsel of their fears, may cast in their lot with them. I beg, if I may be permitted as an old and, I trust, earnest Poor-law medical reformer, to urge them to aid and assist you in every way. The agitation which terminated in the Metropolitan Poor-law Act was the immediate result of your Commission's labours; and if in our day and generation the condition of the sick poor on the one hand, and that of their medical attendants on the other, is to be materially altered for the better in country districts, it will only be as the result of the exposures of the wrong-doings of the existing system which your Commission can, if fearlessly worked and assisted by the medical officers, bring to light.

Isolated as my country brethren are, there is no hope of much success from any agitation initiated by them; by availing themselves, however, of the aid you offer them, a successful result may soon be obtained now that public opinion has pronounced itself so strongly in our favour.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
JOS. ROGERS,
President of the London and Provincial Poor-law
Medical Officers' Association.

Oct. 1867.

MEDICAL EDUCATION AT OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your leading article of last week on this subject will, I am sure, be read with great satisfaction, for all are agreed that the universities ought to exercise a greater influence than they do upon our profession, and most persons are of opinion that religious restrictions ought not to interfere. I think, however, that many who read your article will be led to infer that those restrictions are greater than is really the case. As far as the University is concerned, I speak particularly of Cambridge, only one remnant of such restriction now remains. A person of any religious persuasion, or, indeed, without any—for he is not questioned upon the subject,—may matriculate, keep terms, proceed to and take any degree (the theological degrees, of course, excepted), and enjoy all privileges which the University can afford. The only point is, that he does not become a member of the Senate, or ruling body of the

University, unless he is a member of the Church of England. The almost successful efforts to sweep away this restriction in the last session of Parliament you will remember. In the colleges also there are representatives of various creeds, and they may all compete for and hold the scholarships; but the fellowships are, by Act of Parliament, reserved for members of the Church of England. The ill effect of this has been felt in several of the colleges, because it has prevented them from retaining some of their ablest men. Not long ago a nonconformist undergraduate of Trinity College was senior wrangler, but the College lost the benefit of his services as a teacher because he could not be made a Fellow. Had it been in the power of the College they would, I believe, gladly have done so; indeed, a petition to have the restriction removed, and the power given to elect nonconformist Fellows of the colleges, was unanimously signed.

All, therefore, in the way of education, degrees, exhibitions, and scholarships that the university and the colleges can give are open to members of all religious denominations. The membership of the Senate and the fellowships of colleges remain to be thrown open.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
M.D. Cantab.

Oct. 19th, 1867.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I was much pleased by the perusal of your excellent article on the older universities, and especially by your remarks on the Cambridge Medical School. There is one point upon which it would be productive of great advantage if you would use your influence with the authorities. There are no lectures on "descriptive and surgical anatomy," such as are required by the College of Surgeons.

I believe the want only requires to be laid before the "Board of Medical Studies" in order that it may be supplied, for I am sure all are anxious that nothing should be wanting to make Cambridge a most noted school of medicine and science.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
AN UNDERGRADUATE.

King's College, Cambridge.

THE INQUEST AT REDCAR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—An extract from your number of the 5th having appeared in the *Middlesborough Gazette* of this week, relative to the above case, I feel called upon, as a duty I owe to the profession generally, after your comments, to afford my explanation and reason for acting as I have done. Believing the principle advocated by you to be "*audi alteram partem*," therefore I conclude you will accord that justice to me, as a member of the profession, by the insertion of this letter. I must, in the first place, draw your attention to some inaccurate remarks, of a most important nature, in your quotations upon the case. First, "That another attempt was made by Dr. Bennett to enter the bladder," but again unsuccessfully, &c. Secondly, "That the man Errington died at ten o'clock on Friday morning." Both these statements are incorrect; as, according to the evidence of the deceased, and the woman in attendance upon him, Dr. Bennett did not make a second attempt to pass the catheter; and the man died about eleven o'clock on the evening of Friday.

