

pers? Orders from the guardians would be too easily obtained, and in many cases be a source of annoyance both to themselves and the medical officers.

Nos. 7, 8, and 9 are well enough, but No. 10 is objectionable. The quantity and kind of food must form, in almost every case, part of the treatment, and as such should be left to the medical officers' discretion.

With regard to remuneration, there ought to be a minimum salary fixed by the Poor-law Board, and in every case drugs and appliances should be dispensed by the Union. How can anyone be supposed to attend a country parish with thirty or forty on the sick list, supply them with drugs, &c., and keep a horse (which he must do in order to get through his work), for a salary of £70? Yet in every week's LANCET such offices are advertised. Where are the applicants found?

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Jan. 1859.

OBSERVER.

P.S.—Being already qualified under the Poor-law Act, a change such as I propose cannot be of any service to me; but as the new Medical Act distinctly recognises the claims of Scotch and Irish graduates and licentiates, I am unwilling to see any attempt at exclusiveness or injustice.

## DR. MAYO VERSUS DR. FORBES WINSLOW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Can you enlighten us poor ignorant bewildered mortals as to the real object of Dr. Mayo's eccentric epistle to *The Times*, respecting the case of James Atkinson, the imbecile who was tried for murder a short time back at York? This singular letter is much talked of and canvassed in our medical circle, and all appear greatly puzzled to discover the secret of the President's attack, and, I must add, somewhat unprofessional criticism, on the evidence of Dr. Winslow, a gentleman who deservedly takes the highest rank as a medical jurist in this country. Dr. Winslow's cutting, biting, slashing, and unanswerable reply to Dr. Mayo's letter is universally admired for its manly, honest, lucid, and truthful exposition of important medico-legal principles. It is, indeed, a "sorry sight" to see the President of a Royal College of Physicians so far forgetting what is due to profession and position as to lower himself by making so unseemly and unfair an attack upon one who has worked so unremittingly and zealously to enlighten the public mind on all points connected with psychological medicine and the medical jurisprudence of insanity. We are of opinion here that Dr. Mayo will not soon forget, or easily rally from, the damaging and crushing broadside which Dr. Winslow has brought to bear against him. The President must indeed feel painfully conscious of his utter inability to meet Dr. Winslow in fair and legitimate warfare, when he is driven to the humiliating necessity of running for shelter behind the columns of the *Examiner* newspaper! The article in the paper to which Dr. Mayo so exultingly points his finger is a scurrilous attack, based on a most erroneous view of the medico-legal testimony of Messrs. Winslow, Williams, Kitching, and North; and headed "*Mad Doctors Again!*" Only imagine the President of the Royal College of Physicians directing the attention of the profession, through the columns of *The Times*, to this article for a scientific exposition of principles of medical jurisprudence! Surely "the times are out of joint" when this can be done. If the *Examiner's* mode of discussing questions of this character, and of personally abusing and attacking distinguished members of the profession, be agreeable to the intellect, feelings, and taste of Dr. Mayo, the circumstance is much to be regretted.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Edinburgh, Jan. 1859.

M.D.

## NEW SPLINT FOR FRACTURES.

(NOTE FROM MR. CHRISTOPHER HEATH.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the report of a case of resection of the elbow at Fort Pitt, in your number of Dec. 25th, it is mentioned that "the splint made by Mr. C. Heath, late of King's College Hospital, and used by Mr. Fergusson in a case reported in THE LANCET, was not found to answer the purpose. When it was applied with sufficient tightness, it caused œdema of the limb; besides the arm could not be kept at any particular angle, and, if loosely applied, it was apt to slip off."

I regret to find that the splint should have failed in its object, but imagine from the phrase—"the arm could not be

kept at any particular angle"—that its use was somewhat misunderstood. My object is to have the arm *straight* during the early treatment, and so to keep the cut ends of the bones asunder, and maintain the normal tension of the muscles and soft parts. The arm is easily maintained in this position by giving the screws a half turn, and so reversing the hinges, when the joint is not being flexed.

With respect to the œdema, that is, no doubt, a difficulty, but can be prevented, to a great extent, by careful bandaging of the arm under the splint (except at the wound, where compression is made by strips of water-dressing), and supporting the whole arm upon pillows above the level of the body. To obtain a good movable joint requires some time, and the wound will probably not be thoroughly healed for three months or more.

The most successful movable joints after excision I have ever seen are the first and third of those in which this splint was used (THE LANCET, Nov. 28th, 1857); the second, I must acknowledge, failed, owing to want of attention on the part of the patient.

It so happens that there have not been any cases of excision of the elbow at King's College Hospital since the above; but I understand that there has been a most successful case in the Bath United Hospital, in which my splint was used, and which I hope will shortly be published.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Gordon-square, January, 1859. CHRISTOPHER HEATH, M.R.C.S.

## PARTIAL AMPUTATION OF THE HAND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—THE LANCET of the 1st inst. publishes a clinical lecture by Mr. Solly upon "Partial Amputation of the Hand," which contains some strikingly judicious counsel to young surgeons. The subjoined case, which occurred to me many years ago, is so strongly illustrative of Mr. Solly's teaching in relation to conservative surgery in such cases, that perhaps you may consider it worthy a place in your columns:—

On a 1st of September morning, about twenty-five years ago, a healthy, active woman of about fifty, and of a spare habit, the wife of a gamekeeper at Chilworth, near Guildford, being without a match, incautiously shook some grains of gunpowder from a copper powder-flask, containing more than a pound of that material, upon some ignited tinder, for the purpose of obtaining a light; of course a violent explosion ensued, producing great personal injury by its results, in addition to severe contusions and lacerations inflicted by fragments of the flask on various other parts of the body. The right hand was regularly smashed; the little finger was completely torn away from its articulation, with its metacarpal bone, and was, two days afterwards, found in the garden of the cottage, whither it had been driven, with the window or door, having attached to it several inches of the flexor tendon: it is now in the museum of Guy's Hospital. The metacarpal bones of the index, middle, and ring fingers were fractured; the skin of the fingers themselves, together with the soft parts of the palm, and the integuments of the dorsum of the hand, with those of the wrist, were most extensively lacerated and injured. The thumb was disarticulated at the carpus, and was merely attached to the hand by a portion of skin, some muscular fibres, and by its flexor and extensor tendons. Amputation was decided upon, but the patient shrank from the operation, and sought my opinion. A reconsideration of the circumstances of the case led to an attempt to save the hand. The parts were carefully cleansed, the dislocated thumb was restored to its normal position, the lacerated integuments were readjusted, and simple dressings applied. Considerable suppuration ensued, attended by some sloughing of the contused parts; but she gradually improved until her perfect recovery, and I had the satisfaction of seeing her ply her needle in shirt-making, with little inconvenience, within three months from the date of the injury.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Guildford, Jan. 1859.

RICHARD EAGER, M.R.C.S.

## A COMMERCIAL PHASE IN REGISTRATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I take the liberty of calling your attention to the rather unbusiness-like way in which some of the preliminaries connected with the Medical Registration are conducted. We are told to put our two sovereigns in the hands of a clerk, who then politely informs us that a "receipt" shall be sent to our residences as soon as is possible or convenient. Now, with al