

vaccinator has to give 24 hours' notice of his intention to "creep into their houses" to offer to vaccinate—rather a slow "creep." Does Mr. Stevens know that public vaccinators sometimes have patients who go to them for everything except vaccination because they dread the "four places" all conscientious men make? So far no public vaccinator has raised the shriek of "behind the backs of their usual medical attendants," "unfair and unprofessional," and "unfraternal business." This has been left to one who, I suppose, is an "ordinary general practitioner."

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Dec. 4th, 1899.

P. V.

"A SYMMETRICAL PALMAR ERYTHEMA."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Referring to the note on Symmetrical Palmar Erythema in THE LANCET of Dec. 2nd I may say that I have seen a similar condition in a lady impregnated with malaria from residence in India. She had also the triangular saffron patch on each temple. I understood from her that it was common in those who had suffered much from malaria. Dr. Chalmers does not mention this, but he might verify the point. I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Manchester, Dec. 3rd, 1899.

J. W. STENHOUSE.

THE LATE DR. W. I. WHEELER: A CORRECTION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Regarding the action of Dr. Wheeler against the Government for visiting Mayo, alluded to by your Dublin correspondent in THE LANCET of Dec. 9th, I would point out that unless my memory be very much at fault he ought to have put the figures at 1100 guineas and not 11 guineas. Having known Dr. Wheeler well I was interested and so read the reports of his action carefully. I recollect he brought forward some eminent Dublin surgeons to show that the charge was not excessive. Why such a fuss about a guinea a visit? Again, in the same report your correspondent mentions two guineas as being charged to visit North Dublin in consultation. Why visit West of Ireland for one?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Ilford, Dec. 11th, 1899.

C. B. TOWNSHEND.

* * By a printer's error, which spoilt the whole story we must admit, the amount was given as 11 guineas instead of 1100 guineas. Our Dublin correspondent related the episode correctly.—ED. L.

"HORSE AMBULANCES AT LONDON HOSPITALS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have read with great interest your leading article on this subject in THE LANCET of Dec. 9th (p. 1599), the more so as for some years past I have advocated the establishment of an ambulance service capable of dealing with the accidents that occur in the streets and manufactories of London. It is a matter that is so evident and the need for such a service is so apparent that the only surprise is that it has not been set going long since. I quite agree with you that the police have too many duties to perform to add to them that of rendering first aid to our street accidents. The subject has cropped up on and off for years past, and many plans have been put forward, but so far nothing of any consequence has been effected. I suppose the reason is that of the want of money, for a system of any kind whatever must cost something, and even the limited plan you put forward will require an outlay for the purchase of ambulance carriages and for the laying down of the telephone calls. It is only a matter of detail, but you do not say who is supposed to go out with the ambulances, whether the first-aiders will be hospital students or paid assistants. Another point strikes me—viz., the distance of some of our populous suburbs from a hospital, in some cases three or four miles. However, these are only minor matters—the main point is to establish something to remove this blot from our city. Consideration for your space deters me from saying more, but I sincerely trust that now you have taken up the matter you will bring it to the notice of the Government or the London County Council.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Dec. 12th, 1899.

THE EDITOR OF "FIRST AID."

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD AND UNDERFED CHILDREN.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you allow me to appeal in your columns on behalf of the funds of the London Schools Dinner Association? The association was formed in 1889 to provide cheap or free meals for underfed children attending the Board and voluntary schools of London. The association has repeatedly communicated with every public elementary school in London and it is prepared to make grants for any school on the application of a local committee, one member of which should be a teacher and another a manager of the school, who will undertake to administer with care and discrimination the grant which is made to them in alleviating the wants of the necessitous children. Last winter there were 59 such local committees dealing with the needs of 129 schools.

I am aware of the urgent claims at present pressing for national aid, but this object will, I trust, meet with the same generous support which the public has given it in former years. Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by the honorary treasurer, Lord Kinnaird, or by the secretary, London Schools Dinner Association, 37, Norfolk-street, Strand.

I have the honour to remain your obedient servant,

6, Great Stanhope-street, Mayfair, Dec. 12th, 1899.

REAY.

THE CONFERENCE AT NEWCASTLE AND THE MIDWIFERY QUESTION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—At the very important and interesting meeting of the profession held on Nov. 22nd in the College of Medicine, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the discussion of a Midwives Bill occupied a prominent position. The question was dealt with almost exclusively from the medical practitioners' point of view. When Mr. Victor Horsley said, "The British Medical Association had dealt with the matter of the midwife and had introduced the first Midwives Bill," Dr. Cox of Gateshead, who has taken, and is still taking, a very prominent part in medical politics in this neighbourhood, cried shame, and there can be no doubt that he voiced the feeling of the meeting. The organisation of the profession for the mutual advantage of its members was prominently dwelt upon by nearly all the speakers. The organisation of the profession would seem to be another term for a medical trades union. It would undoubtedly be most advantageous if the profession could be better organised, but great care must be exercised by any such organisation not to run contrary to any movement which in lay public opinion is advantageous to the community. Thousands of women are annually attended by midwives, many of whom are ignorant, incompetent, or drunken, and none of whom are subject to control. Can this condition of things be to the advantage of the community? It is not proposed to put a stop to the practice of midwifery by midwives—it could not be done. Why should not these women, who cannot be got rid of, be registered and controlled? It certainly would be advantageous if the poor could be attended by clean, sober, competent midwives. How can the profession consistently oppose a movement which has such a desirable object in view? How can the profession hope to prevent such an obviously excellent reform?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

SURGEON.

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND AND THE NOTTS SANATORIUM.—At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Nottingham and Notts Association for the Prevention of Consumption held on Dec. 1st the report of the Sanatorium Sub-committee was read. A site had been selected near Mansfield and the Duke of Portland had most generously consented to sell 50 acres of land to the association and to hand over the purchase money as a donation to the association's funds. It was agreed that owing to the many calls on charity at the present time no appeal for money towards building and maintenance should be made at present; but the committee decided that they would take every means in their power to make the objects and work of the association known. The subscription is 5s. per annum and the honorary treasurer is Mr. William Hodges, Messrs. S. Smith and Co.'s Bank, Nottingham, while the honorary secretaries are Mr. Ernest W. Enfield, Burton Joyce, and Dr. W. B. Ransom, The Pavement, Nottingham.