When I was called upon professionally to see Errington, on the afternoon of the 18th, I found him in a state of collapse, almost pulseless, complaining of extreme pain over the lower portion of the abdomen. Upon examination, I found the bladder enormously distended, marks of ecchymosis over its site, the penis much tumefied. The poor man's history was that he had not passed any urine since the Monday evening that Dr. Bennett had put him to great pain by using force to pass the instrument for over an hour, not succeeding.

Seeing the nature and urgency of the case I returned home for my catheters, and upon my return was able to pass without difficulty No. 4, relieving him of three or four pints of urine of a dark colour, and strong odour. On the afternoon of Thursday, and the morning of Friday, I again succeeded with more or less difficulty, owing to the more general tumefaction of the penis, and on the last occasion leaving the catheter there until he died. My treatment beyond this was ammonia, beef-tea, and brandy; notwithstanding which the shock to the nervous system was so great that he died from its effect.

Errington, unaided, unassisted, and unrelieved, was left on the 17th in this critical state—in fact, to die. Dr. Bennett, knowing that the man refused to go to the Middlesboro' Infirmary, left him in this condition, and sent him a mixture of tincture of muriate of iron, and never visited him again until the afternoon of the 19th, when he was sent for by the wish of my dying patient for the purpose of telling him how he had treated him. When Dr. Bennett arrived at the house on this occasion I accused him of neglect and disgraceful treatment—unworthy of a medical man, and told him that if the man died I would have a coroner's inquest, as I considered his conduct most culpable. Had Dr. Bennett shown any degree of anxiety for the welfare of his patient, either in calling in the aid and opinion of a brother medical friend, or made more endeavours to relieve him from his critical state, I should never have said one word; but his not doing so, in my mind, proves the "conduct and treatment in the case culpable."

Dr. Bennett, not knowing any other medical man had been called in to see Errington, left him in this state from the evening of the 17th to the afternoon of the 19th, as before alluded to.

With these facts before me, I acted as I did, and, when even Dr. Bennett himself admitted to me that "he had not paid that attention to the case that it required," I felt it to be a duty to my deceased patient and the public to refuse my certificate of death, so that an investigation should take place.

If, however, in acting up to the dictates of my conscience, "and a public duty," I have strayed from the path of "professional etiquette," I regret much its narrowness; but, at the same time, I felt, under all the circumstances of the case, justified in the act; and I must say, in conclusion, that I still consider a great injustice to have been done towards me in your remarks, as I never for one moment wished to take to myself the credit of having succeeded in doing three times that which another medical man failed in doing at all; although having done so was a fact that, with patience and perseverance, success would be the result.

In conclusion, I now lay before my medical brethren the facts of this case, and, should they condemn me for my "conduct," I hope they will remember that "nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit."

Yours very truly,

THOS. LOCKE, M.R.C.S. Lond.

Bedcar, Yorkshire, October, 1867.

* * Our comments were founded on sworn evidence given before the Coroner.

THE DRY-EARTH SYSTEM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A letter in THE LANCET of the 5th inst. contains some severe remarks on the Report of the Leamington Sewage Conference, and on the Dry-Earth System. Will you kindly allow me, through your columns, to inform the writer of that letter that the sole responsibility of the Report of which he complains rested with the late Mr. Hitchman, and that his decease renders it impossible for any one to say what was his motive for dismissing that "Inventor's" scheme with only *one line and a-half*, and for giving Royston as the "Inventor's" residence instead of Romsey.

I have scarcely looked into the Report; but if my memory serves me I saw in it, that to an invention of Mr. Cheshire for saving the solid fæces with the loss of the urine, and to an invention of Mr. Bannehr, for saving the urine with little care for the solid fæces, Mr. Hitchman has given full space; and I think I observed that he gave the address of both those gentlemen. The motive, therefore, assigned for neglect and mistake in the case of Mr. Taylor can scarcely with justice be imputed to Mr. Hitchman.

