

their own work. Such a course must give them a greater dignity in the eyes of the public. There will not be the same necessity to place themselves under the control of laymen, who have a contempt for professional combinations and whose institutions largely depend for their success on the existence of an over-stocked medical market.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

W. RICHARDSON RICE, B.A., M.D. Dub.,
Honorary Secretary, Public Medical Service.

Coventry, May 20th, 1900.

"THE CONFERENCE ON MEDICAL ORGANISATION AT MANCHESTER."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I crave a little of your space to make a few remarks on the criticisms of your Special Commissioner on the Manchester Conference in THE LANCET of May 12th (p. 1382). His chief criticism is that a conference on medical organisation ought not to have dealt with grievances, and at first sight that is so. But this conference was being convened on very different lines from anything previously attempted in connexion with the profession, and it seemed to those who had the arrangements in hand that it was not enough to talk about the value of the principle of delegation, but that it would be far more to the purpose to give a *practical demonstration* of its value. That was the central idea underlying the whole affair. The first and second days of the conference were devoted to this demonstration, and I think, and so do the majority, if not all, of those present, that it was a decided success. Had it not been it is scarcely likely that the third day would have seen the principle of delegation embodied in the resolution which I moved so readily adopted. Regarding the representative character of the conference it is quite correct to say that 4000 members of the profession were represented. Half of these were members of branches of the British Medical Association and half were members of local societies in all parts of the country. The Hospital Reform Association did not send a delegate. How far the delegates were instructed by the societies sending them I am not in a position to say, but it was no fault of the system or of the authorities of the conference if they were not. The agenda was in the hands of the secretaries and delegates a full month before the date of the meetings, and the introductory note expressly directed their attention to this point and urged them to give full instructions to their delegates how to vote on the different resolutions. The authorities of the Conference have no right to think that the delegates voted any way than in accordance with the expressed directions of their societies, and if any delegate did then it is for his society to bring him to order.

In conclusion, I have only to say that destructive criticism is always an easy matter, but I fancy that the mistakes of those who are working honestly for any cause are of more value to that cause in the long run than the adverse criticism they excite, particularly of that kind which is so ready to tell us what we should have done but is not so ready to indicate the lines of future progress.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

SAMUEL CRAWSHAW, M.B. Vict.,
Honorary Secretary to the Conference.

Ashton-under-Lyne, May 21st, 1900.

"DEATHS UNDER CHLOROFORM."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Whilst agreeing with Captain Clayton Lane, I.M.S., that all important particulars should be given in these unfortunate cases, I cannot agree that his letter in THE LANCET of May 19th (p. 1467) will encourage young practitioners to take the trouble to record cases. In speaking of Dr. Mowat's letter he says: "Possibly he carries the same principle—the principle of sketchiness—yet further, for he seems to imagine that the clinical observation of a patient under chloroform close enough to ensure the subsequent unity of a full and accurate report of his symptoms places his life in danger. Can one argue with such an one?" I do not know what Captain Clayton Lane wants to argue about. Dr. Mowat remarked on the difficulty of relating all the details some time afterwards, and the efforts made to prevent a person dying under an anæsthetic, and afterwards the appearance before a coroner's jury are not conducive to a long and

detailed report. I pressed Dr. Mowat to report the case and if he did not wish to write a paper on the case he could record it in your Hospital Mirror. This he did, and for several reasons curtailed it. My desire was to have the case on record as a death from chloroform, believing as I do that all deaths from an anæsthetic should be recorded, even if the scientific details are omitted. In this case the coroner did not order a post-mortem examination, and, unfortunately, one was not made, so that if Dr. Mowat had reported all the clinical details of the patient it could not have been complete without a pathological report. I think that in every case of a death from an anæsthetic we should have it (1) reported, (2) a post-mortem should be made, and (3) a clinical history of the patient and the case should be given. If we cannot get these then let us have a record of all deaths due to chloroform and other anæsthetics and take them for what they are worth, without dubbing the recorder as one who has the "principle of sketchiness." Dr. Mowat is an able anæsthetist and it was a painful shock to him to have a death from an anæsthetic which he is accustomed to administer, and I can understand how easy it was to leave out details in writing his report some days after.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Wigan, May 19th, 1900.

WILLIAM BERRY, F.R.C.S. Irel.

MEDICAL ETHICS AND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—At the spring meeting of the North of England Branch of the British Medical Association held at South Shields on April 16th it was unanimously resolved to petition the Council of the Association to set apart one day at the annual meeting at Ipswich for the discussion of medical ethics and medico-political subjects. I hope that other branches will take steps to support this and make a similar request.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Durham, May 21st, 1900.

EDWARD JEPSON.

CAMBRIDGE APPOINTMENTS ASSOCIATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you kindly give publicity to the fact that we have upon our books a large number of those who are just completing their career at the University and who are anxious in the course of the summer to enter upon various departments of practical life both in England and abroad? This association has met with so much sympathy during the short time it has been started that we feel confident that many, especially old Cambridge men, need only to be reminded of its existence to avail themselves of its aid if opportunity occurs.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

W. A. J. ARCHBOLD, Secretary.

73, Trumpington-street, Cambridge,

May 19th, 1900.

"ON THE MODERN TREATMENT OF DIABETES MELLITUS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I should be glad if you would print a note in THE LANCET to indicate the following erratum. The error is mine.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

May 21st, 1900.

ROBERT SAUNDBY.

ERRATUM.—On page 1424 of THE LANCET of May 19th the quantity of cheese in B diet should be three ounces and not two ounces as printed.

THE PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY: A CORRECTION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I shall be glad if you will allow me to correct two errors which occur in the report of the proceedings of the Pathological Society of London in THE LANCET of May 19th, 1900, p. 1441.

1. It was to Dr. Edington (not Edingham) that I ascribed the credit for much that has been ascertained regarding the pathology of African horse-sickness.

2. I did not state that filtration does not arrest the virus