

the interest of his patient and of friends having the patient put under proper treatment, whereas an ordinary judge and jury would not only be unable to recognise such signs, but, what is more important, would not know what signs to look for. Now if trained medical men are to have their judgment in such cases put to the test and decided upon by an ordinary judge and jury, who have no special training, the question arises, Will any man with any sense of personal or professional dignity pronounce a judgment in such cases? How long the medical profession as a body will permit its individual members to be tried in matters medical before another body, who are not conversant with the special requirements of a special profession, I know not; but this much may be predicted with certainty—that it will be so long as the profession of medicine allows it, and no longer. Reflection on this subject opens the question, Is this present state of things to continue? Are medical men in giving judgment in any case of insanity or any other medical case—the summing up of the evidence elicited from signs and symptoms and expressing these in language is judgment—to be liable to this judgment being questioned in a court of law? or is there in the future to be a special court of physicians before which tribunal the judgment of a medical man when brought into question is to stand or fall? I fail to see why the opinion or judgment of a medical man, formed on matters purely medical, should be permitted to be subjected to the scrutiny of an ordinary judge and jury. Surely no one will admit that a judge or a jury, who have no special training in medicine, can know better than an educated medical man. The medical man may have made a wrong judgment, but if he has I maintain that it is not consistent with the dignity of the medical profession to permit any of its members being cross-examined by a non-medical man, and dictated to by a judge who is non-medical. In the Army and Navy we have instances of officers whose discipline or knowledge is brought into question being tried by their brother officers, and in this instance dignity is displayed, while in allowing medical men to be examined as they at present are dignity is painfully absent.

I hope that this state of matters will not be permitted to exist any longer than is possible. It is a matter demanding the earnest consideration of the profession, for I believe that in all instances the medical man forms a judgment to the best of his ability and to the interest of patients and friends, and such being the case it behoves us to do all in our power—and if united we are powerful—to prevent the present state of trial existing. By all means allow patients, if they think that they have been pronounced insane when they are not insane, and so have been confined in an asylum, appeal and sue the medical man for damage; but in the first instance let us insist upon an appeal being made to a court of physicians who must pronounce whether the medical man has formed a wrong judgment or not, and then let the patient, after the court of physicians has found a man in error, sue him for damages before an ordinary judge and jury. But we cannot insist too strongly, for the sake of the dignity and honour of the profession, that the judgment or opinion of the medical man be decided to be right or wrong by proper representatives of the profession.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

August, 1885.

F. H. H.

HYDROPHOBIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With reference to Dr. Dulles' criticism on my case of hydrophobia, which appeared in THE LANCET of July 18th, I would have entirely ignored his remarks had he not implied that I had committed manslaughter. He states that so long as I continued poulticing the patient was relieved, but so soon as I began the use of apomorphia and opium the patient got worse. Such a statement is most erroneous. What I did say was that the apomorphia and opium had "no effect." He also accuses me of jumping at conclusions, inasmuch that as soon as the patient refused drink, &c., I commenced to make inquiries about a dog-bite. This is a most erratic statement to make; in fact, no inquiries were made about a dog-bite until I had thoroughly weighed the symptoms, and then, and not until then, were inquiries made, which elicited the fact, beyond a doubt, that the dog was mad and was shot. The symptoms were so evi-

dent, and the autopsy of the case was so clear and entirely in accordance with the so far known facts of the pathology of rabies, that further comment on the case is unnecessary. The occurrence of pericarditis I looked upon as a coincidence, due to cold and injury and a depraved state of the blood. I may here add, in passing, that I entirely excluded pia arachnitis from the beginning, for obvious reasons too numerous to mention here. I congratulate Dr. Dulles on his keen sense of diagnosis, and also sympathise with him in his loneliness, as also in his unique position of feeling like one "crying in the wilderness."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

City Infirmary, E., August, 1885.

W. GEM.

A HOLIDAY AT DARTMOUTH.

(From an occasional Correspondent.)

"WHERE shall I go for my holiday?" is a question more frequently debated than easily solved. After a year's steady work in any one place, a change to, and rest in, any other place is welcomed; but welcome is not an absolute quantity, and much depends on the more or less. If a man be alone, and perchance know little of the world, the choice of holiday quarters is comparatively easy, for he may find change anywhere; but if his object be to amuse and develop some big lads as well as rest himself, if he be something of a "travelled Thane, athenian Aberdeen"—critical, yet not *blasé*,—he may well be puzzled, as I was a few weeks back, in endeavouring to answer the question, "Where shall I go for my holiday?" A genial spirit guided me to this bit of the old world; and I shall ever be grateful for the happy inspiration. Literally, the town of Dartmouth is cut off from the railway system, for the station is on the other side of the water, and can only be reached by a ferry; most of the travelling into the interior is by old-fashioned coach and carrier; and, pony phaetons excepted, there is not a private carriage in the town. The people are as primitive in their ways as they are honest and hospitably kind; and, of the beauty of the scenery, it is scarcely possible to say enough in praise. As I am writing I look down the Dart, studded with yachts, into the open sea; the town is under my windows, into one of which peeps a splendid magnolia in full bloom, into the other a jessamine; in the garden below are figs, fuchsias, and peaches, as independent of glass as if they were growing in the valley of the Rhone, or on the Riviera. The long flights of steps, from Mount Galpin or Mount Pleasant into the town, remind one of Malta; and so does the harbour, in so far as the great depth of water allows ships to come close up to the depôts. The coast is rocky for the most part; but on each side of the harbour, and just beyond it, are pretty coves, with sandy beach, in which bathing is pleasantly private and perfectly safe. The boatmen are mostly Navy Reserve men; all respectful, skilful, and reliable. In a few miles' pull up the Dart may be enjoyed such varied luxuries as alternating oak forests and ripe cornfields down to the water's edge. Within a couple of hours' row is quaint old Totnes, on the borders of wild Dartmoor; just across the hills is busy Brixham, one of the great fishing centres of the kingdom; eight miles eastward is imperial-looking Torquay, with its Naples-like bay and terraced palaces and gardens; at an equal distance westward is Slapton, with its phenomenal fresh-water lake on the sea shore. Lovers of old churches will find material for reflection in St. Petrox, dating from the fifth century, and St. Saviour's, from the thirteenth, with traditions of the Spanish Armada. The opportunities for piscatorial sport are abundant throughout the district. An excellent hotel, comfortable apartments at very moderate prices, a well-stocked circulating library and an art depôt, do not exhaust the advantages of the place, for living is good and cheap. In praise of the Devonshire dairy produce not a word need be wasted. Rabbits are 1s. 6d. a couple, sirloin of beef 9½d., loin chops and rump steaks 10d. per pound. These are prosaic details, but a good many "brother chips" may find them useful in choosing holiday quarters. Of one thing I am pretty confident;—that any tired man who takes up his quarters for a time in this good old town will remember, with gratitude and admiration, this choice bit of Rhineland on the English south coast.