In that letter the Dry-Earth System is termed "impractical," and to its "important and damaging rival" a single testimonial is given. The *Times* newspaper of the 5th inst. contains a testimonial from the Government of India, grounded on reports from all the Presidencies, of the general and successful adoption of that system. This great work, the importance of which, in the opinion of the Inspector-General of Gaols in Bengal can scarcely be estimated, is the result simply of a paper read by me before the Society of Arts, and published in the Journal of that Society for May, 1863.

If Mr. Taylor would inquire at the House of Correction at Wakefield, he would find that there are in that prison 100 cells

already fitted with the earth-closet: that governor, warders, and prisoners are all perfectly satisfied with the invention; and that the work of fitting at least 700 cells is in progress.

As to the value of the manure saved by means of dry earth I will, out of many statements which might be made on the subject, content myself with the following:—A farmer, who is also a dealer in manure, supplies and removes the earth for a school of eighty boys. There are for that school four self-acting closets and a urinal. One vault serves for the whole. The removal is effected *once in three months*. It takes place in open day in the high street of a town. No one is offended by it. The manure-dealer has tested its value on wheat and on turnips, and he estimates the value of the contents of that vault, at the end of three months, to be, when dry, at least from £2 to £3 per ton. He fully agrees with me, also, that by repeated uses of the same earth you may increase the strength of the manure to any amount.

Allow me to point to a feature in this "impractical system" in which every medical man must feel a deep interest. The earth commode *can exclude entirely foul smells from the excreta in sick rooms*; and also, as I believe, the many deleterious gases arising from them. What other system will do this? The idea of being instrumental in effecting this relief of even one human misery has often cheered me in a work which, during ten years, has been neither pleasant, nor easy, nor inexpensive.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Fordington Vicarage, Oct. 8th, 1867.

HENRY MOULE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Fully recognizing the value and importance of Mr. Moule's earth-closet plan for deodorizing and utilizing the chief excreta from the human body, I think that its main advantages may be extended to all but the very poorest classes by the simple throwing of a few handfuls of dry clay over each motion in the vessel used. To all who can afford it I strongly recommend the use of the inexpensive and most complete closets supplied by the company established for their manufacture; my suggestion is for those to whom a sum of two or three pounds would be an insurmountable difficulty. The requisite details will be obvious at a glance; a tub or receptacle of any kind to hold some dry clay, and a little scoop or shovel are really all that is required. After emptying, once a day, the vessel or night-stool used, a scoopful of earth should be put in prior to its being used again; no slops of any kind should be thrown into it.

This would bring all the essential features of the admirable system within the reach of nearly everyone who can rent a room in the country and outskirts of towns: that it would present difficulties to those poor living in centres of population is no reason why the millions who can should not take advantage of it.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS PALMER, M.D. Lond.

Upper Southwick-street, Hyde Park,
October 4th, 1867.

COUNTRY WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES.

IN relation to the investigation of country workhouses now proceeding in our columns, the following letter is from one of the Farnham guardians:—

FARNHAM WORKHOUSE.

To the Editor of the *Times*.

SIR,—The description of Farnham Workhouse, published in THE LANCET of Saturday, and to which you draw the attention of the public to-day, is unquestionably true.

Scandalous as the facts referred to appear, others of a more shocking nature might have been introduced into the picture to render it still more revolting.

The visitors' book may record no indignant protest, but not only protests, but efforts have been made by some of the guardians to remedy the scandal; their influence, however, has never been equal to that of the Poor Law inspector, much less of the Poor Law Board. "The wards are clean, and everything very satisfactory, and the management of the guardians admirable." Yes, sir, the guardians have been well instructed in and well carry out the present Poor Law system, which amounts to this—that they guard the doors of their workhouses with the most determined vigilance against the poor, the sick, and the infirm. If such unfortunates will enter they must be branded with disgrace, made very miserable, must be made to eat the bread of affliction and drink the water of affliction until they disappear.