

admitted which have already shown signs of improvement or are in the initial stage of the disease. All advanced cases must remain at home. The more advanced they are the more infective they must be. By this means we avoid grappling with the greatest danger to the community. We are also apt to arrive at a false conclusion concerning the value of sanatorium treatment, as these statistics are quoted from carefully selected cases, many of which would have become quiescent by careful treatment at home. This is a fact known to every practitioner even of limited experience. It therefore seems that in order to be of the greatest service to the country the sanatorium treatment must be extended in order to include advanced cases or special hospitals must be built in order to meet this demand. I believe that the vast majority of medical men agree that the amount of money now expended on sanatoriums is out of all proportion to the resulting benefit.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

BOUVERIE F. P. McDONALD, M.D. Edin.

New Brighton, Jan. 6th, 1906.

## PHYSIOLOGICAL TESTS FOR PHARMACEUTICAL PREPARATIONS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have only recently had an opportunity of reading the article on this subject which appeared in THE LANCET of Dec. 23rd, 1905. The attention which you are giving to this important question must be welcome to all who have ever had occasion to make or test pharmaceutical products. To such workers it is well known that in the present state of our chemical ignorance of the composition of many of the most important therapeutic remedies the chemist is unable to determine the quality of such. The estimation of the extractive as indicated by the residue left on evaporation is at best but a rough indication useful for the manufacturer as a check on his workmen. Its indiscriminate use with preparations of such a drug as digitalis would be positively dangerous; that is to say, if there were any attempt to standardise the preparations to a definite amount of extractive.

With regard to physiological tests, I do not think there is any question of altering the doses in accordance with reports received from a pharmacological laboratory. It is obvious that if a preparation is proved by physiological experiment to be too strong, it can be diluted; if too weak, it may perhaps be concentrated or, better, rejected. Undoubtedly such tests can only be performed by a central laboratory and the certificate issued should be dated so that the products may not be used after the expiration of some time. It has, however, been recently shown by Dr. W. E. Dixon and Mr. G. S. Haines that such preparations may be kept for at least six months without perceptible diminution of therapeutic strength.

The question of popular prejudice against such methods of testing is not a serious one, as the facts are not likely to come under the immediate notice of members of the general public. Besides, the system has for some time been in vogue for sera. With regard to the inclusion of such tests in the Pharmacopœia a precedent has been established in Germany, the Pharmacopœia of that country requiring that antidiphtheritic sera should be tested in an Imperial institution and sold under an official seal and bearing a label giving the name of the manufacturing firm, the amount of antitoxin in each cubic centimetre, as well as the controlling number and the date of the official certificate. It is, moreover, enacted that sera bearing a control number which has been officially recalled must not be dispensed in pharmacies.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

H. WIPPELL GADD,

Lecturer on Materia Medica and Pharmacy,  
Royal Albert Memorial College, Exeter.

Exeter, Jan. 5th, 1906.

## DOCTORS IN THE DOCK.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—There would seem to be something peculiarly alluring to the reporter's mind, assuming that he has one, in such headings as "Grave Charge against a Surgeon," "Medical Man Charged with Theft," and the like, to judge from the number of such that have been appearing in the daily press recently. They tickle the public palate, I

suppose, but it is most unfair to us, for the vast majority of the prisoners are not medical men at all. Any specious blackguard who wishes to inspire confidence may very readily do so by adopting one of the learned professions and the cloak of respectability connected therewith. To assume the rôle of a priest one must dress the part, which is irksome; the legal profession takes commendable care of itself; remains therefore our unfortunate calling, so our genial knave dubs himself a doctor and all goes well until he is found out, when *we* suffer. Since the egregious Bridgwater retired for a well-earned rest I have noticed three or four cases of this description, counsel explaining in one of them, still *sub judice*, that the prisoner was not really a surgeon but had personated a deceased medical man of the same name; at subsequent hearings, however, he is still placidly described as a surgeon. I am not trespassing on your space, however, to ventilate a grievance which must be patent to all but to suggest a remedy. "A. B., a medical man, was charged," &c., and "A. B., stated to be a medical man, but whose name does not appear on the Medical Register," are, I think, two very different things, and if you, with your usual courtesy, can induce the press agencies and news editors of the London dailies to think so too, our long-suffering profession will be under a distinct obligation to you.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Matlock, Jan. 7th, 1906.

C. FRANCIS STEELE.

## THE PRELIMINARY TREATMENT OF SEROUS EFFUSION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In the notice with which you have honoured some of my remarks on the treatment of serous pleurisy the context supplies an almost sufficient indication that the word "intravenous" (in the nineteenth line of p. 48) is a misprint. Nevertheless, in order to obviate any serious misunderstanding you will, perhaps, permit me to state that the "preliminary injection," of which I owe the suggestion to Sir James Barr's well-known method, is not intravenous but intraserosal. The effects of adrenalin are apt to be too potent to justify, in my opinion, its intravenous administration. But the preliminary injection of a moderate dose into the serous effusion may be regarded as free from risk by reason of the considerable dilution afforded by the fluid into which it is effected and of the exceedingly gradual action exerted upon the serous membrane. I need not dwell upon the other details of the "preliminary treatment," nor upon those of the "after-treatment," as they are set forth in the paper which I hope may be published at an early date. I should, however, mention that on p. 47 "Carson" should be read instead of "Carter," and "Stanski" instead of "Stamsky."

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Curzon-street, W., Jan. 6th, 1906.

WM. EWART.

## THE LATE DR. H. I. FOTHERBY

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—May I add a few words to the obituary notice of the late Dr. Fotherby contained in THE LANCET of Dec. 30th, 1905, in recognition of the debt which the Hunterian Society owes to his memory? Few medical societies have been more loyally and devotedly served by one member. Entering the society in the year 1854, during the presidency of Dr. Lever, he became secretary three years later and held that post under nine successive presidents, filling afterwards almost every office in the society, including that of treasurer from 1871 to 1889. Volumes of the minutes and accounts are filled with his neat handwriting. He compiled the roll-book of the members, a work of no little research. When it came to his turn to be the society's orator in 1869 he celebrated its jubilee by a discourse on the rise of "Scientific Associations," with a history of the Hunterian Society. The oration was published and is often referred to; at the present time, when the amalgamation of the medical societies of London is in view, it has a special interest. Dr. Fotherby's labours were given freely, ungrudgingly, and with the kindness and geniality that belonged to his character. It is a pleasant duty to bear witness to his devotion during a long life to the cause of scientific medicine and surgery, as represented by the Hunterian Society.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

R. HINGSTON FOX,

Honorary Treasurer, Hunterian Society.

Weymouth-street, W., Dec. 30th, 1905.