Newcastle-on-Tyne, where I was house surgeon, differs so materially from those advocated that I have ventured to offer a brief note as to the practice here.

A paper on "The Diagnosis and Treatment of Abscess in connexion with the Vermiform Appendix," by Professor Rutherford Morison, published 11 years ago in THE LANCET (Feb. 23rd, 1901), has been overlooked by your contributors, and as a large experience has confirmed the truth of the views he then expressed I should like to draw further attention to them. At the end of this paper he draws the following conclusions:—

The diagnosis (of abscess) is based upon the history of an acute attack of appendicitis and the presence of a definite tender lump. The position of the appendix and the relations of the abscess may be foretold by a careful study of the tumour. (Every old house surgeon of Mr. Morison can fully bear this out, and the fact is insufficiently recognised, as it is most helpful in prognosis and treatment.) Early operation is the proper treatment, and with few exceptions the vermiform appendix should be removed at the same time as the abscess is drained (pelvic cases form the chief exceptions to this rule).

A warning as to this is offered in the same paper in these words:—

The operation should be done with the object of draining the abscess and removing the appendix, and, to do this safely, undoubtedly requires care and some practice. It also demands that the patient should not be too seriously ill to tolerate a fairly long operation; that skilled assistance should be available; and that the surroundings can be so adapted as to approach a hospital standard.

No detail of the operation then described has been altered, except that the catgut sutures are reinforced with silkworm-gut and that the amount of gauze used for drainage purposes has been diminished or altogether omitted. Later Mr. Morison¹ reports that he had operated on 110 consecutive cases on these lines without a death, and I recently collected statistics for him,² showing that 157 abscess cases had been operated upon in the Royal Victoria Infirmary without a death during the year 1910.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
Newcastle-on-Tyne, Feb. 18th, 1912. CHARLES F. M. SAINT.

KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON AND THE EVELINA HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In justice to my committee I trust you will find space for this reply to the letter from the honorary secretaries of King Edward's Hospital Fund, which you have published in your issue of to-day. Their communication will, I fear, give the impression that my committee have deliberately departed from the uniform system of hospital accounts; this is not the case. It must be remembered that the legacy in question was absolutely unconditional, and *not* specified as being for the general purposes of the hospital. My committee, however, as a precaution sought legal advice, and ascertained that it would be a perfectly legitimate transaction to allocate it to the Samaritan fund. This legacy was then dealt with in accordance with a regulation of the King's Fund (No. 7 on p. 12 of their red book), which exactly applies to the case. This course has been approved by the hospital auditor who signed the accounts.

Paragraph 3 of the honorary secretaries' letter states that my committee have full power to apply the legacy to the general purposes of the hospital. Granted; but, having regard to the conditions just mentioned, they have also equal power to allocate it to any other object which is for the benefit of the hospital. If the committee of the King's Fund would be just in dealing with this matter, they must admit that it is not merely a question of hospital accounts, but also the strict interpretation of the wording of a will.

The letter from the honorary secretaries cannot fail to create the impression that my committee by their action wish to conceal the purposes for which the income of the Samaritan Fund is used. To this I must give a complete denial, and would point out that the authorities of the King's Fund know full well that the accounts of all special funds are published in our annual report, and are therefore open to

the inspection and criticism, not only of the subscribers, but of anyone who may obtain a copy of the book.

In managing the affairs of this institution, which is the only large hospital for children in the whole of South London, my committee's only desire is to do, with the means at their disposal, the greatest amount of good for the sick poor, and by their straightforward policy hope to elicit the sympathy and support of the public.

Sincerely thanking you for your kindness and courtesy in publishing my other letter,

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
D. MALCOLM SCOTT,
Feb. 17th, 1912. Chairman of the Committee of Management.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF LORD LISTER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am writing in the room in which Lord Lister was born at Upton on April 5th, 1827. The house is, as you state in your obituary notice, now the Vicarage, and the Church of St. Peter is built upon a portion of the garden in which the great surgeon played as a boy. To the completion of this church Lord Lister himself contributed a few years ago, and we who worship in it think that it is a fitting home for a memorial to him, and that the best form that the memorial could take—of one who did more than any other man has done to alleviate suffering and to save human life—would be a rood screen with the figure of the Saviour of the World, and to this the character of the church is peculiarly adapted. We are all poor people here and cannot carry out our wish unaided. I therefore ask you of your courtesy to allow me to appeal through your columns for donations for this purpose—they could be given as a thankoffering in many cases for benefit received, as well as to perpetuate, on the scene of his birth, the memory of one who has placed the whole world under an obligation. I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

F. K. HODGKINSON, Vicar.
St. Peter's Vicarage, Upton, Essex, Feb. 16th, 1912.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN GRAND CANARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Some report having appeared in the press regarding the prevalence of epidemic disease, I should be greatly obliged if you will give publicity to the fact that this island is, and has been, particularly free from infectious disease of any kind, the report being therefore quite without foundation. Visitors and invalids can enjoy the advantages of this delightful climate under as healthy conditions as exist anywhere.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
W. M. M. JACKSON, M.D., D.P.H.
Las Palmas, Grand Canary, Feb. 10th, 1912.

FATALITIES FOLLOWING THE INTRAVENOUS INJECTION OF SALVARSAN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A correct appreciation of the value of salvarsan in syphilis, its efficacy in treatment, and the risks incurred, can only be attained by a careful consideration of all the aspects of the case. In THE LANCET of Jan. 20th (p. 152) you published an article by Mr. Willmott Evans in favour of salvarsan when employed with due care, and in your issue of Feb. 3rd (p. 283) you printed a valuable paper by Mr. Arthur Foerster, who has employed the drug widely, and who, with a recognition of its value, is also very certain that its use is by no means free from danger. In your issue of Jan. 20th (p. 153) Dr. J. H. Sequeira laid stress on the use of redistilled water in the preparation of the salvarsan for intravenous injection. It is certain that many precautions are needed to obtain the best results. You have referred¹ to fatal cases in which epileptiform convulsions and death occurred in young and strong patients after the intravenous injection of an ordinary dose of salvarsan. In those in which a necropsy was made hæmorrhagic encephalitis was found.

At the Académie de Médecine of Paris Professor Gaucher, who has succeeded Fournier as the leader of the French school of syphilography, referred recently to two fatal cases at the Saint-Louis Hospital. In one, a strong

¹ An address delivered at Halifax on Oct. 7th, 1903. See Northumberland and Durham Medical Journal for 1904, p. 263.

² Brit. Med. Jour., Oct. 28th, 1911; and THE LANCET, Dec. 16th, 1911, p. 1683.

¹ THE LANCET, Dec. 23rd, 1911, p. 1785.